PATRIOTIC EDUCATION BASES IN CHINA

Modes of Citizen Formation
Between Nationalism,
Local Identities and Tourism

Gotelind Müller

HASP
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Cover illustration: Outdoor statue of ‘little radish’ sitting idly in a prison courtyard with a ‘young pioneer’ red scarf around his neck (Geleshan) (photograph by the author, © 2014)

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In memoriam Elisabetha and Hans Müller

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Preface

This book has come a long way, a very long way indeed. It started to become a more focused project in around 2013, following books on school textbooks in East Asia and on historical documentaries in China to probe into the ways historical consciousness is constructed in and beyond the classroom. However, due to other projects and books coming in between which led me deeper into the field of cultural heritage studies, though proving helpful for this present book, too, this manuscript went from the front to the backburner repeatedly. Finally, then, it now sees the light of the day. Most of the materials were collected over many years, and on-site observations cover the period of 2010 to 2018 mainly, though the time-frame covered with documentation is longer (roughly 1997 to 2019). Between 2013 and 2017, I had the occasion to travel more regularly to visit 'patriotic education bases' around China, if always squeezed in between the teaching seasons, and for the funding of some of the fieldwork, I am very grateful to the Heinz-Götze Foundation. For further documentation, an extremely helpful hand was always offered by our institute's former librarian, Anne Labitzky: I am deeply indebted to her for the great support she has provided and the enthusiasm with which she accompanied my academic work until her well-deserved retirement. I am also grateful to my former students who took part in seminars on related topics in early phases of this book project and sometimes wondered about the huge amount of materials that the 'patriotic education campaign' produced: they also put up with the sometimes rather bad visual and acoustic quality of filmic sources. Regarding some details, I am furthermore indebted to Dr. Mariana Münning, Olivia Wenzel, and Dr. Clemens Büttner for their valuable suggestions. The production of the book has been luckily in the professional hands of Nicole Merkel-Hilf and the HASP team, and a special thank you goes to Thilo Scheidt for taking over the technical parts of the index with the precision and endurance one needs for this task. On a technical note, I should state that, given that the topic is concerned with the 'patriotic education bases' of the People's Republic of China, I have opted for using simplified characters for Chinese in general in this book, and Pinyin for transcribing it (but for very common exceptions like Chiang Kai-shek etc.).

I dedicate this book in memoriam to my late mother and father, being thankfully aware that I would have never made it without their life-long unwavering support which remains a very dear memory to me. They were always there to back up the family and help my husband keep it running during my absences, and wondered

how long it would take to finish this particular book, when every fieldwork resulted in yet further heaps of materials piling up. It is really sad that they did not live to see the book finally accomplished: it simply took too long, but I only realised this time that while I have dedicated books to my children, my husband, and other close family members in the past, I completely missed out on doing so for the most obvious: you, Mum and Dad, to whom I owe so much, so this is my unfortunately belated, but even the more deeply felt thank you for all that you have done for me in life: I will always keep you in my heart. R.I.P.

G.M. 2025

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1 Introduction

Abstract This chapter provides an outline of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in the context of the larger 'patriotic education' campaign in China as its most outstanding, continuous, and widespread ingredient. It addresses the main concerns, namely patriotism and nationalism, national and local identities, tourism, and citizen formation, and discusses the approach and materials used. A quick tour through the book concludes the chapter. Three appendices provide 1) an overview over the listings of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' in terms of time and geographical scope, 2) an example of an upgrading process of a site, and 3) examples of further site listings and labels encountered during fieldwork to contextualise the 'patriotic education showcase base' labelling.

One of the most striking aspects in present-day Chinese education is the broad and long-term 'patriotic education' (*aiguozhuyi jiaoyu* 爱国主义教育) campaign. Although the aim of patriotism in education is per se not new in China, the concerted action for 'patriotic education' ever since the 1980s and 1990s has outgrown any former dimensions, becoming the most long-standing campaign in the whole history of the PRC (People's Republic of China),[1] well and alive to this day. While Deng Xiaoping 邓小平, China's paramount leader of the 1980s, steered the country away from the Maoist hyper-revolutionary path culminating in the Cultural Revolution (conventionally dated 1966–1976), he acknowledged the particular value of teaching patriotism to Chinese youth.[2] The critical year of 1989 which saw the Tiananmen protests and the beginning demise of Communist rule in Eastern Europe seemed, however, to teach the authorities that the effort of the 1980s urgently needed reinforcement. Thus, Deng's protégé and successor Jiang Zemin 江泽民 would become the one to decidedly drive up the campaign in the 1990s, defining its contours, and broadening its application. According to the 'patriotic education' campaign's official promoters, it was designed to counter corruption by 'capitalist forces', and to achieve a strong identification of the populace with the Chinese

1 For research on the general 'patriotic education' campaign, see, above all, Zhao (1998), Kinoshita (2007), and Wang (2008 and 2012).

2 Deng's role in the 'patriotic education' campaign, while often not fully appreciated, has been duly pointed out by Kinoshita (2007).

state.[3] For this, the campaign became also outstanding in terms of the breadth of tools it applied, including not only school textbooks, but since the mid-1990s also increasingly films, songs, and physical places, the so-called 'bases', which are spread all over China. Whereas school textbooks are addressing youth as the primary target group of the campaign, the other tools go beyond this segment of society and clearly aim at the populace at large. Thus, 'patriotic education' was and is to be not only relevant for socialising the coming generation, but also for a long-term formation of the PRC citizen as such. In other words, the campaign was designed for the whole Chinese society.

In this context of broadening the scope and target groups of 'patriotic education' in China, the so-called 'patriotic education bases' (*aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi* 爱国主义教育基地) play a decisive role. They dot the landscape and are a physical crystallisation, reflected in the term 'bases' (*jidi* 基地),[4] where various campaign tools can be physically 'anchored' and joined together: school classes may visit the places as a form of 'outdoor education', sing patriotic songs, and pledge their patriotism on spot, visit museums, and watch patriotic films. Grown-ups may include such places in a travel itinerary of either organised group outings or individual tourism. Some declared 'patriotic education bases' were picked and upgraded as 'national patriotic education showcase bases' (*quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi* 全国爱国主义教育示范基地),[5] a label introduced in 1997 as the highest administrative level,[6] which was added in the context of the Hong Kong handover,[7] a peak of nationalist

3 See former deputy head of the CCP Central Committee's Propaganda department Liu Yunshan 刘云山 in his general preface to the series on the (first) 100 'patriotic education showcase bases' as a benchmark publication in this regard (cf. below). Liu Yunshan also cited Deng Xiaoping's propagation of patriotic education to this avail. See, e.g., in Xie (1998: 1).

4 The term 'base' (*jidi*) is applied broadly as the foundational (or central) physical place for some activity to anchor it. It is not identical with the usual Chinese term for the Communist 'base areas' during Republican times, *genjudi* 根据地.

5 Sometimes the translation 'demonstration base' is used for *shifan jidi*. I opt for 'showcase base' as this is to my mind the most literal and apt translation. Kinoshita (2007) translates *shifan* into Japanese as *moderu* (model) which in Chinese would be usually *mofan* 模范, though. In any case, these sites are officially acknowledged as displaying 'best practice' examples of sites of national importance, which is captured well in the word 'showcase'.

6 It seems that existing work on the patriotic education campaign largely ignores the fact that the label 'patriotic education bases' existed already earlier before the sites might have been upgraded to a 'national showcase base' level. At times, the pre-upgrading label appears at the entrance of single sites next to the upgraded 'showcases bases' plaques.

7 That the 'showcase bases' list was added in the context of the Hong Kong handover is stated by Liu Yunshan in his general preface to the series on the (first) 100 patriotic education showcase bases. (Preface, p. 3, contained in every booklet of this series, e.g., in Xie 1998). As mentioned, 'patriotic

fervour in the PRC, others were newly designed as such. As pointed out when the second list of such 'national showcase bases' was promulgated (in 2001), the addition of *shifan* 示范 (showcase) to the label intended to stress that these sites had an outstanding function of providing a benchmark for other sites, showcasing how one made the 'patriotically' best of a site or an exhibition with various technical means, adding activities and other endeavours to involve the addressees actively. This should go in tandem with publications and filmic presentations (see below) to help turn the topic of patriotic education in general into society's 'main melody', and to conform to the official programme for the 'building up of civic morality' (*gongmin daode jianshe* 公民道德建设) with such 'bases'.[8] That the Chinese state sees these 'bases' as a tool of particular importance is corroborated by the fact that whereas there is just one list of 100 patriotic films and 100 patriotic songs and 100 patriotic books (for primary through senior secondary pupils) that were chosen in the 1990s, the originally equally 100 national-level 'showcase bases' have been the only tool to be continually expanded by additional lists, covering 356 sites on four lists by the end of the Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 era. After a hiatus of several years, further lists came out in the Xi Jinping 习近平 era, bespeaking the fact that the tool is still seen as valuable. One of the driving factors behind this expansion ever since the first list of 1997 is obviously the desire to take in more and more places in the vast territory of China and have them 'appropriated' by the Chinese state to be 'patriotically' inscribed for the nation, even if geographically not very homogeneously spread (see appendix 1 for a table, according to province).[9]

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education bases' had been there already earlier, but at this point in time, the upgraded national-level 'showcase bases' were officially proclaimed.

8 Cf. then-deputy head of the Propaganda Department Liu Peng's 刘鹏 preface in Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe (2002: 2–4). Liu mentioned specifically the publishers Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe, Zhongguo shaoer chubanshe, and Zhongguo ditu chubanshe with books, illustrated volumes, and maps, as well as the CCTV film clips (see below) then produced for the second list sites, as 'coordinated' outlets for propagating the 'bases'.

9 One might note that although the first list of 1997 covered all provinces and autonomous regions – if very unequally, the next lists already skipped some, i.e., the second list omitted Tibet, Ningxia and Qinghai, the third again Tibet as well as Shaanxi and Gansu, whereas the fourth skipped Guangxi. That way, at the end of the Hu Jintao era, 'peripheral' minority areas, namely Tibet, Qinghai and Ningxia remained the least covered with 4 sites each, Xinjiang and Hainan counted 5, and Inner Mongolia 6. Equally strongly minority-inhabited Guangxi arrived at 7, Yunnan and Guizhou at 8. Top-scoring, in turn, were Jiangsu and Hunan with 19, and provinces with 18 (Beijing, Hebei, Sichuan) or 17 sites (Liaoning, Shandong, Hubei). On this basis, the Xi Jinping 习近平-era lists proceeded after a hiatus of 8 years, driving the imbalance even further, tellingly by 2021 ending up with Beijing far at the top with 42 sites (Hunan and Jiangsu as the next with only 33 and 31), while Hainan (7), Ningxia and Qinghai (8), and Inner Mongolia and Tibet (9) remained at the lower end.

The fact that the number of patriotic education sites and its most high-ranking form, the 'national patriotic education showcase bases' which we will focus upon in this book, is continuously growing shows that the patriotic education campaign and the 'bases' are still very much part of the agenda to this day. They are also included in the latest addition to the general 'patriotic education' campaign: the 'Patriotic Education Law of the PRC' which went into effect on January 1, 2024. Here, the 'patriotic education bases' are explicitly named as an important venue for patriotic education, to serve not only for pupils but for the Chinese citizen at large.[10] Key to the presentation in the Xi Jinping era is, that the 'showcase bases' should help 'tell the story well' (*jianghao gushi* 讲好故事) regarding China, the Party, and the Xi Jinping-era 'socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era', as the recent nomination list of 2021 put it.[11] (One should note the term 'story', not 'history'!) This agenda, in fact, led to some remarkable new listings which beyond the numerous museums or revolutionary memorials represented before, also by now include the new Beijing Daxing 大兴 International Airport, opened in 2019 (and 'patriotically listed' in 2021). Fittingly, the airport also opened a permanent exhibition on its role as a 'showcase base' in 2023, celebrating its own construction as a showcase for present-day China to conform to Xi Jinping's call to strengthen the nation via transportation infrastructure.[12] A further thing to note is that in spite of the nominal use for 'education' of these sites, the promulgating entity of the 'showcase bases' is *not* the Ministry of Education (*jiaoyubu* 教育部), but the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) Central Committee's Propaganda Department (*zhongxuanbu* 中宣部).[13] This, again, bespeaks the fact that the target group is the Chinese citizen who is to be 'educated', rather than the more narrow group of pupils only.

However, besides the incentives of the central authorities, 'patriotic education showcase bases' are a potent factor in tourism as well, and as such are also of economic interest to localities. In fact, one of the newer declared aims of the campaign is to use 'patriotic education' as a means for economic development of

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Interestingly, sensitive Xinjiang was moved by 6 nominations in 2021 alone ahead to 15 in total. (See the table in appendix 1.)

10 See the text of the 'Patriotic Education Law of the PRC' (*Zhonghua renmin gongheguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu fa* 2023), especially articles 16, 26, 34.

11 'Zhongxuanbu xin mingming yi pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi' (2021).

12 See 'Beijing Daxing guoji jichang quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi jiben zhanchen zhengshi kaizhan' (8 August 2023).

13 I do not follow the Chinese official switch in English translation from Propaganda Department to Publicity Department since the Chinese name did not change. Similarly, I do not follow the Chinese official switch from calling the CCP now CPC in English, since the CCP used itself 'CCP' historically, which is deliberately ignored.

underdeveloped areas. From the local perspective, besides the economic gains expected from tourism, 'patriotic education' can also serve to define local contributions to the national 'cause', and thus provide prestige or 'symbolic capital' (in the sense of Bourdieu [1984]) as well. In other words, not only the central authorities have a stake in 'patriotic education bases', but also provinces or even smaller local entities. Provinces (alternatively autonomous regions or municipalities, being on the same administrative level and in the following subsumed for convenience) are in fact a mid-level broker in this relationship between the local and the national. This can be seen, for example, in the organisation of the respective national lists of 'patriotic education showcase bases' which group all these places by province.[14] Thus, these sites contemporaneously function as a kind of local identity marker while 'serving the nation' per definition. Furthermore, beyond the establishment of the national-level lists, provincial and sub-provincial levels drew up lists of places, too, and thus the number of 'patriotic education bases' labelled on some administrative level is, in fact, enormous.[15] These local lists, in turn, also prepared for future upgrading possibilities (similar to, e.g., the cultural heritage system in China)[16] when higher-ranking lists were assembled. (For an example of such an upgrading process, see appendix 2.) This means that the process was fed into from above as well as from below. However, beyond the vertical there were also horizontal development possibilities, i.e., more assigning entities could join in on the same administrative level for labelling (and thus acknowledging and appropriating) a site.[17] And in parallel to these 'patriotic' listings, other labelling systems were assigned as well (see below and appendix 3).

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14 In fact, it seems that already the first list (of 1997) was based on a selection from proposals each province had been called to hand in. See Chen (2010: 9–10). Since every province was to be represented on that first list (if not evenly) and probably lobbied for its sites, this might also explain why the number of 100 sites was not strictly applied, resulting in de facto 103 nominations.

15 Wang (2012: 107) already counted almost 2000 county-level sites in the 5 provinces or centrally administrated municipalities of Beijing, Hebei, Jiangsu, Jiangxi and Anhui alone, and this process has been going on.

16 The basic regulations for the cultural heritage system in the PRC were spelt out in 1960 to go into effect in 1961, proposing an administratively bottom-up procedure for nominations of 'cultural relics' in a hierarchical system. After the large-scale destruction of cultural heritage during the Cultural Revolution, the earlier regulations were enlarged and advanced to codified law status in 1982, adding a stronger centralising top-down note to the graded nominations. See 'Wenwu baohu guanli zanxing tiaoli' (1961) and 'Zhonghua renmin gongheguo wenwu baohufa' (1982). The administratively hierarchical nominations of 'patriotic education bases' basically follow the same pattern.

17 Different entities could label 'patriotic education bases', e.g. on a national level, the Urumqi 'revolutionary martyrs' cemetery' was declared as a 'patriotic education base' in 1995 by the Minzhengbu 民政部 (Ministry of Civil Affairs), earning one year later the *same* title from the State Education Commission (Guojia jiaoyu weiyuanhui 国家教育委员会) together with, again, the

In terms of consumption, the 'patriotic education showcase bases' are, however, also part of some kind of tourism. Visits are organised by, e.g., the workplace as a 'training',[18] or by schools for 'education', or they are undertaken in the form of a private travel by interested individuals. Thus, they take part in a commoditisation of these places and have to consider also tourist expectations for economic reasons. In sum, 'patriotic education showcase bases' are clearly situated between the national, the local, and the touristic, and they address not only pupils, but also cadres,[19] cadets, and the Chinese citizen at large.

Exploring patriotism and nationalism, citizen formation, national and local identities, and forms of touristic consumption

'Patriotism' as a term harks back to ancient Greek *patriotes* used for people who did not belong to a *polis*, connoting their local origin (and originally, in fact, kinship).[20] Up to the 17th century AD, a 'patriot' simply was understood as someone who 'loved his native place'. Only subsequently the term came to mean 'love of one's country' (which is the meaning conveyed by the Chinese *aiguo* 爱国 of today), being logically connected to the rise of nation-states. In Europe the evaluation of the term was ambivalent: it wavered between a 'patriot' being characterised by 'public spiritedness' (positive) on the one hand, or rather by exclusivist 'nationalism' (negative) on the other.[21] The application of 'patriotism' to history has been seen as

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Minzhengbu, as well as the Ministry of Culture (Wenhuabu 文化部), the Cultural Relics Department (Wenwubu 文物部), the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League (Gongqingtuan zhongyang 共青团中央), and the General Political Department of the PLA (People's Liberation Army) (Jiefangjun zong zhengzhibu 解放军总政治部). This is an example of horizontal development. In 1997 it would become a 'showcase base' finally, i.e., in a vertical upgrade. Cf. Xie (1998: 18).

18 There are, e.g., places designed for people working in specific sectors who would then pay group visits to the sites for 'education', usually connected to historical 'red' precedents in their field which shall be emulated in the light of this 'history'.

19 Cadres, including young student cadres, are routinely sent on such training travels, usually to 'red sites' connected to revolutionary history, which also create stronger personal bonds among the participants. Cf. Doyon (2023: 62)

20 Etymologically speaking, the Greek term *patria* from which *patriotes* is derived, implied (patrilineal) descent.

21 See the historical overview of the term 'Patriotismus' by Busch / Dierse (1989); and by Dietz (2020).

especially problematic.[22] In more recent times, distinctions between types of 'patriotism' have been proposed to salvage some form of it, e.g., 'blind' *vs* 'constructive' patriotism, or 'blind' *vs* 'symbolic', or 'active' *vs* 'passive' forms.[23] For the PRC context, however, the Soviet Union's less ambivalent stance was decisive. Though Lenin is usually cited (tellingly out of context) in PRC documents with his very general phrase: 'Patriotism is one of the most deeply ingrained sentiments, inculcated by the existence of separate fatherlands for hundreds and thousands of years',[24] he was in fact *no* advocate of it himself, and rather cautious to promote it, balancing it with the need for socialist internationalism. But things changed under Stalin: with him, 'patriotism' was declared to be the embodiment of all virtues (a definition by Stalin during World War II, fighting the 'Great *Patriotic* War' – notably linking it by this term also to the 1812 'patriotic war' against Napoleon's invasion of Russia),[25] and thus it is obvious that from this perspective patriotism must be 'good' and not simply 'nationalist'.[26] In fact, Chinese leaders like Deng Xiaoping and, above all, Jiang Zemin who was the key promoter of the 'patriotic education' campaign in the 1990s, tirelessly declared (in fact variegating and twisting Mao!)[27] that 'patriotism' is *not* 'narrow nationalism' (*xiaai de minzuzhuyi* 狭隘的民族主义) – and thus is not directed 'against' others. (A subtext to this stress is, according to Zhao (2004), the agenda to discourage any potential ethnic 'narrow' interpretation in multi-ethnic China.) The Chinese case furthermore indirectly contributed – in a reversal of direction – to present-day post-Soviet Russian patriotic education which

22 One may only recall Goethe's oft-cited dictum: 'Der Patriotismus verdirbt die Geschichte' (patriotism ruins history) (1817) (Goethe talking with Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer, a teacher in Weimar and for some time Goethe's secretary) to characterise historiography of the Jews, Greeks, and Romans, up to the Germans of his time, as partisan, distorting their own histories as much as those of others. Cf. Deibel / Gundelfinger (1907): 199.

23 Cf. the brief summary by Sanina (2017: 21–22).

24 Lenin (1918). One needs to recall here the fact that the First World War had been waged also on the Tsarist side with plenty of patriotic/nationalist rhetoric, and Lenin's choice to strike a deal with the German enemy had been heavily attacked as 'unpatriotic' by his opponents. (This context is, of course, not mentioned in China where the phrase is just cited out of any context as a 'proof' that Lenin already was pro-patriotism.)

25 The Russian term for both wars, translated as 'patriotic' in English, is in fact derived from 'fatherland' (*otechestvo*), thus close to the original Greek term *patria* implying (patrilineal) descent.

26 Cf. also Sanina (2017: 68) who points out that Stalin's definition of 'socialism in a single country' was the precondition for this shift in the Soviet Union's concept of 'patriotism'. For the tensions between Marxist internationalism and 'patriotism' in the after all multi-ethnic Soviet Union, as played out over the WW II memory, see Brunstedt (2021).

27 Mao had defined the CCP's internationalism as opposing 'both narrow nationalism and narrow patriotism' (Mao: 'In memory of Norman Bethune' [1939], in: [Mao] 1965: 337), thus qualifying also patriotism with the negative adjective 'narrow' and paralleling both concepts!

was reinstalled after a brief hiatus in the wake of the end of the Soviet Union.[28] Outside observers, however, often tend to interpret Chinese 'patriotism' as a fig-leaf term for 'nationalism'.[29]

Admittedly, also in the West there have been several scholars arguing for the need to distinguish between (positive) patriotism and (negative) nationalism (e.g., Viroli 1995, or Primoratz / Pavkocić 2007). Here the argument is mostly on 'patriotism' being loyalty to the polity (ideally the *res publica*) and not to primordial ties like 'blood', ancestry etc. (that are often considered typical ingredients of – ethnic – 'nationalism'). This ('pro-patriotism') argument, though, is drawn from the Western republican tradition, from ancient history over the Renaissance to the modern republic, for some authors culminating in (or rather having to be restricted to) a 'constitutional patriotism' (*Verfassungspatriotismus* – a term coined by Dolf Sternberger but highlighted by Habermas [1986]) which is predicated on the individually acknowledged 'moral value' of the polity (and thus may turn against it if the latter develops in a 'morally problematic' direction). In other words: patriotism may at times require the individual to oppose the state if the latter does not any longer 'deserve' loyalty.

This conception does not work well with non-democratic regimes including the Chinese Communist state and its citizens where the 'moral validity' of the polity cannot be freely decided upon and acknowledged by the individual citizen as in the 'patriotism-defending' authors' ideal-type *res publica*, although one might argue that the language of 'patriotism' may be used (and historically has been used) also in authoritarian regimes by oppositional forces precisely as a legitimation for opposition (Guo 2004). Furthermore, as Poole (2007: 129–132) noted, a neat bifurcation of polity and culture, and in parallel of patriotism and nationalism, is in general problematic, as is the clear-cut distinction between state and nation, since it is the modern nation-state that claims loyalty of its citizens, trying to build up a 'national identity' (beyond potentially dividing birth and ancestry, especially in a multi-ethnic state like China) via history and culture, claiming the monopoly to define the latter in content.

Therefore, this is not to deny that the top-down use of patriotism or nationalism has not been and cannot be challenged by alternative visions of state and nation,[30]

28 For more on Soviet and post-Soviet Russian patriotic education in a sociological perspective, see Sanina (2017).

29 See, e.g., Zhao (2004) who defines it as state-led nationalism (see also Zhao 1998: 290); Rose (2000) or Guo (2004) call it 'state nationalism' etc.

30 As Guo (2004) and Gries (2004) have argued, there is also a 'bottom-up' challenge of nationalists/patriots not affiliated with the state to this top-down claim to 'name the nation' in content, either

precisely using the possible theoretical bifurcation of patriotism and nationalism and of state and nation for legitimation of divergence or outright opposition. But it is to stress that the Chinese party-state aims at conflating and monopolising all of these categories, presenting itself as an ideal polity for China *and* as guarantor of the 'Chinese' nation.

The issue of 'patriotism' became virulent in China in the early 1980s after the Party had officially come to terms with the Cultural Revolution by its verdict on it as a great mistake in its 1981 resolution on Party history.[31] Since this could invite criticism, the key task was to avoid letting discontent grow into a criticism of the socialist system as such, especially as the new possibility to get into contact with the West during the new 'Reform and Opening' policies initiated by Deng Xiaoping since 1978 easily fed admiration for an alternative 'capitalist' way of life into that discontent. Therefore, the Party tried to 'correct' any 'false' interpretations of patriotism – either in 'leftist' (i.e. Cultural Revolution style) or 'rightist' (anti-socialist) ways – and enumerated shortly before the said resolution also a host of historical figures which embodied the 'greatness' of China, refuting various possible criticisms against the system or against 'loving China' as it is.[32] And soon after, the need to link up 'patriotism' and education was stressed even more since it seemed to be mostly young people who felt alienated. The Tiananmen protests of 1989 were seen as a concrete sign of this alienation.[33] Thus, more education about 'heroes' and about the achievements of socialist construction should counter the impression that problems were generated by the system as such. And in the context of the ongoing talks during the 1980s over Hong Kong's future, the pending integration of Chinese having grown up outside the mainland and its system became a further key issue.[34]

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framing it as 'cultural nationalism' vs. 'state nationalism' (Guo) or as popular/'new' nationalism vs. the official one (Gries).

31 Cf. 'Guanyu jianguo yilai dang de ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi' (1981), published in *Renmin ribao* on 1 July. For an English translation by the Wilson Center, see: 'Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China', (n.d.).

32 The highly interesting listings as a window on the perceived 'gist' of Chinese culture would deserve more space. Suffice it to say here that it included philosophers and poets, statesmen and rebels, generals and strategists, scientists and intellectuals of various times. It was especially pointed out that there are several minority representatives included. This meant, however, also historical figures like the great 7th century Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo and even Genghis Khan, i.e., figures of one-time rivalling empires, re-configured in hindsight as models for Chinese 'patriotism' (!) since the PRC includes today Tibet and Inner Mongolia in her territory. See 'Aiguozhuyi shi jianshe shehuizhuyi de juda jingshen liliang' (1981).

33 There has been established an interesting geographical relationship between the length of protests and the number of (urban) patriotic education sites: cf. Liu / Ma (2018).

34 See 'Guanyu jiaqiang aiguozhuyi xuanchuan jiaoyu de yijian' (1983).

In any case, in the Chinese state's perspective, 'patriotism' is designed to bind Chinese citizens also emotionally to the Chinese nation-state and to ideally elicit dedication to the greater 'cause' via learning to be proud of 'Chinese' (of which the definition is not uncontested) civilisation and contemporary (socialist) achievements, or via 'remembering shame' regarding the 'humiliation' China went through since the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century.[35] Though 'patriotic education' is aimed at the Chinese populace, i.e. is inwardly oriented, the fact that 'foreign aggression' and 'Chinese resistance' make up much of it explains why it is easily perceived as 'nationalist' in practice. Indeed, one of the problems of neatly separating 'patriotism' from 'nationalism' as the Chinese government, as noted above, tries to rhetorically do (not casually qualifying nationalism with the adjective 'narrow')[36] lies in the fact that the definition of 'Self' cannot do without delineating the 'Other': either internally (depending on the context, these might be certain minorities, 'class enemies', or else) or externally. And for forging a 'national identity',[37] which is the primary goal in the state's agenda with the 'patriotic education' campaign, the 'Other' must be primarily set externally.

This education is, however, extending beyond the school context in a form of life-long learning to form the desired Chinese citizen in society at large. Therefore, I use the more general term 'citizen formation', and for the formal school context, 'citizen education'. 'Citizen*ship* education', in turn, as the most common term in Western societies, implies that the individual is supposed to acquire a status and

35 Cf. Callahan (2010): the 'pessoptimist nation'. Besides the 'Western aggression' starting with the Opium Wars, Japan is the usual other 'aggressor' that inflicted suffering on the 'victim' China. (For a non-mainstream view on taking the Chinese victim narrative as not only strategic, see Suzuki 2007).

36 One may recall here the fact that the term *minzuzhuyi* 民族主义 for 'nationalism' with its strong ethnic element (*minzu* 民族) is potentially dividing in a multi-ethnic state as is the PRC. Furthermore, the qualification of 'narrow' has a famous antecedent in vocal intellectual Liang Qichao's 梁启超 distinction between 'great' (*da* 大) and 'small' (*xiao* 小) nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century to argue against the anti-Manchu revolutionaries and their efforts to ground 'nationalism' in a distinction between the (alien) ruling Manchus and the Han Chinese, calling their 'nationalism' only 'small'. After the establishment of the Republic, Sun Yat-sen and later Chiang Kai-shek would be quick to point out that 'nationalism' now comprised also the 'minorities' – and thus a substantial part of territory which should go on to belong to 'China'. (Cf., e.g., Leibold 2006). The PRC followed up on this argumentation.

37 For the concept of 'national identity', Guo (2004: 10) has proposed in his work on Chinese cultural nationalism to refer to psychoanalyst Erik Erikson's work on individual identity. Collective identity, of which 'national identity' is but a subcategory, is, however, a multi-layered concept and played out in various contexts horizontally as well as vertically. For a recent political studies take on a multi-level territorialised understanding of collective identity in the case of Europe, see Kuhn / Nicoli (2020).

certain agency as the outcome of formal education (which democratic societies need for actively participating adult citizens), while the terms 'citizen education' and 'citizen formation' put the accent on the state's continuous moulding of citizens in school and beyond, which is closer to what is at stake in the Chinese case. For forming the desired Chinese citizen, the young generation is of course the first and major target, and thus already in school, Chinese 'patriotism' is explicitly to be fostered not only in the field of outright citizen education which comes under different names,[38] including politics, morals, or ideology, depending on the time and on the level of schooling, but also in history classes, and in the subject of geography. Beyond normal school classes, outdoor activities, including social service and military training, are applied rather early to educate children to serve the larger society and be moulded into 'responsible' citizens. This was not only to counter tendencies perceived like those of the 'me generation' (as the 'post-1980s' generation would be called later) being only preoccupied with personal well-being,[39] but was already addressing the problems with the previous, more 'politicised' 'generation' of the 1980s, culminating in the Tiananmen protests of 1989. Deng Xiaoping had voiced the 'lesson' to be drawn in front of the very military commanders he had ordered to forcefully and bloodily suppress the student-led Tiananmen protests: Chinese youth lacked 'ideological and political education'.[40] This call was taken up by Jiang Zemin in his well-known 'public letter' of 1991 on education, which is tellingly treated as on the level of a curriculum in normative power (!), in which he specified that this meant for education to put more stress on China's modern history and on China's 'national conditions' (for the term, see below).[41] In that context, he also advocated to use the 'revolutionary martyrs' and their history to show above all to Chinese youth that their living-standard of today has come at a high price. They therefore needed to learn to be grateful to those paving the way for them – a conception that corroborates the impression that 'patriotism' in China is understood as an

38 For a brief overview of the historical development of 'citizenship education' in the PRC, see Xu (2022). For a more extensive treatment, see Kennedy / Fairbrother / Zhao (2014).

39 Cf. Rosen (2009) and Hansen / Svarverud (2010).

40 Deng Xiaoping: 'Address to officers at the rank of general and above in command of the troops enforcing martial law in Beijing' (9 June 1989): 'I have told foreign guests that during the last ten years our biggest mistake was made in the field of education, primarily in ideological and political education—not just of students but of the people in general.' (See the 'official' English edition of the third volume of Deng's works, [Deng Xiaoping] 1994, p. 297.) For the released Chinese version of the speech, see [Deng Xiaoping] (1993), vol. 3, pp. 302–308.

41 The letter, dated to March but printed on *Renmin ribao* on 1 June, 1991 (i.e., shortly before the Tiananmen Massacre's second anniversary) is notably part of the collection of Chinese History *curricula* of the 20th century (Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo 2001: 607–608).

'extension of filial duty'.[42] In fact, the one-child policy introduced under Deng Xiaoping also heightened the need in a society ageing as a result to highlight 'traditional' values like 'filial' behaviour with its inherent hierarchical obligation, which should then feed into 'loyalty' to the nation, also from that side. Jiang Zemin thus stressed he wanted to have this kind of education all through, from kindergarten to university, pointing out to children and students how China was bullied since the Opium War but finally chose socialism and the CCP to lead the country out of crisis. This should serve for Chinese youth to feel proud and assured of their Chinese identity to counter currents to adore and follow 'the West', while not falling prey to 'leftist' (i.e. Deng Xiaoping-critical) currents either.[43] In terms of 'national conditions', Jiang specified this meant to teach youth more positively about China's great cultural tradition (which gave some room to pre-Communist China), while acknowledging China's special 'population' problem which demanded a strict policy to curb population growth (i.e. the one-child policy) since otherwise economic development would be hampered (which should solicit support for those recent policies). On the other hand, Jiang Zemin argued in a veiled reference to the 1989 'turmoil', those who favoured Western-style parliamentarism did not understand China's historical situation, nor that capitalism is based on exploitation. Therefore, Jiang requested in his 'public letter', all this should be properly reflected in the textbooks (Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo 2001: 607–608).

In consequence, Chinese youth was to be educated with more patriotism and discipline, increasing beyond the theoretical political-ideological lessons also military training which was as such obligatory already in the mid-1980s (Genevaz 2019: 458). Both the political-ideological and the military aspects have been reported as not very popular with students, especially on the university level which was the major target at first, where students perceived it as a form of punishment, since the reinforcement of these measures was introduced after the 1989 'turmoil' (Rosen 1993). Rather than the outright 'partification' (*danghua* 党化) of higher education envisaged at the time (Hayhoe 1993), more indirect means like activities which have more of a leisure character, including visiting sites as a group experience, which were stepped up in the following years, were judged as having more potential to be better received. Here, tourism and ideological training are

42 Cf. Kwak / Matsuda (2015: 2). In the enlarged form of 'gratitude education', this is also applied to and has been recently stepped up for inner-Chinese migrants. See Wan and Vickers (2024).

43 One may note that at the time there were contestations among the CCP leading figures of how to react after the momentous events of 1989 and the dissolution of the Communist bloc in Eastern Europe. While Deng Xiaoping still wanted to continue his economic 'reform and opening' policies, his 'leftist' critics attacked him. Deng, though, won out, and Jiang sustained his line.

merged while internal group cohesion is strengthened. This was also extended down to secondary and even primary education, as Jiang Zemin had called for, and the Communist youth organisations, i.e., the Young Pioneers for children aged 6–14, and the Communist Youth League thereafter for those aged 14–28, functioned as important transmission belts.

However, beyond the inculcation of a national identity, also regional and local identities come into play, as both are de facto reflected in the 'patriotic education bases'. Whereas the national part is of obvious primary importance in leading visitors of those bases to acknowledge their being 'Chinese', whether out of pride (e.g., with sites focusing on the 'greatness' of Chinese civilisation) or out of 'humiliation' (with sites focusing on Chinese victimisation), the fact that the bases are assigned to the province encourages a second reading and use (in the sense of de Certeau [1984]) of them as also an acknowledgement of this locality's particularity. In fact, one of the driving forces behind the addition of further national-level sites after the 1997 first list of '100' 'patriotic education showcase bases' was the dissatisfaction with the perceived 'privileging' of Beijing and Shanghai at the expense of more 'remote' areas. By expanding, e.g., on the memorialisation of 'martyrs' to the Communist cause, one could also honour the (possibly rather remote) places where they were born even if their main activities might have been in cities in the East of China. Also, by integrating some geographically 'remote' places of cultural 'achievements', one could take in areas with hardly any important contribution to the Communist revolution to counter local feelings of being neglected in the national scheme. Furthermore, the aim of using the bases also for school outings and 'hands-on' activities required some places also in 'remote' areas for local children to visit, and these were then augmented by provincial-level or county-level sites.

In taking in such less 'obvious' sites, there seem, however, to be further considerations at work as only selected possible sites were chosen. Looking, e.g., at Tibet which – together with Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang – is a region where it seems difficult to designate or set up 'patriotic' sites, 'cultural achievements' is obviously not enough for a site to be picked. Although the Potala (the Dalai Lama's winter palace) in Lhasa, later joined by the Jokhang Temple and the Norbulingka (the Dalai Lama's summer palace), was inscribed, following the PRC's application, on the UNESCO list of world heritage,[44] and is also acknowledged as a 'top site' of

44 In the UNESCO listing, the official description provided by the responsible nation (here the PRC) introduces the heritage site as: 'The Potala Palace, winter palace of the Dalai Lama since the 7th century'. See UNESCO [2001]. This is evidently absurd since, needless to say, the institution of a 'Dalai Lama' would be created only hundreds of years later, with the Potala serving the function of his 'winter palace' yet later, but it is – as we will see also in chapter 2.3 with the Great Wall – a

China in purely touristic terms, e.g. being integrated in Shenzhen's theme park 'Splendid China' (Jinxiu Zhonghua 锦绣中华) showing China's top tourist sites *en miniature*, in this sense defining 'China' for the tourist, the 'patriotic' value of such a site is dubious.[45] Rather, it points to a decidedly 'Tibetan', not '(Han)-Chinese' identity and thus was not considered for the 'patriotic' lists,[46] where Tibet figures only poorly.[47] Dunhuang's 敦煌 Mogao 莫高 caves in Gansu are, in turn, 'safely' historical and may be treated as a place showing 'Chinese artistic genius' with their famous wall-paintings and statues – side-lining their Buddhist-religious aspects with no more monks residing there, as much as their multi-cultural character. This shows that the desire to expand the 'patriotic' sites geographically had to be carefully weighed against possible 'localist-ethnic' (or religious) counter-readings not feeding into the state's aims.

Finally, the 'patriotic education bases' with their connections to national and local identities have the potential to channel the growing inner-Chinese tourism into a form of political-cultural travel,[48] thus moving away from an only tourist 'gaze' (Urry 1990) to involve themselves with the sites visited more deeply, depending on the group or individual as more in form of a 'pilgrimage' (often using the term *xunli* 巡礼 associated with religious practice),[49] or as more in form of a happening,

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sobering example of the lack of monitoring of such international organisations which simply put disclaimers on their websites, shifting content responsibility to the respective country to which the site 'belongs'. After all, a long nomination procedure had been undergone before the international listing, and the site had been also enlarged from the listing of the Potala in 1994 over time to include the Jokhang (added in 2000) and then the Norbulingka (added in 2001).

45 This theme park, Jinxiu Zhonghua 锦绣中华, presents roughly eighty top sites all over China, loosely grouped according to provinces. Built together with this theme park is an open-air museum of minorities' housings, thus giving credit to China's multi-ethnic population which figures only marginally in the miniature top tourist sites. The UNESCO-approved Potala, e.g., is the only top site in Tibet included (as I observed during a visit in 2016).

46 Incidentally, when addressing these sites in school textbooks, care is taken to stress the historical dominance of the Chinese emperor *vs* Tibet. See, e.g., the textbook of the elective history course in senior secondary school on cultural heritage by Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo et al. (2007), pp. 67–71.

47 In the lists before 2021, Tibet figured with just two PRC 'martyrs' cemeteries' (needless to say, rather ambivalent places for the local population), a site of 'resistance' against the British in 1904, and the usual official regional museum, i.e., the Tibet museum.

48 For a comparative development in the post-war Soviet Union under Stalin, see Gorsuch (2003): domestic tourism was to serve and reinforce Soviet patriotic identity. (See also chapter 6 of the present book.)

49 There is a growing body of literature on the relation of tourism and pilgrimage. Cf., e.g., Timothy / Olsen (2006). One may note that the PRC nationalist-patriotic agenda often leads to religiously-tinged wording, like revolutionary sites being termed 'sacred' etc. Therefore, I translate *xunli* throughout as 'pilgrimage', since the religious reference of the chosen wording is not accidental,

leading to a reinforced 'national identity'.[50] History, civilisation, and culture thus become part of leisure activities as one sort of entertainment, while the state tries to use this to 'market' its own reading of these places.[51] Especially with the heavily political 'red tourism' (*hongse lüyou* 红色旅游), i.e. travel to CCP-related sites,[52] it is notable that these sites are often combined in packaged tours with 'green' (natural beauty) sightseeing spots so as to offer a more varied programme to the travelling target groups which first receive some ideological 'training' and then may relax in nature.[53]

A term that is not yet used to my knowledge in Chinese conceptions of tourism is 'dark tourism' though it pertains to some of the 'patriotic education bases' in practice, i.e. those focused on atrocities, notably by the Japanese in the 1930s/1940s or by the GMD (Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party) against CCP 'heroes' (massacre sites, concentration camps, or prisons: see chapter 3.2 of the present book).[54] This might be explained by the 'negative' association of the term 'dark', since the main aim in these Chinese sites is to show that the displayed atrocities in the end led to more 'patriotic' determination of resistance and self-esteem. Even though one might doubt that visitors in China only get out of these sites what they are assumed to carry away with, i.e., a reinforced identity as a 'Chinese' and a resolve to resist any encroachments on China and her people in the future,[55] the official reading of these sites is rather 'red' than 'dark', since the latter would be detrimental to bolstering (positive) 'patriotism'.

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though it might be understood by many Chinese citizens touring the famous places rather as devoid of religious overtones in practice.

50 See Frew / White (2011) for the junction of national identity and tourism.

51 Tourism and state-led nationalism / patriotism are of course also coupled in other countries of the world. See, e.g., Pretes (2003) for an analysis of different sites in South Dakota.

52 For 'red tourism', see, e.g., Rioux (2007), Zhang (2008), Takayama (2012), Lin (2023). To some degree, 'red tourism' picks up on the Cultural Revolution precedent of the 'great linkup' (*da chuanlian* 大串联) (1966–1967) when young Red Guards travelled around the country to 'sacred' sites of the revolution. For some examples of 'red sites', cf. in the present book chapter 3.3, several cases in chapter 4, and chapter 5.3.

53 Cf. also Rioux (2006).

54 In English, there have been first attempts to apply the concept also to Chinese places. See Du / Littlejohn / Lennon (2013).

55 Interestingly, Du / Littlejohn / Lennon (2013: 53–55) empirically tested with Chinese visitors of the Nanjing Massacre memorial that many did not pick up the message of resistance at all but rather carried away the message of national humiliation. Therefore, some also rejected the call for peace and Sino–Japanese friendship in the future (which is a usual addendum to exhibitions at these sites of Japanese atrocities in China – cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book). This, in turn, leads to the conclusion that 'education' at these places is effective in instilling feelings of victimisation whereas the 'politically correct' diplomatic addendum is perceived as artificial and unconvincing.

Patriotic education: the campaign and the bases

Officially, the aims of 'patriotic education' were spelled out in several documents.[56] The most important for the 1990s when the scope of the campaign was significantly broadened after the suppression of the Tiananmen protests of 1989, was the 'Implementation outline for patriotic education' of 1994, later officially translated as 'Action plan for patriotic education' (2006).[57] Here patriotism is presented as a 'glorious tradition' and 'common spiritual component of all our country's nationalities' ('Action plan' 2006: 7), thus defining it from the outset as of importance to all ethnic groups living in the PRC. In fact, the major goals are defined as 'to inspire the national spirit; promote national cohesion; foster national pride […] and concentrate the patriotic sentiment of the masses toward the great cause of developing socialism with Chinese characteristics […].' ('Action plan' 2006: 8). This clearly shows that patriotism here is equated with CCP politics, not the *patria* per se, and thus sustains Suisheng Zhao's claim that the 'patriotic education campaign' is (in Charles Tilly's terms) 'state-led nationalism' (Zhao 1998). Internally, the scope is set as 'patriotic education theory, teaching materials, systems, *and bases*' (emphasis added, G.M.) that should form 'the main theme of society', whereas it is declared as 'definitely not narrow nationalism' to the outside. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, the plan declares outright: 'In contemporary China, patriotism is essentially identical to socialism' ('Action plan' 2006: 8) – a dictum by Jiang Zemin (cf. Zhao 1998: 296). Thus, by implication, only pre-Communist history could be 'patriotic' on its purely own terms – though the reading of pre-modern history has to conform to official (CCP) interpretations (as laid down in the officially approved history textbooks) no less.

To achieve these goals, a host of 'materials' is to be used for 'patriotic education', including even natural landscape. The 'materials' are to prove the civilising and historical achievements of the past, resistance against foreign aggression, and most notably the historical 'accomplishments of the CCP'. Target group of the campaign is primarily youth, though 'all people' should be educated as well ('Action plan' 2006: 11). In short, 'patriotic education' is a form of more general citizen formation. For doing this, all kinds of activities and media should be utilised: besides theoretical and practical 'education' measures, also TV (television), cinema,

56 For a brief overview on some key documents of the campaign since the 1980s in politics and school before the mid-1990s, see Kinoshita (2007: 114–125).

57 For an English translation, see 'Action Plan' (2006). For the Chinese original, see 'Aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shishi gangyao' (1994, 6 September).

music, drama etc. are to be applied to reach all sorts of people ('Action plan' 2006: 12).

In this context, the 'patriotic education bases', our main concern in the present book, are set which are defined in the 'Action plan' as 'museums, memorial halls, martyrs' memorials, revolutionary war campaign and battle memorials, protected cultural and historical sites, important scenic spots, important development projects', to be identified by the propaganda departments on all levels of the Party organisations. ('Action plan' 2006: 12–13).[58] (We will encounter several examples for these categories in the present book's following chapters.) Clearly, the broadening of the bases beyond pure CCP sites which are nowadays sites for 'red tourism', to include also 'natural landmarks, sites of antiquity and culture, and scenic spots' that 'can inspire in people a love for the motherland's magnificent landscapes and long history and culture' ('Action plan' 2006: 13) pays heed to the fact that not everybody might get hooked on exclusively propagandistic contents. To ensure that all kinds of citizens will be taken in, the media are required to contribute to make 'patriotic education' the 'main theme in society', e.g., prescribing such content for prime-time TV, or calling for organisations to carry out pertaining activities during public holidays: 'festival activities should not only entertain and bring joy to the masses, but should also provide them with patriotic education', the plan states ('Action plan' 2006: 14–15). By stressing the 'sacredness' of national symbols like the emblem, the flag or the anthem at every possible occasion, a further identification of the citizens with their country shall be achieved, whereas the national and local reverence of 'models' in personal conduct (patriots, heroes, 'martyrs', labour models etc.) should serve for building up a 'morally educated' citizenry.[59] Although this all aims at the citizens in the PRC, the potential of 'patriotism' to forge closer ties with Chinese living abroad is addressed by asking for books and other media to be produced also for those target groups ('Action plan' 2006: 15–18).

To ensure that these plans were also implemented, the 'Action plan' of 1994 prescribed that the propaganda departments at every level had to draw up detailed plans and were held responsible for the outcome. In fact, in the following years, pertaining activities soared in all kinds of fields, including the setting up of a first list of national-level 'patriotic education showcase bases' which came out in 1997 (with '100' – actually 103 sites), followed by a second (2001 with 100 sites), third

58 Though the English translation uses here the term 'publicity departments' – following present-day PRC practice, I retain, as noted above, the more literal translation 'propaganda department' since the Chinese term did not change though the translation term was 'adjusted' when realising the 'negative' ring of 'propaganda' in English.

59 For several examples, see chapter 5 of the present book.

(2005 with 66 sites) and fourth list (2009 with 87 sites) with which the system was temporarily halted until 2017.

Looking at the development of official documents which concerned specifically the 'patriotic education bases', an important step was in 2004 when ten government ministries and party departments issued another decisive document: 'Opinions on strengthening and improving the work of patriotic education bases' (Guanyu jiaqiang he gaijin aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi gongzuo de yijian 关于加强和改进爱国主义教育基地工作的意见). Here, a stress was laid on making the sites more 'accessible' in content and form to attract more visitors (which might be interpreted as a need to invigorate these sites), including the suggestion to open them for free. Ideologically, the bases were to step up efforts in forging the 'national spirit' (*minzu jingshen* 民族精神), provide education in 'thought and morality' for the youth (*sixiang daode* 思想道德) to help achieve the common goal of a 'well-off society' (*xiaokang shehui* 小康社会).[60]

For the more specific group of 'red tourism' destinations among the 'bases', a further plan was set up for development until 2010 with 12 key red tourism zones specified,[61] some 30 suggested tours,[62] and about 100 'classic' areas, which was also to boost the economy of (often remote) 'old revolutionary areas' (which had successfully complained with the authorities for neglect and need of funds for

60 See 'Zhongxuanbu deng shi bumen tichu gaijin aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi gongzuo' (2004, October 3).

61 The twelve were in loose chronological fashion: 1. The area of Shanghai and Zhejiang with the topic of the founding of the CCP; 2. Mao's birthplace Shaoshan in Hunan, Jinggangshan and Ruijing in Jiangxi and the topic of the cradle of the revolution; 3. The area around Baise in Guangxi (where Deng Xiaoping had been active in the late 1920s to manage a Communist uprising); 4. Zunyi in Guizhou as a turning point on the Long March; 5. Western Sichuan for the toughest part during the latter; 6. The Yan'an area in Shaanxi as the 'holy land of the revolution'; 7. Manchuria for 'resistance' history; 8. The Anhui–Jiangsu–Shandong area where with the Huai–Hai Campaign the Civil War against the GMD went through a turning point; 9. The Hubei–Henan–Anhui area which contributed a lot of important military staff to the PLA and finished off the GMD; 10. The Taihang area in Shanxi and Hebei where decisive battles were fought during the Anti-Japanese War; 11. The eastern Sichuan area with a former Chinese soviet and around the GMD-stronghold Chongqing where Communists were persecuted shortly before the final victory of the Communists; and 12. Beijing and Tianjin as the places where the CCP finally triumphed and established the PRC. It might be noted that but for the Long March-connected sites the whole of Western China is absent from this list (as is Inner Mongolia and strikingly the Southeastern coast including Guangdong which has a lot of revolutionary history to credit.)

62 Some suggestions for tours in these 12 areas were made, e.g., in Tian (2005); Li (2007), and the highly official Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanchuan jiaoyuju (2009), though not precisely 30.

making their sites more attractive).[63] This setup was enlarged subsequently in the following plan (2011–2015) to 18 zones with 180 tours.[64]

Notably, after the transition from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping in 2012/13, the nomination of 'patriotic education showcase bases' in lists was halted at first (which according to the previous four-year rhythm should have come out in 2013, i.e., just after Xi Jinping took office, suggesting there was some insecurity how things would move on at this point). When in 2017 a new list with '41' (42)[65] sites was finally proclaimed (interestingly without naming any site for the formerly privileged Beijing), the total was declared to have arrived at 428. This, however, means that in between 31 sites must have been added without an officially declared 'list'. In fact, a nomination of a single site was mentioned in the press in the first years of the Xi Jinping era: 'People's Daily' (*Renmin ribao* 人民日报) announced one individual site in 2014 as newly labelled, which also heralded the new accent Xi Jinping's era came with, being a (further) memorial site dedicated to Lei Feng 雷锋, the quintessential Communist (see chapter 5.3 of the present book), this time in Liaoyang 辽阳.[66] When the first Xi-era list was proclaimed in 2017, the new guiding spirit became apparent, explicitly focusing on the history from the founding of the CCP (1921) to the victory in the 'War of Liberation', i.e. the Civil War (1949), with a particular accent on the Long March (1934–1936) ('Zhongxuanbu xin mingming' 2017). That the institution of 'patriotic education showcase bases' was taken very seriously also in the Xi Jinping era is additionally highlighted by the fact that the '428' national sites labelled by 2017 (in fact 398, which appear on lists 1 to 5 – see appendix 1) were published as an official summary in a new large book series of 22

63 'Zhong-ban, guo-ban yinfa "2004-2010 nian quanguo hongse lüyou fazhan guihua gangyao"' (2005, 23 February). See also Takayama (2012: 115–116), though Takayama unfortunately has several errors in the table and map provided. For some examples of such sites, cf. especially chapter 3.3 of the present book.

64 See Zhao (2021: 234).

65 The official number given is 41, however, a count of the sites (cf. appendix 1) renders 42.

66 'Liaoyang Lei Feng jinianguan chengwei quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi' (2014). (Although the title does not include 'showcase', the text calls it that way as nominated at 3 March 2014 by the Propaganda Department.) One may note that this site was subsequently not taken up in any list, was therefore not even appearing in the *Fengbei* collection in 22 volumes of 2019 – see below – which updated the whole 'patriotic education showcase bases' system to the Xi Jinping era, including also the list of 2017, and does not appear in the most recent overview of sites on the CCTV website ('Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi' 2021). It is, however, simply integrated in the new 40-min. instalment on the major Lei Feng sites listed – which is the culminating last instalment no. 40 of the recent 'documentary' series on the 'patriotic education showcase bases', 'Xin huo xiang chuan: Quanguo aiguozhu jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli' (2019–2022). See also below.

volumes, grouped according to provinces, which came out in 2019, called *Fengbei* 丰碑 (monuments) and addressed to the Chinese citizen at large.[67]

After the (fifth) list of 2017, which did not officially continue the list numbering, thus taking some distance from the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao eras' sequenced list 1 to 4, a further list was promulgated already after two years, in 2019, adding 39 sites, which shifted the balance back to less 'equality' in province coverage, figuring almost a third, i.e. 11, new sites for Beijing alone. (At this point, the official total given again exceeds this by 6 sites that would have been nominated in between not covered by the list.) The basic aim of the new list of 2019 was declared to contribute to the proliferation of a sense of 'mission' (*shiming* 使命), heightening the willingness among Chinese citizens and youth in particular to work for a strong country, repaying it its due, furthering self-assertion regarding the socialist way with Chinese characteristics, regarding theory, regarding 'the system', and regarding culture, to consolidate the 'new' trajectory and fight for the 'new' era ('Zhongxuanbu xin mingming' 2019). In short, the key terms all reflect the stamp of the Xi Jinping era. In fact, this new list was preceded by a general call to step up the role of the 'national patriotic education showcase bases', by this making clear that patriotic education was not only to be continued in the 'new era', but to be even stressed more than before, and especially the 'showcase bases' ('Zhongxuanbu yinfa tongzhi' 2019). To redefine the general 'patriotic education' campaign for Xi's so-called 'new era', an updated 'action plan' (or more literally: an implementation outline) was therefore published soon after as well to replace the original one of 1994, bearing the stamp of Jiang Zemin. By now, it is even suggested to start with 'patriotic education' right away from birth (!) (section 5), not leaving out anyone or any field or any media, especially pointing to the new social media, to inculcate the message into the Chinese citizens' minds (*jin tounao* 进头脑) (section 15), warning, above all, of 'historical nihilism' (i.e., of historical interpretations not in accordance with the official line) (sections 11 and 26), and infusing all terms typical of the Xi era (Chinese dream, red genes etc.)[68] in the new framing. Lei Feng is tellingly the one single figure named as an ideal model (sections 18 and 33), which underlines once more his special status in the 'new era'. Tourism is also included as something that needs to be infused with 'patriotic

67 Interestingly, here the 2017 new list was explicitly called the 'fifth' list. See the general preface (p. 1) in this book series: *Fengbei* (2019). The writing-style is meant to be easily accessible also for youth, but the whole is explicitly naming cadres, the military, and the broad public as the intended readership as well. (See the preface, p. 2)

68 Interestingly, the new 'implementation outline' of 2019 also mentions 'cultural genes' (section 12) which even 'biologise' 'Chineseness', and they mention also 'cultural nihilism' (section 12) beyond the 'historical' as something to be opposed.

education' (section 25), pointing out the Chinese holidays and memorial days as well as the international ones for using them as occasions to conduct 'patriotic' activities (sections 23 and 24),[69] but also handing out the warning that 'law' will be enforced to make sure national symbols and 'martyrs' will be respected,[70] while no historical revisionism will be tolerated (section 31). Mere 'formalism' and 'bureaucratism' should, however, be absolutely avoided (section 34), since people should feel genuinely 'touched'. In this context, the 'patriotic education bases' were also to serve (sections 21 and 22) ('Zhonggong zhongyang guowuyuan' 2019). Again, already two years later, in 2021, the next 'patriotic education showcase bases' list with further 112 (officially '111') sites was proclaimed, of which 13 went to Beijing alone, while this list at least considered all provinces again and listed the Shanghai site of the first Party congress (at its 100th anniversary) as an 'enlarged site' additionally. This means that of 2021, the total of the national-level lists is 549 sites, while the overall figure (i.e., arguably including also those individually nominated) is given as 585 ('Zhongxuanbu xin mingming' 2021). Notably, as mentioned, the lists under Xi Jinping did not go on with the numbering as lists no. 5 to 7 but changed their title to 'new batch' more neutrally, thus enforcing agency without being bound by the previous examples of the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao eras. The more thematic dedications of the Xi-era lists, however, underline that the use of the pre-Communist past is toned down, while revolutionary history is stepped up. This is in line with the 'presentist' thrust of Xi's 'four histories' (*sishi* 四史) concept advocated since 2020 and formally introduced into education in 2021 at the 100th anniversary of the CCP's official founding, intending the history of the CCP (i.e., since 1921), of 'New China' (i.e., since 1949), of the Reform and Opening period (i.e., since 1978), and finally of the development of socialism (which provides some larger outlook in a *longue durée* and in a more international perspective of the history of socialist thought into which the 'Chinese way' should be integrated as a new stage of development).[71] This way, the pre-Communist

69 One may note that the new calendar of memorial days includes not only a 'martyrs' day', but also the 'National Memorial Day for the Nanjing Massacre Victims'. (Cf. chapter 3.2 for the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall as a 'patriotic education showcase base'.)

70 While, e.g., the 'flag law' has been introduced already early in the Jiang Zemin era, the Xi Jinping-era addendum to this kind of laws was the 2018 law against ridiculing military personnel, 'martyrs' and heroes. (Cf. also chapter 4.1 on the Korean War Memorial Hall and 'martyr' Qiu Shaoyun 邱少云.)

71 See also Kawashima (2021) on the history politics of the Xi Jinping era. Interestingly, the international 'development of socialist thought' is counted as starting from Thomas More's book *Utopia*, published in 1516! (Cf. Kawashima 2021: 59). That way, socialism has '500' years of history.

Chinese past as such has largely lost its relevance which figured somewhat more in the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao eras' lists.

Following the original 'action plan' of 1994 and the proclamation of the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' in 1997, the promotion of these sites was also sustained by CCTV (China Central Television) which produced short TV film clips in 1998 on the sites of the first list (1997) which had been published, as mentioned, at roughly the time of the Hong Kong hand-over, a high-time of patriotism in China. These programmes, bringing the single 'bases' into Chinese homes via TV, also encouraging Chinese citizens to visit those sites as tourists, were later expanded in four-year intervals to cover also the sites of the second (2001) and third list (2005), amounting to 269 film clips in late 2006,[72] running the series *Ai wo Zhonghua* 爱我中华 (Love our China).[73] Interestingly, the comments of the panellists during a roundtable discussion held at the occasion of the finishing of the 269 film clips showed not only that some film scripts had to be 'modified' many times, but also that the final categorisation of the clips according to provinces was not the only option considered. Instead, a categorisation according to topic or type had been considered as well. In the end, however, obviously the conformity with the ordering structure of the promulgated lists prevailed. Finally, an interesting point to be noted is that besides the touristic characterisation of sites as 'red' (*hongse* 红色) or 'green' (*lüse* 绿色), also one as 'ancient' (*guse* 古色) was introduced.[74]

At times, some sites were additionally broadcasted as thematically grouped, e.g. to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Long March, the finished *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips of thirty sites pertaining to this topic were broadcasted in October of 2006 in sequence to visually retell this saga – and stimulate 'red tourism' to these sites.[75] In 2009 in the context of the 60th anniversary of the PRC's

72 See Luo (2006, 29 December).

73 This collection of film clips on sites of lists 1 to 3 were also published as a DVD collection (*Ai wo Zhonghua*, published in 2008 by Xuexi yinxiang chubanshe 学习音像出版社) and this has been used in the present book. Only for sites of later lists, website versions (in the meantime partly defunct – see below) have been used.

74 The roundtable discussion was published on the following day, again in *Guangming ribao*: 'Ai wo Zhonghua, qiang wo Zhonghua' (30 December 2006). The expression *guse*, implying a visual impression, is also used in textbooks, e.g., in the senior secondary elective history course on world cultural heritage, there paralleled with *guxiang* 古香 (lit.: smell of the past), i.e., evoking the feel of antiquity via various physical senses. (Cf. Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo et al. 2007: pp. 102–105.)

75 'Ai wo Zhonghua: quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli' (2006). For ten days, three video clips a day were broadcasted together, making up a programme of 30 minutes, roughly following the Long March route. This also further stimulated 'Long March tours' in the tourist sector in China. For a Western, slightly earlier 'reliving' of the Long March published in the commemoration year of

founding and after the decision on the fourth list, CNTV (China Network Television) finally set up a website (today defunct) called *Wo de zuguo* 我的祖国 (our ancestral land),[76] presenting all 356 sites nominated until the end of Hu Jintao's era with ten minutes film clips (taking the 269 *Ai wo Zhonghua* clips over and adding newer clips to cover also the sites of the fourth list). As in the lists, the 'patriotic education bases' were grouped on the website according to the provinces (significantly – and different from the four national lists – symbolically integrating here Hong Kong and Macau and even Taiwan, though all listed as with yet '0 sites'!),[77] adding some further information, and thus stimulating tourists to visit.

However, this was not the only visual take on the sites. From the side of educational TV, provided by the 'National Centre for Educational Technology' (NCET, in Chinese called Zhongyang dianhua jiaoyu guan 中央电化教育馆) there was an alternative collection of (slightly longer) video clips on '100 patriotic education bases' (de facto only 58), chosen by the Ministry of Education in this case, assembled in 2006 from earlier productions – mostly based on the first list,[78] published under the title *Zhonghua hun* 中华魂 (Soul of China) and recommended for primary to junior secondary school under the label of 'national conditions education' (*guoqing jiaoyu* 国情教育).[79] The latter collection, however, did not stress the location and had consequently no categorisation into provinces but rather focused on the educational (national) content. One may note that the label 'national conditions' for education had been strongly promoted by Jiang Zemin as well (though he did not invent it). In fact, the term is hard to translate, since the character *qing* 情 can be understood in various ways: as situation, condition, but also more

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2006, see Jocelyn / McEwen (2006). They had walked the whole tour in 2002–2003 to test the 'myth' built around the Long March experience by the CCP and ever since organise such tours for tourists. In 2011 with the 90th anniversary of the CCPs founding, red tourism tours and Long March tours in particular peaked in China. See Qian (9 June 2011).

76 The website could be found at: http://zuguo.cntv.cn/. It was taken off in the early Xi Jinping-era.

77 This listing here clearly suggests claims to these regions for 'patriotic education' – if in the future.

78 The focus of *Zhonghua hun* is very much on revolutionary history and mainly skips ancient sites of the first list. See *Zhonghua hun* (2006). (By the way, these alleged 'alternative 100' do not correspond to the alternative list of 100 sites, set up in 1998 by the Central Party School. For a brief discussion of the latter, see Billeter 2007: 282–286). The video clips reused here seem to have been mainly produced by provincial educational TV stations since the mid-1990s. One may note that sometimes sites differ from the first list, e.g., for the topic of the Korean War (1950–1953), the first list (1997) has the Korean War museum in Dandong (cf. below chapter 4.1), while *Zhonghua hun* presents the Korean War martyrs' cemetery in Shenyang (both Liaoning Province) which is listed only on the second list (2001).

79 For the latter series, the publisher's description could be found on the (by now defunct) website http://www.cetav.com.cn/cpztjy/37.jhtml.

emotionally as feeling. In a sense, it is ideal to represent the merger of knowledge and emotion so central to 'patriotic education' (cf. also chapter 6 of the present book): one should know more about this unique China in history and in the present, understand its special circumstances (and why it needs to follow its own way, not simply copying other countries and their systems), but also feel personally attached and responsible.

While the CNTV website with the sites of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras was taken down in the early Xi Jinping era, CCTV has set up a new website in the meantime which covers all sites of all the lists (interestingly not including the arguably extra labelled sites in between and beyond the lists) up to 2021.[80] The ordering is as before according to province (which also guarantees easily assignable responsibilities in the established administrative structure), only that by now the 'new' ones listed in the Xi Jinping era in 2017, 2019, and 2021, are usually put ahead, to only then cite the other formerly listed ones (which were sometimes still represented by the former *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips produced since the late 1990s on the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao era lists 1 to 4, while the new sites are in a varying format, assembled from different TV programmes with varying length, and the older *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips being substituted one after the other to also bring the older lists into an 'updated' format).[81] That way, Xi Jinping appears now in these newly added ones on top, while the older ones had been dominated by his predecessors Jiang Zemin and – to a lesser degree – Hu Jintao. And on 28 December of 2022, a new collection of 40 instalments à 40 minutes of 'documentaries' was released on the 'national defence and military affairs' video channel (underlining the strong military underpinning in the whole 'patriotic education') which picked up 'topics' with either one or several connected 'patriotic education showcase bases' sites, concentrating, however, only on those on 'revolutionary history', more precisely from the founding of the CCP to the archetypical Communist Lei Feng (cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book), at the end showing Xi Jinping who defines the sites and what should be learnt from them.[82]

80 The new website is: *Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi* (2021).

81 This, again, bespeaks the fact that the Xi Jinping era sites are not to follow seamlessly the former format. But this assembly of presentations of the newly listed sites, from short news items of local TV stations to longer presentations in former programmes of various formats and styles, leaves a rather careless hodgepodge impression. This is extended increasingly also to the sites of lists 1 to 4, mostly in the form of TV news programmes or taken from educational TV. A major push for creating new 'entries' was apparently the 100th 'birthday' of the CCP in 2021.

82 The 'documentary' series, as it is called on the Ministry of Defence's website (Jiang / Hao 2023), is titled 'Xin huo xiang chuan' or 'the torch flame is handed on'. See 'Xin huo xiang chuan: Quanguo aiguozhu jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli' (2019–2022). The image of the torch handed on clearly evokes

The declared aim of the new online collection, as stated on the Ministry of Defence's website, is by now to tell 'moving stories' (note again: stories, not history) that exemplify total dedication to the Communist cause.[83] The non- (or pre-)Communist sites which played at least a role in the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao era lists thus fade out of sight, and the 'story' of China is standardised, which fits into the general thrust in the Xi Jinping era to curb even minimal variegation in historical narratives. Thus, history education in school, which, though bound by curricular guidelines, had formerly at least allowed for several textbooks to coexist since the 1980s,[84] is by now replaced by just one authoritative textbook version to be used in schools around China in a move back, and once more produced by the former monopolist, Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe 人民教育出版社 (People's Education Press).

In terms of media, beyond television, the book market sustained the effort to popularise the 'patriotic education showcase bases' as well: already in the 1990s, e.g., several book series came out.[85] The Propaganda Department 'encouraged' some publishers explicitly, most importantly including Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 中国大百科全书出版社 (Chinese encyclopaedia press) which put out a whole series with one booklet for each site of the first list of 1997 (and started covering the second list of 2001 as well), explicitly aiming at young readers, reprinted in the 2000s, and tellingly republishing it in 2012 at the very end of the Hu Jintao era with a more lavish layout (though by then without colour pages). This demonstrates that the campaign was well alive at that time and that this series, the largest project of all, remained the benchmark production, put on the stacks of school libraries, defining the official reading of the single bases to be handed to the next generation of Chinese citizens. (We will therefore use this for the discussion of first list sites along with the filmic renderings mentioned above when turning to single cases in the following chapters.) Other publishers which were invited and published comprehensive volumes, namely on the sites of the first list, included Changzheng chubanshe 长征出版社 (Long March press), Zhongguo shaonian ertong chubanshe 中国少年儿童出版社 (Chinese youth and children's press) (which published photo volumes and several volumes with stories), Xuexi chubanshe 学习出版社 (Study press) (which also went on to cover the following lists with one volume per list) and

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the ideological context this phrase usually comes with. Incidentally, in 2015, a three-months-long 'torch relay' was the main feature in 'red tourism' of that year. (Cf. Zhao 2021: 234). Needless to say, this also evokes the Olympic fire imaginary.

83 Cf. Jiang / Hao (2023).

84 For an overview of history textbook versions before the Xi Jinping era, see Su (2011) and Li (2011).

85 Cf. He / Guo (2000: 27) and Billeter (2007: 243, 282).

(Zhongguo) Ditu chubanshe (中国)地图出版社 (SinoMaps press) (bringing out maps of the sites of every list with short descriptions, ideal for tourists preparing to travel to the sites on their own).[86] The choice of these publishers who dutifully printed the 'official' policy statements connected to the single lists as an introduction,[87] suggests that the first and foremost target for the campaign were Chinese youth, and secondarily adult tourists. Later reprints show that these publishing projects are of ongoing relevance, even keeping the original setup in those cases where de facto changes in the sites had occurred (!) which bespeaks the binding power of the original decisions on the lists.[88] This holds true even for the new summary of 2019, when the officially assigned publisher (notably of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference), Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe 中国文史出版社 (Chinese Literature and History Press), presented the state up to the 2017 list, i.e., updating the whole to the Xi Jinping era with the mentioned 22-volumes *Fengbei* series, structured according to provinces,[89] with a chapter dedicated to every listed site up to then, following (implicitly) the listings' sequence from the list 1 sites onwards. This new summary, explicitly directed at youth, but also cadres and the military, also notes that the key sites (here notably all 'red' ones) are those showing the 'red traces' (*hongse zuji* 红色足迹) of Xi Jinping, thus underlining once more the shift towards CCP-related sites in the overall system of 'patriotic education showcase bases' henceforth.[90]

However, also other publishers not officially assigned quickly picked up the topic of the 'patriotic education showcase bases',[91] either encouraged by local

86 Liu Yunshan from the Propaganda Department mentions the involvement of the named publishers. See his statement in the context of the proclamation of the first 100 list used also as general preface to the series on the 100 patriotic education showcase bases published by Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe, e.g., in Xie (1998: 6). (This statement also takes the lead in other publications enlisted by the Propaganda Department.) This shows that these publishers were officially invited.

87 This meant, above all, the statements of the deputy head or head of the Propaganda Department.

88 Interestingly, in spite of the fact that some sites had undergone changes in the meantime, most notably the merger of the earlier two separately listed Beijing sites of the Museum of Chinese History (no. 2 on the first list) and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution (no. 3 on the first list) into the new National Museum of China in 2011, the reprints stick to the original sites as listed. See, e.g., the map volumes of Zhongguo ditu chubanshe: although in the case of the no. 1 site of all, i.e., Tiananmen Square, the 2013 reprint of the 1999 volume on the first '100 patriotic education showcase bases' names the new 'National Museum' as adjacent to the Square (*Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* 2013: 3), the two older museums of Chinese History and of the Chinese Revolution remain as the no. 2 and no. 3 sites without mentioning their merger into the new 'national' one!

89 Some volumes combine two provinces or cover the 'autonomous regions' together.

90 Cf. the 'preface' reprinted in every volume of the *Fengbei* series.

91 This is nothing rare in the PRC 'mediascape'. E.g., in the case of representing foreign history in Chinese media which created a hype in 2006/2007 with the TV documentary series *Daguo jueqi* 大

propaganda departments, or simply on their own, like Shantou daxue chubanshe 汕头大学出版社 (Shantou university press) very early on, Hongqi chubanshe 红旗出版社 (Red Flag press), Jiangxi jiaoyu chubanshe 江西教育出版社 (Jiangxi educational press), Shaanxi renmin chubanshe 陕西人民出版社 (Shaanxi people's press), or Jilin wenshi chubanshe 吉林文史出版社 (Jilin culture and history press) (later Jilin chuban jituan 吉林出版集团 – Jilin publishing trust – which even started a series on single sites as well in 2012).[92] Still others focused on one or more provinces and their sites.[93] And especially in the 2000s, additional series on the sub-category of 'red tourism sites' added to the whole campaign.[94] Thus, beyond the orchestrated attempts focussing on youth, there was a broadening of addressees to society at large.

Additionally, other large publication projects partly intersected, e.g., the museums which had been called upon to provide easy access, tried to specifically approach youth via a series 'Taking you to the museum' (*Dai ni zoujin bowuguan* 带你走进博物馆). Several of the museums represented in the series are also labelled 'patriotic education showcase bases', and the series as such is designed, as can be seen from the series' endorsement of 2004 at its launch by the head of the National Cultural Heritage Administration printed in every volume at the beginning, explicitly as a 'second classroom' for 'minors' (*weichengnian ren* 未成年人 – an alternative label vis-à-vis the usual 'youth', stressing their being 'future adults') to 'acquire knowledge and cultivate sentiments'.[95] The authorship remains with the local

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国崛起, this topic was quickly picked up by various publishers beyond the officially assigned ones. See Müller (2013, chapter 2).

92 Jilin chuban jituan also came out with a volume explaining the 'gist' of each single list. Cf. Chen (2010).

93 E.g., Tuanjie chubanshe 团结出版社 (Unity press) started a 10 volumes series in 2013 on sites in the provinces, always covering several provinces close to each other together. See, e.g., Yang (2013) on Jiangsu and Zhejiang. In other cases, local publishers came out with books on their own province's sites. See, e.g., Hu (2015) on Shanxi by Shanxi renmin chubanshe 山西人民出版社 (Shanxi people's press).

94 For the latter, see, e.g., also the series on 'famous red cities' (*hongse mingcheng* 红色名城) which was published in 2005 by Zhongguo lüyou chubanshe 中国旅游出版社 ('China Travel & Tourism Press') (e.g., Wang 2006, or Xiangtan lüyouju 2006). But also Party publishers and editors joined in. See, e.g., on the national level: Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi yanjiushi / Guojia lüyouju (2014); or on a more local level, e.g., Zhonggong Hangzhou-shi zhishu jiguan gongzuo weiyuanhui et al. (2016).

95 See, e.g., the volume on the Anhui Provincial Museum (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009), p. 2 (for the museum itself, see chapter 2.2 of the present book), but also a 'red site' like the 'Iron Man Wang Jinxi memorial hall' (Tieren Wang Jinxi jinianguan 2010) (see chapter 5.3 of the present book) is covered by this 'museum series' thus endorsed.

museum representatives, though. This means that various agents involve themselves on the ground to bolster (or use) the campaign.

Furthermore, one should also note that apart from the listing as 'patriotic showcase education bases', single sites were also simultaneously included in other, similarly graded lists. (Cf. appendix 3 for a sample of various labels). Beyond labels directed at the education of youth, there are also 'bases' for education in national defence (*guofang jiaoyu jidi* 国防教育基地) established since 2007,[96] once more directed also at the Chinese citizen at large. In fact, a very eye-catching role is the involvement of the PLA (People's Liberation Army) in this whole system of 'bases'. Thus, typically, in the filmic renderings of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' mentioned above and integrated in the discussion of single sites in the following chapters, one can observe pupils as well as cadets visit the 'patriotic education showcase bases' sites on guided tours. Another notable group (who the normal tourist will unlikely encounter),[97] though not evident as such in the plaques, but disclosed by the filmic renderings (and in a few cases mentioned in the 'patriotic' written materials) addressing a domestic Chinese audience, is prisoners (of various types) who are taken to some of the sites to 'better' themselves via ideological training, demonstrating to the domestic audience that the state has not given up on them but invests in re-education of 'culprits'.[98]

More specialised alternative graded 'education bases' listings represented by plaques on-site include, e.g., 'Party character education bases' (*dangxing jiaoyu jidi* 党性教育基地),[99] or the one to provide edification against corruption and for

96 In fact, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress adopted a law in 2001 on National Defence Education which spelled out the criteria for national defence education bases (article 23 and 28). The official English version of the 2001 law can be accessed via the web archive: *Law of the People's Republic of China on National Defense Education (Order of the President No. 52)* (2001). For discussions of national defence education, see Hughes (2017), Genevaz (2019), and Naftali (2020). The law itself has undergone revisions in the meantime.

97 This also shows that it is important for evaluating the sites to move beyond an approach based on personal on-site visits only, to also take in various materials designed for the domestic audience through time.

98 This, incidentally, was already on the GMD's mind in Republican times, reflected indirectly in the prison and 'concentration camp' sites discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book.

99 The oft-used translation 'Party spirit' is not exactly literal, though taken up by Western researchers as well. Cf. Pieke (2018: 711, 721) who discusses the term and states that *dangxing* is, in turn, the Chinese translation for Lenin's 'party-mindedness'; this is apparently based on Sorace (2016: 45) who however adds the Russian original 'partiinost''. This Russian term (party + the suffix 'ness'), though, makes clear that the Chinese *xing* is used similarly as the suffix 'ness', i.e., in the sense of 'character', 'typical quality', and is a faithful translation from Russian. Furthermore, there is the concept of *jingshen* 精神 which is (rather straightforward) 'spirit' in translation (which Pieke opts to render as 'essence', given the need to distinguish it from *xing*, which seems a bit forced; a back

thriftiness, addressing, above all, cadres, or the one for learning about the Chinese 'national conditions' (*guoqing jiaoyu jidi* 国情教育基地), not the least designed for Hong Kong and Macau youth (who are seen as particularly in need of politically correct education to understand their 'motherland' China better). 'Red education bases' (*hongse jiaoyu jidi* 红色教育基地) is a further label used, if not as a full-blown system. It, however, shows that the idea of physical 'bases' for 'learning' is rather broadly applied.[100] And one may note that not only are those assignments often graded from local up to national level, depending on the assigning entity, but also sometimes they are explicitly for specific target groups. These may, in turn, not only be types of people (e.g., pupils or cadres or the military), but also specific institutions who have set up fixed relationships with sites. E.g., some universities may have contracted a site as 'their' 'patriotic education base', sending regularly students over to be 'trained'. These labels, always proudly exhibited at the sites themselves with plaques (see fig. 1.1), thus also provide some clues as to the sites' intended use.

Fig. 1.1 Part of the display of label plaques at a purely 'ideological' site: the memorial for cadre Kong Fansen (Liaocheng) (photograph by the author, 2017) (for Kong Fansen, see chapter 5.3)

Beyond the 'educational' field, there are, of course, also other graded labels for sites, including the tourist AAAAA (5A) down to A classification, where predictably revolutionary sites figure more rarely, while pre-modern cultural as well as natural

translation of 'essence' would rather lead to *cui* 粹 or *jing* 精 at best). Therefore, I prefer to translate *dangxing* more literally, reserving 'spirit' for *jingshen*.

100 It is paralleled to a much lesser extent by the term 'point' (*dian* 点) (sometimes also, if covering a larger area, *qu* 区). Cf. appendix 3 for some examples.

sites are outstanding. Thus, in a sense, the 'patriotic' sites complement the touristic one, only in some instances of pre-modern 'patriotic' sites overlapping in category (see fig. 1.2). And the cultural and natural heritage system has its graded labels of 'protected units' (*baohu danwei* 保护单位) as well. Thus, the labelling of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' is to be seen in this larger system of graded different labels of sites (cf. appendix 3) which are also proudly displayed side by side at every single site, sometimes called rows 'of honour' (*rongyu* 荣誉) (and come with a fixed set of requirements respectively, configuring also the site's envisioned use).

Fig. 1.2 Display of labels and chronology of listings at a top tourist and historical site: the home of Confucius (Qufu) (photograph by the author, 2015) (for the Confucius site, see chapter 5.1)

In terms of categories according to which one may group the 'patriotic education showcase bases', one suggestion in 'patriotic education' materials, looking at the *contents* of 'patriotism' as mirrored in the lists of 'patriotic education showcase bases', based on the first '100 bases' list, has been to distinguish sites of 'historical culture', 'national righteousness', 'revolutionary wars' and 'outstanding personalities'.[101] Liu Yunshan 刘云山 from the Propaganda Department, however, whose preface adorns every single booklet of the benchmark Zhongguo dabaike quanshu series on the single sites of the first list, provided the 'official' understanding and picked out from the first '100' list as categories: 1) places which were foundational for Chinese civilisation, enumerating the Neolithic site Hemudu 河姆渡 (cf. chapter 2.1), the legendary tomb of Huangdi 黄帝 (the Yellow Emperor) (cf. chapter 3.1),

101 Fang (1999), ending up with these roughly equally numerous single categories.

the Mogao caves in Dunhuang (cf. chapter 2.3), and the Great Wall near Beijing as prime examples: this is notable in so far as neither Palaeolithic Peking Man nor Neolithic Banpo 半坡 (which are textbook staples – see chapter 2.1) are cited, but the more 'problematic' Hemudu, and it covers the only 'religious' site on the first list: Dunhuang; 2) places of modern history remembering China's being bullied by foreigners and her resistance, enumerating the museum of the Opium War (in Humen 虎门, Dongguan; see chapter 4.3), the site of the signing of the Nanjing Treaty at the end of the Opium War, the destroyed Old Summer Palace in Beijing, the memorial of Lin Zexu 林则徐 (in Fuzhou; see chapter 5.1) as the 'hero' of the Opium War, and the memorial for the villagers of Sanyuanli 三元里 (Guangzhou) who resisted the British in the Opium War as the most exemplary: this is notable in so far as all these places highlight conflicts with the West (mainly the British) and none with Japan, although numerically those latter ones are far more numerous on the list; 3) places of the Communist revolution, naming the site of the First Party Congress in Shanghai, the Jinggangshan 井冈山 base area (see chapter 3.3), the memorial hall of the anti-Japanese war of resistance (Beijing), the Geleshan 歌乐山 'Red Crag' memorial hall in Chongqing (see chapter 3.2), and the Yan'an 延安 revolutionary base area (see chapter 3.3) as representative: this less surprising selection covers, however, also the anti-Japanese war, but remarkably *only* as part of the Communist revolution; 4) the sites of contemporary history which show the building-up of New China (i.e. the PRC) like the Fushun 抚顺 memorial of Lei Feng 雷锋 (who stands for Communist morality in general and the army more specifically; see chapter 5.3), the memorial for 'iron man' Wang Jinxi 王进喜 (who stands for total dedication of a labourer to open up the Daqing 大庆 oil field; see chapter 5.3), the Liaocheng 聊城 one for model cadre Kong Fansen 孔繁森 (who served the minority areas, namely Tibet; see chapter 5.3),[102] and the Red Flag Canal (in Henan; see chapter 2.3) as an engineering project showing how socialism worked to create a new China to be proud of.[103] By this, Liu Yunshan de facto established a 'core group' among the sites of the first list.

102 One may note that often Jiao Yulu 焦裕禄, a cadre serving tirelessly up to his death by cancer in Henan in 1964, is taken up as the most important model cadre in general. He had been hailed in the Mao era, and is so again in the era of Xi Jinping who is said to have a special emotional bond to this model. Kong Fansen, however, has the 'advantage' of covering the minority issue, while Jiao Yulu served in 'China proper', and he is a post-Mao 'hero'. This likely endeared him to Jiang Zemin and especially Hu Jintao who had served in Tibet himself.

103 See Liu Yunshan's preface to the series on the (first) 100 patriotic education showcase bases published by Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe (but also printed by other officially enlisted publishers like Zhongguo ditu chubanshe). See, e.g., in Xie (1998: 3–4).

Other categorisations proposed simply stayed with the provinces or grouped sites chronologically according to the site 'content' (which made obvious the strong leaning towards modern times in these whole listings of 'patriotic education showcase bases').[104] Interestingly, in terms of content, the second to fourth lists almost exclusively added revolutionary sites and some on 19th century victimisation, thus augmenting the presentist thrust of the whole endeavour. In fact, the 'official' statement of the deputy head of the Propaganda Department at the time the second list was published (2001), Liu Peng 刘鹏, declared that by then the contribution of the CCP was to be central for the further listings.[105] Earlier sites were consequently hardly chosen.[106] That way, older times were integrated only marginally or indirectly, mainly by provincial museums by then increasingly listed, and also 'science' was only marginally considered.[107] And Liu Yunshan, when head of the Propaganda Department, stressed in 2004 as the listings for the third round were underway, that the main task was at this point to broaden access to existing museums, memorials, revolutionary sites and martyrs' cemeteries, suggesting to design also movable exhibitions or online versions besides intensifying 'red tourism', by this explicitly linking 'patriotic education bases' and 'red tourism sites'.[108] Thus, unsurprisingly, with the fourth list (2009), half of the sites were

104 This alternative grouping was proposed by He (1997: editor's preface), interestingly moving backward from the present, arguing for a more 'pedagogical' approach to start with what is closer to modern youth. However, in obvious deference to the dominating provincial grouping, a provincial ordering index is included.

105 See his preface in *Di er pi baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* (2013 [2002]: n.p.). Liu established here as a core group: the memorial park of Li Dazhao 李大钊 (executed 1927) and the Heilongjiang memorial of Ma Jun 马骏 (executed 1928) for the early 'martyrs'; the memorials of the site of the August Seventh conference (1927), the Autumn Harvest Uprising (1927) and the Baise 百色 Uprising (1929) (for the latter, see below chapter 4.2) for the period of 'land revolution'; the relics of the Pingxingguan 平型关 Battle (September 1937) and the Jiaozhuanghu 焦庄户 tunnel warfare for the period of the Second Sino–Japanese War; the Tianjin–Beijing Campaign (late 1948 to early 1949) memorial (see below chapter 4.3) and the Shuangdui 双堆 martyrs' cemetery of the Huai–Hai Campaign (late 1948 to early 1949) for the Civil War period; and the memorial for the key political couple Zhou Enlai 周恩来 and Deng Yingchao 邓颖超, the one of general Peng Dehuai 彭德怀, and the one of general Ye Jianying 叶剑英 for the establishment of the PRC.

106 Notable exceptions include the memorial for Tang poet Li Bai in Sichuan (list 4) and the one of 17th century intellectual Gu Yanwu in Jiangsu (list 3).

107 One 'scientific' pre-modern figure covered is Li Shizhen 李时珍 and his role in Ming medicine and botany (list 1). The engineering 'wisdom' of the old Dujiangyan weir or the modern Red Flag Canal (both list 1) could be counted into this category as well (for both see below chapter 2.3). Other cases are science museums and the very notable case of the former nuclear testing site in Qinghai praising China's first atomic and hydrogen bombs (list 3).

108 See the speech of Liu Yunshan of 2004, printed as a preface to the third list-related publication *Di san pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* (2009: 1–6).

dedicated to the Long March, the Second Sino–Japanese War, and the Civil War, whereas the other half covered 'cultural' topics, mostly in the form of museums.[109] The original basic idea to only provide one listing per figure was also not strictly followed as some key Communist figures 'reappeared'.[110] However, all in all, the dominating categorisation remained the administrative one according to province. And in general, most publications concentrated on the first list, whereas the further lists were less received.[111] After the hiatus in the early Xi Jinping era, in 2017 the promulgation of lists was continued, as mentioned, now heavily focused on the Party, and only partly paying attention to breadth in geographical coverage.

In terms of categorisation of sites, non-print media like CCTV also came forward with suggestions, proposing the following on the CCTV website of 2008 on the TV film clip series *Ai wo Zhonghua* which in its ranking also reveals the order of importance in this 'official' point of view in an updated version vis-à-vis Liu Yunshan, covering the lists up to then: great personalities in history, holy places of the revolution (the biggest group), revolutionary martyrs (the second largest group), never forget history (i.e. sites of victimisation), Chinese civilisation.[112] This clearly betrays the primary importance of revolutionary figures and places as also most 'great personalities in history' are, in fact, Communists or their sympathisers.[113] The 'never forget history' sites, in turn, mostly focus on Chinese victimisation by the Western powers or Japan, however always adding the politically correct ending that although this is 'never to be forgotten', it should not lead to continuous hatred.[114]

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109 See Chen Xiuling (2010: 107). Interestingly, the official guide to the fourth list sites (*Di si pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* (2009)) simply reprinted Liu Yunshan's speech of 2004, i.e., provided nothing specific about the criteria for the fourth list.

110 One example is the Communist 'model' new personality, Lei Feng, who is honoured on the first list with his memorial and tomb in Fushun (Liaoning Province), and again on the fourth with his memorial in Hunan where he came from (cf. chapter 5.3).

111 The series of Jilin chuban jituan, published in Changchun in 2012, crosses the lists, with a strong leaning to those sites placed in Manchuria, i.e., close to home. Ditu chubanshe also published maps of the second and third list, and others started with some coverage of sites on list 2.

112 This could be found on the (by now defunct) website: 'Ai wo Zhonghua – Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli' (2008b).

113 Browsing through the category of 'historically outstanding people', one notes only few non-Communists, basically Republican-era figures considered close to the Communists like Lu Xun etc. Notable is the integration here of two mythological figures as 'historical': Huangdi (the Yellow Emperor) (see chapter 3.1) and the Great Yu! Only the equally mythical Yandi (see chapter 3.1), the purported half-brother of Huangdi, remains in the category of 'Chinese civilisation'. As for real 'historical figures' there are only few from earlier times through the 19th century, notably Confucius (see chapter 5.1), Zheng Chenggong (see chapter 5.1), Gu Yanwu, and Lin Zexu (see chapter 5.1).

114 The short explanations on every section could be found on the (by now defunct) website: 'Ai wo Zhonghua – Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli' (2008b). Interestingly, there was one

Nevertheless, this clearly reflects the call by Jiang Zemin and others to use the history of 'shame and humiliation' to further patriotism.[115] The last section on 'Chinese civilisation' is tellingly short, mostly covering museums, as those few historical figures that are deemed patriotically important (e.g. Confucius; see chapter 5.1) have been shifted to the first section on 'great personalities in history'.

In contrast to these Chinese official categorisation proposals, another categorisation has been proposed by Western-based scholar Zheng Wang in his work on the 'patriotic education' campaign and its implications for Sino–US relations (Wang 2012: 105–106). For him, the patriotic education bases fell into the categories: external conflicts, civil wars, myths, and heroes, noting that the great majority of the first official national '100' bases are dedicated to conflicts, namely external ones with the Japanese and internal ones with the GMD. This, obviously, gives a quite different, more 'aggressive' impression, though here the basis is only the first list.

After studying the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system – which up to now has hardly been treated specifically – in more detail,[116] one could think of other categorisations, e.g., grouping them into topics loosely following the chronology of site 'contents': mythology, pre-history, pre-modern history, Westerners and China, the Japanese and China, Sun Yat-sen and the 1911 Republican revolution, CCP figures, revolutionary and Party places, wars and battles, and CCP *vs* GMD places. Obviously, this would mean occasional overlaps, e.g., in the case of 'wars and battles' which might intersect with other categories. However, the category 'wars and battles' comprises sites which have much in common in the way they are organised so that it seems sensible to mark them as a category of its own (and this category is also particularly suited for comparative approaches as it is to be found in many

site in this section which is not directed against 'foreign aggression' but nature: the site of the great Tangshan earthquake of 1976.

115 On the use of the trope of humiliation history, see Callahan (2010) and Wang (2012).

116 Up to now, there have been only studies on some single sites, though usually not in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context. Billeter's (2007) French-language study on the Yellow Emperor (whose 'mausoleum' is a 'showcase base' – cf. chapter 3.1 of the present book) at least includes a convenient brief overview of the first national list of 100, in fact 103, 'patriotic education bases' in his chapter 6 (see also the appendix) together with a discussion of alternative lists that at times rivalled this list. The more recent book of Denton (2014) focuses on museums, covering some examples of museums of pre-modern history, of the Chinese revolution, of dead heroes, of the military, of Japanese imperialism, of exemplary leaders, of literature, of ethnic minorities and of urban planning. In this context he also addresses 'red tourism' sites, though only occasionally hinting at the 'patriotic education' context. A recent article (Liu 2018) addresses the 'patriotic education bases' as such, but only considers the urban sites and correlates them with the intensity of the 1989 protests at the given cities. This is interesting in itself, but seen from the system, while there is a geographical ordering of the sites, this is, as mentioned, according to province, but there is no urban–rural divide per se in the system.

countries around the globe). Similarly, 'Party places' might intersect with other categories, but again the way the sites are organised suggests a grouping together and distinction from other sites where, e.g., a CCP 'hero' is central.

This book opts to follow an approach which not only looks into site *contents*, however. Billeter (2007: 254-255), considering the first list, has already proposed to distinguish between monuments, historical sites, museums, and cemeteries. Taking this idea of considering the *types* of the bases, which decides much about the way *how* things are presented, further, I propose to look at the basic structuring element in each type: there are 'patriotic education showcase bases' focused on materiality and objects (including excavations, regional museums, or iconic constructions and landscape transformations); on locality and places (including fictive ones, commemorative ones, or settings of important steps in the Party's history); on more elusive things not easily localised like 'site contents' physically unavailable since either beyond the national border, thus requiring stand-in representation, or recording former actions rather than something 'stationary' (e.g. uprising, strikes, guerrilla activities, or wars and battles); or on outstanding people (i.e. different types of role models: 'traditional' ones, non-Communist modern ones, and above all Communist ones, including Party leaders). Via this structure, I intend to get beyond the *what* to consider also the *how* of presentation, to offer a more holistic view on the system of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' and its evolution through time. I will thus look at the specific *modes* exemplified by the sites, largely drawing on the first '100' list, but also taking up some cases from further lists to acknowledge the system's development over time, looking into the contextualisation of materiality, the marketing of locality, representation of the elusive, and the presenting and at the same time presencing of individual agents, as means to educate Chinese 'patriotic' citizens.

A comment on the approach and materials used

Looking into the 'patriotic education showcase bases', this book, while focusing on specific case studies for the single modes, keeps several research areas in mind: on the one hand, memory *vs* history is reflected in these 'bases'. Here, Pierre Nora and his concept of *lieux de mémoire* is of obvious relevance.[117] More generally, studies

117 Nora has elucidated this concept in his multi-volume work on French sites. In the English-speaking academia, the short English-language article on *lieux de mémoire* between memory and history (Nora 1989) has been most widely received, popularising the concept more generally.

on memory culture provide some background.[118] Lowenthal, in turn, adds to perspectives on the uses the past (which he famously once termed a 'foreign country') is put to via heritagisation.[119] On the other hand, Bourdieu and de Certeau provide inspiration with theories of social practice since the 'bases' are, as will become clear, also social 'fields' and performative places, where 'strategies' of state-mandated behaviour meet 'tactics' of tourist consumption.[120] Museum studies, in turn, have discussed the function of museums also for citizen formation,[121] and they serve for analysing ways of display. Given that there is a close link to history in the sites considered in the present book, the convenient check-list of eight key questions by Thiemeyer (2010: 84–89), specialised on history museums and drawing on classical source criticism, is useful to keep in mind when discussing exhibitions and their context: 1. Who is the author (of a museum or exhibition)? 2. What is the position of the author? 3. Who is the addressee? 4. When, where and how did it come into being? 5. What is the aim of it? 6. What are the key terms / issues? 7. Which format is used? 8. How is the formal setup? However, beyond this positive check-list, there is of course also the crucial question of what is avoided, i.e., is not addressed, be it in terms of content, or in terms of political, financial, institutional etc. background. Furthermore, it is important to pay attention to the way in which things are narrated, presented, and framed. Here, insights from literary studies on narrativity and genre, not the least the concepts of intertextuality (Kristeva 1980) and paratexts (Genette 1997) (with 'text' understood here in the broadest sense) relevant for the presented narratives in and beyond exhibition spaces and their mutual interconnectedness are helpful, as is, most importantly, sociologist Goffman's concept of 'frame' (Goffman 1974). This serves to analyse the way how things are narrated and presented, and how perception is guided by 'framing' in exhibitions as well as in written or audio-visual sources, which make up the materials used for the present book. Studies on performativity in and of museums, in turn, take the museum as a

118 Jan Assmann's 1992 German-language book on 'cultural memory' became very influential for differentiating between forms of memory, namely for 'collective memory' distinguishing between 'communicative memory' and the long-term 'cultural memory'. This key book was followed by various publications by himself and his wife Aleida Assmann, connecting memory studies to cultural studies more broadly, and to (especially German) history politics more specifically. See also Erll / Nünning (2008) and Erll / Rigney (2012) on 'memory culture' and its various medial forms. One needs, however, to count in that most of these studies implicitly assume a societal and political setting which is rather different from the one in which Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases' operate in.

119 See Lowenthal (1986) and Lowenthal (1996).

120 See Certeau (1984), and for Bourdieu's take on social practice, first published in French in 1972, the reworked English edition of 1977.

121 For the educational role of museums, see, e.g., Hooper-Greenhill (2007).

'stage' (another Goffman-inspired approach),[122] and look at both the museum curators' intentions as well as at the visitors. In the words of art educator Garoian (2001: 235), this leads to question as: 'What is the relationship between museums, their cultural artifacts, and performance? Who performs the museum? Whose memory and cultural history is being performed?' The visitors, in fact, 'read' an exhibition not only through text, but also through the latter's relation to artefacts or objects more generally, and through the objects' setting in space.[123] And they might well ask to which degree it is 'their' cultural history that is performed there, which links back to the issue of identity. But visitors are a variant group who bring their own experience and expectations to a place. Beyond the pupils and similar types of guided visitors, tourists who opt for visiting a place in their leisure time need to be taken into account as well. At this point, tourism literature helps distinguish between different types of tourists,[124] has explored how tourists interact with the visited places, and how sites try to appeal to expectations or generate interest in the first place. Not the least, there has been also some attention to the issue of tourism's role for national identity building.[125] Particularly pertinent as a background to some case studies in the present book are the subfields of 'dark tourism' and 'battlefield tourism',[126] as well as 'heritage tourism',[127] which includes tourism to sites of cultural pride, but also to those of 'dissonant heritage'.[128]

For the more practical and China-related aspects, this study can build upon work on nationalism in China,[129] on the educational system,[130] and its relation to citizen

122 See Goffman (1959), suggesting that people 'act', behaving differently in different settings on stage, or backstage.

123 Cf. Buschmann (2010) for the application of narrative theory to museum analysis.

124 Regarding the typology of tourists, Cohen (1972) has been often cited, though not all of his types are equally relevant for the Chinese case, while a general distinction between organised groups (the 'institutionalised form') and individual tourists is important to maintain.

125 A classic in tourism studies, focusing on the interaction of tourists with the places they visit, is Urry's work on the tourist 'gaze', first published in 1990 and subsequently updated, integrating in the third edition (coauthored by Larsen) also the performative side of tourism (Urry / Larsen 2011) which renders it closer to the issues at stake in the present book. For a general overview on tourism studies, see Jamal / Robinson (2009). For a collection of contributions regarding tourism and national identity, see the volume edited by Frew / White (2011).

126 For 'dark tourism', see, e.g., Sharpley / Stone (2009), White / Frew (2013), Hooper / Lennon (2017), and Stone (2018). For battlefield tourism, see, e.g., Ryan (2007) and Baldwin / Sharpley (2009).

127 For an overview of the field, see Park (2014).

128 The term 'dissonant heritage' has been popularised by Tunbridge / Ashworth (1994). Other similar terms have been proposed as well, including 'difficult heritage' (Macdonald 2009) etc.

129 For influential English-language studies in this field, see, e.g., Gries (2004), Guo (2004), Zhao (2004); Callahan (2010), Wang (2012). In the context of International Relations Studies, Gustafsson (2014), e.g., sees recent Chinese 'nationalism' and 'patriotism' as overlapping. Dessein's edited

education.[131] Research on layered territorialised identities in China from the local and regional to the national is a further relevant area,[132] and studies on tourism and heritage in China are an increasingly rich and relevant field, too.[133] Work on Chinese museums, in turn, is of particular interest as several sites are, in fact, museums.[134] A crucial issue for the present book is to pay attention to what kind of history views are provided to the Chinese citizen in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' looked at and how this is done.[135] Usually, extant studies on single sites focus on a given moment, often the point when the researcher visited it to then analyse an exhibition. However, most importantly, one needs to be aware that exhibitions are nothing fixed, especially in China where political winds may change rather abruptly. Therefore, where possible, I try to historicise *the sites themselves* in the ongoing 'patriotic education campaign', which is facilitated when materials of different stages during the campaign can be confronted with each other as well as with the time of personal visit. This provides a more complex and layered approach. I also provide the year photos (the number of which had to be restricted to only 30 for the whole book) were taken, which unfortunately is often not done in academic publications, though this is a crucial information, given the changes sites and exhibitions may undergo.

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volume (2014), in turn, combines the issue of nationalism with Chinese views on history and their political implications.

130 More recent influential studies in the field of Chinese education have been Kipnis (2011), Hansen (2015), Vickers / Zeng (2017).

131 Cf. Kennedy / Fairbrother / Zhao (2014), and the China-related parts of Vickers / Kumar (2015).

132 See Moser (1985) and Oakes (2000) from a geographer's perspective, Goodman (1995) and Fitzgerald (2002) from a historian's one, and Oakes / Schein (2006) that include an anthropological one.

133 To name but a few book-length works: on Chinese tourism more generally, see, e.g., Oakes (1998), Nyíri (2006), Ryan / Gu (2009), Huang / Chen (2021). For Chinese heritage tourism, see, e.g., Yan (2017), Zhang (2020).

134 See the book-length English-language works treating Chinese museums under various aspects, from those presenting, above all, a collection of samples like the guides by Clifford / Giangrande / White (2009) or Li / Luo (2010), to those focusing on the recent museum-building boom and its architectural dimension like Jacobson (2014), to those discussing museum history and conceptions in China like Lu (2014), to museologist analyses of display modes like Varutti (2014) (if without a background in the Chinese language). Most importantly for the present book, Denton (2014) looks at museums 'exhibiting the past', Ho (2018) on those 'curating revolution'. See also the article by Vickers (2007) on museums and nationalism in China.

135 For an example of how historiographical changes were reflected in one museum (and incidentally a 'patriotic education showcase base' as well, not discussed in detail in the present book), see Rana Mitter on the case of the Beijing War of Resistance Museum (Mitter 2000).

Basically, most materials used are set in the first 20-odd years of the 'showcase base' system, i.e., covering the time-frame 1997 to 2019. In general, personal on-site observation is contrasted with the official materials which for the cases of the first list (1997) include single booklets on each individual site (written shortly after the first list had appeared), reprinted over the 2000s, and reprinted with a new layout in 2012,[136] i.e. the above-named benchmark series of Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe which provide the official narrative of the Jiang Zemin era also shared through the Hu Jintao era, though assigned to local authors who in some cases use the occasion to fill in local perspectives. For sites on the second list (2001), there are the official descriptions in the 4-volumes collection of the propaganda and education bureau of the CCP Central Committee's propaganda department (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002) directed at cadres, the Chinese citizen at large, but especially at youth. The two further lists 3 and 4 (2005 and 2009) of the Hu Jintao era were covered in the publications compiled once more by the propaganda and education bureau, then published with the 'educational' press, Xuexi chubanshe (*Di san pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* 2009, and *Di si pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* 2009). To the above written narratives, visual materials are added, namely the educational videos (on some sites of the first list) of the *Zhonghua hun* DVD collection (published in 2006 and designed for classroom use),[137] and the TV film clips (the *Ai wo Zhonghua* collection published also as DVDs in 2008 which will be the cited version in this book in the cases of list 1 to list 3 sites covered there, while the fourth list sites were available only on the CNTV website which was taken off in the early Xi Jinping era, as mentioned above), aiming at the general domestic public. Finally, again in print format, the newest province-specific 22-volume collection (*Fengbei* 2019) which provides updated official descriptions of the sites on lists 1 to 4, adding also the fifth list sites, i.e. the 2017 nominations, are used which bring the respective presentation up to the Xi Jinping era, aiming at cadres, the military, youth, and the Chinese citizen in general, disclosing also the shifts historical narratives had to consider according to the new agenda.[138] To the above materials, which are systematically applied to each case study, locally available materials are added, where possible, which reflect how

136 For consistency, I have cited the original late 1990s versions throughout, but have counter-checked with the 2012 versions I could get hold of.

137 There is, as noted above, one case of the second list covered there, the (Shenyang) Martyrs' Cemetery for the Korean War, and the collection assembles videos produced mostly in the late 1990s.

138 Some of the alternative publications mentioned above when discussing the campaign have also been integrated, but not as systematically as the material mentioned here. For the respective target groups, see the prefaces of the single publications.

the local site tries to present itself to the visiting tourist. Given the limited space, the challenge was to choose among the many sites, and here an attempt has been made to somewhat balance out regional (and to some extent temporal) representation beyond the content type considerations. This, however, also necessitates the reminder and *caveat* that the different types presented in this book are not evenly distributed in practice, as hinted at above, but some types are more common than others. To facilitate orientation for the reader, a vague chronological sequence has been applied among the case studies of the single types in terms of site contents, which also hopefully helps to delineate more clearly how the 'patriotic' narrative of China's past evolved, which the Chinese citizens are supposed to embrace.

One word should be also added about the outstanding book of Denton (2014), a scholar coming from the field of Chinese modern literature and film, to also profile for the reader the particularities of the present book. At first glance, regarding the choice of sites to be treated, there are a few overlaps: Denton's book which appeared when the present book project was already underway, has a somewhat different focus, namely on various types of museums, though understood broadly to encompass also memorials, 'martyrs' cemeteries', and 'red tourism' sites. There is, however, no systematic link to education and the uses these sites are made to serve, and the sites treated rather serve to illustrate the singular museum types. The present book starts from the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. It is not geared towards museums as such (of which only some are 'patriotic education showcase bases', and reversely, not all 'patriotic education showcase bases' are museums), but asks what kind of sites (museums or not) are labelled in this evolving system, how they relate to citizen formation, and how they are situated between nationalism, local identities, and tourism. Furthermore, and most importantly, as to site descriptions, it historicises the exhibition narratives since on-site observations are, to stress once more, by nature just one spotlight at a given time, by systematically relying on the materials produced in the 'patriotic education' context since the respective site's listing. In this sense, this book not only draws on my former work on various aspects of modern Chinese history in terms of content, but methodologically also links up with my earlier work on Chinese historical documentary series reflecting global rise (and fall) of nations (Müller 2013), which also disclosed the multi-medial concerted action on TV, the book market, and museum exhibitions to reinforce a certain historical reading, in that case of foreign (post-1500), Chinese (post-1840), and particularly Soviet history that had been (at least partly) taught in Chinese school history already. My previous work on Chinese history textbooks (Müller 2011, Müller 2013[2008], Müller 2014, Müller 2018), in turn, also serves for linking up the textbook knowledge Chinese citizens learnt in school with the reinforcement by outdoor education as is provided by the 'patriotic

education showcase bases'. Finally, my previous work on cultural heritage, namely with cemeteries (Müller 2020, Müller 2022), also helped me realise the fruitfulness of historicising narratives on specific sites themselves and of close on-site observation, held against the written (and visual) materials. I therefore hope that this book will provide the reader with a fairly systematic understanding of the modes and workings of China's 'patriotic education' in terms of such 'showcase bases', which address not only pupils but also the grown-up Chinese citizen, as a civil tourist or a military cadet, or even as a political cadre (and sometimes as a prisoner to be 're-educated'), how this whole system evolved since at least 1997 when the first list of sites was promulgated, and how it is embedded in the larger structure of using such sites as 'training' tools for specific agendas and target groups through time, typically referring to a specific framing of history. In comparative perspective, especially a look to the (former) Soviet Union is helpful to highlight the commonalities but also the specific traits in the Chinese 'patriotic education bases' which are addressed more in the concluding remarks (chapter 6).

In theory, the concept of 'patriotic education bases' could also do without a connection to history: one could very well imagine, e.g., a modern scientific place serving as such (say, Cape Canaveral), or a very particular landscape (say, the Grand Canyon for the US). In fact, the 2021 listing of the new Daxing Airport, mentioned above, under Xi Jinping points into this direction to move away from history and heritage to the present. However, in China the sites chosen up to now were almost all connected de facto to history in some form – even if as history of science with some museums[139] – including, of course, Party history. This, turned around, means that the state obviously perceives the need to appeal to some kind of history to elicit patriotism. This is also understandable, as the used definition of 'patriotism', as presented above, is not only 'love of one's place of origin' (which in a multi-ethnic China could also be potentially divisive) but equated with Chinese civilisational (including more recent socialist) 'achievements' in the past to instil confidence into

139 Although the first list of 1997 does not cover science – but for the historic case of Li Shizhen 李时珍, the Ming times physician and herbalist whose memorial is cited, the second list of 2001 and the later ones do integrate some science-focused museums on aviation, on the navy, on technology, and on nature or natural history. Only the Qinghai site of the construction of China's first atomic weapons on the third list is not a normal 'science museum', though the accent is still clearly on the historical significance: the site is no more in operation but has been turned into a museum. Probably this integration of some science sites was a reaction to an alternative list of '100 patriotic education sites' set up by the Central Party School in 1998 which had more of such sites in, even covering two modern non-museum sites with the Gezhouba 葛洲坝 dam in Hubei and the geothermal power plant in Tibet. (See Billeter 2007: 283, note 157.) Interestingly, the latter were not taken up in the successive official 'national' lists, only the museums which by way of exhibition retain control over interpretation and in this sense are also more didactic, i.e., 'educational'.

the future of a socialist China. That way, also China shares in the 'cult of heritage' by using the 'spoils of history' (Lowenthal 1996). The following chapters will therefore also serve for providing insights into the recent normative Chinese historiography which the Chinese citizen is supposed to embrace, its changes over time as reflected in the respective framings of narratives on the singular sites, their context and background, but also the problems and inconsistencies connected to them, which sometimes open up possibilities for divergent readings even from the inside.

Quick tour through the book

Given the pluriform modes under which the 'patriotic education showcase bases' operate, the following chapter (chapter 2) starts the discussion with concrete examples focusing on materiality, i.e., sites that are playing up and constructing identity by relying on material objects. However, since 'objects' never simply 'speak for themselves', they can be used for a 'national' reading or for precisely the opposite: as defining the local. Thus, contextualisation decides upon the level of identity affixed to them: national, regional, or local, or a layered combination of them. Examples discussed in this category include excavations which are materially connected to their geographical location and therewith easily convey a 'local' reading, but also museums which display movable objects, e.g., as art history, on a national or regional level. In the latter case, the object is in tendency disconnected from its place of origin and shown as a 'Chinese' object, or as an object defining the regional (e.g., provincial) identity alternatively. Contextualisation and framing decide. Other examples include buildings or landscape transformations which are by necessity physically tied to their location but have been built for a supra-local goal (the Great Wall, e.g.) and have been later invested with an 'iconic' meaning to represent Chineseness (e.g. the Mogao caves in Dunhuang which could be easily also read as showing a decidedly 'multi-cultural' face, not the least since the site was registered also as part of the transnational 'Silk Road' with UNESCO in 2014, but also historically as a place where many cultures, languages, and religions met). Engineering constructions, in turn, like the ancient Dujiangyan 都江堰 irrigation system or the socialist Red Flag Canal, while clearly serving the locality and region they are placed in, have also come to stand as symbols for 'Chinese' hydraulic creativity. In discussing those examples, the tension between local, regional, and national readings and how this is marketed for educational as well as tourist aims respectively is analysed.

Chapter 3, in turn, concentrates on locality, i.e., sites where the very physical place is of primary importance. This category covers also purely fictive places like the purported 'mausolea' (*ling* 陵) of the mythical ancestors of 'the Chinese': there is nothing 'original' in a material sense like an excavation (as in the preceding chapter) to be seen, but the sites have lived through legend in these cases, leading to a historically established and in that sense 'materialised' site, assuming those mythical figures were connected to the very places (which in turn can be made to physically serve political ends of celebrating and performing a 'patriotic' 'Chineseness' at large, taking in also Taiwanese or Overseas Chinese). Further 'places' considered in this chapter are those of historical commemoration and mourning, including places of atrocities and victimisation (typically by the Japanese against the Chinese), of 'martyrdom' of heroes with prisons and execution grounds or 'concentration camps' (typically with the GMD in the perpetrator role against the Communists), and the tombs and cemeteries of such 'martyrs' (who were killed either by warlords or the GMD). Finally, the 'Party places' localise and make tangible key points in the Party's history (according to its contemporary reading), to be experienced on spot by the visiting pupil or tourist to heighten their patriotism and acceptance of the current official narrative on history. In this category of sites, the physical location promises tangibility and thus 'authenticity', by this framing the 'patriotic' experience of the Chinese citizen as learner or tourist.

Next, in chapter 4, we turn to sites which refer to more elusive issues not easily pinpointed at one given place (like those sites discussed in the preceding chapter 3). This includes, as one subcategory, 'patriotic education showcase bases' dedicated to events or groups of people that transcend mainland China's borders and thus necessitate physical representation by stand-in museums like 'bases' dealing with Taiwan, the Overseas Chinese, or the Korean War. A further subcategory are sites which are elusive in the sense that they record instances of some former more or less 'spontaneous' action, be it revolutionary uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities, which were dynamic and fluid, and thus hard to pin down in a static 'base' concept. This holds also true for the final subcategory, the war and battle sites. These sites, recording former action in wartime, are to evoke scenes of organised fighting which evolved in that very area in the past, and their larger historical impact, though physical remains are often elusive or in need of interpretation. The 'bases' thus try to provide a narrative (and often also sensory) framing for the visitors to convince them of the official historical reading. In all of the cases in this chapter, the 'bases' function as some sort of surrogate or physical anchor for the visitor, even if they cannot provide much tangible experience of their topic per se. Narration and its framing is thus the main theme of this chapter which is employed to make the 'patriotic' message plausible. This is its obvious task in the

'patriotic education' scheme, though the narratives need to struggle with the limits the evasive nature of site contents entails for effectively reaching out to the intended audience.

The subsequent chapter (chapter 5) focuses on sites for individual agents, be they 'traditional' role models in the educational or military or moral-political field, modern non-Communist ones, or outstanding Communists, including Party leaders, as embodiments of (socialist) values. The respective sites are authenticated via their connection to the very individual, typically their place of birth as their 'former home' (*guju* 故居), occasionally also other places where they did decisive things, or their tombs. However, these sites are often also used to show how these important individuals were shaped by the locality and its customs and thus provide a good occasion for the local to share in the glory of that respective figure, arguing the locality and its customs somehow contributed to the latter's outstanding achievements. These figures' 'patriotic' value as role models is invigorated by presenting them at 'their' places which also presences them at the same time via the 'authenticity' provided by the respective local context, rendering them also individual and distinct. They, or rather the values they embody, thus become more accessible to the visitors for emulation, be they pupils, other guided Chinese citizen groups, or individual tourists.

The concluding remarks, finally, reflect on the different aspects that surfaced when studying the Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases' explored in more detail in the various case studies. They look at the different types of sites, the role emotions and knowledge are to play in the education for 'patriotism', and consider the different agents involved in the whole system. While it is the question how effective different modes applied by such sites are in providing what they are assumed to provide, namely a more intense identification of domestic citizens with 'China', the different actors involved in the system and their respective perspectives and agendas imply also the possibility of divergent readings. To situate the whole in a larger context, a final brief comparative look to the Soviet model (and beyond) will also help clarify historical relationships as well as structural similarities and differences, to explore whether there is something specifically 'Chinese' in the PRC's 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

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Appendix 1

Number of national-level patriotic education showcase bases according to province/ autonomous region / municipality as appearing on lists

Province / autonomous region / municipality	**List 1 1997**	**List 2 2001**	**List 3 2005**	**List 4 2009**	**List 5 2017**	**List 6 2019**	**List 7 2021**	**Total**
Beijing	9	5	1	3	0	11	13	42
Tianjin	1	4	1	2	0	0	2	10
Hebei	6	5	4	3	0	1	2	21
Shanxi	3	5	4	3	0	1	1	17
Inner Mon-golia	1	1	1	3	1	0	2	9
Liaoning	5	5	4	3	0	0	4	21
Jilin	1	3	2	3	0	0	2	11
Heilongjiang	4	2	2	4	0	1	3	16
Shanghai	4	4	1	2	0	0	3+1 enl.	14
Jiangsu	7	4	5	3	0	4	8	31
Zhejiang	5	3	1	3	1	1	4	18
Anhui	1	4	1	3	3	0	2	14
Fujian	5	5	2	3	3	1	3	22
Jiangxi	4	5	2	3	2	2	3	21
Shandong	4	5	4	4	0	1	3	21
Henan	3	2	4	2	2	4	5	22
Hubei	5	3	5	4	4	1	3	25
Hunan	3	7	5	4	3	2	9	33

Number of national-level patriotic education showcase bases *(continued)*

Province / autonomous region / municipality	**List 1 1997**	**List 2 2001**	**List 3 2005**	**List 4 2009**	**List 5 2017**	**List 6 2019**	**List 7 2021**	**Total**
Guangdong	4	3	3	2	0	1	4	17
Guangxi	2	3	2	0	0	3	2	12
Hainan	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	7
Sichuan	5	7	2	4	5	0	2	25
Chongqing	3	3	1	2	0	1	2	12
Yunnan	1	1	3	3	0	1	2	11
Guizhou	1	2	2	3	6	2	2	18
Tibet	2	0	0	2	0	0	5	9
Shaanxi	7	1	0	3	6	0	2	19
Ningxia	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	8
Gansu	3	5	0	5	2	0	6	21
Qinghai	1	0	1	2	1	0	3	8
Xinjiang	1	1	1	2	2	0	6	15
Total	**103**	**100**	**66**	**87**	**42**	**39**	**112**	**549**

Source: *Renmin ribao* 人民日报 (People's Daily) 11 June 1997, p. 3; 12 June 2001, p. 4; 21 November 2005, p. 2; 22 May 2009, p. 8; 30 March 2017, p. 6; 17 September 2019, p. 5; 20 June 2021, p. 4.

Appendix 2

Example of a site's upgrading process inside the patriotic education system: Hohhot (Inner Mongolia): Inner Mongolia Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery (opened in 1980)

Label	**Assigning entity**	**Year**	**Level**
Aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi 爱国主义教育基地 (Patriotic education base)	Nei Menggu zizhiqu jingshen wenming weiyuanhui 内蒙古自治区精神文明委员会 (Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region spiritual civilisation committee) *and* Nei Menggu zizhiqu dangwei xuanchuanbu 内蒙古自治区党委宣传部 (Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Party Committee Propaganda Department)	n.d.	Regio-nal
Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi 全国爱国主义教育基地 (National patriotic education base)	Zhonghua renmin gongheguo minzhengbu 中华人民共和国民政部 (PRC Ministry of Civil Affairs)	1995	National
Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi 全国爱国主义教育示范基地 (National patriotic education showcase base)	Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu 中共中央宣传部 (CCP Central Committee Propaganda Department)	2005	National

Source: Official plaques on-site (seen 2016)

Appendix 3

Sample (non-exhaustive) list of further labels for educational bases and some parallel labels by various assigning entities (often on various hierarchical levels, from local to national)

Types of bases (*jidi* 基地)	**Other labels**
Quanguo qingshaonian jiaoyu jidi (target group: pupils) 全国青少年教育基地 (National youth education base)	Guojia yiji bowuguan (for museums) 国家一级博物馆 (National first-class museum)
Zhongxiaoxue aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi (target group: primary and secondary school pupils) 中小学爱国主义教育基地 (Patriotic education base for primary and secondary schools)	Bowuguan xuehui tuanti huiyuan danwei 博物馆学会团体会员单位 (Unit of members of the Museum Association)
Zhongxuesheng suzhi tuozhan jiaoyu jidi (target group: secondary school pupils) 中学生素质拓展教育基地 (Quality development education base for secondary school students)	(Zhongdian) wenwu baohu danwei (a cultural heritage label) (重点)文物保护单位 ((Key) cultural relics protection unit)
Guojia daxuesheng wenhua suzhi jiaoyu jidi (target group: university students) 国家大学生文化素质教育基地 (National university students cultural quality education base)	Xiaowai daketang (for universities, e.g.) 校外大课堂 (Great off-campus classroom)
Guanxin xiayidai jiaoyu (shifan) jidi 关心下一代教育(示范)基地 (Care for the next generation education (showcase) base)	Weichengnian ren sixiang daode jianshe xianjin danwei (target group: youth) 未成年人思想道德建设先进单位 (Advanced unit for ideological and moral edification of minors)
Guofang jiaoyu (shifan) jidi (target group: pupils and cadets) 国防教育(示范)基地 (National defence education (showcase) base)	Weichengnian ren shehui ketang (target group: youth) 未成年人社会课堂 (Social classroom for minors)

Sample list of further labels *(continued)*

Types of bases (*jidi* 基地)	**Other labels**
Lixiang xinnian jiaoyu jidi 理想信念教育基地 (Ideals and conviction education base)	Xianjin danwei 先进单位 (Advanced unit) (for various contents)
Geming chuantong jiaoyu jidi 革命传统教育基地 (Revolutionary tradition education base)	Wenming danwei 文明单位 (civilised unit)
Deyu jidi (of various entities) 德育基地 (Moral education base)	Guojia dengji lüyouqu (dian) 国家等级旅游区(点) ('National Tourist Attraction') (max. 5A)
Quanguo kepu jiaoyu jidi 全国科普教育基地 (National science popularisation education base)	Quanguo gongye lüyou shifandian (target group: industries) 全国工业旅游示范点 (National industrial tourism showcase site)
Shehui kexue puji jiaoyu jidi 社会科学普及教育基地 (Social science popularisation education base)	Guojia shuili fengjingqu (for canals) 国家水利风景区 (National irrigation works scenic area)
(Zhonggong) dangshi jiaoyu jidi (中共)党史教育基地 ((CCP) party history education base)	Quanguo hongse lüyou jingdian jingqu 全国红色旅游经典景区 (National red tourism classic scenic area)
Qingnian ganbu xuexi jiaoyu jidi (target group: young cadres) 青年干部学习教育基地 (Learning and education base for young cadres)	Guojia dizhi gongyuan (for geographical sites) 国家地质公园 (National geopark)
Dangxing jiaoyu jidi (target group: cadres) 党性教育基地 (Party spirit education base)	Guojia zhongdian fengjing mingshengqu (for 'green' tourist sites) 国家重点风景名胜区 (National key scenic and sightseeing area)

Sample list of further labels *(continued)*

Types of bases (*jidi* 基地)	**Other labels**
Dangyuan jiaoyu jidi (target group: cadres) 党员教育基地 (Party member education base)	Wenhua shengtai lüyou mudidi (touristic sites) 文化生态旅游目的地 (Cultural and ecological tourism destination)
Quanguo fanfu changlian jiaoyu jidi (target group: cadres) 全国反腐倡廉教育基地 (National anti-corruption education base)	Huayuanshi danwei (for ecological set-up) 花园式单位 (Garden-style unit)
Quanguo lianzheng jiaoyu (shifan) jidi (target group: cadres) 全国廉政教育(示范)基地 (National integrity education (showcase) base)	Quanguo wenhua gongzuo xianjin jiti 全国文化工作先进集体 (National advanced collective of cultural work)
Sixiang zhengzhi lilunke shijian jiaoxue jidi (of various entities) 思想政治理论课实践教学基地 (Practical teaching base for ideological and political theory class)	Wenming fuwu shifandian 文明服务示范点 (Civilised service showcase site)
Shehui shijian jidi (of various entities) 社会实践基地 (Social practice base)	Gongren xianfenghao (target group: workers) 工人先锋号 (Worker pioneer label)
Renwen shehui kexue puji jidi 人文社会科学普及基地 (Humanities and Social Sciences popularisation base)	Qingnian wenminghao (target group: youth) 青年文明号 (Youth civilisation label)
Keyan jiaoxue jidi 科研教学基地 (Scientific research and teaching base)	Zhian mofan danwei 治安模范单位 (Public security model unit)
Sheke puji xuanchuan jidi 社科普及宣传基地 (Social science popularisation and propagation base)	Weisheng hongqi danwei 卫生红旗单位 (Red Flag hygiene unit)

Sample list of further labels *(continued)*

Types of bases (*jidi* 基地)	**Other labels**
Xianjin sheke jidi 先进社科基地 (Advanced social science base)	Xingfeng jianshe shifan chuangkou (for minority areas) 行风建设示范窗口 (Showcase window for behaviour edification)
Gongwuyuan tese shijian jiaoyu jidi (target group: officials) 公务员特色实践教育基地 (Civil servants specific practical education base)	
Zhiye jiaoyu deyu gongzuo jidi (target group: vocational school pupils) 职业教育德育工作基地 (Moral education work base for vocational education)	
Qiye jingshen jiaoyu jidi (target group: enterprises) 企业精神教育基地 (Enterprise spirit education base)	
Quanguo jianshe xitong aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi (target group: construction sector) 全国建设系统爱国主义教育基地 (National construction system patriotic education bases)	
Quanguo liangshi xitong aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi 全国粮食系统爱国主义教育基地 (National food system patriotic education base)	
Quanguo jiancha jiguan ganjing aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi 全国检察机关干警爱国主义教育基地 (National procuratorial organs cadres and policemen patriotic education base)	
Quanguo minzu tuanjie (jinbu) jiaoyu jidi (for minority issues) 全国民族团结(进步)教育基地 (National unity of nationalities (advancement) education base)	

Sample list of further labels *(continued)*

Types of bases (*jidi* 基地)	**Other labels**
Dangwai daibiao renshi, tongyi zhanxian ganbu aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi (for United Front work) 党外代表人士，统一战线干部爱国主义教育基地 (Non-Party representatives and united front cadres patriotic education base)	
Haixia liang'an jiaoliu jidi (for cross-Strait issues) 海峡两岸交流基地 (Cross-Strait exchange base)	

Source: Official plaques encountered at various patriotic education sites

2 Contextualising materiality: patriotic education between the national, the regional, and the local

Abstract This chapter introduces three types of contextualised materiality as used in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system: 1. *in situ* excavation sites of national significance and their potential for local readings (with case studies on Neolithic Hemudu in Zhejiang Province, and Shang dynasty Yinxu in Henan Province); 2. the role of museums displaying objects from different local origins in a given area to forge a regional-provincial identity (with case studies on the Ningxia Museum, the Inner Mongolia Museum, and the Anhui Museum); 3. iconic constructions and landscape transformations in the sense of a 'cultural landscape' which were created or later endowed with a supra-local meaning (with case studies on the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan in Hebei Province, the Dunhuang Mogao Caves in Gansu Province, the ancient Dujiangyan irrigation system in Sichuan Province, and the 'revolutionary' Red Flag Canal in Henan Province).

The role of material culture in identity construction is less straightforward than it might seem at first glance:[1] material objects do not simply 'speak for themselves' but can be read in a variety of ways, either as being connected to the place they are located (e.g., excavated or otherwise placed), or as standing for something beyond the local. In the context of 'patriotic education showcase bases' in China, the state obviously tries to convey a 'national' reading, appropriating them for national 'heritage'.[2] However, local actors might use them to construct a local identity, or mid-level brokers for a regional one.

This chapter will look into three types of contextualised materiality: first we will focus on *in situ* excavation sites of national significance and their potential for local readings. These sites are not very numerous in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, but we will look more closely into the cases of Neolithic Hemudu in Zhejiang Province, and Shang dynasty Yinxu in Henan Province to observe, how these excavation sites are applied for 'patriotic' uses and what kind of readings emerge. Secondly, the role of museums displaying objects from different local origins in a given area to forge a regional-provincial identity will be considered, looking into the cases of the Ningxia Museum and the Inner Mongolia Museum to

1 On material culture and identity, see, e.g., Fowler (2009).
2 For a critical view on conventional 'authorised heritage discourse' see Smith (2006).

consider the specific challenges in 'minority areas', contrasting this with the case of the Anhui Museum, where possible localised readings are no less relevant, but played out in their own ways. Thirdly, iconic constructions and landscape transformations in the sense of a 'cultural landscape',[3] which were created or later endowed with a supra-local meaning, will be dealt with, paying particular attention to the cases of the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan in Hebei Province serving as a site associated with 'military' aspects, the Dunhuang Mogao Caves in Gansu Province associated with 'artistic' genius, and the ancient Dujiangyan irrigation system in Sichuan Province, and the 'revolutionary' Red Flag Canal in Henan Province, both associated with Chinese 'engineering' capacities. These sites, which we will analyse more systematically in case studies on the basis of the types of materials as described in chapter 1 of the present book to consider their evolution in the whole 'patriotic education showcase bases' system over time, show in their breadth the possible range of contextualisations such sites are situated in, how this is related on-site to 'patriotic education' agendas, and in which sense different readings between the national, regional, and local emerge.

2.1 Excavation sites

The specific nature of an excavation site it capitalises upon is its being tied to the very place it is located: it derives its 'authenticity' from its not being 'touched', moved etc., but simply being 'discovered' there *in situ*. Of course, technically speaking, an excavation *is* a touching of the site and might, e.g., show (or privilege) one layer, and cover (or underprivilege) others, but for our purposes the important aspect for its role in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system is this specific 'selling point'.

When browsing the list of the first '100' 'national-level patriotic education showcase bases', which set the tone for the whole endeavour, one notes very few such sites: Zhoukoudian 周口店 near Beijing, i.e., the *homo erectus* 'Peking Man' site; Hemudu 河姆渡 in Zhejiang and Banpo 半坡 in Shaanxi as Neolithic sites; Yinxu 殷墟 in Henan as a Shang dynasty (16th–11th century BC) site; and the terracotta army of the First Emperor (3rd century BC) in Shaanxi. Of course, some more recent historical sites needed some 'excavation', too, but are rather '(war)

3 Cultural landscape theory goes back to Carl Sauer who defined a cultural landscape in 1925 as a natural landscape which had been modified by a cultural group. Cultural landscape theory is applied today by the UNESCO, but also greatly in favour in China's heritage conservation system, e.g., with the so-called 'historically and culturally famous cities'. Cf. Wallenwein (2020).

ruins' or '(mass) graves', whereas these above-named sites were 'archaeological discoveries', and they are connected to the issues of where 'the Chinese' come from and how their early civilisation emerged.[4]

The discovery and use of the 'Peking Man' site at **Zhoukoudian** in 20th century China has been covered in existing literature quite extensively,[5] so we can limit ourselves here in the context of 'patriotic education' to the observation connected to history education in China: in present-day history textbooks used in school (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016), Chinese children learn that the designation 'Peking Man' (*homo erectus pekinensis*) is not simply referring to the place where the hominin remains were found (the first discovered 'Peking Man' actually being not male but female,[6] though this is no point in the narrative and presentation),[7] but that this hominin was the 'representative of Chinese early humanity' since s/he lived on the territory that now is China.[8]

Although the introduction in the present-day textbook vaguely asserts that 'there are different explanations of human origin' (without mentioning anything specific, namely the Out of Africa thesis), the textbook is only concerned with the origin 'on Chinese territory' which suggests to the pupils that there is an indigenous origin without need of any larger 'trans-border' picture, and a straight line to the modern Chinese. Present-day PRC (People's Republic of China) borders are thus implicitly naturalised as an ahistorical given that was somehow relevant all the way through

4 The issue of 'origin' is always connected to excavations in a 'nationalist' paradigm of archaeology as is the case in China. See Liu / Chen (2012: 1, 8, 17–18).

5 For a view to the site's significance for China's modern history, cf. Sautman (2001), Leibold (2006), Schmalzer (2008), beyond the purely scientific literature not concerning us here.

6 Among the excavators, she was dubbed 'Nellie'. An American sculptor, Lucile Swan, made a first reconstruction of her head according to the instructions of anatomist Franz Weidenreich. For a photo of her and the reconstructed head of 'Nellie', see Boaz and Ciochon (2004), p. 140.

7 Schmalzer (2008: 11) emphasises that representations in PRC times are often suggesting a female. However, present-day textbooks do not make this very explicit: although the ever same reproduced bust has breasts hinted at, the angle of the presentation makes the bust's face look less feminine, thus providing a generic hominin representation. See the newly standardised junior secondary textbook version used since the scholastic year 2016/2017, *Zhongguo lishi* (2016: 3). (Compare to Schmalzer 2008: 12 with a front view.) Textbook descriptions also do not use the female pronoun but usually the (male) plural. Here, the main focus is on the current junior secondary textbook, though earlier PRC textbooks have been consulted as well, namely those concurrent with the launch of the patriotic education campaign.

8 For the use of the word 'hominin', see paleolithic archaeologist Dennell (2009: 10).

history.[9] And people who happened to live there presumably also stayed there to 'evolve' through time into the present-day Chinese.

This presentation de facto conforms to the theory of multi-regional human origin prevalent in Chinese scholarship, though this has not gone unchallenged even among Chinese scientists.[10] In spite of excavations in other parts of present-day China in the meantime that go even further back in time than 'Peking Man' like 'Yuanmou 元谋 Man' (*homo erectus yuanmouensis*) in southwestern Yunnan province, mentioned in textbooks as the earliest site found in China,[11] the latter excavation site did, however, not make it into the first national '100' patriotic education showcase bases list (neither does 'Lantian 蓝田 Man', likely 'older' than 'Peking Man' as well,[12] located in Shaanxi Province, nor any other).[13] So why 'Peking Man'?

Officially, there are no reasons given for this choice. Judging from the genre of history textbooks used in school where 'Peking Man' is addressed since late Republican times,[14] even providing a hypothetical reconstruction of his/her looks,[15] one

9 Needless to say, this view is unscholarly at best. See the pointed remarks by, e.g., Goldin (2018: 2), a scholar focused on ancient China. For a more general take on the 'spatial trajectory' of modern Chinese prehistoric archaeology, cf. Leibold (2011).

10 De facto, it had been German anatomist Franz Weidenreich who suggested a straight line from Peking Man to modern-day Chinese. In general, Chinese scholarship favours the multi-regional model. Besides the Out of Africa model, a modified version of the latter with local admixture is also discussed in international scholarship. Cf. the brief summary in Shelach-Lavi (2015), especially pp. 39–43. See also Cheng (2019), chapter 3, about the sociopolitical dimension of recent discussions about the topic.

11 The Chongqing Longgupo 龙骨坡 site which might be even older, though this is still debated, is not mentioned.

12 As Schmalzer (2008: 185) notes, locally in Shaanxi, there is some resentment that 'Lantian Man' is not treated prominently like 'Peking Man' – and that the original fossils were moved away to Beijing.

13 One may note that further not named but graphically shown sites of Paleolithic hominin discoveries include one in Taiwan as 'sites on Chinese territory', with the 'national border of China' also explicitly pointed out in the map to drive home the point (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 3). (The Taiwan 'site' likely intends the 'Penghu mandible' fragment, i.e., a very recent casual off-shore discovery first scientifically published in 2015, though still debated as to its affiliation, which means it came to attention only at the very time the new Xi Jinping-era mainland Chinese textbooks were produced. While usually new discoveries are slow to get into textbooks – e.g., the Longgupo site discovered in the earlier is not yet on this map, the 'Taiwan site' was apparently too tempting, and thus was included immediately.)

14 Notably, only some of the Republican-era textbooks of the 1930s and 1940s addressed Peking Man. (Cf. also Schmalzer 2008: 48–51). PRC textbooks, though, picked up Peking Man as a subject in history from the start. See, e.g., *Gaoji xiaoxue lishi keben*, *wunianji yong* (1952), p. 1. For a more recent textbook, see the most wide-spread junior secondary textbook of People's Education Press in the 2000s: *Zhongguo lishi* (2008). For the Xi Jinping era, see the standardised edition of 2016 (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016).

might consider several factors: 'Yuanmou Man', discovered only in the 1960s (like 'Lantian Man'), i.e., much later than the 'Peking Man' discovery, is more difficult to visualise as the excavations only rendered two teeth. In the case of 'Peking Man', whole skulls provided a much more detailed picture, making hypothetical reconstructions of head and face possible. In the meantime, bones of around 40 individuals could be found at the Zhoukoudian site (Shelach-Lavi 2015: 37). A bust made in the 1950s by a technician who had been present at the early phase of excavations in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and remakes of that bust have been a staple in PRC textbooks ever since. And 'Peking Man' was used in the early PRC as a way to introduce the 'masses' to a Marxist materialist-scientist world view of human origin (Schmalzer 2008: 55–56). In contrast, in the preceding Republican times, culturally conservative tendencies worked against too much deviation in the education of Chinese youth from traditional historiography and the legends about the origins of China and Chinese civilisation recorded there (cf. also chapter 3.1 of the present book on the mythical founders' 'mausolea'). Republican-era proponents of 'scientism' therefore ran up against these 'cultural' preferences. Part of the problem was whether 'primitive' 'Peking Man' should be considered a Chinese 'ancestor' which was not to everybody's liking (Schmalzer 2008: 49–52). Only since the 1950s things changed towards the affirmative in this regard in the PRC era, subscribing to a Marxist materialist worldview.

Another factor is archaeology and its history in China: the discovery of 'Peking Man' was a great sensation in the early 20th century. Although Western scholars were at first leading the excavations – a fact notably skipped in present-day Chinese textbooks (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 2–5), in the late 1920s Chinese archaeologists partly took over and made the most spectacular discoveries, namely Pei Wenzhong 裴文中 who would also be the key person to discover the near-by Upper Cave with its more recent *homo sapiens* remains. Pei Wenzhong would stay on the mainland after 1949 and would be acclaimed there as a founding figure of Chinese anthropology. In any case, the discovery of 'Peking Man' was perceived as a 'glorious page' in modern *Chinese* archaeology (and not only of archaeology 'in China'), and this in itself is a reason for national pride. Furthermore, present-day textbooks assert to Chinese pupils that the 'Peking Man' site is the 'richest and materially best documented *homo erectus*-site known up to now in the world' and thus contributes also to worldwide understanding of mankind's origins (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 5). While the site has been unquestionably very productive in the many decades of excavations and is internationally acknowledged as a key *homo erectus*

15 This was based on the works of Canadian anatomist Davidson Black, who worked at the site in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and above all his successor, German anatomist Franz Weidenreich.

site worldwide, the present-day textbook's chosen wording strongly recalls the familiar 'Party speak' phrasing of Chinese outstanding and indigenous development and its generous contribution to the world which is repeated once and again, projected here unto pre-history.[16]

Although most of the key findings of the original excavation have gone lost during the Sino–Japanese war (above all, none of the originally 5 complete skullcaps has been recovered),[17] this particular history also renders the 'Peking Man' site 'national' in another sense: it becomes part of anti-Japanese 'resistance' – and implicitly accuses the Japanese of even destroying 'China's' pre-history.[18] The fact that the presently displayed skullcaps in the Zhoukoudian site museum are only imitations (based on careful sketches drawn in the early 1930s, photos and replicas) does not in itself seem to pose much of an 'authenticity' problem in perception,[19] and can be used in the above sense of Chinese victimisation by foreigners even as an asset. Furthermore, the Upper Cave excavations near-by of much more recent remains of hominins (Shandingdong ren 山顶洞人) were used for sustaining the view that there should be somehow a continuity between 'Peking Man' (*homo erectus*) and the more recent Shandingdong ren (*homo sapiens*) because they lived in the same area, regardless of the large time gap between the two.[20]

The designation 'Peking Man', in fact coined by Western scholars,[21] very obviously plays into a 'national' agenda for today's patriotic education, an evocation none of the other Palaeolithic sites on present-day Chinese territory provides. Thus, it seems plausible to choose this site which was also promoted in the Mao years to

16 While this statement may not seem spectacular in itself, pupils who are confronted with certain fixed wordings in various contexts will link this with such other contexts. There is, in other words, a point of mutual reinforcement by this stadardising way of handling language. Cf. the work of Michael Schoenhals (1992) on 'doing things with words in Chinese politics'. See also the perceptive comments on language use in Fitzgerald (2022), chapter 2.

17 For the drama of getting lost, see Boaz/Ciochon (2004), chapter 2.

18 Since of all original remains the traces end with an American transport, during the early PRC and its anti-American thrust, namely during the Korean War, the US were the second 'culprits'. For the later shift in argumentation in the 1980s with again more criticism of the Japanese and less the Americans, see Schmalzer (2008: 183). The Japanese, incidentally, restituted objects they had collected during their occupation time, but none of the skulls were found (Xie 2019: 96–97).

19 Schmalzer (2008: 102), however, notes that during the 1950s, entries in (published!) visitor guestbooks addressed the issue of perceived loss of originals (if in the sense of criticism *vs* the Americans).

20 Though dating is very much debated, 'Peking Man' is given around 500.000 years ago, while Upper Cave humans are dated around 30.000 years ago. (For a tentative dating table of discovered hominins in China, see Shelach-Lavi 2015, p. 37.) In any case, the time gap is very large.

21 'Peking Man' was the popular version for *Sinanthropus pekinensis*, the name given by Canadian anatomist Davidson Black in 1927 which was later changed to *homo erectus pekinensis*.

the Chinese populace very pronouncedly, thus sustaining a further continuity in use, for a national list of patriotic education bases. It is already familiar to generations of Chinese by now, a textbook staple, and due to its Republican-era excavation also a potential bridge to Chinese living beyond the present-day PRC, namely in Taiwan.[22] It is also one of the earliest sites the Chinese government had suggested to the UNESCO to be taken up as a world heritage site since it yielded much material and was already well-known, not the least due to the foreign involvement in its discovery and excavations in the 1920s and 1930s (which in this context proved an asset). Thus, the site belonged to the very first batch of such world heritage sites in China, inscribed by the UNESCO in 1987 on the PRC's application (UNESCO [1987a]), and thus marks the 'national' for China also on a global scale. For the national context, Zhoukoudian was also designated, i.a., as a 'first-class museum' (cf. the sample of labels in appendix 3 of chapter 1 of the present book), and efforts were made to turn it into a more attractive science education site for youth, using advanced multimedia exhibition technologies. Given the 'Japanese' background story of the 'lost' skulls, one may also note the curatorial choice to add Japanese as a third language beyond Chinese and English at this site.[23]

While Zhoukoudian is a Palaeolithic-cum-Neolithic site ('Peking Man' and 'Shandingdong Man'), Banpo and Hemudu, in turn, are both purely Neolithic sites in this first list of 'patriotic education bases'. Banpo, excavated in the 1950s, started to appear in the early 1960s in PRC history textbooks, while Hemudu was excavated only in the 1970s. Both are treated in tandem in PRC school history textbooks since the 1980s for the Neolithic times: whereas Banpo in Xi'an in the north-western province of Shaanxi is to show early (primitive) societies' community living,[24] Hemudu, located south of Hangzhou Bay in eastern Zhejiang province, is important for pointing out the early cultivation of rice (challenging the older notion held internationally that rice was first cultivated in the Indus valley). Obviously, whereas Banpo in the north and at the very place of later centres of Chinese civilisation again may be used in the sense of suggesting 'continuity', Hemudu is to show that even China's south, traditionally considered as for a long

22 'Peking Man' is also regularly addressed in history textbooks in Taiwan.

23 Cf. Xie (2019: 85). In fact, the language variety choices at single 'patriotic education' sites are sometimes quite telling in terms of agendas (and only on a second line of expected visitors). It does not necessarily mean either that all Chinese texts will be translated in an exhibition, even though those sites being UNESCO nominated 'world heritage' need to consider their accessibility for foreigners.

24 One may note that Banpo in present-day Xi'an, a site identified as of the Yangshao Neolithic culture, is still very much thrust into the received Marxist framework of a promiscuous matrilineal primitive society for which it is made to stand. Cf. Wan / Xue (2019: 82, 87).

time 'alien' to 'Chinese' culture, was part of 'China' early on. Especially here, a local reading of the site is easily possible, as rice cultivation distinguishes Hemudu from millet-based northern China, but also the living in pole houses clearly differs and might precisely be used to show how different the south was, or even connect it to Southeast Asia rather than to northern China as is found in non-Chinese scholarship. That division argument is fundamentally based on climate difference and harks back to the Pleistocene (cf. the recent summary of a key figure in the field of palaeoanthropology, Robin Dennell (2020, chapter 10), who argues that immigration of the human species to Northern China went over Central Asia or Siberia, but to Southern China instead from Southeast Asia, with the Qinling 秦岭 Mountain range being more or less the division line).[25] Still, the 'patriotic' reading argues with Hemudu for an inclusive concept of 'China' which can now lay also claims to the oldest rice cultivation, arguing that the bone plows found suggest that the technique of rice cultivation was not even new at that time but must predate Hemudu. Recent 'patriotic' treatments of the site furthermore belabour the point of traces of interaction with Northern China to outbalance the impression of difference. In sum, to prevent the conclusion of a fundamental North–South difference, official Chinese publications go at length to stress that one should rather conclude that it was the conventional notion of 'China' that was too narrowly focused on the north and mainly the Central Plain – incidentally a shift in conformity with scholarship,[26] and that traces of Hemudu influence can be found also elsewhere (mainly citing pottery as evidence), extending not only to the south but also to the west and even the north.[27] Furthermore, parallel later excavations in other parts of southern China, though not connected to Hemudu visibly, are to strengthen the point that at least the Yangzi valley and rice cultivation (including both varieties of short- and long-grained, i.e. the subspecies 'japonica' and 'indica') were equally ingredients of Neolithic 'China' alongside the millet-based North.[28] In short, not only the Yellow River (Huanghe) is the 'mother river' of 'China', but the Yangzi, too. And not India 'invented' rice cultivation in Asia, as 'international discourse' had it, but China,

25 In fact, the issue of North–South difference is even acknowledged by some treatments of the Hemudu site in the context of 'patriotic education', e.g., Wang / Zhou / Xing (1998: 241).

26 In fact, the traditional notion of the Central Plain as the 'cradle' of China has been challenged by the many new archaeological findings since the 1970s.

27 See, e.g., Sun (2008), or Zhou (2002). Sun, a noted expert on the site, lends a whole chapter to the issue of connections between Hemudu and other archaeological excavations in a larger area. Both publications are explicitly situated by the respective prefaces in the context of 'patriotism'.

28 Interestingly, even though some later excavated sites seem to be even older than Hemudu, the latter remained the symbol of 'Chinese' ancient rice cultivation which suggests that its symbolic standing is paramount and will not be overthrown easily by a new finding.

even covering different sorts of it. Furthermore, the pole houses so different from the northern housing are framed over their construction technique as nonetheless a link to later Chinese wood constructions since they already use mortise and tenon joints, thus counterbalancing the impression provided by the different housing pattern with a focus on this technique to argue for their unquestionably belonging to the Chinese 'national' heritage.[29] This, in a way, corroborates the statement of archaeologist Lothar von Falkenhausen (1995) that the 'regionalist paradigm' in Chinese archaeology of the post-Mao years is not antagonistic to nationalism but rather a small-scale variant of it, given the ideological and administrative context in which it is played out. At best, it challenges other region's claims horizontally,[30] but not the national ones vertically.

Case study: the Hemudu site

Looking more closely into the **Hemudu yizhi bowuguan** 河姆渡遗址博物馆 (Hemudu site museum) (Zhejiang Province) case, which was listed in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system on list 1 (1997), we may base ourselves on various materials (cf. also chapter 1 of the present book) for its 'patriotic' framing: the textbook descriptions for pupils they encounter in school and bring with them to the sites; the site's respective booklet in the benchmark series on the (list 1) '100' 'patriotic education showcase bases'; the TV film clip in the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* (love our China) series; the educational video of 1999 in the collection *Zhonghua hun* (soul of China) on (some of) the '100 sites' by the 'National Centre for Educational Technology' (NCET), the above all reflecting the state of the late 1990s when the site was nominated; and the updated Xi Jinping-era narrative in the multivolume *Fengbei* series of 2019 on the 'patriotic education showcase bases'. This can be contrasted with local materials collected on-site, and personal observation in 2016, reflecting the time after the exhibition's major overhaul of 2009.

Textbook descriptions are by necessity and genre predictably short but present Hemudu today as a counter-balance to Banpo in Shaanxi which was, as mentioned,

29 Pole houses were, however, not used all over southern China, but mainly in swampy areas. (Cf. Shelach-Lavi 2018: 24).

30 The most well-known case is the naming of the neolithic Dawenkou-culture (named after the Shandong site, while in Jiangsu a similar site has been excavated, leading to an alternative naming proposed by Jiangsu archaeologists, though intending the same archaeological culture: Dawenkou won out.)

known earlier (being discovered in 1953).[31] Hemudu, only discovered in 1973, however was the site that triggered the mentioned shift in understanding of Neolithic China to move away from the exclusive focus on the larger Huanghe (Yellow River) area as China's 'cradle'. Both sites appear together since the 1980s in Chinese history textbooks to form a new narrative of plurality of 'China's' origins. The general societal and in consequence educational climate of the 1980s was more 'antiquity-friendly' than the times before, and – one may add – the textbooks of the 1980s (and ever since) are more detailed in general and have grown in overall length. Thus, there was also more space to deal with 'pre-history'.[32] This has to be seen also in the context of shifting educational goals from the 'revolutionary' to a more 'knowledge'-oriented outlook.[33] The stress is put on Hemudu being a proof that the South was 'Chinese' as well and not 'barbarian', that rice cultivation in China was older than assumed before, and that architecture and pottery can prove continuity with times thereafter. Since the presentation of pre-history is focused on excavations, it is in a sense seen as ideal for training pupils in (classical Marxist) 'historical materialism', while the narrative constructs images of living in Neolithic times in accordance to the Marxist vision of evolution of society ('matriarchy' etc., along the lines of Friedrich Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*,[34] basing himself on the theories of Lewis Henry Morgan and Johann Jakob Bachofen popular in the 19th century).[35]

With this standard textbook narrative in mind, the national TV audience encountered the broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 4) on the Hemudu 'patriotic' site, produced in 1998 by Zhejiang TV with the support of Shanghai TV, the

31 Banpo was treated in textbooks of the early 1960s at the latest. Understandably, an evaluation of findings needs time to 'stabilise' readings before going into a highly authoritative genre like textbooks.

32 In the Chinese context, the conventional delineation of 'pre-historical' and 'historical' along the line of invention and use of writing is maintained.

33 This can be gleaned from the curricula over time. Cf. the collection by Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo (2001). For a general overview on post-Mao education in China, see Vickers / Zeng (2017).

34 German original: *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats* 1884.

35 One may note that when translations of Chinese archaeological work, bound to deal with this ideological straightjacket even in scholarship, were published in the West, irritations arose. See the remarkably outspoken critical foreword by British archaeologist Peter J. Ucko in the widely disseminated work of Chang / Xu: *The Formation of Chinese Civilization* (2005). For a more accommodating view, see Shelach (2004). The use of the Chinese translation term for 'matriarchy' (usually *muquan* 母權, lit.: mothers' power / right) is rather avoided in Chinese publications to use the term *muxi* 母系 (which is rather 'matrilineality') instead, already suggesting some uneasiness with the 19th century model. Engels, in fact, had taken some distance from Bachofen's term 'mother's right' (Mutterrecht) himself, though with the argument that there were no *legal* rights, and stated he used it only as a short-hand term. See Engels (1884: 48).

education bureau of the Central Propaganda Department, the societal education centre of CCTV, the academic association of broadcasting, and the study society on audio-visual education programmes. The film clip visually tours the museum with its interpretations of the findings, interspersing some views of the outside real excavation, and adds some imagination on the lives the Hemudu people might have led. A short didactic explanation by the director of the museum points out the 'contributions' Hemudu provided for 'China' and its archaeology, while a localist reading is strictly avoided (as is a link to Southeast Asia which has been proposed, as mentioned, by some archaeologists outside of China).[36] This film clip is addressing the Chinese citizens as a national TV public and has a decidedly nationalist ring, and it is to solicit viewers to consider visiting the site as a tourist in the future.

Compared to this 10 minutes TV film clip, the slightly longer *Zhonghua hun* educational video (disc 7) (14 minutes), designed for classroom use, introduces the intended watching pupils also to the history of the excavation in the 1970s, providing some historical footage (which stresses not only expertise but also the 'labour' that went into the excavation),[37] using material of Zhejiang TV, too. This educational video, produced on initiative of the Ministry of Education, dwells more soberly on didactic explanation. It highlights Hemudu as 'home' to rice production, focuses on pottery, and explains to the intended watching pupils in more detail how ancient tools were used. It also addresses the site as of importance in all sorts of disciplinary histories, from agriculture to architecture to art, to finally end up with politics by pointing out that CCP (Chinese Communist Party) general secretary Jiang Zemin (in office at the time of the late 1990s) had written the museum's name in his calligraphy, thus endorsing it also from the political side.[38]

The 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 (Shao 1998), which is explicitly addressing youth (like the textbooks and the *Zhonghua hun*-video, while the TV clip had the Chinese citizens at large in mind), spelt out the official reading of the Hemudu site of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras.[39] Like the educational video, it focuses on the

36 E.g., Australian archaeologist Peter Bellwood includes Southern China, i.e., the regions south of the Yangzi, into Southeast Asia (Bellwood 1992: 56) and addresses Hemudu in this regard (92, 96, and 102).

37 As Schmalzer (2008: 125, 140) remarked for the case of Palaeontology, this was also to show that excavations meant 'labour', and were done by workers, i.e., a category of people rhetorically privileged during Mao's time.

38 For calligraphy as a political tool, see Kraus (1991).

39 As will be recalled from chapter 1 of the present book, the booklet series on the single first list sites of 'patriotic education showcase bases' was on the stacks of school libraries and reprinted also through the 2000s, with a new layout version started in 2012 at the very end of the Hu Jintao era. These booklets thus can serve as a mirror for the official reading of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras handed out to Chinese youth. For consistency, I will cite the original layout version throughout.

process of finding the place, to move on to the issue of how the people might have looked like (in reconstructions based on the bones found: one male and one female are presented), since they are deemed 'ancestors' of the people now living in the area – thus following the line of thinking mentioned above with 'Peking Man' and local 'continuity' as a given;[40] here, the *anthropological* closeness to Southeast Asia is cautiously mentioned, but with the addition that there is enough proof of interaction with northern China to point out the South's contribution to later Shang and Zhou *cultures* in China (19). Thus, there are 'local' special traits without challenging a 'common' Chinese *cultural* past. Beyond humans, another focus is on which animals could be certified to have lived there at the time and which of them were domesticated, the tools for hunting and fishing and – most importantly – of agricultural activities, the eating habits with pottery, also introducing the fact that the findings were in different layers, i.e., from different times, alerting the young intended readership to the fact of the need of a diachronic view of the site and its inhabitants. The construction of pole houses (proudly claimed to be the 'oldest in the world': 102) is explained as primarily a reaction to the wet climate, linking such findings to similar minorities' practices of today (by which these minorities are, needless to say, also 'patriotically' addressed as representatives of 'China'). With pottery, e.g., links to Yunnan minorities – and Taiwanese aborigines! – are named (76). Local pride, however, is also stressed, e.g., with the excavation of a well which is significantly older than the first well found in northern China to date.[41] Thus, the long-established narrative of the Yellow River (Huanghe) being the 'cradle' of Chinese civilisation is the main point challenged by the Hemudu findings (126). A key theme is the finding of cultivated (and cooked) rice which is to correct the former assumption that rice was cultivated first in India and Japan (hence the subspecies' naming 'indica' and 'japonica'), to argue that China's Yangzi region was, in fact, the origin.[42] Furthermore, from the burial findings, life habits, social arrangements (including stratification and 'matriarchy' supposedly sustaining the Marxist version of history's development), and beliefs are hypothesised. Sun worship, e.g., exemplified in the iconised excavated ivory item interpreted as two birds with a sun, is claimed to be ubiquitous in China all over,

40 Cf. Shao (1998: 13–20). This reflects the research preference to sustain 'continuity' to generate an argument for 'ancestors'. While, as mentioned above, there was no consensus in Republican times whether 'wild' Peking Man was 'desirable' as an 'ancestor', in PRC this assumption was viewed more positively, and for the neolithic Hemudu people, in post-Mao China there was no such doubt.

41 Shao (1998: 91). Here, Hemudu and Shanghai's Majiabang culture are said to have preceded the North about 1000 years.

42 Shao (1998: 100–101. The 'origin' of rice cultivation remains a hotly debated issue in scholarship, though.

from Yunnan to Inner Mongolia (110) (thus reinforcing once more the modern national boundaries), and even worldwide. This way, Hemudu is neatly fit into the historical materialism narrative obligatory to follow.

Finally, the national designation as a heritage site and 'patriotic education base', and the construction of the site and museum as such are detailed in this booklet designed for youth (which can be also read as a justification of the curators as to their conforming to the requirements of 'patriotic education' as handed out politically in 1994 – cf. also chapter 1 of the present book). Guides were trained to provide the 'correct' and 'patriotic' narrative first of all to elementary and junior secondary pupils (131). While Hemudu has become part of textbook narratives on 'China's' historical beginnings, as mentioned, the site is, however, also to serve as a study ground for the 'pre-historical culture of China's South' (*Zhongguo nanfang shiqian wenhua* 中国南方史前文化) (115) – a wording that suggests to the reader that somehow there is something like a 'Southern culture'. Yet, the narrative is careful to stress that all areas in what today constitutes China should be understood to have contributed to the creation of the Chinese nation 'together' (123), to prevent too much stress on a 'Southern' identity.

A 'nationalisation' of sorts is also given by the fact that some Hemudu excavation 'highlights' have made it into postage stamps, namely in a series of 1996, stressing the pole houses with wood-pole remnants (for housing), rice cultivation with a shovel bound to a stone handle (for economics), movement on water with a paddle (for transport), and the birds-with-sun 'worship' icon for 'beliefs' (the 'superstructure' in Marxist understanding).[43]

A common problem Hemudu shares with many excavation sites lies, however, in the fact, that the best pieces have been moved up in the museum hierarchy, first of all to the provincial museum of Zhejiang, and the 'top' pieces to Beijing, which means that those are locally available as replicas only. Still, the site tries to interest more tourists to come to the locality: a short documentary was produced for screening at the museum to illustrate the material findings not so easily comprehensible for the average tourist in a more imaginative way (132). Compared to other sites, like the historically much more recent Terracotta Army of the First Emperor (see below), where the visitor sees the original excavation pits with the spectacular artefacts, or to a modern folklore minorities' village to simulate daily life, the Hemudu exhibition is designed as something in between. To render the site attractive for tourists, it works with replicas and reconstructions (*fuyuan* 复原)[44]

43 The stamp series of 1996 can be found at 'Hemudu neolithic tools' (2015).

44 This is one of the most hotly debated terms in Chinese heritage conservation. The 'China Principles' for the conservation of heritage sites mandatory to follow since 2000, define the term as 'resto-

(something deemed necessary),[45] as otherwise the visitor would not grasp the significance of the findings (129–130).

That the site struggled with attracting tourists is also reflected in the fact that the display was revised and updated in 2009, as the more recent narrative in the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* series discloses (Ding / Pan 2019: 62). Above all, more scenic recreations were added for visitors to imagine life at the times, stressing pole housing and its construction, gender-specific division of labour etc. (63). The site, discovered in the 1970s, had became open to the public only in 1993, i.e., only briefly before it was nominated a 'patriotic education showcase base'. After the 2009 overhaul, the new 2019 Xi Jinping-era narrative shows a further shift with its notable accent on Hemudu as proving that 'the Chinese' (*Zhonghua minzu* 中华民族) have demonstrated to be also mobile on water early on, moving on and between rivers and the near sea, thus enlarging the usual 'earth-bound' understanding of 'the Chinese' with a more pluralistic and less static conception (and thus indirectly also hinting at the maritime agenda so important to recent political concerns in the PRC). Furthermore, art and the esteem of jade objects as a 'typical' 'Chinese' tradition is also traced back to Hemudu in the new narrative. (Neolithic jade objects, as we will see with Anyang, would be eagerly collected already in Shang times).[46] Civilisational 'Chinese' techniques of weaving, lacquer, and the digging of canals are also pointed out as already present in Hemudu (65–66). In short, the continuities with later Chinese cultural practices are stressed to mark Neolithic Hemudu as an unquestionably 'Chinese' civilisational ancestor in the present-day framing.

On-site, as I observed in 2016, the visitor is offered a broad experience: arrival at the site is already part of it, since entry is at the other side of the river which means one arrives at the site itself only by slowly crossing the river with a boat, and thus perceives it as water-directed (and removed from modern motorisation). A huge stone remake of the excavated small ivory item, interpreted as figuring two birds with a sun in between, greets the visitor as the icon of the site. This icon also figures on various book covers on the subject of Hemudu (and was, as mentioned, also turned into a postage stamp design). The viewer is first to visit the museum which is built recalling the architectural 'Neolithic style' (if not on poles), to then move to the outside excavations. This way, the main narrative is provided before moving to

ration' in their new Chinese-English edition (*Zhongguo wenwu guji baohu zhunze* 2015: 44, 113), which clearly is not the meaning here. The literal meaning of restore or return plus original here applies to recreation of immagined life scenes.

45 Cf. Varutti (2014: 61) who also noted the frequent use of replicas not perceived as problematic in Chinese museums since they help sustain the overarching narrative.

46 Cf. Rawson (2023, chapter 1) on jades in the equally Southern Neolithic Liangzhu culture near present-day Hangzhou in the very same Zhejiang Province where Hemudu belongs to as well.

the 'real thing', since the remains to be seen are hard to grasp in significance for any non-specialist (see 2.1.1). Thus, outdoor recreations, including one of a possible scene of ancient building work (see fig. 2.1.2), is shown which are to update the 'persuasiveness' of the site since the 2009 exhibition overhaul.

Fig. 2.1.1 Outdoor excavation of wooden poles (Hemudu) (photograph by the author, 2016)

Fig. 2.1.2 Outdoor recreation of an imagined scene of Neolithic people constructing a house (Hemudu) (photograph by the author, 2016)

For memorialising how the site was discovered (which would, as mentioned, trigger a rewriting of 'China's' pre-history), the site's offer is enriched by detailing the archaeological process with photographs of the excavation time. They also sustain the narrative of scientific progress archaeology has undergone in PRC times. In fact, in 1973 when excavations began (and followed by a second round in 1977), the Air Force had to be asked to send someone for taking (birds-eye) photographs (thus marking the PLA as also contributing its share to the final rewriting of 'China's' pre-history). Zhejiang TV was employed for filming, documenting the process and making the site known (which then also served as footage for the two 'patriotic' filmic treatments addressed above). Locally sold publications directed at an adult general public also stress with pride that the area had once been seen as peripheral to Chinese culture, due to the lack of archaeological work before the establishment of the PRC. But that all changed with the excavations. This way, local pride is re-gained by arguing for the Yangzi area being now recognised, due to Hemudu, as a further integral part of 'China's genesis',[47] adding also rice to the millet of the North as a characteristic food of 'China' early on (Sun 2008: 65). Furthermore, since different types of rice have been found, the site can also sustain claims of breadth in this regard, though findings in Hunan of the 1990s are now considered even older than Hemudu (Zhou 2002: 30, 34; Sun 2008: 70). Interestingly, though, Hemudu remained in the Chinese textbooks as the main example, not being re-placed by the new findings. Inferring from the 'Peking Man' site example above, the role in archaeology, here for revising the former Huanghe (Yellow River)-centred narrative into a more pluralistic understanding of 'China's' origins, trumped the question of dating, and the 'iconisation' of Hemudu required more stability in textbook representations to gain force.[48] Furthermore, as with the 'Peking Man' site, Hemudu rendered very rich material remains, including in this case rarely preserved organic material like wood, given the long-term waterlogged condition of the low-laying site (Sun 2013: 556). More problematic (and usually avoided) is the assertion that cannibalism might have been practiced by the Hemudu people, as the locally sold material mentions (Zhou 2002: 50). But other aspects are more prone to take pride in. E.g., excavations of woven fabric prove the respective technology was already available at Hemudu (Zhou 2002: 68). In fact, with women's burials, spin-dle whorls have been found which are taken as material evidence for the gendered

47 Zhou (2002: 15). See also the more detailed book by Sun (2008). Sun Guoping has also been asked to contribute the chapter on Hemudu in the *Companion to Chinese Archaeology*, edited in 2013 by Ann Underhill, where he stresses similar points in a more scientific vein.

48 Cf. also Sun (2008: 185) who points out that Hemudu remained the key factor in revising the previous assumptions and was not supplanted by the earlier cases.

division of labour practiced by the Hemudu people (and 'the Chinese' thereafter) (Zhou 2002: 73). Thus, the finds are interpreted in ways to reinforce the historiographical framework Chinese citizens know from school, and balancing out local specificities with overarching 'national' concerns to fit into a narrative of a regionally inclusive 'Chinese' pre-history.

Case study: the Yinxu site

While Hemudu is a 'pre-historic' Neolithic site in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, the excavations put on display in the **Anyang Yinxu bowuyuan** 安阳殷墟博物苑 (Yinxu museum park in Anyang)[49] (Henan Province) (list 1, 1997), move us into 'historical' times (although the definition of boundaries of the latter are tendentially extended backward in the PRC in recent years).[50] Interestingly, the Shang dynasty (16th–11th century BC) as such receives only a very cursory treatment in Chinese history textbooks – over time even rather decreasing in proportion in PRC textbooks, likely because of the problematic topic of 'slave-holder society' once mandatory to dwell upon in history teaching, given the Marxist theory of socio-economic stages.[51] Thus, the textbook narratives pupils encounter in school mostly focus on the Shang's end and replacement by the succeeding Zhou, but Shang bronzes are presented as icons of 'Chineseness'. In fact, in textbook presentation, bronzes (Shang to Zhou) are treated in an extra chapter (in the current 2016 textbook version joined by the ever more prominent oracle bones writing),[52] though

49 The term *bowuyuan* slightly differs from *bowuguan* 博物馆, the usual term for a museum: while *guan* is indoor, *yuan* 苑, meaning park, is outdoor. There is also *bowuyuan* 博物院 which has become a preferred term in recent years with a more 'courtly' association, though this, too, is indoor. (Cf. also chapter 2.2 for the regional museums recently termed this way.)

50 The current history textbook picks up on pre-Yinxu sites to spell out more of the preceding periods, including the purported Xia dynasty, suggesting the Erlitou 二里头 site in Henan to 'reflect the class division and status bounderies of the Xia king's court' (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 19).

51 A diachronic look into PRC junior secondary history textbooks as the ones virtually every Chinese had to study in school reveals that the Marxist theory of historical stages was the main dividing criterion up to the 1980s and – if less prominently – was still explicitly referred to in the 1990s.

52 The most recent textbook (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016) adds the oracle bones on equal footing (pp. 23–26.) Interestingly, the Sichuan site of Sanxingdui with its spectacular bronzes was addressed in the preceding textbook version (*Zhongguo lishi* 2008) (but dropped again in the most recent 2016 textbook). In any case, the Sanxingdui site is not (yet) included in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. Sanxingdui has been portrayed in scholarship as clearly different from the Shang and thus from 'Chinese' civilisation, if the latter is to be identified with the Shang dynasty. In other words, it is a site potentially rather leaning to a regional identity, though interactions with the Shang are also claimed more recently.

addressing – besides the remarkable technological achievements – also the human cost (in the sense of 'slave-holder society' in Marxist terms). Thus, for pupils, Shang times come across as also rather cruel (human sacrifices), though undisputedly outstanding in technology and aesthetics.[53] And the excavations at Anyang are cited for both.[54]

Yinxu, the remains of the last Shang capital located at Anyang ('Yin' 殷 as the name of the city, *xu* 墟 as rubble or ruins because this is how the succeeding Zhou dynasty termed the former capital after they had ousted the Shang: rubble of Yin) is also presented to the national TV public by the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clips on China's 'patriotic education showcase bases', produced in 1998, in this case by the education department of Henan TV and supported by the same institutions as in the case of Hemudu. Since this film clip was created before the inscription of Yinxu as a UNESCO site (in 2006), it is much more openly focused on the theme of nationalism than it would be feasible later. However, one may note that the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips were broadcasted (and sold as DVDs) also well beyond the UNESCO inscription period and thus continue to shape understandings for a Chinese public, all 'internationalisation' by the UNESCO inscription notwithstanding. Special stress was put for the Chinese TV audience on bronzes and especially the oracle bones as the beginning of writing. The film clip reveals that at the time of its filming (1998), the exhibition featured paintings in a very popular style to help imagine Shang times, especially for youth, which could be hardly kept for an international UNESCO public (and thus have disappeared on-site in the meantime). The popular style, however, conformed well with the site's booklet in the '100 patriotic education showcase bases' benchmark series of 1997 – see below, which also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of the site as such (1987), where 'stories' about the largely elusive Shang times try to enliven the historical period for youths' imagination (Yang / Du 1998: 132–161). More tangible issues substantiated by the findings like transportation with horse-drawn chariots are included in the TV film clip's presentation as well (not mentioning, though, that they are seen as one of the most likely 'foreign' imports of the Shang, introduced from Western Asia over the steppe – cf. Shelach-Lavi (2015: 257).) But the TV narrative also does not fail to briefly mention the 'slave-holder society' to conform to Marxist dogma for its PRC-socialised audience.

53 Notably, compared to earlier textbook versions, e.g., *Zhongguo lishi* (2008), the cruelty issue is toned down in the very short treatment in the current (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016) textbook version with its stronger accent on Chinese achievements.

54 The more recent excavations of earlier Shang settlements, namely in Zhengzhou, are not yet treated in detail (but do appear in footnotes in the 2016 textbook).

Comparing the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip with the slightly longer educational *Zhonghua hun*-video on Yinxu, one notes that like in the case of Hemudu, both filmic productions obviously based themselves on the same footage. For this educational video, Henan Normal University's audio-visual education entity is named as responsible, with production time given as July 1998. Different from the more soberly approach of the educational video on Hemudu, however, the Yinxu educational video is heavily charged with elating music. Its take on Yinxu stresses the site as a 'cultural heritage' issue, and it focuses in the beginning on the excavated palace remains as signs of rulership, before moving to the more spectacular 'contents', i.e., the bronzes and oracle bones. Comparing both filmic treatments that show the site in the late 1990s, with the subsequent overhaul of the site for the UNESCO nomination (in 2006), it becomes, however, clear that not only the painted stories, but also many on-site recreations (of buildings, statues with motives of Shang jade pendants etc.) had been removed after the late 1990s to avoid the impression of Disneyfication to international eyes.

The respective booklet in the benchmark '100' patriotic education showcase bases series, in turn, addresses the point of how this site might contribute to history education explicitly. It argues that the Yinxu site in Anyang has a great potential to emotionally engage pupils, showing them – as it is called here without hesitation – the 'slave-holder society' via its cultural relics (Yang / Du 1998: 4). Furthermore, the site is framed as a 'proof' against some Western scholars' arguing for China's culture having come 'from the West' – a more than dated theory, but still emotionally charged and thus fitting to figure in a 'patriotic' narrative to rouse sentiments of indignation and hurt national pride with the pupils.[55] For its 'patriotic education' potential, the site which has been set up, as mentioned, as a place to visit in 1987,

55 Yang / Du (1998: 3). This likely refers to the theory of Swedish geologist Andersson (and others), who had discovered both 'Peking man' and the Yangshao Neolithic site and assumed that Yangshao pottery showed the Western influence by comparative dating with other sites (which has been successfully challenged thereafter). The debate raged in Chinese archaeology for a long time. See Liu / Chen (2012: 7–8). One may also associate this more historically with the 19th century minor figure in Western academics, Lacouperie, who had formulated this idea of 'Western origin' of Chinese culture which was picked up positively (!) in early 20th century China by some intellectuals for political reasons, to argue that like the Aryans in India, also the Chinese were an in-migrating conquering people, with Huangdi (cf. also chapter 3.1 of the present book) leading them against the local Miao who were pushed by the conquerors towards the Southwest. (Cf. Müller 2008: 62, 66). This theory was quickly dropped after the Xinhai revolution of 1911/12 and the founding of the Chinese Republic. Incidentally, during the Cultural Revolution, the Soviets were accused of still holding up the idea of Chinese culture's 'Western origin' (which should be considered a 'shame'), and therefore the stress on 'local characteristics' of Neolithic pottery was in fact prescribed by national key Chinese museums like the Shanghai Museum. Cf. Lu (2014: 126).

prepared itself in various regards as it shows ancient civilisation by the triad of city building, writing, and bronzes. It also illustrated the living at the time (thus going beyond textual explanation), and offered trained people to introduce certain highlights on spot. National and international activities for research and for summer camps etc. for pupils were organised, and re-creations, e.g., of buildings, added. That way, at the late 1990s, the site tried to conform to the 'patriotic education' prescriptions (cf. chapter 1 of the present book). The 'patriotic' booklet legitimised the site's take by referring to *the* authority on ancient history in PRC times, Guo Moruo 郭沫若, who was also a well-known Communist writer, intellectual, and key figure in the PRC cultural heritage system. He dominated the official writing of China's ancient history, reflected in the textbooks pupils had to study (Dirlik 2011: 74–75; based on Dirlik 1978). Guo, who dedicated himself to the study of oracle bone inscriptions beyond his career as a leftist writer, ever since his long sojourn in Japan in Republican times,[56] visited Yinxu in 1959 (at the time of the Great Leap Forward, started in late 1957 and officially launched in 1958) and praised it as a perfect place to learn about ancient Chinese culture. He also memorialised his visit with poems. Backed by this Maoist-era scholarly-cum-political authority, the 'patriotic' booklet also proudly asserts in the more 'nationalistic' vein of the Jiang Zemin years, that Yinxu is also to show many civilisational 'firsts', be it in China, sometimes in the world of which one can be proud. For 'patriotic education' purposes, continuity up to the present day should be stressed, not the least over character writing, to drive home the point to pupils that their lives today are in fact connected to those times of the Shang (12).

The authority of Guo Moruo is also cited for identifying the Shang with the 'slave-holder stage' according to the Marxist paradigm (13).[57] (In fact, this was an issue Guo had shifted his views on: while he first considered the Shang as still belonging to the primitive society stage in his seminal work of 1930 on ancient Chinese society, by the mid/late 1930s he argued for the Yin–Shang times belonging already to the slave-holder society stage, based on the findings in Yinxu.) [58] Furthermore (like with Zhoukoudian), the key role of *Chinese*

56 Guo is still credited with deciphering a substantial number of oracle bone characters. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, he worked in Tokyo's Tōyō bunkō library on materials collected by the Japanese.

57 Although his thoughts on periodisation slightly changed over time, namely when exactly to start the next stage of 'feudalism', his basic historiographical views were in line with Mao who supported him in this regard.

58 See Dirlik (1978) chapter 5 on the basic concept of Guo Moruo's periodisation and its later revisions. In 1930, Guo had his views of the time published as a book on ancient Chinese society. As becomes clear from reading Guo's own account in 1972 of his changing views on periodisation, the

archaeologists in the excavation is something stressed in the 'patriotic' narrative of the booklet, with the first more systematic excavations being in 1928 in Republican times (21). Already before, Chinese intellectuals like Luo Zhenyu 罗振玉 or Wang Guowei 王国维 had started deciphering the oracle bones' inscriptions after the first oracle bones had been recognised as such in 1899 when sold as Chinese traditional 'medicine'.[59] The Yinxu excavations (since 1928) by Chinese archaeologists under the aegis of the newly founded Academia Sinica are today often seen as the starting point of modern Chinese archaeology (Liu / Chen 2012: 6). Academia Sinica would, however, move to Taiwan before the founding of the PRC on the mainland, which also meant that scholars divided: Li Ji 李济, the early important archaeologist, moved to Taiwan and is thus marginalised in PRC accounts, although he was instrumental in the Yinxu excavations, while Xia Nai 夏鼐, a slightly younger leading scholar in archaeology, remained on the mainland and would go on to dominate this disciplinary field in the PRC.[60]

Since both the 'Peking Man' site and Yinxu were at the earliest time attracting foreigners, these are only cautiously connected in the 'patriotic' narrative in a 'positive' vein to the development of early Chinese archaeology by using (and introducing) new Western methods of excavation, but foreigners clearly figure negatively with the issue of colonial 'theft'. E.g., the 'patriotic' booklet on Yinxu highlights that 'patriotism' here also means to remember how foreigners cleverly fleeced the Chinese, stole their heritage and scattered it around the world. Thus, pride in early Chinese civilisation is mixed in the narrative with indignation about exploitation (Yang / Du 1998: 34–38). This topic is rhetorically connected to two

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main change was, however, about when to *end* the slave-holder stage which he adjusted thrice during the long Zhou period, while the shift regarding the Yin [Shang] period as being already a slave-holder society was stabile after the late 1930s, given also the Yinxu excavations with its many human sacrifices which to his mind had clarified the issue. (See Guo Moruo: 'Zhongguo gudaishi de fenqi wenti' (The problem of periodisation in ancient Chinese history) 中国古代史的分期问题) which was integrated in the 1972 edition of his book on the slave system he had published several times over the 1950s when he had already affirmed the Yin (Shang) as belonging to this phase.) (See Guo Moruo: *Nulizhi shidai* 1956: 4; for the 1972 evaluation: see *Nulizhi shidai* 1972 edition, 'instead of a preface'). (Parts of the book had already appeared in the years 1950–1952, and the earliest book edition was in 1954. The 1956 edition referred to here is closest in time to his visit of Yinxu.) Scholars of ancient China have voiced criticism of Guo's ideology-driven approach. Cf. Falkenhausen (2006: 23n54, 410n29) and on slavery specifically: Yates (2001: 285, 301n27).

59 Yang / Du (1998: 32). See also Liu / Chen (2012: 5–6).

60 On the role of Xia Nai in PRC archaeology and the field's 'politics', see the critical and bitter comments by Tong (1995). However, it seems that in spite of Tong's portrayal of Xia Nai as the personified leadership of the Party in archaeology, suggesting he 'did not endure the personal suffering of so many intellectuals of the period' (Tong 1995: 197), Xia Nai was nevertheless not spared during the Cultural Revolution.

foreign missionaries (who are thus presumably 'demasked' as to their intentions in China): Frank Herring Chalfant and Samuel Couling (36),[61] who published early on about the oracle bones' inscriptions they had collected. However, the intended young Chinese readership is also told that their moving into this field was helped by the fact that the Chinese scholars at the time had not cared enough about it themselves (37) – again a familiar rhetorical device often used to encourage more Chinese commitment. But the topic of colonial and missionary 'meddling' is suggested explicitly for 'patriotic education' purposes as a good point to stress (since emotionally charged) (38). In the period of 1928–1937, the young reader learns, substantial Chinese activities finally brought more to light in Anyang, not the least the discovery of the oracle bones 'archive' pit, also termed 'the world's first library' (39, 59). Thus, this period can be considered the birth of a 'Chinese archaeology'. In 1938, during the Second Sino–Japanese War, the Japanese, in turn, sent special teams, and they, too, 'robbed' the site (40). In sum, the site's 'patriotic' reading points out that the 'capitalist' Westerners (including the tsarist Russians), who also used their missionaries, as well as the Japanese 'plundered China' since the late 19th century (89), – a narrative fully conforming to the 'Chinese humiliation' storyline much stressed in the 1990s (Callahan 2010).

In PRC times, things would finally change for the better, according to the 'patriotic' narrative, when CASS (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) established an archaeology department (following Soviet precedent and picking up the work of Republican-era Academia Sinica by then on Taiwan). The excavation at Yinxu of human sacrifices (and people 'joining' the dead), however, then led to intensive discussions about their relation to the Marxist 'slave-holder society' in China (Yang / Du 1998: 103), which again shows that sites also gain national importance because of their role in the development of PRC scholarship. As mentioned above, Guo Moruo based his revised argument on the Yin (Shang) belonging to the 'slave-holder stage' on the Yinxu excavations of human sacrifices, though recent Chinese scholarship points out that there is a difference in treatment between human sacrifices and those 'joining the dead'.[62] In PRC times, the tomb of the royal consort Fu

61 Interestingly, the subsequent Canadian Presbyterian missionary James Mellon Menzies, stationed in Anyang, is not named who was to become a leading scholar in oracle bones. On Menzies and his scholarly contributions in this regard, see Dong (2005, chapter 9).

62 As Tang (2009: 144–148) emphasises, there is a clear difference in treatment and placement between 'human sacrifices' (presumably POWs, at times beheaded, and without any particular provisions, thrown into mass graves in more distance to the tomb owner), and those 'joining the dead' to go on serving him in the afterlife, like wives or concubines, or personal staff who had been with the dead during the latter's lifetime, all buried at the same time with the tomb owner but with more personal provisions. Furthermore, during repeated rituals after the burial, human sacrifices

Hao 妇好 (Fu Zi) of around 1200 BC,[63] discovered in 1976 and not looted before, was one of the major triumphs of Chinese archaeologists at the site (41), rendering some of the 'top pieces' available today. (In fact, Fu Hao's tomb also showed that at her time, ancient, i.e., Neolithic, objects were already treasured, thus marking her as an early Chinese owner or inheritor if not outright collector of antiquities – cf. Linduff 2018: 271.)

The Yinxu site is, like Zhoukoudian, where 'Peking Man' was found, a UNESCO world heritage site today, as mentioned, though inscribed later (2006)[64] – a labelling pointedly stressed on-site.[65] A key feature of Yinxu is seen especially in the connection to Chinese writing over the excavated oracle bones. The present museum is self-consciously designed to stress those features (and to conform to requests by the UNESCO). It thus tries to combine nationalist interest with 'internationalism', as the local brochure of the museum asserts. Strikingly, the visitor is made to walk back in time along a timeline which takes as starting point not the present, but the 1911 Xinhai revolution![66] This means one walks from the end of monarchy (1911/12) 'back' through all dynasties (including those before the establishment of the Chinese empire in the 3rd century BC) up to the Shang (which also might signal to Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese visitors with the 1911 revolution – cf. also chapter 4.2 of the present book on the Wuchang Uprising site – a 'common' starting point prior to the 1949 political and systemic divide!). Central topics to be stressed in the museum exhibition are the bronzes (designs being repeated on the museum's walls) and the oracle bones, suggestively with a tortoise shell reproduction in a water basin in the underground museum's court. 'International standards' are also invoked with the partition of the exhibition into single halls according to

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were offered, too, thus making for some human sacrifices being subsequent to the tomb owner's burial.

63 Some scholars have argued that the character should be understood as composed of the phonetic right part (and thus read *zi*) and the left part marking her as female. According to Cao Dingyun, this meant she was a daughter from a state or area named Zi (though with the different character 梓). See Cao (2020: 353) and his own referenced work of 1989 there. The common reading of her name, though, is (still) Fu Hao.

64 For the covered area of Yinxu and the buffer zone which comprises the then recently discovered Huanbei site which is supposed to be an earlier Shang capital, see the UNESCO entry 'Yin Xu' (UNESCO 2006).

65 Nominations of 'world heritage sites' have been high on the Chinese political agenda, turning China into the world's most active party in this regard. (See Yan 2018). It was deemed a helpful tool for heightening China's soft power. (Silverman / Blumenfield 2013). But it is, of course, also addressed to the domestic audience to show China's by now 'equal footing' on the international stage.

66 *Yinxu bowuguan*, Anyang, n.d., p. 1. The following description of the museum's intentions in arrangement is based on this leaflet.

'accepted' standards of 'civilisation' which are to be shown as fulfilled by the Shang: city building (the city of Yin being the last and longest-used of the Shang capitals, dating back to the 14th century BC, while in 1999 – i.e., after the nomination as a 'patriotic education showcase base' but before the UNESCO nomination – a further Shang capital site across the river has been discovered in Anyang: Huanbei 洹北,[67] said to be possibly the immediate predecessor of Yin: it is now in the buffer zone of the inscribed Yinxu UNESCO site), metallurgy (the bronzes), ritual system (represented mainly by jade objects), and writing (the oracle bones). Accordingly, the visitor is made to walk through these 'civilisation criteria'.

Looking into the local Chinese-language brochure of the museum, collected during my visit in 2015, which is obviously addressing Chinese visitors, though possibly also those not living in the PRC, the site is by now interestingly presented as defined over the locality, today belonging to Henan province, by pointing out that the Shang's key territory was 'Henan province' (!) (though – apart from the evident fact that provinces as such are a much later invention – this province and its borders are also historically contingent: in fact, at the time of early superficial excavations in the first years of the 20th century, Anyang, then called Zhangde 彰德, belonged to Zhili 直隶 province, then to Henan province, and in the first years of the PRC to the short-lived Pingyuan 平原 province, before becoming once more part of Henan province). In short, the present-day province of Henan also uses this site domestically to pose and brand itself as 'cradle' of Chinese civilisation for local pride. The 'city' part of the exhibition tries to give some glimpse of 'daily life' of the Shang, even if this is very hard to present in material terms. The most spectacular finding in this regard prove the existence of water pipes, while figurines are thought to represent the 'looks' of the people at the time and their stratified society. The delicate issue of cannibalism, less prone to solicit pride today, is represented by a cooking vessel with a human skull found inside which was apparently cooked,[68] which provides a more drastic illustration of the times as also very cruel (a feature typically pointed out also in textbook descriptions of the Shang Chinese audiences are familiar with). The more spectacular exhibition part is, of course, the bronzes, but beyond the ritual items also bronze weapons (with a victim's pierced skull) show the

67 For a more recent treatment of Huanbei and urbanisation, see Jing et al. (2013).

68 One may, however, question the conclusion whether cooking someone's head must automatically mean cannibalism (though several instances of cannibalism through Chinese history can be ascertained). As Tang Jigen suggests, the two heads found which had been cooked have distinct features and probably were of important 'enemies', and he also mentions an example of a human skull being inscribed as an offering. To write on a skull would logically mean to get rid of the flesh first. That the latter was consumed by the Yin people is possible, but no selfevident conclusion as long as typical illnesses caused by cannibalism are not ascertained with Shang people.

multiple uses metallurgy was put to. Jade, in turn, is presented as a precious item accompanying burials with the often-seen motif of birds.[69] Finally, the oracle bones lead to the positive climax, i.e., the development of Chinese writing. One of the oracle bones even made it into a national postage stamp – like the 'top findings' of Hemudu mentioned above,[70] while bronzes with inscriptions link the two Shang 'highlights': bronzes and writing. Also in the case of Yinxu, the most famous findings have been moved up the museum hierarchy to Beijing: the Houmuwu ding 后母戊鼎 (formerly read as Simuwu ding 司母戊鼎)[71] as the biggest bronze vessel (excavated in 1939 in Anyang and figuring on many book covers as an icon of ancient Chinese culture, having been housed earlier in Republican China's capital Nanjing)[72] is now placed in the new National Museum (a combination of the former Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution, see below 2.2) in Beijing. This leaves for Yinxu only a replica, which was installed, the 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 already argued, to respond to the pupils' expectation as they all know this item via their textbooks and want to 'see it' there (Yang / Du 1998: 87). And – the museum also points out more recently – some precious pieces excavated at Anyang are still overseas, notably pointing in its brochure to an example of an item now held in Japan.[73] Thus, the Chinese visitor is asked to ponder this fact which on the one hand should evoke pride that Shang culture is 'attractive' also for non-Chinese, on the other, that these pieces rightfully belong and must be transferred back to China in the future!

Interestingly, head of the Yinxu excavation team and one of the curators of the museum, Western-trained archaeologist Tang Jigen 唐际根, who had been a key

69 One may note that the 'updated' short filmic presentation of the site in the newly set up CCTV website (of 2021 – cf. chapter 1 of the present book) represents Yinxu by now with a news programme on an exhibition of jades, i.e., the cruelty factor gives way to the aesthetics.

70 See the 1996 stamp, available at 'Precious Chinese Archive' (2015).

71 Characters on oracle bones are sometimes mirrored, and the consensus in the meantime is the reading of Houmuwu ding, also taken over by the National Museum in Beijing by now (cf. National Museum of China n.d.). Notably, the current junior secondary history textbook (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 24) still uses Simuwu ding, adding the possible reading of Houmuwu ding only in a footnote. This, again, underlines the 'conservativeness' of the textbook genre.

72 Notably, the Houmuwu ding was moved to Nanjing after the Second Sino–Japanese War to celebrate Chiang Kai-shek's 60th birthday (who then ordered it to be placed in the Central Museum, i.e., today's Nanjing Museum).

73 One may recall that the Japanese are accused of having fleeced China's art treasures not the least during the Second Sino–Japanese war. The heavy Houmuwu ding, for one, had been reburied at wartime locally and 're-excavated' after the war when it was moved to Nanjing where Chiang Kai-shek's government was located. When Chiang moved to Taiwan and took many of China's art treasures with him, now held in the Palace Museum in Taipei, the Houmuwu ding was not taken, probably given his challenging weight. It therefore has become even more precious to the PRC.

figure in promoting the site for UNESCO inscription,[74] also wrote a popular book in Chinese which is also sold locally in the museum. In this book addressed to the Chinese citizen at large, designed in the context of the nomination, Tang tries to walk the fine line between the scientific aspect (e.g., evading any mentioning of the Marxist 'slave-holder society'), and an appeal to a Chinese-socialised readership. The existence of 'slaves' is only cautiously addressed as 'possible' and if so, numbers are said to have been small (Tang 2009: 59). Connected to this is the issue of human sacrifices and cruelty which Tang Jigeng focuses upon for the Chinese readership as these are aspects of the Shang civilisation most disturbing to modern visitors, namely if one is to consider the Shang as 'one's ancestors' (Tang 2009: 161).[75] While this aspect is less prone to further 'pride', the oracle bones as the earliest known form of Chinese writing do so more easily.[76] Although it cannot claim to be the oldest writing system in the world, it is at least the only one that is (in adapted form) still in use. In fact, to Tang Jigen, the main issue are the oracle bone inscriptions, which shows that with the UNESCO listing the accent was moved somewhat from bronzes to the evolution of Chinese writing.[77] (In fact, in 2017 the oracle bones as such were successfully registered in the UNESCO 'Memory of the World' documentary list as a further step.)[78] This accent on writing is now also repeated on site, and in Anyang city a specialised museum on Chinese writing has been established.

The locally available materials show, however, also different historiographical narratives competing with each other. E.g., another popular archaeology book on the famous tomb of Fu Hao sold in the museum as well at the time of my visit in 2015, more clearly directed to readers with a PRC educational background, still

74 A photograph of 2005 shows him explaining the site to the Korean representative of ICOMOS who then reported favourably, leading to the UNESCO inscription in 2006 in the end (Tang 2009: 4).

75 The large amount of killed humans found, be it as sacrifice to the ancestors, as sacrifice during buildings enclosed in the construction, as 'accompanying' a high-ranking dead by being buried alive, or the cruel treatment of supposedly subdued enemies by cooking the heads of their leaders are cited (Tang 2009: 72, 150–166).

76 Interestingly, the Chinese and English phrasing of an exhibition on oracle bones are slightly different in connotation: while the English 'Oracle bones reveal the past' promises the foreigner a 'true' look into an objective past, the Chinese *Yipian jiagu jing tianxia* 一片甲骨惊天下 (An oracle bone startles the world) advertises its character as impressing non-Chinese. (See the reproduction of the poster in Tang 2009: 184). This way, it serves the patriotic education agenda perfectly.

77 This is notable as it might reflect the fact that while there is much discussion whether anything excavated at earlier sites could be counted as 'writing', Anyang still claiming to be the 'first', there have been other sites excavated in China where bronzes were found and which are likely earlier, if not spectacular to the same degree as the Anyang bronzes. (For the early bronze age, see the recent summary by Bagley 2018).

78 Cf. UNESCO (2017) 'Chinese Oracle-Bone Inscriptions'.

keeps to the Marxist 'slave-holder society' concept and other socialism-inspired ideas, including remnants of 'matriarchy' to explain Fu Hao's range of action! (Gu 2006: 45)[79] While this book, too, concentrates on the oracle bones,[80] a notable feature is the accent in this publication on the Communist authority Guo Moruo, whose work on ancient Chinese culture and history had become a dogma of sorts in conventional historiography in PRC times, as mentioned. Guo wrote poems when he visited Yinxu in 1959, i.e., at the high time of the Maoist Great Leap Forward, in that context also stressing his 'rehabilitation' of the archetypical bad last Shang ruler Zhou 纣,[81] because of whom the Shang capital Yin thus was turned into 'rubbles' (Yinxu) by the succeeding dynasty, arguing that king Zhou had also his merits (in 'nationalist' terms), since he extended (if by force) Shang culture to a broader region in the South of present-day China (Gu 2006: 16–17). (This historical re-evaluation of king Zhou as a less negative figure was incidentally also shared by Mao![82])

Overall, interpretations offered in this locally-sold book on Fu Hao's tomb are feeding more openly into nationalist agendas, e.g., brushing aside any scholarly doubts raised regarding assertions that objects excavated in Yinxu have travelled over thousands of kilometres (to suggest the Shang's far-reaching contacts). While Tang's book thus represents a more scholarly approach, if popularised for the Chinese tourist, Gu's book keeps up the 'traditional' ideological viewpoints in line with what the domestic audience is familiar with from school.

For the modern tourist experience, though, the local community has also set up a drama troupe which plays some 'Shang stories' (of which the popular paintings had, as mentioned, been taken off after the late 1990s) to enliven the times long ago for Chinese visitors (and focuses, e.g., on the imagined romance between Shang king

79 As Wang (2004: 102) has noted, king Wu Ding's other wife Fu Jing 妇姘 was ranking higher than Fu Hao but was not recorded as a military leader. Nevertheless, Fu Jing's tomb, though looted, contained more arrowheads than Fu Hao's which was not looted. In short, the remarkable role of Fu Hao in this regard was not straightforwardly linked to status or could sustain any dogma of 'matriarchy'.

80 Obviously to keep respect for China's ancient civilisation, the author also points out comparisons with the Greeks and Romans, simply sidelining the older cases of Egypt and Mesopotamia. (Gu 2006: 15).

81 Notably, different from the last purported Xia ruler, Han historiographer Sima Qian portrayed the last Shang ruler King Zhou 'not always entirely negative'. Cf. Birrell (1993: 110). Guo Moruo as much as Mao Zedong valued Sima Qian highly.

82 Incidentally, Mao also shared Guo's views on the 'rehabilitation' of some other typical 'villains' in conventional historiography, e.g., of Cao Cao of the 3rd century AD (with whom both, Guo and Mao, furthermore shared the faible for poetry). For an overview of Mao's views on historical figures, see Ma (2008).

Wu Ding 武丁 and famous consort Fu Hao).[83] That way, this UNESCO site tries to market itself also in more 'popular' fashion to Chinese tourists.

In the more recent official 'patriotic' Xi Jinping-era framing of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' in the 2019 *Fengbei* series, the presentation of Yinxu has somewhat shifted (and integrates also newer findings after the nomination in 1997): by now, the focus is on Yinxu as the 'birth place' of Chinese archaeology, which is also leading the list of the '100 most important excavations in China in the 20th century' promulgated in the meantime (Tian 2019: 39, 41). Interestingly, the place is, however, once more called an 'excavated typical slave-holder society' (40), thus ideologically moving back to the Marxist dogma in the 'patriotic' reading. While the site is supposedly clearly showing 'Chinese characteristics' (*Zhongguo tese* 中国特色) – an evidently modern term, the broader presentation includes beyond the bronzes and the oracle bones also the various architectural foundations and the horse chariots, stressing that 'China' had chariots 'early on' (43). This likely is a reaction to the argument that the latter might have been introduced for Central Asia as many (foreign) archaeologists hold today (and show that in the Xi Jinping-era, awareness of alternative readings of historical facts is there, causing the perceived need to bring up contrary arguments, at least for the domestic audience). In fact, as I observed on-site in 2015, the chariots are highlighted in the outdoor display.[84] The 2019 'patriotic' narrative has, however, completely edited out the foreigners in the history of the excavations, focusing only on the Chinese archaeologists. On the other hand, the extensive 'human sacrifices' for ritual-religious reasons are also to show the dark side of those times (46–47). That way, the ambivalence of the Shang, tangible also in the textbooks, remains also in the Xi Jinping-era 'patriotic education' perspective.

The story of the Yinxu excavations, connected to the history of the development of 'Chinese' archaeology in 20th century China, made for its feasibility to be addressed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. The excavation the PRC would be most proud of, however, and which is the final one of excavation sites in terms of chronology of the site content to be integrated in the first list (1997) of this system, is the famous terracotta army of the First Emperor (3rd century BC): the **Qin Shihuang bingmayong bowuguan** 秦始皇兵马俑博物馆 (lit.: Museum of Qin Shihuang's tomb figures of warriors and horses). This spectacular and top tourist site has been extensively treated in secondary literature in many respects, so we

83 See Tang (2009: 171; 176) for some photos of a performance.

84 The introduced horse-drawn chariots were a 'prime instrument of war' at the time. Cf. Rawson (2023: 85), discussing the Anyang excavation).

can limit us here again to the educational 'patriotic' context, where the site as such, like Yinxu in Anyang, comes across as rather ambivalent: great aesthetics, but a cruel background. In fact, the evaluation of the First Emperor – notoriously contested in Chinese historiography,[85] most pointedly during the 20th century when the former verdict on him was called into question – is very mixed also in present-day school history, acknowledging his rational policies but decrying his oppressive rule.[86] The terracotta army is, however, unequivocally praised as an outstanding achievement in sculpture art and 'shining jewel in the world's art treasure house'.[87] It has grown into one of China's most famous archaeological sites, and given the possibility to send single terracotta statues also overseas, it has generated various overseas exhibitions.

In terms of 'patriotic education', the technical skill in the production process, the aesthetics and variegation of the statues and their 'realism' are stressed, but the site as such has been also called the 'biggest military museum of ancient China',[88] since it supposedly mirrors ancient warfare arrangements with different types of warriors, weapons, horse-drawn chariots etc.[89] As with 'Peking Man', this site was inscribed on the PRC's application in the UNESCO list of world heritage early on (1987) and thus functions also externally as a marker of 'Chineseness' (UNESCO 1987b). Advertisements of the site rarely fail to mention that Jacques Chirac, later to become French president, purportedly once named it the 'eighth wonder of the world'.[90] In present-day endeavours to argue for China's ancient links to Central Asia (and its claims to the Silk Road, notably reinforced in the Xi Jinping era), the

85 The issue of 'reversing the verdict' of the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang, of the 3rd century BC was favoured by Mao, while Guo Moruo was critical towards Qin Shihuang (several of his historical plays had the state of Qin in a negative role: see Guo Moruo's *Five Historical Plays* [English translation 1984]) and he was therefore reproached by Mao who championed Qin Shihuang. Incidentally, the reverse case was of empress Wu Zetian of the 8th century AD, whom Guo proposed for a positive reevaluation, but given Mao's last wife, Jiang Qing's role, in Chinese politics, this became an increasingly sensitive historical parallel.

86 The current textbook (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016) keeps to the division in his assessment in praising Qin Shihuang for 'unifying China' (and for the terracotta army) (pp. 42–46), while his brutal rule led to 'peasant uprisings' (pp. 47–49).

87 Cf. the current textbook (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: p. 46): it is highlighted as one of the major excavation successes of China in the 20th century.

88 See Wan / Xue (2019: 54) in the Shaanxi volume of the *Fengbei* series. This recent 'patriotic' summary of the site also stresses very much the excavation history (as part of PRC history and 'archaeological successes'), and the artistic rendering of the various types of troops, while the 'feudal' First Emperor remains in the background.

89 For a recent treatment of the archaeological site, see Rawson (2023: chapter 12).

90 Incidentally, this claim of foreigners having called one's site the 'eighth wonder of the world' is a trope to be encountered also elsewhere.

terracotta army with its depiction of various 'foreigners' is also a welcome 'proof' of China's openness and 'internationality' since ancient times.

Interestingly, in the lists of 'patriotic education showcase bases' following the first one of 1997, excavations do not figure any more (but for the special genre of relatively recent atrocity sites where excavated mass graves are to show 'proofs' of Chinese victimisation – see also chapter 3.2). Thus, pre- or early history only comes up on these lists indirectly in the form of artefacts collected in museums. Strikingly, even world-famous archaeological sites like the Bronze Age Sanxingdui 三星堆 excavations in Sichuan were not picked for the national 'patriotic' lists (and not even yet for inscription on the world heritage list, although in the meantime that site is on the tentative list, while stressing the uniqueness of Shu culture in the Sichuan Basin).[91] The strong localist reading that one may attach to the latter site, rather showing ancient Sichuan's 'difference', makes it a complicated site in terms of nationalism, even though the attached museum, as I observed on spot, does its interpretative best to argue that there has been interaction with Shang culture – a fact more and more sustained by scholarship – to integrate Sanxingdui culture, too, into 'Chinese' history nevertheless.[92] Still, as we observed with Hemudu, the possible localist reading poses some obstacles to a seemless 'national' interpretation.

2.2 Translocal museums and their objects

In contrast to excavation sites, translocal museums display objects from somewhere else. The first list of '100 patriotic education showcase bases' (1997) includes big national-level museums, located in Beijing and Shanghai. They, however, tell also a story of rivalry. On the one hand, Beijing as the capital has a clear advantage: the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' of 1997 includes the Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution (in the meantime merged into the new National Museum of China, opened in 2011),[93] as well as the

91 One may, however, note that archaeological large sites have increasingly become a focus of Chinese *heritage* policies since the 2000s, if not in terms of 'patriotic' sites. Cf. Zan et al. (2018).

92 Incidentally, the new CCTV website set up in 2021 on the 'patriotic education showcase bases' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) points out in its representation of Yinxu via jade objects, that there are 'proofs' of interaction between the Shang and Sanxingdui, thus indirectly taking in the latter site into the 'patriotic' framework.

93 This case is interesting insofar as the factual merger of two 'patriotically' listed sites into one by the creation of the 'National Museum' in 2011 entailed an inconsistency in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system: the representations simply went on with the former format of two sites, and

Military Museum and the Old Palace Museum for Beijing. The first and the last of these are in implicit rivalry with the National Palace Museum in Taipei, where the Guomindang shifted the best artwork of Chinese tradition to when fleeing the mainland.[94] Inside the PRC, due to long contestations and reworking of the Museum of Chinese History in Beijing, the Shanghai Museum could move to the pole position during the 1990s as representing Chinese ancient civilisation. This was mainly due to its able director at the time who attracted funds and had a spectacular new building designed.[95] And in Shanghai with its formerly many rich private collectors, many priceless art pieces had been 'collected' (or 'donated') before and during the Cultural Revolution to at least preserve them.[96] The Shanghai Museum of today exhibits first-class antiques in a modern fashion of display and thus has made a significant step ahead in China's museum landscape (Lei / Vickers 2015: 231–234). In fact, since the reworking in the 1990s, Shanghai Museum was for the time being the de facto National Museum of China where the highlights of its civilisation were displayed in up-to-date fashion.

However, if belatedly, Beijing, the capital, caught up and now presents with the **Zhongguo guojia bowuguan** 中国国家博物馆 (National Museum of China**)** (finally opened in 2011, combining the two former museums on history and revolution and adding further exhibition space in an expansion of the original Soviet-style buildings by modern world-class architecture),[97] not only the 'biggest museum on earth', but its section of Chinese antiquity now presents a huge amount of high-class artefacts that display 'the nation' as is considered fitting for the capital of an emerging superpower. Display techniques have been updated in the process, and also 'retrieved artefacts' from overseas are proudly exhibited, e.g., the two noted zodiac animal bronze heads (of twelve) stolen at the 1860 plundering of the Yuanmingyuan 圆明园 (Old Summer Palace in Beijing) by British and French troops which were auctioned in Paris in 2009 and claimed back in a way causing scandal at the time. At an auction of the art collection of late fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, a

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the new CCTV website set up in 2021 (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) deals with the problem in representing the two sites simply via old news clips of the early 1960s! (That way, the Jiang Zemin-era *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips could be replaced without hampering the format of two distinct sites listed by simply going back in time to the Mao era.)

94 The transfer of the top pieces to finally end up in Taipei was a saga in itself. Cf. Elliott / Shambaugh (2005), especially chapters 4 and 5.

95 This was an early example of what has been observed for the role of new museum architecture in more recent times in China. For the latter, see Jacobson (2014).

96 Cf. Ho (2018), chapter 6. See also the detailed treatment in Lu (2012).

97 While the Shanghai Museum was built by local architect Xing Tonghe 邢同和 (who was also involved in the case of various CCP-related sites in the city and beyond), the capital invited international architects (von Gerkan, Marg und Partner) for designing the newly added part of the building.

Chinese representative made the bid but then argued the heads had been stolen from China and should be handed back without pay. In the end, a French businessman, i.a. owner of various fashion brands including Saint Laurent, donated them to China's National Museum – and pushed his business in China.[98] Interestingly, whereas the antiquities section of the National Museum in Beijing capitalises on its artefacts, the 'successor exhibition' of the former Museum of Chinese Revolution is based much more on photographs and didactic texts with only very few artefacts. Although there is a special catalogue for this 'modern history' section, titled *Fuxing zhi lu* 复兴之路 (Road to Revival),[99] a topic I have dealt with elsewhere,[100] the comprehensive catalogue of the 'National Museum' basically only covers the ancient section and limits itself to just a couple of pages for 'modern history'. This in itself bespeaks the fact that the ancient section of artefacts is seen by the museum itself as much more important for defining China for the world, than the modern, heavily ideological exhibition – which is also much less visited.

All these national-level museums (though less importantly with the Old Palace Museum which capitalises not so much on its collections than on its buildings) share the common feature that they display artefacts which come from all over China. Therewith, the artefacts become de-localised and re-contextualised:[101] they do not speak any longer for the locality where they were found but are to illustrate 'Chinese culture'. The focus is less on the uses of the single artefact but rather on its aesthetics: it turns into an object of art (Varutti: 2014: 59–60).

Beyond the national-level museums, there are, however, also several provincial museums that figure in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, by this acknowledging that these somehow represent (and materialise) the 'identity' of their province as a contribution to the nation. In fact, this was closely following the Soviet model of regional museums (*krayevedcheskiy muzey*) which engendered a similar system in the PRC in the second half of the 1950s. (For more on this, see chapter 6 of the present book.) In the case of the provincial museums of which some

98 Jones (2013). Further retrieved zodiac animal heads are exhibited in the Poly Art Museum in Beijing, though some of the originally twelve are still missing. (This latter museum, though run by a company, has close ties to the government and the PLA, and pursues a 'lost relics recovery' programme. Cf. Varutti 2014: 49–50.)

99 The official translation now preferred is 'Road to Rejuvenation'. The term *fuxing* means, however, literally 'rising again'.

100 The 'Road to Revival' is not only the topic of the by now standard exhibition of modern Chinese history in the National Museum, but was designed at the same time as a documentary and then was turned also into an epic show. For more on the interrelated productions, see Müller (2013), chapter 3.

101 This has been addressed in scholarship on object 'biographies'. For the Chinese context, see Allard et al. (2018).

are included in the first '100' list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Shaanxi, Ningxia) and many more in the following lists, mainly the second one, some in the fourth, artefacts and objects from all over the respective province are displayed. Here, on the one hand the provincial identity is to be stressed, but on the other the displays are to focus upon the particular contribution the respective province provided for the whole nation (which closely follows the Soviet model of regional museums).

The provincial museums are a particularly interesting case in the 'patriotic education' system since they are an intermediate broker in identity formation between the local and the national by defining the regional. From above, they are also deemed important since, as noted in chapter 1 of the present book, the grouping of sites in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system is officially according to provinces. The large quantity of provincial museums in the 'showcase bases' lists suggests that they are seen as a feasible intermediary. On the one hand, provincial identities have been described in scholarship as rather weak and construed by an 'up-scaling' process of existing local identities to the provincial scale by elites for specific purposes in China (Oakes 2000).[102] On the other hand, one may recall that, e.g., with personalities, the very first information provided in traditional as well as modern biographies is precisely the region (followed by the county) they hail from. Obviously, historically speaking, 'province' boundaries shifted through time – as we already noted in the case of Yinxu's supposed 'Henan' character.[103] And in an ethnographic sense, most people would rather group themselves beneath the province level, largely following local 'dialect borders'. However, the institution of 'native place organisations' identified by provincial names so frequently found in late imperial China suggests the provinces had some relevance also historically as identifiers (Goodman 1995), especially in farer away areas for people (temporarily) migrating. As Fitzgerald has noted, the province has become increasingly important at least since the late imperial times, and 'provincial identities are negotiated within

102 This is put by Oakes in the context of modern-day economic motives since provinces have been assigned by the central government in the context of fiscal decentralisation since the 1980s the task to integrate all areas in their jurisdiction to distribute wealth and opportunities between them. Provinces, on the other hand, try to market themselves in competition with others for attracting capital, thus using certain aspects of 'culture' as a tool to distinguish themselves to this end. By this, they often, de facto, just use distinctive traits of one or more localities to stand for the whole provincial administrative entity.

103 The terms for administratvie subentities equalling today's 'provinces', changed over time. Fitzgerald (2002: 12–19) argues, that the provinces are nevertheless a rather constant territorial echelon through Chinese history and in spite of not being congruent with social, economic, or cultural patterns are an important site for negotiating identity constructions in a governmental context.

patterns of government as well as those of language and culture' (Fitzgerald 2002: 13). Thus, the administrative unit of 'province' was – if secondarily – 'filled' with some identifying traits which might originally only have been characteristic of parts of the province's territory.[104] The warlord era in early 20th century China also meant that local power-holders tried to mold 'their' territory into distinct units, most famously with Yan Xishan 阎锡山 who wanted to turn 'his' Shanxi into a 'model province'. The structure of provinces was finally taken over by the PRC with only minor readjustments, and today, provincial 'identities' are taken for granted by most Chinese.

Provincial museums, an institution with strong underpinnings of the Soviet model of regional museums, always located in the provincial capital bespeaking their assigned role in the overall national system, in any case have the task to define and showcase a 'provincial identity'. Given their integration in the 'patriotic education' system, this needs to be calibrated with a view to national agendas. Therefore, a look into listed museums with a strong 'minority' component are of particular interest: here, the term 'province' is not used but 'autonomous region', being on the same level in terms of administrative hierarchy, though. In the following, we will focus on the Ningxia Museum (which is the only such 'minority' case on the first list of patriotic education showcase bases of 1997), and the Inner Mongolia Museum (which is included in list 2 of 2001), while the case of the Anhui Provincial Museum exemplifies the more 'standard' Han perspective (on list 2 as well).

Case study: the Ningxia Museum

The **Ningxia bowuguan** 宁夏博物馆 (Ningxia Museum) (list 1, 1997), located in Yinchuan, capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, was the very first of any such minority regional museums taken up in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' listings. When it was designated in 1997, it was placed in a Buddhist temple of the (Tangut) Western Xia dynasty (11th–13th century AD). The name 'Ningxia' (lit. pacify the Xia) refers to the conquest of the Xixia (Western Xia) empire by the Mongols in the 13th century and thus keeps the gone-by Xixia linguistically as the identification marker of the region. The addition 'Hui' was given to the autonomous region for crediting the 'hyphenated' Sino-Muslims (Lipman 1996) as the major population group since the long gone-by Xixia for whom the region is designed. The Buddhist temple structure, however, does in itself not give any clue to the Sino-

104 One case would be Anhui (see also below) where the 'typical' associations of successful bankers and staunch Neo-Confucianists is originally connected to parts of the province only.

Muslim character of the region. In fact, one notes that the Muslim character is largely hidden in the overall presentation. In other words, the Hui play a minor role in 'their' region's museum. Only with the new museum building, opened in 2008 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the autonomous region, the outer appearance started to suggest a more Islamic character, while built in the form of the *Chinese* character *hui* 回.[105]

The materials on this 'patriotic education showcase base' nominated in 1997, including also the nationally broadcasted TV film clip of *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 9) (while the educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection did not cover it), are referring to the original location in the Buddhist temple (which in turn became a heritage site in its own right after the museum's main exhibitions moved out). The *Ai wo Zhonghua* 'patriotic' film clip is striking in so far as it virtually shows nothing of any Islamic exhibits to the national TV audience. It rather starts its 'patriotic' narrative with pointing out how Ningxia is geographically connected to the Huanghe (Yellow River), stating only that it developed a 'special' kind of Chinese culture. Talking about the population, the film clip shows a busy street, while any special marker of Islam (most easily identified with the head gear) is conspicuously absent. The temple, as mentioned originally of (Tangut) Xixia times and renovated later, also provides visually a fully 'Chinese' impression, sustained further by a visual stress on the pagoda and the Chinese-style roof figurines. The exhibition, it is stated, was only opened in 1988 (i.e., at the 30th anniversary of the autonomous region and thus very late for a provincial museum, though de facto a predecessor had been created in the 1950s). The presentation of the exhibition tellingly starts with the Silk Road and the Xixia. Thus, Buddhism, the dominating religion in Xixia times, is stressed, while some glimpses disclose the links to Tibetan Buddhism (the Tanguts being possibly ethnically linked to the Tibetans and in any case for quite some time culturally influenced by them as well as by the Chinese). The Xixia script is shown which is clearly inspired by the Chinese script in form (though deciphering it is an ongoing scientific challenge). An equivalent to the multi-script Rosetta Stone (which helped decipher Egyptian scripts), i.e., a stone bearing inscriptions in Xixia and Chinese characters is shown (which helped to decipher parts of the Xixia script) as one of the exhibition highlights, beyond the artistically appealing famous reclining bronze cow, again of Xixia times. This is to show to the national TV audience (and possible future tourists to the site) that the museum also holds some high-class artefacts (including national-level first-class ones not moved away to Beijing).[106]

105 See Peng / Feng in the *Fengbei* series (2019: 152).

106 Artefacts are also labelled hierarchically, with 'national treasures' being the highest, followed by first-rate, second-rate etc. labelling on the national and accordingly lower administrative levels.

CGI scenes are interspersed in the film clip to recall the Mongols' conquering the Xixia which meant that empire's end.[107] The ruins of the Xixia necropolis 'pyramids' (as 'foreigners' are said to call them) are shown, with dancers and soft ethnic music added to suggest their attractiveness as a tourist destination. After the Xixia topic, the film clip switches abruptly to Mao and the revolutionary history of Ningxia without filling in anything between the Xixia's demise (by the Mongols) and Mao, i.e., skipping the 'Muslim' history, as the former two topics were suggested to be the main issues in the exhibition.[108] Weapons, including pistols and firearms, dominate as 'first-rate relics' in this 'revolutionary history' part of the museum, besides photos and explanations. Here, normal visitors are shown touring the exhibition, again soliciting the national TV audience to consider visiting as tourists, too. The Chinese translation of the Communist Manifesto by Cheng Fangwu 成仿吾 and Xu Bing 徐冰, in turn, visually focused upon thereafter, is to mark the province in 'red' terms. The Long March which went through Ningxia is also memorialised by a famous poem of Mao (Qingpingyue: Liupan shan 清平乐·六盘山) (Liupan Mountain: to the melody of Qingpingyue) that he wrote there in October 1935 when moving north toward the Great Wall.[109] (Edgar Snow, the American journalist who provided the information on much of all this, is however not mentioned).[110] Military topics are stressed in this Long March context, including the (de facto desastrous) Western Expedition of the Red Army (in 1936), only briefly acknowledging the 'good relations' the Communists and the local imam supposedly built up – which at least hints at the topic of Islam and the Hui. The endeavours to spread literacy are

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Cf. also appendix 3 of the introduction of the present book for similar graded labellings, e.g., of museums.

107 One may note that in contrast to this image of the threatening riding Mongols extinguishing the peaceful Buddhist Xixia kingdom, the newer summary narrative on the Ningxia Museum in the *Fengbei* series (Peng / Feng 2019: 151–160) turns the role of the Mongols around as absorbing the 'advanced economy and culture' of the Central Plain, i.e., the Han-Chinese one, to then develop Ningxia (there p. 153)!

108 One may note that the Soviet model of regional museums which the PRC took over in the 1950s envisioned three parts of an exhibition: the natural surrounding, the pre-revolutionary history and culture, and the revolutionary one. For more on the Soviet museum model, see chapter 6 of the present book.

109 An annotated translation can be found in Zhang / Vaughan (2002: 64–65). The line 'bu dao changcheng fei hao han' 不到長城非好漢 can be interpreted in various ways. (Literally: if one does not arrive at the Great Wall, one is no real man.) It has been understood also as simply meaning that Mao wanted the course of the Long March to be directed to the North up to where remnants of the 'Great Wall' were, i.e.: we should boldly go that way. The line has, however, come to be also more symbolically interpreted to argue for Mao's appreciation of the 'Great Wall' as such. In this sense, it is usually referred to in recent times.

110 For Snow's role as a crucial information provider on this time, cf. Ishikawa (2022).

one of the few instances when the local population in Ningxia is mentioned at all. Jumping to 1949, the narrative goes on with Ningxia's being 'liberated peacefully' by the PLA (without saying anything of who was ruling the area before – Muslim warlord Ma Hongkui 马鸿逵, a staunch anti-Communist). An only short visual reference to Islam is integrated when showing historical footage on applauding happy people after the 'liberation', where women wearing white head scarfs can be spotted. In the end, brief reference is also made to pre-history and ancient history, i.e., from Neolithic times to the Xiongnu of Han times (206 BC–220 AD), and some later Chinese artefacts held by the museum are also mentioned. But the glaring absence of anything typically 'Hui' in this film clip shown on TV in all of China of the regional 'Ningxia Museum', which was to serve for fostering not only patriotism but also inner-Chinese tourism, is striking. The regional is completely merged into the national in this case, and the regional history is reduced to the long-defunct Buddhist Xixia legacy, and, of course, the Communist one, leaving out the Hui.

The original exhibition, which is also dealt with in the benchmark 'patriotic education' booklet series' respective volume on the museum (Zhong et al. 1999), however, had three parts of which the second (not covered in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip) at least dealt with Hui customs, while the first part focused on the 'common' Chinese history to which Ningxia contributed, be it in premodern times,[111] be it during the Communist revolution.[112]

The last part (equally not addressed in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip) focused on the ancient petroglyphs found in the province (by this going far back in time suggesting the rather recent Sino-Muslims as historically not too important after all). Notably, the colour illustrations attached to the volume in the book series do not include anything specifically Islamic either. However, different from the film clip, the history of the museum is presented in the booklet as longer than suggested there. While the present Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region was set up in 1958, soon after, a predecessor of the museum was founded in the rush to building up museums as in the Soviet model (where the minority 'nationalities' had received attention). However, in the Ningxia case, that predecessor institution did not contain 'Hui' in its

111 Strikingly, the historical nomadic tribes living in the Ningxia area for centuries are called 'minorities' (Zhong et al. 1999: 12), and their archaeological findings are thus de facto incorporated into a historical narrative of 'China'.

112 Notably, the description reveals a Han perspective since, e.g., Mao Zedong is described as 'inspecting' a mosque as he would do at whatever other place, chatting with the imam (Zhong et al. 1999: 33), or Communist meetings held in prayerhalls (Zhong et al. 1999: 39) without even noticing that from a Muslim perspective, entering a mosque's prayerhall as a non-Muslim is usually not acceptable.

name, just 'Ningxia'.[113] In 1973, notably during the latter half of the Cultural Revolution which had caused a stop to all cultural activities in the preceding years, the name (with 'Hui') was set for the museum, and in 1991 Jiang Zemin provided his authoritative calligraphy for the museum's name (Zhong et al. 1999: 4). The travelling exhibitions the museum was involved in elsewhere, however, also largely evaded the Islamic identity and rather focused on Ningxia's other legacies.

In recent years, while the Buddhist temple has become secondary as a venue for the museum and is rather visited in its own right, the new imposing museum building is to reflect Ningxia's 'specialty' by referencing Islamic architecture at the outside. According to the museum's leaflet – which I collected on-site in 2016, the new building was designed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Autonomous Region (2008).

However, upon entering, the visitor is presented in the entrance hall, again, with another focus than Islam, putting Ningxia in the Silk Road context by a red-haired man with a camel – in 2016 at the time of my visit even more fitting as the Silk Road reference is a central topic for the political agenda of the Xi Jinping era. The whole basement exhibition focuses on non-Islamic factors, namely the Tang dynasty Sogdians who were present in the region, carrying also various religions with them (some now being extinct in China), the strong interaction with the Han, the Buddhist Tangut Xixia kingdom (11th–13th century) which had its capital in modern Yinchuan, and Ningxia's 'revolutionary contribution' of the 20th century, which is quite detailed.

With the revolutionary Liu Zhidan 刘志丹, a (non-Hui non-Ningxia) cadre building up the revolutionary base area covering parts of neighbouring Shaanxi and Gansu,[114] it is only pointed out that the Hui and the Han supposedly fought 'shoulder to shoulder', and that the CCP respected the Hui, illustrated more directly by a banner they presented to a Hui imam, thanking for the help received (see fig. 2.2.1).

Recreated scenes are to show that Ningxia people also helped by providing shelter to (or 'welcoming') Communists, namely Red Army troops led by general Peng Dehuai 彭德怀, and also hosted sympathetic foreigners like the American

113 According to the locally available leaflet of the museum, this precursor was designed in 1959 but only officially established in 1973.

114 One may note that Liu Zhidan, who was nearly executed during an inner-Communist purge, but sustained by Mao, died in 1936 in battle and was declared a 'martyr' by Mao. He was connected to the father of Xi Jinping which additionally might have helped to put stress on him in the Xi Jinping era. (The Shaanxi–Gansu base area would cover also parts of Ningxia, if after Liu's death, and is thus commonly known as Shaan–Gan–Ning Border Region or as the Yan'an Soviet.)

leftist journalist Edgar Snow and the American-Lebanese physician George Hatem (who are shown in a dio-rama).[115]

Fig. 2.2.1 Red banner 'love the people like heaven' presented by the Han Communists to the local imam, Ningxia Museum (Yinchuan) (photograph by the author, 2016)

115 There is a locally sold publication of a popular story-telling kind (Wei 2009) specifically addressing Snow's visit (and the CCP's uneasy stand in Ningxia) which was reflected in the Edgar Snow's famous *Red Star over China* (1937, many times reprinted and later enlarged) which was so decisive for creating Western sympathies for the Communists in China. (On the book and its influence, see most recently Ishikawa 2022). Roughly a fourth of Snow's travel account was concerning Ningxia. Notably, according to Wei (2009: 88), George Hatem (with his Lebanese background) served the Communists well in dealing with the local Muslims, though the assertion that his Arabic language skills helped in communicating CCP slogans to them is unlikely, given that the Hui do not speak Arabic or read it easily, just studying it in the context of the Koran. From the CCP side, the key figure on the difficult terrain of Ningxia was Peng Dehuai who is credited for tactics to make the Hui accept the Communists without selling them out to the GMD or their own local leaders.

'National' concerns are also pointed out by a famous scene of the popular street theatre play 'Lay down your whip' on poor refugee street performers,[116] shown as Manchurians driven from their homeland by the Japanese occupation: a destitute old father attacking his starving daughter with a whip to go on performing for earning some money (which is going to be dramatically stopped by an actor posing as audience to redirect anger of the spectators at the 'real culprits' causing the plight: the Japanese), but here put in a Ningxia setting among locals. The message is: do not attack other Chinese (the CCP's key slogan to stop Chiang Kai-shek fighting them) but the Japanese – and the Ningxia audience supposedly sustains this plight of their 'fellow compatriots' from Manchuria with great sympathy, welcoming the 'liberation' of the common people which the Communists suggest to bring.[117]

Only the upper floor of the new museum addresses the Muslim identity of the Hui more directly, though it clearly points out that the Hui (the 'hyphenated' Sino-Muslims) are culturally close to the Han. E.g., Ming-era artefacts show their Islamic identity only via Arabic script used on them, otherwise looking 'Chinese', while architecture is the most obvious 'Islamic' element in all. Arabic calligraphy in ink brush or hanging scroll paintings also suggest a mix of Islamic and Han-Chinese styles, while eating utensils with yin-yang-formed metal plates and chopsticks underscore that in spite of Islamic flavour provided by Persian-inspired metal work, the substance is still close to the Chinese Han majority culture. Major explanations in the new museum are also provided in Arabic script, though the primary language remains Chinese, in fact drawing the conclusion at the end of the exhibition that the Hui of Ningxia (historically known for being prone to uprisings and rebellions) are special, but still good Chinese 'patriots'.

The Xi Jinping-era update of the museum's perceived 'patriotic' role as reflected in the 2019 *Fengbei* series on the 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Peng / Feng 2019: 151–160), in turn, rather stresses the benign influence that Ningxia received from 'the centre',[118] namely the Central Plain as 'core' region of China historically, and that Ningxia was since old a place for various ethnicities to 'pass through', thus undermining an exclusive identity construction centering on the Hui who only took roots there since Yuan (13th–14th century) times. In short, the longer historical perspective decentres the Hui automatically. Interestingly, beyond the bronze cow of

116 The street play was originally written in 1931 with an anti-GMD stance, then adapted to the anti-Japanese war and performed all over China. See Hung (1994: 57–64).

117 Since the Hui in Ningxia were used to be governed by their own local strongmen and had a long history of uprisings, to convey to them a notion of 'patriotism' to participate in the 'common cause' against the Japanese during the war was at issue.

118 This fits well with the perceived stress on 'gratitude education' for the minorities current in China today. See Wan / Vickers (2024).

Xixia times as one of the top artefacts of the museum, this new presentation focuses on a late Qing map held by the museum not mentioned in the earlier presentations of the museum, which shows the Qing empire in its largest extension: this piece not only is evidently not specifically 'Ningxia', but it clearly puts the nation and its territorial claims upfront, further decentring the Hui identity definition of 'their' region. In sum, the case of the Ningxia Museum reflects how 'patriotic' readings lead to a not only highly selective, but even distorting representation of local identity and history in the case of an area that has been historically known for its 'unruliness' and local strongmen, to make sure national agendas are duly served.

Case study: the Inner Mongolia Museum

While Yinchuan's Ningxia Museum was the only minority area museum listed among the first '100' of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (and as the only site for Ningxia in that list altogether), though with a largely non-Hui narrative, as we observed, more museums appeared on the second list. This included the one in Hohhot (incidentally once called Guihuacheng 归化城 by the Ming dynasty, lit. 'city returning to civilisation'), the capital of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region which was the very first of the Autonomous Regions in China to be established (in 1947, i.e., even before the PRC itself!). The **Nei Menggu bowuguan** 内蒙古博物馆 (Inner Mongolia Museum**)** (list 2, 2001) is also the oldest of such museums in a minority area. Like many other provincial museums, this is a so-called 'comprehensive' (*zonghexing* 综合性) museum, i.e., presenting the cultural as well as the natural aspects which mark the region (as in fact the Soviet regional museum model suggested). While the Ningxia Museum holds a considerable number of artefacts, in the Inner Mongolia Museum, dioramas play a very eye-catching part in its exhibition.[119]

The official 'patriotic' narrative provided on the second list sites (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002: 274–275), treats the museum remarkably briefly, although it is pointed out that it was the very first minorities museum opened to the public (in 1957),[120] and is one of the sightseeing spots in Hohhot. The museum presents the historical minorities of the area, but also the revolutionary history, and fossils (for which Inner Mongolia is

119 Varutti (2014: 62) has even called them a 'characteristic trait' of Chinese museums, although this is certainly not a singular distinction.

120 One may note that the Ningxia Museum discussed above, though prepared for at that time, too, did not open before the Cultural Revolution.

especially noted).[121] Museum highlights are, in fact, the dinosaur and early mammal finds in the nature section, while exhibited cultural objects come from various nomadic cultures, including a Xiongnu crown, but also objects of various Mongol tribes. Throughout, though, ethnic intermarriage, e.g., with the Manchus, is stressed in the official 'patriotic' narrative, while more distinct issues like religion are only briefly mentioned, as is music. For revolutionary times, 'progressive' publications concerned with Inner Mongolia are exhibited, including Mao's 1935 declaration to the Mongols of Inner Mongolia (when the Japanese tried to split Inner Mongolia off from China) to warn them against the Japanese and the warlords and rather join the Communists, and the Mongolian top Communist and PLA general, Ulanhu (Wulanfu 乌兰夫), is given due attention.

The museum (up to 2008 and thus in the official listings called Nei Menggu bowu*guan*, thereafter Nei Menggu bowu*yuan* 内蒙古博物院 and in a new more lavish building as we noted also above in the case of the Ningxia Museum) is also visually treated for the national TV audience by the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips (disc 11), reflecting the times of the early 2000s. At that time, the museum, established in 1957 in a Soviet-style building, was still housed in that building, with a galopping horse statue on top. According to the film clip's narrative, the horse is to symbolise Mongol 'advance and development'.[122] Inner Mongolia is first characterised as the 'home of fossils', the most spectacular being the skeletons of dinosaurs found, while for ancient culture, the contribution of the 'many ethnicities' living in the area through time is stressed. For the ancient culture part, stone age artefacts to bronzes of the Donghu 东胡 culture (7th–2nd century BC) (clearly influenced by Han-Chinese bronzes of the simultaneous later Zhou period), are to demonstrate local cultural development early on. The better-documented Xiongnu 匈奴, China's chief rival in the north through much of Han times (206 BC–220 AD), followed. Here, the famous story of Wang Zhaojun 王昭君, a beautiful court lady presented by the Han emperor to the Xiongnu chief to bolster relations with this problematic neighbour, is interspersed to again make the point of Han-Chinese benign influence.[123]

121 This conforms to the Soviet model's triad of nature, prerevolutionary history and culture, and the revolutionary era.

122 Bulag (2002: 12) notes that the horse is shown galopping towards the South (i.e. China proper), not towards the North (the Republic of Mongolia) which would imply 'national splitism'.

123 One may note that this topic was not only often treated in imperial times but also in the 20th century. On a side note, Guo Moruo wrote also on her, if very early before his full turn to Communism: at that time, he even figured Wang could have liked her time in the steppe. This, of course, was highly untypical a view. Bulag (2002: 72) has called Wang Zhaojun 'the most heavily and continuously written-about woman in Chinese history' and devotes a chapter to her (and similar cases of Chinese women married off for diplomatic reasons to 'barbarians') and the Chinese male anxieties

The subsequent Xianbei 鲜卑 were the first from the steppe to enter the Central Plain (during China's period of disintegration after the fall of the Han dynasty). This was, according to the film clip's narrative, the first time of ethnic merging (thus easily turning foreign domination of the northern part of China into a positive narrative of how China absorbed the minorities). The relation to the Silk Road also brought the strong influence of Buddhism to the area. The Khitan (Qidan 契丹), grown into formidable northern rivals by the time of the Song dynasty (960–1279), are the next focus, since excavated tombs can be cited to sustain the narrative of close (rather than rivalling) relationship between them and the Han-Chinese, represented in the museum above all via funerary objects: jewellery, jade and celadon objects, or metal work. Genghis Khan also appears tellingly in this narrative as foremost a unifier of the various Mongol tribes (and thus peacefully!). His grandson Khubilai, who established the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) in China, in turn is called the first minority (!) (bespeaking the viewpoint from the present) ruler of the 'unified' country (since the Yuan were the first foreign rulers over the whole of China). Again, the image of a peaceful ethnic unifier is evoked, and this is even hailed as laying the basis for today's multi-ethnic China! Thus, very clearly, history is twisted to breaking point to sustain the 'patriotic' reading – in an effort to take in the Mongols. Thus, the narrative also leaves out the Ming (who drove the Mongols out of the Chinese heartlands, though they remained a source of trouble for the Ming court) to address the Nüzhen 女真 (Jurchen) who were present in the area as well, then evolving into the Manchus. This prepares for the final Qing dynasty (1644–1912), pointing out the important Mongol role at the Manchu Qing court. This role included also descent, as is stressed with the Mongolian princess married to Abahai, the father of the first Qing emperor, Shunzhi 顺治. Thus, this Mongolian consort (Zhuang fei 莊妃), is claimed as the Qing dynasty's 'mother of the nation' (*guomu* 国母) (an evidently modern term)![124] Via this condensed and highly problematic presentation of Inner Mongolia's history, the major aim becomes evident: to present the various local historical actors positively as 'contributors' and in harmonic relationship with the Han to prepare for the modern setting of a multi-ethnic China. Consequently, all aspects of conflict are edited out (as we also observed with the Hui in the Ningxia case). The film clip presentation links this up with an equally positive exhibition on folklore, showing types of jewellery and clothing worn by

expressed over this motif through time. See also Bulag's contribution in the exhibition catalogue on the Great Wall (Bulag 2006).

124 Sun Yat-sen – cf. also chapter 5.2 – was called 'father of the nation' (*guofu* 国父), and thus occasionally his wives (Lu Muzhen 卢慕贞 as well as Song Qingling 宋庆龄) were called 'mother of the nation'. Cf. Müller (2022: 230–231).

several minorities living in Inner Mongolia. Finally, revolutionary history is, if astonishingly briefly, brought up, where one however notes that not even the most prominent Mongolian in the PRC, Ulanhu, is mentioned.[125] In any case, he has his own site in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system and thus his own *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip.

Contrasting this filmic representation done after 2001 (when the second list was promulgated in which this museum – at its old site – was included), with my on-site observation in 2016 at the new site, one notes that the entrance hall sets by now a more general theme of Inner Mongolia: the oral heritage. The visitor is greeted by the statue of a man playing a Mongolian fiddle as a 'typical' object representing 'Mongolianness' (see fig. 2.2.2), obviously singing a tale to the children at his feet. This stresses the strong oral (intangible) heritage of the Mongols – the intangible heritage being something much on the agenda in present-day PRC heritage policies.

Fig. 2.2.2 Statue of an old Mongolian playing the fiddle and singing to children at his feet in the entrance hall of the Inner Mongolia Museum (Hohhot) (photograph by the author, 2016)

125 One may add that he had been attacked during the Cultural Revolution and since then was removed from Inner Mongolia. Cf. Bulag (2002: chapter 7) on his career.

The main language used in the museum is Chinese. Only for the more important explanations, English and Mongolian is added. Dioramas show the different sub-categories of Mongols and their living in an ethnographic style, while in the historical section Genghis Khan is to show how Mongols would 'contribute to Chinese culture',[126] namely after Genghis when the Yuan dynasty was established in China by his grandson Khubilai, including also a stress on the Mongols' fondness of Lamaism (which, in turn, binds them and the Tibetans together and in consequence both to China, reinforced by the later Manchus who shared this inclination and brought the areas of Mongolia and Tibet into their Qing empire).

The Mongols (at Yuan times) are also portrayed as the ones through whom exchange with the West was possible (while they are said to have also protected the Northern border, namely against the later Tsars' ambitions!). The earlier medieval Tuoba 拓跋 as well as the Khitan who established dynastic rules over parts of China at various points in history respectively are seen as 'proto-Mongols', thus extending the Mongol–Han relationship backwards. This way, even before the Yuan dynasty, Sino–Mongolian 'positive' contacts can be enumerated, with the most glaring case being the portrayal of the 'alliance' the Chinese Song dynasty entered into with the Khitan-Liao rulers in 1004 – conveniently sidelining the fact that this was a major loss of face for the Song who had to acknowledge for the first time openly another ruler as equal to the 'son of heaven', and in fact ending in the Song losing the North of China altogether. This way, the blatantly forced history representation in the museum becomes obvious. Finally, also with the Mongols, their contribution to the Communist revolution is highlighted in the new museum's version, here putting a special stress on the Mongolian general and key cadre Ulanhu,[127] whose Russian copy of Marx' *Capital* which he used when studying in Moscow's Sun Yat-sen University, is exhibited. While this prepared for Inner Mongolia's 'red' future, a map on the Japanese 'perfidy' to create a separate 'Mongolia' (Mengjiang 蒙疆) in 1939–1945, shows the danger the Communists had to fend off (cf. Mao's declaration of 1935 to the Mongols of Inner Mongolia mentioned above), not because of Mongolian secessionism, but because of foreign interference by the Japanese. This finally leads the viewer to the statement that Inner Mongolia was, in fact, the first autonomous region granted by the CCP (in 1947, i.e., before the founding of the PRC), which 'liberated' the area and furthered the integration of Han and Mongols. That Ulanhu, the figurehead of Mongolian Communism, was heftily attacked during the Cultural Revolution is, however, not mentioned, neither that he engendered the programme to have 3.000 Chinese orphaned children adopted by Mongols during

126 One may note that Genghis Khan has been often called in PRC textbooks a 'Chinese' hero!
127 On his decisive role for Mongols in the PRC, see Bulag (2002), especially the final chapter.

the Great Famine (1958–1962) following the Great Leap Forward.[128] (Ulanhu had, in fact, managed to block the introduction of radical Maoist policies into Inner Mongolia, where he was the supreme leader, by arguing for the predominantly pastoral Mongols being a different case than the agricultural Han. This resulted in Inner Mongolia being the least-affected area by the Great Famine, but his blocking of radical policies in his 'kingdom' was held against him when the Cultural Revolution set in.)[129] On the other hand, his strong commitment to Communist China (Chinese being his mother tongue while he did not speak any Mongol himself),[130] his education in the Soviet Union (he spoke Russian fluently), while keeping Inner Mongolia away from the Mongolian People's Republic, made him 'the' minority cadre for Beijing.[131]

Inner Mongolia with its large grass steppe and low population density is, however, also important for the Chinese state for present-day technical reasons, since it is a place where China's astronauts can safely land, given the country's ever more important space programme. This, however, also meant, the exhibition suggests, shifting traditional herding Mongols to make room for the aerospace industry, launching satellites or space rockets. Indirectly, this imagery positions the hypermodern Han against the idyllic, but backward Mongol minority represented by the pastoral nomads – a common trope of representation of minorities. Furthermore, in a more rational assessment, the rich natural resources of Mongolia are also named as a contribution to the Chinese *patria*.

When comparing the exhibition (as of 2016) to the earlier filmic representation in *Ai wo Zhonghua*, it becomes clear that formerly, the aspect of natural history and the spectacular dynosaurs finds were at least seen as important as the cultural historical aspect to engender national as well as local pride. In the end, Inner Mongolia was and is China's 'home of fossils'. By now, though, cultural history and intangible heritage (an issue much on the agenda since the Hu Jintao era) has taken centre stage, especially in a 'patriotic education' context, as the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* summary (Peng / Feng 2019: 9–16) also shows,[132] and history is seen even more overtly from the present extending backward to rewrite earlier times, e.g., regarding

128 The official stories woven around this programme are set by Bulag (2010, chapter 6) in the context of China's evolving minority politics to create reciprocal affective bonding in citizenship. For the Great Famine, cf. Dikötter (2010).

129 Still, his family went on being a major player in Inner Mongolia after the Cultural Revolution.

130 He belonged to the Tumed Mongols who had given up the Mongol language and spoke Chinese.

131 Cf. Bulag (2002: 229), referring to Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping who labelled him as such.

132 Peng / Feng (2019: 9–16) only add as a new find of 2010 a Buddhist stupa by now exhibited in the museum.

the issue of inter-ethnic relations. The delicate question of Outer Mongolia's role is evaded throughout. But compared to the Ningxia Museum case, the Mongolian one at least gives 'its' minority an important place, enabling Mongolian visitors (pupils or grown-ups) an easier identification with the exhibition than the Hui in Ningxia who are, as we noted, largely written out of the picture of their own region.

Case study: the Anhui Museum

In contrast to the minority region museums discussed above, the **Anhui-sheng bowuguan** 安徽省博物馆 (Anhui Provincial Museum) (list 2, 2001) in Hefei is to show the more 'mainstream' Han culture, if with local specialties. This museum belonged to the very first provincial museums in the PRC, opened in 1956 on the basis of earlier smaller exhibitions representing northern and southern parts of the province (*Wanbei* 皖北 / *Wannan* 皖南) with a thematic focus respectively,[133] which already points at the heterogeneity of the province cut through by the major rivers of the Yangzi and the Huai.[134] De facto, Anhui province which is one of the more recent administrative creations in Chinese history, dating back only to Qing times, is no self-evident entity: while there is evidence of very early 'Sinitic' cultures living in the area which is celebrated in the museum, Anhui features de facto several distinct regions in terms of geography, from parts connected to the Northern Plain to mountaineous parts in the Southwest, including the famous Buddhist 'holy mountain' Jiuhuashan 九华山 and, above all, the tourist top destination and UNESCO cultural-natural mixed world heritage site 'Mount Huangshan' 黄山 (UNESCO [1990]). But also in terms of language and custom, there are distinct regions, some rather linked to neighbouring provinces,[135] while the culturally and linguistically most peculiar Anhui-internal region is Wannan (often called also Huizhou 徽州 after the major prefecture's former name, close to the Huangshan, and smaller than today's administrative definition of Wannan as the province's 'South

133 For the predecessors, see the volume in the 'Take you to the museum' series: Anhui-sheng bowuguan (2009: 8).

134 The simple north-south divide (*Wanbei* 皖北 / *Wannan* 皖南) is defined in this (administrative) context by the Yangzi, though the Huai was also an important divide, historically speaking. Furthermore, while Wannan is an established cultural-linguistic entity which de facto covers only a part of the area south of the Yangzi (for a map cf. Moser 1985: 114), the term Wanbei is only an administrative entity.

135 Cf. Moser (1985) who includes parts of his discussion of Anhui people in the chapter on 'Eastern Mandarin Peoples' (intending parts of Jiangsu and Anhui), and Wannan in the subsequent chapter on 'The Wannan, or Huizhou People of Anhui Province'.

of the Yangzi' part) from where the famous 'Hui(zhou) merchants' (*huishang* 徽商) came.[136] The 'comprehensive' (meaning geographical, natural, and cultural aspects-addressing) Anhui Provincial Museum situated in the centrally located provincial capital Hefei also prides itself as having been pointed out as an exemplary museum particularly by Mao Zedong himself who visited only this one provincial museum in 1958 and commented positively on it.[137] This, incidentally, gave the museum an edge over competing provincial museums, with the Shandong Museum having been presented in 1957 in the leading Chinese museum journal *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物参考资料 (Reference material for cultural relics), as the Chinese trendsetter among the provincial museums in following the Soviet model.[138] Viewed in hindsight, Mao's visit to the Anhui Provincial Museum where he was shown 'inspecting' one of the museum's top pieces, a huge bronze tripod of the Warring States period (5th–3rd century BC) representing the blossoming Southern Chu 楚 culture, stating that the Chinese people should learn about its history and creative force,[139] would be a crucial asset for museum staff to fend off destructive campaigns later, especially during the 'destroy the Four Olds' (old ideas, culture, customs, habits) campaign of the Cultural Revolution, and for asserting 'local' cultural traits.

The museum building was in itself already an architectural statement: when it was built in the 1950s, the Soviet style was – like in the case of the Inner Mongolia Museum – the reference which, in turn, integrated neoclassicist elements. The building would be put under architectural heritage protection by Anhui Province in 2007 and declared a tourist site in itself, while, as elsewhere and in the above cases of Ningxia and Inner Mongolia, a larger and more spectacular new museum building was designed which opened in 2011 with the slightly changed name as Anhui bowuyuan 安徽博物院 (Anhui Museum) – the term *bowuyuan* having a more refined touch than the 'normal' *bowuguan*, and leaving out 'provincial', by this taking also distances in name from the formerly stressed museum *hierarchy* to rather stress the regional *identity*.

In terms of 'patriotic education', the 2002 official descriptions of the second list sites deal with this 'showcase base' only briefly (Zhonggong zhongyang

136 The 'Hui(zhou) merchants' have been sometimes, if problematically, called by Westerners the 'Jews of China' because of their role in money-lending. On a national scale, they were a Southern counterpart of the northern Shanxi or Jin 晋 merchants.

137 Cf. Anhui-sheng bowuguan (2009) which cites this Mao praise as an endorsement.

138 See the reflections of the latter museum's director on how to learn from the Soviet Union's local museums best (for more on this, see chapter 6 of the present book): Shandong-sheng bowuguan (1957: 19–21).

139 Cf. Anhui-sheng bowuguan (2009: 9). A brief summary of the artefact itself is given ibid. pp. 43–44.

xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002: 635–637), like in the case of the Inner Mongolia Museum, suggesting that, after all, museums were deemed the less important sites for advocating 'patriotism' vs the more numerous 'red' sites in the 'showcase bases' system treated more extensively. The presentation points out that the museum was first opened in 1956 and presents nature, history, and society in general, and more specifically, as to its holdings, the bronzes since Shang, the coins of the state of Chu, the Han wall 'paintings', the 'four treasures of the studio' (brush, inkstick, paper, inkstone), and the commercial contracts of the Hui merchants are the highlights. In conventional Marxist fashion, the exhibits are to show the area's development from 'slave-holder society' to 'feudalism'. In the pre-historic section, the main object is the palaeolithic Hexian 和县 Man (partial) skull preserved (*homo erectus hexianensis*) (which is scientifically particularly important since, as mentioned above, the 'Peking Man' skulls excavated at the Zhoukoudian site have gone lost), and some other fossils are also mentioned, but more important to the 'patriotic' agenda is clearly the historical section from ancient China on, including also architecture. The existence of the special collection of Pan Yuliang's paintings (see below) is, however, only briefly mentioned.

In the 'patriotic' *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 13) TV film clip, the Anhui Provincial Museum (Anhui-sheng bowuguan), at the time of filming (in the early 2000s) still placed in the old building of 1956, is presented – more attractively than in the above official written summary – to the national audience as a place where Chinese high culture is represented in condensed form (and thus worth a touristic visit). The museum's standing as an educational base with plaques, including its being a 'patriotic showcase base', is pointed out to the viewers, by this underlining its officially endorsed educational role. The museum, featuring exhibitions on culture and nature of this province, Anhui, show, the TV viewer is told, that this province belongs to the South as much as to the North of China, which makes it special according to this narrative (and thus interesting and 'inclusive'). The area is claimed to have been settled since a very long time, referring to the preserved (partial) skull of 'Hexian Man', and showing various stone age tools. The many different cultures leaving traces in Anhui through history are to document the multi-facetedness of the province, from the Bronze culture(s), which include northern and southern styles, over traces of Han times documented with Huaibei (the area north of the Huai river) stone artefacts (stone carved tombs in a peculiar style),[140] to the famous Huizhou

140 In fact, this type of stone carved tombs belonged to ancient cultures that went well beyond the present-day Anhui province's Northern part to neighbouring Northern Jiangsu, Eastern Henan, and Shandong. Archaeologists have termed this the Qi-Lu region after these two ancient states of the Warring States period. (Cf. Li 2018: 4).

merchants in the South of the province of late imperial times, the typical Ming and Qing architecture of Huizhou, the 'four treasures of the studio' for which Anhui is so well-known, shown in the setting of a recreated scholarly 'studio', and the embellishing *paifang* 牌坊 (honorary arches) as well as typical carvings in stone, wood, or brick for decoration. This gives the TV audience a quick visual tour through the museum's highlights for the cultural part of the exhibition. The natural history part, much shorter in this 'patriotic' film clip, features the most spectacular excavations and reconstructions of ancient animals once living in the region. Again, 'northern' as well as 'southern' fauna are there to show that Anhui had both. Only at the end, military visitors are briefly shown to look closely at the exhibition, to suggest that this museum has also a great 'patriotic appeal' for the armed forces!

If one compares this filmic 'patriotic' reading with presentations by the museum staff and 'their' museum as can be gleaned from the museum's own volume in the *Dai ni zoujin bowuguan* series (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009), and addressed to youth as well as a 'second classroom' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), one notes that the curators follow a somewhat different approach: they rather try to point out the Anhui particularities that would distinguish this museum from other Chinese museums. Beyond the heterogeneity of flora and fauna, for the ancient times, the local cultures,[141] most prominently Chu culture, are stressed (though carefully interspersing comments on links to China's 'Central Plain', too).[142] Chu culture is not only reflected in the bronzes, including the famous tripod Mao had 'inspected', but also with documents written on bamboo providing insights into the inner workings of the Chu state (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009: 13). For later times, another 'top' artefact of the museum, a Northern Song period glazed wine jug with warming bowl, even made it into a postage stamp,[143] similar to key artefacts of Hemudu or Yinxu, as we noted above (chapter 2.1). However, the museum also presents the 'nationalisation' of the local specialties in an international context: the 'four treasures of the studio' for which Anhui became famous in the Ming and Qing dynasties, made it into the Panama world exhibition (1915) as representatives of 'China', with a coloured world map design on a piece of solid ink winning a prize –

141 Those include the early states of Wu 吴, Yue 越, Qun Shu 群舒 (several small feudataries of early Zhou times, collectively called Qun Shu), and Chu. Pieces from former neighbouring cultures also were found in Anhui and are held by the museum. Notable pieces are, e.g., from Cai 蔡 which expanded into parts of Anhui (and was later swallowed by Chu).

142 This regards mostly Northern Anhui, to where already Shang culture 'extended southward' (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009: 33–34).

143 This was published in 1991. See Anhui-sheng bowuguan (2009: 14). Cf. 'Youpiao shangzhe: T.166' for an image of the 15 *fen* postage stamp.

by this 'innovative' piece demonstrating that the traditional art of ink production was also well alive and able to go with the times (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009: 14).

On the other hand, the museum also put on a special exhibition section on woman painter (and sculptor) Pan Yuliang 潘玉良 (1895–1977),[144] who went to France and Italy in the 1920s to study painting and sculpture and developed a very Westernised style. She was, however, no Anhui native but born in Jiangsu and sold to a brothel as a child, but bought out and taken in as a concubine by an early Republican revolutionary-minded Anhui official, Pan Zanhua 潘贊化,[145] who also wrote poetry and had connections to Sun Yat-sen as well as to fellow Anhui radical intellectual Chen Duxiu, the later general secretary of the CCP and future ostracised 'Trotzkyist'.[146]

From her Anhui patron and 'husband' Pan Zanhua, Pan Yuliang took her surname 'Pan', and he was the one to realise her artistic skills and finance her training abroad, sending her as a first step to the Sino-French Institute in Lyon,[147] and then to Paris and Rome. Pan Yuliang's amazing biography has been turned into novels and films, ever since woman novelist Shi Nan 石楠 triggered interest in Pan Yuliang in the early 1980s, making her known to the modern Chinese reader.[148] This spurred further research and filmic treatments, including a film of 1994 by famous director Zhang Yimou 张艺谋, with actress Gong Li 巩俐 starring as Pan Yuliang. In the Anhui Provincial Museum's volume, Pan Yuliang is also carefully integrated into a more 'national' story of early Western-educated students later contributing to China, although her work became controversial in China in the 1930s. In 1937, she would move again to France, where she remained and died in 1977. At the time of her departure, the Second Sino–Japanese War broke out in full, making a return more difficult, but one may also recall that given the Republican government's legal (if in practice not easily enforced) subscription to monogamy,

144 Her year of birth has been contested, but scholar Dong Song of the Anhui Museum argues convincingly for 1895. See Dong (2013: 2–4).

145 Well-known woman writer Su Xuelin 苏雪林, a classmate of Pan Yuliang in France, who later moved to Taiwan, wrote about Pan Yuliang stating that she was consequently ostracised by Pan Zanhua's wife. Cf. citations in Teo (2016: 54, 87).

146 There is conspicuously little information on Pan Zanhua, although he contributed to the key May Fourth journal *Xin Qingnian* (New Youth) his former classmate and fellow Anhui native Chen Duxiu edited, and wrote poetry. (Incidentally, art connoisseur Chen Duxiu also would provide three inscriptions in 1937 for Pan Yuliang's work during his political imprisonment in Nanjing by the GMD – cf. Dong 2018 – particularly praising Pan Yuliang's use of ink fine-line drawing or *baimiao* 白描, a Chinese painting tradition flourishing since Song times.)

147 For the background of the Sino–French Institute in Lyon, see Müller (2001, esp. 347–351).

148 Shi Nan updated her literary portrait of Pan Yuliang after obtaining new information in Shi (2013).

concubines were particularly vulnerable in times of crisis.[149] In PRC marriage law, concubinage was clearly outlawed. Pan Yuliang's leaving China to never return might also have had this additional personal background.

In any case, with 'modern' and 'Western-style' Pan Yuliang, the Anhui Provincial Museum outbalances the province's more traditional image, namely defined by Huizhou culture, which is historically associated with the rich merchants economically, and with staunch (Neo)-Confucian conservatism culturally, meaning also a very restricted role for women (epitomised in the (in)famous 'chaste widow' arches prolifering in the area).[150] Pan Yuliang with her French-inspired portraits of women, including many nudes (which Republican-era Chinese critics already found particularly objectionable, leading to scandal and even attacks on her exhibitions in Shanghai), are a glaring contrast. It is notable that this Western-style artistic part of the museum is skipped in the 'patriotic' film clip.[151] But the museum itself is proud of having received in the 1980s the bulk of the artwork of this exceptional Chinese woman artist posthumously from abroad who, however, did not venture to move back to the PRC in her lifetime.[152] Pan Yuliang's painting style would not have matched Mao-era aesthetics, for sure, though she also had to struggle with preconceptions and expectations in the West where she was put in the exoticising and essentialising 'Chinese' as well as the gendering 'woman artist' category and found it increasingly difficult to sell her art and make a living, dying in rather poor circumstances.[153]

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149 For a short discussion of the delicate legal status of concubines between 'marriage' and the newly created legal category of 'household member' at the time, see Tran 2009.

150 Shexian 歙县 (Huizhou) is famous for whole archways with one honorary arch after the other, including those granted to the family of 'chaste widows' that would not remarry and even might rather 'choose' suicide than survive their husband.

151 The 2002 summary of the second list site (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002: 635–637) at least briefly mentions Pan Yuliang.

152 Pan Yuliang, while in France and also during exhibitions she did internationally, remained connected also after 1949 to the R.O.C.-side which was still the representative of 'China' on the international level at the time. A Chinese friend living in Germany who visited Pan Yuliang in Paris in her last years (when the Cultural Revolution was not yet over) also recalled that she did not dare to apply for an entry permit to the PRC because of her 'bad background' connected to Pan Zanhua's former (GMD) official career. (*Pan Yuliang quanji* vol. 8: 154).

153 Cf. Teo (2016: 66–68). Shi Nan (2013: first illustration section) includes a photo of her tombstone in Paris which also shows that in her final years she lived with Wang Shouyi 王守义 whom she had portrayed and who was a key figure in the Chinese community in Paris, owning a restaurant there. He had helped her over years before, travelled to the PRC after her death to convey some materials to Pan Zanhua's family, and would be buried with her when he died in 1981 (Shi 2013: 3, 191–193). One may note that the *Pan Yuliang quanji* (2015), volume 8, with additional materials

The museum's own volume, addressing youth (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009), though, proudly includes this special exhibition part edited out in the 'patriotic' TV film clip, even reproducing several of Pan Yuliang's paintings for the intended young reader. Dong Song of the museum staff and author of a chronicle of Pan's art, whose father had already worked for the museum when Pan's works arrived in 1984 (Dong 2013: 352), unfortunately remains somewhat vague on the background of the transfer of Pan's work precisely to the Anhui Provincial Museum. He only suggests that the key person to arrange for the transfer of her artwork from France back to China was Pan's former student, the noted Chinese woman cartoonist and niece of Republican-era writer Yu Dafu 郁达夫, Yu Feng 郁风, who petitioned the Ministry of Culture to support the transfer (Dong 2013: 311).

In sum, while Pan Yuliang herself was no Anhui native, her affiliation with Anhui resulted from her connection to Pan Zanhua, who had remained with his legal wife and children in China in 1937 when she moved again to France. During early PRC times, Pan Zanhua worked in the Anhui Literature and History Institute, but died already in 1959. With Pan Yuliang living abroad in France (where she remained affiliated with the Nationalist government by then in Taiwan), and given his own former connection to the GMD (Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party) (and to CCP-accused 'Trotzkyist' Chen Duxiu), Pan Zanhua would have been a likely candidate for having 'political problems' in the 1950s.

Popular biographies of Pan Yuliang in Chinese remain vague on this point (see, e.g., Yi 2003). A careful reading of the few post-1949 letters Pan Zanhua wrote to her reveals that in the 1950s, things were, in fact, not going too well for Pan Zanhua and his family (cf. *Pan Yuliang quanji* 2015: vol. 8). Pan Yuliang was apparently not expecting his early death in 1959,[154] but the letters she had sent were burned during the Cultural Revolution by Pan's family whom she had regularly sent money to from France after his demise (Dong 2018). The later transfer of many of Pan Yuliang's works to the Anhui Provincial Museum (while other works of hers went to Beijing's National Art Museum of China, i.e., to the 'national' scale) was thus possibly also connected to Pan Zanhua's former role and links to the Anhui heritage system.

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from and on Pan Yuliang, evades the role of Wang Shouyi, and the Pan family poses in front of the tombstone in Paris (p. 152), discretely covering Wang's name behind flowers.

154 Pan Yuliang, who frequently wrote to Pan Zanhua, was apparently grief-stricken when she heard of Pan Zanhua's death which she obviously did not expect (Dong 2013: 259–260). The otherwise highly interesting volume in the multi-volume *Pan Yuliang quanji* (2015), containing (selected) written materials on her (volume 8), including also letters and poems from Pan Zanhua mostly before 1949, is clearly tailored along the Pan family's interest, but still discloses that Pan Zanhua and his family did not fare very well in the 1950s.

In any case, the Anhui Provincial Museum was proud of having recieved these special holdings and did several exhibitions on Pan Yuliang, touring also other cities, including Hong Kong, and a Pan Yuliang exhibition was even held in Taipei in 2006. She thus also 'served patriotically' in this sense, and was at the same time an important marketing device for the Anhui Provincial Museum in its self-representation.[155]

Beyond Pan Yuliang, a further focus of the museum in its self-representation to Chinese youth is Anhui vernacular architecture, which was less delicate and also figured in the 'patriotic' film clip: in this case, too, Anhui could be shown as contributing 'to the nation' via its peculiarity, not the least since two Huizhou villages, Xidi 西递 and Hongcun 宏村, had earned the UNESCO world heritage title in 2000 (UNESCO 2000),[156] i.e., shortly before the Anhui Provincial Museum was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001. The museum's exhibition on local 'typical architecture' is therefore an important part where the regional feeds into the national.

The narrative also wavers between asserting local (Huizhou) particularity (*difang tese* 地方特色) and representation of typically '*Chinese* rural architecture' (*Zhongguo xiangtu jianzhu de daibiao* 中国乡土建筑的代表) of Ming and Qing times (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009: 58). Since architecture is less easy to present than smaller moveable artefacts, the museum provides some recreations in reduced scale and tries to show the building techniques, coupled with photos and parts of buildings, e.g., to show segments of a typical main hall, or typical embellishments like carvings on stone, wood, and bricks (see fig. 2.2.3).

With the famous arches of honour, notably nothing is said about those for the 'chaste widows', concentrating only on the artistically outstanding example for the local luminary, the scholar and official Xu Guo 许国 of the 16th century, sporting the calligraphy of famous Ming calligrapher and painter Dong Qichang 董其昌. This way, Huizhou is also shown as having been acknowledged for producing first-rate scholars for the nation.

155 For Pan Yuliang and her exhibitions from an art historical perspective, see, e.g., Teo (2016, chapter 1).

156 The villages were also often used as settings for Chinese films. For a recent discussion of the differences between the UNESCO viewpoint and Chinese tourists' perceived 'cultural moments' at these sites, see Zhang (2020: chapter 5), going in tandem with Laurajane Smith's sociological work on 'emotional heritage' (Smith 2020).

Fig. 2.2.3 Huizhou architecture represented in parts in the Anhui Museum to stand for Anhui's specificity (Hefei) (photograph by the author, 2016)

The palaeological part of the museum, in turn, is out of itself the most popular with children, figuring a mammoth skeleton and various pre-historic animals of which fossils have been found in Anhui, as well as the (partial) skull of Hexian Man (see above). This part is the basis for the labelling of 'science education popularisation base' the museum received as well.[157] While science education has been especially stressed in the early PRC (Schmalzer 2008), one may, however, note, that the museum itself tends in its self-representation to focus more on the cultural than 'scientific' aspects of Anhui. This conforms to the national trend to reevaluate and step up Chinese 'culture' in education, especially since the 1990s, as science is less prone to show 'national characteristics'.[158]

As I observed on-site in 2016, the visitor entering the (new) museum building in Hefei is by now greeted with a new identity marker: Hefei's famous great official of the second half of the 19th century, Li Hongzhang 李鸿章 dominates the entrance hall. Given Li Hongzhang's long-time negative image in the 20th century as a *maiguozei* 卖国贼 (lit: bandit selling out the country) for his signing the

157 See Anhui-sheng bowuguan (2009: 21). For the label, cf. Appendix 3 of the chapter 1 of the present book.

158 The museum, however, notably states that Anhui archaeologists 'received the task' from the state to search for traces of the origin of mankind (Anhui-sheng bowuguan 2009: 30). This has to be seen in the context of trying to challenge the 'out of Africa' thesis discussed above (chapter 2.1) with Peking Man.

'humiliating' treaties of Shimonoseki in 1895 (after the First Sino–Japanese War) and the Boxer Protocoll in 1901, in Deng Xiaoping's era and the changes in historiography on the late 19th century with a more positive view on the self-strengthening movement to which Li Hongzhang belonged,[159] this visual stress on Hefei's disputed 'great son' is a historiographical statement. Beyond him, other famous historical 'Anhui figures' are highlighted as well: [160] the equally controversial strongman of the 3rd century AD, Cao Cao 曹操, who brought down the Eastern Han, usually decried in conventional history but in his case reappraised both by Guo Moruo and Mao; the first Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, another traditionally decried autocratic figure and favourite of Mao; the successful Huizhou merchants of Ming–Qing times (more in line with Deng Xiaoping's reappraisal of China's commercial heritage); 'Anhui' as core of Neo-Confucianism (since the 1990s selectively reappraised in China, too) etc. In sum, the new museum has rewritten its presentation, at least in parts. It does also include some information on Anhui's technological and scientific side, from ancient copper mining to astronomy. Still, Anhui architecture (de facto Huizhou architecture) receives particular attention also in the new museum's version with an extra exhibition, pointing out its clearly distinguishable local flavour. And also the 'four treasures of the studio' retain their extra exhibition, with paper making and the production of the other three 'treasures' (writing brush, ink stick, and ink slab) detailed and visualised with dioramas, to present Anhui as core to Chinese civilisation and tradition.[161] The museum thus puts the regional into the service of the nation by posing as one of its classical centres of Chinese (high-)culture (which also likely is to counter the modern image of Anhui as a rather backward and poor province providing housekeepers and nannies for rich families at the East coast, namely in nearby Shanghai).[162]

The 2019 update of the site's official 'patriotic' framing in the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* series (Ding / Pan 2019: 155–160), in turn, very much stresses the political link of the Anhui Museum to Mao over the latter's 1958 visit, also legitimating the fact that the new museum's name, opened in 2011, has been written 'in Mao

159 Comparing history textbooks of the PRC through time, this change since the 1980s which asserts late-Qing attempts at 'modernisation' and economic development becomes evident.

160 As mentioned above, the historically late creation of the province 'Anhui' obviously renders any identification of earlier figures as 'people from Anhui' anachronistic.

161 Cf. also Oakes (2000: 678–679) about Anhui posing as an embodiment of 'Chineseness' which also is to serve as a counterweight to 'negative' present-day associations with Anhui, namely 'backward' Northern Anhui.

162 One may, however, note that in the era of Hu Jintao who had links to the province, Anhui developed more quickly and is catching up economically.

calligraphic style'.[163] In fact, the former name 'Anhui-sheng bowuguan' had been penned by Communist high-level cadre and general Chen Yi 陈毅 (157). (Chen Yi was noted as someone profoundly interested in collecting and preserving China's cultural heritage and, when mayor in nearby Shanghai, also patronised the Shanghai Museum.)[164] Given the heterogeneity of Anhui Province, this is by now solved by contrasting a general historical outline with thematic exhibitions which focus on single topics, mostly connected to the province's southern part. Pan Yuliang has notably disappeared once more from the Xi Jinping-era 'patriotic' framing, while the ancient bronze tripod, the celadon jug, and the late imperial art form of 'iron painting', typical for the Wuhu 芜湖 region, point to various regions in Anhui (to calibrate the Huizhou preponderance). The peculiar art form of iron painting, imitating brush paintings by treating iron rods, was also used for representing China internationally with exhibitions. On a national scale, it is also honoured in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, decorating the latter, i.a., with Mao's calligraphy of his famous poem 'Snow' (of February 1936) in iron (160). That way, the new 'patriotic' framing shifts the accent almost exclusively to culture and arts to define Anhui's contribution to the nation at large.

Taken together, the three regional museums discussed above show how regional identity had to be framed and negotiated vis-à-vis the national one to serve 'patriotic' agendas, but still keep the distinct local selling points for attracting visitors. Different target groups were thus addressed slightly differently, while the material holdings chosen for more detailed presentation in especially filming were more restricted to those 'nationally conducive'. The case of the Ningxia Museum's 'patriotic' framing reflected the uneasiness about the local Hui Muslim identity, while the Inner Mongolia Museum shows a more conciliatory and integrative approach. The Anhui Museum, in turn, poses as an embodiment of 'Chineseness', though largely over Wannan local characteristics, while the unique holdings of 'Western-style' woman artist Pan Yuliang less easily fitting into the 'patriotic' narrative are sidelined for the national audience, though played up locally. In all three cases we could also observe diachronically that the role of natural history (e.g., with fossils), which was a mandatory part of regional museums according to the

163 As Kraus (1991) already noted, Mao's calligraphy was often used in copy-and-paste manner of single characters glued together (generating a rather unharmonic assemblage) since he did not provide inscriptions that often, and obviously also could not provide inscriptions for names and titles given after his death like this new name for the museum, 'Anhui bowuyuan'. The use of Mao's calligraphic style is therefore something the museum had to legitimate.
164 Cf. Ho (2018: 5, 216–217), and Lu (2014: 112).

Soviet example, receded over time in China to put more and more accent on culture in the display, bespeaking also shifts in PRC educational goals.

2.3 Iconic constructions and landscape transformations

The last category of 'patriotic education showcase bases' to be addressed in this chapter are those larger material constructions and landscape transformations that were imbued with a translocal meaning or were even already built or engendered with such an aim. These include military as well as cultural and technological aspects. The most famous among Chinas iconic constructions and landscape transformations is likely the 'Great Wall', spanning (according to oft-repeated claims)[165] thousands of kilometres, though it never was one coherent entity but rather stretches of fortifications built at various times and most intensively during the Ming dynasty. The 'Great Wall' was inscribed as an entity in 1987 by the UNESCO as world heritage and is incidentally a good example of the problem to take over once and for all the descriptions provided by the respective nation-state at the time of application. Thus, to this day the official UNESCO website features several problematic if not outright wrong claims like the notorious one of the 'Great Wall' being the 'only work built by human hands on this planet that can be seen from the moon'.[166] Since the topic of the 'Great Wall' that has been particular fascinating in foreigners' eyes which to a large extent drove its reappraisal in China in the 20th century, has been dealt with in existing literature already extensively as to its historical and cultural aspects,[167] suffice it to say here that the 'Great Wall' is treated in recent Chinese school history narrative mainly from the angle of its materiality, how it was built with which type of construction materials, and its building structures etc., which is

165 For the problematic assertions around what has become commonly called 'the Great Wall', see the by now 'classical' study by Waldron (1990).

166 See the respective 'description' entry of 'The Great Wall' on the UNESCO [1987c] website. Unsurprisingly, the Chinese public was disenchanted when the first Chinese 'taikonaut' who went into space in 2003 (if not to the moon) stated he did not see it. (Other astronauts staying longer in space – again not as far as the moon, however, noted that with appropriate weather conditions and binoculars they could even zoom in on skyscrapers. Either way, the 'Great Wall' was no exception to other built structures.) UNESCO, in turn, has simply added a general disclaimer on its webpages, shifting responsibility for contents to the respective nation-states – and thus keeps also such wrong claims without comment.

167 For an intriguing multi-perspective treatment in one volume, see the catalogue of an exhibition in Australia (Roberts et al. 2006).

nowadays to engender pride,[168] and only secondarily from its cultural side which has been for a long time rather negatively associated in China in the sense of exploitation and megalomania, associated with Qin Shihuang, China's first emperor and purported creator of the 'Great Wall'.[169]

Emblematic for this view is the famous story of Meng Jiangnü 孟姜女, retold over centuries in China, whose husband was recruited for building the Wall at Qin Shihuang's time and perished there. When she arrived at the Wall to look for him and realised that he was dead, her bitter wailing even moved Heaven and let the Wall crumble to expose his bones so she could at least collect and bury them properly.[170] Vis-à-vis this traditional view, Mao's rather favourable evaluation of Qin Shihuang mentioned above, and his views on the 'Great Wall' which he also mentioned in poetry suggested an at least not negative evaluation,[171] and thus during the Cultural Revolution Meng Jiangnü was turned into a figure to criticise, while present-day history textbook versions try to strike a balance between acknowledging the massive labour required to build the 'Great Wall' (thus integrating the traditional 'Meng Jiangnü perspective'), and the ever more prominent pride in the famous 'Great Wall' as a showcase for China and national emblem printed even on Chinese one yuan bills.

Case study: the Shanhaiguan Great Wall Museum

In terms of 'patriotic education showcase bases', the first list (1997) includes the geographically spectacular and very touristic Badaling 八达岭 (lit.: eight eminent peaks) section close to Beijing, and the Gansu 'end point' (of Ming times),[172] i.e., the fortress Jiayuguan 嘉峪关 controlling the Hexi 河西 corridor. The importance attached to the 'Great Wall', however, led to the fact, that in the fourth list (2009), a further 'Great Wall' site was included as 'patriotically' relevant, namely the Eastern

168 A special elective history course on senior secondary level with the topic of 'world heritage' dwells on the 'amazing' Great Wall and ist construction in detail: *Putong gaozhong kecheng biaozhun shiyan jiaokeshu* (2007: 52–59).

169 Qin Shihuang had de facto likely constructed only few new walls, but reutilised earlier walls of the Warring States period. Cf. Waldron (1990: chapter 2).

170 For English translations of several versions of the story which recieved renewed attention in the 20th century in China, see Idema (2008).

171 Mao's respective poems mentioned but were not clearly judging the Great Wall as such. See also below.

172 The older Yumenguan 玉门关 of Han times, more to the West, was beyond the Ming territory and already ruined. Cf. Waldron (1990: 142).

'starting point' (of Ming times) at the sea at Shanhaiguan.[173] Being a very photogenic area and already part of the Great Wall UNESCO listing (see below), the place draws crowds of tourists by itself. The **Shanhaiguan changcheng bowuguan** 山海关长城博物馆 (Shanhaiguan Great Wall Museum) (Hebei Province), which is the site listed, in turn, takes over the task to explain the whole setup of the Ming Great Wall with its antecedents and to provide 'education' about the topic. The museum's exhibition is thus also the focus of the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip, produced after the 'patriotic' nomination of 2009, presenting this 'base' to the national TV audience.[174] In the UNESCO listing of the Great Wall, all three locations, i.e., the 'starting point' (Shanhaiguan 山海关, lit.: pass between mountains and the sea) and 'endpoint' (Jiayuguan) as well as the famous Badaling section near Beijing, mark the Great Wall heritage entry together.[175] (This may also explain why this third site could not be left out in the 'patriotic education' framework.) In fact, when looking into Chinese school history textbooks, they focus on the length and thus more on the 'beginning' and 'end' points than on sections in between, and the 'starting-point' Shanhaiguan offers on-site also a whole 'Great Wall Park' for tourists today (where signs include English and Russian translations, bespeaking the main foreign target groups). One may note that with the definition of Shanhaiguan as the 'starting point', the part of earlier walls built in Manchuria and thus even further to the east, are by this implicitly left aside,[176] while Shanhaiguan, the 'pass between the mountains and the sea', highlights the maritime connection which is becoming ever more important to recent political agendas.

On the other hand, the 'middle sections' also involve the problem that there were historically various fortified sections or walls (mostly of rammed earth) at different points in time of which often not much is left and where no one consistent line can be drawn. In any case, the middle sections of Ming times when there was the most intensive wall building, at this point also using bricks and stone, bespeak the rather limited territory the Ming effectively governed in the North, which is not very feasible to stress for 'patriotic' uses today. The Manchus, who conquered China in the 17th century, extended the territory far beyond, and in modern China, inheriting to a

173 One may point out that in a sense there are other 'Eastern starting points' in Manchuria when sections of what today is collectively called 'the Great Wall' were built on lines further to the North, stretching East. See also below.

174 This fourth list site is not included in the DVD collection of *Ai wo Zhonghua* and could therefore be accessed only on the CNTV website 'Wo de zuguo' (2009) (which is by now defunct).

175 See the respective map tap of the entry: UNESCO [1987c]: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/438/maps/.

176 This 'eastern wall' was to delineate the Han settlements in Southern Manchuria against the Mongols, the Jurchens, and later the rising Manchus.

large extent this territory, the by now inner-Chinese 'border line' is not very convenient to stress and less relevant than showing the extension with the 'final points'. The Badaling section in between is the exception as it is close to Beijing, geographically spectacular, and was pointed out by Guo Moruo in 1952 as a fitting cultural site to be included for foreign visitors in diplomatic outing tours,[177] given the fame the Great Wall enjoyed abroad.[178] This section was thus restored extensively with its imposing brick-covered structure and was shown to US president Nixon during his historic week in China in 1972 (amid the ongoing Cultural Revolution), broadcasting the by then intensely restored site as a Chinese showcase to TV viewers all over the world.[179] Nixon, at home once known as an anti-Communist hawk, showed himself impressed and commented on the Great Wall as a sign of a 'great people' with a 'great past' and thus also likely a 'great future' – remarks that would be referenced frequently thereafter in China.[180] In this context, one may recall that Mao (who let vice president Li Xian-nian 李先念 accompany Nixon to Badaling) had mentioned (if not clearly judging-ly) the Great Wall also in his poems (though this did not shield the Great Wall from suffering destruction at several of its sections during the Cultural Revolution).[181] And after Mao, Deng Xiaoping voiced the famous and in his case straightforward 'patriotic' slogan: 'Love our China, restore our Great Wall' (*Ai wo Zhonghua, xiu wo changcheng* 爱我中华，修我长城) in 1984 to collect funds for repair in preparation for the UNESCO application. The Great Wall was thus to represent China positively ever since, at least in the official reading (though not necessarily in the popular one).[182]

Shanhaiguan as the geographically strategic point between the Northeastern Plain and the North China Plain where the natural barriers of mountains and the sea

177 This is pointed out, e.g., by the 'patriotic' booklet on Badaling (Qiao / Sheng 1999: 71).

178 As has been noted in scholarship, the Western notions of and fascination with 'the Great Wall' since the 17th century contributed to the (reluctant) modern Chinese reappraisal. Cf. Waldron (1990: chapter 11).

179 The photographs during this visit boosted the international image of the 'Great Wall' as a top touristic site considerably.

180 His speech there was televised and is easily available on the internet. Apparently, though, his visit to the Great Wall lasted only 15 minutes. Cf. MacMillan (2007: 285), who discusses Nixon's week in China from an American diplomatic history point of view.

181 E.g., cf. Mao's poem *Qingpingyue: Liupan shan*, written when passing through Ningxia (see above, 2.2) during the final part of the Long March in October 1935. That poem was not per se judging the Great Wall in any way, though the respective line has been twisted to suggest he hailed it. The Great Wall also figured in his poem 'Snow' some months later in February 1936, again without judging it per se.

182 Cf. Lovell (2006: conclusion). See also Rojas (2010) for various examples of modern Chinese artists dealing creatively and critically with this 'icon' of Chineseness.

come closest, has been historically particularly important since Ming times. The Shanhaiguan Fortress had been built by general Xu Da 徐达 in the early Ming (14th century) who had been a major figure in pushing the Mongols out of 'China proper' to establish the Han-Chinese Ming dynasty (1368–1644). It thus can be easily integrated into a 'patriotic' narrative. Its epithet of 'the first pass under heaven' (*tian xia diyi guan* 天下第一关) displayed over the main gate,[183] and used in many poems since Ming times to refer to the place, also underlines the self-assertive narrative connected to it as the point from where one 'enters China'. The many poems written about Shanhaiguan (and the Great Wall in general) embody also parts of the intangible heritage connected to the wall and are displayed on spot in an outdoor exhibition (as I witnessed in 2015).

The military strategic function of Shanhaiguan was tested not the least during the Ming–Qing transition in the 17th century. The extensive protection integrating various kinds of military structures and the sea as a defensive measure are key features stressed at the site. The figure of Li Zicheng 李自成, the 17th century 'rebel' (hailed in Communist historiography) who ousted the 'corrupt' Ming court in Beijing while trying to stop the Manchus from exploiting the turmoil to cross the Great Wall, 'nationalises' Shanhaiguan as the point which should have secured the Han-Chinese from the Manchu invasion.[184] Li Zicheng is thus represented with a statue at the site today. As school history assures the pupil, only treason (by the Han-Chinese general Wu Sangui 吴三桂 stationed there who would not join Li Zicheng's side) could make the Manchu invasion happen in spite of all the fortifications by opening the gates for them, and prepare the end of Li Zicheng's attempts to establish himself as a new (Han-Chinese) emperor in Beijing.

Furthermore, the 'patriotic' stress on the role of the Great Wall also for maritime protection has a particular ring today in China's increasing attention to the maritime sphere, pointing out China's need to 'protect herself'. Historically, this is linked to Qi Jiguang 戚继光, the famous Ming general fending off the 'Japanese pirates' (*wokou* 倭寇) in the 16th century along the Chinese coast,[185] who was also sent to

183 The calligraphy displayed is contested as to its author. Cf. Liu (2019: 196).

184 Notably, the Manchus in turn had themselves a borderline drawn in Manchuria to protect their homeland from (non-bannermen) Han-Chinese immigration (if not as a wall of bricks and stone, but rather commonly known as the 'willow palisade', *liutiao bian* 柳条边), i.e., allowed for civilian Han settlement only in Southern Manchuria up to that borderline, at least in theory. Practices, however, varied locally and through time. (A further borderline also had been drawn by the Qing in Manchuria towards the Mongols.)

185 It should be pointed out that these 'Japanese pirates' de facto were a mix of people with many Chinese also participating. They were a threat to China's long maritime border, i.e., also far beyond Shanhaiguan.

reinforce the Great Wall at Shanghaiguan for this purpose, connecting the fortress with a walled structure right into the nearby sea – today's famed photogenic spot called 'old dragon's head'. In sum, the whole construction is to show that this place, Shanhaiguan, has served 'the nation' by protection, as the official summary of 2009 on the site as a 'patriotic education showcase base' underlines, enumerating the major war instances,[186] and it points out the necessity for China of strong 'defence' capacities on sea as much as on land, while simultaneously praising the site's UNESCO standing. Thus, special offers are to be directed at youths to make the museum serve as a 'second classroom'. This call for strong 'defence' capacities is also the key theme in the newest 'patriotic' summary of the Xi Jinping era, which stresses for the intended domestic reader that China, in fact, once had the capability to defend itself and could only fall by treason (as the case of 'traitor' Wu Sangui in the 17th century showed). In fact, this 'defence capacity' of Shanhaiguan would be also acknowledged by the treason-profitting Manchu-Qing themselves *after* they had 'entered *the pass*', i.e., Shanhai*guan*, to rule over China (Liu 2019: esp. 195–198).[187] That way, the Great Wall has not only grown into a symbol of China, but is framed in the 'patriotic education' context as proving both the architectural genius of the 'labouring masses' of once, and the defence capacities of the Chinese nation (203–204). And it fits well into the official narrative of a China that supposedly needs maritime power urgently, if for 'defence' only.

Case study: the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang

While the Great Wall has been a (contested) emblem of drawing the line between 'the (cultured) Chinese' from the ('barbarian') 'non-Chinese' over much of its history, later having turned into an 'inner-Chinese' line (which made for its being framed today in this regard rather uneasily as a 'contact zone', namely between the Mongols and the Han-Chinese),[188] other sites moved into the row of built 'icons' of Chineseness where even more than their geographical location, their cultural qualities are of paramount importance. Big Buddhist rock carvings and cave paintings found at various places in China have been widely acknowledged as Chinese cultural heritage. However, they were usually not considered for 'patriotic education'.

186 See *Di si pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* (2009), pp. 30–34.

187 The Xi Jinping-era narrative also adds some legends for the domestic readership, not the least connected to Qi Jiguang and particular buildings at Shanhaiguan.

188 This interpretation can be found, e.g., in the elective course history textbook mentioned above (*Putong gaozhong kecheng biaozhun shiyan jiaokeshu* 2007).

The notable exception are the **Dunhuang Mogaoku** 敦煌莫高窟 (Dunhuang Mogao caves) (Gansu Province) (list 1, 1997) (equally part of the UNESCO World Heritage sites, being included in the first Chinese batch of sites inscribed in 1987, like the Great Wall) (UNESCO [1987d]). This is significantly the only site among the first '100' 'patriotic education showcase bases' which has a religious background, although the religious Buddhist aspect is toned down to hail this site as, above all, a pinnacle of the Chinese art of painting (and secondarily of sculpture). The flying *apsaras* (celestial beings often depicted as dancers or musicians) motif is frequently alluded to in China in various contexts in its aesthetic quality as an icon, although one might as well point out that *apsaras* are per se a 'foreign', un-Chinese motif with a decidedly Indian-Buddhist background. In fact, it is remarkable that a place like Dunhuang made it into the first 'patriotic education showcase bases' list which rather privileges revolutionary history. Gansu province, for sure, does not offer much in terms of revolutionary history but for the most eastern part where the Long March went through, but other provinces don't either. Obviously, whereas Tibet, e.g., is represented in the 'patriotic' listings not with the Potala (though the latter is a World Heritage site since 1994),[189] but with memorials for 'anti-imperialist' and 'liberation' struggles of rather limited historical relevance, Dunhuang as a place for a long time in oblivion, has less potential to be recaptured as a distinctly 'Buddhist' and un-Chinese site. The Potala would offer too much incentive to be read as distinctly 'Tibetan', whereas in Dunhuang there are at present no monks (the place had been largely given up in the 14th century) that would challenge the art-historical definition. And again, as with 'Peking Man' or Yinxu (see above, chapter 2.1), one should point out that Dunhuang was another 'big discovery' in the early 20th century. Once more, at first it was foreigners who made the place famous (and took away much of its treasures to display in various museums around the globe). Thus, this world-wide 'recognition' (cf. also the Great Wall case above) also explains in part why the site was chosen as a place to be proud of 'Chineseness'. This easily includes also Overseas Chinese who are often listed as donating funds for maintaining this 'common heritage'. In fact, materials on Dunhuang in connection to 'patriotic education' continue to stress that the place is important as a pinnacle of *Chinese* art, namely painting and sculpture, brushing aside the non-Chinese aspects, and as an aesthetic 'jewel in the Gobi desert' that demonstrated China's presence in the Western regions early on.[190] Consequently, apart from the Buddhist caves, Dunhuang as an ancient Chinese frontier town is

189 Cf. also chapter 1 of this present book for the problem of 'patriotism' with sites like the Potala.
190 Examples of descriptions of Dunhuang in the patriotic education contexts are Fang (1999: 38–41); He (1997: 312–314); Wang / Zhou / Xing (1998: 546–547).

integrated into the narrative as well and how it was influenced by the 'dominant' culture of the 'Central Plain' to mark it as unquestionably 'Chinese'.

Furthermore, with the famous 'library cave' containing lots of documents discovered in the early 20th century,[191] the 'patriotic' viewpoint puts a stress on the fact that the daily life of the 'Chinese people' at former times has become more palpable as well (as is, in fact, the one of the many non-Chinese present there). Simultaneously, Dunhuang is, however, also characterised as a site of Chinese victimisation by the foreign colonialists (cf. above) who not only took away much of its treasures, but in their greed also wrought destruction to the site, e.g., by cutting and removing wall paintings to transport abroad, which should arouse justified patriotic indignation on the part of the present-day Chinese visitors (who in this case do not need to worry about any 'Chinese' destruction during the Cultural Revolution as the Mogao caves were cordoned off at that time).[192] Further destruction, as the exhibition on restoration work in Dunhuang (as I observed in 2014) details, was caused by White Russian soldiers who had fled to China in 1920 after defeat in the Russian Civil War and were located in the area of the caves for five months on order of the then Chinese government. Given the cold nights and need to cook, and the desert environment, the Russians used wooden parts of the site for daily firewood inside of the caves, by this, however, also damaging the wall paintings. More recently, though, foreign as well as domestic donors cared for the caves and their conservation. Thus, in front of the caves, the present-day visitor encounters rows of short portrayals of such benefactors, including also the notable case of Japanese calligrapher Aoyama San'u 青山杉雨. He had collected dozens of precious Dunhuang scrolls and kept them in Japan, but asked his son to finally hand them back to their place of origin. That way, as the appropriate measure to atone for the former 'colonial fleecing' of the site,[193] restitution and donations for protecting what had been damaged are suggested.

This particular history of scattered treasures, though, led also to current international Dunhuang studies, since many countries and museums around the globe are involved and opted – rather than for restitution à la Aoyama – for cooperation, e.g., to build up a digital archive. Thus, Dunhuang is also a place marked by globalised

191 Some scholars call the cave 'sūtra cave' (see, e.g., Fraser 2004: 3–6) which translates the common Chinese designation *zangjingdong* 藏经洞. The 'library cave' contains, however, all sorts of documents, including those of other religions than Buddhism and also secular ones.

192 Interestingly, the exhibition on preservation in Dunhuang does not mention this rather special case of a religious site being spared during the Cultural Revolution. According to the staff of the Dunhuang Academy, this was due to Zhou Enlai personally (Duan 1991).

193 Museums abroad have, however, been reluctant to hand items back to Dunhuang. Thus, virtual cooperation has been proposed instead.

scholarship and features state-of-the-art facilities to display not only the caves, but also the information drawn from the findings by academic studies over decades in various fields. The Dunhuang Research Academy bundles the expertise from the Chinese side and provides the most important link to international scholarship.

When looking into the 'patriotic' framing of this top tourist site, one notes that in filmic presentation, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 9) and the longer educational *Zhonghua hun* video version are in fact overlapping, i.e., the former is simply a shortened version of the latter. (This, in turn, discloses an interesting connection between these two different 'patriotic' filming enterprises, which in other cases, as we saw, rather produced two different film versions on one site, if apparently based sometimes on the same local TV footage). The video on Dunhuang, produced by the Gansu Provincial Audiovisual Education Centre, scripted by Xuan Chengdong 玄承东, a former journalist in Gansu and cadre, and Ren Zhongxuan 任仲选 of the audiovisual education centre, is in a rather slow tempo with long shots and music, more than text, which sustains the tourist-oriented 'art-historical definition' of this 'patriotic' site. It introduces the geographical place with views of the sand dunes behind 'iconic' famous painted motifs from the caves, usually *apsaras* or *bodhisattvas*, passing by, followed by stringed books on stacks to insinuate scholarship which is, the commentary underlines, the 'pride of the Chinese nation'. Masses of visitors, including many foreigners, are to prove the tourist attraction of the site with its long history through 'ten dynasties'. The caves are presented as a marvel of art also praised by Westerners (e.g., with the smiling 'Eastern Mona Lisa Buddha' of cave 259), and the flying *apsaras* are in the longer *Zhonghua hun* version also blended with a modern Chinese dance group imitating the paintings, linking the topic also to famous 20th century artist Zhang Daqian 张大千 who worked at Dunhuang in Republican times (but left the mainland in 1949), and to present-day Chinese efforts to preserve the caves. Predictably, it is claimed that preservation was best in PRC times.

As for the contents of the site, some of the famous Buddhist stories depicted in the caves are introduced, including the one of the Buddha (in a former life) saving a hungry tiger mother and her cubs by offering up his body. As the commentary adds in unmistakable 'patriotic' framing, though it is the (future) Buddha that is shown, this should be understood by the audience as also representing the Chinese people at large who do not fear to sacrifice themselves! (This forced 'interpretation' is incidently also included in other 'patriotic' materials on Dunhuang.) The wall paintings are not only presented to the audience as to their obvious Buddhist content, but are interesting, as the narrative points out, also for representing Chinese daily life habits in history, and therefore they should be considered very precious for

Chinese citizens (be they pupils or the national TV audience) to learn about their past, too.

In the second (modern) part of the video, much shortened in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV version, the Daoist monk Wang Yuanlu 王圆箓 who discovered the 'library cave' in 1900 which instigated the interest of foreigners, brings up the 'patriotic' agenda even more clearly, since this is connected to the history of theft by those foreigners who took many of the manuscripts abroad. Interestingly, while the educational *Zhonghua hun* long version is much more explicit about the foreign 'culprits', naming them one after the other, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV version cut much of this section so that the viewer of this TV version is not confronted with this criticism very explicitly. Similarly, the issue of scholarship on Dunhuang is much abbreviated in the TV version for the Chinese citizen at large, leaving a rather positive impression of scholarly cooperation with international symposia showing the attraction of Dunhuang, while the longer educational version for classroom use keeps stressing that the main scholarship is, after all, Chinese, not foreign,[194] from the establishment of Dunhuang studies in late Republican times, and painter and 'guardian of Dunhuang', Chang Shuhong 常书鸿 (who remained on the mainland in 1949), to PRC times, suggesting to the viewer that the PRC particularly cared about protection and scholarly investigation. The longer educational video version also features shots of prominent Chinese politicians, including Deng Xiaoping, visiting this 'cultural' site (and therewith endorsing it), which heightens the 'political' feel the video comes with, in contrast to the shortened TV version cut down to rather focus on the more 'touristic' parts.

In line with the particular viewpoint of 'patriotic education' on Dunhuang, the 'patriotic' booklet (Zhang / Lu 1999) as well as other 'patriotic' renderings provide sometimes rather questionable assertions, e.g., when it is suggested that the famous *apsaras* are simply a kind of Daoist immortals (Fang 1999: 39), skipping their foreign provenance altogether, or suggesting the above-mentioned rather bizarre interpretation of the Buddha's self-sacrifice as standing for the Chinese people's readiness to sacrifice themselves for others (Wang / Zhou / Xing 1998: 546). In short, a certain uneasiness with the religious (and partly 'foreign') site content is palpable.

As Dunhuang is an important testimony of the ancient Silk Road, this is, however, also playing into present-day political agendas. It is thus connected also to the UNESCO listing of the Silk Roads (2014) as a border-crossing entry, covering several countries. In short, in present-day 'patriotic' view (as reflected in the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* series, Zhang / Zhao 2019: 11–22), Dunhuang is at the same

194 To underline the point, the PRC flag in front of the Institute for Dunhuang Studies building is visually highlighted.

time framed as a 'patriotic education site' and 'icon' for Chineseness, and as a transborder site documenting cultural contact over the Silk Road. While the new 'patriotic' framing still puts a stress on art, praising the murals and sculpture, it also claims that due to the fortunate peaceful surroundings, the caves escaped destruction when elsewhere Buddhism was persecuted at different points in time! (The obvious historical irony is here, that this was due to the fact that the area was simply not in Chinese hands at those times when anti-Buddhist persecutions occasionally raged in China.) That way, the narrative assures the reader, '*Chinese* traditional culture' was preserved there well (emphasis added) (12). Only after the end of the Mongol Yuan dynasty when access to the Western regions was once more cut for China, the site fell into oblivion, until well into the Qing (13).

In terms of art, the most outstanding and iconic feature, the *apsaras*, are by now acknowledged as of Indian origin, but are said to have integrated Daoist immortals due to religious syncretism (14–16). Thus, it is claimed, one could still say that the Dunhuang *apsaras* have 'Chinese cultural characteristics' (15). The most 'patriotic' part of the presentation, however, is reserved for modern times with Wang Yuanlu, the Daoist. While conceding that he intended to raise money to repair the by then dilapidated caves, the fact that he, who discovered the 'library cave' in 1900, would sell manuscripts and art pieces to foreigners (starting with Aurel Stein, but then more importantly to sinologist Paul Pelliot, and then to Japanese as well as Russians and Americans) was something not to be forgiven (17–21). Still, it becomes indirectly clear to the intended young reader that only by Pelliot's making the finds public in Beijing, Chinese intellectuals realised what was going on. They would then stage 'the first cultural heritage protection activity in history' (!) (20), but the historical irony was that at least what had been bought by the foreigners would be preserved well in museums abroad (in contrast to items that were supposed to be sent to Beijing for safekeeping but disappeared on the way), which are facts cautiously mentioned. Daoist Wang, in turn, likely (and supposedly deservedly) ended his days in mental derangement.

Contrary to this Daoist 'traitor', PRC scholars would, however, care well for Dunhuang. In this new 'patriotic' summary of 2019, the long-term director of the Dunhuang Research Academy, Fan Jinshi 樊锦诗, often called the 'daughter of Dunhuang', is explicitly praised for her life-long research, being instrumental from the Chinese side to set the huge (international) digitalisation project of the caves into motion. But on top of her scholarly credentials, she is also praised for having been an outstanding CCP member all the time (21–22). In 2009, she was chosen as one of the '100 personalities since the establishement of New China that moved China', and in 2013 received the 'Lei Feng prize' as the highest PRC award for

civic morals![195] (22). This way, 'patriotism' is connected not only to academic achievements of Dunhuang studies in China, but also clearly to the Communist Party.

Finally, whereas the Great Wall has a military connotation, and Dunhuang a cultural one in defining 'Chineseness' for the Chinese citizen, there are also iconic constructions and landscape transformations that are to show and stand for Chinese engineering skills and creativity, once and today, and they are connected to a central feature of Chinese traditional legitimation of rule: water control. For ancient times, there is the case of the Dujiangyan 都江堰 (lit.: magnificent river weir) irrigation system in Sichuan Province, which is – like Dunhuang or the Great Wall – at the same time a 'patriotic' site and a UNESCO one. Its modern 'counterpart', the Red Flag Canal in Henan Province, is, however, a purely 'patriotic' site.

Case study: Dujiangyan

The **Dujiangyan shuili gongcheng** 都江堰水利工程 (Dujiangyan irrigation works) (Sichuan Province) (list 1, 1997), hailed as the world's oldest still extant and functioning water regulation construction,[196] proudly displays locally its role as a UNESCO site, but also as a 5A tourism site in China, and as a top-level national park site (as I observed on-site in 2014). Given the UNESCO nomination (in 2000, listed together with the nearby Daoism-related Mount Qingcheng 青城 which is no 'patriotic education showcase base', though),[197] its plaques are often multilingual, offering beyond English also Korean and Japanese, sometimes even German. The high skill of Chinese engineering in taming the Min 岷 river into a benign source of water for irrigation of the fertile Chengdu 成都 plain with various measures back in the 3rd century BC is to show how the Chinese were able to invent methods of hydroengineering early on. By the splitting of water ways with the so-called fish mouth into a slower-moving inner lane and the quicker-flowing outer river, then regulating the amount of water to be directed from the inner lane into the irrigation canal cut through the mountain, simultaneously blocking sediment from entering

195 For Lei Feng as a Communist allround model, cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book.

196 See Yang (2019: 55). The short description of the site (ibid. 56–60) provides a brief but concise summary of the technical working of the different parts of this construction.

197 Apart from physical vicinity, the combination of these two sites of very different content into one inscription on the UNESCO world cultural heritage list is remarkable, given also the fact that while in the inner-Chinese heritage protection system, Dujiangyan is listed in toto as well, the Mount Qingcheng Daoist temples are only partly listed as individual items. In this sense, the granted Chinese application in the international system goes further than the inner-Chinese one.

the latter with dykes, weirs, moveable threshholds, and sand banks, for the water to enter over the so-called bottle-neck into the higher-placed irrigation canal, irrigation water is directed toward the East (see fig. 2.3.1). The respective irrigation canal was dug into the mountain with ingenuous methods at the time, given the not yet invented explosives (a fact especially highlighted also in the recent Xi Jinping-era narrative framing, Yang 2019: 55–60), which thus connects the Min river to the plain beyond. Periodically changing water levels were measured with stone figures fixed at the margins. The whole system, invented by the Qin state's official Li Bing 李冰,[198] required annual clearing of the inner lane and repair work for which methods with locally easily available materials were also designed, using, i.a., bamboo caskets of stones, to block the inner canal during repair works.

Fig. 2.3.1 View of Dujiangyan: the splitting up of water ways (photograph by the author, 2014)

The control of water has been central to Chinese traditional understanding of the legitimacy to rule, already reflected in mythology with the Great Yu 大禹 (claimed locally as a Sichuanese)[199] 'taming' the water – considered the first 'Xia dynasty'

198 Li Bing lived before the Qin conquered all of China under the First Emperor and thus was of the 'Qin state', not the 'Qin dynasty'.

199 Cf. the locally sold booklet on Dujianyan as a UNESCO site: Zhang (2013: 4, and p. 18 even showing a photo of the stele 'on the spot of his birth').

ruler posthumously according to legend, and water control is of crucial importance for agriculture. By Li Bing's and his son's skilful canalling, who were therefore deified by the locals with a temple later, which is today part of the whole heritage site, flooding was controlled, while the irrigation of a large area in the Chengdu plain was made possible. This proved even crucial in the 20th century, as is pointed out in locally sold materials as much as in explicitly 'patriotic' narratives, during the Second Sino–Japanese War to feed the populace of 'free China' by producing large quantities of grain and vegetables.[200] That way, the old technical invention also served the modern Chinese nation in its presumably darkest hour! To keep the system running well, it also required, as mentioned, annually collective work to clear the silting which also implied intangible heritage over the festivities around this collective regular endeavour to bind the locals together.[201] Furthermore, it is pointed out that Dujiangyan was important for the trade route connecting the Tibetans and the Chengdu plain, and it was also part of the 'Southern Silk Road'.

To step up the 'patriotic' contents of the Dujiangyan site (beyond its UNESCO world heritage role) as well as the local credentials for contributions to the Chinese nation at large, the visitor encounters at the site further illustrations of historical instances where Sichuan locals showed themselves to be 'patriots', namely with the early 20th century Sichuan railway uprising of 1911 to protest against the incumbent Qing signing away the railway concession rights to foreigners. Since these protests fed into the Xinhai revolution (see chapter 4.2 of the present book for the Wuchang Uprising), the Sichuanese are thus shown locally as contributing to 'the nation' also later in history, while the monument for the dead of this Sichuan Railway Protection Movement as a national-level key cultural protection unit underlines this 'patriotic' commitment of the locals in a commemorative vein. The Dujiangyan site came, however, more unfortunately into national focus once more in recent years because of the great 2008 earthquake which wrought damage to precisely this region of Sichuan, and thus WHITRAP (World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region) in Shanghai, an entity under the auspices of the UNESCO, set up a special project to restore the Dujiangyan site.[202]

In the national 'patriotic' perspective, the filmic representation of Dujiangyan, a site not treated in the *Zhonghua hun* educational videos, but in the *Ai wo Zhonghua*

200 Cf. Zhang (2013: 23), referring to a (Communist) Xinhua article of 1945! This assertion has been also attributed to the US vice president touring China during the war. See below.

201 Cf. Zhang (2013: 58–61). In fact, in 2006 the festivities were inscribed in the inner-Chinese intangible heritage protection system, while the repair work they were connected to is now no longer done by the populace. See also below.

202 For the evaluation of the Dujiangyan site after the earthquake, see WHITRAP (2009). A restoration of parts of the ancient city was undertaken subsequently: WHITRAP (2013).

film clip (disc 8) for the national TV audience, produced by Sichuan TV's societal education department in 1998, presents Dujiangyan proudly as one of the 'three great wonders' in ancient China, together with the 'Great Wall' (cf. above) and the terracotta army (cf. above, 2.1), all connected to Qin rule.[203] Showing the fertile land around, it is pointed out to the TV audience that this was only possible because Dujiangyan tamed the Min river which had repeatedly caused inundations before. Dujiangyan, constructed during the long reign of Qin Shihuang's great-grandfather in the 3rd century BC (to whom Qin Shihuang would succeed quickly, given the very brief two reigns in between), is thus a site connected to Qin rule (that is usually associated with being rather 'brutal') with a very benign and 'peaceful' role, underlined in the TV film clip by a soft music audio-track.

The TV film clip introduces the various parts of the construction and the important function of dividing the Min 岷 river, explaining to the national TV audience the working of the single parts with graphics in detail, as well as the regular maintenance work at the Tomb Sweeping Festival in spring. With the picturesque temple in his honour, the official Li Bin is profiled as the genius behind it who succeeded in having this constructed in only eight years, in spite of not having technologies like dynamite at his disposal.[204] His purported tomb is shown to commemorate his personal effort which would make the rich harvests the whole area ever since enjoyed possible. The narrative does, however, not fail to point out that in PRC times, additional constructions enlarged this water system enormously, but since Li Bing achieved what he achieved with the means of his time at hand, his work should be by now the pride of the whole Chinese nation.

Compared to this filmic treatment, soliciting the TV audience to visit the site as tourists, the 'patriotic' narrative in the booklet on Dujiangyan of the benchmark patriotic series (Song 1998) reflects more explicitly also its own role in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. It legitimates its narrative as written to conform to the 1994 'action plan for patriotic education' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), (101) and to closely follow the point of view of Jiang Zemin, then general secretary and key figure behind the whole 'patriotic education' in the 1990s, who visited the Dujiangyan site in 1993 and called it a site combining 'science and patriotism' (1, 75). For the construction of Dujiangyan, which is dated to roughly 256–251 BC here (and thus even less than 8 years) (1), the ancient genius of Li Bing

203 This definition of the 'three great wonders' of ancient China is, needless to say, not the only one current in China.

204 In a more traditional Marxist reading, one would expect a reference to exploitation of labour here, as with other large projects like the First Emperor's mausoleum, but the quick construction is positively mentioned here without addressing any human cost.

receives praise, though pointing out that the PRC would top him with adding cement and enlarging the whole project so that now even more water is distributed which would serve also for modern industries today, not only for agriculture (e.g., 4, 14, 62).

Furthermore, in 1975 various dredgings were done that also excavated ancient stone markers and iron signs (used since Ming times) in the river bed which showed how the ancient measuring of water levels functioned (10, 19, 22). That way, PRC excavations and historical scholarship receive praise as well – something we noticed at various sites in the present chapter to broaden the 'patriotic' credentials.

An interesting variation to Dujiangyan's 'patriotic role' during the Second Sino–Japanese War is provided by the booklet's narrative for intended young readers in pointing out that it was, in fact, a foreigner, US Vice President Henry A. Wallace, who visited China in wartime and commented that thanks to this ancient construction in Sichuan province, unoccupied (or in GMD parlance 'free') China had enough to eat during the 'common war against fascism', (9) thus shifting Dujiangyan's 'anti-fascist' credentials to a US Vice President's remark!

Locally, in turn, Li Bing's role was that important to the locals that they deified him (and his son), thus starting the tradition of the local temple (Song 1998: 11). In the latter, the main rules for maintenance were written on a board in the educational three-character format (*sanzijing* 三字经) for easier memorisation to record for posteriority what needed to be done regularly to keep the construction working (20–24). The construction's importance can be gleaned also from the fact, that through all dynasties since the Qin, a special official was tasked with looking after the weir (17, 26–32).

Since Sichuan hosts various 'ethnic minorities', various former officials responsible for Dujiangyan were, in fact, non-Han (26–27). Needed materials for maintenance works (bamboo, stones, but also special wood for which trees were planted near the river) were all locally available (24), and locals (presumably also including non-Han, since Dujiangyan is also called a place of 'inter-ethnic cooperation') had been traditionally tasked with the regular maintenance work (until in the 20th century specialists were called in instead).

Apart from the material legacy of Dujiangyan, the site and Li Bing are, however, also connected to rich intangible heritage. E.g., given the deification of Li Bing, many popular stories about him and his son became part of the local lore (cf. also Birrell 1993: 87–88), which are also a more colourful way of advertising the site to the intended young readers of the booklet (35–44). Li Bing became even the topic of a feature film in 1983, and a Peking opera format was employed to create a new play on him as well (which incidentally received a prize at the time the 'patriotic'

booklet was published) (80).[205] On the more profane level, the city near the construction was renamed in 1988 as 'Dujiangyan' as well (47–48), marking the concerted action to prepare the site for the final inscription in the UNESCO list in 2000, together with the nearby Daoist Mount Qingcheng, to turn the whole area into one large tourist destination offering culture, nature, and 'science' in one. Given the fact that several important figures in Chinese history, be it the Great Historian Sima Qian of Han times (73, 97), or poets, e.g., several Tang poets, stopped by at Dujiangyan, some on their way to visit the Daoist Mount Qingcheng, leaving poems or inscriptions,[206] this links these two otherwise rather distinct sites together also culturally.

On the other hand, the relative vicinity of Dujiangyan to Sichuan's major city Chengdu (which profits from the irrigation system directly), and its location on important travel and commercial routes, being also the place over which products from the upper Min river arrived downstream to the whole area, made the place a rather frequently visited one (cf. 66–67). In the 20th century, e.g., the noted warlord Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥 (who had a strained relationship with Chiang Kai-shek and is thus rather positively viewed in the PRC) visited the site repeatedly in the 1940s (52). In 1941, he penned the board of the temple for Li Bing and his son which can be seen there today (78), while in early PRC times, leading Communists like Zhou Enlai (in 1955) and Zhu De (in 1957) passed by, as did Guo Moruo in 1955, leaving an inscription. During the period of the launch of the Great Leap Forward campaign, Liu Shaoqi visited in March 1958 (76, 95–96) as well as Mao Zedong himself, just 3 days after Liu Shaoqi (91). During his visit, Mao immediately called for a 'modern' method to block the silting, and for installing a floodgate (92).[207] Mao's 'wish' to 'challenge' ancient China's great inventions and top them, is palpable.[208] In fact, this agenda is in the background of the repeated claims that the PRC 'improved' Li Bing's work with modern means.

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205 The opera was performed by the Chengdu (Peking) Opera Troupe.

206 In the 20th century, notables included also the famous painters Zhang Daqian 张大千 (who would leave the mainland) and Xu Beihong 徐悲鸿 (who would remain but died already in 1953).

207 One may note that although it is impossible to criticise Mao in such a patriotic booklet directly, his various cited non-specialist comments on an irrigation system functioning since over 2.000 years, calling for 'better solutions', is rather striking. It looks like the 'challenge' of an ancient 'feudal' genius stroke an uncomfortable comparison.

208 His 'wish' to take a swim there (which he undertook several times in his career as a kind of threat to show he dominated the waters as a demonstration of power) can be seen in this context. (Obviously, he was discouraged and did not do it in this case. His visit, one may add, was during an important Party Meeting in Chengdu to launch the Great Leap Forward.)

After Mao, Hua Guofeng 华国锋, the transitional successor of Mao, was next among the top leaders to visit in the 1970s, and Deng Xiaoping, himself from Sichuan, also visited the site several times after his own final lasting political comeback (in 1979, 1980, and 1982).[209] Deng, while praising Li Bing as a knowledgable person, however stressed that he was for sure no deity (cf. the temple), thus putting the accent on technology. Jiang Zemin, in turn, pointedly picked up on Mao when he visited the site in the early 1990s, to stand at those places from where Mao had given his recommendations for 'improvement' (95).

Accordingly, given the modern interventions, including the installation of an electric floodgate (83), the narrative assures the intended young reader that by now, it was finally no longer necessary to block the canal during the annual reparations, which was however part of the site's intangible heritage, especially connected to when the canal would be reopened after the repair work at Qingming (Tomb Sweeping) in spring. To revive this part of intangible heritage nonetheless (something very much on the political agenda today), the 'opening' festivities were simply reintroduced. In fact, already at the times of the Republic prior to the PRC, the festival had been renamed as 'great ceremony to open the water (flow) (*kai shui da dian* 开水大典)' (81). In 1990, this 'traditional' festival was revived, 'imitating the ancients', and in 1994, the 2.250th anniversary of Dujiangyan was celebrated with fanfare (83, 85, 87). The revived 'traditional' festival was subsequently inscribed on the first list of 'national intangible heritage' in 2006,[210] thus underlining Dujiangyan's relevance for a Chinese identity definition on the national scale also beyond its international UNESCO face.

Case study: the Red Flag Canal

In contrast to Dujiangyan of the 3rd century BC, the **Linzhou hongqiqu jinianguan** 林州红旗渠纪念馆 (Linzhou Red Flag Canal memorial hall) (Henan Province) (list 1, 1997) is to show that not only ancient ('feudal') China was capable of extraordinary inventions in the crucial sector of water control, but that also 'Red China' could do marvels. The Red Flag Canal is made to stand as a proof to this. (In fact, for the 100th anniversary of the CCP in 2021, the Red Flag Canal has become once more the subject of a big TV drama, *Hongqiqu* 红旗渠, in 31 instalments, to celebrate socialist achievements).

209 One may add that he was thus thrice very close to his former home in Sichuan but never went back there. See chapter 5.3 of the present book on Deng's former home.
210 Cf. 'Di yi pi' (2006: item 478).

Historically, the Red Flag Canal was built 1960–1969 to divert water from Shanxi to Henan's Lin 林 County over a distance of 70 km (in various parts and sublanes, adding up to 1.500 km of construction according to official reckoning), because of repeated severe droughts and famine in Lin County. (The connection to the Great Famine following the Great Leap Forward which hit Henan and this region in particular and was an important background,[211] is not spelled out at the site as I observed in 2017, since it is still a political taboo topic:[212] in fact, only droughts of earlier times up to the 1940s, i.e., prior to the PRC, are enumerated in the museum!)

The original memorial museum which is the place listed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system and visualises with miniatures the way the work was done, was joined by a new museum added nearby in 2014, and thus, both buildings featured exhibits at the time of my visit. The new museum's exhibition arrangement is to imitate a winding canal.

The 'long-term' drought problem is dramatised by an installation with painting, while next to it clippings of a well-known propaganda documentary film of 1970 (leaving out the more explicit Cultural Revolution references therein) with the famous spectacular and iconic scene of people dangling down from rocks, working this way to loosen parts of the rocks, is repeated again and again (see fig. 2.3.2).

This documentary film, celebrating the construction of the Red Flag Canal, is familiar to all Chinese of a certain age.[213] In 1974, when Deng Xiaoping made a short-lived come-back on the political scene during the Cultural Revolution, he notably chose this film as the first one among ten films to screen for the United Nations – where the PRC had taken over the 'China' seat from Taiwan in the meantime and sent Deng to New York to address the General Assembly – as an introduction to the PRC's accomplishments! (Cf. Zhang 2012: 160, 175).

One should note that in the West, too, the Red Flag Canal had been advertised as a showcase of Maoist performance. When Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni, known for his leftist political sympathies, was invited by Zhou Enlai to Cultural Revolution China to make a documentary, his (soon to be contested) documentary *Chung Kuo – Cina* of 1972 also included a scene on the Red Flag

211 As the party secretary of the time, Yang Gui (see also below), later noted, many people starved to death, but he would not stop the work since only water by the Canal would help in the future (Zhang 2012: 55). For some comments by another village party secretary in Henan also in the larger Anyang region on the local situation during these times in comparison, cf. Seybolt (1996: chapter 4, and p. 73 on the Red Flag Canal).

212 For the Great Famine, cf., e.g., the book-length study of Dikötter (2010).

213 The scene with the dangling workers is at min. 12–14 of this Chinese propaganda documentary film (called *Hongqiqu* 红旗渠) of 1970.

Canal, presenting the Chinese official narrative of the time to a Western public, though filtered through his own filmic style.

Fig. 2.3.2 Red Flag Canal: the documentary projected on the wall in the museum (Linzhou) (photograph by the author, 2017)

This, however, did not prevent him and his documentary from becoming a target in China of a whole criticism campaign, arguing he was showing too much of Chinese backwardness (Lin County being the only rural area he was led to on his carefully scripted itinerary), and not enough of the revolutionary fervour sparked by Maoism. The criticisms of this supposedly 'anti-Chinese' Antonioni documentary, assembled into a leaflet by *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), were published in 1974 also in various foreign languages by China's Foreign Language Press, e.g., in English with the title 'A vicious motive, despicable tricks: a criticism of M. Antonioni's anti-China film *China*' (*Renmin Ribao* Commentator 1974), which suggests that the whole 'criticism' movement was designed with an international audience in mind as well.[214] Notably, Antonioni was accused in China of having been part of a Soviet plot, since the Soviets were the chief 'enemies' of China at the time (*Renmin Ribao* Commentator 1974: 15). Reportedly, Antonioni himself who spoke no Chinese and

214 Cf. also 'Repudiating Antonioni's Anti-China Film' (1974).

did not know much about the inner-Chinese political intricacies of the time, was totally unprepared for such a bashing treatment after his invitation to China, and felt deeply hurt. Jiang Qing 江青, Mao's last wife, apparently pushed the campaign against Antonioni, reportedly being particularly upset about his filming pigs while her favourite revolutionary operas could be heard in the background – something Antonioni was unlikely to have ever realised. Yang Gui 杨贵, the leading cadre of the Red Flag Canal project (who had his own problems at the time, though – see below), also duly criticised Antonioni's representation of the Canal during the campaign. Thus, Deng Xiaoping's choice of screening the Chinese propaganda documentary of 1970 on the Red Flag Canal internationally for the United Nations in the very same year of the concerted campaign against the Antonioni documentary, i.e., in 1974, was therefore also likely to brush aside the Antonioni version and replace it with the Chinese production in front of international eyes.

With the Red Flag Canal, the slogans of Chinese self-reliance, the national spirit of fearlessness and taking matters literally in one's hands (as tools were rare) is celebrated, referencing the story of the 'foolish old man who removed the mountains' as one of the standard references of Cultural Revolution times to stress that everything is possible as long as 'the masses' are willing to do it.[215]

A long list in the museum, however, also names and honours those that lost their lives (age 15 to 58!), working on the Red Flag Canal (since work safety measures were nil). Praises and endorsements of the site by CCP leaders (of whom conspicuously few visited in Maoist times, though) are pointed out, but also the fact that today many construction workers around China hail from the area (in fact because of enduring poverty), supposedly because of their special skills in this type of work. Mao, notably, never visited this theoretically 'hyper-Maoist' site. A photo showing Mao shaking hands with the local driving force, party secretary Yang Gui, in the early years of planning (likely of 1958),[216] is therefore the only way to suggest Mao's backing. Since Yang Gui was attacked during the Cultural Revolution, his name remained a 'hot potato' for many years (see also below), as can be seen from

215 The speech-turned-essay of Mao on the ancient parable of the foolish old man who removed the mountains (through generations of descendants following up on him) was one of the three main texts people had to 'study' during the Cultural Revolution. (The other two are 'In memory of Norman Bethune' – cf. also chapter 5.3 of the present book – and 'Serve the people'.)

216 Yang Gui met Mao, as it seems, at the time the canal was being designed in late 1958 when Mao was on tour in his train (some leaflets give 1959, but from Yang's recollections it should have been in 1958: see Zhang 2012: 5, 156). (He had met Mao already once in 1956: Zhang 2012: 42.) According to his interviewer, Yang criticised the ongoing Great Leap Forward steel production frenzy at that meeting for limiting the workforce of this project as well as of the necessary work in the fields (Zhang 2012: 5–6, 44), which likely did not amuse Mao, if it happened that way.

materials of different times: the local exhibition of this photo is thus also an indirect statement sustaining him. Zhou Enlai seemed to have been behind the project at the time (and advertised it also to foreigners, see also below), but never visited in person either, neither would Deng Xiaoping (in spite of his choosing the propaganda documentary for the UN screening).

While one may note the traces of a visit of the key Buddhist lay leader and noted calligrapher Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 to this 'red site' in 1977, memorialising it with a long poem (Zhang 2012: 162), high officials rather visited from the 1990s onward. These included later general secretary Hu Jintao as well as later prime minister Wen Jiabao, with the most important visit being then-general secretary Jiang Zemin in 1996, i.e., shortly before the Red Flag Canal became a 'patriotic education showcase base', which means that at this time, the site was promoted more strongly. One may also add that more recently, present general secretary Xi Jinping visited the site in 2022 and recommended the canal's 'spirit' of self-reliance to China's youth explicitely.

Outside of the museum, the present-day visitor encounters a mix of on the one hand rather traditional Chinese forms of recording the famous achievement of Communist China, e.g., with stelae, on the other hand, revolutionary slogans abound, like 'subdue nature', reflecting the Mao-era 'battle against nature' spirit (cf. Shapiro 2001). The Red Flag Canal thus supposedly trumps the Dujiangyan site as a triumph of human creativity: where Dujiangyan 'only' tamed nature, the Red Flag Canal is to stand for a 'victory' over it, and this is to engender particular pride and patriotic fervour. But the Red Flag Canal is also set in the tradition line of Chinese water works, including Dujiangyan, in the outdoor exhibition. While the traditional ones are, however, connected to individual technical geniuses like the Qin official Li Bing in the case of Dujiangyan, the Red Flag Canal is now purportedly 'of and by the people'.

In filmic 'patriotic' treatment, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 6) presents the site to the national audience with a more nation-concentrated narrative of engineering and 'victory' over water, citing Zhou Enlai who told foreigners in the early 1970s that New China was proud to have created two marvels: the new Nanjing Bridge crossing the Yangzi (finished 1968 during the early Cultural Revolution period and after the Soviets had withdrawn their engineers in 1960, allegedly together with the plans),[217] and the Red Flag Canal. Thus, foreigners visiting China during the Cultural Revolution were often made to

217 The Soviets had, however, helped design it and thus had more share in it as is acknowledged in the story-line of Chinese achievements against all odds.

visit these sites of 'new China'.[218] (The sound track of the TV film clip features bombastic music accordingly.) A miniature model in the museum's exhibition, presented to the national TV audience, shows the whole setup of the Canal which taps water from the Zhang 漳 river in neighbouring Shanxi. Given this new lifeline, the former arid area of Lin 林 County in Henan would then be able to produce crops. The stretch through the Taihang mountains was very hard to build as exhibited photos and graphs are to illustrate. Clippings of the propaganda documentary film of 1970 as a kind of master narrative on the site are interspersed which show how hard it used to be for the people living in the area to daily carry water before the project was undertaken. The year 1959 (during the Great Leap Forward) was especially dry, the narrative asserts, but the people did not want to undergo any longer the same tragedy as of old (and starve), and thus started to act. The interspersed propaganda documentary film scenes show masses of labourers, including women and some children, who acted to remedy the situation in Great Leap fashion. Thus, in 1960 they started to divert water from the Zhang river, illustrated by shots of explosions to blow up the mountain rocks. While vaguely stating that it was a time of 'difficulties' (i.e., the Great Famine time), simple helmets and tools are to prove to the TV audience that the people nevertheless went on to 'take matters into their hands' – a Maoist slogan to mobilise the people (and not only ask for help from 'above'), using whatever was at hand.[219] All the while, the people had to work by living on only very limited grain, supplementing it with wild herbs shown in the vitrines (which hints at the Great Famine). Photos of people sleeping in holes on the montains are to document how they did arrange with adverse conditions, and since they had to rely on themselves (which was turned into their 'spirit'), they found ways to produce explosives and other tools themselves (e.g., presenting photos of Great-Leap-style furnaces exhibited in the museum). After the Cultural Revolution, a traditional black stele would be erected in 1990 to celebrate the (25th anniversary of the) opening of the first canal in 1965 as the major sign of success.

But for this success, the storyline goes on, some had had to sacrifice, referring to one outstanding example, the young engineer Wu Zutai 吴祖太 who was only 27 years old when he died.[220] The danger and daring spirit are repeatedly visualised

218 De facto, a substantial number of foreigners, mostly of Third World Countries (which had been explicitly targeted by Zhou Enlai to be shown the canal) toured the site. Zhou had recommended this already in 1968. (See Zhang 2012: 157). As mentioned above, also Antonioni had been led there.

219 See also chapter 3.3 of the present book for Mao at Yan'an, penning the slogan 'ziji dongshou' 自己动手 (do it yourself), which was to become a staple in Maoist rhetoric.

220 Yang Gui recalls him as the earliest 'martyr' of the project who was killed in 1960 in a tunnel by falling stones (Zhang 2012: 142). Other young people, including girls, died or were mutilated because of the work (Zhang 2012: 142–143, 146–147, 151–152).

with clips of the most iconic scenes from the 1970 propaganda documentary film of the workers dangling down the rocks, dramatising their braveness by focusing on how the workers put on the cords which held them. This 'risk squad' (a wording calling to mind the 'dare to die squads' *gansidui* 敢死队 often mentioned in revolutionary contexts) was in charge to put explosives into the mountains and loosen the rocks.

Some years later, after finishing the Canal, calligraphies were also chiselled into the mountain for memorialisation, namely the one by then vice president Li Xiannian who was one of the few political figures to visit during Maoist times, namely in 1974 (accompanying the President of Zambia), who would send a calligraphy subsequently.[221] But still during construction time, as the TV film clip points out, it was the Young Brigade (young volunteers) that made the most difficult of the tunnels, the Qingniandong 青年洞 (Youth tunnel, the calligraphy of which was provided by Guo Moruo in 1972 – who did not personally visit the site, though, either).[222] This way, the canal is strongly connected to the role of youth also for the national TV audience. Enormous bridges for aqueducts had to be built on the way as well. In 1965, the main channel was opened, and in April 1966, i.e., shortly before the full onset of the Cultural Revolution, the second, while in July 1969 the whole Red Flag Canal was declared finished. In all, the project claimes to have levelled 1.250 peaks, dug 211 tunnels etc. Staff at computer screens show the extent of the whole project with various canal lanes to demonstrate to the TV viewer where crops can be grown by now, thanks to the Canal. Jiang Zemin's inscription of the Red Flag Canal motto he had written during his 1996 on-site visit, was immediately chiseled into the rocks, too, as the filming shortly thereafter proves. Heroic stories about the building of the Canal are represented at the site also via artwork, e.g., by paintings or bas-reliefs outside. More didactically, though, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, produced by the Henan TV's education department in 1998, summarises the key message of the site in the end, blending in the motto or 'spirit' of the Red Flag Canal as the 'patriotic' message to learn for the national TV audience: rely on your own strength, do pioneering work in spite of hardship, unite and cooperate, and dedicate yourself selflessly (*zili gengsheng, jianku chuangye, tuanjie xiezuo, wusi fengxian* 自力更生，艰苦创业，团结协作，无私奉献). That way, the Red Flag Canal's official legacy was clearly fixed.

221 Cf. Zhang (2012: 98, 100, 159). Since Zhou Enlai was already ill, Li Xiannian was to accompany the Zambian president to visit the Canal in 1974.

222 According to Yang Gui, he used personal connections to ask Guo Moruo for calligraphies for both Hongqiqu and Qingniandong, which Guo did already in 1968. This served also as an endorsement of Yang Gui's pet project (Zhang 2012: 97–98).

In comparison to the above TV presentation for the Chinese citizens at large, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video's (disc 2) take provides some distinct features in its own 'patriotic' framing of the site, designed for classroom use. This video was produced in 1997 by the audio-visual education entity of the propaganda department of Zhengzhou's University of Technology. Starting with an aerial overview and tourists visiting the area, it hails the Canal as a kind of modern 'Great Wall' (!) (of water) (which shows again that the 'Great Wall' image has been fully absorbed into the trope of 'patriotic' language).[223] The Red Flag Canal is (as we encountered already with the terracotta army of Qin Shihuang) even praised as the 'eighth great wonder of the world'.[224] The educational video presents the exhibition inside the museum and the bas-reliefs outside to the intended watching pupils to illustrate how the work was done. As an educational video, this video notably shows repeatedly pupils who learn about the place on-site. They are shown visiting the indoor exhibition with the miniature model to understand the set-up of the overall construction. The simple food and tools used are focused upon, but given the many droughts that occurred 'until the 1940s' (as is also carefully stated here, but notably shown with a book entry which also mentions that people 'ate each other', though this moment is quickly passing by), the people now wanted to do something against it. The famous 1970 propaganda documetanry film is integrated in this video even more extensively than in the TV film clip, showing how people, including children, had to carry water from afar, so that it was decided already in 1957, that Lin County needed to get water from the outside.[225] In 1960, finally, people started making holes everywhere to blow off the rocks. All the while, there was not much to eat (though the Great Famine is again not addressed openly). The building of aqueducts with bamboo scaffolds, and of water reservoirs are shown to demonstrate the many tasks the whole endeavour implied. And thus, finally, rich crops could be grown also in this formerly destitute area. The photo of Mao, shaking hands with Yang Gui, the party secretary, suggests political backing, and Zhou Enlai's remarks (to foreigners) on New China's 'great wonder', the Red Flag Canal, should not only cause pride, but also legitimise Yang Gui's decision at the time to go on with the project at whatever cost.

That the site even attracts foreign tourists is claimed by showing young foreigners in the area (who however apparently did not realise that they were filmed

223 As might be recalled, the 'Great Wall' trope is also used in the de facto national anthem of China: 'March of the volunteers', as the Great Wall of blood and flesh.

224 This praise is rhetorically ascribed, as so often, to foreigners. See Zhang (2012: 171).

225 In fact, the first endeavour was the so-called Hero Canal of 1957–58 which, however, did not work well and only tapped into inner-Henan water ressources which dried up.

and when they did, the camera quickly stopped; obviously they were participating in a paragliding outing in the area, but are claimed in the video to have 'visited the Canal'). In any case, Chinese visitor groups led by guides, shown thereafter, are to demonstrate to the pupils that the site is supposedly attractive to both foreigners and Chinese. (In fact, it is a peculiar feature of this educational video, that it tries to suggest that beyond 'political education', the area is also interesting in touristic terms and thus also fun, showing boat cruises on the Canal!) The key lesson for the pupils should, however, be the 'spirit' for which the Red Flag Canal, built during the 'difficult 1960s', stands, namely self-reliance to show how people become creative under socialism. That way, local economy can be boosted, as shots of an assembly-line glass bottle production, and mechanised spinning mills are to prove. This means that the Canal not only served for agricultural production, but also for setting up industries.[226]

Given this success, the pupils should, however, also learn about the costs, namely the fact that some lost their lives for the Canal, visualised with the stele honouring these 'martyrs' (including the university-trained young engineer Wu Zutai who had been also pointed out in the TV film clip version). An old man, serving as a witness, tells pupils on-site in more personal terms about the construction times,[227] which prepares for an individual profile of the famous 'hero' of the dangling workers to emotionalise the storyline: when a stone hit him and smashed three of his teeth, he would simply use his iron tool to throw them out, to bleedingly go on working nonetheless! This, obviously, should be a working attitude to emulate. Visitors are shown taking notes, while listening to the guide's explanation, underlining the educational 'study aspect' of the site, while shots of Jiang Zemin, shaking hands during his on-site visit, are interspersed for political reference. The pupils visiting the site also learn more specifically about the role of youth at the time, namely with the *shengongpu* 神工铺, i.e., young people who saw their work as 'holy labour' (*shengong*) for the future generations, and thus also put their sleeping mats (*pu*) in the rock holes (not going home for the whole period of work), as the old propaganda documentary film shows. This should teach modern pupils that people at the time simply had 'revolutionary optimism', and this is what nowadays pupils should learn from their example. The 'youth tunnel', Qingniandong 青年洞, which was built by youth who supposedly 'volunteered', is seen as a topic of

226 Incidentally, in the 1970 propaganda documentary film, the first of the examples for industrialisation in the area had been the production of water toilets!

227 Already in the 1950s, the Chinese 'museum workers' visiting the Soviet Union noted this use of (revolutionary) witnesses telling youth on-site of their experiences as an effective educational device. Cf. below in chapter 6 of the present book.

particular salience for the visiting pupils.[228] Those young people had not much food and thus had to eat wild grass, many even fell ill, but they would still work on. Repeatedly, girls are also shown taking part in hard labour, thus evoking the 'iron girls' image of the time.[229] The contribution of youth (of whom some de facto perished and others remained invalidated) would be also honoured later by calling the tunnel after them, eternalised by the calligraphy of Guo Moruo (1972) which is chiselled into the rocks (and thus is to show to today's youth that also young people can leave their mark). Thus, final shots of pupils at the site and of Jiang Zemin's visit in 1996 (who also left his own inscription, chiselled into the rocks) figure as the two poles of education and politics defining 'patriotic education'.

Compared to the above filmic representations for the national scale, be it for TV or for classroom use all over China, the 'patriotic' booklet (Wang 1998), de facto based on a longer book of 1996, stands out in that it largely follows the views of Yang Gui who is repeatedly named here, bespeaking a more local perspective in its take on the site (if not disclosing his personal difficulties during the Cultural Revolution). As a general background, the long history of droughts in the region (and notably also of cannibalism reported five times since the Ming era!) is accentuated (Wang 1998: 4–5). Compared to the other 'patriotic' materials, this booklet is more explicit about the various difficulties encountered during the construction, again bespeaking a local perspective, zooming in on all major sites along the Canal and where problems were encountered.

While the project was supported beyond the local in the beginning, during the Great Famine (which is only vaguely described), opposition from some higher echelons of the Party increased, also due to some 'wrong allegations' regarding the project. While not openly stating that party secretary Yang Gui (who admitted this later) de facto defied orders to stop the project and clandestinely had the 'Youth tunnel' built nevertheless, the narrative suggests that this was in fact conforming to the wish of the local 'people' who simply needed water. More than the other 'patriotic' materials, this booklet dwells on single cases of 'heroism' and sacrifice, profiling various individuals which again underlines the local perspective. It becomes also

228 De facto, as Yang Gui recalls, the young people were assigned this task. This was even in defiance of the orders given from above to stop the project at the time. The tunnel was hard to detect and thus intended to be built secretly – which throws a somewhat different light on it (Zhang 2012: 96).

229 'Iron girls / women' (*tienü* 铁女) had been promoted especially by the Dazhai model for agriculture (a campaign started in the early 1960s and physically referring to the Shanxi side of the Taihang mountains), showing that women could do as much as men under socialism. The topic also recurred in Daqing, the industrial parallel. (Cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book on Wang Jinxi). Notably, while the 1970 documentary film focused a whole section on them, in the more modern 'patriotic' versions, this issue has been toned down.

clear that at various places along the 70 km trajectory of the whole Canal, it needed Party representatives to 'convince' the respective village populations that working on the construction would benefit them, too, and the larger society in the long run. Recruitment was mostly local, though apparently also Army units at times helped (71). Repeatedly, though, it is also mentioned that due to lack of knowledge and experience, the recruited perished, e.g., when they dug tunnels and simply succumbed due to the lack of oxygene, or when they dealt with explosives amateurishly (27, 29). Some interesting glimpses are provided by hints that fertilizer was assigned to them to create their own explosives, and they also received scrap metal from the PLA, left over from the Korean War, to make their utensils! (41). In sum, the 'patriotic' booklet provides a more local take in comparison to spell out what the project meant on the ground.

The 'Red Flag Canal' was, as mentioned above, used as a showcase to foreigners of the spectacular feat socialism could provide. However, a chief figure behind its construction, the former party secretary of Lin County, Yang Gui, was for a long time brushed aside, since he came under attack during the Cultural Revolution. Similar to Wang Jinxi of Daqing (see chapter 5.3 of the present book), he thus complicates the narrative. E.g., in the Cultural Revolution little picture story book (*lianhuanhua* 连环画) version of the Red Flag Canal (*Hongqiqu* 1973), his name is evaded (while, e.g., some 'model workers' are named).[230] After the Cultural Revolution, Yang Gui was cautiously put back into the picture, and he was interviewed later (after the Red Flag Canal's 1997 nomination as a 'patriotic education showcase base') to enable him to tell his version of the Canal.[231] (Subsequently, he would be even declared an 'honorary president of the Canal'.) Yang had come to Lin County in 1954 as Party secretary. Realising the dire water situation, he tried with wells at first, as he told his interviewer, and had a first small canal built in 1957 to 1958 from a small river in the area, dubbed (reflecting the spirit of the Great Leap times) 'hero canal' (Zhang: 2012: 4–5, 24–25). However, during the 1959 drought, all dried up which spurred the larger project to divert water from the Zhang river in Shanxi, started in 1960. For this task of 70 km through the Taihang Mountains, he cited the ancient Dujiangyan as an inspiration, though here in Shanxi and Henan, obstacles were more massive (9). In 1965, the first Canal went into operation, and in April 1966, shortly before the Cultural Revolution came into full

230 *Hongqiqu* (1973). Interestingly, this comic-book version (pictures with text below) has several names of 'negative figures' (as of that moment in time) cancelled, leaving the blanks.

231 See Zhang (2012). This book was originally published in 2005. Zhang started to interview him for a TV documentary in 1999 after a TV serial on the Red Flag Canal story was proposed in 1998 (Zhang 2012: frontispiece and p. 3).

swing, *Renmin ribao* wrote celebratory articles to make also Yang Gui's name known nationwide (11). But only shortly later, Yang Gui was criticised as were many cadres at the time. (As it seems, his defiance of orders to stop work during the famine had made him many enemies.) In typical Cultural Revolution parlance, he was labelled a 'capitalist roader', the Canal a 'black canal' (obviously countering the self-exaltation with the appropriation of the revolutionary 'Red Flag' symbolism), and he was imprisoned until people from Lin County clandestinely freed him (12, 69–73). He was reinstalled temporarily in Lin County in 1968 (78), in 1969 the whole Canal was finished, and by 1970, the propaganda documentary film 'Red Flag Canal' was shown all over China.[232] Still, Yang Gui would be personally attacked further and again more intensely in the later phase of the Cultural Revolution in 1975. He thus could only resume working in 1979, if not returning to Lin County after having been transferred away for good in 1973 (15, 80–90). Today's local leaflets of the site, though, honour Yang Gui, even paralleling him with Li Bing of Dujiangyan, and his calligraphy also makes the mentioned great claims for the Red Flag Canal as 'China's Great Wall of Water'.[233] The so-called 'spirit' of the Red Flag Canal would become also the topic of exhibitions which repeatedly toured the country, including Beijing where Yang Gui was also invited to explain it.[234] That way, the local and the national perspective of the Canal came closer together.

In the new official 'patriotic' framing of this 'showcase base', by now updated to the Xi Jinping era (in the *Fengbei* series, Tian 2019), however, one notes a shift in accent away from the local or personal (Yang Gui) to portray the Canal as above all something 'the people' of Lin County built, but with significant help of the Party representatives also beyond the village level, and namely being possible only because of the cooperation of the neighbouring Shanxi province representatives who

232 According to Yang Gui's recollections, filming had actually started early when the Canal was under construction, but nothing was released, as long as 'negative' evaluations of the Canal project were circulating (Zhang 2012: 92–93).

233 Cf. the local leaflet: *Hongqiqu fengjingqu* 红旗渠风景区 (Red Flag Canal scenic area) (acquired in 2017). One may add that on some of the locally available leaflets the trope of the 'Great Wall' is also used by applying similar 'advertising strategies': e.g., in school textbooks, the Great Wall is often claimed as outstanding, providing a calculation meant to impress the pupil that if one were to put the bricks (of Ming times) into a line, one could easily encircle the whole globe. In likewise fashion, here leaflets claim that with building a small wall with the earth moved for constructing the Canal, one could easily link Guangzhou in the South of China with Harbin in the Northeast. (This 'patriotic' calculation was incidentally already featuring in the 1970 propaganda documentary film as well).

234 This, too, can be gleaned from the locally available leaflets where Yang Gui (sometimes without being explicitly named) can be seen on many photographs. One major exhibition was in 2004 (Zhang 2012: 175–176).

aggreed to have 'their' Zhang river used. In this larger picture, Lin County, being in the border region between Henan, Shanxi, and Hebei, is thus nationalised. In other words, it should not only be Henan to be credited. That way, the site is drawn away from any 'too' local interpretation. The new 'patriotic' framing also contextualises the Canal, pointing out that there were, in fact, earlier inner-provincial irrigation projects in the 1950s before the Red Flag Canal was started (Tian 2019: 5). Only when they dried up, the larger project of using neighbouring Shanxi's Zhang river was finally devised. This way, the Yang Gui-centred narrative (with its implicit criticism of Party committees beyond the county with whom Yang Gui had clashed) is relativised to stress that many people and institution helped Lin County to build the Canal (10). But the major point stressed in the new 'patriotic' narrative is the 'Red Flag Canal spirit', which is linked here to Xi Jinping who is said to fully endorse it (8). The basic (Maoist) lesson of not asking for help from above but taking things in one's own hands should be integrated, though, with the Party's guiding spirit of 'unification', which will make sure that the power of the many can be turned into a productive mass (and not prove divisive). The whole Red Flag Canal endeavour, in this sense, thus clearly stands for more than a local success story.

Today, the 'Red Flag Canal Scenic Area' (*Hongqiqu fengjingqu* 红旗渠风景区) is labelled as a 5A tourist site of the PRC, i.e., the highest possible labelling in this regard.[235] This is likely more a 'political' labelling than reflecting genuine attraction, though, apart from the fact that the site is not very conveniently located in terms of access. The added attractions include motor boat cruises on the Canal and paragliding (both of which had been shown in the educational video, as mentioned above), but also cable cars up the mountains, or hiking tours are advertised, which were obviously introduced to heighten the attraction of the Canal which as such is a very extended site.[236] The 1970 propaganda documentary film, familiar to every Chinese of a certain age, still plays a crucial role for place branding (and thus is also referred to in the museum). But – in marked difference from Dujiangyan – the site's touristic appeal as such is rather limited, leaving the 'patriotic education' function in a clear pole position.

The four cases of this subchapter show how iconic constructions and landscape transformations are integrated in the 'patriotic education' system as material sites

235 The promotion to 4A had been achieved in 2002 (according to an older leaflet of the site), and the one to 5A came only after 2009. The 'scenic area' was also included in the '10 Red Tourism Areas' labelled in 2007.

236 This can be seen from the leaflets for tourists available locally. The 'main' entrance near the memorial museum has a ticket booth.

where the Chinese citizen can learn in a tangible way, framed by contextualisation, about China's military (the Great Wall), artistic (the Mogao Caves), and engineering (Dujiangyan and the Red Flag Canal) capacities in history and the respective potentials in the present. The sites also position themselves between the local, the regional, and the national, in most of the cases (namely those being UNESCO world heritage sites) additionally also considering the international, which sometimes leads to different narrative framings for the domestic audience to be 'patriotically educated' at a site *vs* the international tourist, something we already observed in the first subchapter on excavation sites with the case of Yinxu.

Final remarks

All in all, the discussed examples in this chapter on three different types of contextualising materiality in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system show how different readings of objects are emerging between the national, regional, and local agendas, and how these change over time. They also show, how materiality is applied to educate Chinese citizens into 'patriotism'. Although much of this is connected to Chinese cultural history, 'socialist achievements' are also integrated into the system, as the regional museums with their exhibition parts on modern (revolutionary) times, following the Soviet model, as well as socialist constructions like the Red Flag Canal demonstrate. Therewith, the cultural history of China is supposedly seamlessly feeding into modern socialist China's development, or, turned around, the latter is drawing its strength from Chinese tradition, providing the PRC's development with a distinct Chinese face. The tangible character of materiality is also a key attraction for Chinese tourists who are often rather wary of narrative discourse in textbook-like fashion, hoping to 'see' something real instead.

Still, objects don't speak for themselves, and contextualisation thus means to suggest a reading of what is to be seen, which is most crucial in instances where only specialists can 'read' or interpret material evidence, like in the cases of excavations. Therefore, narrative and visual means (e.g., with explanations or recreations, dioramas, or films) are crucial for 'educating' the visitor of a site. In those cases where sites are appealing also to international tourists (like Yinxu, the Great Wall, the Mogao Caves, or Dujiangyan), national pride can be easily engendered, which also feeds into the goal of 'patriotism', but the sites' offer needs to be reframed for the Chinese citizen for going beyond national pride to identify also 'world heritage' sites as nonetheless distinctly 'Chinese'. As we observed, this, at times, is achieved by pointing at China's being fleeced by foreigners in the past at those very sites to

create a feeling of cultural identification and the need to 'defend' those sites against any possible encroachment. Presentations to the international audience and to the domestic public thus differ, taking also into account the expectations domestic visitors, whether pupils, or grown-up tourists, come with, given their previous exposure to normative textbook narratives in school, following the Marxist paradigm (as set mainly by Guo Moruo for ancient times). A case in point was Yinxu and the difficulties of how to present, interpret, and present the findings to different target groups.

For the modern times, reflected in the translocal museums, as well as in the landscape transformation of the Red Flag Canal discussed above, the main task and challenge is to engender interest with the domestic audience by connecting local and revolutionary history. During my on-site observations, those parts of translocal museums addressing revolutionary history were typically the least visited ones by non-guided tourists, with the repeatedly overheard remark that there is 'nothing to see'. While exhibition parts on ancient history often bank on aesthetic objects, and parts on natural history on impressive skeletons or recreated animals particularly liked by pupils (as also the TV and video presentations discussed above clearly showed), those on local culture can draw on the distinct local flavour and customs as selling points to attract visitors. Objects for the revolutionary period, in contrast, are often unspectacular, and presentation is therefore largely focused upon texts or photos, and some dioramas to generate contextualisation. Interest can be generated, as the case of the Red Flag Canal demonstrates, rather over an appeal for elderly domestic visitors to their memories of the Mao era, linking up with the well-known propaganda documentary film to contextualise what can be seen materially on site, while younger people are reminded of the special role young people played during the building of the Canal to suggest agency and importance of the younger generation to make their contribution to the *patria*. That way, China's ancient impressive achievements in military, cultural, or engineering respects (as exemplified by the Great Wall, the Mogao Caves, and Dujiangyan respectively), should not only awe the new generations and engender national pride, but should also lead to self-assuredness that also the present generation of Chinese citizens can make its mark for socialist China and its future standing in the world. This, after all, is what 'patriotic education' is supposed to serve for, using the 'showcase bases' as a tangible format for reaching out to pupils as well as to tourists, integrating the local over the regional into the larger national(ist) framework for the formation of Chinese citizens.

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3 Marketing locality: patriotic framing for the citizen as learner or tourist

Abstract This chapter focuses on different types of 'places' in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, i.e. sites where their locality is key: 1. 'fictive' places which purport that a mythical-legendary figure can be localised there: these places (with case studies on the 'mausolea' of Huangdi in Shaanxi Province and Yandi in Hunan Province) aim at embodying the nation or 'Chineseness' over the constructed origins to market the specific place to learners and tourists as an anchor for national identification, cultural bonding, pride, and 'patriotism'; 2. the very numerous cases in the 'showcase bases' system of places of commemoration and mourning, which cover three subcategories: sites of atrocities and victimisation (with case studies on the Lüshun and the Nanjing massacres in Liaoning and Jiangsu Province respectively, and the bacteriological warfare Unit 731 in Heilongjiang Province), prisons and 'concentration camps' (with case studies on the Longhua prison-cum-execution ground in Shanghai, the Guizhou Xifeng 'concentration camp', and the Chongqing Geleshan prisons), and 'martyrs' cemeteries' (with case studies on Urumqi in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and Yunnan Province's Kunming December First 'martyrs'), focusing on localised sacrifice; 3. Party places (with case studies on Jingganshan and Ruijin in Jiangxi Province, Zunyi in Guizhou Province, Yan'an in Shaanxi Province, and Xibaipo in Hebei Province) which present Party history in a tangible and localised form to render it more accessible to the Chinese citizen.

After considering various examples of 'patriotic education showcases bases' playing up materiality and objects in chapter 2, we will move on in the present chapter to another category: places, i.e., sites that define themselves over their very locality. There has been some discussion on the concept of 'place', especially vis-à-vis 'space' (cf. influential theorist Lefebvre (1994) who preferred 'space'). As de Certeau (Certeau 1984: 117) opined, relating both terms, 'space is a practiced place', and 'place' is a 'configuration of positions'. Others, however, use the terms precisely to the opposite avail. In that (majority) view, which I follow, 'places' are holistic, topographic, and phenomenological, and they are not 'exchangeable'. This is pertinent for 'sites' like the 'patriotic education showcase bases' we look at in this chapter. As Agnew defines this sense of 'place', it 'is constituted by the impact that being somewhere has on the constitution of the processes in question' (Agnew 2011: 317). Whereas 'space' is rather associated with the global and abstract, 'place' is

local and specific. It is therefore also easily linked to the past, serving as a *lieu de mémoire* (in Pierre Nora's sense) over being an (at least claimed) *lieu d'histoire*. In the reverse direction, recent theorisation points out that 'place' is also something constructed by 'social practice', thus integrating the aspect of what people do at and with such sites (Agnew 2011: 326). This fits well with the 'patriotic' 'site' concept and the uses of such sites for citizen formation in China.

In this category of 'patriotic education' sites discussed in the present chapter, we may distinguish different types of 'places'. The first we will look into here are 'fictive' places which purport that a mythical figure can be localised there. Since the 'owner' or 'content' of the site is mythical, I have labelled such sites 'fictive'. In contrast to chapter 5 of the present book, such sites do not effectively enhance a historical individual as a model, but rather have the function of embodying the nation or 'Chineseness' over its constructed origins, which is only localised there, linked to the respective mythical figure. This serves for marketing the specific place to Chinese citizens, be they learners or tourists, as an anchor for national identification, cultural bonding, pride, and 'patriotism'. This will be elaborated via case studies on the 'mausolea' of Huangdi in Shaanxi Province, and Yandi in Hunan Province.

The next and less elating, but very important (and numerous) variety in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists is the one of commemorative places, or places of mourning which bespeaks the crucial role emotions are to play in 'patriotic education'. This includes three kinds of subcategories: the first are sites of atrocities and massacres of 'normal Chinese people', i.e., sites of victimisation (where visiting is clearly a form of 'dark tourism' to Chinese 'dissonant heritage'):[1] the tonic keynote in these sites is horror and gloom, as the case studies on the Lüshun and the Nanjing massacres in Liaoning and Jiangsu Province respectively, and the bacteriological warfare Unit 731 in Heilongjiang Province, will show. The second subcategory are prisons and 'concentration camps' where the suffering of (Communist) 'heroes' is highlighted by the cruel treatment they received, though commemorated in the light of their will to resist nonetheless: here, the tonic keynote is rather defiance and courage, as case studies on the Longhua prison-cum-execution ground in Shanghai, the Guizhou Xifeng 'concentration camp', and the Chongqing Geleshan prisons will show. The third subcategory are cemeteries of 'martyrs' who have died

1 There are different terms used for such types of sites and visits to them in scholarship. The term 'dissonant heritage' has been popularised by Tunbridge / Ashworth (1994), while the term 'dark tourism' has shown a particular emotive appeal and has been more contested, especially whether it focuses on the type of place, or the motivations of visiting tourists. Cf., i.a., White / Frew (2013), Hooper / Lennon (2017), or Stone et al. (2018).

for 'the cause', intending the Communist one. They are to honour those who lost or gave up their lives, while educating the young to follow their uncompromising example: here the tonic keynote is reverence and resolve, as case studies on the Urumqi 'martyrs' in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and Yunnan Province's Kunming December First 'martyrs' will show.

Finally, sites of particular importance for the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) are covered in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists: here, the place is – statically – conceived as recalling special events and settings, showing where what exactly is assumed to have happened, who sat where on which chair near whom, and how the places look where iconic historic photos have been taken etc., to show Party history in a localised form, accessible to learners as well as to tourists, enhancing the 'patriotic education' of Chinese citizens via these tangible sites. This will be exemplified with case studies on Jingganshan and Ruijin in Jiangxi Province, Zunyi in Guizhou Province, Yan'an in Shaanxi Province, and Xibaipo in Hebei Province.

3.1 Fictive places

Interestingly, for all the declared Marxism and historical materialism, places associated with mythological figures are included in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, namely on the first list (1997). In school history textbooks, figures like Huangdi (the Yellow Emperor), Yandi (the Flame Emperor), or the Great Yu are usually labelled as 'legendary' (*chuanshuo* 传说) (evading the term 'mythical' / *shenhua* 神话 with its more supernatural-religious connotations,[2] while the label 'legendary' allows for some 'historical' referent supposedly only shrouded in mist by the phantastic stories told about such figures). This conforms to the Marxism-inspired historical views as once set by Guo Moruo 郭沫若, *the* long-term authority of PRC (People's Republic of China) textbook history on ancient China in the Mao-era, who repeatedly stressed that China's 'history' starts with the Shang dynasty only (see also chapter 2.1 of this book) – as long as archaeology would not prove the Xia dynasty, and that the narratives on Huangdi and the like as provided by ancient historiography, namely by Sima Qian 司马迁 of Han times who put Huangdi

2 The Chinese term for myth, *shenhua* 神话, implies over *shen* something divine or supranatural of the tale (*hua*). Legend, *chuanshuo* 传说, is historical and sociological as it denotes stories (*shuo*) transmitted (*chuan*) in a community through the ages. For a comparative table of elements to differentiate between myth, legend, and folk tale, based on William Bascom, see Birrell (1993: 5).

(in fact a 'latecomer to the primeval pantheon of the Chou [Zhou] mythologies')[3] at the beginning of China's history, are legendary.[4] Nevertheless, if in 'materialist' fashion, PRC textbooks suggested increasingly over time that there must be some reality behind the 'legend' – thus carefully readjusting the more reserved Mao-era view, and that there is, in any case, a long tradition of revering these figures. That way, the 'legendary' was becoming more 'historicised' over 'tradition'. In fact, one may note that the former CCTV (China Central Television) website that featured and categorised the *Ai wo Zhonghua* (love our China) film clips on the single 'patriotic education sites' that were listed in the eras of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao (as explained in chapter 1), grouped Huangdi and the Great Yu in the category of '*historically* outstanding figures'! ('Ai wo Zhonghua' 2008b) The two are thus assumed to be 'historical' somehow. In the case of the Great Yu 禹 with whom the Xia dynasty is supposed to have started as China's 'first dynasty' (the historicity of which to prove has been the major task of the controversial archaeological 'Xia–Shang–Zhou chronology project', set up in the mid-1990s),[5] the 'need' to historicise him in that context is more obvious. The supposedly earlier Huangdi is likely 'needed' for the preceding Neolithic phase of 'clan society' which according to the Marxist historiographical paradigm paved the way for the development of class society. Only Yandi (see below) – obviously of less 'historical' importance – thus remained in the broad category of 'Chinese civilisation' on the former CCTV website.

Case study: the 'mausoleum' of Huangdi

The 'patriotic education showcase base' **Huangdiling** 黄帝陵 (mausoleum of Huangdi)[6] in Shaanxi Province (list 1, 1997) is in fact a place that has been quite

3 Birrell (1993: 19). Cf. also her chapter 6 on the myths around him. Background to Huangdi's Han-era 'promotion' was his role in the Huang–Lao cult of the time, merging Huangdi and Laozi 老子. Yellow (*huang* 黄) also was the emblem colour of Daoism.

4 See Guo Moruo's famous overview of China's ancient history according to Marxist categories in the latest version as contained in the posthumous 1982 collection of his works: Guo Moruo (1982). For his criticism of taking Huangdi and the like as 'history': see there p. 18. (Originally, this book has been a collection of articles he wrote in the late 1920s in Japan where he had fled to after Chiang Kai-shek's purge of the Communists to end the First United Front.) One may also note that this historiographical view conformed to Soviet reading of Chinese history at the time.

5 For a criticism of the project's 'results' regarding chronologies, focusing in fact on the better to grasp Western Zhou times, see Shaughnessy (2009).

6 At least in tendency, the term *ling* 陵 for a tomb is reserved for kings and emperors and usually implies a larger tomb area, often planted with trees and with added sacrificial buildings and

successful in establishing itself as an accepted localisation symbolising Chineseness at large. Beyond the mainland Chinese, also many Overseas Chinese and some Taiwanese come to visit, including, most recently, former (GMD / Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party) President of Taiwan, Ma Yingjiu 马英九 at the Tomb Sweeping Festival of 2024. The site (as I observed in 2014) markets itself with both the 'tomb' and the old trees of the larger mausoleum area, 'planted by Huangdi'.[7] A host of calligraphies are to show the broad appeal (and use) of the site: e.g., the (replica) calligraphy of Chiang Kai-shek (written in 1942 during wartime and placed as the official stele in front of the 'tomb', predictably taken off by the Communists later and replaced by Guo Moruo's – see below), as well as an inscription by Deng Xiaoping show this, but also emperors like Kangxi of the Qing dynasty, or revolutionaries like Sun Yat-sen who toppled the Qing, as well as 'religious' figures like the modern Buddhist lay leader (and calligrapher) Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 are connected to the site over calligraphies. More suprisingly, Huangdi's giant 'footprint' which underlines his mythical super-human stature, is presented at the site without any further comment.[8] A huge shrine and replicas of ritual vessels with a large square for ceremonies show that the place is to be used to perform (staged) 'traditional' rituals (which have, in fact, been inscribed as 'national intangible heritage' of the PRC in 2006!).[9] Further up the hill site, a large round opening in the ceiling of a new building is to visualise where Huangdi presumably 'ascended' to heaven at the end of his days on earth, mounting a dragon. In the inner shrine, a replica of the most well-known ancient representation of Huangdi (from the Eastern Han period Wu Liang 武梁 shrine)[10] is installed. In ancient fashion, modern stelae are set up on the larger ground, too, which, e.g., also 'announce' to Huangdi the 'home-coming' of the former colonial territories of Hong Kong (1997) and Macau (1999) in a clearly nationalist vein. Huangdi who, according to myth, was the inventor of a host of cultural practices, is also visually credited with them at the site, i.a. the invention of

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sometimes statues, to lead to the tomb tumulus. It is thus often translated as 'mausoleum', while the more general term for a tomb is *mu* 墓.

7 One may note that this feature of trees as 'authenticators' and 'links' to important personalities can be frequently encountered in such sites and connects also to the 20th century practice of collectively planting trees, culminating in the 'tree planting day' observed since 1915 in China (see also below).

8 One may note that 'footprints of a giant' appear in Chinese mythology also in other cases (mostly connected to fertility by a woman treading into them to then bear a divine child – cf. Birrell 1993: 116, 118).

9 See 'Di yi pi' (2006: item 480). Cf. also the similarly inscribed 'traditional' ceremonies we encountered in chapter 2.3 at Dujiangyan's 'opening the water flow' in spring.

10 For the Wu Liang shrine in Shandong of Eastern Han times with its many stone carvings including scenes and figures of ancient myths, see the 'classical' study by Wu (1989).

a kind of compass which is said to have given him the final edge in his mythical fight against his main adversary, the half-beastly Chiyou 蚩尤 (see below) who mastered the magical art of conjuring up fog to confuse his opponents (Birrell 1993: 50–52, 132–134). That way, Huangdi can be also framed as a model for innovation that leads to (military) success – a feature with a decidedly modern ring.

Beyond the physical structure of the whole site, Huangdiling is also marketed as of importance for intangible heritage, referring to the (mostly newly invented) ritual ceremonies held there regularly again since the 1990s. Beyond the designation as a 'patriotic education showcase base', the place is, however, also labelled as a 'protected scenic area', thus joining the symbolic with the natural environment in touristic terms.

For PRC citizens, Huangdi has been typically introduced in history textbooks together with a photo of his 'tombstone' at Huangdiling as a visual marker. This 'tombstone' features the calligraphy of Guo Moruo (see 3.1.1) – as said a main authority for ancient history in Communist reading (beyond his identity as a major literary figure) and with close relations to Mao,[11] who calligraphed 'tomb of Huangdi' in May 1958 (at the height of the Great Leap Forward started in late 1957 and officially launched in 1958),[12] although, as pointed out above, he did not believe in Huangdi's historicity (cf. also Li 1999: 33–34). There is some uncertainty on how Guo came to write this inscription, since the rather detailed annalistic biography of Guo does not mention a visit to Huangdiling in May 1958 or give any concrete hint (Gong / Fang 1992). Nor does the recent even more detailed annalistic biography's 'long version' (Lin / Cai 2017). A shorter posthumous collection of Guo's calligraphy (of 1985) did not include this well-known 'tombstone' either, but a later larger collection does, if without providing any background to the genesis of this calligraphy (*Guo Moruo shufaji* 1999: 303). As the booklet of the benchmark 'patriotic' booklet series (see also below) claims, the Huangdiling site had, in fact, approached Mao for writing it when asking for funds to repair the site in the 1950s, but that Mao (who, like Guo, arguably did not believe in Huangdi's historicity) referred the job to Guo Moruo who therefore could not decline it. As it turns out, the new 'tombstone' was set to replace the one by Chiang Kai-shek of 1942 which was predictably taken off by the Communists later (and is now shown in replica – the

11 On the relationship between the two, see Qin (2011: 14-22).

12 One may also recall his writing of calligraphy in the case of Anyang's Yinxu excavations where he visited some months later in June 1959, even writing poetry thereon. (Cf. chapter 2.1 of the present book.) In the Yinxu case, as a writer but also as a historian, he was more at ease with that 'historical' Shang site, while in Huangdi's case he likely wrote the 'tomb' calligraphy to conform to Mao's wish.

original likely having been destroyed – among the various inscriptions dedicated to the site, but not disclosing it as the de facto 'predecessor' official 'tombstone' set in front of the 'tomb'). As mentioned, when introducing the topic of Huangdi, PRC textbooks usually reproduced this stele which is thus widely known in China and associated with the site. Given the controversial personality of Guo Moruo who is decried by his critics as embodiment of an opportunistic intellectual and sycophant of Mao,[13] apart from his controversial personal life,[14] the stele has thus created heated controversy, not the least among Chinese outside the mainland, over having such a calligrapher define a place which is to honour the supposedly 'common ancestor' of all Chinese![15] (Notably, whereas the stele was formerly figuring very markedly with a close-up in textbooks, the new Xi Jinping-era standard textbook has dealt with the controversial issue by keeping the stele, but showing it now from afar so that the calligraphy of Guo Moruo is no longer clearly discernable as such – see *Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 16.)

13 One of Guo's longtime mainland researchers, Qin Chuan, addresses the critics to plead for a 'balanced' evaluation in his preface to his collection of research articles on Guo since the 1990s (a book somewhat strangely titled 'new' comments on Guo) (Qin 2011: 1–3). In Western languages, in spite of Guo's undisputable importance, there is an astonishing dearth of writing on Guo that would go beyond his literary side, and beyond a focus on his early (pre-PRC) works. (Chen 2007 focuses on Guo beyond literature, but mainly on his move to Communism in the 1920s; Wang 2018 includes more substantial comments on the PRC phase in the second part of his book, if with a major interest in literature and translation issues. Dirlik 1978, chapter 5, addresses Guo's changing views on slavery in his overview of the origins of Marxist historiography in China.) Even in Japan, the 'more problematic' PRC phase is hardly addressed in scholarship. Guo's granddaughter (daughter of the daughter with his Japanese wife) who married a Japanese and teaches literature in Japan, as well, largely evades this period in her recent book in Japanese on Guo (Fujita 2017), restricting herself to his connection to Japan where he stayed for longer stretches of time prior to the Second Sino-Japanese War with his Japanese wife and the children before moving back to China for good.

14 Guo Moruo himself had part in this as he wrote about his 'particular weakness' for women, and third-party accounts mention this trait as well. The fact that he had a Japanese common law wife with five children was a liability in Japan as much as in China later, though he dropped her apparently out of a sudden 'out of patriotic motives' to move back to China when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out. There he simply started a new large family. (An academic-cum-personal view is provided by his granddaughter (Fujita 2017: 301-316), mainly based on the family's accounts. The Japanese wife who was held responsible in Japan for his fleeing from Japanese police surveillance and who took the children with her to look for him after the war to discover the new situation, nevertheless remained in China for the rest of her life.)

15 One may recall that in traditional Chinese understanding, the handwriting or calligraphy is supposed to be connected to the writer's morals. For calligraphy as a political tool, see Kraus (1991).

Fig. 3.1.1 Huangdi's 'tomb' stele in Guo Moruo's calligraphy (and behind the Ming-era stele on Huangdi's 'riding on the dragon', i.e., ascending to heaven) (Huangdiling) (photograph by the author, 2014)

The officially atheist Communist state has appropriated the Huangdiling site by treating Huangdi, especially in post-Cultural Revolution years, outright as an 'ancestor', with the high-level 1994 visit of Li Ruihuan 李瑞环, member of the then-politburo's standing committee, at the Tomb Sweeping Festival (a 'feudal' custom according to more 'orthodox' Marxist understanding), who planted a tree and offered flowers (in conformity with the modern funerary regulations of the PRC, and

no animals, as tradition would have it),[16] marking the new appraisal. In fact, this openly broke the 'Communist taboo against ancestor worship' (Zhao 2004: 228) – and picked up on the 1937 GMD–CCP joint political 'sacrifice' for which Mao himself had written the 'eulogy' for the CCP side (see below), which thus is to legitimise the turn.

Normal people, though, also take to the idea of Huangdi being the common ancestor of the Chinese people. One can observe people at the site searching for and pointing out their surnames which are supposedly coming down from Huangdi, and thus, all common Chinese surnames are represented with single spirit tablets in an ancestor hall to offer to Chinese citizens an occasion to feel connected and represented. The offerings in food which are said to be 'Huangdi-style' are also smartly marketed by a restaurant nearby, which serves similar food to hungry visitors.

As has been shown in extant scholarship, the cult of Huangdi was consciously revived in the early 20th century in nationalist revolutionary circles and then taken over by the Communists: in fact, the most widely used modern school history textbook before the Xi Jinping-era's most recent one does not fail to mention that Mao Zedong and other CCP leaders sent a delegation to the 'mausoleum' of Huangdi (Huangdiling) in Shaanxi – which was not far from the Communists' Yan'an base area of the time – shortly before the Sino–Japanese War (*Zhongguo lishi* 2008: 12).[17] In fact, this had been a symbolic gesture to bolster the newly envisaged Second United Front with the GMD, as this was done as a common 'pilgrimage' on the suggestion of the GMD (!) to seal their cooperation.[18] While the GMD aimed at binding the suspect 'un-Chinese' Marxist and anti-religious Communists with links to Moscow and the Soviet Union therewith to a 'Chinese' cultural and ideological heritage, underlining the common 'responsibility' towards China's 'ancestors', from the Communist side, this gesture had been aggreed to out of United Front policy considerations vis-à-vis the Japanese threat, not out of any conviction that Huangdi was 'historical' and really had a 'tomb' there. In fact, at a closer look, Mao's 'sacrificial eulogy' (*jiwen* 祭文) he had given to the Communist representatives to read out 'to Huangdi' ceremoniously, was in remarkably defiant wording, recalling Huangdi, above all, as a *warrior* figure to underline the Communist resolve to fight (and, above all, call upon the GMD's armies to be ready to fight) and resist (the Japanese), pointedly including a warning against any 'traitors' (potentially among

16 For the development of funerary practices in the PRC, see Goossaert / Fang (2008).

17 The Xi Jinping-era textbook does not mention this any longer, and it integrates also the Henan site laying claims to being Huangdi's 'birth place' to counterbalance the exclusive focus on Huangdiling. See *Zhongguo lishi* (2016: 12–16).

18 Cf. Pantsov / Levine (2012), p. 312. See also Matten (2017: 191).

the GMD). Mao's 'eulogy' notably compares the intensifying confrontation with Japan to the already briefly referred-to mythical one between Huangdi and Chiyou! (Chiyou, usually depicted as a half-human, half-beast against whom Huangdi and his purported half-brother Yandi – see below – fought according to myth,[19] is thus signifying the Japanese barbarous 'monster' threatening Chinese 'civilisation'!)[20] It thus was to serve as a rallying cry for unification of all Chinese 'tribes' against the enemy – and a distancing from all who might think of 'collaborating' with the Japanese.[21] That Mao did not honour the site of Huangdiling much as such became obvious when he refused to write the 'tomb' stele in his own calligraphy later, handing this rather on to Guo Moruo, as mentioned. The instrumental use of the site is thus a continuity.

The present-day Xi Jinping-era history school textbook version puts Huangdi, Yandi, and the Great Yu all under the label of 'legend' but stresses that behind this must be historical figures who were leaders of 'tribes' that united in the end to develop into the Huaxia 华夏, i.e., the 'Chinese' (*Zhongguo lishi* 2016: 12–13). Especially since the official reappraisal in the 1980s of these 'legendary' figures, they made a spectacular comeback – and are convenient to appeal to a Chineseness going across borders to incorporate Overseas Chinese and, of course Taiwanese, by referring to a common 'origin'.[22] In fact, one notes that the respective places claiming to be the 'mausolea' of these mythical figures try to 'market' their mythological content as historical reality:[23] e.g., even though 'legend' itself tells that the purported 'tomb' of Huangdi did not hold his remains but only his clothing since he 'ascended to heaven' on a dragon (note also the calligraphy of a Ming official directly in front of the 'tomb' tumulus referring to his 'riding the dragon',

19 The 'relationship' between Huangdi and Yandi has been explained differently in different sources. A major tradition counts them as halb-brothers, but Yandi is sometimes also called an ancestor to Huangdi etc.

20 Needless to say, the Chinese characterisation of the Japanese as 'devils' (*guizi* 鬼子) fits into this dehumanisation of the enemy. Since the Miao living in Southern China, including in Mao's home province Hunan, connect themselves to Chiyou as their purported ancestor, this use of Chiyou by Mao was double-edged in itself. Here, Mao clearly wanted to stress Chinese civilisation (Huangdi) vs Japanese barbarity (Chiyou) at a time the full-scale Sino-Japanese war had not yet begun.

21 Mao is said to have written the eulogy in March 1937, i.e., before the full outbreak of the war and before the Tomb Sweeping Festival. The classical-language text is reproduced in full in Li Riqiang's patriotic booklet for young readers (1999: 43). For an English translation of the eulogy, see Zhang / Vaughan (2002: 54–56), though the reader should be warned that this book's historical background information on Mao's poems and other writings is not always accurate.

22 See Billeter (2007). Cf. also Matten (2017).

23 For Yandi, see below. The tomb of the Great Yu, in turn, is claimed to be in Shaoxing, Zhejiang, and also one of the first list sites in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

see fig. 3.1.1), the visitor is nowhere told about this but made to assume there are some physical remains stored in this 'tomb' (which remains closed of course). The booklet in the benchmark 'patriotic education showcase bases' series on the first list sites (cf. chapter 1 of the present book on these materials) even claims that archaeology 'substantiated' the place as the real place of his tomb – though no details are added as to what had been excavated then. Background to this assertion is likely the fact that there are also other places in China competing for claiming Huangdi, since the location of his 'tomb' was never clearly described in ancient texts. And the 'story' of Huangdi's ascending to heaven is narratively embedded (already historically) in the frame of a clever device attributed to a high official of Han emperor Wudi 汉武帝 (156–87 BC) when the latter visited the 'tomb' at Huangdiling in Shaanxi and precisely asked how there can be a 'tomb' if Huangdi ascended to heaven. The official is said to have smartly argued that it is in fact a 'tomb' but a *yiguan zhong* 衣冠冢 (lit.: clothes and cap grave mound, i.e., substitute tomb, since Huangdi left cap and clothes behind when ascending to heaven), and thus the emperor was assured he had not come in vain to pay homage (Li 1999: 33). The modern 'patriotic' booklet itself, though, suggests to its intended young readers that Huangdi was, in fact, a historic human person who was just extraordinary, leading a Neolithic tribe, fighting with other tribes (though only out of necessity or to counter provocation, appearing less 'self-assertive' than the warrior-Huangdi of Mao's 'eulogy'), uniting different tribes, and thus became the ancestor of all Chinese. As of himself, Huangdi is presented in this 'patriotic' booklet of 1999 as loving peace and only going to war if nothing else would work (a far cry also from some depictions in the early 20th century which precisely wanted to show that China, too, had its great conquerors, hailing his 'warrior-like style'). According to the 'patriotic' booklet's version, which can serve as a mirror for the official reading of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras handed out to Chinese youth and usually available in school libraries,[24] Huangdi, above all, cared for and helped his people with all kinds of inventions, living up to impressive 110 years, to then be buried 'normally' at this very site (Li 1999: 4-21). By this, the 'patriotic' booklet redraws the figure of Huangdi to not only 'humanise' him, but also to embody China's preferred international image at the time of the turn of the 21st century as a powerful, creative, but basically peace-loving nation. And in terms of a Chinese self-image, Huangdi's attitude of doing everything possible for his people is

24 Cf. chapter 1 of the present book. As will be recalled, this booklet series on the single first list sites of 'patriotic education showcase bases' was supposed to be on the stacks of school libraries and reprinted also through the 2000s, with a new layout version started in 2012 at the very end of the Hu Jintao era.

equated outright with what is called 'patriotism' today, i.e., Huangdi is, according to the booklet's reading, the perfect model for 'patriotic education'! (Li 1999: 16) By differentiating also among his subdued enemies between those only forced to fight against him and those really 'culpable', he showed the qualities that rulers ancient as present need to have: farsightedness and moral judgement. While duly informing himself well about local conditions, on a personal level, he strictly adhered to discipline. In short, his record reads like a record of merits modern-day CCP cadres should live out in front of the populace to retain legitimacy of rule. And, needless to say, this distinction of the 'real culpable' and the 'forced or led astray and repenting' ones among his adversaries is a device to keep the door open to any former opponent ready to change sides.

In terms of practices at and uses of the Huangdiling site, ancient texts mention sacrifices to Huangdi since the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang (3rd century BC), but the connection to the very location of present-day Huangdiling in Shaanxi became more stable only since Tang times, and the planting of cypresses (a typical feature of large tomb areas) is recorded since Song times when the present setting and layout is said to have originated (Li 1999: 28). Up to the Qing, emperors regularly sent envoys, and even after the Xinhai revolution of 1911, the first provisional president of the Republic, Sun Yat-sen, would conform to this practice and 'announce' the establishment of the new government to Huangdi in 1912 in nationalist terms, as his locally reproduced inscription written on the occasion is to show! Given the fact that Huangdi is credited with uniting different tribes, including many of those originally led by his most powerful opponent, the half-animal, half-human Chiyou, standing for the South (and, e.g., claimed by the Miao ethnicity as their ancestor),[25] this was also to bolster inter-ethnic unification of the then fragmented Republic which hoped to gain back those territories once under Qing suzerainty where mainly non-Han lived, which had become de facto independent after the end of empire. Furthermore, with Sun Yat-sen's inscription, the accent was shifted towards China being a respectable civilisation in world history, i.e., the accent shifted to a cultural (and thus inclusive) definition of 'Chineseness'. Finally, and straightforwardly political, the GMD and CCP would pick up on Huangdi as a device to help bridge the gap between the GMD and the CCP in view of the foreign, i.e., Japanese, threat. Thus, as mentioned above, at the Tomb Sweeping Festival (Qingming) in 1937, just briefly before the start of full-scale hostilities of the Second Sino–Japanese War and in the context of the newly arranged Second United Front between the GMD and

25 Chiyou is also credited as the god of metallurgy and thus of war. Cf. Birrell (1993: 50).

the CCP, following the Xi'an Incident (1936),[26] both parties sent envoys together to 'sacrifice' to Huangdi (Li 1999: 26-27). From the Communist side, not only did Mao compose the sacrificial 'eulogy' (see above) at the time, but also later, the PRC would keep the ('feudal') tradition of sacrificing to Huangdi on the Tomb Sweeping and Chongyang (Double Ninth of the lunar calendar for paying respect to the ancestors) Festivals.[27] (This was interrupted during the Cultural Revolution which wrought destruction to the site, though nothing specific is mentioned to the young readers of the 'patriotic booklet' about their hyper-revolutionary Red Guards predecessors' effects). Since the 1980s, the 'sacrificial ceremonies' were stepped up significantly to attract also 'patriotic' Overseas Chinese, Taiwanese or Hongkongers, to whom this site should serve as a kind of Chinese 'Mecca' (Li 1999: 27, 34)! In sum, in spite of all its 'materialist' orientation, the CCP obviously kept this site's semi-religious aura on purpose and restored the site to suggest continuity since at least Han times to bolster its own legitimacy, while approaching the Overseas Chinese on more practical terms for help to fund the upkeep of the site (Li 1999: 38–39).

As a 'patriotic education showcase base', the site was also visually propagated after its nomination in 1997. The nationally broadcasted TV film clip *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 9) introduced Huangdiling in a fashion very similar to the 'patriotic' booklet of the same time we have referred to above, thus extending this reading to a national TV audience. The alternative educational *Zhonghua hun* video clip (disc 6) of 1998 by the Shaanxi Province audiovisual education entity, though, provides some more peculiar aspects. First of all, one notes that while the site is covered in this more selective series, it is unusually short (about half of the length of other *Zhonghua hun* videos) which may suggest that the site was percieved as necessary to include, but as somewhat 'difficult' to present to learners. It gives a special stress to calligraphies, featuring the well-known 'tomb' stele of Guo Moruo (which pupils are familiar with from their textbooks), but introducing also one of the former GMD local military commander which adorns the temple on the 'mausoleum' site (Xuanyuan miao 轩辕庙),[28] which cautiously suggests a 'common' ground with the

26 The Xi'an Incident intends the capture of Chiang Kai-shek in Xi'an by two of his generals, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, who pressured him into stopping his campaigns against the Communists and rather accepting a Second United Front with them to resist the Japanese encroachment.

27 It is not quite clear in which form 'sacrifices' were held in Maoist times before the Cultural Revolution, though.

28 'Temple of Xuanyuan', Xuanyuan being another name of Huangdi according to Sima Qian (and likely an identification with an earlier different god by the systemising Han historiographer). Cf. also Birrell (1993: 235).

GMD. A notable feature of this educational video is that it addresses the problem of ecology with the hint that Huangdi first taught the people to build houses with wood but then had to learn (note: a leader learning from his errors) that with all the wood gone on the mountain, disaster occurred (which could be also read as a veiled hint to the Great Leap Forward of PRC times when such man-made deforestation, initiated 'from above', happened again in China as the first of the so-called 'three great cuttings', leading to ecologic disaster and finally contributing to the Great Famine, 1958–1962),[29] and thus Huangdi started to plant trees, of which the oldest cypress, accentuated on spot, is supposed to be still a reminder. Planting tree days, originally practiced in Republican times already since 1915,[30] are a reinstated institution in post-Cultural Revolution China which is in fact immediately connected to this 'legendary' precedent in the video, by this conveniently also advertising the new policy of afforestation (and soliciting active engagement from the video-watching learners' side). For the inscriptions and calligraphies, Chiang Kai-shek's (replica) stele finally appears in the video (though not pointing out that it had been placed in front of the 'tomb' before being replaced by the one of Guo Moruo), quickly followed by the modern CCP leaders' inscriptions provided by then-general secretary Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng. Thus, the video suggests, all Chinese, regardless of dynasty or party affiliation, revered Huangdi, and even today, Overseas Chinese would flock to the place, too. That way, it should seem 'natural' for Chinese pupils to join in as well to perform their 'Chineseness' on-site.

Comparing the above 'patriotic' framing of Huangdiling at the time of listing the site under Jiang Zemin with the new, Xi Jinping-era one of 2019 in the *Fengbei* series (Wan / Xue 2019: 71-80) (cf. chapter 1 of the present book on materials used), written in a style to be accessible also to youth, though addressing also cadres, the military, and the Chinese citizen in general, accents have somewhat shifted in the meantime. Taking distance from any 'mythologisation', the narrative points out clearly from the outset that this 'tomb' is just a *yiguan zhong* (substitute tomb), but that since 1961, the site is a declared heritage of China as the place from where 'according to legend' Huangdi rode on a dragon up to the sky. It is thus designed as a place that is above all *heritage* since the site was already a memorial space (or *lieu de mémoire* in Nora's term) in Chinese history earlier. That way, the heritage referred to is in essence intangible which however in time created tangible structures. In other words, many famous people revered Huangdi here in the past

29 Cf. Shapiro (2001) on Mao's war against nature.

30 The GMD shifted the date from Qingming to the day of death of Sun Yat-sen (March 12) in 1929 and kept the tradition when moving to Taiwan. The present-day PRC date is March 12, too. For the Republican-era practice, see Pitts (2019) (cf. also chapter 5.2 on Sun Yat-sen).

(which, according to this narrative, is substantiated with documentation already 'since 442 BC'), and in Tang times, the existence of a temple is mentioned. This, then, legitimises the place as a heritage site. However, the present name Huangdiling is revealed to the intended reader of Xi Jinping times as being, in fact, rather recent, since over many centuries the 'mausoleum' had been simply named 'bridge mausoleum' (Qiaoling 桥陵) and the hill it is on as 'Qiaoshan' 桥山 (bridge mountain),[31] possibly due to the siting with a river surrounding the hill over which a bridge is built (though other explanations have also been given in history for this name) (72). Over discussion of the toponyms, the narrative also integrates some popular traditions, but it always takes distances from anything 'religious' by stressing that this is only tales. In any case and more importantly, the naming as 'Huangdiling' is disclosed as only assigned by the GMD during the second Sino-Japanese War in 1942 (when Chiang Kai-shek wrote his 'tomb' stele version), naming also the whole district similarly in 1944 (73). Though this is explained as a reaction to the deep crisis China was in at that time of war, one may wonder, in turn, whether this GMD renaming in the vicinity of Yan'an, the 'capital' of the CCP at the time which since 1941 was de facto again more rival than cooperator, in GMD view, in the shaky Second United Front against the Japanese,[32] had not additional political overtones. Incidentally, Huangdiling is today administratively part of the municipality of Yan'an! (Geographically, it is sited on the way from Xi'an – which was held by the GMD during the war – to Yan'an.) In terms of a CCP appropriation of the site, the Mao-era Guo Moruo stele, replacing Chiang Kai-shek's calligraphy in front of the 'tomb', was not the only symbolic act, but more recently, Xi Jinping (who's father was from Shaanxi) added in 2017 a new large sign at the entrance to the site to leave his own mark and stress with it (incidentally with a modern design)[33] that Huangdiling should be considered, above all, a symbol for the 'spirit of Chinese civilisation' today. That way, a hand is offered to present-day Taiwan's GMD, adding also that back in 1938, 'Mr.' Jiang Dingwen 蒋鼎文 (who is not explicitly outed here as the GMD general holding Xi'an at that time who would later end his days in Taiwan) was the one who wrote the board for Xuanyuan temple (which had also appeared in the educational video). The old cypresses, in

31 Cf. also the Ming-era calligraphy (see fig. 3.1.1 in the background) which refers this way to the site: *Qiaoshan long yu* 桥山龙驭.

32 In 1941, the so-called New Fourth Army or Wannan Incident was a major crisis. General Ye Ting (see below) was a key figure involved.

33 If compared to Yandiling (see below), it seems that Jiang Zemin rather attempted to link up with traditional imagery (cf. his stele at Yandiling) which contrasts with the more 'modern' style of the Xi Jinping era. This might have to do with the two leaders' different educational background. (Cf. also chapter 6 of the present book.)

turn, which are another touristic ('green') 'selling point' of the locality, are a further aspect of the site to be proud of, having been acknowledged by a foreign scientific expert (a British tree specialist) as the 'oldest ones in the world' (if not holding up the claim of being 'planted by Huangdi'.) (74) That way, all traditional touristic 'attractions' are rationalised in the Xi Jinping-era narrative to feed into political education and national pride for the Chinese citizen.

The political use of the site is of special concern to the Xi Jinping-era narrative. Modern inscriptions praise the site as, e.g., a key place for PRC officials to visit, while Chinese living outside China are also all called upon to revere Huangdi there, showing respect, 'putting their clothes in order' before approaching the 'tomb' etc., to make political use of the aura of the site. Mao's 1937 'eulogy' and Deng Xiaoping's inscription of 1988: 'Yan Huang zi sun' 炎黄子孙 (descendants of Yan[di] and Huang[di]), appealing to Chineseness broadly, reframe the site in a CCP political context. This shows to the intended reader that the CCP has inscribed itself in this ancient site for 'Chineseness' safely (and carefully avoids any mention of what happened at the site during the Cultural Revolution). Instead, new stelae for Hong Kong, Macau, and of course Taiwan, are pointed out to demonstrate that all kinds of Chinese (should) care for the site. Historically, this is also bolstered by the fact that in 1938, the 'patriotic' GMD military leader Cheng Qian 程潜 (who surrendered to the CCP and would remain on the mainland in 1949 which marks him as 'patriotic' in PRC view) would provide a further plaque: 'Renwen chuzu' 人文初祖 (the first ancestor of human civilisation) which not only binds all Chinese together, but even lays claims to the origin of 'human civilisation' for China!

In more practical terms, for the sacrifices held there again by now to honour Huangdi, the large entrance square is to serve, which holds up to 5.000 people and is decorated with large imitations of ancient sacrificial vessels (76.) To underscore the political message of ethnic unity, at the sacrificial square, a flag for each of the 56 minorities (according to PRC taxonomies) has been installed, suggesting also the ethnic minorities to be descendants of Huangdi somehow which is the present 'inclusive' narrative of 'Chineseness' preferred.[34] A dragon bell designed after an excavated bell serves for the ceremonies, and in a newly built hall placed on the upper part of the whole complex, the modern plaque of well-known PRC calligrapher (and painter) Huang Miaozi 黄苗子, who wrote its name 'Xuanyuan dian' 轩辕殿 (Xuanyuan hall, i.e., in parallel to the Xuanyuan *miao* or temple as the historically main building of the complex, bearing the mentioned calligraphy of 'Mr.' Jiang

34 One may recall that Huangdi's fight against Chiyou in myth could be understood as a divisive factor between the Han and the minorities, and thus, Huangdi has been reframed in more recent times as an ancestor of also the minorities.

Dingwen, the GMD general), adorns this architectonically peculiar new structure with a round hole in the ceiling, by this also 'connecting earth and sky' (77). That way, the newly built addendum to the site drives home the politically preferred reading of China and Chineseness and adopts the site into PRC ideology.

In sum, as the 2019 'patriotic' framing asserts to the modern reader, the CCP 'respects tradition', and thus 'sacrifices' are done at the Qingming and Chongyang Festivals (though one neither believes in Huangdi's historicity, nor in the value of sacrifices). What is at stake according to this 'patriotic' reading is ethnic self-assertion, national unity, civilisational tradition, self strengthening and stress on creativity, the idea of common roots and ancestors, and for this, the rites serve, which are also relevant for Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and the Chinese overseas. (To bolster this point, several famous representatives of these groups who visited are named, i.e., representatives that cooperated with the PRC, serving in Hong Kong and Macau, and from the Taiwanese side also including notably the extramarital son of Chiang Kai-shek's son Chiang Ching-kuo and present-day GMD politician Chiang Hsiao-yen / Jiang Xiaoyan 蒋孝严 as a late link to his biological grandfather who once tried to put Huangdiling to his own political use).[35] That way, Huangdiling as a 'fictive' place is made to fulfil its 'patriotic' role of embodying the Chinese nation for learners and tourists alike.

Case study: the 'mausoleum' of Yandi

When one compares the above case of Huangdiling in Shaanxi with the parallel case of the purported mausoleum of Yandi,[36] **Yandiling** 炎帝陵 (Hunan Province) (list 1, 1997), one notes that the latter presents itself even more straightforwardly as CCP-appropriated, with the name of the site itself written by former general secretary Jiang Zemin. The site (as I observed in 2017) is much less visited (and more out of the way than Huangdiling, which is almost on the route from Xi'an to

35 Chiang Hsiao-yen (John Chiang) participated in the 'sacrifices' in 2005 and again in 2015. One should also add that Chiang Hsiao-yen (formerly surnamed Chang / Zhang 章) pursued his official integration into the Chiang family only after the death of his father's legal wife, Faina, in 2004. (Cf. also Müller 2022: 243). His visit to the mainland in 2005 had thus personal as well as political backgrounds. Nothing is predictably said about his possible reaction to the new placing of the remake of his grandfather's stele.

36 One may note that while Huangdi purportedly ascended to heaven, Yandi was supposed to have died a real death. (Cf. Birrell 1993: 181).

Yan'an).[37] Yandiling, too, is made to serve for 'patriotic education' of PRC citizens, but also should attract Overseas Chinese. Like Huangdiling, its (new) sacrifices are declared as 'national intangible heritage' since 2006,[38] but Yandiling is also more politically labelled as a 'Party responsibility' site. Although there are very few foreign visitors, the plaques also feature Japanese and Korean, possibly because Shennong 神农 (lit.: the divine farmer), since late Zhou times identified with Yandi (lit.: the flame emperor), plays a role in the pantheon there, too. Like with Huangdi at Huangdiling, also Yandi – Huangdi's half-brother according to (a major version of) myth – is presented as an 'ancestor'.[39] Yandi is always put first in the common expression of the Chinese as 'decendants of Yan and Huang' (*Yan Huang zi sun* 炎黄子孙) which implies ranking (or sequence), but in myth Huangdi clearly dominates. The Yan–Huang sequence, however, also implies the logic of the five 'elements' or phases where water (associated with Huangdi in some texts) subdues fire, and yellow (*huang*) follows red (flame). According to myth, Huangdi in fact won against Yandi and only then allied with him. But in 'commemorative' terms, on-site at Yandiling, like at Huangdiling, all usual Chinese surnames are represented on ancestor tablets in an ancestor hall, to ideally provide for every Chinese a point of personal reference over them with Yandi as a common 'ancestor' of all. Hunan, being the province from where many important CCP cadres hailed, while others served there, is also represented more politically by many inscriptions from higher cadres, e.g., Chen Yun 陈云, who praised Yandi for his (legendary) contribution to agriculture and medical science. Yandi's 'tombstone' is notably written by Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 in 1986, the soon (i.e., at the beginning of 1987) to be ousted 'reformer' whose death would trigger the 1989 Tiananmen protests.[40] Hu Yaobang had served in Hunan, and it is obvious that to keep his calligraphy meant a tacit local backing of this 'patron' whose name was officially restored only in 2005. That the 'tomb' of Yandi is still treated in a 'traditional' way is corroborated by the fact that there is, e.g., a designated place for firecrackers to follow traditional ('feudal', according to classical Marxist understanding) tomb rituals which is apparently still in use. Historically, among the (replica) inscriptions of Song, Ming and Qing era stelae, the visitor may note the interesting case of the third Ming

37 The way from Xi'an to Yan'an was, however, in Republican times still difficult, which guaranteed the Communists in Yan'an relative safety. In PRC times, though, infrastructure has been built for easing traffic.

38 See the list of nominations: 'Di yi pi' (2006: item 481).

39 Yandi is said to have divided the world up with Huangdi, though Huangdi subdued him later in battle. (Cf. Birrell 1993: pp. 131–132). There are many versions about these mythical figures with different claims as to 'family relations' between them.

40 For Hu Yaobang's career, see the recent biography of Suettinger (2024).

emperor Yongle (who had forcefully grabbed the throne, ousting the 'legitimate' emperor, creating scandal at the time), who obviously sent an envoy to Yandiling to 'explain' his behaviour and announce his rule as documented by a stele inscription, proving that propagandistic use of the site is nothing new. The Manchus, too, thought it appropriate to 'inform' Yandi at various occasions of important state affairs (notably appearing as 'non-Han' with the Aixinjueluo 爱新觉罗 / Aisin Gioro name used). However, since the whole site was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (as the Xi Jinping-era 'patriotic' framing admits – see below), what the visitor encounters today is all a post-Cultural Revolution creation (if supposedly in imitated 'Qing-style').

Like Huangdiling, Yandiling provides newly produced sacrificial cauldrons in ancient style,[41] and a host of added modern stelae, including those that 'announce' the 'home-coming' of the former colonial areas of Hong Kong and Macau in 1997 and 1999 to Yandi. The stele of the Chinese government on 'regaining' sovereignty over Hong Kong (see fig. 3.1.2) sports on the backside the 'one country, two systems' motto in Deng Xiaoping's calligraphy.[42] The strong accent on 'regaining sovereignty' is also stressed by the local imitation of the Beijing clock counting down to the 'unification' (with Hong Kong and Macau respectively) once placed at Tiananmen Square as China's symbolic centre, here 'hoping for the final complete unification of the motherland', intending Taiwan as the last outstanding task, while the back side figures Jiang Zemin's call for such a unification with Taiwan.[43] The many modern added stelae, on the backside often listing the donors, are not only by governmental entities but also by privates, business agents or Buddhist associations. Thus, local entities as well as supra-local ones leave their present-day mark and associate themselves with the site. Incidentally, Hu Yaobang is represented with a further stele among them, here with a text from the early 1960s when he was responsible for Hunan and visited Yandiling several times. A further notable (replica) stele is of the GMD general Xue Yue 薛岳 of 1940 who 'asked' Yandi for protection of Hunan's capital city Changsha (which went back and forth between the Japanese and the GMD troops during the Second Sino-Japanese War, in the end falling to the Japanese). This way, the 'patriotic' efforts of the GMD general (who

41 The 'nine cauldrons' refer to the legitimacy of rule. Cf. Birrell (1993: 154), referring to K. C. Chang.

42 One may note that such inscriptions of a general character need not have been done by the person on or for a site, but could have been copied also from somewhere else. Cf. Kraus (1991). This is likely the case here.

43 Jiang Zemin, in whose era Hong Kong and Macau 'came back' to the mainland, repeatedly stressed that Taiwan remained the last task that he had to hand to the next generation. Cf. chapter 5.1 of the present book and Jiang's symbolic distribution of Zheng Chenggong figurines.

ended his days on Taiwan, but had his headquarters for some time at Yandiling during the war and was thus connected to the site directly) are acknowledged (which is also an invitation to Taiwanese visitors to a 'common' history vis-à-vis the Japanese invaders, and parallels the narrative role of the inscription of ('Mr.') Jiang Dingwen, the local GMD commander during wartime, in the 'patriotic' Huangdiling framing mentioned above.)[44]

Fig. 3.1.2 Chinese government stele announcing Hong Kong's 'coming home' with a host of modern stelae in the background (Yandiling) (photograph by the author, 2017)

Like Huandiling, Yandiling sports a host of additional labels beyond the 'patriotic education showcase base' one, showing the intended use of the site, including being a 'cross-Strait' site and a site for Overseas Chinese. The rebuilding of the temple

44 General Xue Yue's role in the defence of Changsha and the whole area is appreciated in today's PRC. He has been praised also by American military aviator and head of the famous 'Flying Tigers' supporting China during the Second Sino-Japanese War, Claire Chennault. (Cf. Chennault 1949: esp. 288, 293–295.

was apparently sponsored by a large group of people (judging from the list of donors), and in the temple a modern statue of Yandi-Shennong marks him as inventor of agriculture and other cultural techniques. With the reference to the 'descendants of the dragon' who should all visit this 'ancestor', there is also an indirect reference to the famous song by Taiwanese singer Hou Dejian 侯德健, once written when the US diplomatically dropped Taiwan for the PRC, but then a hit on the mainland when Hou Dejian moved there. The nationalist song became a sort of anthem of the 1989 Tiananmen protest movement, which Hou Dejian supported (who would then have to leave the mainland again, when the latter was crushed), but the song would be also appropriated for unification messages by officials on both sides of the Taiwan Strait subsequently (see also chapter 4.1 of the present book).[45] Beyond the dragon motif, sacrificial vessels and a trigram square, in turn, pick up on the further purported invention of Yandi of the hexagrams (as found in the *Yijing* 易经 or Book of Changes as combinations of the trigrams supposedly invented before by the mythological figure of Fuxi 伏羲 on whom Yandi would have based himself).[46] Given that the name Yandi literally means 'flame emperor', the modern Olympic idea of torch bearing was, however, also readily integrated in the 1990s in the site's framing and thus 'sinicised'. That way, before the Chinese regatta competition (the 'dragon boat' competition) on the day the famous 4th – 3rd century BC poet Qu Yuan 屈原 is said to have drowned himself (in the very province of Hunan) as a 'patriot' in protest against the ruler of his native Chu state,[47] the torch flame is to be picked up in Olympic fashion at Yandiling. Thus, even a 'Chinese-style' sport event is integrated with a 'global' framing into the site's 'patriotic' uses.

As a 'patriotic education showcase base', Yandiling is framed in filmic representation by the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 7) from the outset in a very political vein, highlighting the calligraphy of then general secretary Jiang Zemin inscribing the site. Interestingly, though, immediately after this, the pavilion with the main 'tomb' stele is shown: 'tomb of Yandi-Shennong', which not only underlines to the national TV viewer the officially endorsed identification of Yandi with Shennong at Yandiling,[48] but is written, as mentioned,

45 Cf. Cheng (2016: 166). For the larger context, see also Cheng (2019: chapter 2).

46 Fuxi is often considered in Zhou-era texts the 'first god' in chronology. See Birrell (1993: 44).

47 One may note that the figure of Qu Yuan sparked a heated debate in modern times. Guo Moruo wrote a historical play on him in 1942, presenting him as a 'patriot'. This 'patriotic reading' became mainstream in PRC times. For a translation into English, see Guo Moruo (1984): *Five Historical Plays*, pp. 87–191.

48 This equation is very old, dating back to the late Warring States Period (Yang / An 2008: 190). However, originally, they seem to have been two distinct figures (cf. Birrell 1993: 47). The equation,

by former general secretary Hu Yaobang, a Hunanese, who had been ousted soon after he wrote it and was not yet rehabilitated at the time of filming in the late 1990s! This means that this kind of opening can be read also as a tacit pleading for a rehabilitation of Hu Yaobang. Quickly switching back in time, the narrative then tells the national audience that already in Han times, Yandi was venerated, which is seamlessly integrated with shots of a modern staged ceremony in more touristic fashion, thus 'authenticating' the (new) ceremonies. However, when the main doors open, the TV audience sees once more the calligraphy of Jiang Zemin of 1993 to bind things unequivocally back to the political present. Visually, statues of an eagle and a deer as mythical additional animal 'mothers' of Yandi, and broken stelae suggesting age-old tradition are intermingled with the staged ceremonies held in 1997 to insinuate again 'unbroken' tradition. The inscription penned by high CCP elder cadre Chen Yun (notably one of the critics of Hu Yaobang in the 1980s, pushing the latter's downfall) that 'the descendants of Yandi and Huangdi will not forget their first ancestors' sustains the visual focus on inscriptions and calligraphies, mixed with shots of the modern sacrificial ceremonies and the burning of incense at the 'tomb' tumulus. The responsible official for the site explains to the national TV audience that Yandi (the flame emperor), was the one to teach the use of fire for agriculture (i.e., the slash-and-burn method), and thus a modern flame monument was erected to commemorate this. Yandi also purportedly invented farming tools, which the (new) engraved pictures on the wall in black and white illustrate, and therefore he is also called Shennong (divine farmer). Yandi-Shennong also searched for medical plants to cure illnesses, of which the ancient medical classic *Shennong bencao jing* 神农本草经 (Shennong's herbal classic) was the result. And he cared for cultural development more broadly, e.g., inventing also musical instruments. He thus provided the material basis for Chinese culture and became a symbol for it. At a pond, his footprints are said to have been preserved (though one might note that different from the gigantic ones of Huangdi at Huangdiling, his are at least rather normal in size). After an embellishing narrative intermezzo about a white dragon changing black when entering the pond because of the herbs Yandi had washed there and then ascending heaven, the nationally broadcasted TV film clip, produced by Hunan TV's societal education centre in 1998, leads back to politics, showing political leaders including Yang Zhengwu 杨正午, at the time of filming governor of Hunan, visiting (and thus endorsing) the site from the CCP's side.

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though, might have 'helped' Yandi (who had once clashed with Huangdi, according to myth) to remain as Shennong, a culture bearer, in the forefront of positive evaluation with his 'descendants'.

In comparison, the *Zhonghua hun* 'patriotic' educational video (disc 7) for classroom use, produced slightly later than the above TV film clip of *Ai wo Zhonghua*, introduces the site first over Deng Xiaoping as a political reference, with his inscribed 1988 motto: 'the descendants of Yandi and Huangdi' (in fact not specifically connected to the place of Yandiling, and also used by Huangdiling as seen above, thus connecting both places over Deng's legacy). Only then it moves down the line of political leaders to Jiang Zemin's 'Yandiling' calligraphy, which is also inscribed on the entrance gate over the road leading to the site as well as at the site itself. The stele of Hu Yaobang: 'tomb of Yandi-Shennong' appears as well, and some parts of the video clearly use the same filmic material as the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip which once more suggests that both 'patriotic' productions often used footage from the same source (usually the local TV). Different from the TV film clip, however, this educational version for pupils goes more into 'legendary' (mythical) contents, mentioning the war between Huangdi and Yandi's tribe (i.e., before they supposedly allied to fight Chiyou), and thus rhetorically links the Yandiling site to the more dominant Huangdiling one, which also figures in pupils' textbooks, as mentioned above. The intended target group of the video learns that Han historiographer Sima Qian already identified Yandi with Shennong who are thus considered to be one and the same 'person'. In 'legend' (rather: in myth, but the term is always evaded), Yandi is said to have had a cattle's head. This is explained here as figuratively, just meaning that he slaved away for the people 'like cattle'.[49] The main narrative focus is, however, on the tools he supposedly invented, and all his other contributions to human civilisation. The educational video provides many shots of the exhibition posters and the images on the wall to provide an impression of touring the site (which would serve as a stand-in for a visit for pupils too far away to visit in person). Interestingly, more details are provided in this educational video on sacrificial food offered (which meant here only grain and vegetables, no animals, as tradition would usually have it). Historically, the narrative points out that the first Song emperor already searched for the location of Yandi's tomb in Hunan (which was apparently disputed, the viewer concludes), which would be finally established at Yandiling. Jumping to 1986 (i.e., after the Cultural Revolution), the Hunan government decided to repair the temple (which was likely the background to Hu Yaobang's 1986 'tombstone' inscription, but here told as the background story to a stele of 1989, celebrating the finished renovation, while nothing is said about the complete destruction that had led to the need of rebuilding the site in the 1980s.) The temple is presented in some detail (which

49 This common metaphor stands for working to exhaustion, often also used for describing exploitation of 'the people' by upper classes or landlords etc. in Marxist-framed narratives.

likely reflects the need to explain religious things to pupils unfamiliar with them), detailing also the different sacrifices, namely the seasonal and the major ones. The Hu Yaobang 'tomb' stele, when shown, is, however, only introduced as 'a marmor stele' to the intended watching pupils (in marked contrast to the TV version that showed the calligrapher's name very clearly to the adult public). Another difference to the slightly earlier *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip is the fact that when the filmed large ceremony with all the eulogies read out is shown in this video produced by Hunan's audiovisual centre in 1999, Hunan cadre Yang Zhengwu is no longer highlighted, who had left the position of governor of Hunan in the meantime in 1998 (by 1999 serving as Party secretary of Hunan, though).

For more background to this 'patriotic education showcase base', the booklet in the benchmark 'patriotic' series on first list sites (Zhou 1998) discloses the interesting fact that the whole county where Yandiling is located sports the name 'Yanling xian' ('flame mausoleum county') only since 1994! (1) This means, that Yandi has been stepped up in importance significantly only in the era of Jiang Zemin, who pushed the 'patriotic education' campaign. In a way, this parallels Chiang Kai-shek's political naming practice of Huangdiling and its district in the early 1940s mentioned above. This political stress also connects to the historiographical reframing of 'China's origins', since in that context, Yandi is (like Huangdi) to represent 'China' back in Neolithic times, as framed in a classical Marxist history view. Yandi is thus presented in this context as (male) leader of a 'matrilineal clan society' who lived between the Huanghe and the Yangzi, thus integrating also China's 'South' (3–4). This way, one may see him (or rather his 'fictive' site) as the 'mythical' counterpart of the southern Neolithic historical excavation site of Hemudu in Zhejiang we discussed in the present book in chapter 2.1.

Although Yandi's purported father (Shaodian 少典) as well as his mother (Rensi 任姒) are named (5),[50] the mother is, in fact, not prominent in spite of the supposed 'matrilineal society' as Marxist history view would have it, and Yandi with his 'three mothers', integrating the two animals, a deer and an eagle, which purportedly acted as surrogate mothers when his human mother was 'gathering food' with others of the tribe (62–63), ironically turns the usual 'scientific' Marxist imagery of this matrilineal societal stage on its head. In the 'patriotic' booklet, Yandi's often portrayed two horn-like protrusions on his forehead (the 'cattle head') are not explained as figurative, as in the above filmic treatment, but rationalised as hair knots (5).[51] Without a clear explanation as to the two names Yandi and Shennong,

50 As often in myth, there are many versions of names and relations claimed.

51 Given the traditional depictions of Yandi-Shennong, the protrusions are, however, clearly not covered by hair.

the intended young reader learns that they are, however, the same person that invented agriculture (6), found more edible plants to enlarge the menu, and experimented with planting, growing, and protecting crops (which prepared for the societal transition from hunting and gathering to sedentary agriculture) (7–11). Connected to his association with 'fire', Yandi thus invented slash-and-burn agriculture and was the one to extend the planting of crops to the south of the Huanghe (which reflects the former historical master narrative of China's Huanghe being the cradle of civilisation, then expanding to the South, and Yandi as a Northerner coming to the South, bringing 'civilisation', while the Hemudu site – see chapter 2.1 of the present book – stood precisely for the challenge to this Northern-centric conception of 'China' from the archaeological side) (11). Supposedly imitating animals,[52] Yandi invented various digging methods and tools, and used fire to make the latter – his 'specialty' (12). That way, he corroborated Friedrich Engels' dictum that man differs from animals through labour, and labour starts from creating tools (14). To store food, he also invented ceramics made from soil by burning, and taught people to keep animals, with this introducing also a first division of labour between herders and farmers, and in a further division of labour, first artisans like weavers or potters appeared (15–19). (All these inventions are represented on-site on the walls as engravings, showing how Yandi brought 'culture' to mankind, and this should be internalised by the pupils as the narrative of origins of such cultural practices.) On the other hand, since people often ate the wrong plants and suffered from ailments, Yandi-Shennong tried to find medical plants to cure them (22–25). Furthermore, Yandi-Shennong supposedly also developed the 64 hexagrams, and invented musical instruments, music being understood as having its origins in labour, providing rhythm to sustain the latter (26–29). To regulate life more generally, he also supposedly invented rites. All these traditionally named inventions of Yandi-Shennong are thus reframed and explained in a Marxist context to present a more or less coherent narrative in conformity to textbooks pupils use in school. In a more 'Confucian' vein, Yandi is said to have had his 'capital city' in Qufu (home to Confucius many centuries later – see chapter 5.1 of the present book) (31), and attracted many people because of the abundant life his able rulership offered. They thus flocked to him voluntarily without his needing to use force (!), thus reflecting a Confucian trope *ante litteram*. His altruistic care for his people would even cost him his life when he poisoned himself involuntarily by testing medical herbs. Under Yandi's rule, his tribe thrived, alike another one in the Northwest (i.e., Huangdi's) (though not going here into the

52 Inventions are often said to have originated by scrutinising animal behaviour or natural phenomena, i.e., via mimesis. Cf. Birrell (1993: 43).

received narrative of the conflict between Huangdi and Yandi before they allied to fight Chiyou) (33). The mythical conflict with Chiyou is rationalised in this 'patriotic' framing for the intended reading pupils as caused by Chiyou's tribe's being herders that were in conflict with the agricultural one of Yandi, thus caused by different economic modes in Marxist understanding. Chiyou, furthermore, also disposed of metallurgic knowledge, while Yandi's tribe was yet unaccustomed to war (again reinforcing Yandi's 'peaceful' image which one may compare to the ambivalent one of 'warrior' Huangdi) (34). Thus, only the combined forces of Yandi and Huangdi (the two of them only vaguely described here as fighting among themselves just to see 'who would lead') would finally repel Chiyou, while the tribe of Chiyou would be magnanimously 'integrated' thereafter by the victors. Thus, the intended young reader is assured, China finally had 'one people', and the fertile area of the Yangzi, by then spatially integrated, attracted Yandi who looked there especially for medical plants (which, though, cost him his life in the end) (35–38).

Yandi, the presumed Neolithic tribal leader who had moved to the South, was honoured after his death also as the god of the (hot) South (which explains his name of 'flame' emperor, connected to fire). As with Huangdiling, the location of his 'tomb' was, however, a debated issue already in Han times. By following the naming of the area which also had (wild) tea plants (which served at first as medical plants, one should add), it was only after Han times that there were any written records about Yandi-Shennong's 'tomb' (41), and the local tea was thus called 'Shennong tea' (43). Originally, the 'patriotic' booklet claims, there had been a bronze stele for Yandi's 'tomb' to mark the place which apparently went lost. But in Tang times, a temple was constructed (45), of which the precise location was, however, lost again. In Song times a new temple was built, and the county was named Chaling (lit.: tea mausoleum) after the wild tea plants growing there. That temple was renovated several times, not the least during the Qing, but also in Republican times, and even in 1940 during the war (when it served, in fact, as temporary headquarters of the local GMD troops).[53] The Japanese never conquered this area (though Hunan's capital city Changsha went back and forth during the war, as already mentioned) (47–49).

Sacrifices to Yandi, the pupil learns, have been known at least since the 5th century BC! (51). These included, above all, sacrifices in winter (when agriculture stopped) and after harvest (52–53). Since Song times, Hanlin academics would be usually tasked to write the eulogies (55–56). But also popular cult took to Yandi, and many miraculous stories were told about him, e.g., that the 'lion dog' stole rice

53 At the time, even the GMD chairman Lin Sen 林森 gave money for it.

for him in the heavens to bring to the earth, explaining the arrival of rice cultivation so important for the region (which the Neolithic Hemudu site had substantiated in archaeological terms – see above chapter 2.1) (60, 63–65). Also after his death, in times of crises, Yandi was said to have reappeared as a fire dragon to help (69). But beyond such tales addressing the phantasies of intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet, modern politics is palpable throughout, namely via inscriptions and calligraphies, citing above all the major ones by Jiang Zemin and Chen Yun (76–77). Hu Yaobang is, however, also mentioned in the booklet, who passed by already in 1962, notably stating at the time that Yandi was great in helping people – and that the CCP of today should do even better! (78). Given that this was at the final times of the Great Famine, when he, as many leaders, toured his home region, and was shocked by the poverty encountered,[54] the remark was clearly double-edged. That way, history and politics are always closely knit together.

Like Huangdiling, Yandiling once hosted many historical stelae, but it received also more political new ones, as the 'patriotic' booklet discloses. Notably, even the GMD right-winger (and Chiang Kai-shek's former chief ideologue) Chen Lifu 陈立夫 sent an endorsement from Taiwan in his old age![55] (80). In a more 'religious' vein, the young intended readers learn that Taiwanese 'people' came over to 'take the fire of the cauldron' to establish branch temples for Yandi in Taiwan, asking also for a statue to take over to Taiwan (81–82). (That such practices of popular religion are presented in a 'patriotic education' booklet addressed to PRC youth is, in fact, quite remarkable.) More predictably, people from Hong Kong and Macau are said to have come in 1996 to 'announce' the pending 'return to the motherland'. In 1993, a sports event with a 'dragon boat' contest for Chinese from all over the world (see below) was set up, for which the red flame monument was built (83–84), and a great 'symposium' on Yandi was held then, too, since in a more Marxist historiographical vein, Yandi is to stand for the shift from matrilineal to patriarchal society, and from the Neolithic to the bronze age.[56] Today, however, the place of Yandiling serves above all for a 'Chineseness' defined 'by blood relationship' and

54 Hu Yaobang was assigned to Hunan temporarily and, like other leaders who had visited home during the Great Leap and the subsequent Great Famine times, was appalled by the poverty he witnessed. (Suettinger 2024: 144–150).

55 One may note that Chen Lifu was a staunch anti-Communist but became active in his late years in Taiwan (when Chiang Kai-shek was long dead) for establishing more cultural ties across the Taiwan Strait.

56 Cf. chapter 2.1 of the present book on 'patriotically labelled' excavation sites for the Neolithic and the bronze age and the respective historiographical *vs* 'patriotic' narratives.

culture (87), acknowledging that Chinese civilisation had different origins (including the South), which are, however, since long integrated into one.[57]

Compared to the above framing at the time of listing the site 'patriotically' under Jiang Zemin, the more recent 'patriotic' reading of the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* description (Peng H. 2019: 41–53) shows that the accent has shifted in the meantime. By now, the *heritage* part of the site (similar to Huangdiling) is central from a present-day point of view. Typical for the new reading is that the site is framed throughout by a modern perspective, posing as 'tradition': the whole ensemble of structures that make up the site are all in 'Qing-style architecture' but newly built (42). Above Jiang's calligraphy naming the site, the stele has a traditional-style dragon and tiger motif (which reflects also Jiang Zemin's faible for China's cultural symbols), but this is explained by now as just a way to 'symbolise unity'. The part of the site where the sacrifices are prepared is inscribed by a calligraphy of modern scientist and politician Zhou Peiyuan 周培源 (who was rector of Beijing University after the Cultural Revolution), praising the 'first national ancestor', while the traditional motif of two dragons with a pearl is just to 'symbolise peace'. That way, traditional elements are simply to decorate modern messages. The main hall with typical wooden *dougong* 斗拱 joints and fish and beast motifs sports Chen Yun's calligraphy on 'the descendants of Yan and Huang do not forget their ancestors' to make sure the visitor recalls the political message the whole site is to convey. The 'tomb' stele pavilion with the calligraphy of Hu Yaobang (who is here directly named as 'former general secretary' after his meanwhile official rehabilitation, without any mentioning of his political 'problems' earlier),[58] leads to the tumulus 'tomb' itself (43). In 2002, new buildings were added aside the central axis of the former layout, again in imitated Qing-style. Here, Yandi-Shennong is profiled with bundles of grain and a plow to accentuate the centrality of agriculture he supposedly invented as one of his 'ten great deeds', which are also depiced at the side with reliefs (including the musical instruments which ironically feature also rather late and foreign-derived additions like the pipa!) (44).[59] The 'holy flame' installed in 1993 for the mentioned first 'dragon boat' contest organised for Chinese from over the world, was spatially arranged in a way

57 Cf. chapter 2.1 of the present book for the case of Hemudu as a 'real' Neolithic 'patriotically labelled' site to stress this point in contrast to this 'fictive' site of Yandi.

58 One may note that Xi Jinping's father had been close to Hu Yaobang earlier, and thus Hu is carefully reappraised in more recent times, if not for his 'liberal' inclinations. For a recent Western assessment of Hu Yaobang, see Suettinger (2024).

59 The *pipa* originated in Central Asia and was spread over the Silk Road. Cf. Millward (2019). It became, however, ironically a national symbol of sorts (Millward 2011), probably making for its appearance in Yandiling.

to cause visitors to always be oriented towards the 'tomb' when arriving at the flame to enhance the 'reverence' factor of this 'fictive' site by layout. It was also in this context, that the whole area was significantly expanded so that already 10 km before arrival at Yandiling, one would be greeted by a *paifang*-archway with Jiang Zemin's calligraphy of 'Yandiling', and Chen Yun's calligraphy at the back: 'The descendants of Yan and Huang do not forget their first ancestor', to drive the key message home even before one arrives at the site (and when leaving it)! (45–46). In other words, it was this 'global Chineseness' factor that drove the major stepping-up of the site in the 1990s (and the naming of the whole area as 'Yanling county'). That Yandiling has in the meantime come to be seen as of national importance is also corroborated by the fact that in 1998, a set of 3 postage stamps were made to memorialise 'Yandiling'.[60] (As we noted already in chapter 2.1. and 2.2 of the present book in the cases of Hemudu or Yinxu or the Anhui Provincial Museum, postage stamps were used especially in the 1990s for defining key artefacts or cultural heritage as embodying 'China', and this case – though de facto new and 'fictive – thus fits well into the general picture.) A stone version of the Yandiling stamps is even placed in a pavilion at the site! Another new addition is a further temple built since according to myth, Yandi had five children, and thus in 1995, these five were to be 'honoured' there, but less as 'ancestors' than as representatives of 'Chinese' virtues each of them supposedly stood for. In 2003, then-Hunan Party secretary Yang Zhengwu, who had been also prominent in the national TV film clip of the site, as mentioned above, suggested to further green the site, and thus trees were sponsored and planted along the way. The sponsoring entities, in turn, engraved their wishes in stone (incidentally a practice seen at several memorial sites around China). A further, but locally driven new addition to the site is the large 5-grain bundle monument declared a landmark of Zhuzhou municipality (to which Yandiling administratively belongs) in 2011, hailing fertility and agriculture. The *Fengbei* description, however, also stresses to its intended readers that according to 'legends' around Yandi, he did not only care for agriculture, but also introduced markets for exchanging goods, and searched for medical herbs to cure illness. (For this, he incidentally is said to have had a special instrument, visually reminding of a Buddhist horse tail whisk,[61] which would signal him which plant had which characteristics.) Thus, Yandi is presented as embodying the ideal ruler who not only

60 These 1998 postage stamps showed single structures of the site, including the traditional-looking new stele incribed by Jiang Zemin in front of the sacrificial hall.

61 The horse tail whisk as often represented in Buddhist portraits of abbots is a sign of authority and benevolence (originating from a whisk to drive flies away without killing them). It is also used in Daoism which could be connected well to Shennong.

guaranteed food, but also cared for fair market conditions in society, and cared for the health of his people. This brings him somewhat closer to a modern pupil less connected to agriculture in life today.

As for the site of Yandi's 'tomb', a Qianlong-era inscription is claimed for authenticating the location of present Yandiling (47), though the *Fengbei* description asserts that the location of the 'tomb' was, in fact, in dispute (like in the case of Huangdi), since the earliest references are very vague, only stating that Yandi wanted to be buried 'in the South'. A 'tomb' of Yandi was first mentioned by well-known scholar Huangfu Mi 皇甫谧 (3rd century AD) as somewhere near Changsha, but only in Song times it was more concretely named. On the other hand, at the current site, it seems that since Han times there was a 'tomb' (which was set there to supposedly 'pacify' the area!), while in Tang times, a Buddhist temple was built (49). The existence of a Yandi *temple* at the current site is therefore only certain from Song times onward, where sacrifices were held, which continued also during the Yuan period. The Ming restored the temple, since Zhu Yuanzhang, the first Ming emperor, particularly cared for historical tombs (as he did incidentally with Huangdiling) (50), and by 1524, there was obviously already a statue in place. In the early 20th century, (internal) wars caused, however, damages. Thus, in 1940 during the Second Sino–Japanese War, (GMD) general Xue Yue repaired it,[62] and (as mentioned) also used the area for his local headquarters for some time. The street to Yandiling, now adorned with Jiang Zemin's arch of the 1990s, was, in fact, built at that time of war. The PRC times, in turn, meant destruction, though first said to have been due to a fire caused by visitors and their incense offerings, but then – as is finally addressed here openly – by the Cultural Revolution which aside of the tomb tumulus simply 'levelled all'! (52). This, in fact, was the background to the restoration efforts of the 1980s which thus had to start from scratch: at the occasion, the whole was also enlarged, and new parts added, thus de facto going beyond a 'restoration'.

The sacrifices, which are the major public events celebrated at the site and since 2006 inscribed as 'national intangible heritage' together with the ones at Huangdiling, are claimed as going back as far as Zhou times, but normal people are also claimed to come and make offerings in a popular fashion, rather asking for good weather, though. At present, the official sacrifices are designed as an ensemble of music, dance, and text. In 2012, they were additionally declared as one of the '10 big roots and kinship cultural events of global impact' (*quanqiu zui ju yingxiangli de shi da genqin wenhua shengshi* 全球最具影响力的十大根亲文化盛事),

62 He is not disclosed as a GMD general here, though.

stressing their function of uniting all Chinese wherever they live under the 'roots and kinship' label! (53). 'Global impact' is thus restricted de facto to Chinese overseas, and this labelling is incidentally also shared by the Huangdiling sacrifices,[63] again showing the close association of the two sites, though Huangdiling is by far the 'globally' better received one of the 'fictive' places among the 'patriotic education showcase bases'.[64]

The above examples of 'fictive' places show how in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, locations of 'mausolea' of mythical figures, their 'authenticity' being derived from traditional Chinese historiography, are used to strengthen a sense of 'Chineseness' over purported common origins. This is also to include Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese, and thus these sites are used to perform this inclusive 'Chineseness'. In a diachronic view, it has become evident that this type of 'patriotic sites' has been increasingly valued since the 1980s and used in various activities for building up 'kinship' bonds between all the 'descendants' of Yandi and Huangdi. However, it has also become evident that the political use of the locations, namely in the case of Huangdiling, is nothing new in the post-Cultural Revolution PRC, given that Chiang Kai-shek as well as Mao already tried to use the location for their respective political agendas in the 1930s (and, in a sense, also earlier emperors did so). One may also stress once more the 'battle' of calligraphic definition and appropriation on-site, expressing the GMD–CCP political contest, but at times also the sensitivity of some calligraphies of contested CCP figures. As became obvious, there are, however, not only national but also local political agendas visible at such 'fictive' sites that try to market their locality in a 'patriotic' way to Chinese citizens as supposed places of 'origin', even in the case of a site that had been completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and recreated thereafter like Yandiling.

3.2 Commemorative places

Beyond the category of 'fictive' places considered above, the second category of 'patriotic education showcase bases' we look at in this chapter is a very large group

63 Other entries cover, e.g., sacrifices to Confucius (see also in the present book chapter 5.1).

64 This preponderance of Huangdi over Yandi has also its premodern reasons. As mentioned, Sima Qian of Han times, whose narrative is looming large over Chinese historiography on early China to this day, clearly accentuated Huangdi as the starting point of history (which also had to do with his own inclination toward the Huang[di]-Lao[zi] tradition).

of sites which demonstrates the centrality of commemoration and mourning for 'patriotic education'. While engendering pride in 'Chineseness' and national cohesion can be seen as the major goal of the preceding 'fictive places' which try to link up a locality to ancestral ideas of origin, that remain to a large degree abstract, sites of commemoration and mourning are more concrete and emotionally charged from the outset for the visitor. This is especially so for the first type among them, the places of commemoration of atrocities: here 'victimisation' is central, i.e., the victimisation of innocent normal people. These sites are thus part of the 'victimisation' and 'humiliation' history much stressed during the Jiang Zemin era.[65] Such sites include massacre sites like those for the Lüshun Massacre (1894) during the First Sino–Japanese War and the Nanjing Massacre (1937/38) during the Second Sino–Japanese War, as well as the site of more long-term atrocities of the Japanese Unit 731 bacteriological warfare experiments in Harbin during the 1930s/1940s. As can be seen, these places of Chinese victimisation are connected to the Japanese as the perpetrators.

A second type are prisons and 'concentration camps' where 'heroes' were incarcerated which, beyond the brutality of the treatment received, are to show the determination and ability of these 'heroes' to suffer for their values, i.e., the more or less 'voluntary' suffering for the (revolutionary) cause (instead of giving in) is the main issue. Most of these places are connected to the ideological rivalry with the GMD (e.g., in the highest-ranking GMD 'concentration camp' in Xifeng), and, if feasible, they are combined with the places of death (e.g., Shanghai's Longhua Martyrs' Park which covers the prison buildings and the final execution grounds, or Geleshan near Chongqing which displays the prisons and the 'martyrs'' tombs).

This leads to the last variant of this group: the cemeteries for 'martyrs' (*lieshi* 烈士, officially translated into English as 'martyrs') which are not necessarily connected to the specific place of suffering (like Longhua or Geleshan), but may host all 'revolutionary dead' of a certain region. Different from individual 'martyr's' tomb parks cases (which border on the type of sites considered in chapter 5 of the present book, highlighting an individual as a model),[66] such collective 'martyrs' cemeteries' were set up more systematically in the 1950s to 'centralise' the tombs of Communist 'martyrs', following Soviet precedent (where they were called 'heroes' cemeteries', though, not using the term 'martyr' with its Christian

65 Cf. Callahan (2010) and Wang, Z. (2012).

66 Cf., e.g., the tomb of Lei Feng, or the integration of the foreign Communist doctors Bethune and Kotnis in the Hebei 'martyrs' cemetery' (see chapter 5.3)

connotations).[67] In these regional 'martyrs' cemeteries', usually being cemetery parks (*lingyuan* 陵园), those who died after 1949 could be buried there, too, including people not being 'martyrs' in the strict sense of having lost or given up their lives for 'the cause',[68] but who were entitled to be cared for in death by the Party (e.g., certain cadres).[69] These regional 'martyrs' cemeteries' were also set up in provinces and regions with little contribution to revolutionary history, singling out some (at times not at all local) 'martyrs' of the Communist revolution, e.g. in Xinjiang or Tibet, to show that these areas, too, are integrated in the nationwide pattern. Other collective 'martyrs' cemeteries' are, however, more focused on specific historical events. Either way, such sites are less dramatic. They rather put the accent on commemoration, mourning, and respect, less on the cruelty of the deaths that might have preceded burial. 'Martyrs' cemeteries' figuring in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system include the examples of Xinjiang's capital Urumqi with a general place-specific 'martyrs' cemetery' built around a group of 'outsider' 'martyrs', and of Yunnan's capital Kunming with a site connected to event-specific 'martyrs' tombs', which will illustrate how these sites work in practice in the 'patriotic education' context.

Sites of atrocities

To begin with the **sites of atrocities** among the 'patriotic education showcase bases', these are at first glance focused primarily on the non-political, with 'normal people' being the victims. As mentioned above, they usually have the Japanese as perpetrators, with the historically earliest one among the listed such sites being of the First Sino–Japanese War 1894/95 (cf. also chapter 4.3 for the commemoration of that war) when the Japanese massacred the population of Lüshun 旅顺 / Port Arthur (today Liaoning Province), at the time a base of the Chinese Beiyang 北洋 Fleet and the key strategic harbour in Southern Manchuria. The Lüshun massacre shocked the world at the time and was a setback for the international reputation of the Japanese who wanted to show to the world with their war against the 'backward' Qing that they, in turn, were part of the club of the 'civilised' Great Powers.

67 Cf. Müller (2022: 117). 'Martyr' is, as mentioned, the official English translation used in the PRC for the term *lieshi*, implying death of the person. 'Heroes' (*yingxiong* 英雄), in turn, are in Chinese terminology those who lived on.

68 In PRC times, a 'martyr' would intend, e.g., someone dying while on duty or fulfilling a 'good deed'.

69 This, too, followed the example of the Soviet Union, but also reflected the traditional importance of funerals in Chinese culture.

The massacre was first reported in the Western press at the time. However, there was also a prehistory to it which is usually left out in the black-and-white presentation in China (and at the site as I observed in 2018 – see below). To intimidate the Japanese, the Qing officials had ordered some captured Japanese soldiers to be executed and their heads displayed at the gates – a not uncommon practice in China at the time.[70] The Japanese soldiers were enraged by this 'barbarous' and 'humiliating' treatment of their comrades,[71] and when they conquered Lüshun, vented their wrath on the defenceless normal people.[72] Unfortunately, this was not to be the last Japanese atrocity in China.

Case study: the Lüshun Massacre Memorial Hall

Bearing in mind that the Nanjing Massacre of 1937/38 by the Japanese has been stepped up in memorialisation in the PRC in the last years (see below), it becomes quickly obvious that the Lüshun massacre is accordingly moulded into a similar style of exposition as a (smaller-scale) 'precedent' to the larger Nanjing massacre decades later. Most clearly, the Lüshun massacre site, named **Lüshun Wanzhongmu jinianguan** 旅顺万忠墓纪念馆 (lit.: Lüshun Tomb of the 10.000 Loyal Ones Memorial Hall) (Liaoning Province) (list 1, 1997), imitates parts of Nanjing's artistic language with similar-looking grey letters to focus on dates and numbers. Since 1894/95 was at a time when Communism was not yet present in China, the 'patriotic' value is represented at this site by the word 'loyalty' (*zhong* 忠), and the whole site is (also historically) named 'Wanzhongmu' 万忠墓. (In fact, this does not sit easily with the narrative that the slaughtered victims were all normal people and no plaincloth soldiers. Someone 'loyal' would be usually expected to have consciously stood for the Chinese side which rather evokes the image of Qing soldiers in this case, who were typically labelled on tombstones this

70 This was not only often described by appalled Westerners, but also by Chinese. One may only recall the 20th century writer Shen Congwen 沈从文 who described such scenes he witnessed himself repeatedly, even for early Republican times. In juridical terms, the practice was prescribed in the legal code of the Qing as an additional punishment for 'notorious' cases. (Cf. Mühlhahn 2009: 35).

71 Incidentally, the practice of publicly exposing heads of executed people was used in Japan herself and only stopped in the early Meiji period, i.e., not long before the Sino–Japanese War. Cf. Nagata (2023).

72 As we will see, the most recent 2019 *Fengbei* narrative, obviously aware that this 'prelude' has been too well-established outside China to be ignored any longer, has changed strategy to address it but tells its readers that this was a crafted Japanese lie which the naive Westerners did buy into. (See below.)

way,[73] than of accidental victims who did not choose to die for their country but were simply slaughtered.) The number given is of 'almost 20.000' victims in Lüshun during the First Sino–Japanese War, including civilians (but also Qing soldiers). As I observed in 2018, the site is, however, also labelled as one for ideological cadre training and for officials' professional morals, thus showing that the place is above all a political message rather than a commemoration of the victims.

The exhibition at this 'patriotic education showcase base' provides some relics of the war, at times replica, but also uses dioramas to illustrate the official reading, clearly trying to insinuate the personal responsibility of the Meiji Tennō for the massacre (which the Japanese denied). (He is thus shown deciding on the attack to deflect any reading of the massacre having been a local uncontrolled outburst unbeknownst to the Tennō.) While reports by Japanese wartime journalists are to authenticate the committed atrocities, nothing is said in the exhibition (as of 2018) about the crucial role of Western reports which kicked off the international outrage (e.g., in the *New York World*). On the outside of the exhibition hall, a 1994 copy of the 'tomb stele' of 1922 is presented. It is to mark the site where the Japanese are said to have deposited the ashes of the roughly 20.000 victims whom they burned to cover up the massacre. While a first commemoration was held in 1896 shortly after the massacre and withdrawal of the Japanese (a replica of that tombstone is presented, too), the taking over of the area by the Japanese after the Russo–Japanese War in 1904/05 put a halt to the possibility to commemorate these dead.[74] In 1922, locals are said to have initiated a new commemoration privately again, and in 1948, i.e., at a time when the Soviets held the area, the 'Wanzhongmu' was finally rebuilt.

In filmic 'patriotic' representation of the site,[75] the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 2), produced by Liaoning TV's science education department in 1998, introduces the (1994) built memorial hall, which is the actual site 'patriotically' listed, after showing the original tomb and the (replica of the) 1896 stele. Local pupils can be observed who are lectured in the exhibition with photographs, including the main Japanese commander's photo to pinpoint who was responsible (Japanese commander Yamaji Motoharu 山地元治), and photos of victims to show who were the ones

73 Cf. in chapter 4.2 of the present book for the case of the dead Qing soldiers during the First Opium War.

74 There is an interesting parallel in Taiwan with the commemoration stele for the fallen Qing soldiers of the Sino–French War, 1884/1885, which was rendered impossible to keep when the Japanese took Taiwan from the Qing as a colony after the Sino-Japanese war there. Cf. Müller (2022: 27–34).

75 This site, though on the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases', was not covered by the *Zhonghua hun* educational video collection.

slaughtered to testify the historicity and nature of this massacre. Similar shots show that not only pupils but also marines are receiving 'patriotic education' at the site, placed in one of China's main military harbours.[76] Translations of reports of British observers at the time are read in pathetic voice, accompanied by pathetic music, and images of destroyed old buildings as well as available old photos that show the survivors provide the visual cues, while water turns suggestively into red (blood). Japanese newspapers also published sketches and reports at the time, while the '36 survivors' who had to transport the corpses were the witnesses on the Chinese side. Their descendants are interviewed who tell what they heard in their family, underlining the attempt at 'resistance' – if without much chance – of the normal people. The Japanese foreign minister, however, tried to defend the Japanese army at the time, arguing that the killed had been all Qing soldiers. The Japanese thus wrote a stele for the 'Qing commanders and soldiers' to make the commemoration site of the massacre appear as 'only' a tomb for dead combatants. This original place of the tomb (before the relocation of 1994) is shown, going also into the history of the filmed 1994 excavations there which rendered bones and jewellery, proving that the slaughtered ones thus obviously included also women and children, not only 'combatants'. Finally, shots of the new site of 1994 and its opening ceremony show the memorial as the visitor would encounter it.

Compared to the filmic treatment, the 'patriotic' booklet (Wang 1999), while in theory focusing on the memorial hall which is the place listed and which had been recently newly set up in 1994 at the 100th anniversary, rather focuses on retelling the background of the massacre itself, i.e., the First Sino–Japanese War (1894/95). Major stakes are to provide 'iron proof' that the massacre happened, and on cruel stories retold later by the very few survivors. It also profiles those 'bad' Chinese officials like Li Hongzhang who did not prevent the massacre or send military help, and exalts those commanders that resisted while others fled. On the other hand, it tries to argue that the massacre was not a sudden event, but part of the long-term 'mainland strategy' of the Japanese approved by the Meiji emperor himself who wanted the Sino–Japanese War to happen, thus stressing the Tennō's personal responsibility. While several strategic mistakes of the Qing side are admitted, Lüshun in fact being one of the best prepared places for a military conflict with

76 Lüshun has been closed to tourists from outside until 2008, due to the presence of the Chinese navy which caused the area to be closed off as militarily sensitive before. The former long-term presence of the Soviets there was another reason to keep the area under strict surveillance, which, e.g., also impacted on the Russian/Soviet cemetery in Lüshun. Cf. my study of the latter in Müller (2022: 159–173). Since 2008, tourists are allowed to visit, though the military harbour area is of course still off-limits (Müller 2022: 152).

strong fortifications and an excellent technological infrastructure (32), the characterisation of the people in Lüshun wavers between being hapless victims and being willing to resist, even without any weapons. Minor victories in the area before the massacre are celebrated with a language similar to the later Second Sino–Japanese War accounts, e.g., that such smaller temporary victories 'destroyed the myth of Japanese invincibility'. Such language enforces the impression that the depiction of the history of the First Sino–Japanese War is very much backward reading, couched in the language of the more recent Second Sino–Japanese War, since at the time of the First Sino–Japanese War the Japanese were not yet known as particularly strong. In fact, many foreign war observers were betting on the Qing side in the conflict at the time,[77] and even Japan herself was not sure at all at the time she would easily win against the large Qing empire. The victory would become a major step on Japan's way to Great Power status in hindsight. Most of the narrative, and the emotionally most compelling part of the 'patriotic' booklet designed for young readers, is the description of singular cases with names of survivors or their descendants who spoke about the atrocities in detail. Notably, several of these testimonies are from 1974, i.e., at the 80th anniversary of the massacre, during the still ongoing Cultural Revolution. Foreign observers and also some Japanese journalists who did sketches and wrote descriptions at the time of the massacre (late 1894) are also cited to 'prove' the atrocities and to deny Japanese claims that they had been provoked, trying to 'explain' the massacre when it could no longer be denied as such. In the typical propagandistic sequence, after much elaboration of cases of hapless victims, stories of resistance are added to show that in spite of everything, 'the Chinese people' did not succumb. This type of cathartic narrative is well established: first recounting the horrors of what happened, which results in the (collective) will to fight back.[78]

Finally, the booklet talks about the memorial as such, which makes clear that the present site is in fact new. The original memorial space was the place where the bodies had been cremated by the Japanese after the massacre, who signed the place with the named stele 'for the perished Qing officers and soldiers' (76). Since Japan had to hand back the Liaodong Peninsula after the First Sino–Japanese War to the Qing due to the Triple Intervention (by Russia, Germany, and France), a Qing

77 For Western scholarship on the 1894/95 war, see, e.g., Paine (2003).

78 This recalls the cathartic *su ku* ritual of Communist times where the oppressed are supposed to first accuse their oppressors, detailing their wrongs, who will then in a carefully monitored public trial be judged by 'the masses' to reestablish justice and morally bind the 'liberated' former victim to its liberators. See Anagnost (1997), as well as Hinton (1966) on the *su ku* ritual, which is often translated somewhat awkwardly as 'speaking bitterness' (to parallel 'eating bitterness', *chi ku*). Since *su* means speaking out or voicing something literally, I prefer the translation 'voicing bitterness'.

official wrote the first Chinese memorial stele (*Wanzhongmu*) in 1896 (79). At that time, the number of victims was notably given as around 10.800. When the Japanese returned a few years later after the Russo–Japanese War (1904/05), a Japanese was said to have been ordered to 'steal' the stele (which would later, as is argued, be recovered).[79] In 1922, when the Japanese were still having the say in the area, a new stele was erected at the same place on private initiative (obviously without a text on the backside explaining any background) (80). And when the Soviets took over the area in the final days of the Second World War, the former 'Wangzhongmu' was restored and a further stele added, figuring a new text on the backside which by then also criticised the Qing and provided the augmented victim figure of 'over 20.000' (82–83, 89). Together with the recovered 1896 stele and the 1922 one, there was then a triple of stelae. At the original site, the place was enlarged so that it could serve also for local ceremonies to enter and swear loyalty to the military or the Young Pioneers etc., but in 1994 at the 100th anniversary of the massacre, the whole site was newly set up, with the memorial hall added, and this then required a complete shift of the site for more space (86). During this shift, the tomb had to be opened, and the various 'proofs' beyond the ashes and bones of the victims like utensils used to cremate them, the jewels (proving that there had been also women, not only plain-cloth soldiers, that were killed – as claimed by the Japanese), the bullets to shoot them etc. were then transferred to the new exhibition site. There, the human remains were reburied at the new site under a new tumulus (88), and the new stele now states in typical 1990s fashion that the site is to serve for 'patriotic education' to 'never forget the national humiliation' and sustain the determination to become a strong country, i.e., it is not primarily to mourn the massacre victims (again given as around 10.800, though said now to be those that were cremated) (89). Ironically, the so-called 'butcher of Tiananmen' (1989), former prime minister Li Peng 李鹏, participated in the opening of this restored atrocity site in Lüshun and even wrote the memorial hall's name! (91) As a lesson, the site is to tell the younger generation that China has to become strong to not encounter again such a humiliation, that 'the invader' (i.e., the Japanese) was 'brutal by nature', and that the Qing, too, were culpable of having led China into economic backwardness and humiliation – again a wording strongly reminding of the more recent past with the oft-repeated dictum, commonly associated with Deng Xiaoping (who however did not invent it): 'the backward will be beaten'.[80] (92) That way, the

79 Cf. again, the Taiwan parallel case. (Müller 2022: 27-34)

80 The dictum was, in fact, originating from a speech of Stalin in 1931, defending the speed of his industrialisation programme, which was translated into Chinese. As Wang (2020) has pointed out, the dictum gained currency in the PRC only in the era of Deng Xiaoping.

massacre victims of the 19th century are made to serve the PRC historiographical narrative to argue for development into a proud nation that will no longer be bullied.

In comparison to the late 1990s' framing, the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 (Li / Chen 2019: 37–44) is most striking in its apparent awareness that the former crude propagandistic version cannot be held up any longer without addressing its most obvious problems: thus, the narrative strategy changed. Historical scholarship is addressed by now in stating that beyond the formerly claimed '36 survivors' there were 800 more, but that this wrong former claim was in fact due to a Western mistaken author! (42) Also, the crucial role of Western reporting to make the whole massacre known at the time is acknowledged by now. The narrative also acknowledges Qing failure (and above all Li Hongzhang's failure) to defend the best harbour China had at the time. It details the stelae, adding that the 1922 stele which was privately built did not disclose its real referent openly (which is why it could be erected at all during the Japanese presence on spot), and it suggests that the military as well as the people 'resisted' (which would explain and justify the 'loyalty' label better) which is framed as a 'lesson in patriotism' for today's youth. That way, however, the massacre's victims seem to be victims of choice rather than accidental ones. The way the exhibition is described also rather points to a view that cares more about what kind of materials were used in the exhibition than about showing any compassion for the real victims. On the other hand, it is claimed that those Japanese that were endangered to become POWs of the Qing during the war, rather committed suicide in traditional Japanese style (i.e., by *seppuku* or disembowlment) (40). Thus, it is suggested to the reader that simply no POWs were there to be made by the Qing (which they then could have mistreated), that way indirectly arguing against the possibility of the Qing having provoked the Japanese retaliation. A very notable part of the *Fengbei* narrative is, however, the detailed description of the reporting on the massacre, since the 'proof' of it is key to the Chinese 'patriotic' agenda (42–44). Given the fact that Western reporting was decisive for the international attention, the Xi Jinping-era narrative asserts that the Japanese were only spreading false news that the Qing had mistreated the Japanese POWs via Western reporters, since they feared for their international reputation at the moment when they were trying to revise their 'unequal' treaty with the US. They thus paid for influencing Western media and managed at first to block the reporting by Creelman (in the *New York World*) on the massacre until after the US had signed the treaty (43). The narrative concludes that the massacre was in any case not, as claimed by the Japanese, an accidental explosion of frustration or revenge for mistreatment of Japanese POWs by the Chinese, but planned from the outset, just like 40 years later in Nanjing! (44) This

shows that by now the strategy has changed to take up criticisms of the former propagandistic narrative to try and proactively deflect them. And it clearly shows how the Lüshun Massacre is framed as a historical 'precursor' to the Nanjing Massacre which is of prime importance to the PRC's 'patriotic' agenda.

Case study: the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall

The Nanjing Massacre's victims of 1937/38 are commemorated today in a large site also desginated on the first list (1997) of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Jiangsu Province), named **Qin-Hua Ri-jun Nanjing datusha yunan tongbao jinianguan** 侵华日军南京大屠杀遇难同胞纪念馆 (lit.: Memorial Hall for the compatriots meeting disaster during the Nanjing Massacre by the Japanese Army invading China). As mentioned, it has been retroactively connected to the Lüshun site, but is the much more prominent one of the two. Much has been written on the Nanjing Massacre,[81] and also the exhibition design of the memorial, which has been reworked several times, has received attention.[82] Suffice it to concentrate here on the aspect of 'patriotic education' as reflected in this site since this is the way how it should be perceived by the Chinese learner or tourist. As I observed in 2011, the site is eye-catching with its monumental artwork. Strikingly, a cross is central which, after all, is a 'foreign' and on top of that a religious symbol: there is no explanation why this was chosen to stand for (non-Christian) Chinese victims, but it bespeaks the 'globalised iconography of death' (Kosellek 1998),[83] though stripping the symbol of its original religious meaning. In fact, the official designation also used in the 'patriotic' booklet (Zhu / Duan 1998: colour plate section) is not 'cross' but 'landmark' (lit: symbolic stele, *biaozhi bei* 标志碑), displaying the date of the massacre (13 December 1937 to January 1938). Other references to a 'globalised iconography of death' are the 'Wailing Wall' (including imitated crack holes), or the use of footprints to symbolise the victims. Both provide the clear hint to the Jewish case and the Holocaust remembrance as the model, following the political baseline to frame the Nanjing Massacre as another Holocaust (and the political agenda for China to be viewed as mistreated by the Japanese fascists as the Jews were by the German Nazis). Also, the use of candles in an underground room is a

81 To only name some academic Western English-language publications on this highly politicised topic: Fogel (2000), Wakabayashi (2008).

82 See, e.g., Denton 2014: 143–149, Du / Littlejohn / Lennon: 2013.

83 This is a broader trend in China. Cf. the case of the Nanjing aviators' cemetery discussed in Müller (2022), chapter 5.

globalised element taken over. What differs from Holocaust memorials is the use of monumentality, with huge figures in bronze or stone trying to impress and drive home the message to the viewer. Single massacre sites spread over the city are represented in this memorial by single rocks, while pebbles are to recall the countless victims who often were finally thrown into the Yangzi. Apart from the repeatedly stressed figure of 300.000, the officially mandatory figure for the victims (which, according to some, might also serve to 'top' the Japanese victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki),[84] which is even written in words in different languages to hammer home its importance, and imprint of feet with a short biographic information of name and age, where known, are to impress the visitor with this mode inspired by Holocaust museums, here and there adding some statues. Iris Chang, the Chinese-American writer who wrote the passionate, if controversial, book on the 'Rape of Nanjing', is honoured with a statue on-site.[85] The urge to impress also renders some monumental installations close in style to the Longhua Martyrs' Memorial in Shanghai (see below). The sculptures are said to have been sponsored by a Hong Kong 'patriot' for the 50th anniversary of the massacre in late 1997 (the year of the Hong Kong hand-over), while the sculptures themselves were done by Nanjing local artists. In short, all over, the design of the memorial is to insinuate a 'Chinese holocaust'. It might be recalled that the UNESCO listing of the Nanjing Massacre archive was prepared for by the Chinese government for the World Document List 'Memory of the World' over years (finally inscribed in 2015 at the 70th anniversary of the end of WW II). The exhibition stresses the personal responsibility of the uncle of the Shōwa Tennō who was never prosecuted for the massacre, and it claims that the GMD troops (who had been often criticised earlier as having easily given up) were mostly 'patriotic', which is a clear sign of accommodation towards Taiwan's GMD. While excavated bones are to prove the massacre's historicity (since it is still disputed by some – if rather marginal – voices in Japan), the wish to impress by all costs is mostly sustained by artwork, like paintings or dioramas of slaughter, rape and looting. While confessions of Japanese soldiers are cited for the extent of atrocities committed, the Shōwa Tennō is personally accused by showing him bestow honours on his uncle who also visited the Yasukuni Shrine for the Japanese war dead, including war criminals, thereafter. On the other hand, the Japanese are said to have lied to their own home-front by

84 Cf. Denton (2014: 287, note 31).

85 One may note that her personal fate (she committed suicide) is not mentioned in the 'patriotic' context, nor the controversy sparked by her book which contained many factual inaccuracies in detail, but was full of indignation and passion for the Chinese victims. Undoubtedly, her book made the Nanjing Massacre better known in the West.

staging photos of Japanese soldiers, taking Chinese well-dressed children by the hand in supposed harmony. Western witnesses are also cited to prove the horrendous massacre, and the tombstone of the German Rabe couple who helped the Chinese (using their Nazi affiliation)[86] is said to have been shipped from Berlin in 1997 at the 50th anniversary, notably now serving as a museum piece rather than as a memorial. (The tomb of the couple, though, is still in Berlin.)[87] Also Minnie Vautrin, the US 'angel' missionary who helped protect, above all, the girls in the missionary Ginling College from raping Japanese, is honoured with a (if irritatingly sexist) statue.[88] The 'Christian factor' (since several of the remaining foreigners at the time of the massacre were missionaries) is balanced in the exhibition by modern Jiangsu-born Buddhist master Xingyun 星云 of Foguangshan 佛光山 in Taiwan, who sponsored an oil painting in 1999 done by a Chinese-American painter, to commemorate the massacre.[89]

Looking into the filmic 'patriotic' representation of the site shortly after its 'patriotic' listing, one notes that like the Lüshun Massacre site (and the Unit 731 site below), the educational video collection *Zhonghua hun* on (chosen first list) 'patriotic education showcase bases' actually skips all of these Japanese atrocity sites. These sites, pointing out Chinese victimisation, were apparently not deemed inducive for educational purposes. The *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clips (disc 4), in turn, which cover all sites of lists 1–4, produced by Jiangsu TV's societal education

86 John Rabe, working for Siemens, had joined the NSDAP, though living most of his years in China. Given the good relations between Berlin and Tokyo, he was chosen by the remaining foreigners in Nanjing at the time as spokesperson to negotiate with the Japanese for a guaranteed safety zone for non-combattants. Rabe wrote a diary which detailed what he got to know of the massacre when touring the city, but the diary was published only in the 1990s, long after his death (Rabe 1997). He managed to save many Chinese civilians together with other foreigners who had stayed on in Nanjing at the time. His plea for the Chinese cause back in Nazi Germany was predictably ignored, and after the war the Rabe couple lived in Berlin in rather reduced circumstances. Today, Rabe has been labelled the 'Schindler of China' or 'the good Nazi', and is honoured in the PRC. Several films have been made on him and the Nanjing Massacre as well.

87 According to the grandson, Thomas Rabe, the tomb is still in Berlin, while the German tombstone was transferred to Nanjing. However, it is in the *museum* exhibition in Nanjing, not in an honorary cemetery as stated on the grandson's website 'John Rabe' (n.d.). It thus serves as an exhibition piece, not as a tomb memorial.

88 Minnie Vautrin, an American, committed suicide in 1941 after her return to the US Her statue in the Nanjing memorial's exhibition accentuates her body only covered by almost transparent clothing. Given her missionary identity and her effort to shield the girls from rape by Japanese soldiers, this is, to say the least, a striking choice of representation.

89 One may add that Xingyun, born on the mainland and a very active (if controversial) figure in modern Buddhism in Taiwan, became involved also in cross-Strait activities. His works are therefore also easily found in mainland bookshops.

department in 1998, starts in this case with elegic music to visually focus on the figure of 300.000 as the key message of the the memorial hall. Then the cross with the official dates of the massacre is shown (13 December 1937 to January 1938). Accompanied by a very slow and pathetic voice, monumental figures in bronze and cement appear. Old footage, contrasted with modern shots of several places in the city with commemorating wreaths insinuate that the memorial is actually standing for all those places in the city where massacres occurred. With a wall with names, the figure of 300.000 is accentuated again, stating that this way, half of Nanjing's population was wiped out during those days, and many rapes occurred, too. A survivor who comes every Tomb Sweeping Festival is presented who had been stabbed several times. Snippets of various survivors who tell their fate, including women, are sequenced as testimonies of the massacre. This is accompanied with photos of killings and film clips of American missionary Reverend John Magee (whose documentary later became part of China's successful application for inscription of the documents on the Nanjing massacre in the UNESCO 'Memory of the World' list in 2015).[90] The 'patriotic' film clip then moves on to the memorial itself. Children, representing the new generation, are shown visiting who were called to write on a memorial banner. A Japanese organised group visiting and honouring the victims in Japanese style to then plant trees as a commemoration, include a former Japanese soldier who explains his personal reasons for coming as an atonement and that he wants to plant trees for future Sino–Japanese friendship. The John Rabe diaries as further crucial testimonies are shown printed in Chinese translation (though the inconvenient fact that he was a member of the NSDAP is skipped). The viewer of the film is only told that he was ignored by the Nazis when he talked about the massacre later, and is paralleld with Oskar Schindler, with passages of his diary cited. The repenting Japanese soldier Azuma Shirō 東史郎 (who made his participation in the massacre known before the Rabe diaries were published), is cited for evidence from the other side. For his 1987 published book *Waga Nankin puratōn: ichi shōshuhei no taiken shita Nankin daigyakusatsu* わが南京プラトーン: 一召集兵の体験した南京大虐殺 (My Nanjing Platoon: the Nanjing Massacre as experienced by a conscripted soldier), quickly received in China,[91] Azuma was attacked by right wingers in Japan. Photos of the Tokyo Trials, however, lead back to the main culprit: general Matsui Iwane 松井石根, a declared

90 For the 2014 handed-in application by the PRC approved in 2015 which details the documents covered, see 'Nomination Form' (2014). Gustafsson (2021) has briefly discussed the 'memory politics' around this inscription and the criticism raised on the Japanese side.

91 In China, a translation into English was also added in 2006 at Azuma's death, simply titled: *The Diary of Azuma Shirô*. Nanjing: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe.

faithful Buddhist! Footage of the Japanese victory march on 17 December 1937 in the former Chinese capital Nanjing, contrast with a present-day Buddhist monk sounding the bell in commemoration of the massacre. A ceremony of commemoration with candles, including survivors and Buddhist monks, is shown to move also present-day young girls to tears, implying that this history is relevant and moving for all generations of Chinese citizens. At the end, the 'patriotic' film clip again focuses on the figure 300.000 to make sure the key political message is received.

Compared to this more emotional framing, the 'patriotic' booklet on the site in the benchmark booklet series (Zhu / Duan 1998), in turn, addresses also the history of the memorial as such. It makes clear that the memorial (the name of which was notably written by Deng Xiaoping) which is termed 'for the victimised compatriots' was opened in 1985 at the 40th anniversary of the Chinese 'victory' (or rather the Japanese surrender) in the war (62), i.e., from the outset it was not timed for an anniversary of the local massacre itself, but rather of Chinese 'victory'. This already shows that the memorial 'for the victimised compatriots' (the term 'compatriots' putting the accent on civilians) was to serve less the local victims or their descendants than rather the national agenda. And 10 years later at the 50th anniversary of the war's end in 1995, it had been enlarged, and is ever since trying to become 'more international', while at the same time serving as a 'patriotic education base' for primary and secondary schools and finally as a national 'patriotic education showcase base' (1–2). The booklet first recounts the history of the massacre, adding details to show to the intended young readers of the booklet that not only killings of (plain-cloth) GMD soldiers occurred (as the Japanese tried to claim later), but of children, women, and the old as well. Instances of particular cruelty and humiliation are recounted repeatedly to show the Japanese took pleasure in this, revealing their bestiality, citing survivors' testimonies and also some Japanese diaries. The way how this former Chinese capital with its famed city wall could be conquered (which implied the problematic question as to why it could not withstand the attack) is detailed.[92] Bullets found recently when restoring parts of the city wall are cited as hard evidence of the Japanese ferocious attack (23). Another notable aspect of the narrative is the comment on Buddhism: although the Japanese, including the later executed chief culprits, were professed Buddhists, they did not hesitate to kill Chinese Buddhist monks and nuns (which also suggests that religion does not shield from atrocity) (24, 91). The post-war international Tokyo Trials and the domestic trials in

92 The narrative is notably restricted in assigning the failure to hold Nanjing to the GMD government: Chiang Kai-shek is not even named. Rather, the focus is on victimisation and hopeless resistance.

Nanjing provided further important material, not the least the testimonies of foreigners who witnessed the atrocities (95). Overall, the Nanjing Massacre is framed as an equivalent to the Nazi Holocaust (39). The booklet figures a photo of the main culprit that was executed by the Chinese themselves in their Nanjing Trials in 1947 locally as a sign of late justice (still under the GMD): the lieutenant general Tani Hisao (谷寿夫) (while not showing his superior, general Matsui Iwane, who was executed in 1948 in Japan after the international Tokyo Trials).

In the second part of the booklet, the memorial itself is focused upon which was decided to be set up when in 1982 the textbook revisions in Japan (made public by concerned Japanese!) which belittled the actions of the Japanese in China during WW II, brought the issue to popular attention.[93] The booklet goes at length to give the impression that it was 'the people' who demanded the setting-up of a memorial for the victims of the Nanjing Massacre by citing all kinds of people who were 'roused' by the medial reporting on the Japanese textbook revisions (not mentioning the reporting had been kicked off by Japanese media which was then taken over by the Chinese), and thus the government supposedly only responded to the urge of 'the people'. Almost everything that was built later is thus said to have been called for by some reader or writer of a letter to official agencies: monumental statues, commemorative devices etc., suggesting the authorities were only 'reacting' to public pressure (48–62). Notably, as this booklet is addressing young readers, all of it supposedly started with a letter by a university student who asked for establishing a memorial! And representatives of the Communist Youth League would have asked to be 'better educated' via this history to love the motherland, love the Party, and love socialism![94] (54) While this may not sound very convincing even to pupils, as becomes clear, the reporting of the textbook issue had triggered a host of publications of testimonials and photos of the atrocities in China to counter any relativising Japanese claims. Obviously, especially the photos were making a deep impression and shocked the Chinese public where the massacre had not been a well-known topic earlier beyond the local Nanjing region.[95] A Communist from a Chongqing

93 The textbook issue has already received much attention in and beyond scholarship. Cf., e.g., from the Japanese societal perspective, the book-length study of Saaler (2005).

94 Needless to say, this 'letter by representatives of the youth corps' uses the familiar expressions of Party statements on how education of the younger generation should be.

95 The literature on the massacre is, as mentioned, already abounding. Suffice it to say here that there have been attempts to suggest that the political 'disinterest' of Mao times in this massacre (in the former GMD capital and with no notable Communist 'martyrs') was overstated, and that the massacre was known. Still, a look into history textbooks with which Chinese children grew up in Mao times shows that the massacre was not focused upon, very different from the textbooks produced since the Deng Xiaoping era. In fact, the Nanjing Massacre is mentioned for the first time by

school (i.e., a non-local person, but from another former 'GMD capital'), in turn, is said to have pointed to the anti-fascist memorials the Soviets as well as the Europeans had built: why did China not do the same? (57) That way, international models are invoked to mobilise domestic actors. Since 'the people' were asking for this belated 'justice' to the victims, according to the narrative, funds were thus collected from various quarters (55, 63–65), including primary school children who are mentioned approvingly for 'willingly' donating their savings during organised outings, which also means that the government is portrayed as only adding financially what 'lacked' for this purportedly bottom-up memorial. In fact, Deng Xiaoping is said to have 'apologised' that China was late in doing something for the victims, but then endorsed the memorial by writing its name in his calligraphy (58). He had also visited the site, placed on the spot of one of the mass graves discovered, in person in 1985 (i.e., when the memorial was set up for the 40th anniversary of the war's end) (60). All kinds of people were made to visit, from kindergarten (typically in this 'patriotic education' context without considering the possible psychological impact of an atrocity site on little children) to all walks of life to receive education there. For the extension of the site in 1995 (at the 50th anniversary of the war's end), further funds were collected, and Nanjing-born architect Qi Kang 齐康 was assigned to design the monumental layout (65–66). Most importantly (and tellingly), the key issue was also here not the victims themselves, but the 'national humiliation', a key topic in the Jiang Zemin era. Like in the Lüshun Massacre site discussed above, the massacre thus was nationalised for 'patriotic' reasons.

In 1997, finally timed at the anniversary of the start of the massacre itself (13 December 1937), the monumental new layout was opened to the public (and the site labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base') (67). The visitor is to be led to the 300.000 victims figure as the mandatory one to show the official political line everywhere,[96] and the large square in the front is to be used for ceremonies, by now held at the date of the start of the massacre in December. Already since 1986, every year a 'Sino–Japanese Friendship' activity is held where Japanese private associations or groups come and plant trees (another global death commemoration mode), which in China is tellingly called 'green atonement' (*lüse de shuzui* 绿色的赎罪). The most important of the Japanese groups to the Chinese is the Meishinkai

the normative History curricula which textbooks had to follow in 1963 (Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo 2001: 296), shortly before the Cultural Revolution unsettled the educational system, but was once more dropped by the next curriculum of 1978. Only in 1986, it is mentioned again in the curriculum (Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo 2001: 477) and ever since.

96 Since there have been many debates about the number of victims, often simply depending on what was to be counted in in terms of space or time when and where atrocitities were committed, the figure of 300.000 has become a symbol for the official definition.

銘心會 (lit. tomb stele of the heart association) headed by a former perpetrator (who was also interviewed in the video) asking for forgiveness and peace (73). The exhibition is designed to prove with testimonies and photos, including those published in Japan at the time, that the massacre was real, to counter any claims from the Japanese side relativising the massacre. In this context, the testimonies of foreigners are shown, including the horrific reels done by Reverend John Magee, though his identity as a missionary is barely mentioned.[97] The effect of the gruesome materials on children is, needless to say, not considered at all in this 'patriotic education' context, while the ending with a 'call for peace' and Sino–Japanese friendship is rather abrupt and thus predictably unconvincing (75). More important is to the booklet to show who went to visit the site, including foreigners and even former Japanese Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi 村山富市 of the Socialist Party.[98] Notables that visited also included Yang Zhenning 杨振宁, the Nobel laureate born in China (who would move back to China after his carreer in the US, see also below for the Kunming 'martyrs' site) (76). To underline the massacre's remembrance, Nanjing set up stelae at many places around the city where mass graves had been discovered to show the 'topography of terror'. These almost all end on familiar slogans to call for not forgetting the past to 'revive China' (78–93). I.e., the main message was thus repeated over and over: the massacre is to serve the nation. Thus, also the survivors are urged to contribute, e.g., by telling groups of visitors, including foreigners, again and again what happened. Since the 1990s, pupils were sent to them to conduct 'oral history' and interview them to learn 'patriotism' (100). Even a Sino–Japanese student summer camp was organised where Japanese pupils were supposed to 'learn' of the atrocities committed by their 'compatriots' to then bring this back to Japan. Japanese pupils are thus claimed to have been enraged about their textbooks 'covering up' history.[99] (100) Interviews of the most compelling survivors' testimonies were cut together into a 150 min. video to be shown as a proof that the massacre was real and large-scale (101). On the scholarly level, conferences were organised to 'correct' false

97 Incidentally, the missionary identity of Magee also hampered the reception of the material of this 'amateur' in the West. Cf. Ho (2021), pp. 141-157.

98 Murayama, one of the rare Prime Ministers not from the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) in Japan, had been the one most explicit in acknowledging Japanese guilt in China in general. Therefore, he was attacked from the political Right at home. He visited the Nanjing site only after serving as Prime Minister, though.

99 One may note that the storyline of all Japanese textbooks 'covering up' Japanese wartime atrocities is hard to maintain, as this holds only true for the notorious right-wing textbooks which are not widely used, while those used more often are mentioning them to various degrees. Cf. Shin / Sneider (2011).

assertions about the massacre. On the popular level, in turn, at the anniversaries, ceremonies would be held, including at the various sites in the city, and films were made, including one with Taiwan (since the topic also offers a commonality with the GMD). Japanese visitors are asked to write about 'their feelings', and every year a booklet with their comments is assembled. Most notably, a commemorative tree planting date was set, not at the anniversary of the massacre in (cold) December, but on 15 August (105), the day when Japan declared unconditional surrender to the Allies.[100] In this sense, the commemoration of the massacre is to serve the nation again, not putting the victims into focus.

Beyond 'patriotic education', the memorial 'of the victimised compatriots' is designed also responding to the calls and requirements to serve as a base for 'national defence' (so that Chinese will not be victimised ever again) and for 'morality education' (*deyu* 德育) for pupils (106). (Cf. the labels in appendix 3 to chapter 1 in this book.) For this goal, all the devices have been set up with strong emotional underpinnings like photos and films. On the international level, in turn, while a clear aim is to reach out to Japanese to 'strike' at their emotions, soliciting reflection and ideally atonement behaviour, an outspoken aspiration of the site is also to be counted as 'no. 2 world-wide massacre site'! (107) Thus, media were called in, including CCTV, to propagate the site. And even Japanese TV reported in 1997 at the 60th anniversary of the massacre on the activities in Nanjing. As becomes also evident, a close partnership was created with the equally very politically charged museum on the 'Anti-Japanese War of Resistance' at the Marco-Polo-Bridge in Beijing, e.g., mounting the Unit 731 exhibition (for that site, see below) to show Japanese atrocity in China more broadly, but also an exhibition on the Holocaust (as a presumable 'twin' of Nanjing) (108). John Rabe's diary and other materials were translated into Chinese, and to reach also audiences not being able to come to the museum, videos were made which are also to serve the named 'morality education' in schools, from primary to university level, but also for 'morality education' of the military or different types of work units (109). That way, the Chinese citizen at large is addressed to be formed life-long. This all marks the memorial's 'going out' strategy (as a reaction to the 'patriotic education' requirements – cf. chapter 1 of the present book – to intensify a site's impact). In a very apt summary, the booklet states that the memorial is, first of all, a *political* place, and only in second line a historical one (109),

100 One may recall that the war did not completely stop on 15 August 1945, but went on in Manchuria for some more time. From an East-Asian point of view (and also from a Soviet one) the end was in early September, in China celebrated at 3 September (in the Soviet Union, given the different time zone in Moscow, 2 September). The declared 'unconditional capitulation' of the Japanese is thus the central issue, when a timing with 15 August is used in China.

and it is keenly looking for ways to address various audiences, building up also connections to, notably, Hiroshima,[101] and also Osaka in Japan (110), while all walks of life are asked to contribute, e.g., also Overseas Chinese in Japan, to translate and make the whole topic better known where they live. On the other hand, the memorial wants to sustain those Japanese who testify to the atrocities, most notably former soldier Azuma Shirō whose diary of the days in Nanjing admits to the many killings and who was sued in Japan for doing so (112–113). The memorial also states that it handed a lot of material to Iris Chang whose book 'caused a stir' worldwide (113). Given the hefty controversies her book engendered, due also to the many factual inaccuracies stated in the passionate book, and her tragic death by suicide, the omission of all this in the 'patriotic' booklet leaves a somewhat bitter aftertaste to the memorial's self-praise.

The new Xi Jinping-era description in the 2019 *Fengbei* series, in turn, provides an update on the 'patriotic' reading after the extention the site underwent in 2015. It enforces the impression that the victims of the massacre have been fully made to serve the national political agenda. All the major overhauls (and enlargements) of the site were timed after the 'victory' of China and defeat of Japan in 1945 (not the massacre itself), the newest in 2015 (which, according to its architect He Jingtang 何镜堂 who has designed several national key projects for China,[102] is, in fact, to stress the 'feelings of victory and fulfillment', being on a decidedly more positive tonic keynote to point to a brighter future rather than to a brutal past).[103] The commemoration of the massacre itself has been stepped up in the meantime (i.e., in 2014) with a unique 'national memorial day' (*guojia gongji ri* 国家公祭日) on 13 December, for which the large entry square of the present site serves locally. The integrated part of the mass grave only authenticates the place as one of the massacre sites, but the monumental artwork provides the key message visually. The updated official 'patriotic' narrative of 2019 stresses that the massacre was, like in Lüshun, not an outburst of frustrated Japanese soldiers, but a planned rape of China's former capital. That the victims included many Chinese soldiers, often in plain cloth or taken prisoner, is stated here as a fact, that way also suggesting that the (GMD) troops had been 'patriots' fighting, while the civilian victims, evoking a more passive image recalling the former 'humiliation history' tonic keynote, are toned down

101 Here, the Peace Memorial of Hiroshima is claimed as a partner.

102 He Jingtang designed, among others, the China pavilion on the Shanghai Expo of 2010.

103 For the design of the new extension of 2015 by architect He Jingtang, see 'Victims of Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall' (2017). This official descriptions states that people should now be able to remember, but also 'rest, relax, walk, and play' on the much more lively and positive addition grounds. Frost / Vickers / Schumacher (2019: 15) add that the new addendum also serves to 'internationalise' China's contribution to WW II as a significant 'global player'.

(Yang / Song 2019: 41–42). The notorious 'killing contest' of two Japanese soldiers, reported in the Japanese press at the time,[104] is mentioned, making clear that these culprits received their due punishment after the war in Nanjing where they were executed by the Chinese (42). That way, Chinese agency is underlined. While the international committee of the 'safety zone' (led by John Rabe and including several missionaries as well as businessmen) is briefly mentioned, nothing is said about who this was in this new narrative, rather putting the accent on the heavy destruction and plundering of the city and its surrounding they documented, but not on the many lives they saved! The international post-war Tokyo Trials are also only mentioned as to their attesting to Japanese 'barbarity' (43). The PRC, in turn, created more recently the National Memorial Day in 2014, which, as Xi Jinping is cited, should not be understood as a thirst for 'revenge', but as showing that China deeply cares for peace (44). In sum, the individual victims only serve as a backdrop to this overarching national goal, and even though the place is on the grounds of a mass grave, the symbolic and political role of the site by now overshadows everything else.

Case study: the Unit 731 Exhibition Hall

In contrast to the event-specific massacre sites above, a site of more long-term and systematic Japanese atrocity *vs* 'normal' Chinese in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' is the gruelling Unit 731 exhibition hall in Harbin (Heilongjiang Province), fully named **Qin-Hua Ri-jun di qi san yao xijun budui zuizheng chenlieguan** 侵华日军第七三一细菌部队罪证陈列馆 (Crime Evidence Exhibition Hall of the Bacteriological Unit 731 of the Japanese Invaders of China) (list 1, 1997).

As I observed in 2013 during an on-site visit (i.e., before the new 2015 additions), the sentry box at the entrance of the Unit 731 memorial was presented to the visitor as one of the few things that survived, since the Japanese destroyed and blew up the whole when having to leave in 1945. Here, the Japanese did experiments for chemical and, above all, biological warfare on civilians over years. Victims are estimated as around 3.000. A statue of a Japanese in the exhibition with a front civilian and a back military side is to illustrate the two-facedness of the Japanese who de facto commanded in all of Manchuria since the early 1930s, if behind the Manchukuo façade, and also posed at the very place to the outside as a 'civilian'

104 Cf. Fogel (2000), and Wakabayashi (2008).

institution, while conducting their warfare experiments inside. Japanese witnesses are cited for the production of poisonous gas already in Japan before the Unit 731 itself was established in Manchuria. To drive home their cynicism, the fact that the Japanese even erected a monument to the animals killed during their experiments in Japan is cited, while their human victims in China did not receive anything, suggesting the Japanese utter contempt for the Chinese. Futhermore, the Unit 731 is also set in a larger Chinese context, showing it as only one (if the most important) of a whole network of such institutions that the Japanese set up in China. They developed also chemical weapons (which are pointed out beyond the better-known bacteriological ones the unit produced) and applied them also over a large area in China, as maps are to show. In short, the effects were not only local, but national (which makes the site also better suitable for 'patriotic' purposes). The exhibited outfit with gas masks, and the sculpture work recreate an atmosphere of horror in the museum, while foreign doctors are also cited as witnesses that the Japanese did use poisonous gas in China. The international community is also accused of being partial even today, since, as a list is to show, Chinese people are still endangered by remaining chemical weapons which were never cleared afterwards, while Japan herself was cleared of everything dangerous after WW II. Furthermore, pointing to the declassification in 2007 of US archival holdings concerning the Unit 731 and its key figure Dr. Ishii's role, the collaboration of the US has become evident who traded the medical knowledge achieved by Ishii through his inhuman experiments for dropping the case against him after the war. Dioramas show some of the cruel experiments (see fig. 3.2.1), including infections by injection, vivisections, or frostbite progression tested during Harbin's extremely harsh winters, as well as bombing effects (tested further away in the countryside) on human *maruta* 丸太 (the code-word for the victims), maening 'logs', while Ishii's reports on the experiments show the results. Furthermore, biological warfare with the breeding of infected animals was prepared for at the site. At closer scrutiny, it is Japanese testimonies and scholarly publications that offer more details, [105] given also the fact

105 The museum on the Unit 731 produces also scholarly publications which are available on spot, e.g., a large bilingual volume with many illustrations was sold at the time of my visit: Qin-Hua Ri jun Guandong jun qi san yao budui zuizheng chenlieguan bian 侵华日军关东军七三一部队罪证陈列馆编 / Compiled by the Unit 731 Criminal Evidence Museum: *Qin-Hua Ri jun Guandong jun qi san yao xijun budui* 侵华日军关东军七三一细菌部队 / *Unit 731: Japanese Germ Warfare Unit in China*, Beijing: Wuzhou chuanbo chubanshe 2005. It is apparent that most of the material was taken over from Japanese sources. For the 'political timing' of the release of some Chinese archival materials, see Brooks (2019).

that there were no surviving victims (who included also several non-Chinese),[106] though the crucial role of Japanese scholarship on the topic is not properly disclosed to the visitor. While the commemoration of victims is hampered by the fact that most names are unknown, a name corridor lists those that could be established.

Fig. 3.2.1 Diorama of a human experiment: Unit 731 (Harbin) (photograph by the author, 2013)

106 There were at least also Koreans and Russians (Soviet as well as 'White' Russians who were a sizable population group in Harbin) and likely some Westerners.

Outdoor, due to the blowing-up of the site at the Japanese retreat, the visitor encounters only ruins, including those of the building where infected animals were held. They, however, provide the locality with a particular emotive force. Similar to the Nanjing Massacre memorial, a Japanese stele of atonement has been offered in post-war times by some concerned Japanese. Otherwise, as of 2013, the ghastly place only presented one statue in the courtyard to underline isolation and despair. While, as we observed with the massacre memorials, Chinese sites try to end in presentation on a note of agency, this site makes this hard, and thus the main agenda is to prove Japanese guilt (which is still relativised by some in Japan, not the least because some medical staff involved went on to make careers in Japanese post-war medicine, though recently some name lists have been officially, if reluctantly, released in Japan).[107] Thus, the name of the site was chosen with an accent on 'crime evidence' to make sure the atrocity will be fully acknowledged.

Comparing the above on-site observations of 2013 with the 'patriotic' filmic representation of the time of listing the site as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in the late 1990s, produced by Heilongjiang TV's societal education department in 1998 and broadcasted on national TV in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip series (disc 3), one notes the strong accent on 'justice' and 'proofs'. The film clip starts with a historical photo of the Siberian (Khabarovsk) Trials in 1949 and the 12 Japanese accused for war crimes there (showing that at least the Soviets, who had driven the Japanese out of Manchuria in 1945 and had taken the accused prisoner, cared for justice at the time). The highest-ranking of the accused, general Yamada Otozō 山田乙三 and former commander-in-chief of the Kwantung (Kantō) Army to which the Unit 731 belonged, is cited in translation stating at Khabarovsk in front of the Soviet judges that the Unit 731 was designed for bacteriological warfare against above all the Soviet Union, but also Mongolia, and only thirdly against China. Karasawa Tomio 柄沢十三夫 of the bacteriological department of the Unit 731 admitted to have personally participated in experiments on living people, while Kawashima Kiyoshi 川島清, a higher-ranking leading figure of the Unit 731, added the information that this meant at least 600 victims yearly. The film clip then switches to a group of school children visiting the exhibition, the guide explaining the photos, while the pupils take notes. The military physician Ishii Shirō 石井四郎 is presented as the key figure and culprit, setting up the Unit 731, and secondly

107 For a standard Western discussion of the Unit 731 in English, see Harris (1994). In 1996, Hal Gold published translations of various Japanese testimonies on Unit 731. In the meantime, not only have the US-held documents been declassified in 2007, but many new testimonies and documents have surfaced, especially in Japan. In 2023, the full details of a list of over 3000 Japanese staff were released. Cf. 'Scholar unearths new details of Unit 731 from National Archives' (2023).

Kitano Masaji 北野政次 (who then took over the Unit in 1942) (both living on 'normally' in post-war Japan). A photo shows the origins of it all with Ishii's bacteriological institute in Tokyo, where Koizumi Chikahiko 小泉親彦 (a military physician as well, who would serve as Minister of Health in Japan during the early 1940s!) supported him, to then move to Manchuria. In 1933, the Unit was established, posing to the outside as caring for epidemic prevention and water purification for the Kantō Army, while rests of bacteriological weapons document that the truth was completely different. A Russian map with comments by Kawashima Kiyoshi of 1949 (during the Khabarovsk Trials) details for the Chinese national TV viewer of this 'patriotic' film clip, that bacteriological weapons were, in fact, used in various places in China, namely in Ningbo, Changde, Chongqing, Nanjing, areas of Shandong, and Nomonhan (in Inner Mongolia, site of the battle in 1939 between Japanese and Soviets toops). And a Japanese newspaper article shown praising Ishii's scholarship also serves to prove the point that not only the Army appreciated his scientific competency, but also wider circles in Japan. Since the buildings of Unit 731 have been blown up in 1945, old photos serve to show the former layout of this site near Harbin, while the internal functioning is illustrated by the drawing of former technical employee Ishibashi Naokata 石橋直方, showing there was an area for experimentation, and a prison to house the victims. Referring to the Khabarovsk Trials' questioning of the captured Japanese, details of how the Unit worked are disclosed. Tachibana Takeo 橘武夫 (a Japanese army adviser who acted only as a witness at the Khabarovsk Trials),[108] for one, explained the way how victims were sent to the Unit 731 and his own role in it, giving the files of chosen prisoners kept in Manchurian prisons secretly and directly to the Unit 731. These prisoners thus would not be sent to court but to the Unit as 'special transfers'.

The 'patriotic' film clip claims that a 'great part' of the victims could be ascertained to have been 'anti-Japanese resistance fighters' (showing a librarian at the Heilongjiang Archive who obviously researches into the files as far as they were found). Thus, at least over 200 names could be identified, although those transferred were then all given numbers and called 'logs', erasing their identity. The film clip also includes snippets of a live interview of Kamada Nobuo 鎌田信雄, a Unit member, in Japan later who explains in a matter-of-fact way that for the experiments, it was 'best' to have the victims without narcotics. Thus, the people were bound to the stretcher, and when vivisection started, they would scream, then

108 The official Soviet publication on the Khabarovsk Trials of 1950 names Tachibana as an adviser. See the English version published by Moscow's Foreign Language Publishing House: *Materials on the Trial of Former Servicemen of the Japanese Army Charged with Manufacturing and Employing Bacteriologial Weapons* (1950: 12).

becoming ever more faible. Organs were taken out, and all was registered scientifically. (A written article by Kamada is shown where he described this in detail.) The 'patriotic' film clip points out that the US later kept those records (because of the deal with Ishii after the war, typed in English translation with illustrations.) But behind these records were at least 400 people who underwent this kind of treatment alive and died in the end. Wano Takeo 和野武男, another staff member, also is shown testifying in a later live interview that he saw a youth cut in two from head to feet, adding that someone had gone to Changchun, then the capital of Manchukuo, to simply grab a 12-year old boy on the street (who thus was not sent over from some prison). A reconstruction of a vivisection scene full of blood is blended in, contrasted with a photo of a laughing Okamoto Kōzō 岡本耕造, head of the disease study department (and later honoured professor of Kyōto University!), to add contempt and sadism to horror. Chinese women, too, were infected and vivisected, and photos of affected or mutilated body parts add to the strong visual impact of the scenes. Kawashima Kiyoshi's testimony is again cited (written in Japanese), and photos of some 'martyrs' (i.e., Communists) among the identified are shown to give also the victims a face (if notably only the Communist ones). Most, however, were likely just normal people among the over 3.000 victims. With the marriage photo of one identified victim, the topic is particularly emotionalised, which contrasts with the destroyed ruins of the bacteriological section (due to the Japanese attempt to erase any memory in 1945). That way, the commentator points out, normal Chinese were murdered on China's own soil (which underlines the more 'patriotic' 'national humiliation' aspect), while photos show once more laughing Japanese perpetrators. Finally, a Chinese testimonial of a villager and former worker at the site during the inner-Chinese post-war Shenyang Trials in PRC times is cited to show that not only in Khabarovsk, but also in China herself, justice was pursued (similar to the Nanjing Trials referred to above in the case of the Nanjing Massacre, which, however, had been held by the GMD), while shots of pupils, gas masks and photos summarise the visual presentation of this 'dark' site of evil and the learning from it.

Compared to this filmic treatment which leaves a strong impression of horror, the 'patriotic' booklet of the same time (Wang Y. 1998), attempts to provide more background for the intended young reader. It, too, starts with the Khabarovsk Trials in the Soviet Union, where a dozen people were tried, briefly mentioning that the international Tokyo Trials addressed the crimes of the Unit 731 as well, though the US intervened to prevent the key figure Dr. Ishii Shirō (and some others) being prosecuted (due to their deal with him) (1). In China, if only in PRC times, the Shenyang Trials were set up in 1956 to carry out justice, this time by the Chinese

themselves (though the Unit 731 was only a minor part of the trials, given that the main culprits were not in Chinese hands, and that the larger Manchukuo 'collaboration' topic was the main concern). Referring to the textbook controversies in Japan, in 1982, when the first major controversy was sparked in Japan (see above), also Unit 731 was put on the agenda anew, though making clear it should rank behind the Nanjing Massacre (but before Auschwitz!) (2). This already shows that the topic was not supposed to come into the main spotlight to leave the main focus on the Nanjing Massacre atrocity. In 1985 (at the 40th anniversary of the war's end), the Unit 731 site was designated as a 'protection unit' in China's heritage system. However, only in 1995 (at the 50th anniversary of the war's end and thus decidedly later than the Nanjing Massacre memorial) the exhibition would be finalised, opening also the remaining underground parts to the public. (One may note that at that time, major international scholarly treatments of Unit 731 as well as collections of testimonies had also become available, thus also heightening the pressure to present the physical site to the public well.) In Japan, the site and its exhibition stirred great interest, in spite of opposition of the Japanese ultra rightists.

Via TV, including American, British, and also Japanese TV, it was also made known internationally at the time. In terms of Chinese 'patriotism', though, the site is notably called for the intended young readers of the booklet one of 'shame' for China, which should spur the decision to become strong to never have to endure the same fate again (3). Background to this rather late and somewhat reluctant treatment of the Unit 731 site in the PRC is likely also the fact that there are no stories of resistance to be told here (which is connected to this framing as 'shameful'). In comparison to the Nanjing Massacre memorial, this site (and even the 'patriotic' booklet) exploits the victims rhetorically much less, though. Rather, the narrative directed at Chinese youth reveals some uneasiness of how to explain this place of horror. The trajectory of Dr. Ishii from a country child to a devil in white is therefore put into the context of militarisation in Japan since Meiji times (5). General Tanaka Giichi 田中義一, later pursuing a political carreer, is described as the one to push for aggression in China as a first step towards Japan's finally dominating 'the whole world'. In this context, Ishii's plan to use biological warfare to help Japan on this way matured, and thus, he aimed at a career in the Army as a trained physician, which frames his trajectory as a combination of loyalty and personal ambition. For developing superior weapons, he informed himself abroad in Europe, where he realised that certain taboo topics would not be investigated because of international bans, like germ warfare, and due to the memory of the devastating pestilences in the past. Ishii thus decided to go precisely into this scientific taboo zone, fully aware that also Japan had signed the ban on such

research (i.e., the Geneva Convention) (5–9). His project received backing, especially from the Japanese Kantō Army stationed in Manchuria, and he received large sums of money. As a preparation, the intended young reader of this 'patriotic' booklet learns, Ishii first established a germ research institute in Tokyo,[109] and after 1931 and the Japanese-created 'Manchurian Incident', he would shift his base to Manchuria, first to an inner-city location in Harbin under the cover of a disease-prevention and purification of water institution in 1932 (9–11). For secrecy reasons, he then moved to a place 70km from Harbin which was encircled with barbed wire, the villagers nearby assuming it was a prison. The ashes and smell of the cremated victims could be, however, noted by those living in the vicinity. The 1985 published parts of the diary of Endō Saburō 遠藤三郎 of the Kantō Army described some details of the appalling experiments conducted, which are referred to in the booklet for the intended young reader (16). At the time, the Japanese Army willingly provided the so-called 'logs', often sending imprisoned suspects, but at times also picking up people from the street. They were fed well at the beginning, and then infected to test what happens (17–18). After an escape of prisoners who managed to flee to the neighbouring villages, secrecy was endangered, and thus the Unit transferred to its final location south of Harbin to Pingfang in 1935 (today part of Harbin municipality). The narrative of the booklet tries to argue that the escape made some 'anti-Japanese fighters' aware of the place and that they tried to attack, to integrate at least some 'resistance' narrative, but nothing could be achieved (22).

The whole set-up of the site is explained as in two parts, with the front part looking like a normal place where Japanese families of the upper-level staff lived, went to school etc. Here also Chinese workers were used for daily routine jobs. The back side, however, was closed off and highly secret, where the victims were kept and the experiments conducted. Testimonies of the former chief of kitchen, a Chinese, who could only infer from what he was able to see, revealed that workers started to disappear as soon as the whole set-up was finished in 1938. While the workers from near-by were well paid, other workers were from far away, e.g., from Shandong province (which was very common in Manchuria where most migrant workers came from Shandong), but they would not be let home and later

109 The 'patriotic' booklet makes it seem that Ishii already made human experiments with Manchurians in Tokyo at the time. Fact is that in 1989, dozens of skulls and bones were found in Tokyo near the former laboratory site during construction works, likely dating back to WW II. The suspicion raised in Japan itself was that this had been people supposedly transferred from Manchuria by Ishii when he had already set up his base there, possibly dead victims of experiments for further investigation in Tokyo. According to a *New York Times* article at the time (Sanger 1990), requests for an official examination of the skulls and bones were declined, and those were ordered to be quickly cremated, which precluded any closer investigation of the time of death or their origin.

disappeared, likely having become 'logs' (25–26). The whole area became militarised and a closed-off zone, and people living there had to carry ID cards: otherwise, they would end up in the prison themselves. Trains passing by had to close curtains, and airplanes were forbidden to fly over it (27). To terrorise the people living closer by, they were held mutually responsible and had to face draconian measures for transgressions. To enlarge the area, whole villages were simply cleared (29), thus negatively impacting also on the Chinese populace in this way. The enlarged area would also feature a small airfield.

For policing the Chinese, the Japanese often used Manchukuo representatives to 'govern Chinese by Chinese', as the 'patriotic' booklet puts it (32). The Chinese workers also had to perform rites of submission before starting to work in the morning, i.e., also received (Manchukuo-style) ideological 'education' (which is a point always mentioned in Chinese textbooks when talking about Manchukuo and thus expected by the intended reading pupils) (33). The Japanese staff, in turn, consisted mostly in confidentials of Ishii, either his relatives (including a brother of his) or from his home province, so that he could trust their loyalty. Only few Japanese would therefore later (after Ishii Shirō's death) be ready to tell what happened inside the buildings. While at first germs were in the focus of research, poisoning and freezing became crucial topics subsequently (as research was connected to a preparation for war with the Soviet Union in the Far East). Victims would be observed through glass, and the processes would be described in detail. All experiments were separated, so that there was no mutual interconnection and information. According to the 'patriotic' booklet, the victims were often political 'anti-Japanese resistance fighters', but also included some foreigners, namely Soviets (although there were also non-Communist foreigners who are, however, skipped in the narrative). The transfer of victims into the Unit involved also the Japanese consulate in Harbin (which suggests that this was not only a secret inner-Army affair but that also Japanese diplomatic circles were actively involved) (39–43).[110] Since virtually no one emerged alive from the experiments, this renders the reconstruction of the details difficult. Experiments were done in a very scientific manner with comparison groups, different dosages of germs etc. (43). Technical assistants, some of whom would end up in the Fushun Prison (Liaoning Province) after the war, where they were 're-educated' by the Chinese Communists, later claimed that they were forced to collaborate, but disclosed some details (45). But testimonies by other perpetrators showed that some never developed scruples and were fully 'satisfied' if they did their scientific job well (47). In 1996, a former staff member talked in TV in Japan

110 In Harbin, there were many Russians who had fled the Soviet Union, some of whom also ended up as victims of the Unit 731.

about having done vivisections without narcotics for having 'clean' results, without apparent remorse (48). Even women and children were not spared. One Soviet woman was also to serve for experiments to stabilise whether different bodily conditions (in terms of gender or 'race') resulted in differences in experimental outcome (51). But the Japanese also experimented with curing measures (for preparation if the conflict with the Soviet Union would happen, to cure affected Japanese soldiers), though the victims of the experiments would in any case be killed in the end (52).

The main aim of Unit 731 was, however, to develop devastating bacteriological weapons. Therefore, they cultivated germs and fleas as well as mice, on whom the fleas would feed, to transport the germs and cut down costs. In the case of bombs and other weapons, the high temperatures often killed the bacteria, and thus they tried to cultivate heat-resistant bacteria (53–55). Much of the information on these experiments came from one Japanese, Tamura Yoshio 田村良雄, who had first successfully hidden after the war, notably in a PLA unit! When finally exposed, he was sent to the Fushun prison for 're-education', and explained also what happened at the Mongolian frontier in 1939 during the Japanese–Soviet Nomonhan conflict (59–60). This military clash had been the major Soviet–Japanese contest during those years and was won by the Soviets, while being provoked by the Japanese Kantō Army against the wish of Tokyo.[111] Since the fighting went badly for the Kantō Army, they thought of applying germ warfare, and thus bacteria were produced for that campaign. The use of shells and bombs was risky, given that they could also endanger Japanese tanks or airplanes, and thus the idea was to rather poison water. Ishii was there to intervene if Japanese soldiers would be affected to cure them. The initiated epidemic would be monitored to gain further information how it spread. Still, several Japanese died in that context as well, which would be covered up by Ishii later (61–70).

A key issue for the 'patriotic' booklet was, however, to point out to its intended young readers that the Tennō was ultimately the responsible for the evils committed by the Unit 731, since it was set up to serve the larger Japanese war aims, and these included domination over China (71). All over China, branch institutions were opened with equally numbered units, even stretching out to Singapore (which the Japanese conquered in 1942). The 'befriended' government in Nanjing (after the Nanjing Massacre, i.e., the collaborationist one) was an important base for coming closer to the front line of the war with 'Free China'. Thus, bacteriological war was brought to bear also in central China, and for this use in real war, tests were made in

111 On this military confrontation, see Goldman (2012).

Pingfang outside the laboratory also in free air and also with villages in Manchuria, namely a village in Jilin Province in 1938. That way, normal people living in Manchuria also were turned into guinea pigs, the intended young reader learns. While the locals assumed that some plague had suddenly broken out and were happy to see Japanese doctors coming in to look after them, they did not realise that they had been only part of an experiment (72–76). Infected fleas were disseminated first, and to then stop the epidemic, various measures were tested, including the burning down of whole villages. Subsequently, such warfare tactics would be applied in China's Zhejiang and Jiangsu Provinces, in the reach from Nanjing (and near Chiang Kai-shek's home in Zhejiang). Hunan Province was targeted as well, as was a Communist base area in Shandong, which is especially pointed out in the 'patriotic' booklet (77–85). The Japanese would force the ill people to leave, thus spreading the diseases also around the neighbouring counties.

To prevent the Japanese troops from infecting themselves in the process, Ishii had devised countermeasures (86), and thus Ishii was hailed back in Japan as a bacteriologist of renown. He would use this fame to attract and recruit many good biologists and medical specialists in Japan, and although there were also people trying to oppose him, he was powerful enough and would intimidate scientists not ready to follow him (87). (This is to show to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that also in Japan there were some scientists not willing to join, who would however be pressured into working for Unit 731.) On the other hand, Ishii also offered incentives like good pay, even to Chinese workers he needed for daily work (87–92).

In the final phase of war, the Japanese considered playing the germ warfare trump card, making Ishii, who had been transferred away from Unit 731 in 1942 since he had acted too much on his own (while his men kept loyalty to him nonetheless) (81), again head of Unit 731, stepping up production of bubonic plague bacteria (93). However, when the Soviets declared war and swiftly attacked the Japanese in Manchuria in August 1945, Ishii realised time was up and tried to quickly conceal everything. All remaining victims were killed, the staff was ordered to burn all evidence, and to blow up the site. The staff had also to swear to never say a word about it, even if captured by the enemy. Preferably, they should rather kill themselves before becoming POWs (though not many would do so) (97). Who could, transported files back to Japan, while the murdered victims who could not be cremated so quickly, were collectively thrown in a moat, covered and burnt, including the Chinese translator, and also many Chinese workers of whom only some managed to escape (101–102). Ishii himself took a plane out, while others jumped on trains before the Soviets entered – and thus ended the Unit 731 (104–105).

Reflecting this history, the present site was set up in 1985 with the aim to 'build peace', as the 'patriotic' booklet claims (107). Its name was written by Zhang Aiping 张爱萍, then Minister of Defence (108),[112] while one notes the absence of any top CCP leader with a calligraphy or endorsement as we encountered at other 'patriotic' sites. Private concerned Japanese are said to have taken over parts of the materials from Pingfang to make exhibitions in Japan, insinuating it was the Chinese lending materials to the Japanese (although the major materials are, in fact, in Japan, and partly in the US now). Visitors from Japan included some former repenting staff who are typically said to have asked 'the Chinese' for forgiveness (nationalising the victims). In 1995, the site opened, with the underground parts included (111), but the major problem of the memorial remained that much of evidence was destroyed. Testimonies of staff that had opened their mouths only after Ishii's death are therefore crucial, while Chinese researchers tried to find additional materials and interviewed former workers and families of established victims, providing the bases on which this booklet's narrative draws (while the Chinese intended young reader is not informed on the solid research that has been provided by Japanese researchers as well as Western ones) (112).

When comparing this patriotic representation with, e.g., the case of the Nanjing Massacre, one notes the overall much less politicised thrust: here, not much of resistance can be told, and this 'dark' place was opened only rather late, and low-key (with Zhang Aiping's calligraphy and no advertised high-level CCP cadre visits). Though the place is nationalised in the sense that it stands for Japanese biological warfare in China at large, its political exploitation potential is more limited, also due to much evidence having been destroyed, which once more corroborates the sad fact that history can only be told of what left traces, which might be rather accidental. The void, however, has been filled by films and other media trying to imagine what could be pieced together from some testimonies, mostly of Japanese formerly involved.[113] The less pronounced political exploitation, however, heightened the place's forcefulness for the visitor.

112 Incidentally, he would be also the one signing the 1995 monument at the memorial for the Chinese, American, and Soviet aviators of WW II in Nanjing, fighting against the Japanese. Cf. Müller (2022: 291–292).

113 In the 1980s, first films were released, the major Chinese-language one produced in Hong Kong: *Hei Taiyang* (Black Sun), which had various follow-up productions. A more recent Western production is *Unit 731* of 2015. One may note that the Nanjing Massacre had also received many filmic treatments, including one in Hong Kong of 1995 with the same title *Hei taiyang* by the same director, Mou Dunfei 牟敦芾, born on the mainland, raised in Taiwan, who then moved to Hong Kong and started filming on the mainland subsequently.

In the meantime, though, in 2015, this site has been expanded as well. The new 'patriotic' presentation in the 2019 *Fengbei* series thus updates the narrative to the Xi Jinping era. By now, for the 70th anniversary of Japan's 1945 defeat, a large exhibition hall in form of a black box (to insinuate both the totally closed-off nature and a reference to a recording black box like after an air crash, proving what happened) was added in 2015 in the obvious thrust to monumentalise also this site (incidentally and tellingly with the same architect caring for the 2015 Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall enlargement, He Jingtang, showing the close connection drawn between these two atrocity sites).[114] By now, the narrative is all focused on the national, arguing that the site should be counted as 'the largest bacteriological warfare site of WW II', and an 'iron proof' that the Japanese broke international conventions (Yao / Hao 2019: 30). The politicisation is also underlined by using the derogatory term 'Japanese devils' (*Riben guizi* 日本鬼子). A further contextualisation is provided by the stress on the fact that with their inhuman experiments (the victims of which are less important to the narrative), the Unit 731 aimed at contributing to the Japanese troops' combatant capacities (not mentioning here the Soviets as chief target any longer) by investigating how to shield Japanese soldiers from frostbite in cold northern Manchuria, or from epidemics, and test treatment options. For this, humans (Chinese, Soviets, and Koreans are the only ones named) (34) were used as guinea pigs. The use of bacteriological warfare in other parts of China also draws the intended readers' attention to the nation at large (31). The politicising thrust is also discernible when the victims are further reduced to 'anti-Japanese resistance fighters', and the major claim the narrative tries to raise is that the site should be considered as 'of equal worldwide historical significance as the Auschwitz concentration camp'! (32). In this vein, the narrative even goes as far as accusing the Japanese of having planned a genocide to wipe out the Chinese! (32–34). In the end, the Xi Jinping-era narrative draws the conclusion that this 'patriotic education showcase base' should remind every Chinese to 'not forget the national shame' and the 'bitter lesson' of this history, and that the site tells the world with the suffering of 'the Chinese' the great harm of bacteriological weapons for humanity (40). That way, the new narrative shows that compared to the late

114 For a description, see Tatlow (2015). The architect's intentions are to be found on the project website: 'The Exhibition Hall of Crime Evidences in Harbin / Architectural Design & Research Institute of SCUT' (2017). Interestingly, the only part in bold letters is that the project is not designed to 'express an angry mindset' but a 'standpoint of human civilization'. Notably, he points out the tight mandated schedule, starting building only in September 2014 for being ready with the whole exhibition by August 2015 for the anniversary of Japan's defeat in WW II.

1990s when the site was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base', politicisation has by now rewritten also this 'dark' site away from the victims.

In sum, looking at the above three cases of atrocity sites in the specific context of 'patriotic education', it becomes evident that there is little pedagogical or psychological concern for how pupils and small children (including at times even kindergarten age, as we noticed) might emotionally deal with such sites.[115] Rather, if they are made to cry, this is seen (and shown in TV) as a sign of effectivity, assuming that this way also the coming generations will 'never forget'. The victims, most of whom are nameless, are also clearly of secondary importance vis-à-vis the nationalist message which frames the sites. Although the Holocaust remembrance is constantly referred to visually or narratively as a model, this reference remains formal, rather taking it as a 'competitor' which China tries to 'equal' or even 'surpass' with its atrocity sites. If one follows Du's conclusions from interviews with Chinese visitors of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall (Du / Littlejohn / Lennon 2013), they come away with strong feelings of national humiliation, many of them rejecting the diplomatic addendum on 'peace-building' and 'friendship' in the future. Atrocity sites are, however, visited also by Chinese citizens as a form of 'dark tourism'.[116] One should also point out once more that especially the Nanjing Massacre and the Unit 731 have been addressed in several movies and documentaries and thus are circulating as topics in society also in other medial formats. Their overt politicisation and instrumentalisation has, however, severely hampered serious historical scholarship on these subjects in China, and, needless to say, also negatively impacts on the Sino–Japanese relationship. In the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, targeting the Chinese audience, these 'dissonant heritage' sites,[117] though framed as not only terrible in themselves but also 'shameful' for China, cannot completely brush away a sense of gloom and horror, and this is what distinguishes them from the following cases.

115 For some practicioners' views, if not focused on special visitor groups like children, of how best to deal with 'places of pain and shame', cf. Logan / Reeves (2009). The book also covers a (cautiously written) chapter on the Nanjing Memorial.

116 Cf. White / Frew (2013), Hooper / Lennon (2017), or Stone et al. (2018).

117 For 'dissonant heritage', cf. Tunbridge / Ashworth (1994).

Sites of prisons and 'concentration camps'

While the above cases are atrocity sites, focusing on 'normal' victims, the second subcategory among the listed commemorative places are sites of **prisons and 'concentration camps'** (in post-war parlance).[118] These are typically associated with *political* victims of the GMD, most notably Communist inmates. In short, while in the case of the listed atrocity sites the perpetrators are the Japanese and their victims 'the people', in the case of prisons and 'concentration camps', the perpetrator is the GMD and the (narratively relevant) victims Communists. In that second case, the tonic keynote is decidedly different from the gloomy atrocity sites, putting the accent on heroism and defiance.

Case study: the Longhua prison-cum-execution ground site

Historically speaking, the First United Front between the GMD and the CCP, set up in 1924, ended bloodily in 1927 in the midst of heightening tensions, with the 12 April attack by Chiang Kai-shek's troops on Communist-led worker militias in Shanghai when the Northern Expedition arrived at that city, marking the water-shed. The Communist headquarters in Shanghai had to go underground in consequence, while all kinds of leftists were hunted down also at other places in China. Beyond those grabbed and simply killed on spot, many were incarcerated, and that way the number of political prisoners instantly swelled. In Shanghai's formerly peripheral Longhua district, a 'patriotic education showcase base' is located today at a historical prison-cum-execution ground site (and is called today a 'martyrs' cemetery' since corpses of executed Communists were later found there, thus linking all subcategories of 'commemorative places' we look at in this chapter in a sense): the **Longhua lieshi lingyuan** 龙华烈士陵园 (Longhua Martyrs' Cemetery) (list 1, 1997). Although this site was enlarged in the 1990s to function more generally as Shanghai's 'martyrs' cemetery' today, the Longhua site's 'patriotic' potential is

118 The term 'concentration camp' is used in PRC materials which links the GMD to the Nazis (and insinuates the victims as non-'normal criminal' ones, i.e. above all as political ones, intending the Communists). At the time, these camps had officially other (cover) names. The term 'concentration camp' was, however, also used by the US Cf. Wakeman (2003: 545) who lists a report called like this by the US Consul in Kunming of 1945. The GMD usually called them 'labour camps' with an aim to 'reeducate' the inmates, something the CCP would pick up as well (which also follows the Soviet GULag example, translated into Chinese as *ladong gaizaoying* 劳动改造营). A check in Republican-era sources only rarely rendered the term 'concentration camp', and if so, it appeared in connection to Germany.

primarily derived from being the very site of a GMD prison-cum-execution ground which is why the site is grouped here with other such sites of suffering rather than in the third subcategory of 'martyrs' cemeteries' (for those see below). The Longhua site has been addressed already in a general sense by Denton (2014: 108–112), based on his impressions during a visit of 2001 in a 'martyrdom and memory' view. The following will focus, instead, on the 'patriotic education' aspect and also go more into the history of the site's development, which was first of all a detention facility (from where many inmates would be also released). In fact, the military garrison running this prison already existed before the GMD took the place over. Numbers of detentions and executions over the years when it was in GMD use (1927 to 1937)[119] are not clear (and numbers given vary widely). On the other hand, in comparison, Nanjing's Yuhuatai Martyrs' Cemetery (as it is called today) which was the major execution ground in Nanjing used by the GMD in their capital and is also on the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases', differs from Longhua in that the site does not include former prison buildings, as the prisons were located elsewhere in that city.[120] Thus, Yuhuatai would rather belong to the third subcategory in the present chapter (and will not be treated in this book in detail).[121]

At my visit of the Longhua site in 2011, the main focus of the whole was clearly on one specific group among all those that languished in the prison over the years and were also killed there: the '24 martyrs' of 1931 (of the CCP, including also five members of the famous League of Left-Wing Writers). Since their case made a stir at the time, they would be particularly searched for later, their remains being identified in 1950. They thus 'define' and 'authenticate' the place. However, the indoor exhibition in the added memorial hall addressed not only this history, connected to the prison and execution grounds, but also more recent (i.e., PRC-era) 'exemplary people' of Shanghai who died (or were killed) prematurely (notably covering also cases of young people who died in 1968 during the Cultural Revolution's local struggles!), thus broadening the concept of 'martyrs' who lost their lives for the 'just cause' who are by now all to be remembered in this 'martyrs' cemetery' of Shanghai. This shows that the site is clearly conceived as not only a historical one, but as one advertising the 'just cause', for which the 'martyrs' died locally, to be of enduring validity to present-day Chinese citizens. Outdoor, large

119 There is no information provided on what happened after 1937 with the site, i.e., during the Japanese occupation and (after 1945) during the GMD's second hold of Shanghai (until 1949). There is only a remark in the 'patriotic' booklet (see below) that the Japanese bombardements damaged the site, which suggests it was not reused thereafter.

120 Needless to say, Shanghai had also more prisons than just Longhua.

121 For a short description of Yuhuatai see Denton (2014: 112–115).

spaces are designed for the Young Pioneers (and other groups) for memorial activities as crucial performances in the 'patriotic education' context, while the historical detention houses, segregated according to gender, and the cells have been partly reconstructed in 1991. An underground tunnel leads the visitor over to the execution ground where in 1950 the corpses had been found. In the extended park, sculptures provide the larger local revolutionary context, especially recalling the 1925 'anti-imperialist' May Thirtieth Movement (which started in Shanghai) and the 1927 break-up of the United Front (or '12 April counter-revolutionary coup' of Chiang Kai-shek in CCP wording) as crucial milestones in Shanghai's revolutionary history, leading to the suffering of revolutionaries under the GMD at this Longhua prison-cum-execution ground. The sculpture on the 'liberation' of Shanghai in 1949, in turn, closes the pre-PRC revolutionary history cycle on a triumphant note (thus suggesting that the suffering of the 'martyrs' has not been in vain).

If one compares this setup to the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall where different localities in the city (where massacres occurred) were represented at the site synchronically, the Longhua site rather stands here for different points in time in the city diachronically. The central axis of the present layout is, however, focused on a glass pyramid (recalling the Louvre pyramid built by China-born world-famous architect I. M. Pei), in which the indoor exhibition on the 'martyrs' is placed. The pyramid as an (un-Chinese) antiquity-referencing way of memorialisation, taking up death and tomb as a theme (though the exhibition content is very obviously far from the Egyptian royal association), is joined by a large horizontal stele in red stone in front of it with inscription by then-general secretary Jiang Zemin, himself deeply connected to Shanghai (and a key promoter for setting up this 'patriotic education' site), with the motto honouring the 'martyrs' sacrificing their 'pure hearts and red blood for the people' (see also below). Notably, the whole square is called *hongyan* 红岩 (red rock / crag) square, by this naming connecting Jiang's stele with the site in Chongqing (see below) most famous among Chinese citizens for the topic of GMD persecution of Communist 'martyrs'. Behind the pyramid, there is a huge horizontal statue of a half-buried naked man, stretching his arm to heaven (calling to mind the Nanjing Massacre Memorial's monumentality) to symbolise the 'unknown martyrs' (*wuming lieshi* 无名烈士). With a flame in front, this is clearly inspired by the 'tomb of the unknown soldier', a practice introduced since WW I in the West and since WW II also practiced by the Soviets,[122] which is here transposed

122 In China, there were discussions on such a memorialisation also for the (original) military context, connected to the Nanjing aviators' cemetery. Cf. Müller (2022: 307–308). One may note that this, once more, sustains Koselleck's (1998: 5) assertion that iconology of death has become

from the military to the Chinese revolutionary context. The detention houses as the 'authenticating' key location of the Longhua site, though, appear by now rather as a 'side' structure to the central memorial axis, bespeaking the fact that after all, history is only used as a prompt for the key political message to be conveyed to the Chinese citizen.

The Longhua 'patriotic education showcase base' was promoted in filmic representations in a nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 3),[123] produced by Shanghai TV's societal education department in 1998. The presentation starts with shots of the modern large park and outdoor artwork, contrasting this with the ancient and famous Longhua pagoda, attached to the Buddhist temple nearby, and the peach trees in the garden (which always draw crowds during the blossoming season). This touristic image serves as a contrasting background to the gloomy comments of famous writer (and icon in the PRC literary historiography of the Republican era) Lu Xun 鲁迅, whose writer-friends were among the executed '24 martyrs' of 1931 at the neighbouring prison. Thus, Lu Xun spoke of Longhua, this favourite place for outings in Shanghai in spring, as a place of darkness. Shots of the prison (the filming turning into black and white to insinuate a leap back in time) and of heroic paintings, representing the 'martyrs' of 1931, are intermingled. The woolen vest of woman 'martyr' and writer Feng Keng 冯铿, full of (bullet) holes (and claimed as a major 'relic' rendered by the 1950 excavation), is to materially 'authenticate' what happened, while historical footage of executions by shooting (if not at Longhua) visualises it. The (rebuilt) prison buildings for female and male prisoners (the latter being more numerous) introduce the national TV viewer in material terms to what preceded execution, and for the presumed brutal inquisitions inside, paintings stand in for visualisation. The most important Communist 'martyrs' who perished in this location since 1927 are enumerated with their respective positions in the Party (i.e., pointing out also those killed there already before the '24 martyrs' of 1931). Others were imprisoned in Longhua, too, but then transferred to Nanjing and killed there at Yuhuatai. With two couples among the '24 martyrs' of 1931 imprisoned with their babies (one baby ending up in an orphanage, while the traces of the one of labour movement cadre He Mengxiong 何孟雄 and his wife were lost after their execution),[124] the 'martyrs' become more personalised and

globalised. Cf. also Müller (2022: 309). In the Longhua case, this tomb is said to contain 271 unknown 'martyrs' (Ji / Wang 2019: 68).

123 The educational *Zhonghua hun* videos do not include this site.

124 He Mengxiong is one among those 'martyrs' killed in Longhua mentioned in 1945 in the Yan'an Party resolution which defined the CCP's history for the first time (and rehabilitated also several figures, including He Mengxiong who had been attacked by the inner-Party 'leftists' in early 1931). Cf. the version printed in the 1965 edition of Mao's Works (Mao 1965), vol. 3: 188, 222.

emotionalised for the TV public. The Communist journal they read is to prove their ideological commitment, while solemn brass music engenders a feeling of reverence. A small bridge to the execution ground (not the underground tunnel presented today) points suggestively to their end. After this tragic introduction, the prison is, however, presented as also a place of resistance in typical Communist narrative sequence, substantiated with a defiant poem a Communist inmate supposedly wrote on the prison walls. In a final step of the narrative, commemoration of this history of struggle and sacrifice is guaranteed by the ideological heirs. Thus, after establishment of the PRC, excavations were undertaken in 1950 which rendered the corpses of the '24 martyrs' of 1931, and Deng Xiaoping would push in 1983 for establishing the memorial which would be opened in 1995 (without, however, explaining to the TV audience why it took so much time in between each of these steps).

Romantic music accompanies shots of the large sculptures outdoor on the more sanguine topic of successful struggles for independence and liberation. The centrally placed stele inscription of Jiang Zemin (on the back featuring the 1995 text of the Shanghai CCP committee and the municipal government for the setting-up of the site) leads visually to the memorial hall (*jinianguan* 纪念馆) in the glass pyramid and the exhibition inside, where school children are shown visiting to receive 'patriotic education'. The Chinese TV audience and potential future tourists to the site are, however, also assured that the stories of single martyrs can be studied by every visitor at the exhibition also indipendently via multimedia facilities (which were a very new feature in the late 1990s), as well as the local revolutionary history in general. Outdoor in the cemetery, single tombstones also identify the respective 'martyrs'. For those 'martyrs' who gave their lives during the PRC era, in turn, a seperate (pantheon-like) commemoration hall (*jiniantang* 纪念堂) was erected which stores their ashes (according to present-day funerary regulations).[125] That way, post-1949 cases (counted here as 'over 500') are clearly separated from the ones of the 'old society', which are given as over 1.100 'martyrs'. In 1997, i.e., at the time of the site's listing as a 'patriotic education showcase base', the 'tomb of the unknown martyr' was added as the first such case in China, together with the monumental 'unknown martyr' sculpture (by sculptor Pan He 潘鹤) representing those who sacrificed during the liberation of Shanghai (in 1949), but of whom one does not know

125 Cremation has been made the norm in the PRC. The term *jiniantang* is slightly different in connotation from *jinianguan*, with *guan* rather having an official and objective-distanced ring, while *tang* rather implies a reference to ancestor halls, i.e., puts the accent on reverence and subjective involvement. I have tried to capture the latter with the translation 'commemorative hall', since the ashes are also stored there, while the *jinianguan* just tells the history.

their names.[126] (That way, the site visually turns the 'liberation' of Shanghai into the key and crowning event of the cemetery part, overshadowing the '24 martyrs' of 1931.) Accompanied by bombastic music as sound-track, the outdoor artwork in the park describing important heroic battles in Shanghai up to 1949 are presented, as well as the various added inscriptions and endorsements (which incidentally include a calligraphy of leading lay Buddhist Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 whom we already encountered at other 'patriotic education' sites). In the end, the reverence the site supposedly engenders with all kinds of Chinese citizens today is underlined by showing a (Tibetan) minority cadre (with Han-Chinese at his side) offering a Tibetan scarf, young recruits entering the Army and swearing loyalty there, and pupils offering flags, thus insinuating the site is (and should be) of enduring importance to all walks of life and all ethnicities in the PRC.

Compared to the above 'patriotic' TV presentation, providing a general and visual introduction for Chinese citizens as potential tourists, the 'patriotic' booklet (Fang 1998) in the benchmark patriotic education series on first list sites does not only offer more background to the intended young reader, but also discloses more on the workings of the 'patriotic education' endeavour. One should recall that these booklets were usually stored in school libraries and also provided teachers with materials with which to prepare for their 'patriotic education' tasks. Since the Longhua Martyrs' Cemetery is in its present form a very recent creation of 1995–1997, this means that it is de facto built in the process of the 'patriotic education' campaign mainly driven by Jiang Zemin who is closely connected to Shanghai where he served as mayor and Party secretary before becoming the major national leader and general secretary of the CCP. (People connected to him were ever since dubbed in politics as the 'Shanghai clique'.) The reader of the booklet notes that all through, that the defining visual element repeated in the layout on every page is the new monumental figure of 'the unknown martyr', rather than the prison-cum-execution ground which is the historically 'authenticating' part for the location. As is stated near the end of the volume, the figure's creator, Pan He, a sculptor from Guangdong, visited the site in 1994 (i.e., before it was officially opened in its present form) together with other Chinese sculptors and is said to have found out that a relative of his was killed in Longhua, which moved him to design this sculpture (129–132). Likely, the scultpors had been led to the site to suggest eye-catching artwork.

Historically, the Longhua Martyrs' Cemetery, situated close to the Longhua Buddhist temple first built in the 3rd century AD with a pagoda and peach tree

126 One may note the plural used, based on the burial of over 200 unidentified corpses here claimed as 'martyrs' for the liberation of Shanghai. According to Ji / Wang (2019: 68), they were 271 'unknown martyrs'.

garden, both inspiring many poems through time, was, as mentioned, a place used as a prison and execution ground already before the GMD took over.[127] (And, one may add, in spite of the 'patriotic' gruesome descriptions and the executions carried out, this military prison was, in fact, described as comparatively lenient towards the mostly political offenders by some of the survivors in their memoirs who often got to know several GMD prisons.)[128] Executions, however, occurred, and in 1950, when remains of executed people were found at the site, they were identified as those of the '24 martyrs' of 1931 (8), but it was only after the Cultural Revolution that the site was fixed as a memorial site (which makes the reader wonder why this memorialisation took so long, which had also not been explained in the film clip). As is disclosed in the booklet, the military garrison and prison quarters had to be largely reconstructed, based on elder people's memories, since the Japanese bombardements during the Second Sino–Japanese War had largely destroyed the original buildings (17). (I.e., what the visitor encounters today, is all reconstructed.) In 1958 (at a time when all over China 'martyrs' cemeteries' were set up), Shanghai set up its 'martyrs' cemetery' in the larger area, but in the end the present Longhua Martyrs' Cemetery received all 'martyrs' and revolutionaries on its grounds, thus not only hosting the early Communists once executed there (who 'authenticate' the location), but also those to be honoured since PRC times (which suggests that only by this merger the former prison site 'profitted' in terms of memorialisation). One may note that the present monumental Longhua Martyrs' Cemetery, opened in 1995, but constructed since 1990 (i.e., just after the 1989 Tiananmen protests which shook the legitimacy of the CCP), has its name plaque written by Deng Xiaoping. Jiang Zemin, in turn, the one who had managed to avoid bloodshed in Shanghai in 1989 during the protest movement, to be then called to Beijing by Deng Xiaoping to take over national responsibility, was the one who then pushed for 'patriotic education' rather than guns. At Longhua, he wrote, as mentioned, the central motto about giving one's blood for 'the people' – an ambiguous concept if one considers that context at the time. Beyond Deng and Jiang, also Chen Yun, a leading CCP figure of the older generation who had long served in Shanghai (and was at the time politically in tension with Deng Xiaoping), inscribed himself into the place as well, by penning the name of the memorial hall. This means that several major political

127 In his study on the Chinese penal system, Dikötter (2002: 138) mentions an eyewitness account of an execution in 1919 when it was a military prison. The execution was done publicly and with the 'new method' of shooting the kneeling condemned men who had a slab attached to their back, telling their names and crimes (a practice known to this day).

128 Dikötter (2002: 292) cites such cases, concluding that 'life in Longhua was more benign' than in civil prisons, with plenty of decent food. Apparently, treatment greatly differed, depending on the status (and likely the behaviour) of the inmates.

figures of the early 1990s cared about being represented at this newly set-up site. And in terms of historical references, while the newly reintroduced Tomb Sweeping ceremony was practiced there, the day of 'liberation of Shanghai' in May 1949 was added to the ceremonial dates (11), i.e., beyond the 'traditional' ('feudal') reference, there was also a Communist and local one, underlining once more that the 'liberation' of Shanghai was to be perceived as the climax. In terms of material heritage, the (rebuilt) prison quarters, including one women's and three men's goals (18), could understandably not present much of original materials, since only some clothing or handcuffs had been recovered, and thus the intangible heritage of writings and poems of the inmates is particularly stressed (without going into the problem of how those could have been transmitted).[129] Letters to the outside, however, could be written by the inmates, and some were even published out of prison (incidentally something hard to imagine for today's inmates of PRC prisons) (25). The wards obviously even tolerated poetry clubs inside the prison (29). The purported poems and songs are thus seen as 'intangible heritage' by now, given that tangible materials are scarce.

The 'patriotic' booklet focuses predictably on the Communist 'martyrs' (as the term 'victim' does not fit the preferred image), executed there over time, who included also two sons of Chen Duxiu, the first CCP general secretary made the chief scapegoat on the Communist side for their *annus horribilis* of 1927 and the persecution of the Communists by the GMD. (Although he was accused by the CCP of Trotzkyism,[130] the GMD would nevertheless imprison him later for years in Shanghai, too, but he enjoyed several privileges in prison and would be finally released.)[131] His two sons, Chen Yannian 陈延年 and Chen Qiaonian 陈乔年, in turn, had sided with the inner-Party critics of their 'problematic' father in 1927. They were detained and executed by the GMD in Longhua in 1927 and 1928 respectively.[132] With its foreign concessions and industries, Shanghai was, however, also a

129 It might be noted that already with late Qing-era revolutionaries, the problem of 'faking' poems or other 'testaments' occurred. Cf., e.g., the contested case of Tan Sitong's 'last' prison poem, the 'standard' version of which is also included in PRC history textbooks and thus well-known, providing a kind of 'model' for such narratives. (Incidentally, Taiwan's Academia Sinica historian Huang Zhangjian 黄彰健, for one, suggested in his study on the 1898 reform movement that Tan Sitong's poem had been altered by Liang Qichao on purpose who fled and survived the Qing crackdown on the movement, while Tan was executed.)

130 One may recall that 1927 was the time when rivalry between Trotzky and Stalin peaked, also connected to controversies over the course of Soviet China policies.

131 For privileges, cf. Dikötter (2002: 291). Incidentally, it was in prison when he would also comment on Pan Yuliang's artistic work (see above, chapter 2.2, on the Anhui Museum).

132 However, the way the two brothers (and the relationship with their father) are presented to the intended young reader, is extremely sanitised. The key problem is that they had been (in fact very

major location for the Communist labour movement, and it was also the central location of the 'anti-imperialist' May Thirtieth Movement (1925) as well as of the 1927 '12 April coup' of Chiang Kai-shek which marked the break-up of the First United Front bloodily, thus generating many 'martyrs'. The League of Leftist Writers also resided in Shanghai, as did various dissident organisations, in times of crisis profiting from the extraterritoriality of the concession areas. That way, Shanghai as a location *sui generis* is clearly profiled for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet, and why it produced so many 'martyrs'. Key among them are the '24 martyrs' of 1931, including the five of the League of Leftist Writers (one of them Hu Yepin 胡也频, the husband of well-known female writer Ding Ling 丁玲), and the other noted Communists who are ranked according to their hierarchical position in the Party at the time. Several of them are said to have been unjustly attacked by the 'wrong leftist line' in the CCP around Wang Ming 王明 (real name: Chen Shaoyu 陈绍禹) at the time (and were rehabilitated in the Yan'an resolution on the Party's history in 1945, like He Mengxiong mentioned above in the film clip),[133] but they would not waver in their commitment to the Party in spite of all (36–39). That way, the inner frictions of the Party at the time become also apparent to the intended young reader, though closely following the official Party historiography that all was put in order in the end, but also stressing that the true 'martyrs' knew right and wrong. The individual biographies (in fact rather hagiographies) of the '24 martyrs' as well as of further cases are designed to be used for 'patriotic education' to choose a focus on some individuals, depending on the target group to be educated. They include also a female 'martyr' who was assassinated and not directly connected to Longhua at all (51–53), but since the cemetery by now hosts all 'martyrs' of Shanghai, she is included nonetheless. In the end, the biographies serve most importantly to demonstrate the attitude and moral outlook that should be taught with their example as a form of 'patriotic education'.

For the post-1949 'martyrs', which should be more approachable to a present-day Chinese citizen than those who had once to fight against the GMD, the round commemoration hall (*jiniantang*) was set up which contains their ashes (95). According to the booklet, those honoured there include exemplary PLA members, but also technicians, policemen etc., and a computer enables research into their more

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vocal) anarchists when in France (1919 to the early 1920s) where they participated in the work-study movement, while their father was the first CCP general secretary back in China, until they, too, were won over to the CCP's side. For more on this, see Müller (2001: esp. 408–409, 478–480). The Chen father–sons relationship was rocky for personal as well as political reasons. For an English-language biography of Chen Duxiu, see Feigon (1983).

133 Cf. the version printed in the 1965 edition of Mao's Works (Mao 1965), vol. 3: 188, 222.

recent exemplary lives, showing such models are relevant also for today (96–97). The commemoration is, however, also to honour all those whose remains had completely disappeared which includes also Deng Xiaoping's former wife Zhang Xiyuan 张锡媛 (98). She had died in 1930 in Shanghai in childbirth while Deng was active in Guangxi, connected to the Baise Uprising (see chapter 4.2). Obviously, she had been buried in Shanghai, but given Deng Xiaoping's downfall during the Cultural Revolution, this might have been the (not spelled out) reason why her remains had 'disappeared' – and a possible additional reason for Deng Xiaoping to care for the site and write the name of the cemetery subsequently.

While the memorial hall's exhibition presents the deeds, materials, and words of the 'martyrs' (92–95), outdoor, a 'stelae forest' of rocks inscribed with poems by the Shanghai 'martyrs' (or by others on them) reinforces the ideological message more poetically (99).[134] Given the accent on 'intangible heritage' to stand for the 'martyrs', the booklet refers to some of their poems, demonstrating that poetry is (as in ancient times) regarded as a most forceful and 'authentic' expression of an individual's heart (56–69).[135] The poems represented include even one from late Qing times, thus extending the 'revolutionary' history of Shanghai back to young nationalist anti-Qing revolutionary Zou Rong 邹容 who died in a (different!) Shanghai prison in 1905 when incarcerated for his famous 1903 text 'revolutionary army',[136] addressing his elder friend and co-inmate, the scholar Zhang Binglin 章炳麟! The calligraphies by high-ranking Communists represented at the site, in turn, provide modern political backing, including poetic praises of the 'martyrs' by Mao Zedong and Communist writer-cum-intellectual Guo Moruo, and endorsements, e.g., by Zhou Enlai (101–103). But also modern-day famous calligraphers were invited (111), while Shanghai's vibrant art scene was drawn in as well for contributing new sculptures, bas-reliefs, paintings etc. to this place which celebrates Shanghai's revolutionary history (115–132). Obviously, the narrative programme of the large sculptures and reliefs was clearly defined beforehand which is detailed in the booklet, with a negative thrust for the pre-1949 period, and a positive one for the times thereafter (116–117), strictly following the engrained pattern of bad old society *vs* the shining new one. It was to start with the Opium War of the mid-19th century and the heroic 'fight against imperialism' as the real starting point of Shanghai's (revolutionary) history. In that context, the Small Sword Society, a

134 Incidentally, this variant with inscribed rocks is used in various 'patriotic' sites.

135 This belief was already stated in the ancient Chinese classics: poetry expresses the intention: *shi yan zhi* 诗言志.

136 Zou Rong died while imprisoned together with Zhang Binglin because of the so-called Su Bao case in a prison in the International Settlements.

secret society which tried to help the Taiping Rebels (during their attacks on Shanghai) from within Shanghai in the 1840s, is notably also receiving praise for its historical role (72).[137] A predictable main focus is on Shanghai as key location for the Chinese labour movement,[138] but also art and literature are included in Shanghai's revolutionary history (73–76). For the post-1949 phase, apart from vague references to the Korean War (1950–1953), the reasons for 'martyrdom' are, however, not that clearly spelled out (77–78). To facilitate pupils' empathy (and bespeaking the 'patriotic education' agenda), young heroes are especially focused upon in the designed artwork (121). In front of these, the various swearing-in ceremonies are to be held (128).

Interestingly, artwork is described here directly as a means to make 'patriotic education more attractive' (78), which shows that there was an awareness that tourists might not feel particularly attracted to such a constructed 'commemorative' site. Artwork was thus applied with a broad use of materials, from bronze statues to *guohua* 国画 (national painting), to oil painting, to silk tapestry (85). Multimedia devices were integrated in technically advanced Shanghai as well, and one notes the ambition of this site to excel in Jiang Zemin's home base in the task to provide particularly effective 'patriotic education' that he had called for (80–81). Fixed relations with schools but also with factories to spread 'socialist civilisation' and 'patriotic education' to Chinese citizens at large were established to heighten the 'patriotic' impact of the site, and thus the large space designed, as at other patriotic sites, for ceremonies (91), could be also put to good use.

In fact, a particularly interesting feature of this booklet is that it details how the site tried to conform to the requests to establish an 'effective' 'patriotic education' (133–143), which provides a glimpse into the inner working of the system, especially in its connection to schooling. The responsible people for this site systematically set up fixed contracts with schools of various age groups: primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary, and they chose always one test class for each. To link up with 'morality education' classes envisioned in the curriculum, it was decided together with the teachers on which 'martyrs' best to focus (133). (For this, the biographies-hagiographies of this booklet served.) Interestingly starting top-down (while children would obviously grow from primary to senior secondary

137 One may note that secret societies are a delicated topic in revolutionary history: in terms of their ideology, they represent 'feudal' elements, but when they helped the 'just side' in history, they are to be praised. As is well known, Sun Yat-sen and also Mao liked to use these organisations. Needless to say, secret societies are no longer supposed to exist in the PRC.

138 The historiography of the labour movement has been monopolised by the CCP. However, one should stress that historically, the anarchists as well as the GMD were important actors even before the CCP. Cf. Müller (2023).

and thus potentially be exposed repeatedly to such a programme),[139] the senior secondary students were to focus on the five League of Leftist Writers cases as the most demanding topic, also connecting it with readings in literature. At the down end of the educational trajectory would be stories of young 'martyrs' for primary school pupils (134). Younger pupils' emotive linkage with the site should be further enhanced by hands-on activities like making wreaths and offering them, while the senior secondary students would go on and visit the site of the League of Leftist Writers to connect the cemetery with the place of former action of the 'martyrs', thus creating a 'revolutionary itinerary' in Shanghai, to then reflect why Lu Xun would write on his lost friends thereafter and how he did so (135). Students would be also asked to summarise 'what they learnt' to test success of the measures proposed (136), and film and other media should repeat and reinforce the content. Primary school students, in turn, were to be moved by stories of young individuals that embodied the required 'morality', and the site would also send out qualified staff to schools to hold lessons there (137). This was seen as a particularly effective means to spread 'patriotic education' (138). Summer camps and other activities were to add to that, as well as concerts or various memorial days to perform on spot (139). The effectivity was supposedly proven by the fact that pupils had volunteered for some activities, as the booklet proudly claims (141). In sum, the site praises itself as a 'showcase' for 'patriotic education', and in 1997 also offered to host a meeting to exchange best practice examples in this regard, for which it received also official recognition (143). That way, Jiang Zemin's 'home-base' set the standard.

Roughly 20 years later than the above presentation of the site when it was just recently set up, the 2019 *Fengbei* description, updating the site to the Xi Jinping era (Ji / Wang 2019), somewhat tones down the strong accent on Jiang Zemin. It points out that the site had also received additional labels beyond 'patriotic education', including the rather rare one of a 'martyrs memorial construction protection unit' (*lieshi jinian jianzhuwu baohu danwei* 烈士纪念建筑物保护单位), thus putting the accent on the physical build-up.[140] The place is also indirectly relativised in calling it 'Shanghai's Yuhuatai', thus pointing to the GMD's already named major execution ground in Nanjing. The *Fengbei* narrative at least briefly addresses the issue of what happened after the 1950 excavation of the '24 martyrs' of 1931, stating that while 'old revolutionaries' are said to have asked for a memorial, which was started in 1963, the Cultural Revolution 'stopped it', and thus only in the 1980s, Deng

139 One can only speculate whether that was due to the awareness that there was no time to lose for reaching out to youths (who might have already started forming their own ideas) before they leave school to teach them to be 'patriotic'.

140 This label was introduced in the 1980s.

Xiaoping pushed it ahead again, so that in 1995, the cemetery park was finally opened, and in 1997 the exhibition hall. For the Xi Jinping-era narrative it is, however, important to point out that the commemoration should not end in gloom, but the sacrifice should be seen as a ground from which new life and hope springs. To underline the message of resistance the 'martyrs' stood for, the purported defiant poems they wrote on the prison cell walls, are referred to as 'preserved'. (Needless to say, it is also more than unlikely that the GMD guards would have tolerated anti-GMD slogans or poems on prison walls.) In short, the narrative taps into assumptions visitors might be prepared for by movies and fiction (67). The 2019 *Fengbei* narrative focuses on several cases of 'martyrs', which are also reflecting more recent evaluations of historical 'importance': first of all, the two sons of Chen Duxiu, the first CCP general secretary turned 'Trotzkyist', are profiled. Given the 'bad' image of their father (since he 'erred' later) and the 'good' image of the sons (since they chose the 'correct' path), the narrative stresses at all costs the differences between them (69–73). Chen Yannian, who was higher in the CCP hierarchy than his brother, had been notably named in the meantime in 2009 as one of the '100 heroic model personalities that made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of New China'. That way, his recent honour is also reflected in this 2019 narrative (71). Beyond the two Chen brothers, the early Communist cadre and labour activist Luo Yinong 罗亦农 (who received the same honour in 2009 as one of the '100 models') is profiled (73–78), and the major activist among the peasantry Peng Pai 彭湃 is stressed as well,[141] all executed in Longhua in between 1927 and 1929. With the Communist cadres and writers killed in 1931, i.e., the '24 martyrs', the highest-ranking in Party hierarchy, Lin Yunan 林育南, is profiled who would be even visited by Chiang Kai-shek's chief ideologue, Chen Lifu, who tried to persuade him to change sides, pointing to the inner-CCP tensions of the time that had put Lin Yunan in a difficult situation. (Lin was, like He Mengxiong, attacked by the 'leftists', to be rehabilitated as a Longhua 'martyr' of the CCP in the Party's history resolution of 1945 in Yan'an.)[142] The hero, however, did not give in and rather died. As the narrative points out, among the 24 'martyrs' were also three women, two of them together with their husbands, and the third being the writer Feng Keng (one of the five leftist writers whose woolen vest is exhibited) who is presented in detail, connecting ideology, literature, and the topic of women's liberation (84–90). In sum, the Xi Jinping-era narrative strongly accentuates the 'ideological example' set by the 'martyrs' for emulation, and presents the site overall as leading forward rather than as

141 For an English-language treatment of Peng Pai and his Hai-Lufeng Soviet in Guangdong, cf. Galbiati (1985).

142 Cf. the resolution in the 1965 edition of Mao's Works: Mao (1965), vol. 3: 188, 222.

one only looking back in commemoration. But it also distances it somewhat from its strong 'Shanghai' specificity and thus from the Jiang Zemin connection.

Case study: the Xifeng Concentration Camp site

While Longhua was a more centrally placed prison site in the major Eastern city of Shanghai, which would fall to the Japanese in 1937 early in the Second Sino–Japanese War, things were different with the subsequent 'Xifeng concentration camp' (listed in 2001 on the second 'patriotic' list), fully named **Xifeng jizhongying geming lishi jinianguan** 息烽集中营革命历史纪念馆 (Revolutionary history memorial hall of the Xifeng concentration camp) in Guizhou Province, once set up by the GMD under a different (cover) name as *Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui Xifeng xingyuan* 国民政府军事委员会息烽行辕 (Xifeng field headquarters of the National government's military committee).[143] With the now listed name of 'revolutionary history memorial', the site is all claimed for the Communist, i.e. the 'revolutionary' prisoners,[144] sidelining the others (as in Longhua or Geleshan – see below – as well).[145] This site was located by the GMD out of the way in rural Southwest China on purpose, being the largest prison ('concentration camp', as it is called today) by the GMD during the Second Sino–Japanese War,[146] by the inmates dubbed 'the university' (in contrast to the main

143 Similarly designated institutions existed also elsewhere in China during the Republican Period. They were, however, no 'concentration camps' (or prisons).

144 As mentioned above, the name 'concentration camp' evokes the German Nazi association. Although parts of the GMD viewed the Nazis favourably, the naming reflects the CCP's wish to show the GMD as 'Nazis' (and to build up an association between Communist 'martyrdom' and the Holocaust). The GMD heads of this 'prison' did not only not use this naming themselves (conceding that the official name was also different for covering the prison's location and character), but partly aimed at an ideological training to win political prisoners over. Some attempts at 'reform prison' measures can be attested, too. In CCP view, these, of course, were doomed to fail or just a figleaf. The term 'concentration camp' does, however, appear after the war in an American archival memorandum used by Wakeman in his study on Dai Li (Wakeman 2003). Interestingly, a later interview with Chen Lifu, the GMD chief ideologue, cited by Wakeman (2003: 217), rather pointed to a comparison with the (Soviet-)Russian 'lager' system than to the Nazi institutions, but framing the Chinese ones as unique, setting them into a Confucian educational context.

145 There is a highly interesting account of a Russian inmate, Constantin Rissov (1985: 168-214). (Rissov is the pseudonym of Constantin Milsky. I am grateful to Mariana Münning for pointing this out.)

146 Dikötter (2002) who has dedicated a book to China's modern prisons in English, unfortunately has almost nothing on this place (just one paragraph on p. 294). Wakeman (2003: 217) only stated that 'Dai'Li's prisons and concentration camps merit a study unto themselves'. Mühlhahn (2009:

inner-Chongqing prison as 'primary' and Geleshan outside Chongqing – see below – as 'secondary school').[147] In fact, the Xifeng camp was also connected to the prisons in and near Chongqing, the wartime capital of the GMD, moving prisoners at times between the locations. Given its out of the way placement, it also receives much less visitors today than Shanghai's Longhua site or Chongqing's Geleshan. At my visit in 2016, it was suggested on-site that the GMD did not simply incarcerate people there (including GMD military or intelligence staff who had to serve terms for disciplinary reasons), but tried (namely with the political prisoners) to bring them around with 'ideological education' (like the CCP, incidentally, would do on their side, too), even attempting at some 'reform prison' measures. Nonetheless, the torture parts also show what was in stock if people did not comply. The area had two separated parts, one for the inmates, and one for the prison staff (who also lived there). The whole site was only opened for the public in 1997, integrating in 1998 the separate near-by location where General Yang Hucheng 杨虎城 (who had staged the 'Xi'an Incident' together with Zhang Xueliang in 1936 to temporarily kidnap Chiang Kai-Shek) had been held captive. While many of the key Communist figures incarcerated there would later be transferred to Geleshan (especially when Xifeng was closed after the Second Sino–Japanese War), the Xifeng site provides a closer look into the GMD's penal system and changing attitudes versus the political prisoners in particular. Though not directly addressed at the site, much of the material (and framing) came from the second more 'reform-minded' GMD prison director Zhou Yanghao 周养浩 who was later captured by the Communists and would write 'repentantly' about his own role, while on the other hand duly proving the 'heroism' of the Communist inmates from his side. His 'reform' measures, when directing the camp, included having the prisoners work instead of only languishing in dark cells as his dreaded predecessor is said to have preferred.[148] Prisoners were also differentiated by him into groups of those suspected to be Communists (who only worked) and those who were not (who were privileged), though later on it was revealed that also some CCP members succeeded in posing as non-Communists to gain access to better information and manoeuvring space. Indirectly, thus, the fears of the GMD of Communist infiltration and subversive activities were proven to have not been unfounded. Since

135–145), though, has some pages on this 'prison camp', based mostly on reminiscences published in the PRC.

147 Cf. Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 221).

148 For a foreign inmate's perspective, see the recollections of Rissov (1985: 167–214). The place was feared for its humid climate, with many prisoners falling ill.

most of the better-known Communists did not die in Xifeng (but later in Geleshan), the main locally stressed 'martyr' is Zhang Luping 张露萍, a young Communist woman who had managed to get into the inner communication system of the GMD's secret service until she was exposed. Dai Li, Chiang Kai-shek's 'spymaster' who headed the secret service and thus was also the ultimate head of the whole camp (and whose calligraphy is displayed at the lake in the recreational part of the staff quarters), had her finally executed near the camp.[149] Her tomb is now used as a site for local school outings (see below).[150]

In filmic representation, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 18), produced by Guizhou TV, introduces this place to the national TV audience as one that looks like a park at first glance, but was the largest secret prison of the GMD in the whole Second Sino–Japanese War. Elderly people are shown visiting, and a heroic sculpture in the courtyard is focused upon. All in all, the narrator tells the viewer, this prison existed 1938–1946. The goal and torture rooms are presented where bones and hand cuffs are said to have been found later. Individual noted inmates (mostly Communists) are introduced briefly with photos from the exhibition: Luo Shiwen 罗世文 and Che Yaoxian 车耀先 (cf. Geleshan below), Zhang Luping (the named female 'martyr'), Xu Xiaoxuan 许晓轩 and Han Zidong 韩子栋 (cf. Geleshan below), Ma Yinchu 马寅初 (the scholar and later president of Peking University), and general Huang Xiansheng 黄显声 (an undercover CCP man). (Many of those, in fact, would be transferred later to Geleshan, i.e., did not die at Xifeng, and some of them would survive into PRC times). Nearby, the place where general Yang Hucheng was imprisoned, is shown as well. (He, too, would be moved to Geleshan later and killed there – see below.) The prison was so crowded, it is argued, that it was hard to turn around in sleep. Zhou Yanghao, the second prison director, supposedly put an accent on mental reform, following suggestions from Chiang Kai-shek and Dai Li, to broaden the 'take' on the prisoners. The tobacco rolling work space, where female 'martyr' Zhang Luping worked, demonstrates how they were also put to work. But the heroes resisted, as is underlined by the added modern sculpture of fists. The Communists even managed to put up a secret cell in the prison by using the prison library (one of the reform prison methods), putting slips into books to be lent as a form of communication. Present-day pupils visiting are shown, who receive 'patriotic education' with an accent on 'little radish', a child imprisoned with his mother (and father) and thus

149 For a brief description of Zhang Luping's case by a non-Communist foreign prisoner in Xifeng, see Rissov (1985: p. 205–206).

150 As we will see with Geleshan below, there are also claims that her remains were later moved there.

not growing up normally (cf. Geleshan below). The guide explains to the visiting pupils that even though he was smaller than them, he already 'worked for the Party' by delivering messages, thus driving home the message that also children can already contribute their share. At the end, the film clip's narrative turns back to Zhang Luping, who was executed with others in July 1945, and whose tomb underlines the sacrifice inscribed in this place as well.

This site on the second list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (2001) has received its authoritative narrative treatment in the four-volume collection on second list sites (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002: 1314–1319), published shortly after the nomination. Here, the 'concentriation camp' is characterised as the final point of the GMD's 'prison trajectory' (during the Second Sino–Japanese War) after Nanjing and Wuhan over Yiyang (Hunan) to Guizhou, claiming that around half of its prisoners were killed over time. It is introduced to the reader as the site where several of the scenes of the famous novel 'Red Crag' (*Hongyan* 红岩) (1961) or the film 'Living forever in burning flames' (*Liehuo zhong yong sheng* 烈火中永生) (1965) (which mainly play at Geleshan though – see below) are set, thus connecting Xifeng with the more widely-known Geleshan. Underlining the GMD's attempt to pose as 'morality education', the single buildings in the Xifeng camp had been named after (Confucian) 'virtues' (1315). Although the place was very remote, it was encircled with electric wire to prevent escapes. The key 'martyr' profiled in this 2002 official reading is Xu Xiaoxuan, known to the public from the novel 'Red Crag' (where he bears an altered name) (although he did not die in Xifeng) (1316). He had been politically active in Chongqing, and would finally be transferred back from Xifeng to Chongqing's Geleshan, where he died during the Geleshan massacre in 1949 (see below). The other figure profiled is the boy 'little radish' after the film *Liehuo zhong yong sheng*. The child is described as already 'helping' his mother early on, leaving his food to her etc. (1318). In spite of being small, the little boy is said to have already understood 'whom to hate and whom to love', and when going to be killed at Geleshan, he would dramatically shout to the world that he was 'innocent'. The boy would be declared a 'martyr' later in the PRC (1319). This all shows that the official description basically thrusts Xifeng into a secondary role vis-à-vis Geleshan, likely because there were less 'martyrs' there, and the remaining prisoners were transferred in the end to Geleshan when Xifeng was closed in 1946. The site, though being the higher-ranking one in the GMD penal system, thus appears as a minor one compared to Geleshan in an ideological perspective. This framing also holds true for the more recent narrative in the *Fengbei* series (Xu / Huang 2019: 135–140) of Xi Jinping times, which follows the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip's

presentation rather closely, highlighting Zhang Luping as the major heroine and 'martyr'. But overall, the site has apparently lost in standing in the 'new era'.

Case study: the Geleshan prison sites

This is clearly different with the last case addressed here, exemplifying the 'prison' subcategory of commemorative places among the 'patriotic education showcase bases': the **Chongqing Geleshan (geming) lieshi lingyuan** 重庆歌乐山(革命)烈士陵园 (Chongqing Geleshan (revolutionary) martyrs' cemetery)[151] (Chongqing) (list 1, 1997). This site combines, once more, two aspects: the prisons, and the commemorative '(revolutionary) martyrs' cemetery'. Like in Shanghai's Longhua site, the whole place is thus subsumed under the category of 'martyrs' cemetery', which sounds more solemn and rather 'red' than 'dark' in the sense of 'dark tourism'. The site is an ensemble, together with an added memorial museum, to exhort the 'Red Crag spirit' purportedly embodied in the sacrifice of the 'martyrs'. The naming 'Red Crag' (*hongyan* 红岩) draws mainly on the famous novel published in 1961 written by two surviving prisoners,[152] one of them a CCP member (who escaped the GMD, but would not survive the harassment of the early Cultural Revolution in Communist China).[153] The novel is mainly set in the two GMD prisons in a mountainous area near Chongqing city, named Geleshan 歌乐山 (lit.: mountains of singing and pleasure, sometimes rendered as 'Happy Valley'):[154] Baigongguan 白公馆 (Mr. Bai's mansion), the former villa of a Sichuan warlord; and Zhazidong 渣滓洞 (dross pit), a former mine. 'Red Crag' (*hongyan* 红岩) is, in fact, the name of a village close to Chongqing city en route to Geleshan where the official Chongqing headquarters of the Communist Eighth Route Army (and the clandestine 'Southern

151 The listing in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' has no 'revolutionary' in, likely based on the inscription of Deng Xiaoping which does not feature 'revolutionary'. The name used by the filmic renderings and many other 'patriotic' materials has, however, 'revolutionary' in, which was since 1985 the official name of the site.

152 The novel has become extremely popular and was also translated into English in China (interestingly not using Pinyin but Wade-Giles transcription): Lo Kuang-Pin and Yang Yi-Yen: *Red Crag*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press 1978.

153 Luo Guangbin 罗广斌, the Communist author, was from a wealthy family, and his brother was a high GMD general. In 1967 he was attacked by Red Guards and died. (Li Hua in Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan 2012: 138).

154 'Happy Valley' references death. Cf. the cemetery area naming in Hong Kong, which followed the practice in Victorian Britain. (Cf. Müller 2022: 12–13, note 52). Wakeman (2003: 301), e.g., uses the term for rendering Geleshan.

Bureau' of the CCP with its telegraph so important for communication) was located to take shelter in wartime from the repeated Japanese bombings of central Chongqing. Thus, the more depressing Geleshan hill-side sites somewhat further into the mountains were subsumed under the more 'positive' and 'red' image of Hongyan in retrospect – again underlining that the suffering at this site is not just 'dark', but rather 'red' – which is to spur resolve for creating a brighter future. Hongyan village itself, furthermore, is listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in its own right (equally on the first list of 1997). Thus, the two 'showcase bases' reinforce each other in a rare case of double listing in one area which also underlines the particular value the 'patriotic education' attaches to it. And in present-day 'Red Crag tours', both places can be jointly visited touristically as part of a 'red travel tour', at times also covering the inner-city Communist sites like Zhou Enlai's former residence or the office of the Communist newspaper *Xinhua ribao* 新华日报 (New China Daily) which was tolerated by the GMD until 1947 when all official CCP representatives were forced to leave Chongqing for Yan'an in the context of the escalating Civil War.[155]

After translocating to Chongqing as the new wartime capital (in 1938), the GMD used the two prisons at Geleshan (and some further buildings close by) mainly for the detention of political prisoners, including (but not limited to) CCP suspects. They thus formed part of a series of prisons and 'concentration camps' of the GMD either newly set up or enlarged after the fall of the former capital Nanjing (in late 1937 – cf. the Nanjing Massacre above), where formerly several political prisoners had been held. This series of prisons included the already discussed highest-level Xifeng 息烽 'concentration camp' in Guizhou (see above) where prisoners were often incarcerated alternately with Chongqing. Since the novel 'Red Crag' has been read by almost all Chinese of a certain age, and the film that was made soon after in 1965, *Liehuo zhong yong sheng* (see above), as well as the opera 'Sister Jiang' (*Jiang Jie* 江姐) (1964) on the most well-known woman 'martyr' has been watched by many people, too, the fictive and the real often overlap in the Chinese visitors' perception. The last-named opera 'Sister Jiang' has been turned more recently into a film, too, by well-known director Zhang Yuan 张元 in 2003. This and the fact, that there has been yet another film made on the 'martyrs' in 2010, show that the topic is not only of relevance to the older generation reading and watching the output during the 1960s, but is still kept alive. Furthermore, the subject was treated also in many comic books before and after the Cultural Revolution.[156] This medial pre-exposition

155 Ren (2012) provides a handy overview of all the relevant 'red crag' sites in and around Chongqing.
156 Cf. Seifert (2008: chapter 3.5, esp. 160–161).

also led the Chinese public to the impression that the dominating element in the prisons were the Communist 'martyrs',[157] though the prisons held also many other suspects, going into the hundreds.[158] It should be clearly noted that Baigongguan was turned temporarily into a facility for the Sino–American Special Technical Co-operative Organisation (SACO), a cooperative intelligence agency, between 1943 and 1945, which trained GMD-Chinese spies to work against the Japanese in the context of WW II. However, during that time, the prisoners were moved over to the newly established Zhazidong prison, while Baigongguan was used again as a prison only some time *after* SACO had left the place.[159] Thus, contrary to the *wrong* insinuation of the novel 'Red Crag' written at a high time of PRC-Chinese anti-Americanism (and taken over in most materials on 'patriotic education'), SACO had no relation to the prisons as such, but only to the Baigongguan location via its temporary use of it,[160] and therefore was not connected to the persecution or torture of Communists,[161] as the widespread storyline leads to believe.[162] In 1947, after the Americans had left, Baigongguan was reverted to its use as a prison, and since

157 After first designating 236 'martyrs', files were reviewed for further cases, and in the end 64 'martyrs' were added by the CCP. In some cases, recognition was granted fairly late, i.e., only after the Cultural Revolution, when many biographies were 'scanned' anew to rehabilitate those 'wronged' earlier. See, e.g., the case of Xifeng's woman 'martyr' Zhang Luping (who had also been incarcerated in Geleshan for some time) and the Communist spy group she directed in the very centre of communication by their enemy, the GMD telegraph office of the Investigation and Statistics Bureau responsible for security issues and espionage. (Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 6, 12); and Li Hua (2011: 38).

158 After 1945, a famous political prisoner was Zhou Fohai 周佛海, imprisoned with some others for collaboration with the Japanese (Li Hua 1996: 2; Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan 2012: 222–223). He had been once a Communist, then went over to the GMD, then to the collaborationist government of Wang Jingwei and finally turned again over to Chiang Kai-shek who is said to have tried to spare him therefore after the war. He died from illness in prison.

159 Thus, the assertion by Dikötter (2002: 294, 348–349) about 'infamous camps' under SACO auspices is mistaken, picking up on the propagandistic blurring of the two.

160 Since the name 'SACO concentration camp' has been deliberately used during the 1950s, it seems the authors of the novel decided to stick to this 'politically correct' image of the time. Tellingly, the first exhibition hall installed was designed to show the 'collaborative US–Chiang (Kai-shek) crimes'. (Wang / Zhou / Xing 1998: 468).

161 Whether that meant the Americans did not suspect that their GMD intelligence 'partners' practiced it, is another question. The cooperation with the likes of Dai Li was also controversial among the Americans. Cf. also Wakeman (2003: 303–304).

162 This is also admitted by Li Hua, the long-term director of the Museum, at least since the late 1990s – see also below. More recently, see Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 209 and 219). The explanations on spot, however, remain vague, probably to not confuse visitors who have grown up with the established version of active US involvement.

Zhazidong prison was set afire by the retreating GMD in late 1949 (to be rebuilt only in the 1960s), leading to many victims among the prisoners not yet massacred, Baigongguan was used as a prison also further on after 1949 by the PRC. At that time, those that formerly had run it were then confined there,[163] together with other GMD 'POWs' and 'war criminals', in total over 700 people, as well as the CCP 'traitors' who had not stood the test as the 'martyrs' had done and had disclosed information on their comrades and the underground CCP networks leading to further persecution and destruction on the Communist side. The 'traitors' would usually be executed by the CCP as a disciplinary act of 'justice' – though transforming some death penalties into prison terms in the case of those who cooperated (once more) with the Communists and helped pin down former GMD spies for them.[164] Tellingly, it is suggested in a very traditional way of Chinese historiographical writing that 'traitors' were typically also morally deficient in general, exemplified by their being described as mentally fixed on sex,[165] which is meant to help explain their lacking resolve for 'the cause'. The GMD agents, in turn, were treated according to the gravity of their responsibility and their 'cooperativeness', though always with an eye to their potential use for future PRC–Taiwan relations and as a showcase that the PRC dealt with enemies rather by 're-education', in contrast to the GMD's bloody methods.[166]

The books and materials abundantly produced by the 'Red Crag revolutionary history museum' and its long-term director Li Hua 厉华,[167] who even was granted a

163 See Ren (2012: 53); Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 225).

164 See Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 141–172) for an interesting sketch of several cases and a categorisation of traitors' types; for an example of a transformed verdict, see ibid: p. 170.

165 Cf. Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 159).

166 For the case of the main persecutor – again presented as personally ruthless, also vis-à-vis his first wife – who testified to the heroism of the 'martyrs' in his 'confessions' and died only much later in custody during the Cultural Revolution, see Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 173–196).

167 Published materials collected at the site in 2014 include Li H. (1996), Li H. (2011), Ren (2012), Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012). Although Li Hua has been close to Xi Jinping's major rival Bo Xilai 薄熙来 and thus was affected by the spectacular process against Bo Xilai at the start of the Xi Jinping era, one should point out that his works were still dominating in the early Xi Jinping era at least. By Western sources, it has been even claimed that the questioning of the (wrong) insinuation of the US implication in the persecution of Communists via SACO was not 'publishable' and suppressed, based on a report of Xujun Eberlein (2011), an American-Chinese journalist's assertion. This was also taken over by others (e.g., Denton 2014: 83). As mentioned above, Li Hua himself, however, did so in

ten lectures series in TV in the widely received forum *Baijia jiangtan* 百家讲坛 ('lecture room') to expound on 'the power of belief' to be learned from the Geleshan 'martyrs',[168] cemented the perception of the centrality of the Communist 'martyrs' at the site, always focusing on the 'key' heroes to learn from who included Communists of different walks of life,[169] and some famous 'patriotic' figures, i.e. those sympathising with the CCP and outspoken against the GMD. These were, above all, general Ye Ting 叶挺 who had been a CCP member, was purged after the failed Guangzhou Uprising in 1927, but finally applied to be reaccepted into the Party and was praised for his role in the so-called Wannan incident of 1941 as leader of the New Fourth Army considered by the GMD as Communist insubordinate troops and attacked in the incident – the de facto end of the Second United Front: he died after his release in 1946 in a plane crash together with his wife and two of his children and some other high-ranking Communists on the way to Yan'an (see also below chapter 3.3 for Yan'an); and general Yang Hucheng who had rebelled against Chiang Kai-shek in 1936 at the 'Xi'an Incident' to pressure him into a United Front against Japan and had ties to the Communists, too: he had been incarcerated in Xifeng (see above) before and was secretly killed in Geleshan custody with a son and a daughter, while his wife had already died there earlier.[170]

The whole site and the museum, as I observed in 2014, are clearly designed as educational, teaching loyalty to the Party and the nation at any cost and in face of every kind of persecution, torture etc. as the highest value.[171] Since most Communist 'martyrs' died just a few days before Chongqing was 'liberated' and at a time when in Beijing the PRC was already established, the tragic deaths and the cruelty of the GMD in their last retreat is particularly impressive. Furthermore, by including also emotional stories of women and even small children among the 'martyrs', the expressed aim is to reach out to wider audiences, not the least to school children to motivate them to be loyal to the Party, too. As Li Hua, the director of the

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low-key fashion in his published works (likely basing himself on research of others), though it would not necessarily be taken in by the public accustomed to the established (wrong) narrative, and not accentuated on spot either.

168 Li H. (2011). This book is based on the widely received TV lecture series 'Baijia jiangtan' in CCTV (China Central Television) channel 10.

169 E.g., it was stressed that some 'martyrs' were of wealthy families who however refused to use bribery or their families' influence to free themselves if that required an ideological bow to the GMD.

170 See Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 46-50). Li H. (1996) includes also brief sketches of some further non-Communists sympathetic to the Party. See also Ren (2012: 72) for some further names.

171 As might be expected, torture methods are described in some detail and tools shown to visibly underline the heroism of the 'martyrs', simultaneously also serving, though, as a 'dark tourism' element.

museum, claimed, one of the surviving CCP prisoners (Han Zidong, who had been also incarcerated in Xifeng – see above – and managed to escape during an outing) urged him to focus on the smallest 'martyr',[172] 'little radish', the (youngest) son of a Communist couple that had helped to push Yang Hucheng into staging the Xi'an Incident (first imprisoned together with his parents in Xifeng as well – see above – and then transferred to Geleshan). Growing up in prison with physical deformation due to malnutrition (i.e., with a big head, but a tiny body, hence his nickname) until his violent death at the age of eight, this story is even more emotive than any torture-*vs*-heroism story of the grown-ups, and instantly appeals not only to any group of children. On spot, a cute statue of 'little radish' (see fig. 3.2.2), sitting lonely on a stone in an angle of the prison courtyard, wearing (anachronistically) a red scarf of the Young Pioneers, is to strengthen the emotive bond especially with visiting Chinese children.

Fig. 3.2.2 Outdoor statue of 'little radish' sitting idly in a prison courtyard with a 'young pioneer' red scarf around his neck (Geleshan) (photograph by the author, 2014)

172 Li H. (2011: 164–166) states that Han Zidong had several statues of the boy erected in different parts of China in his later years.

Very much in the vein of traditional morality tales, the presentations of individual 'martyrs' throw into relief the values they respectively embody, adding poems or letters they allegedly wrote, or things they allegedly said. The historicity of the 'materials' which are either presented as archival by the museum (at times visually authenticated by an archival tag) or draw upon memoirs, is hard to evaluate. One reason to be sceptical is the very obviously faked drawings ascribed to the small boy 'little radish' who is presented movingly as not knowing anything about the outside world, lacking in paper and pencils, but allegedly making the exhibited drawings which use perspective, shadings etc. that even a normal boy of his age could not have possibly drawn on subjects the boy furthermore should not have known, if the rest of the description is valid.[173] In how far audiences draw conclusions from such glaring inconsistencies is of course open to question, though one might assume that at least those with own children will doublethink. In some cases, it is admitted that poems etc. of the 'martyrs' were not original, but were written later.[174] They, however, are said to 'reflect' the personality 'faithfully' and should make up for material not preserved. This is important insofar as the assigning of the status of 'martyr' – which also implies certain benefits for the families – requires some 'material'.[175] And visitors, of course, expect to see something tangible beyond written explanations. Thus, e.g., the flag of the PRC imagined by the only partially informed prisoners which had been allegedly clandestinely made in the prison and which had rotten in the meantime, was simply duplicated according to the memories of the authors of the 'Red Crag' novel, 'admitting' also that the assignment in the novel of its fabrication to 'Sister Jiang' was not real.[176]

Since the label 'martyr' presupposes an almost perfect lifestyle, problematic aspects are either skipped or explained away. A telling case in point is the most famous woman 'martyr' 'Sister Jiang'. The fact that she married and bore a child to another Communist 'martyr' who however already had a family, is either not

173 Examples of 'his' drawings are also given in Li H. (2011: 125–127).

174 See, e.g., the case of Chen Ran 陈然, whose 'confessions' were written by the main author of the novel 'Red Crag' who had shared a cell with him and argued he knew about Chen's plan to write something of this kind. Therefore, he thought it legitimate to write it under Chen's name. (Li H. 2011: 42–43).

175 From the various descriptions one can infer some details of the process of assessing biographies for possible 'martyrdom' which is then connected to various favourable treatments of the 'martyr's' descendants or relatives. Original material or several witnesses need to 'prove' the facts *and* the impeccable motivation.

176 Luo Guangbin later stated he had fabricated the flag himself. As the prisoners only knew it was red with five yellow stars on it, they allegedly decided to place the stars in the centre. See Li H. (2011: 14–16).

mentioned, or explained as necessitated by the circumstances of under-cover existence and under guidance of the Party, pointing out that the first wife faithfully accepted the decision and even volunteered to care also for the latter child.[177] 'Sister Jiang', in turn, is described as reluctant but driven by sincere feelings and revolutionary zeal without any selfishness, though making clear by the decision to have herself rendered infertile after giving birth and by leaving her child with various people to be free for revolutionary actions, especially after the death of the husband in a failed armed uprising in Eastern Sichuan, that children were somehow considered an interference with 'the cause'. The 'Red Crag Soul', which is drawn from all these 'martyrs'' stories, is deemed of national educational relevance and thus was propagated around the country with exhibitions to reach out also to people not able to visit the site themselves. At the site, apart from the prison buildings and the graves, monumentality is also achieved by a large series of sculptures heroising the 'martyrs'.

Comparing the above, based on on-site observations of 2014 and the site's locally available publications, with the filmic treatment in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 8) (Chongqing Geleshan geming lieshi lingyuan), done shortly after the site's listing (1997) by Chongqing's Radio and TV Station and broadcasted nationwide, one notes how the site is didactically introduced as a 'patriotic education showcase' by leading from the joyful insinuation provided by its name Geleshan, showing running school children obviously enjoying the ups and downs of the hill paths, to the serious, showing the children solemnly laying down flowers at the group statue of the key 'martyrs'. At Qingming (Tomb Sweeping Day), the narrative asserts, many adults also come, and a great official ceremony with large wreaths is held at the day of the 1949 massacre, 27 November. Young people in army uniform arrive, too, throwing white paper flowers, followed by a large ceremony with younger children, supposedly underlining the site's relevance for all groups of Chinese citizens. In the memorial hall, photos of victims of the 27 November massacre in their coffins are to document that over 200 revolutionaries were killed that day in 1949, while the red self-made flag with five stars is to prove their ideological alignment. Dramatic music accompanies the narrative which tells about the two locations of killings: the prisons Zhazidong and Baigongguan (shown as small-scale models). In 1943 (when Baigongguan was in fact handed over to

177 Compare, e.g., the two chapters on Jiang Zhujun 江竹筠 ('Sister Jiang') by two representatives of the Hongyan revolutionary museum: Li H. (2011: 97–115) who does not mention anything in this regard in the widely received 'Baijia jiangtan' lecture; and Liu Heping 刘和平 in Chongqing Hongyan lianxian wenhua fazhan guanli zhongxin / Chongqing Hongyan geming lishi bowuguan (2012: 76-96) who explains Jiang's and her husband's behaviour in the named way.

SACO), Zhazidong was established as a prison for revolutionaries, with many torture tools shown. 'Sister Jiang' is introduced by showing her on a photo with her husband and baby when still living a 'normal' life. When she was captured and tortured, she is said to have been steadfast, writing a testament calling for her child to continue to fight in the future. Baigongguan, as is claimed here, was a prison 'since 1939' (skipping the intermezzo use by SACO 1943–1945 before reverting to serve as a prison in 1947). An underground torture cave and photos of three revolutionaries who were imprisoned there are to substantiate the narrative. They, too, would write defying statements. Sculptures with texts outdoor in the park, and sketches of scenes (from the novel) are to help visualise what purportedly happened. In prison, the revolutionaries would, however, not only suffer, but also 'study' together, creating pencil and ink to be able to write. One revolutionary is even said to have studied Russian (evidently as a marker of ideological alignment) by himself in the prison, achieving 'university level'! Others wrote poetry (of which manuscripts are shown), and supposedly last texts written the night before death are cited. Again, the self-made red flag is focused upon which was supposedly hidden beneath the floor. Acoustic recreation of the scene when the GMD set the prison afire, with Communist slogans shouted amid the shooting of the guards, are to provide a vivid impression of the events on 27 November 1949. A survivor tells of the shooting, how guards gunned down inmates also in the cells, and then blocked all and put fire to the prison. Photos of dead people and of burnt walls show dramatically what happened just three days before Chongqing was 'liberated'. A list of the 'martyrs' leads over to the topic of reverence, showing old and young Chinese citizens visit the site together, by this transmitting the narrative from one generation to the next (in the sense of an education in 'revolutionary tradition', passing on the torch, as the usual trope goes). As one may note, nothing is said here explicitely about any US involvement, and even 'little radish' does not appear in this TV film clip version.

This is different in the educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection (disc 2) (12min.) for classroom use, which had skipped most of the sites of suffering we have discussed in this chapter so far, but deals with this most famous Geleshan case. Like the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, it begins with the mountain setting, too, but introduces it on a more mystical note. (Here, the site is called Geleshan lieshi lingyuan without 'revolutionary', i.e., without *geming*, in fact like Deng Xiaoping had written the site's name). The main narrative, however, starts tellingly with a plaque calling the site the 'SACO concentration camp' (Zhong–Mei hezuosuo jizhongying), and showing its 'wolf dog' room where prisoners were allegedly mistreated, by this clearly accentuating the purported involvement of the US,

though pushing the responsibility of this problematic naming to the official plaque! The narrative is, however, ambiguous, pointing out that in 1939, the US and the GMD set up an information office, which was 'thereafter' used as a prison, while the visual cues clearly lead the intended watching pupils to the assumption that the Americans were involved in torturing Chinese.

When the single prisons are introduced, photos of the 'martyrs' Luo Shiwen and Che Yaoxian (key Sichuan cadres who had been also imprisoned for some time in Xifeng – see above) personify the exemplary Communists who died there, and the cadre Chen Ran 陈然, who managed to circulate a journal in prison, articulated the heroic mindset by writing the 'confession' his captors demanded from him in a way to defy them. Apparently, even nature understood who was good and who was evil, and thus a tree planted by 'martyr' Xu Xiaoxuan (who had been imprisoned for some time in Xifeng as well – see above) still blossoms every year, the intended watching pupils learn! 'Little radish' (who did not appear in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, as noted above) appears however in this educational video. For the larger national context, and to dramatise the storyline, the famous moment on the Tiananmen rostrum, 1 October 1949, when Mao proclaimed the establishment of the new government of the PRC, is shown, while in far-away Chongqing's Geleshan the prisoners still languished, who tried to imagine how the new red flag looked like (and ended up producing it differently, though interestingly there are two versions, one closer to the standard, and one with one star in the middle and the four around!)

The educational video places a particular focus on single famous cases, above all 'Sister Jiang', first showing torture instruments to then intersperse filmic sequences of how they were supposedly applied to 'Sister Jiang' to impress the intended watching pupils. Her baby in the family photo is zoomed in, whom she hoped to continue the fight, when grown up, thus teaching the intended watching pupils to be ready to take up this legacy as well. Handwritten testaments and illustrations from the 'Red Crag' novel, as well as the purported study materials and notebooks of the Communist inmates are to suggest to the pupils that only Communism can produce such noble characters. Other figures worthy of reverence were kept in detention places also in the area beyond the two main prisons, e.g., general Ye Ting, or general Yang Hucheng (who was killed there, documented with the photo of his corpse). Liao Chengzhi 廖承志 (son of former GMD leading figure Liao Zhongkai 廖仲恺 and left-leaning painter of the Lingnan school He Xiangning 何香凝), himself an active Communist, who made cartoons about his situation, was also a prominent prisoner held at a distinct location in the Geleshan area. But the narrative climax is 27 November 1949, when only some ten prisoners escaped the inferno, while the

others were all killed. After the Communist take-over of Chongqing only days later, the 'martyrs'' corpses found were collected in coffins and properly buried.

In the final part of the educational video, the focus shifts to the due memorialisation with a notable accent on the military on the one hand, and pupils on the other (similar to the TV film clip, thus underlining the envisaged connection between both). Soldiers paying respect to the main collective tomb show the reverence this site is to solicit, and pupils present large wreaths. The martyrs' sculptures in pouring rain (for which Chongqing is well-known) underline the feeling of grief. A representative of the military gives a standard speech of not forgetting history and being ready to give one's life, and pupils light a bonfire. For the high politics of the site, Deng Xiaoping is pointed out who wrote the name of the 'Martyrs' Cemetery' (without *geming*), and bas-relief artwork is to help transmit 'patriotic education' visually. Notably, the intended watching pupils learn that in 1988, the State Council had declared the site a national protection unit, identifying the site as the 'SACO concentration camp'! (This discloses that the wrong insinuation about the US being involved in a GMD 'concentration camp' was sustained from the very top even in the late 1980s – which also helps explain why it is so hard to get rid of it.)[178] (In fact, the labelling as 'SACO concentation camp' was in broad use, with an exhibition in 1983 in Beijing dedicated to it for furthering 'patriotic education'!)[179] In the 1990s, the 'Geleshan lieshi lingyuan' was listed as a 'youth education base of Chongqing municipality' (*Chongqing-shi qingshaonian jiaoyu jidi*, with the paper document shown in the video, underlining how serious such labels are taken in educational contexts!).[180] In 1993, it was upgraded to the Sichuan province level,[181] and thus, every year, many groups of pupils visit the memorial hall. For those not able to come, travelling exhibitions around China, e.g., in Beijing, are to disseminate the

178 The site had been declared in 1988 a 'cultural relic' to be protected. At that time, it was clearly labelled 'former site of the 'SACO' concentration camp, 1943–1949, Sichuan Province, Chongqing city' ('Zhong–Mei hezuosuo' jizhongying jiuzhi, 1943–1949, Sichuan-sheng, Chongqing-shi "中美合作所"集中营旧址, 1943－1949 年, 四川省重庆市), by this implicating also the Americans in the 'concentration camp' use. The dating up to 1949 is also telling since the massacre occurred in 1949, but the Americans had already left the place after the end of WW II! ('Di san pi' 1988: item 163). Interestingly, the present official online version (of 2014) of that very list has tacitly changed this into: 'Zhong–Mei hezuosuo, 1943–1949, Sichuan-sheng Chongqing-shi jizhongying jiuzhi' "中美合作所", 1943－1949 年, 四川省重庆市集中营旧址 ('SACO', 1943–1949, former concentration camp site in Chongqing city, Sichuan Province). That way, the problem is elegantly shifted to the site *type* being a 'concentration camp', by this little digital change trying to carefully backpedal on the accusation of the Americans. ('Di san pi' 2014: item 163).

179 Cf. Liu (1983).

180 For a sample list of labels, cf. appendix 3 of chapter 1 of the present book.

181 One should recall that Chongqing was at that time still part of Sichuan province.

message nationwide. Museum director Li Hua is interviewed at the end who notably also speaks of the 'SACO concentration camp'! Thus, via this educational video produced by Chongqing's audiovisual education entity in 1997, this key 'patriotic education showcase base' is fixed in its framing for pupils all over China.

Given the pronounced emphasis on this site so well-known via its fictional representations, the 'patriotic' booklet's framing (Li / Liu / Wang 1998) of the place as such is of particular interest. The booklet, too, often uses the expression 'SACO concentration camp' ('Zhong–Mei hezuosuo' jizhongying '中美合作所'集中营) (e.g., 126 ff.), although it admits occasionally that the prison function of Baigongguan was *not* given when the SACO used the place, but that the prisoners would be moved out to Zhazidong until after the end of SACO residing there (e.g., 2). This means that the admission of facts was there already at the time when the place was advocated to the contrary by travelling exhibitions throughout the country under the 'SACO concentration camp' label! While Xujun Eberlein, a Chinese raised in Chongqing, married to an American and now living in the US, has concluded that director Li Hua only leaked the fraud to her during an interview (Eberlein 2011), he (as one of the authors of the booklet) could have pointed, e.g., to this booklet of 1998, where the acknowledgement was already included. Still, in front of the camera at the same time (cf. also his statement in the *Zhonghua hun* video) and elsewhere in the booklet, the continuing use of the 'SACO concentration camp' expression tells a clear story of wilful distortion of history and manipulation of the target audience (even taken over by some Western scholars),[182] and the booklet itself praises especially the use of the travelling exhibition (with that naming) as efficient. Visitors were predictably roused by the displayed torture scenes and came away with the desired message, in sync with the novel and the other artistic products mentioned above, like the theatre play, and the opera and film on 'Sister Jiang', to reinforce the desired (wrong) narrative. (This, in turn, matches Eberlein's impression that 'corrections' are only done in tucked-away half-sentences to not endanger the main picture.) In any case, the 'patriotic' booklet claims that it was mainly revolutionaries who were populating the prisons there, though this, too, is a one-sided story. In fact, an important source to counter these engrained ideological representations is the description in *Le dragon enchaîné* by Constantin Rissov, the alias of Constantin Milsky, who was imprisoned as a foreign suspect in various prisons of the GMD, and later of the CCP in PRC times, who also spent some time at Geleshan and Xifeng. He knew some of the CCP 'martyrs' as co-inmates and was also well aware of the later heroisation process in the PRC,

182 As mentioned, Dikötter, for one, took this over in his book on prisons in China (Dikötter 2002: 348–349).

especially after the 'Red Crag' novel was published in the early 1960s. (He himself finally managed to leave the PRC in 1966 just in time before the Cultural Revolution took full swing, and his comparison between the prison experiences he endured as a political suspect under the GMD, but then also under the CCP, while describing brutality in GMD prisons in detail, nevertheless was decidedly more negative for the CCP methods – likely one reason why his highly interesting book written in French when he safely lived in France has not been translated and is not much used.)

The 'patriotic' Geleshan site booklet, though, explains the situation with the two prisons (which are all, including the torture cells or caves, recreations due to the final destruction by the GMD) only with an accent on the 'revolutionaries' imprisoned. In 1947, all prisoners of Zhazidong were shifted to Baigongguan, and Zhazidong would receive thereafter only the new cases from 1947 on (Li / Liu / Wang 1998: 4). The 'concentration camp' of Dai Li's so-called 'military statistics bureau' (*juntongju* 军统局) (the booklet interestingly uses this GMD official expression in its first part, and 'SACO concentration camp' only later, possibly reflecting different authorship) is detailed with the different 'torture methods' (5–6). (Incidentally these were basically similar to what the Qing already applied). The revolutionaries were, of course, said to have not been impressed by them at all, but defiantly chanted the Internationale etc. Obviously, it was, however, possible for the inmates to write, and they could even pressure the director into accepting a funeral meeting for a deceased prisoner which is all praised as 'victories' won by the revolutionaries (11–15). A notable topic is the recurring stress on the red flag the prisoners are said to have produced according to their imagination when they heard of the establishment of the PRC on 1 October 1949 (15–19). Later, it was claimed it had gone lost and had to be remade 'as it was', which would be shown around the country in 1997 (with the travelling exhibition). In any case, the irony is, as mentioned, that in fact two different versions exist that are displayed: one with the big star in the middle and the four others in each angle, another closer to the official one with the four smaller stars around the bigger one in a semi-circle in the upper part. Another 'recreated' part was the poems that were said to have been composed in prison by the many literati intellectuals which often were destroyed during the final inferno. The very revolutionary sounding poems are said to have, however, somehow 'survived' or were remembered in some other way, one having been thrown away before execution, it is claimed, and found after 'liberation' (19–25).

It becomes clear that the Communist inmates analysed the single people with whom they had contact in prison, namely the wards, to find some 'weak links' to concentrate on, for getting help in communication with the comrades outside (25–

30). Here, the female prisoners were often used for building up links with some ward or medical staff. This would pay off in the end when two wards opened the doors during the final fire. To show the 'perfect' Communist character, the booklet argues that the prisoners always used their time effectively, e.g., learning Russian (and at times English),[183] in one case arguing, as mentioned, that an primary-level educated Communist had learnt Russian by himself in the prison (as in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* rendering). 'Sister Jiang', in turn, is said to have recited Mao (but notably also Liu Shaoqi's later controversial 'How to be a good Communist' – see chapter 5.3 on Liu Shaoqi) by heart (31–32).[184] Ye Ting is a military figure hailed (though not mentioning his temporary problems with the CCP). The narrative, however, stresses how the Party always cared for him, and that he was steadfast, growing hair and beard until his release as a sign of visible protest (54–61). His 'prisoner's song' (*qiu ge* 囚歌) was incidentally picked up by key Communist scholar-cum-writer Guo Moruo and thus became famous around the country (providing also the line the film 'Living forever in burning flames' took its title inspiration from) (59).

Key Geleshan 'martyrs' are, however, Luo Shiwen and Che Yaoxian, the two important figures in the Sichuan Party branch who worked for publications of the Communists and were transferred between Xifeng and Geleshan. In 1955, their corpses were identified at Geleshan with the 'help' of their meanwhile arrested executioner, and Zhou Enlai (who ran the nearby CCP base in Hongyan village as well as the inner-Chongqing Communist representation during the Second United Front years) wrote the tombstone for the two (73). Among the few survivors, Han Zidong is profiled who had charted the environment for his co-inmates as one of the prisoners the wards trusted most and who was therefore repeatedly taken outside. He finally used the opportunity to flee in 1948, i.e., well before the final massacre, but thus could also inform the Party (and would care for memorialisation later) (73–77). A further famous survivor case is Liao Chengzhi who was also named in the educational video: he was incarcerated in a detention facility on Geleshan and would be released in 1946 on pressure of Sun Yat-sen's widow Song Qingling and his own mother He Xiangning (a close ally of Song Qingling and established painter of the Lingnan school, of whom he had inherited his artistic skills to also make cartoons about the prison conditions helping define the visual remembrance of the Geleshan sites).[185] (122–125) The favourite story in this 'patriotic' booklet

183 A worker-poet is said to have applied his English to write 'long live the CCP'! (84)

184 This is interesting as such an inclusion of Liu's text could only be done after his rehabilitation by Deng Xiaoping.

185 In PRC times, Liao Chengzhi would become a key figure in 'United Front work' and in Sino-Japanese relations. He was appreciated not only for his language skills (he spoke Russian, English,

for youth is, however, 'little radish'. He is portrayed as an alround model, politically correct since his birth, declining a female ward's 'corruption' attempts with sweets – needless to say, a story supposed to be accessible to young Chinese pupils. In prison, he studied well, painted, learnt to read and write, and even learnt Russian (!), but also acted as a go-between with messages, and helped another older girl altruistically. Finally, though, he was tragically killed with his parents at the age of only 8 years (78–82). While 'little radish' is of particular emotive force, on a more ideological front, a particularly neuralgic case for Chiang Kai-shek's 'spymaster' Dai Li was the group of underground Communists that had managed to infiltrate his information centre, among them the already named Zhang Luping (in fact her alias) who was killed in Xifeng but had been also imprisoned in Geleshan before (86–90). In 1984, she was finally buried, it is claimed here, in the newly established Geleshan martyrs' cemetery (which sits uneasily with her purported tomb in Xifeng, though) (90).

Beyond the numerous individual stories, the 'patriotic' booklet places a particular focus on the artwork the Geleshan martyrs' cemetery (which was set up as such in 1985) provides. As is argued, donations were collected to suggest (as we noted at other 'patriotic' sites as well) that the whole was not only a top-down endeavour, but a wish 'from below'. Deng Xiaoping would write the name, while Deng Yingchao 邓颖超 (wife of Zhou Enlai who was already dead at the time) wrote the title for the 'collected stelae' installed also at this site. In 1987, a further donation round led to an enlargement, showing that the site was to be a focus topic (127). At that time, the exhibition pointed out the 'wolf dog room of the SACO' (as in the educational *Zhonghua hun* video) and a special exhibition on SACO (once more accentuating the 'SACO concentration camp' allegation) (which, as mentioned, was officially reinforced in 1988 by the State Council) (128). In 1991 (i.e., after the 1989 Tiananmen protests with their positive references to the US statue of liberty), the 'Sino–American concentration camp' allegation was stressed even more, and in 1992, a panoramic multimedia hall was designed to reenliven dramatically the massacre scene of 1949 (129) .

In terms of 'patriotic education' measures, the Geleshan site tried to address the Chinese citizens with repeated references to the well-known 'Red Crag' novel, the film (*Liehuo zhong yong sheng*), and the opera 'Sister Jiang' to reach the public and especially youth more effectively (130). At the massacre's anniversary in November, students would be led there, swearing-in ceremonies would be held, but also the (reintroduced) coming-of-age ceremonies to reach all kinds of Chinese

and Japanese), but also for his cartoons. For the relationship between Song Qingling and the Liao family, cf. Müller (2022: 247–248, 253).

citizens. Literary-artistic activities would be added as well. The staged torture scenes (a typical 'dark tourism' feature) were seen as effective to make people 'understand' how far they have come from those days to now live a happy life. Purported reactions of students are cited that suggest that there was a need to make things 'more attractive' to reach their classmates. The Geleshan site thus sent out travelling exhibitions, e.g., to other 'patriotic education' sites in major urban centres, like Shanghai, Beijing, or Tianjin. Films were made, and essay competitions or recitations of the martyrs' purported poetry were organised to reach the young also emotionally with such expressions of ardent love for the Party in such dire circumstances, exemplifying the dedication to 'the cause' expressed in purported 'last wills' (133). Speech contests or travels with revolutionary content were other measures to encourage students to take in the message, as well as concerts. For creative reenactments, teachers as well as pupils could get praises. A further peculiar measure was the establishment of outright 'Red Crag classes' who would particularly focus on the topic, with the reading of connected books, writing of diaries on their readings, summer camps etc., which were a new project started in 1993 (134). Meanwhile, the already established 'Historical facts of the SACO concentration camp exhibition' (Zhong–Mei hezuosuo jizhongying shishi zhanlan) of 1988 was touring everywhere since its creation, with a claimed drawing of crowds (135–137); and when in summer 1989 (!) an exponential increase of visitors to this exhibition ensued, more travelling exhibitions were designed to meet the demand by various target groups, from workers to students to handicapped.

In sum, no one should be left out in this educational endeavour likely considered a particularly fitting anti-dote to the student-led 1989 Tiananmen movement. In 1996, the large exhibition 'The Red Crag Soul' (Hongyan hun 红岩魂) was set up, accompanied by a large media campaign, to again tour the country (139–144). That way, the topic remained a priority and staple in educational devices for the formation of 'patriotic' Chinese citizens. And it shows, similar to the Longhua case, how such key sites to celebrate Communist heroism try to excel in their 'patriotic education' efforts with best practice examples. Given their strong representation in medial forms since decades, the Geleshan sites can tap into the audience's predispositions and have in this regard a clear edge over Longhua.

In 2019, the *Fengbei* series' narrative, updating the site to the Xi Jinping era, shows that the site has not lost its appeal for being considered key for 'patriotic education'. Most striking is the fact that although the allegation of a US connection to the torture of Chinese Communist prisoners had been leaked here and there as wrong in the meantime, the wilfully distorted storyline is unabashedly returned to once again. In other words, while in the case of the Lüshun Massacre site discussed

above, the strategy had changed to at least try and deflect criticism of former distorted representations of facts, here obviously the distorted story was considered simply too good (and too much disseminated and officially endorsed) to drop. The propagandistic version had gone to extremes in this case before, given that the former name of the exhibition hall, fully opened to the public in 1963 (after the 'Red Crag' novel had been published in late 1961), was 'exhibition hall of the crimes of the US and Chiang at the SACO concentration camp' (Zhan / Zhang 2019: 2). In 1985, the renaming of the site as 'Chongqing Geleshan (Revolutionary) Martyrs' Cemetery' can be seen as a careful step to tone this down in the Deng Xiaoping era. The Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* narrative, however, to the contrary, steps up the wording, claiming that while SACO was officially set up by the Americans and the GMD purportedly for training spies against the Japanese, it was in fact a facility to 'train fascist executioners' who arrested and killed Communists and anti-Japanese activists! (3). Still, Baigongguan is acknowledged as having been used as a prison until the Americans arrived and again after they had left (i.e., here indirectly acknowledging the fact of the non-prison character during the SACO time, though this remains disconnected to the allegation of torture and killing) (4). The *Fengbei* narrative also basically remains in the received picture by profiling those Communist 'martyrs' best known to the public via the novel and other fictitious representations. Interestingly, though, the 'martyrs' are thrust by now into a more active and provocative role vis-à-vis the GMD. E.g., the Sichuan cadre Che Yaoxian is said to have challenged the GMD via publications until he was incarcerated at both Xifeng and Geleshan, however always denying he was a Communist (which is depicted as obeying to Party rules to shield 'the organisation'),[186] but internally in the prisons building up Party cells to fight also ideologically against the GMD. In Xifeng, he would use the library to this avail (where he is claimed to have smuggled in Marxist materials between the GMD ones, which purportedly featured an ensemble of Mussolini, Hitler, and the Sanminzhuyi of Sun Yat-sen!) (15–16), to be then executed by Dai Li at Geleshan, together with Luo Shiwen. These two higher-ranking CCP 'martyrs' were thus particularly memorialised later at that spot of their deaths, with a statue and the stele inscribed by Zhou Enlai (as mentioned above) (18–19). While especially Che Yaoxian represents the intellectual cadre, Xu Jianye 许建业, another figure famous via the novel (which always used slightly changed names), in turn, is representing the worker cadre (whose role was less pronounced in earlier commemoration, thus

186 Incidentally, though not addressed in the 'patriotic' materials, Che Yaoxian had been an active Protestant before he became a Communist and apparently used this also as a cover identity thereafter.

suggesting a shift in perception). Active among various types of workers in Chongqing, Xu Jianye also managed to get into the armament production workforce and could channel arms to the Communists (which steps up the military connection of the 'martyrs' and this site) (22). When one of his subordinates was captured and betrayed him, his Communist identity could not be denied, and thus in his case the purported torture scenes and his heroism are described in detail (like in film or literature) (24–25). The delicate fact that several of his fellow Communists were exposed as well over him is explained by his unfortunate trust in a ward to destroy incriminating materials which were thus found and led to the arrests (i.e., to deflect any idea that he might have betrayed comrades under torture) (25). He would then be executed, which is to prove his loyalty. Finally, the *Fengbei* narrative also profiles the most emotional figures for the public accustomed to the medial representations, on the one hand the famous woman 'martyr', 'Sister Jiang', framing her by now as mainly following in the footsteps of her 'martyred' husband (who died during a Communist military uprising). Her overall characterisation very much follows the film version (27). On the other hand, 'little radish', the 'youngest martyr in the world' who is on the one hand presented as a good (filial) son, but who also learnt on the other hand early on 'who was good and who was evil' (31). In sum, the *Fengbei* narrative, while showing some new accents, basically reverts to the older propagandistic narrative version on this site, sustaining the impression that this prison or 'concentration camp' site is still of key importance for 'patriotic education', not the least because of the broad dissemination via various media circulating in society which frame this site as one of the best-known in Chinese citizens' understanding.

Taken together, these sites of prisons and 'concentration camps' celebrate Communist resolve and heroism in spite of persecution by the enemy, historically typically represented by the GMD, serving as localised models for the following generations of Chinese citizens to be prepared to stand the test and sacrifice, if need be, steadfast in ideological commitment to 'the greater cause', for the common good of the people (or rather of the CCP). Visits, if on guided tours or as leisure tourism, are to enforce the message in these cases especially via emotions created by being on-site. The tangibility of the 'showcase base' thus is to guarantee for this affective force of the locality.[187]

187 For a more general take on emotions in tourism, cf. Picard / Robinson (2012).

Martyrs' Cemeteries

Finally, beyond the atrocity sites and those focused on prisons and 'concentration camps', a third subcategory among the commemorative places are the (revolutionary) **'martyrs' cemeteries'** (*(geming) lieshi lingyuan* (革命)烈士陵园). Some of them are dedicated to an individual, but most are collective ones. The 'standard' case of 'martyrs' cemeteries' are regional ones (cf. in appendix 2 of chapter 1 in this book with the example of Inner Mongolia and its upgrading process in the 'patriotic education bases' system), which were set up in the late 1950s, following the Soviet model. But not only provinces set up such cemeteries, at times also smaller regional entities, or they were connected to a particular group of 'martyrs', i.e., not primarily regionally defined. We will look here into two cases listed nationally in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context which are of particular interest since they are geographically rather at the fringes: Urumqi in Xinjiang, and Kunming in Yunnan, and they exemplify also two different types in that the first is an 'anti-warlord' site during the times of the Second Sino–Japanese War, built around a non-local group of executed Communists, while the latter is an event-specific 'anti-GMD' one after that war's end, built for participants of a political protest movement who were killed during the ensuing clashes with the authorities.

Case study: the Urumqi Martyrs' Cemetery

The **Wulumuqi-shi geming lieshi lingyuan** 乌鲁木齐市革命烈士陵园 (Urumqi municipal cemetery of revolutionary martyrs) (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) (list 1, 1997), placed in Xinjiang's most 'Chinese' city (formerly called Dihua 迪化),[188] which however serves as the capital of this 'Uyghur Autonomous Region', is an interesting case as it is located in an area where revolutionary 'martyrs' do not abound. In fact, this cemetery was the one and only site listed in 1997 in the first round of 'patriotic education showcase bases' to stand for Xinjiang.[189] The whole area had been under warlord domination in Republican times, and given the long

188 Urumqi, formerly Dihua, was a Han-Chinese foundation and has up to now a particularly high percentage of Han population for Xinjiang. Still, as the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, one should expect some local non-Han representation.

189 As will be recalled from chapter 1 of the present book (see especially appendix 1), the first list of 1997 covered all provinces, if with unequal numbers of sites. That way, a Han-centred site was representing the 'Uyghur Autonomous Region'!

border with the Soviet Union, the warlord agenda was to carefully manoeuvre between the Chinese GMD-government and the Soviets. Warlord Sheng Shicai 盛世才, who ruled the area de facto 1933–1944, was backed by the Soviets for most of the time, and thus several Chinese Communists, banking on this relationship, moved there or passed by *en route* between Yan'an, their headquarters since the Long March, and Moscow. Xinjiang was in a crucial position during the Second Sino–Japanese War (of which the region as such was not directly touched, being located far in the West), since the Soviets were Chiang Kai-shek's major help in the early years at a time when the US still tried to not become involved too closely in the war. Stalin's aviators,[190] airplanes, and other military equipment he sent over, mostly passed through Siberia to Xinjiang, and the Soviets also trained some Chinese aviators and technicians there, from which both Sheng Shicai and Chiang Kai-shek profited, but also the CCP who sent its people (undercover) there to receive training for a possible later Red Air Force.[191] When Soviet help diminished after the outbreak of WW II in Europe in 1939 and finally stopped when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, while US help increased and greatly intensified after Pearl Harbor, Sheng Shicai re-adjusted his alignment, and made a deal with Chiang Kai-shek whose Second United Front with the Communists was only still existing in name. At that point, Sheng Shicai first restricted the expanding Communist activities, and then imprisoned a large number of Communists in Xinjiang. After several months, he executed some high-profile Chinese Communists in 1943,[192] including Mao's brother Mao Zemin 毛泽民 and the most important CCP liaison cadre in Xinjiang, Chen Tanqiu 陈潭秋. Others were kept in prison for years and only released after the war's end when things changed again.[193] Thus, the tombs of the three most well-known 'Xinjiang martyrs', i.e., Chen Tanqiu, Mao Zemin, and Lin Jilu 林基路 (see below), executed in September 1943 together, around which the

190 Cf. Müller (2022: chapters 3 and 5) for some more information on those Soviet aviators who died and were buried in China.

191 In this sense, Xinjiang is also a starting point for building up a Communist air force (cf. Xie 1998: 5). Some of the key 10 'martyrs' are, in fact, undercover Communist students who perished on accidents while learning to fly. (The Soviet aviators as well as the Chinese Communists all used false names.) The importance of an air force had become ever more obvious, not the least since the Japanese, who had quickly destroyed much of the Chinese (GMD) air force, used their subsequent air supremacy devastatingly to bomb Chinese cities. This, in turn, had led the GMD to ask for help from the Soviets and then from the Western Allies. (Cf. also Müller 2022: chapter 5).

192 Sheng Shicai also tried thereafter to go back and forth between the sides, but in the end stayed with Chiang Kai-shek and moved with the GMD to Taiwan.

193 The background is very complicated in detail since Sheng Shicai actually manoevered between the Soviets and Chiang Kai-shek for a longer period but finally opted for Chiang and purged the CCP cadres in Xinjiang.

'Urumqi martyrs' cemetery' is built, are three Han cadres from the outside (i.e., neither locals nor Uyghurs). Still, the inscriptions to be seen on spot are provided in Chinese, Uyghur, and also Kazakh and Mongolian, to underline Xinjiang's multi-ethnic character (by this also relativising the Uyghur component in this capital of the so-called 'Uyghur Autonomous Region'). This already shows the problem of such a 'patriotic' 'martyrs' cemetery' in a region populated mainly by non-Han (even though Urumqi as a city has the largest Han-population in Xinjiang, as mentioned), and with no great 'Communist past', though later on, passed-away local cadres (with a less strict definition of 'martyrs') were also buried there.[194]

At the time of my visit in 2014, the memorial hall which is part of the cemetery, pointed out the trajectory of 10 key 'martyrs' who include further Han Chinese and one Manchu, but notably not one Uyghur. The CCP's delicate relationship with Sheng Shicai between the Soviet Union and the GMD is addressed in a way to deflect any ideas about former 'errors' by the CCP to naively set hopes on warlord Sheng Shicai. Instead, the CCP as such is presented as always having been 'correct'. However, one should note that the CCP's Xinjiang 'martyrs' in general, i.e., beyond the 10 key figures honoured at the cementery, also include cases like Yu Xiusong 俞秀松 (Sheng Shicai's own brother-in-law, i.e., husband of his sister), who is said to have been harmed by the 'negative' Party figures Wang Ming 王明 and Kang Sheng 康生, representing 'wrong' lines in CCP history.[195] Upon their instigation, Yu Xiusong was sent to the Soviet Union where he perished in Stalin's Great Terror (and thus is not buried at the Urumqi cemetery).[196] Yu Xiusong is, however, addressed in the memorial hall's exhibition as an early CCP figure in Xinjiang and thus a sort of precursor to the key 10 CCP 'martyrs' who died in Xinjiang and are honoured at the cemetery. In China, Yu Xiusong, killed by the Soviets, would be rehabilitated as a 'martyr' in 1962 (a time when Sino-Soviet tensions mounted), and even in (post-Soviet) Russia, as is claimed, his name was finally 'rehabilitated' (after a military investigation) in 1996 – although, as a Russian researcher has

194 One may note that after the establishment of the PRC and the need to provide burial spaces for cadres to be honoured by the state, the early impetus of honouring those who had suffered for bringing the CCP to power had naturally gone. 'Martyrdom' thus was now to be redefined (mostly dying on the job), and in general the places then also hosted cadres who might have died a natural death. (Cf. Müller 2022: 173–174 for the case of the Chinese 'martyrs' cemetery' in Lüshun).

195 One may recall that in the case of the Longhua prison addressed above, the issue that some Communist inmates there had been attacked by the 'wrong Wang Ming line' was largely evaded (but for the 'patriotic' booklet which mentioned this).

196 Jacobs (2016: 111) mentions Yu Xiusong as a 'Comintern agent' but insinuates he died in an Urumqi prison under Sheng Shicai. As Pantsov has found on the basis of (Soviet) documents and interviews, he had been sent with others to Moscow where he was shot on charges of 'Trotzkyism'. See Pantsov (1994, p. 78, footnote 174).

pointed out in 1994, the Soviets already had done so in 1957![197] In other words, it was de facto the Soviets under Khrushchev who had first rehabilitated him, on which the Chinese would only follow up.

A further notable case in the exhibition is Du Chongyuan 杜重远 who is today counted as one of the 10 key 'martyrs'. Different from the others, his recognition as a 'martyr' is, however, rather recent, i.e., came only after the Cultural Revolution times when Zhou Enlai's widow Deng Yingchao (responsible for the non-Party 'sympathisers') insisted on his case and asked for his remains to be searched for and buried in the cemetery (though he was apparently not found in the end and thus honoured with a substitute tomb, *yiguan zhong*).[198] Du Chongyuan had been a strong sympathiser but was no CCP member. However, he had been instrumental in bringing the generals Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng around to stage the 'Xi'an Incident' in 1936 (kidnapping Chiang Kai-shek) without which no Second United Front between the GMD and the CCP would have materialised at the time, as Deng Yingchao – someone likely well in the know, given her husband's key role on the Communist side during the event – stressed. (This, incidentally, underlines once more how important the Xi'an Incident had been for the Communists, as also the Geleshan 'martyrs' discussed above, including 'little radish's' father and Yang Hucheng himself, showed.) Du Chongyuan, too, was imprisoned by Sheng Shicai and executed, but some months earlier than the three main CCP 'martyrs' in Urumqi's cemetery.[199]

The exhibition hall at the cemetery was built at the 40th anniversary of the 1943 executions, i.e., in 1983 in the era of Deng Xiaoping, and in the meantime (in the 2000s) a new exhibition hall (*Wulumuqi geming lieshi shiji chenlieguan* 乌鲁木齐革命烈士事迹陈列馆) 'on the deeds of the martyrs' has been added which decidedly steps up the aspect of suffering of the 'martyrs' and their heroic resistance with dioramas, as I observed on-site in 2014. It thus combines the outer memorialisation by the tombs with the recreated 'prison atmosphere' in the exhibition (though the prisons were located elsewhere in the city). This exhibition also adds information on later Xinjiang 'martyrs' more generally (if buried elsewhere), e.g., those who died when Xinjiang was 'liberated' in 1949. These include at least some non-Han figures representing Xinjiang, like those invited as a delegation by Mao Zedong to Beijing who, however, died in a plane crash over Soviet territory, thus becoming 'martyrs'. Other more recent (i.e., post-1949) 'martyrs' include cases of people who

197 See Pantsov (1994), ibid.

198 For the substitute tombs containing 'clothes and cap', the reference is the 'mausoleum' of Huangdi (see above, chapter 3.1).

199 For a short biography of Du Chongyuan, see Xie (1998: 28–31).

had been in the avant-garde to 'liberate' the neighbouring region of Tibet, or to fight against the Indians at the Sino–Indian border, or even served further away against the Vietnamese in the Sino–Vietnamese conflict (1979), which underlines the 'frontier' association connected to Xinjiang. Notable are furthermore all those figures who are honoured for 'having sustained national security' or 'prevented secession' in Xinjiang itself, namely of the Police and the Army (which is a likely controversial commemoration from a local non-Han visitor's perspective). But also those who dedicated themselves to build roads or railroads or reclaimed the waste-land etc. are honoured (who are, again, usually Han, characterised as 'serving' the area).[200]

Overall, this cemetery leaves the impression of being somewhat out of place in Xinjiang, having not much connection to the local population. In fact, slogans put up in the cemetery call for 'love your country (i.e., China), love Xinjiang', showing the place is meant to, above all, stress national identification, and less a straight-forward place of 'commemoration'.

Contrasting these on-site impressions of 2014 with the filmic treatments, reflecting the time of the late 1990s when the site was nominated as a 'patriotic education showcase base', one notes that the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV clip (disc 9) placed the accent on the site's use for teaching loyalty to the Xinjiang population already then. Children and adults being sworn in there for loyalty to the country and Party in this 'martyrs' cemetery' frame the beginning and end.[201] The cemetery, the viewer is told, was first set up in 1956 (at the transfer of the remains of Mao Zemin, Chen Tanqiu, and Lin Jilu). The three main 'martyrs' are flanked by two others (see below). Notably, the present tombstones were all written in 1974 (i.e., during the Cultural Revolution when, in fact, several tombstones had been vandalised and thus needed repair) by the old generation cadre and then acting president of the PRC, Dong Biwu 董必武, who had been particularly close to Chen Tanqiu, once founding the CCP's Hubei branch together with him, back in 1920. In the context of the Second United Front, Chen Tanqiu had been sent to Xinjiang in 1939. Mao Zemin, in turn, who was to go to the Soviet Union for medical treatment in 1938, was stuck on the way in Xinjiang, which means he was already there before Chen Tanqiu was sent over. The main argument

200 One may recall the various incentives since the 1950s for Han to move to far away Xinjiang, often as part of the so-called *bingtuan* 兵团, i.e., the Production and Construction Corps.

201 Most children aged 6–14 are members of the (red-scarfed) Young Pioneers. Thereafter, for youths (up to 28 years) there is the Communist Youth League. Only adults may join the Party. Thus, there is a potential overlap to some degree for adult (18 years and older) Youth League members, usually university students, who might already join the CCP. Cf. Doyon (2023).

elaborated in this context is, however, that Sheng Shicai had asked the CCP in Yan'an to send people with financial expertise which Mao Zemin could provide (having run the bank in Ruijin – see below chapter 3.3). He, it is claimed, would help unify the currencies in the area. And also the third 'martyr', Lin Jilu, was sent by the CCP to Sheng Shicai where he did mostly administrative and educational work. (Each of the 'martyrs' is presented didactically in the film clip as the person behind the tombstone.) When Sheng Shicai went over to Chiang Kai-shek (who notably sent his wife Song Meiling 宋美龄 in 1942 to meet with Sheng), Chen Tanqiu realised the change underway and tried to get the Communist cadres out to Yan'an in time, but Sheng Shicai quickly imprisoned several key figures. (I.e., the viewer is assured that the CCP had cared, but the enemy was simply quicker, and Sheng likely wanted to please Chiang Kai-shek with imprisoning the Communists and executing some.) The TV audience sees the tombstones and their backside with the short biographies, written in Chinese, but also in Uyghur (here notably written in the Latin alphabet in the year 1974),[202] Kazahk (in Latin alphabet, too), and Mongolian (in Mongolian script).

The exhibition hall, in turn, opened later in 1983, would be titled in Chinese and Uyghur, the latter now in Arabic script (reflecting the new more accommodating minority policies). The TV viewer and potential tourist is briefly introduced to the exhibition, which displays also materials of 'martyrs' beyond the three major ones. But at the end, the film clip returns to the site's most important use, already shown in the beginning: the Tomb Sweeping Festival on the large square in front of the three major tombs, where crowds of children swear loyalty.

In contrast, the alternative filmic presentation, directed at pupils, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 3), introduces the site with a stronger accent on the cemetery as such. Starting with a view on the larger area, namely with the Tianshan mountains, covered with snow, the camera moves from afar towards the three main tombs. When coming closer, at each side one further tomb becomes visible (see below). Beyond the main square, there are also Muslim tombs to be spotted further to the side. A special focus is here on Baoerhan 包尔汉, i.e., Burhan Shahidi, who died in 1989, a (Russia-born) Muslim Tatar, who became a leading figure in Xinjiang (see below). In 1949, he threw in his lot with the Communists and stayed on in the PRC. Though purged during the Cultural Revolution, he held high positions before and after and helped in establishing ties between the PRC and Muslim countries. The pointing out of Burhan Shahidi suggests that in contrast to the national *Ai wo Zhonghua* series, the educational video had also local (and

202 One may note that the Soviets had conducted a latinisation project for all minority languages in the early years of the Soviet Union, which was a model also for the CCP for some time.

minority) pupils in mind. Minority children, also marked by their minority dresses, are also shown receiving instruction in the exhibition hall, which likely appeals to the intended audience of watching pupils, especially those with a minority background. As the video highlights in its broader take on the site, noted Communists like Chen Yun 陈云, Teng Daiyuan 滕代远, or Deng Fa 邓发 (who died 1946 in the same plane crash with Ye Ting and Bo Gu on their way from Chongqing to Yan'an – see also below for Yan'an) were among the early cadres responsible for Xinjiang, too, thus enlarging the story to the predecessors of the three main 'martyrs'. They all tried to 'educate' the local populace with CCP goals for being willing to contribute to the anti-Japanese resistance during the Second Sino–Japanese War (which, as mentioned, did not touch this region far in the West of China directly).

A special personal note is added in this educational video by interviews in a sort of eyewitness account which emotionalise the shown content: Chen Tanqiu's widow is interviewed, as is Mao Zemin's widow (i.e., his last wife Zhu Danhua 朱旦华). The third major 'martyr', Lin Jilu, in turn, was active in education and culture: well-known author Mao Dun 茅盾 (Shen Yanbing) and famous actor Zhao Dan 赵丹, e.g., worked with him for creating a 'new drama' (*xin xiju* 新戏剧) in Xinjiang (which presents Xinjiang to the intended watching pupils as also a place important for *Chinese* cultural developments). But Lin Jilu also had more contact with the Uyghur population, and thus an Uyghur cadre finally appears who is interviewed and tells in native tongue of how Lin contributed to the development of Kucha where Lin had served as head of administration. Lin Jilu's son is briefly interviewed as well. The switch of allegiance of Sheng Shicai, the viewer is told, landed the 'martyrs' in prison, but the handwritten interrogation record is to show that they did not recant. Most importantly, Lin Jilu left a 'prisoner's song'. (This incidentally shows that this is, in fact, a whole genre – cf. the case of Ye Ting above in Geleshan and his prisoner's song.) Lin Jilu's song is shown in melody and text in the educational video, and it is sung by his widow as a very emotional scene of the video (especially considering that the watching pupils are supposed to know it well since it is still part of recommended reading for youth – see below). The commentary of the video concludes that the three martyrs not only lost their lives, but were actively willing to sacrifice their blood in and for this 'frontier area'! (That way, needless to say, the Uyghurs are further marginalised, needing the 'civilising' Han Chinese mission.) Thus, the political top leaders would sustain their commemoration, with Deng Xiaoping writing an inscription for the three main 'martyrs' in 1983, and Jiang Zemin honouring them with his calligraphy in 1990. And therefore, the commentator emphatically states, the different ethnicities, too, should always remember what the 'martyrs' have done for Xinjiang, as the youth

and children sworn in there are to prove. This way, the video, produced by Xinjiang Educational TV in 1998, draws a clear line from the sacrifice of the Han 'martyrs' 'for' Xinjiang to the obligation for Xinjiang pupils to honour this by pledging allegiance to the Chinese nation and the Party.

These filmic representations of this 'patriotic education showcase base' of the late 1990s are supplemented by the 'patriotic' booklet which provides more in-depth background also to the setting up of the site as such. It discloses that when the cemetery was decided upon in 1955 (i.e., at the time when Xinjiang was organised in the PRC as an Uyghur Autonomous Region), and realised in 1956, only the remains of the three main 'martyrs' were transferred there (who had been executed together in 1943),[203] thus authenticating the site. The large space in front of the tombs was designed from the outset for gatherings of several thousand people 'to pay homage'! (Xie 1998: 11) Notably, the two tombs flanking the main three, are identified here as those of Qiao Guozhen 乔国贞 and Wu Maolin 吴茂林, making up today's front row of five. The two tombs had been added already in the 1950s, but they were vandalised during the Cultural Revolution. These two 'martyrs' had not been executed together with Chen Tanqiu, Mao Zemin, and Lin Jilu in September 1943, but had been imprisoned with them by Sheng Shicai and died of illness thereafter (Wu in 1944, and Qiao in 1945). During the Cultural Revolution, their status as 'martyrs' was questioned, and their (vandalised) tombs were re-erected in 1980 only (i.e., after Dong Biwu inscribed the present tombstones of the main three in 1974) (12). (In fact, the visitors who approach the tombs today via a large avenue lined with trees, see only the three main tombs in front from afar, while the two flanking ones are hidden by the trees and only become visible when moving closer – like in the educational video's camera work, which marks the two off from the main three). The other five of the '10 key martyrs' are now buried (or recorded with a substitute tomb or *yiguan zhong*) in the back row which draw less attention than the vertical front row tomb stelae. Beyond this central memorial space, the cemetery holds by now also the remains of higher cadres, military, or 'labour heroes'. In some cases, these include non-Han, the most well-known being the Tatar Burhan Shahidi (whose tomb was shown in the educational video) who cooperated with the Communists and thus became a key Xinjiang figure in PRC times (14–15) (see below). The memorial space is used as an outdoor education facility and is visited, as other 'patriotic education showcase bases' in the cemetery group, during the Tomb Sweeping Festival and at the place-specific date, here the day of the 1943 execution of the three main 'martyrs'. In spite of being a 'municipal' Urumqi cemetery, also

203 For a 1956 photo of the transfer, see Xie (1998: 11).

the region-specific day of the Autonomous Region's establishment, and other nation-wide common memorial days like the founding of the Party, of the PLA, Labour Day, National Day etc., are celebrated there by pupils as well as cadets. They are also sworn in there to join the Young Pioneers, the Communist Youth League, the Army, or the Party (15–16), similar to many other 'patriotic education showcase bases' we have discussed, which underlines one crucial function of such sites. To further entice pupils and cadets to come, the site also decided to set up free special events for them (17). Activities for pupils like the cleaning of the park or the planting of trees (an activity often connected to tombs and commemoration, as we saw earlier)[204] round out the programmes, and even coming-of-age ceremonies are held there which are notably combined with a 'patriotic' oath (to include virtually every citizen) (78–79). On the other hand, songs or poems connected to the 'martyrs' are part of pupils' education, very much like in the case of Geleshan discussed above. E.g., the 'prisoners' song' text by Lin Jilu which his widow sang in the educational video, is covered in the *Geming lieshi shichao* 革命烈士诗抄, a collection of poems by 'martyrs' first published for youths in 1959 with a preface by Communist poet (and personal friend of Mao) Xiao San 萧三 (Emi Siao), and enlarged in 1962. Notably, it has been reprinted in 2011 and is to be found on the suggested reading list of 2020 for what junior secondary pupils should read, i.e., it is part of children's education up to this day![205] Via the songs transmitting the fact that also children were incarcerated with their revolutionary parents (who would 'teach their children' therewith) (cf. 95–100), this is also to touch pupils on more emotional fronts, like 'little radish' at Xifeng and Geleshan.

During PRC times, the Urumqi cemetery received high-profile visits several times, often also facilitated by the fact that Urumqi was a common transfer station for politicians travelling abroad who changed flights there at China's most Western region (especially at times when longer stretches of flights were still a technical problem). One may also note that the father of today's Chinese general secretary Xi Jinping, Xi Zhongxun 习仲勋, had been active in Xinjiang for years and also wrote an endorsement for the cemetery (64–65). Communist general Wang Zhen 王震, who had helped secure Xinjiang militarily for the PRC in 1949 and was supported by Han settlers (but dreaded by many Uyghurs) was a further high Communist politician and general with strong links to Xinjiang who also wished to have his ashes dispersed over Xinjiang's soil after death (67), and former propaganda minister

204 Cf. the example of Huangdiling in chapter 3.1 of the present book, or at atrocity sites like the Nanjing massacre (see above).

205 See the attachment, p. 7, to the regulations of 2020: Jiaoyubu (2020), no. 35 of the junior secondary items.

Deng Liqun 邓力群 had strong links to Xinjiang, too (as one of Wang Zhen's associates and equally dreaded by the Uyghurs) (67–68). The major event in the history of the cemetery site was, however, the 1983 overhaul at the 40th anniversary of the execution of the three main 'martyrs',[206] when the memorial hall was also set up, and at the 50th anniversary in 1993, the celebrations were joined by some family members of the 'martyrs'. At that time, medial representations of former leading Communist figures also diversified with, e.g., a TV series produced to profile Chen Tanqiu, the highest-ranking among the CCP 'martyrs' at the site, nationwide.

Of the three main 'martyrs', Chen Tanqiu was, in fact, above the other two in Party hierarchy, but also a man of the first hour of the CCP, representing, as mentioned, the Hubei Province party cell together with Dong Biwu at the Party's very beginning. Therefore, Dong Biwu would also later care for Chen's remembrance and write the tomb stelae of the main 'martyrs', and the cemetery's name. A major point to argue for is to not hold Chen Tanqiu responsible for the large-scale imprisonments of Communists by Sheng Shicai. As is pointed out, he had tried (and managed) to get out several of them before the showdown and is said to have willingly stayed behind until everyone else would have withdrawn to Yan'an, only that Sheng Shicai acted more quickly than he anticipated (20–25).

Mao's brother Mao Zemin, in turn, who entered the CCP in 1922, had specialised in economic and financial affairs and cared about provisions for the Red Army. When he wanted to go to the Soviet Union through Xinjiang for medical treatment, a plague had broken out at the border, and thus he was stuck in Urumqi, but soon assigned to make himself useful by helping with finances and economics and also with hygiene measures there (25–28).

Lin Jilu, the third of the main martyrs, worked mainly in the education sector. However, when he started mobilising the masses, Sheng Shicai transferred him to out-of-the-way places in Xinjiang to serve in administration where he came, however, also into closer contact with Uyghurs (apparently the only among the site's memorialised key Han cadres doing so, thus leading to the Uyghur interview in the educational video mentioned above about the situation in Kucha). In the 1942 imprisonment campaign of Sheng Shicai, Lin Jilu was thrown into prison, too, and executed with the other two main martyrs, leaving as a legacy his famous 'prisoner's song' (see above) (31–34).

Du Chongyuan, in turn, was, as mentioned, no CCP member but, hailing from Manchuria, had agitated against Japan (which already dominated his home area) in the years before the Second Sino–Japanese War and thus had been jailed by the

206 Cf. for the content of talks at the occasion, Xie (1998: 71–74).

GMD. In prison, he came into contact with underground Communists (which incidentally shows that prisons were also used as recruiting grounds), and after his release in the mid-1930s managed to approach the generals Zhang Xueliang (from Manchuria) and Yang Hucheng to convince them of a United Front policy against Japan. His role in the run-up of the 'Xi'an Incident' of 1936 when Chiang Kai-shek was kidnapped by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng and pressured into a United Front with the CCP, has been disclosed only later (cf. above). Being a classmate of Sheng Shicai (who hailed from Manchuria, too) when studying in Japan, Du Chongyuan served in the cultural sector in Xinjiang, bringing many leftist and Communist intellectuals to Xinjiang, including famous writer Mao Dun (Shen Yanbing). Sheng Shicai, having become suspicious, imprisoned Du Chongyuan already in 1940 and executed him earlier in 1943, i.e., before the three main Urumqi 'martyrs'. Since his whereabouts could not be established, when Deng Yingchao insisted at a visit to have him added and acknowledged as a Xinjiang 'martyr', a *yiguan zhong* (substitute tomb) was added for him in 1983 at the major overhaul of the site for the 40th anniversary of the three main 'martyrs'' execution (28–31; 61–62).

The 'patriotic booklet', which details the key 10 'martyrs', addressed also the two tombs at the sides of the three main 'martyrs', that had remained elusive for the audience of the filmic presentations, and had been attacked during the Cultural Revolution: those of Qiao Guozhen and Wu Maolin, arguing for the reasons to honour them as 'martyrs'.

Qiao Guozhen is profiled as a Communist once trained at the Whampoa Military Academy. At the start of the Second Sino–Japanese War, he was active in Beijing to motivate young students to go to Yan'an. He himself went to the Soviet Union for medical treatment, and on his return, together i.a. with the widow of former CCP leader and well-known writer Qu Qiubai 瞿秋白, the road to Yan'an was blocked. They were thus stuck in Urumqi, which once more throws into profile Urumqi's geographic location as a connecting hub, but also a place for involuntary stay, depending on the situation on the transport routes. Although he was imprisoned by Sheng Shicai together with the others, he survived in prison until 1945 when he died of illness (34–37). He thus should be also counted as having died a 'martyr'.

Wu Maolin, the other 'problematic case' in terms of Cultural Revolution-era treatment, had joined the Red Army out of poverty. He was sent to do propaganda work among the disgruntled soldiers of Zhang Xueliang's Northeastern Army who had had to leave their home, Manchuria, in 1931 after the Japanese invasion. Given his low-level educational background, he had a hard time at Yan'an's educational facilities thereafter and was thus ordered to work at mechanics, namely for airplanes.

In this context, he was sent to Sheng Shicai's air mechanics school for technical training. In the round-up of Communists, he was arrested, too, and apparently died of illness in prison, his burial being staged by his comrades as a great event in Urumqi in 1944, though (37–40). (This concession by Sheng Shicai suggests that Sheng was, after all, careful with repression toward the later phase of the war to keep manoeuvering space.) Wu should therefore also be counted as a Communist 'martyr'.

The especially memorialised 'martyrs' included also the case of Qi Tianmin 祁天民 (i.e., Qi Yanpei 祁延霈) who was the only non-Han in the group of 10 key 'martyrs', being a Manchu. Qi stood also out for another reason, being an intellectual trained in geo sciences and having participated in the excavations of Shang-era Yinxu (cf. chapter 2.1)! He published academically, but in terms of politics he was oriented towards the left, becoming a Communist in the end. Like all others, he used pseudonyms to cover his identity. In Xinjiang, he was active in the educational sector, but died on the job because of the poor conditions and lack of medical facilities (40–44). This means that he was a 'martyr' only in the broader sense.

Similiarly, on the lower end of the educational scala, Chen Zhenya 陈振亚, a poor boy who joined the Northern Expedition Army where he was recruited by the Communists, was stuck in Urumqi on his way to the Soviet Union and died of illness there, also being included in the list of key 'martyrs' (though this might have also to do with the fact that he was posthumously related to Mao over his daughter marrying Mao's second son).[207] (44–47) In sum, both of these two cases reflect in their own ways the broad use of the term 'martyr' in the post-Cultural Revolution official system.

Two further cases among the key 'martyrs', however, call to attention another interesting point: the importance of the air force and Xinjiang's role therein. One of them, Peng Renfa 彭仁发, joined the Red Army and learnt mechanics in Yan'an. When the leading CCP cadre Chen Yun argued that the CCP should send students to learn flying and airplane mechanics at the school set up by Sheng Shicai which had Chinese but also Soviet teachers, Deng Fa, then the responsible cadre in Xinjiang, suggested this could be the start of a later CCP air force. Peng Renfa thus joined the programme, but perished during an accident (47–50). Similarly, the

207 In fact, given that there exists also a more 'heroic' version stating that Chen Zhenya was executed by Sheng Shicai, the booklet is implicitely also correcting this, which is also plausible since in 1941 Sheng Shicai had not yet switched sides. The reason why Chen Zhenya is likely included in the 10 key 'martyrs' is over his wife Zhang Wenqiu 张文秋. She had been married before to another Communist with whom she had a daughter who would marry Mao Zedong's eldest son Mao Anying, while her daughter with Chen Zhenya would marry Mao's second son Mao Anqing! That way, Chen Zhenya became posthumously related to Mao. (Nothing of this is mentioned in the booklet, though.)

second one, Wang Dexiang 汪德祥, who also came to the Red Army during the early 1930s and had participated in the Long March, would enter the flying school, too, where he perished during an accident as well (50–53). These brief characterisations show to the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet that 'martyrs' not necessarily equalled people being executed, or dying in prison, but often also meant more simply dying on the job, by illness (like Qi Tianmin and Chen Zhenya), or accident (like Peng Renfa and Wang Dexiang).

Apart from these 10 key 'martyrs', who were all non-locals, at least one outstanding 'Uyghur' (who in fact was none, as mentioned, though he spoke for them) is profiled in the 'patriotic education' booklet who is buried in the cemetery (if only in 1989) and was also addressed in the filmic renderings discussed above: Burhan Shahidi. Burhan Shahidi had, in fact, a very complex history, on personal, linguistic, but also political fronts: being a Muslim Tatar born in Russia, he took up Chinese citizenship in the early years of the Republic (Jacobs 2016:31). He spoke also Uyghur fluently, had served as consul in the Soviet Union for the GMD-government, but was for some time also imprisoned by Sheng Shicai where he is said to have produced a poem in Uyghur for Mao (!). He became a leading figure in Xinjiang during the Civil War years, but in 1949 went over to the Communists for good and facilitated the CCP's 'liberation' of Xinjiang, sustaining the 'non-separation' of Xinjiang from the rest of China. In PRC times he became important for China's relations with Muslim countries. During his career, he produced also scholarly articles, creative works, and translations, including notably an Uyghur version of Sun Yat-sen's *Sanmin zhuyi* 三民主义 (three principles of the people)! (53–57) It is symptomatic, that this chameleon-like figure is the closest the booklet's framing of this 'patriotic education showcase base' comes to the Uyghurs in 'their' region.

The above official narrative of the time the site was nominated in 1997, has been updated in the meantime by the *Fengbei* description (Peng / Feng: 2019) to the Xi Jinping-era. By now, the accent has moved to mainly remember the execution by Sheng Shicai of Chen Tanqiu as one of the founders of the CCP 'and others', only subsequently naming Mao Zemin and the other three of the 5 'first row' tomb stelae, which shows that the focus has shifted to Chen and the larger group of five rather than remaining on the three 'main' ones. Similar to the Longhua case discussed above, the new narrative also points out the heritage status of the site, set up in 1956, which was also labelled in 1986 a 'national key revolutionary martyrs' memorial building protection unit' (*quanguo zhongdian lieshi jinian jianzhu baohu danwei* 全国重点烈士纪念建筑保护单位) (190). The exhibition hall, in turn, is now presented as featuring the lives of the 5 front row cases plus Du Chongyuan 'and others',

which shows that Du Chongyuan is by now seen more or less on a par (though not detailing that his 'tomb' does not hold his remains). The *Fengbei* narrative profiles Chen Tanqiu also in a much more proactive way than at the time of the late 1990s, something we noted also for the *Fengbei* narrative on the Geleshan 'martyrs' above. When he was sent to Urumqi (then called Dihua) in 1939, where the CCP had 'helped' Sheng Shicai since 1937 on the latter's request (191), Chen Tanqiu started to agitate among the soldiers. He also sent ideologically trained military 'back to Yan'an', arguing they were mostly former Red Army members who had been dispersed after the (desastrous) 'Western Expedition' (of 1936–1937),[208] which was not to Sheng's liking. He also used the local newspaper for disseminating Marxist ideas, cooperating with the Soviets, and publishing open criticisms of the GMD (which endangered Sheng's manoeuvering space). When Sheng Shicai started to restrict Communist influence, he would also criticise Sheng himself publicly, and 'forced' Sheng to let him publish a critical statement regarding the Wannan Incident of 1941 (in Southern Anhui, often also called the New Fourth Army Incident which de facto ended the Second United Front between the GMD and the CCP, and landed general Ye Ting in prison, including at Geleshan that we discussed above). This suggests Chen Tanqiu also actively provoked Sheng Shicai repeatedly. At the same time, with Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, the Soviets simply could no longer shield the Chinese Communists (192), enabling Sheng Shicai to move against the CCP (which would be, in CCP parlance, the 'objective condition' for the outcome). Chen Tanqiu, it is argued, while following the Yan'an Party line to start a 'rectification movement' (*zhengfeng yundong* 整风运动) also in Xinjiang in 1942 (reframing him here also more in the Yan'an context of ideological correctness), tried to first get other Communists out (over the Soviet Union, since the way East to Yan'an was blocked) before retreating himself, notably starting with the (particularly precious) aviators. However, Sheng Shicai did not wait for him to finish but arrested him with the four other cadres. In the 2019 narrative, Chen Tanqiu is said to have been tortured (incidentally naming the painful 'airplane' position so often applied during the Cultural Revolution decades later), to be then executed with Mao Zemin (both under different names as they had used an alias to cover their true identity) and Lin Jilu, while Yan'an at first did not even know about it (193).

208 The warlords Ma Bufang and Ma Buqing heavily defeated the Communist troops that tried to penetrate their power base in the Northwest. The military disaster contributed also to the political downfall of Zhang Guotao, one of Mao's main inner-Party rivals, who would soon leave Yan'an and the CCP. (As we saw in chapter 2.2 of the present book with the Ningxia Museum, the sensitive topic of Communist failure during that campaign is circumvented in the exhibition there.)

Lin Jilu is the other figure profiled in this 2019 *Fengbei* narrative (interestingly thus leaving out Mao Zemin among the 'three main martyrs'), who composed the famous 'prisoner's song' (still recommended, as mentioned, for youth), describing him as an intellectual who came to Communism via his social engagement. His special contribution was to education and social work during his time in Xinjiang (195). That way, the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* narrative is clearly even more focused on ideology and education than the late 1990s framings of this 'patriotic education showcase base', and it does not include anything for the intended reader that would highlight the site's location in the problematic region of Xinjiang or any minority issues, completely 'nationalising' the site.

Case study: the Kunming 'December First' Martyrs' site

Similar to the Urumqi 'martyrs'' cemetery which was the one and only site listed in the first round of 'patriotic education showcase bases' for Xinjiang in China's Northwest, for Yunnan Province in the Southwest, another ethnically diverse region but without one dominating minority ethnicity as in the case of Xinjiang, there was only one single site listed at the time as well. This is the commemorative site of the tombs of again largely non-local 'martyrs': in this case those of the 'December First' movement (1945) at the National Southwestern Associated University, Lianda 联大 for short, located in Kunming, the province's capital. The site, called **'"Yi er yi" si lieshi mu ji "Yi er yi" yundong jinianguan'** "一二·一" 四烈士墓及 "一二·一" 运动纪念馆 (Tombs of the four martyrs of 'December First' and memorial hall for the 'December First' movement), combines, as the name already says, the 'martyrs'' tombs and a memorial hall. Historical background to this case is that due to the Japanese advance in North and East China after the full-scale start of the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937), some key academic institutions, namely Peking University and Qinghua University from Beijing, and Nankai University from Tianjin, translocated first to Changsha and then to Kunming to form a temporary merged university (Lianda).[209] After the war's end, hopes for a stable peace and a quick return to Beijing or Tianjin were jeopardised by the prospects of Civil War between the GMD and the CCP, and thus in late 1945, demonstrations at the university were organised, which were quickly and bloodily suppressed by the authorities. On site (as I observed in 2014), the exhibition hall presented the four 'martyrs', namely a male secondary school teacher (Yu Zai 于再, a Communist),

209 For an English-language book-length treatment of Lianda, see Israel (1998). He also addresses the 'December First' movement, if briefly (p. 369–375).

two university students (one female and Communist: Pan Yan 潘琰, already 30 years old at the time, the other a young male student: Li Lulian 李鲁连), and a male 16-year-old pupil from a neighbouring school (Zhang Huachang 张华昌) – the only Yunnanese among them. They are now remembered with their tombs as 'the four martyrs' of the 'December First' incident, while the noted (non-local) intellectuals Li Gongpu 李公朴 and Wen Yiduo 闻一多 (both gunned down on the streets of Kunming subsequently in 1946 for their picking up on the incident and its motifs, though no Communists themselves) are also represented outdoor with 'tombs' (de facto 'substitute tombs', i.e., *yiguan zhong*,[210] although this is not disclosed to the visitor on site). Compared to the 'Urumqi martyrs' site, which has been set up as a large cemetery with a square for 'thousands' to attend ceremonies, this site on the grounds of today's Yunnan Normal University is much smaller and thus not suited for use by large crowds as in the Urumqi case, or in many other 'patriotic education showcase bases' we discussed already. The Kunming site banks on the tombs as authenticating the locality, but the small exhibition hall is rather designed for single school classes to visit, and for teachers to be trained in the Yunnan Normal University. That way, the site is directly and unmistakably connected to education, while tourists are welcome but rather few.

To adverstise the site around the country nonetheless, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 8), produced by the Yunnan Provincial Party Committee's Propaganda Department and Yunnan TV, starts spectacularly with a world-famous Lianda alumnus, the physics Nobel laureate Yang Zhenning 杨振宁 (who would move back to China after retirement in the US and reclaim his Chinese citizenship subsequently), singing a patriotic song to the camera from a book held in front of him (which he presumably already sang as a student there). This drives home the message to the TV audience that this place in China's deep Southwest was able to not only produce an internationally highly decorated scientist, but also one who is nevertheless through and through a Chinese 'patriot'! Such a trajectory, it is pointed out, had been only made possible by the three outstanding university presidents (shown with photos) at the time of the Second Sino–Japanese War who (following political orders) led a trek of urban intelligentsia from the North to China's southwestern Yunnan: Jiang Menglin 蒋梦麟 (then president of Peking University, Beijing), Mei Yiqi 梅贻琦 (president of Qinghua University, Beijing), and Zhang Bolin 张伯苓 (president of Nankai University, Tianjin). The film clip adds also photos of famous professors of the time who thus came to Kunming, where the trek arrived in April 1938. In short, the local 'success story' was de facto depending on

210 Wen Yiduo's tomb is in Beijing's revolutionary cemetery Babaoshan where only high cadres and special people are buried.

the brain influx from the North (and that way parallels the Urumqi case discussed above of a 'civilising mission' to frontier areas). Today, the site is on the grounds of Yunnan Normal University, but at the time, conditions were extremely poor, underlined by showing broken houses which served as dorms and class rooms, insinuating the hardships staff and students of urban centres in North China had to endure in this far-away angle of China. In spite of these difficulties, the alumni produced would include many first-rate scholars in several fields, and even Nobel laureates like Yang Zhenning were educated in such an unlikely place. Li Zhengdao / Lee Tsung-Dao 李政道 (who won the Nobel Prize together with Yang Zhenning in 1957) as one further alumnus and laureate of physics is interviewed as well, to show the incredible output of this frontier area. (Li became a naturalised American and remained in the United States, though, in contrast to Yang). But Lianda was not only a place of outstanding scholarship, but also a place of patriotism (insinuating to the TV audience that the two reinforced each other). Protests against the looming Civil War (after the end of the Second Sino–Japanese War) erupted here, and when thugs were sent in by the authorities, this ended in violent tragedy. One Communist secondary school teacher, i.e., Yu Zai, was gravely hurt and died later that day. And three students were dead in the end, too, including one female, i.e., the Communist Pan Yan. Former students as eye witnesses are shown recalling the situation at 1 December 1945 in front of the camera, dramatically recounting the violence and the 'last words' of female 'martyr' Pan Yan.[211] Switching back to the narrator's voice, one learns that after news of the event spread, many in the nation reacted strongly. One of them was Sun Yat-sen's last wife, whose four-character calligraphy, honouring teacher Yu Zai as a pioneer for the people, signed Sun-Song Qingling (!), is shown.[212] Thereupon, the GMD tried to blame the CCP for the whole affair, arguing some (Communist) 'bandits' had been responsible for the violence, which however

211 One may note that the *Ai wo Zhonghua* video narrative and the recent description of the four 'martyrs' and their alleged words and deeds in Xu / Huang (2019: 9–14) are at times verbatim the same, though the latter provides a longer version of their biographies. This also suggests that the different 'patriotic' productions shared some materials or copied from each other.

212 Song Qingling rarely provided any 'calligraphy', likely since she was more accustomed to write in English. This ('unpatriotic') language and script 'problem' is, however, usually evaded as a topic, but the Song siblings had been mainly educated in the US, and in private used English among themselves in writing, and Shanghainese in talking. (Cf. Müller 2022: 253–254). Only Song Meiling, married to Chiang Kai-shek, invested more time into learning classical Chinese (which is what calligraphies normally use) and, above all, Chinese painting. T.V. Song, the politically most active brother, e.g., had Chinese secretaries doing the Chinese correspondence for him. This situation has been often ignored in scholarship, leading at times to wrong conclusions. It is possible that Song Qingling had this calligraphy done in her name, and the Republican-style use of the double surname Sun-Song she would drop in PRC times to remain only with Song.

no one believed. The final burial of the four victims (after several months) turned into a great event in Kunming and took place at the present place on the university grounds (which 'authenticates' the locality). Among those who addressed the crowd with speeches, historian Wu Han 吴晗 (the attack on whom was later used as a trigger for the Cultural Revolution of which he would become a victim) is notably pointed out, thus showing him a 'patriot' back in those times. His profiling thus serves also as a late rehabilitation of this scholar for the eyes of the national TV audience.[213]

Compared to the TV version, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 5) starts less emotionally, rather didactically providing the key definition and affirmation that 'December First' (1945) is the fulfilment of 'May Fourth' (voiced at the time by Zhou Enlai, referring to the fact that these three universities of the North, temporarily merged into Lianda, had been at the centre of political activities already in 1919 during the May Fourth Movement).[214] (In fact, the whole video is much more didactic and often blends in dates to memorise for the pupils.) Aged locals who recall the students coming to Kunming, sing also songs of that time to the camera (again showing that songs were an important medium for content communication and identification). Old photos of buildings used for the university, in turn, are to show the very simple way of life which awaited the newcomers. Interviews with former students are integrated, too. A quick sequence of photos of famous scholars who had come to Kunming serves as visual cues for the distinguished group that these urban newcomers constituted. The accent is, however, in this educational video on famous writer Wen Yiduo, whom pupils know well from class, and his 'patriotism'. As becomes clear, the CCP had its underground organisations in the Lianda (which de facto reveals that the fears of the authorities of Communist infiltration were not unfounded). Repeatedly, scenes of historical footage are integrated in the video. The CCP made strong propaganda to prevent Civil War, and Fei Xiaotong 费孝通, the famous founding figure of Chinese anthropology and sociology, is named as an outspoken professor (who was no Communist at the time) asking the students to avoid any violence, which is visualised by many candles. That way, it should be clear that violence only came

213 In official terms, Wu Han had been rehabilitated already in 1979, but his case is particularly famous, given the association with the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution.

214 Zhou Enlai is also cited as calling the 'December First' movement also the new 'December Ninth' (1935) movement. That way, the student demonstrations against the Versailles Treaty (May Fourth 1919), directed at the Western imperialists, the ones of 'December Ninth' (1935) against the Japanese advance, and the ones of 'December First' (1945) against the GMD's ambitions to exterminate the CCP were set in one line in official CCP interpretation. Zhou Enlai himself had been a Nankai student.

from the other side, and a former student details in front of the camera as an eye witness how Pan Yan died. Returning to a more didactic vein, the narrator points out that historian Wu Han and writer Wen Yiduo were in the front row of the funeral procession, and people not present in Kunming like writer-scholar Guo Moruo and author Mao Dun had also sent telegrammes to support the students in Kunming. Only a few months after the movement, in 1946, Li Gongpu, who had criticised the authorities for the violence, was assassinated in Kunming, and thereafter, Wen Yiduo, who had hoped the 'December First' case would lay the foundation for a new China. In the PRC, the commentator emphatically asserts (with the 1 October Tiananmen Square parades shown!), this hope would be finally realised! And more locally, as the educational video documents, former alumni meet to sing together in front of the tombs, joined by young children now at school, proving there is a legacy, and that school identity is something for life. Thus, the memorial hall's name was written in 1985 by Deng Yingchao, the widow of Zhou Enlai (who had been a former Nankai middle school student), and nowadays, pupils come and lay down white paper flowers to the tombs of their 'predecessors'. To sum up the lesson learnt, a primary school student repeats in front of the camera (like in class), that these predecessors sacrificed 'for us',[215] and that 'we' shall learn well to build up our motherland. A student at Yunnan Normal University, in turn, adds that they as the future teachers want to start from this local experience to teach the next generation, linking the topic clearly to 'patriotic education' requirements. Then, former classmates of the 'martyrs' are shown to visually link the generations together. Student groups from Yunnan and Beijing, in turn, reenact the happy 'meeting' of the different schools, and a present-day Beijing student talks to the camera who has walked the way to 'relive' the experience. (This shows, that reenactment and performative travel are also part of 'patriotic education' and tourism.) At the end, the alumni singing songs and holding flowers in commemoration, leave the viewer with the impression that this history is well alive, and the legacy is carried on. Notably, this video by Kunming Educational TV was produced in 1997 with a director pointed out (and has, in fact, a higher filmic quality than most of the *Zhonghua hun* videos, of which also several shots have been taken over in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, once more showing that both productions often shared filmed material, as we noted also at some other sites). One may also note that on the memorial stone slab behind the tombs is a statue of liberty-like decoration upon which the camera conspicuously focuses. Since the at the time of filming still rather recent student movement of 1989 (which understood

215 This is part of the 'discursive logic of sacrifice, debt, and gratitude' (Sorace 2016: 43).

itself as in the line of 'patriotic students movements') meant that the 'goddess of liberty', erected at the time of the Tiananmen protests, gained a new visual association, one wonders what this camera work might have conveyed to a Chinese viewer only eight years later in terms of legacy of 'student protest movements' (even if the target group are pupils with a necessarily shorter 'historical memory', though teachers also would view the video together). In any case, comparing the educational video with the TV film clip discussed above, one also notes, that the educational video does not put the stress on national glories like the famous Nobel laureates as does the one in *Ai wo Zhonghua*. In other words, the educational 'success story' is no central topic, while the nationally broadcasted TV version plays up national pride.

The 'patriotic' booklet, in turn, provides a reading that stresses that the site is standing first of all for 'patriotism', and only then for 'democracy', and finally for 'science'. The December First 'martyrs' (who are no famous names otherwise) are narratively closely bound up with the two later famous cases of the intellectuals Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo. The site not only features the tombs, though, but also a memorial monument to all those students of Lianda who followed the call (by Chiang Kai-shek) to join the Army against the Japanese and who perished, over 800 names! (Bao / Zhou 1999: 2) In other words, the students had shown themselves 'patriots' already during the anti-Japanese war (if under GMD-government colours). The event of 1945 is set in the context of a legacy of the student movements of 1919 (the 'anti-imperialist' May Fourth) and 'December Ninth' (the anti-Japanese 1935 demonstrations), which reflects Zhou Enlai's dictum (3). Notably, Jiang Zemin visited the site in late 1989 (obviously not linking up this history of student protests to the recent 1989 'followers'). His visit is surprisingly not mentioned or shown at all in the above discussed filmic treatments while at other 'patriotic' sites Jiang Zemin's visit would usually be shown! He commented there that he himself had participated in that 1945 movement to prevent Civil War (though not in Kunming since he studied at the time in Eastern China), thus also showing himself a 'patriotic student'. The main outline of the local events in Kunming is provided by Wen Yiduo whose summary of the movement is engraved unto a stele (7). This text recounts the special situation in Yunnan under warlord Long Yun 龙云 who only loosely cooperated with Chiang Kai-shek, which had provided the Lianda over much of the time with a more 'liberal' surrounding to voice dissent via-à-vis the GMD (but who would be replaced by the GMD in October 1945 – cf. Israel 1998: 370); the mounting tension and crucial role of the 25 November 1945 student meeting where, i.a., China's famous anthropologist and sociologist Fei Xiaotong addressed the students (11), while the authorities tried to intimidate the students by

cutting off electricity and finally shooting over the heads which radicalised the students even more; and finally the events on 1 December when thugs stormed the campus, ending in four dead (the 'martyrs') and many wounded. Though the authorities later apologised for the violence and set up an ad hoc court to judge and execute some 'culprits' (21), the whole affair dragged on until the funeral was finally held several months later. In the meantime, also elsewhere in China, protest gatherings were held, e.g., in Shanghai where Song Qingling also wrote her endorsement for the dead teacher (and Communist) Yu Zai (32). It becomes, however, also obvious that the Communists had a strong influence on the whole movement, their members acting undercover, and they exploited the movement also effectively (45–46).

The Lianda had an uneasy relationship with the GMD-government already before 1945. When the hymn of the university had to be decided upon, neither text nor music was at first accepted by the GMD authorities which tried to get a closer hold on educational facilities in general (53–54).[216] One may note that singing remained a key feature also with the latter-day alumni for identifying with the university (as became also obvious in the filmic renderings discussed above). The university's motto was controversial, too, since the three universities united in Lianda had a rather free-wheeling tradition which attracted top intellectuals as teachers, while the GMD envisioned unity and loyalty for all kinds of schools (55–61). Another special feature was the 'wall of democracy' (a term that has, however, become problematic in the PRC ever since the 1976 similar movement in Beijing), where students would put up posters and writings on all kinds of subjects, but often commenting also on politics (61–66). At the same time, the Japanese repeatedly bombed Kunming from above, after they had secured Burma in 1942, bordering on Yunnan, destroying parts of the university. Notably, the booklet does not address in more detail the fact that Lianda students followed Chiang Kai-shek's call to enlist for the war (and thus were in that sense pro-GMD for a substantial time during the Second Sino–Japanese War years), but rather details the poor living conditions students as well as teachers were in, additionally caused by the horrendous inflation. Even the most noted scholars had to seek ways to feed themselves and their families beyond teaching at Lianda, e.g., pointing out that Wen Yiduo carved seals for others against payment (71; one student later handed one to the memorial for the exhibition: 106). Nevertheless, the booklet claims, the students disdained the money rich H. H. Kung

216 In the 1930s, the educational policy of the GMD required schools to officially register which also meant to accept supervision.

(Chiang Kai-shek's brother-in-law) provided,[217] and would rather hand it onward (71). In spite of these conditions, however, scholarly work also progressed, and many important works were written at the time. Although there were not many facilities, the staff made the best of it, and in terms of local contribution, also Yunnan's geography or customs were used as study objects (72–73). And in these conditions, even later Nobel laureates could be educated (77–78). To stress the difficulties more concretely, the intended young readers of the booklet are introduced to the conditions when the dorms had no running water and students would study in the teahouses where the rain shelter was best. Unsurprisingly, the Communists had also their undercover members working therein (79–80).

On a stele, the inscription by Wen Yiduo tells the whole story of Lianda up to the end of the Second Sino–Japanese War, i.e., before the December First movement of a few months later, serving as the official summary of Lianda's history. (The full text is reproduced in the booklet on pp. 85–88.) In the following year, 1946, however, the three universities that had formed Lianda would move back to their original locations in Beijing and Tianjin, but the new teacher college and the attached secondary schools remained in Kunming as a physical legacy. Student and staff 'martyrs' who had fought during the Second Sino–Japanese War (i.e., had responded to Chiang Kai-shek's call) would be also locally added to the remembrance of the 'four martyrs' (90), and Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo, both closely connected to the December First case, would become part of local remembrance, too. While Li Gongpu had not been present in Kunming but in Chongqing when the December First violence occurred, he instantly organised a protest meeting there and was, it is claimed to enhance his connection to the event, beaten up there together with, i.a., Guo Moruo (though this de facto happened not during such a protest meeting because of the Kunming violence, but in February 1946 during the People's Consultative Conference – cf. the Tao Xingzhi site comments in chapter 5.2!) (98). Li and Wen would later receive a *yiguan zhong* near the 'four martyrs', however the one of Li Gongpu was only set up in 1980, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution (reflecting the fact that he was more controversial in Maoist times as to his ideological alignment than Wen Yiduo, though the latter, too, was no declared Communist) (103). The two well-known Republican-era GMD-critical intellectuals are thus, in any case, appropriated.

217 H. H. Kung is in PRC view a negative figure, framed as not only extremely rich but also corrupt, and thus a 'politically correct' student in this understanding had to refuse money from him. De facto, H. H. Kung, an Oberlin alumnus, had been involved in educational affairs beyond being a key figure in GMD politics, one of China's top bankers, and the husband of Song Ailing, sister of Song Qingling and Song Meiling, Chiang Kai-shek's wife.

Overall, the site is presented to the intended young reader as very efficient for the use as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. Students as well as teachers are said to have been profoundly moved by making white paper flowers or wreaths, offering them to the tombs (as we saw also, e.g., with Geleshan) (109). A special feature of this site is, however, that even disabled children are addressed and integrated in the 'patriotic education' in this case who are said to be moved by hearing the stories of the 'martyrs', or by touching the tombs, if they were blind or deaf. Notably, they, too, are sworn in to the Young Pioneers or the Communist Youth League (which shows that there is some inclusion acted out in these organisations) (113–114). In fact, this is a rare case when the issue of disabled children is addressed at all, since in Kunming there is a specialised school for these children. The freshmen of the Normal University, in turn, going to be teachers in the future, have their first class symbolically in the simple cottage which remains from the time of the Lianda to get a feeling of how one learnt at that time, and to realise how well-off they are today which should lead to the conclusion that if students could be so patriotic under those conditions, for them today it is even more of an obligation (111–112). (This, as we saw with the filmic renderings above, is exactly what the interviewed students repeated to the camera.)

Moving 20 years ahead from these framings of the late 1990s to the newest Xi Jinping-era one of this 'patriotic education showcase base' in the *Fengbei* series (Xu / Huang 2019), one notes that this site of 'student protest' is not treated with particular sympathy any longer. The description does not add anything for local developments of the site in the meantime, largely staying with the accent on the GMD-critical intellectuals Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo, and on a second line with the 'four martyrs' who are introduced individually with some personal items on display in the memorial hall. The historical background is somewhat broadened by naming as colleges in Kunming involved in the December First movement beyond Lianda also Yunnan University, the Sino–French University, and the English Training College (of Yunnan Province) ([Yunnan-sheng li] Yingyu zhuanke xuexiao [云南省立]英语专科学校). In the typical 'centralising' thrust of the Xi Jinping-era narratives, it is also pointed out here that it was in Yan'an, the Party's headquarters, where Zhou Enlai called the whole movement a second December Ninth (of 1935) at the time (interestingly leaving out the May Fourth reference here), thus establishing the historical (anti-GMD) 'affiliation' of the event (8). Of the martyrs, Communist teacher Yu Zai is the most profiled figure (9), who wanted to protect the students from the hand grenades and was hit himself (10). Student Li Lulian, in turn, was the first to die: his family was GMD connected, but when he realised the decrepit state of things, he 'converted', as supposedly proven by the

diary entry shortly before he died from a hand grenade (which thus makes him fit to be described a 'martyr') (11). Zhang Huachang, in turn, the only Yunnanese among them, had met undercover Communists, and is described as someone on the way to 'conversion' (again to likely make him fit to be called a 'martyr'). At 1 December, he wanted to help the Lianda students but was hit by a hand grenade, too (12–13). Pan Yu, finally, was the only woman, and a Communist already on the GMD's black list (which should heighten her ideological credentials) (13). She, too, wanted to 'help the others' but was hit by stones (formerly claimed more heroically to have been stabbed) and died (14).

Overall, though, this *Fengbei* description is not adding any substantial update of this site, remaining within the established narrative, only trying to explain to the intended reader why these victims of violence can be called 'martyrs' (even in the two non-Communist cases, arguing they were on the way towards becoming such).

Both 'martyrs' cemeteries' discussed above show how 'patriotism' is played out in places located in 'frontier' regions, basically by people from the outside: while in the Urumqi case, it is CCP Han cadres who were caught in between different political interests that landed them in warlord Sheng Shicai's prison, in Kunming the factor of education is more prominent, with young people (only partly Communist) taking the lead of supposedly bottom-up protests against national (GMD) politics. In both cases, there is the framing of a 'civilising mission' by these 'martyrs' to the frontier region to live out an unconditional effort for the common *patria* at the given place. That way, also those frontier regions should realise how much they owe to those uncompromising models, revere their local sacrifice in front of their tombs, and eagerly learn 'patriotism' from them, as pupils or tourists.

Concluding from all three subcategories of 'commemorative places' discussed above, those focused on atrocities, those of prisons and 'concentration camps', as well as those honouring the 'martyrs', they have shown, above all, how emotions are addressed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system over 'places', engendering feelings of horror and shame, admiration for courage and defiance, and reverence and mourning for those who paid the 'final price' respectively. This is to serve for inculcating a feeling of obligation into the present-day Chinese citizens via the very places where they materially encounter the respective *lieux d'histoire*, whether as learners or as tourists, to be ready and stand up for the *patria* themselves in the future. Given the strong emotional qualities of these 'commemorative places', they are deemed as particularly effective and are thus very numerous in the overall 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

3.3 Party Places

This final category of 'places', which is equally one with predictably many sites in the PRC's 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, covers locations where important phases and events in the normative reading of the CCP's own history are (statically) recorded. For the pre-PRC era, this includes the place where the Party was 'founded' (Shanghai),[218] according to the official Party historiography, where it laid the foundation for its later way of rule *in nuce* (Jinggangshan, Ruijin, Yan'an, and finally Xibaipo), basically following Mao's trajectory, or where important decisions were taken, e.g., during the Long March (Zunyi). These (pre-1949) sites all market their very locality and physical design to the Chinese citizen as learner or tourist. While 'patriotic education showcase bases' sites commemorating revolutionary uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities (see chapter 4.2) are often connected to the Party, too, those are not fixed 'places', given the inherent dynamics of uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities. The 'Party places' addressed here, in turn, are of a more static nature. Here, it is argued, a certain Party leader lived next to whom, presenting the Party as a lived community; there is the spot where certain famous historical photos have been taken; here the precursors of present-day institutions (e.g., banks, press organs, administrative entities) were located; and there, certain well-known texts or slogans have been composed or were promulgated; here a leader sat when momentous decisions were taken, close to whom; and there he slept during the days of the important Party meetings etc. These places are typical 'red tourism' destinations,[219] and several of them have been treated in this context already in more or less detail, especially Yan'an, but they are also 'patriotic education' sites. In the following, we will therefore put a special focus on these sites as places for Chinese citizen formation to engender patriotism.

In terms of the historical trajectory of the CCP, the Shanghai 'founding place of the CCP',[220] labelled as the **Zhongguo gongchandang diyici quanguo daibiao dahui huizhi jinianguan** 中国共产党第一次代表大会会址纪念馆 (Memorial site of the first national Congress of the CCP) (Shanghai) (list 1, 1997), would be the first to consider. We will only briefly address it here, since it has been analysed

218 This so-called 'First Congress' had to be abruptly ended, though, and was continued on a boat on lake in nearby Zhejiang Province, Nanhu. Nanhu is also taken up in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system as a separate site, since of Zhejiang Province.

219 See, e.g., Rioux (2007) and Lin (2023) on Red Tourism. See also chapter 10 in Denton (2014).

220 One might add that historically the 'founding' of the CCP was more complex, but the official version prescribes 1 July 1921, as the normative date of foundation, and the meeting in Shanghai (which took place later in July) as the crucial event of the 'first congress'.

very thoroughly by Denise Ho (2016) in its curatorial dimension through time.[221] Notably, archival evidence shows how curators struggled with incessant political changes and had even scripted answers to potential (or earlier posed) questions, in delicate cases teaching the guides to take resort to responding 'it's unclear' (*bu qingchu* 不清楚). This is a good example to show how Party history has to be carefully presented according to present-day agendas at such sites.

Visitors to the conveniently located inner-city Shanghai site include also many school classes and organised groups of adults to receive 'patriotic education' there. The site's importance has been stepped up since it is the only site that has been 'enlarged' in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in 2021 (i.e., at the 100th anniversary of the Party's official founding and therefore in this new form not yet included in the 'patriotic' *Fengbei* series of 2019 we use in the present book as the 'fixed' version to update the whole 'patriotic education showcase base' system to the Xi Jinping era; notably, the more recent new CCTV website on the 'patriotic education showcase bases' – cf. chapter 1 of this book – substituted in this case the older *Ai wo Zhonghua* presentation of 1997 of the site with a new film clip presenting the site in an updated format, enlivened by interspersed short movie scenes).[222] The new naming as first of all a 'memorial hall' which only 'integrates' the 'historical site', however, makes clear that in the meantime the (ideological) interpretation has taken the upper hand over the physical structure by far in this place of 'founding the Party'.

While the Shanghai site, which we will not look into here in more detail, is an inner-city site, 'Party places' for the pre-PRC period are found often in more out-of-the-way areas, due to the Party's long-term underground existence after the bloody end of the First United Front in 1927. The places we will look at here (Jinggangshan, Ruijin, Zunyi, Yan'an, Xibaipo) are also roughly following the main Party trajectory chronologically (framed in a Mao-centred perspective) from 1927 to 1949, reinforcing the learning thread from crisis to victory, familiar from school textbooks, for the Chinese citizens as pupil or tourist on site, to explain how and why the CCP would be finally able to create the 'New China', having tested its policies earlier in those 'Party places', and wherefrom it draws its legitimation to rule ever since.

221 This book chapter by Denise Ho was also taken over in her monograph of 2018: *Curating Revolution*.

222 See 'Quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi' (2021). Notably, the police search for the Communists at the site is staged in the movie scenes with *English*-speaking police staff, although the site is not located in the former International Settlement, but in the *French* concession!

Case study: Jinggangshan

The site listed as **Jinggangshan geming jiniandi** 井冈山革命纪念地 (Jinggangshan revolutionary memorial area) (Jiangxi Province) (list 1, 1997),[223] is undisputably one of the most iconic Mao-related places in China, drawing crowds of Chinese visitors (but rarely foreigners) since Mao times. It, however, also functions as a key location for 'patriotic education' of all age groups of Chinese citizens, covering several sub-sites scattered over the mountainous place in the border region between the provinces of Hunan and Jiangxi. Jinggangshan has, in fact, become a symbol in CCP history, often called 'the cradle of the Chinese revolution' (*Zhongguo geming de yaolan* 中国革命的摇篮): closely connected to Mao in the time between late 1927 to early 1929, it was a site of mass pilgrimage during the Cultural Revolution.[224] And today it serves as an important place for cadre education and patriotic education for youth in general to teach the 'spirit of Jinggangshan', with participants donning army uniforms of the time to get a 'feel' for the times back then (see fig. 3.3.1).

The village of Ciping 茨坪 was the central point of the area where Mao fled to after the short failed 'Autumn Harvest Uprising' of September 1927, and Zhu De would finally come to the area with (the rest of) his men as well after the brief Nanchang Uprising of August 1927 (cf. chapter 4.2 of the present book). However, the 'fixed place' character of 'Jinggangshan' is circumscribed by the fact that Mao and the others would frequently move around in the area, given the continuous need to hide, reflected today in the various sites to be visited, scattered over this mountainous place, where they once had dwelled. In fact, since enemy troops attacked the area repeatedly and finally took it in early 1929, burning everything to the ground, what is visible today is all reconstructed, though it is claimed that the 'old sites' are rebuilt 'as they were', usually in the early 1960s.[225]

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223 One may note that this term *geming jiniandi* was already used in the Cultural Revolution for Jinggangshan and similar places forming a 'revolutionary' trajectory in the 'great linkup' (*da chuanlian* 大串联) movement context of 1966–1967 when young Red Guards travelled for free to the 'sacred' sites of the revolution. For an example of a Cultural Revolutiona-era poster on Jinggangshan as a *geming jiniandi* (aside Shaoshan – cf. chapter 5.3 for the latter), see 'Commemmorative (sic!) places of the revolution: Shaoshan, Jinggangshan' [1974].

224 In this sense, the site has been treated several times, today being a 'red tourism' site. Cf. also Denton (2014: 225–230). For a historical account of the Jinggangshan base area, see Averill (2006).

225 Cf. Jinggangshan geming bowuguan (2010b). Materials used here were mostly collected on site in 2013 to add to the personal observations.

Fig. 3.3.1 A group of young people clad in Communist (historical) blue army uniforms in front of the entrance sign 'Jinggangshan' in Mao's calligraphy on a red stylised mountain (Jinggangshan) (photograph by the author, 2013)

Some sites, namely the military 'hospital' (a very rudimentary facility) and other Army-related places, were rebuilt during the Cultural Revolution. While the latter is usually rather perceived as a time of heritage destruction, Jinggangshan was 'politically hyper-correct', so to speak, at that time, also given the fact that the place had been honoured by Mao with a visit shortly before the Cultural Revolution, who did not give this honour during PRC times to many revolutionary places he had earlier lived in. The Army, furthermore, had become particularly influential under general Lin Biao 林彪 (as long as he was the 'crown prince' of Mao, i.e., until 1971), and thus the Army actively cared for the rebuilding of 'its' sites in Jinggangshan to inscribe its own legacy into this 'sacred' place of the revolution.[226] (Other sites in the area, in turn, were only rebuilt after the 1980s, depending on the people they were

226 Nevertheless, at some places even in Jinggangshan destruction occurred at the time, though the materials available do not specify the particular reasons. As it seems, 'followers of Lin Biao' (who personally visited the place in 1969!) had blasted an arc and stele in 1968/69 to erect a pavilion on their own which in turn was blasted after the Cultural Revolution to restore the former sites (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 386, 388, 394, 422). Deng Xiaoping, who was allowed to visit the site in 1972 (i.e., a year after Lin Biao's death, though himself still in difficult conditions politically at the time), objected to the 'rewriting of history' as attempted by 'Lin Biao's clique' (ibid. 387).

associated with.) Historically speaking, given that the Communists had been pressed hard by the GMD in the late 1920s, leaving no time to take special preventions before evacuation, one wonders on what – apart from memory – the reconstruction so many years later could actually base itself. Today's presentation of the 'old sites', however, tends to make the visiting tourist believe that one sees the very furniture once used by the respective great figures of the CCP. An area of hiding and fleeing under massive GMD pressure is typically turned by the presentation into a site of CCP agency, where the main lines of a 'New China' were developed already back then, supposedly proven by Mao's theoretical-strategical articles written at that time. In terms of personal life, this period was when Mao married his third wife He Zizhen 贺子珍 who was a local (and apparently introduced to him by his new local 'bandit friends' – see below), which means that her role is today acknowledged on spot for the visitor as Mao's close collaborator at the time, putting up her (later) photo at the places where she lived with Mao and including her statue in the statue park. (By this, the 'local' contribution in marketing the locality which in many other senses is placed rather out of the way, is also stepped up.) During the Cultural Revolution, a high time of Mao's wife by then, Jiang Qing 江青, his earlier wife He Zizhen was of course not profiled at the site. Incidentally, in terms of personal life, Zhu De – the other central CCP figure of Jinggangshan – lost his younger wife Wu Ruolan 五若兰 when fleeing from Jinggangshan in early 1929. Since she was captured and executed by the GMD, he remarried an even younger one, Kang Keqing 康克清, just one month later, and in PRC times he visited Jinggangshan together with her in 1962, i.e., before Mao who visited the place in 1965. As we will see, the 'national' reading rather keeps this local and personal dimension low-key. Given the fact that since the era of Deng Xiaoping, the Mao-related Cultural Revolution hype of the place entailed a somewhat 'burdened' legacy, a possible 'nostalgic' memory of Red Guard times which the site could trigger with the respective generation, became something to be discouraged in the 'reform and opening' era.

Looking at the ways how the place reacts to the changed times and markets itself locally,[227] as I observed in 2013 on site, one notes that a bureaucratic legitimation approach for defending Jinggangshan's enduring legacy is to bolster the local perspective also in the post-Mao era. This 'defensive strategy' becomes obvious, e.g., in its significantly ordering the sites not according to 'content' but strictly according to their heritage 'status', starting with the nationally listed heritage sites (since 1961), followed by the provincially listed ones (since 2000) to finally those

227 Cf., e.g., with the huge publication in three volumes by the Jinggangshan Museum of Revolution (2010a, 2010b, 2010c).

locally listed (since 1988), adding the 'memory sites' as an extra category (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2010b). The educational aspect is reflected in tales of moral uprightness, personal sacrifice, und model conduct on the CCP's side while denouncing the GMD's inhumanity. More problematic aspects like the violent attacks on landlords the CCP instigated by 'convincing' the locals of their necessity, and even the killing of some people in the way are presented as wise decisions of the leading Party figures, above all Mao himself, who 'explained patiently and with easily comprehensible metaphors' why this had to be done.[228] That the goods confiscated served the CCP well during the times of GMD economic blockade is understood. (In fact, it seems that after the riches of the landlords had been distributed, generating local goods proved much more difficult so that it is occasionally admitted that raids on nearby towns also simply served the need to somehow feed the army). Defeats and retreats were, according to the preferred narrative, either caused by unequal equipment, traitors, interference by ideological 'deviationists', or they were just tactical retreats and thus no 'real defeats'. What remains largely unmentioned even in this local 'defensive strategy' is the fate of the locals who had helped (or at least had tolerated) the CCP to set up a revolutionary base but were left to fend for themselves, coping with the enemy's torched-earth policy when the Communists had to retreat. Rather, the storyline moves on to tell how Communist general Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 handed money to the locals later when briefly coming back to make good for parts of the damage caused. After the founding of the PRC there was some commemoration of all 'unnamed martyrs' who had sacrificed by staying on while the main forces of the CCP saved themselves. That way, the 'martyrs' had contributed to carry on the torch of liberation for the better future of all. The fact that the locals quickly tried to conceal revolutionary slogans painted by the CCP on walls of houses is of course presented 'positively' as a way of 'preserving' those mottos for later generations (cf., e.g., Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2010b: 168 ff.) – a trope one encounters frequently also in other 'patriotic education bases'.

Another problematic aspect which connected the Communists to the locals addressed more fully in the local narrative was their dependence on bandits, namely Yuan Wencai 袁文才 and Wang Zuo 王佐, whom Mao had to court with provision of guns and even with a murder of one of Wang's enemies to gain their support and be let in into the area![229] By this, the CCP became also involved in the local ethnic

228 Cf. Perry (2002) on the Communists' 'emotion work'.

229 The gruesome details of this building of confidence by presenting Wang the head of his arch-enemy, by this 'converting him' to Communism, are told, e.g., in Jinggangshan geming bowuguan (2010c: 69), or Jinggangshan geming bowuguan (2008: 93). Cf. the brief account in Averill (2006:

strife between Hakka communities (protected by the named bandits) and the long-established residents of the area, today of course explained in terms of class antagonisms between the established landlords and the Hakka have-nots (see, e.g., Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 278).[230] As is disclosed in this local version of things, Yuan Wencai even functioned as a go-between in Mao's marriage with He Zizhen in Jinggangshan and organised the marriage party (!) (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 304–305) – something not mentioned in any of the national 'patriotic' productions.[231]

However, since the CCP representatives outside Jinggangshan did not trust them, both bandit leaders were killed later on CCP order, 'erroneously', as the Mao-centred historiography tells us, though it is unclear whether Mao did (or could do) anything to prevent this. Significantly, the directives of the Sixth Party Congress of the CCP held in Moscow which included orders to only temporarily 'use' bandits (if necessary) in struggle, to later eliminate them, was not fully transmitted by Mao in Jinggangshan who 'because of the presence of Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo at the meeting skipped the part on the Party's policy on bandits' (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 300). He thus knew perfectly well, but the two only found out later about the whole of the Party's policies and met their fate in 1930. In any case, after the founding of the PRC they were officially rehabilitated as 'martyrs of the revolution', and their liquidation termed a 'tragedy', blamed above all on 'leftist deviationism' in the Party central at the time (which differed from Mao's course who is thus absolved of their deaths).[232] In fact, Zhu De and Mao met with the widows of Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo when returning to Jinggangshan in the early 1960s, while Peng Dehuai (likely unjustly) was accused in the Cultural Revolution for their deaths.

The Jinggangshan museum, hailed as the first *local* museum on the revolution in China (*vs* the national one in Beijing, now part of the National Museum – see chapter 2.2), was built in the late 1950s as the central educational facitility of the site, and to honour the 10th anniversary of the PRC in 1959 at the time of the Great Leap Forward. It was substantially renovated and enlarged with a more impressive

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174–175), seeing Mao's trusted man, He Changgong, as the mastermind of this action (based on the latter's memoirs).

230 As Averill (2006: 395–399) points out, the ethnic contrast between Hakka and *bendi* should not be overdrawn; fault lines of political alignments varied locally.

231 For a Western account, cf. Averill (2006: chapter 3 on the background of Yuan and Wang, and on the marriage: 179–181).

232 The final responsibility was settled on Xiang Zhongfa and Li Lisan as 'leftists' in the Party central. For a more 'localised' account of their deaths, cf. Averill (2006: 386–388).

architecture in 2007.[233] Apart from its exhibition, which was redesigned by specialists from Shanghai, including multimedia elements, it has published a number of authoritative volumes and a highly educational explanation book reminiscent of a catechism in form: providing questions, grouped in various sections, and their respective official answers (Jinggangshan bowuguan 2008), recalling the example of the guidebook of the Shanghai 'founding place of the CCP' mentioned above.[234] The museum became a centre piece in remodelling Jinggangshan into a top-ranking (5A) tourist attraction as well, not only catering to educational revolutionary 'red' needs, but also selling Jinggangshan's 'green' aspects, i.e., the beautiful nature around. This suggests that the site was in want of a broader appeal (which adds to the 'defensive strategy'). In fact, the place at times tries to promote itself as a 'five colours' tourism destination: red, green, blue (recreation), gold (luck and wealth-generating), and 'ancient' (heritage) (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 431–432). Given the booming 'red tourism' connected to cadre education etc., the place is today certainly wealth-generating for this rather remote area, in the meantime at least served by a high-way, a train station, and also an airport not too far away. The heritage part, however, is, as noted, more imagined than real.

Turning from the 'local' to the 'national' marketing of the site in the 'patriotic education' context, in filmic representation, one notes that the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 5) produced in 1998 by Ji'an TV Station's 'special topic department', often uses drawings as an illustration while photos are lacking. (In this context one should bear in mind that the possession of a photo camera was yet uncommon at the time of the late 1920s. In fact, later in Yan'an where iconic photos were shot, the cameras brought along by newcomers or visitors were highly treasured.) The nationally broadcasted TV film clip first recounts how Mao moved to Jinggangshan after the (failed) Autumn Harvest Uprising in 1927. On the way, he would establish three basic guidelines to reorganise the troops and the local Party branch, fixing, most importantly, the Party's lead over the Army as an enduring basic principle of Communist rule to this very day, and assuring a 'democratic' treatment of soldiers (which was supposed to set the worker and peasant troops and future Red Army apart from the traditional Chinese military as much as from the GMD one). Arriving at Longjiang shuyuan 龙江书院, a local (Hakka) school building, the ideological

233 In fact, at the time three central revolutionary places were chosen to be renovated with special attention to an attractive architecture and high quality exhibition to step up their value as educational patriotic bases and tourist sites: Jinggangshan, Mao's birthplace Shaoshan, and Yan'an (Jinggangshan geming bowuguan 2008: 405).

234 Cf. Denise Ho (2016).

education of soldiers would be established there (as had been, in fact, practiced already during the times the Nationalist–Communist First United Front was still functioning in the GMD Whampoa Military Academy precedent in Guangdong on advice of the Soviets). This, the narrative claims, would serve as the Communists' 'first military school', especially after Mao and Zhu De joined their troops in Jinggangshan, illustrated by (later) photos of Mao and Zhu De. In August 1928, the Communists lived through a moment of major crisis when they were attacked at Huangyangjie 黄洋界, one of the entry passes to the inner Jinggangshan area. Bas-reliefs at the site visualise the fighting scenes where the Communists, reduced in number due to the temporary absence of Mao and Zhu De with a part of their troops, mostly worked with tricks to suggest they were more than they actually numbered to make the enemy retreat, and thus cleverness (an oft-stressed feature as the weapon of the numerically weak) won out. Another feature of ideal leadership is illustrated via Zhu De: not staying aloof, he would lead his men to take things into one's own hands (and thus joined 'the masses'), exemplified by his putting on shoulder poles like everyone else to transport needed things uphill. ('Zhu De's shoulder poles' are thus shown in the museum to authenticate the narrative.) Mao, in turn, exemplifies the leaders' farsightedness, underlined by the story that he would rhetorically ask on the mountain top: what do you see from here? When people responded with which counties one could see (since the area is at the intersection of various counties and at the border between the provinces of Jiangxi and Hunan), he told them they should rather see much more than that, namely 'all of China' from here (the 'patriotic' booklet version would even add 'the world' to make the point of self-confidence in one's historical mission even stronger). Thus, the insinuation goes, he already foresaw the final Communist victory at that time of great difficulties for the Communists (and thus kept his 'revolutionary optimism'). The locals shown with their head gear, mark them as minority people (in fact, the area was inhabitated by many Hakka). On the walls of houses, the national TV audience of the film clip spots anti-GMD slogans which were claimed to have been 'preserved' by the locals (to suggest that they supported the Communist outsiders and covered the slogans at the GMD's arrival 'for preservation', while the fact of the burning down of the villages by the enemy troops is simply skipped to uphold the illusion of 'authenticity').

In Dajing 大井 village, in turn, the tree and rock where Mao is said to have sat to 'study' are introduced in the TV film clip as a further place a tourist should visit in the area. The peculiar octagonal building in the village of Maoping 茅坪 where Mao wrote famous essays on the experiences of the struggle in Jinggangshan and against the doubts regarding the future prospects of 'red' rule in China

('Jinggangshan de douzheng' 井冈山的斗争, and 'Zhongguo de hongse zhengquan wei shenme nenggou cunzai' 中国的红色政权为什么能够存在) with the use of an oil lamp is another visual highlight and sightseeing spot.[235] Then the central village Ciping is introduced with Mao's 'former residence' there, as well as the one of Peng Dehuai (which likely was 'rebuilt' only after the Cultural Revolution, given Peng Dehuai's downfall after the Lushan Conference of 1959 where he had dared to oppose Mao for which he was made to pay the final price in the Cultural Revolution). Only at this point, the film clip briefly admits to the viewer that all had been, in fact, burnt down by 'the enemy', but groups of grown-up visitors who supposedly see original bullet holes in walls that serve to authenticate what happened suggest a touristic visit is worthwhile nonetheless. The former 'army hospital', in turn, is the site where the wounded who could not get out in time were slaughtered, when enemy troops came in in early 1929, including even a boy of 16 years, thus adding the theme of sacrifice to the otherwise triumphalist place. The imagined scenes are illustrated with dramatic paintings of dying soldiers raising their fist in defiance. In 1987, a larger tomb was built for them, and the Jinggangshan 'martyrs'' cemetery also features a black wall (in international fashion)[236] with names of the 'martyrs', though not all names are known of those who died. To include everyone, the new (flame-style) monument was put up at the cemetery, notably with the calligraphy of Deng Xiaoping (who was the next major leader after Mao, but de facto had no personal connection to the historical Jinggangshan experience!), who thus inscribed himself in this iconic place, too. A park with statues of important Communists, including Mao (in bronze) and Zhu De (in stone) and a stelae park, featuring endorsements by high cadres, including the next generation leader Jiang Zemin, have been added as well. Finally, the film clip returns to the memorial museum as the key interpretative site of the whole place, which exhibits mostly maps and weapons of the time, again enticing the national TV audience to consider a personal visit of the site.

Comparing the above national TV version for a broader audience of Chinese citizens with the educational *Zhonghua hun* (disc 2) video, produced at the same time (1998) by Jiangxi Educational TV, one immediately notes the less touristic and more didactic approach for the targeted pupils. Starting with views of the mountains, shots of Huangyangjie (as the 'military' key spot), the memorial hall, and mourning

235 In fact, the bleak situation caused many in the Communist fold to question the revolutionary cause which moved Mao to write about mandatory 'revolutionary optimism' to counter the tide of depression.

236 The black wall with names has become a globalised feature in the artistic language commemorating death. Cf. Koselleck (1998).

wreaths, the key themes of the site are introduced. Historical footage of executions recalling the brutal persecution of revolutionaries by the GMD after the end of the First United Front provides the background to the lesson learnt by the CCP that 'power grows out of the barrel of the gun', as Mao termed it (*before* he came to Jinggangshan, though). With the help of the the two 'local figures' Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo (who were not important to the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV version, possibly because of their 'problematic' histories, and are also not disclosed as 'bandits' to the intended watching pupils of the educational video, but rather are to show local willingness to cooperate with the Communists), the base area was set up, which was, however, under constant pressure from the GMD. The educational video presents the ideological and military developments in didactic fashion. Militarily, the first attack by the GMD could be pushed back (didactically visualised with maps), while internally, the Communists also started their land revolution attempts, in drawings pointedly showing to the intended watching pupils children taking the lead in accusing landlords and asking for 'justice'! The 'C.C.P.' flag of the time and several slogans are also introduced, as well as Mao's three guidelines for the Army, assuring the Party's lead over the military, and the six rules for the soldiers how to behave (to not antagonise the majority of the locals). In cultural terms, the successful defence at Huangyangjie during Mao's absence would be praised and eternalised by him in a well-known poem (when he, being away, was informed of it) also reproduced in golden letters on stone at Jinggangshan. This and other 'moving' stories have become a staple in the classroom, and this educational video also shows a classroom with teachers and primary school pupils, reading out such stories from their textbook collectively, which should resonate with the target group of this educational video. An elderly cadre of the Party School, in turn, is to authenticate the whole by telling of the simple life at the time in Jinggangshan in an interview, thus adding a participant perspective to the presentation. The octagonal building in Maoping village where Mao wrote his two famous essays is to suggest that important ideological creative work was drawn from the local experience at the time. On the military front, Peng Dehuai (who would have the great fall-out with Mao in 1959 which is, of course, not mentioned, but making him here appear as an 'unproblematic' figure working with Mao, given that he had been rehabilitated in the Deng Xiaoping era) arrived also with his troops (after the failed Pingjiang uprising in Hunan of July 1928) to reinforce the Communists. But in January 1929, they were forced to give up the whole Jinggangshan area. While the wounded soldiers in the hospital who could not flee in time would be brutally killed by the enemy troops who then burnt all, the survivors are represented with interviews of elderly military commanders who explain the 'spirit' of Jinggangshan as the legacy of the whole

experience to the intended audience of watching pupils. To follow up on the legacy aspect, Mao is shown when he returned in 1965 to Jinggangshan after the Communist successful establishment of 'New China'. A photo of Deng Xiaoping (who had not been to Jinggangshan back in the late 1920s, but duly visited later during the Cultural Revolution), and footage of general secretary Jiang Zemin (in office at the time of the production of the video) who visited this key revolutionary site in autumn 1989 (!) (i.e., after the bloody crushing of the Tiananmen movement) are to document that also the following leaders cared for the site. Jiang Zemin is even shown writing his endorsement with the brush (since he liked practicing calligraphy which he left for so many places in the 'patriotic education bases' system), thus updating the topic to the educational video's time of production.

The 'patriotic education' booklet, in turn (Li Ch. et al. 1998) provides a closer look into what the filmic representations only sketchily hinted at or even left out. Overall, the rather long booklet praises Jinggangshan as the first base area of the Communists, with the main institutions located in Ciping village, but some also in various other villages scattered around this mountainous area. Here, the fact that Mao Zedong who was the first to lead the rests of his Autumn Harvest Uprising troops there, had forged links with the two local chiefs of the 'green forest troops' (i.e., bandits), Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo (of whom the Hakka background is, however, not mentioned),[237] to allow him access to the area, is, if cautiously, addressed. Short sanitised biographies of the two are given (13–19), but nothing is said about their tragic end (i.e., their execution by the Communists in 1930, later termed a 'mistake'). The swearing-in ceremony to the Party held by Mao at the time with the reproduced 'C.C.P.' oath (not addressing here the many spelling errors which pupils will immediately detect and being in fact of 1931, not of 1927 when Mao moved into the area! – p. 7, and not explaining either why the 'English acronym' 'C.C.P.' was used with people evidently not even knowing how to write properly in Chinese)[238] is described as an event of great importance (7, 135). (This can be compared by the intended readers to the modern longer version of the swearing-in ceremonies often held at such 'patriotic education showcase bases' as a standard form of 'use' of such sites.) The attentive reader can, however, also draw the conclusion from the booklet's narrative, that de facto, only the expropriation of

237 As Mary Erbaugh has pointed out already in the 1990s, the Hakka have been largely written out of CCP history, though she mainly referred to the leader biographies. See Erbaugh (1996).

238 One may note that today's official PRC lobbying against using 'CCP' (Chinese Communist Party) but using 'CPC' (Communist Party of China) instead (a directive some historically less informed foreigners think they have to follow, too) is self-defeated by such 'authentic' use under Mao of 'CCP'.

'the rich' (and raids on nearby down-hill towns) enabled the survival for the Communist troops for a short time and brought the revolutionaries some sympathies of 'the masses'. In fact, it becomes clear that the Communist troops only could undertake raids as long as the local military normally stationed there was away to fight elsewhere, and when it came back, the Communists had to retreat into the mountains (10). To guarantee survival, Mao handed out the six rules of conduct to his men that should create sympathy with 'the masses' by only attacking the rich and not behaving as usually soldiers did, i.e., plundering, and prescribing respect of local custom and sensibilities (11–12, 130), [239] while at the same time making sure that the military had to be under the command of the Party represented by himself (129). While Mao had set up the base area in autumn 1927, the 'wrong' policies of the South Hunan Party committee ordered him to temporarily leave Jinggangshan already in March 1928 (which meant for the locals that the 'enemy troops' could move in easily and devastate the area for the first time) (23, 138–139). When Mao quickly moved back, Zhu De and Chen Yi then joined Mao's troops in April 1928 in Jinggangshan with the rest of their troops after their own brief Nanchang uprising of August 1927 (cf. chapter 4.2) (23). And the rest of the troops of the failed Pingjiang uprising (in Hunan) led by Peng Dehuai would also eventually move to Jinggangshan in late 1928, thus creating a sizeable group of soldiers (56).[240] After some skirmishes with enemy troops, and raids for food and weapons by the Communists, the latter felt confident enough to set up a 'red government' in 1928 in a local ancestor hall (33). In practice, this meant, above all, to redistribute the available land. Different from later more brutal strategies, at first everyone was given a piece of land, including the former landlords (37). And 'enemy' soldiers were tried to win over rather than kill them (which was a pragmatic solution) (55). But soon, 'Party purification' (*xi dang* 洗党) policies were applied also here (53),[241] and some landlords were killed, too (which carefully hints at the less sanguine facets Communist rule entailed as well) (131).

All the while the base area was continuously in danger. Given the constant warfare also between the warlords in China, the Communists had to follow closely where their guerrilla activities could be conducted when warlord or GMD troops

239 Here one may note that Mao was flexible in interpreting rules, since key to survival for the Communists was to not create too much tension with the locals.

240 One may note the particular stress on Peng Dehuai in the booklet who in 1959 would clash with Mao at the Lushan Conference (and end miserably in the Culturral Revolution), pointing out his admiration for Mao at that early time.

241 After the *annus horribilis* of 1927 for the Chinese Communists and the power struggle in Moscow until Stalin emerged as undisputed leader there, CCP history entered a particularly complicated phase. For a short summary, cf. Saich (2023), especially pp. 70–76.

were busy elsewhere, but the hefty inner-Party struggles hampered the Communist base area, too. The official narrative sees all fault with the (South) Hunan Party branch (which had ordered Mao to move into southern Hunan while he tried to build up his power base in Jinggangshan) (40–41). (The difficulty of delivering messages at the time exempted the Party central, still in Shanghai, as they are said to have been informed too late) (52). In any case, already in August 1928, enemy troops devastated parts of the area again (42), while Mao had been ordered to move some of his troops once more to southern Hunan. Those remaining in the Jinggangshan base area had to face the most intense struggle at that point which was the one to hold the place at the strategic Huangyangjie so much hailed thereafter. This inspired Mao who was on his way back with his troops to the famous poem on Jinggangshan already mentioned which eternalised this 'victory' (and made forget the smaller defeats before) (47). Over the winter of 1928/29, 'the enemy' tried to focus on economic blockade rather than continuous attacks on the difficult terrain (58–65). Since the area mainly lived from selling wood and tea apart from self-sufficient agriculture, the curbing of trade especially for crucial goods from the outside like salt or medicine meant, in fact, also hard times for the locals. The wounded Communist soldiers could only be treated very rudimentarily (and often died even of minor wounds), whereupon the Party tried to boost morale by handing out the slogan of 'relying on your own strength' (*zili gengsheng* 自力更生) – a future staple in the propaganda arsenal – to encourage people to simply make do with what was available, while pragmatically trying to entice merchants to smuggle things into the area (102), which had set up its own 'money system' (61). In fact, food had to be transported from the lower parts up to the mountains, for which 'Zhu De's shoulder pole', shown in the film clip as described above, is a 'memorial piece' in the museum's exhibition (63–64). In January 1929, renewed pressure by the GMD, however, forced Mao to leave Jinggangshan for good with the main part of the Communist troops, while Peng Dehuai's troops shouldered the task of defending the area as good and as long as possible to guard the rear. While Mao is said to have master-minded the whole defence work at the strategically crucial Huangyangjie which had shielded the defenders against former attacks (88–92), the narrative stresses that this time the enemy troops bribed a local who 'sold his soul' (in a strikingly Judas-like vocabulary!) (93) to lead them up a small hill path to circumvent the fortification. I.e., the narrative suggests that only treason rendered it possible for the Mao-inspired fortifications to be run over by 'the enemy' – an oft-used trope in Chinese narratives (68).[242] At that point, also Peng Dehuai had to

242 Cf., e.g., the presentation of the Great Wall at Shanhaiguan in chapter 2.3 of the present book where only treason is said to have made it possible for the Manchus to 'enter the pass'.

retreat with his troops, only leaving the local 'bandit' Wang Zuo and his men there, while the Communist troops moved to Ruijin, by then the Communist central base area (see below) (69). For the local people, this victory of the enemy troops in January 1929 was a nightmare, as the latter vented all their wrath on them, burning everything to the ground and massacring the population which had harboured the Communist 'rebels' for so many months (70–72). The (surviving) expropriated landlords, in turn, used the occasion to turn things back, too. And for the soldiers of the Red Army (as the worker and peasant army was called by then) in the 'hospital' who had not been able to flee, this meant death. As mentioned, their collective tomb is today part of the memorial set-up (and reflects also the uneasiness of those that left at the time, leaving their wounded comrades behind to sure death.)

Still, the 'patriotic' booklet is also eager to point out that there were acts of resistance nonetheless, naming the local 'saving' of revolutionary artefacts, or telling the story of the heroic deed of a young woman who seemed to give in to 'the enemy' by leading them the way on the mountains, to then bring them to a dead end and pushing the leader into the abyss to perish together with herself (73–74, 116–117). While the local 'bandit' Wang Zuo obviously evaded the enemy troops in time, he would return in April 1929, and Peng Dehuai, too, in May, then handing some money to the survivors of the massacre to make good for the horrors they had endured in the meantime (a gesture for which they were grateful, the reader is assured, and the scene of Peng's handing the money to the deeply moved locals is duly reproduced in the exhibition as a diorama) (75).

In terms of the commemoration of Jinggangshan as a 'sacred' site of the revolution, the 'patriotic' booklet points out that the Jinggangshan revolutionary museum was, as mentioned, the very first *local* revolutionary museum in all of China, which underlines its official high status in the Mao era (77). The museum displays some artefacts, but many exhibited items are maps, as well as photos and film clips of later prominent visits to the site during PRC times by influential figures, bespeaking its legacy, from Mao or Zhu De (who both returned to the site) to cultural figures like Guo Moruo (who had not been there earlier). The post-Mao key leaders Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and Hu Jintao, all visited, too (78).[243] The Jinggangshan site was first nominated a national 'excellent societal education base', and a site for the education for primary to secondary school pupils, thus foreshadowing the role as a key 'patriotic education showcase base'. Notably, as briefly shown in the educational video above, Jiang Zemin visited Jinggangshan,

243 Xi Jinping would visit later as well, to mark his joining the legacy of the 'cradle of the revolution'. Cf. 'Xi Jinping's visit to cradle of China's communist revolution ahead of Lunar New Year "shows he has consolidated his power"' (2016).

this hyper-politically correct site of Mao times and destination of masses of young Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution, in autumn 1989, i.e., after the Tiananmen events in summer of that year, to point out that this site was, in fact, ideal for the political education of youth. While the protesters at Tiananmen Square had claimed to be 'patriots', he argued that Jinggangshan could show that in fact 'patriotism' and 'revolution' were one and the same! (79).

Still, the site was not without its pitfalls. Earlier, Mao himself, who, as mentioned, only visited and thus endorsed certain places of his revolutionary career in his later years (e.g., not Ruijin, see below), had come to Jinggangshan, 'his' place, again in 1965 in the run-up for the Cultural Revolution (81). This, however, meant that during the Deng Xiaoping era of 'reform and opening', the Mao-centred exhibition had become problematic and had to be 'reworked' to 'adapt' to the new times. To make it more 'modern', more artwork was installed, as was multimedia (in line with many other 'patriotic education' sites we have discussed until now) (82–83). This intended to reach out to the new generation of youth (which supposedly had gone astray in 1989) more easily. Wandering exhibitions were also sent around the country to spread the 'Jinggangshan spirit' all over China (similar to the Geleshan site with its 'Red Crag Soul' travelling exhibition – cf. chapter 3.2 above), i.e., to show its ongoing relevance for all Chinese citizens. Furthermore, lectures given outside the area also showed how the museum tried proactively to meet the demands of the Jiang Zemin-era 'outline on patriotic education' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book). The idea to combine the green and beautiful mountain area as a recreation site with revolutionary education in combined tourism packages was also bringing Jinggangshan into the modern consumer society (83–85).

In the 'former residences' of Mao and other key leaders (all rebuilt due to the enemy's torched-earth policy in January 1929), special exhibitions are to show how simple the Party men lived (and, as one may add, occasionally on spot adding the women, mostly the companions of leaders, who are rarely mentioned in the written sources, including the 'patriotic' booklet), or how the military 'hospital' worked under the circumstances, to authenticate revolutionary history in a modern consumerist society via their tangible form. For fulfilling the task of a 'patriotic education showcase base', the museum also established contacts with schools, starting with primary school, to integrate its offer with morality education for the youngest pupils, bringing out various specialised publications with many stories (like the ones used in the filmed class of the educational *Zhonghua hun* video described above) (85). Locally, even kindergarten children would be led to the martyrs' cemetery to tell them stories of heroism. For serving various target groups, tailored offers were thus created. This, in fact, answered Jiang Zemin's call who, when visiting in autumn

1989 (after the Tiananmen crisis and during the dissolution of the Eastern European Socialist bloc), had argued that 'patriotic education' should start from kindergarten – as was then also integrated in the key documents for 'patriotic education' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), since only this way the 'socialist realm' (*shehuizhuyi de jiangshan* 社会主义的江山, a remarkably 'traditional' phrasing!) would be secured through generations. All of this was to underline the key message that the Party representatives were and are the 'real patriots' (and not the 1989 protesters) (86–87). On a more practical front, to facilitate more people to visit this mountainous area, better infrastructure was built as well, in keeping with the general trend to build up better infrastructure for 'red travels', invigorating the formerly out-ot-the-way places of the revolution.

For a potential tourist visit, the 'patriotic' booklet introduces the various sightseeing spots around the area, while always stressing that the Communists at the time also integrated themselves well with the local population, helping them in daily work (to counter the impression that they were just people living off the local population, also always pointing out how frugally they lived, but never losing their 'revolutionary optimism'.) The educational facilities for the soldiers, on the other hand, are also to show that the Party, while never neglecting ideological education (124), provided also literacy classes beyond teaching revolutionary songs and the like (100–101). Reflecting the educational background of the 'patriotic' booklet and the new appraisal of selected 'traditional' values, one site is even used to thrust Mao into the role of a 'filial' paragon (!), e.g., describing how he helped an old lonely local woman carry water or clean the courtyard (105). (Given his conflictual relationship with his own father and stress on revolutionary autonomy *vs* family obligations, 'filial piety' is usually not something coming to mind with Mao – see chapter 5.3 for the case of Mao's home.) Another site is used to show an exhibition on the military leaders Zhu De and Chen Yi (who led the rest of their Nanchang Uprising troops up the mountains) to get beyond the purely Mao-centred narrative once obligatory (but no longer in sync with Deng Xiaoping's and Jiang Zemin's eras when 'collective leadership' was key) (108). The former 'hospital' recalling the death of the wounded soldiers, however, was particularly honoured in 1970 during the Cultural Revolution with a stele (bespeaking the power of the military before general Lin Biao's fall in 1971 to establish a new memorialisation for the military there in the 'sacred' Jinggangshan area – something less in sync with later preferences) (109–114).

In Ciping in the central 'martyrs'' cemetery, the accent is, however, all on Mao who wrote the inscription 'Long live the martyrs' (118). Deng Xiaoping (who, as mentioned, had no personal historical connection to Jinggangshan) wrote the

memorial stele's title, thus somewhat 'balancing out' Mao's preponderance, and the artwork is recording Mao in basically two ways: referencing the 'spark that can start a praerie fire' (which he wrote only *later* in 1930! – i.e., *not* in Jinggangshan), and his 'power coming out of the barrel of the gun' statement (which he had voiced at the 7 August meeting of 1927 *before* he came to Jinggangshan!) (120). That way, Jinggangshan is de facto bracketed by the larger story of the Chinese revolution's evolution in its ideological and military dimension. The very practical need of arms is also stressed by stories like that of the desperate defence of one single gun when the GMD ordered the Communists in Hunan to give up their arms (with the 'saved' gun being exhibited during the Cultural Revolution even in an extra exhibition!) (133–134). The booklet thus sees Mao's conclusion that the former urban-centred approach of the CCP did not fit China, but that China needed an approach starting from the countryside to built up a base area first (and secure it militarily), as the basic lesson and key legacy of the Jinggangshan experience (141). In terms of further legacies, land reform (or rather land revolution) which was practiced here with a first official 'law' (148), the three basic tenets of the Red Army formulated here, as well as the six rules of conduct to not antagonise the population are seen as central, too, for Mao's ideological imprint. However, in the era of Deng Xiaoping, the ideological focus had shifted. According to Deng, at Mao's time it was correct to move from the countryside to the city, but in the modern era, the issue is 'modernisation with Chinese charaterstics' (151). In this sense, for Deng, Jinggangshan represented a bygone age. Nevertheless, the booklet defends the place arguing that the 'spirit of Jinggangshan' is still valid, encouraging people to sacrifice themselves and fight without fear (153). Deng Xiaoping himself is even cited for defence, notably from June (!) 1989 (with no apparent relation to Jinggangshan, though!) (160), stating that the spirit of struggle is 'our tradition', which also helps to 'overcome the phenomenon of corruption' (the main official target of the student protest movement of 1989). That way, the booklet also smartly integrates Deng Xiaoping to bolster Jinggangshan's legacy! Jiang Zemin followed up on this by stressing that 'even though today is not any longer like Jinggangshan', referring to the better material condition of people's lives, education in 'patriotism' was still needed from kindergarten on to 'not forget' the revolutionary forebears, and to make sure the 'socialist realm' will be handed down from generation to generation (161). That way, Mao's and Deng's legacy could be combined for furthering 'patriotic education' via the Jinggangshan showcase base for the Chinese citizen as pupil or tourist also in modern times.

Moving from the late 1990s up to the present Xi Jinping era, the framing of this site of 'patriotic education' as reflected in the newer *Fengbei* narrative (Liu Yuyan

2019) shows already by its sheer relative length with which it deals with this 'showcase base', that this 'Mao place' is seen as of key relevance for educating the next generation of Chinese citizens also in the Xi Jinping era. Jinggangshan is defined here as a base area for 'village revolution' (*nongcun geming* 农村革命) (41), as the 'cradle' of the Chinese revolution, and the 'spiritual home' of the CCP. The subsites (which are claimed here simply to have been preserved well!), i.e., the museum, the 'martyrs''cemetery, Huangyangjie, the octagonal building, the place where Mao's and Zhu De's troops met, the Longjiang shuyuan educational facility, and Mao's former residences etc., are characterised as ideal for 'patriotic education' (42). In 2005, the museum was chosen as one of the key projects to be updated for enhanced 'patriotic education',[244] leading to the new museum's opening in 2007 at the 80th anniversary of the base area. Many endorsements and filmed visits of high-ranking visitors (including those by Mao and Zhu De in the 1960s) are presented in the museum, and the new exhibition is organised in various 'scenes', highlighting key moments in the base area. Outside the museum, Huangyangjie is especially profiled, where the people of Jinggangshan erected a stele in 1960 which was rebuilt in 1977 (i.e., was likely destroyed in between), which now sports calligraphies of Mao and Zhu De (44). With the Longjiang shuyuan, the Hakka legacy is addressed (finally named here without further ado), since it was the main educational facility originally serving the local Hakka (45).

While introducing the base area and its establishment, the narrative, however, evades once more any mentioning of the 'bandit' character of Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo: they and their troops are characterised in this new 'patriotic education' reading instead as 'peasant self-defence guards'. Being against the local landlords, they were thus 'revolutionaries'. Therefore, Mao decided to present Yuan Wencai with 100 rifles to earn his trust, who would then give him money, food, and cloth, and allowed Mao and his men in into the area. They were also allowed to build a 'hospital' for their wounded, while Mao, in turn, would help Yuan Wencai 'reorganise' his troops, which meant he also established a Party cell there! (46). The fact that Mao sent a trusted man to Wang Zuo, who helped the latter against one of his arch-enemies by murdering him (which is not detailed further in this narrative), thus earning the trust of Wang Zuo, is at least mentioned.

The narrative, trying to impress the intended young readers, profiles Mao and other figures by various stories about clever strategies and easy-to-understand imagery. E.g., Mao explained the need for setting up a base area with the 'bottom' on

244 See 'Aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi de "yihao gongcheng" qidong' (2005) which highlighted, above all, Mao's birthplace Shaoshan (cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book) and Jinggangshan.

which the troops could rest while waiting for opportunities to move with their legs. For clever strategies, it is pointed out that when Chiang Kai-shek had to deal with the Guangxi warlord clique and had to deploy troops from Hunan, this was a good opportunity for the Communists to move into those areas with reduced enemy troops (47). Since Mao himself had a problem with his leg at the time and thus could not join in person, Luo Ronghuan 罗荣桓, the later general and at the time the head of the spy group, who is thus credited beyond Mao, smartly used personal connections to send own men in disguise to enter the town of Chaling in southern Hunan (cf. above for Yandiling). They would then quickly disarm the guards and simply open the gates of the town from within (which however would be lost soon after again) (48). Zhu De, in turn, who had tried to move South to Guangdong after the brief Nanchang Uprising of August 1927 (see chapter 4.2), hoping to connect to the sea – and to Soviet help for a 'second Northern Expedition' (!), quickly realised when he had to change course. Those not following him but heading directly to the South were, in fact, annihilated, corroborating his military foresight, while he successfully moved around in Jiangxi. Still, because of the hardships, many of his men wanted to leave, and thus he tried to motivate them by comparing the situation to Russia in 1905 when the revolution failed, which then would be successful in 1917 after all. Thus, the men should believe in that they would also see 'their 1917' (49). While some still opted for leaving, those who endured would often become great generals later, thus suggesting to the intended reading pupil that it was worthwhile to take the test, trust in the wise leader, and not give up. Another challenge of the Communists had been in Southern Hunan, ending in temporary defeat, which was according to the narrative caused by the wrong 'leftist' current in the Party and its wrong management.

Zhu De and Chen Yi, on the other hand, sent Mao's brother Mao Zetan to Jinggangshan, who found Mao in the octagonal building after convincing Yuan Wencai to let him through. At the same time, Mao had already sent a trusted man, He Changgong 何长工, disguised as a merchant, to look for Zhu De, whom He Changgong knew personally, which shows to the intended reading pupils that the scattered Communists cared for each other in spite of adverse circumstances (50). And thus, the two troops were finally united in Jinggangshan. The Party central would name the joined troops 'Fourth Red Army', with Zhu De as the military head, Mao as the Party representative, and Chen Yi as the political head, and these troops had in fact fighting experience from the Northern Expedition (when still fighting alongside the GMD during the First United Front) and were thus very treasured (51). This way, the strategic and military side of Jinggangshan is clearly highlighted as the basis on which further developments could rest.

The *Fengbei* narrative differs also from the 'patriotic' presentations of the late 1990s in that it profiles not only Mao and the later Communist leaders, but also three (non-local) people for Jinggangshan who lost their lives and thus became 'martyrs'. This way, the presentation emotionalises the topic and also tries to explain the motivation of individuals sustaining the Communists at that time. It also discloses what should be seen in their trajectories as a 'model' for present-day pupils. The first, Wang Erzhuo 王尔琢, had been introduced at Whampoa into the Party by Zhou Enlai (another later key Party figure not connected to Jinggangshan otherwise) and was the strategic head of the newly created Fourth Red Army. He would defend Jinggangshan against enemy attacks, but would be killed in the end when he tried to punish treason. In 2009, i.e., during the era of Hu Jintao, he was included in the '100 heroic model personalities that made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of New China' (cf. above Chen Yannian in Longhua). A reproduced poem summarising his deeds characterises him as motivated by revenge for the bloody 12 April 1927 coup of Chiang Kai-shek in Shanghai (which calls to mind one of the aims of 'patriotic education' to learn 'whom to love and whom to hate') (52). Being of a well-off family, he became 'progressive' and also educated his wife in revolutionary ideas, as the narrative tells the intended reading pupil. He would go to the Whampoa military academy, when his new wife was pregnant, telling her how to name the child (as a legacy), but would never see her again. (This, one may add, very much conforms to typical morality tales.) Zhou Enlai recruited him and sent him for political work to the advance troops of the Eastern route army of the Northern Expedition. They thus opened the way to Zhejiang for the latter. When he was warned about Chiang Kai-shek's moves against the Communists (53), he wrote a farewell letter to his family, acknowledging that he had let his family down, but that he had done so for the better of all families in China (which, again, is a familiar trope of morality tales.) He thus participated in the Nanchang Uprising (given his connection to Zhou Enlai – see chapter 4.2), and then swore to let his beard and hair grow until victory of the revolution would be achieved (another familiar trope – cf. Ye Ting in Geleshan). He then stayed with Zhu De and Chen Yi (i.e., with those who remained of the Nanchang Uprising troops and moved to Jinggangshan) (54). In May 1928, it was him to successfully defend Jinggangshan, luring 'the enemy' into ambush, and who knew how to use the critical points of the mountainous terrain effectively (55–56). Notably, the *Fengbei* narrative also names Lin Biao (the later 'fallen angel' of PRC history, a name evaded in the late 1990s descriptions as someone present at the time in the 'sacred' Jinggangshan, too – and at the forefront of the Jinggangshan hype of the early Cultural Revolution times), describing him, however, as someone

who always wanted to retreat, while Wang Erzhuo rejected this, thus insinuating that Lin Biao was a coward already then. Wang, instead, charged on with other 'daring to die' men, forcing 'the enemy' to close combat with spears, thus making them run away. This marked the high-point of Jinggangshan with 500.000 people in this base area, hailed also by Mao in his essay on the 'struggle in Jinggangshan' (57–58). But soon after, a traitor endangered them (i.e., enticing parts of the Communist troops to desert). When Wang Erzhuo wanted to hunt the traitor down, he was hit by a bullet and died (58–59). Mao thereupon composed a couplet and Chen Yi wrote it in his calligraphy, honouring him.[245] His tomb would be restored in 1982, i.e., only after the Cultural Revolution, but he thus marks Jinggangshan as also a place of courageous fighting spirit, ideological dedication to stand up against any 'traitors', to the point of personal sacrifice.

The second person who lost his life and is profiled in the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* narrative is He Tingying 何挺颖. He had participated in Mao's (failed) Autumn Harvest Uprising and distinguished himself in the hailed Huangyangjie defence. In early 1929 he was wounded, and then died by another bullet. While he, too, came from a rather well-to-do family (60), his biography is somewhat out-of-the-box in that he is presented to the intended reading pupils as someone who was considered rather 'untalented' as a child. He, however, tried to make up for his lack of talent through studying hard, and he succeeded. This suggests to the intended reading pupils that there is no limit to those who strive. To underline his moral character, he is typically presented as someone who always helped others (61). When he came into contact with modern thinking over his father, he first focused purely on academic excellence, but the (anti-imperialist) May Thirtieth movement (of 1925) shook him up politically (which is again pertinent for a reading pupil to underline that while studying hard is important, politics is even more important) (62). Thereupon he went to Shanghai University and became a CCP member. He participated in the Northern Expedition until 1927, when the mounting tensions in the First United Front suggested to better leave in time to avoid being rounded up. He joined in Mao's Autumn Harvest Uprising as his first Communist military adventure, but was overall a political figure, not a military one, which meant that he was not respected by old school military figures focused on combatant roles (63). This led Mao to stress (with his three basic principles the proclamation of which is thus de facto explained as caused by this situation) that for the Communists, the military had to follow the political! A key positive role of the political figures was to prevent people from deserting. Thus, He Tingying proved, in fact, important in that he managed

245 Mao also mentions the death of Wang Erzhuo in his essay on the 'struggle in Jinggangshan'.

to convince many to stay on even after the Autumn Harvest Uprising's failure (64). While the *Fengbei* narrative evades the issue of Mao's leaving Jinggangshan for Southern Hunan and the failed campaigns there, He Tingying would stress back in Jinggangshan that they had to hold the place for the revolution at all costs (65). And that way he distinguished himself at Huangyangjie. He also attempted to direct political work toward the enemy troops to weaken them (another common feature of Communist warfare tales), and he worked with bluffs: that way Huangyangjie could be saved and defended (in spite of the absence of the main troops). Mao and Zhu De, when coming back, thus lauded him (66). In early 1929 (when most troops retreated with Mao, Zhu De, and Chen Yi) he was wounded, and when he was hit once more, he died there a 'martyrs' death'. This case shows above all the key role of the political cadre and that the ideological trumps the military.

The third figure portrayed in this new framing of Jinggangshan is Zhang Ziqing 张子清 (of whom actually it is not clear when he died, since he was wounded and could not leave with Mao and the main troops in January 1929).[246] He, too, participated in the Northern Expedition and in the Autumn Harvest Uprising. In 1928, he was wounded and would thereafter die from his not-healing wound. He, too, provides a case of reference for the intended reading pupils, since he is said to have had the chance to go to the US for study, but instead chose the revolution! When wounded, he would hand the saved salt as the only disinfectant available over for others, instead of using it to disinfect his own wounds (which is a scene eternalised on spot in Jinggangshan with a statue). He had been in the Guangzhou peasant movement training institute (Guangzhou nongmin yundong jiangxisuo 广州农民运动讲习所), where Mao had once taught, and later joined Mao's Autumn Harvest Uprising (thus again being profiled as an early cooperator of Mao). Having lost contact during the chaotic situation after the failed uprising with his group of men, he finally met Zhu De and Chen Yi's troops of the brief Nanchang Uprising. He distinguished himself by blocking treason when he detected it. One participant of the Autumn Harvest Uprising, frustrated because of the failure, made arrangements to go over to his former Whampoa teacher of the GMD. When Zhang Ziqing realised something was up, he quickly split away and retreated with his men to Jinggangshan to Mao (i.e., saved his men for the Communists). Since he treated the soldiers well (thus living out the rules of Mao about a 'democratic treatment' of soldiers), his men remained also loyal to him. But when he was wounded, there was

246 Depending on the source, there is May 1929 or May 1930 given. Even the *Fengbei* narrative itself provides both at different sections, not bothering to explain the inconsistency! Given that the Communists had to give up Jinggangshan in January 1929, it is more likely that he as a wounded soldier could only survive a few months rather than over a year.

almost nothing for treatment in the 'hospital'. He thus had to endure unsuccessful surgery without narcotics, but refused to be transported to the outside and stayed optimistic (i.e., living out 'revolutionary optimism'), while offering the salt as the only available disinfectant to others, and later died from his own unhealing wound (67–74). His case advertises altruism and dedication to the larger aim, placing his own needs behind. That way, the *Fengbei* narrative broadens the legacy of the Jinggangshan site beyond Mao with other exemplary figures who sacrificed, but are supposed to be closer-to-life examples for the intended reading pupils, enriched by their emotive qualities as people giving up their lives for the revolution.

Case study: Ruijin

Much of what we saw with Jinggangshan in terms of difficult heritage preservation in material terms holds true also for Ruijin, the 'red capital' of the Jiangxi Soviet (1931–1934) not very far from Jinggangshan. The **Ruijin zhongyang geming gen-judi jinianguan** 瑞金中央革命根据地纪念馆 (Ruijin central revolutionary base area memorial hall) (Jiangxi Province, on the first 'patriotic' list of 1997) memorialises the place where the CCP built up its first state *in nuce*, earning it the name of 'cradle of the republic' (vis-à-vis Jinggangshan as 'cradle of the revolution'). The area of Ruijin – by the way similarly with a strong Hakka community – had been briefly taken by Communist troops, then lost again, and was finally established as the 'Moscow' of China in 1931. It remained so until 1934 when Chiang Kai-shek's fifth encirclement campaign forced the CCP out, i.e., to start what became later known as the Long March. This means that more than Jinggangshan, Ruijin was a relatively stable 'Party place' for the period 1931 to 1934 to test a new system.

Ruijin was in fact, again, intending several places, since the CCP organisations moved around in the area for security reasons. Similar to Jinggangshan, most of the buildings were de facto destroyed by the GMD after taking Ruijin in 1934, as a local 'red tourism' publication admits (*Gannan hongse lüyou* 2005: 8–81). Although Mao received his well-known title of 'chairman' (*zhuxi* 主席) in Ruijin, the fact that he was at times sidelined by others in the CCP and even criticised and stripped of responsibilities during this period, made for the later problematic standing of this 'red' 'heritage site'. Mao never visited again and rather chose to stress Jinggangshan as 'his' site. Ruijin's local Party history therefore does its best to point out the positive connections to Mao and to explain why some things 'went wrong' nevertheless, either blaming them on 'leftist deviationism', or on Comintern interference ignorant of local circumstances (*Hongdu Ruijin shi* 2012). Soviet Union-inspired

'purges' in the Party and Communist in-fighting, with high cadres being forced to write self-criticisms (including also future Communist leader Deng Xiaoping), left their mark on the Ruijin period and thus led to a somewhat mixed legacy of this first Communist 'state in the state' in the view of later leaders. Though gender policies are, e.g., a field hailed today as successful, land policies are locally admitted to have been 'problematic' in terms of the 'extreme' handling of landlords and 'rich peasants' (*Hongdu Ruijin shi* 2012: 121, 126). On the other hand, strict measures taken at the time which are seen positively from today's perspective like anti-corruption campaigns, leading to death penalty in extreme cases, nevertheless suggest at the same time that discipline in this small 'model state' was far from the desired level.

In terms of physical heritage, most sites in Ruijin were rebuilt 'as they had been' in the mid-1950s to early 1960s (Army-connected ones also during the Cultural Revolution, like in Jinggangshan), others only in the 1990s, as locally available 'red tourism' publications point out which, as we noted also in Jinggangshan, are somewhat on the defensive for their locality in narrative strategy in modern times.[247] Significantly, during the existence of the Jiangxi Soviet, first steps to memorialise the history of the CCP had already taken place in the form of official remembering and honouring of 'martyrs' for the Communist cause (namely since 1927) with a stele (*Gannan hongse lüyou* 2005: 13–15) – somewhat similar to the later erection of the 'monument to the people's heroes' on Tiananmen square in Beijing just before the founding of the PRC (which profiles Ruijin of the early 1930s as a precursor of Beijing in 1949). The place is to convey today an illustration of the breadth of institutions the CCP had founded already then: from a bank, over schools, the post office, and the law court with prison, to manufactures and small factories producing civil and military goods. Thus, the present-day news agency as well as the security bureau or the official press organs all go back to these predecessors (and these institutions are, in fact, encouraged to use Ruijin as a 'patriotic education site' today for their staff!). However, in some cases it is openly stated that the buildings to be visited today had been physically not at the given place but moved there later (*Gannan hongse lüyou* 2005: 31, 33, 44), which limits the 'authenticity' of what one encounters today even further. Obviously, this served to present a coherent and conveniently located total of the institutions placed together as an open-air museum, created for the visiting tourist today, either in Yeping 叶坪 (the first permanent settlement), or in the later (since April 1933) favoured Shazhouba 沙洲坝, both villages belonging to Ruijin municipality.[248]

247 See *Gannan hongse lüyou* (2005: 75–77). This local 'red travel' publication details the history of single buildings.

248 This also meant one had not to care for preservation in locations mid-town, e.g.

The most iconic building of the Jiangxi Soviet was the octagonal big hall in Shazhouba (inspired by the octagonal form of a Red Army cap) which could accommodate more than 2.000 people and was the most prestigious building project undertaken at the time, though the close-by air shelters are a reminder that existence in the Chinese Soviet was precarious, due to GMD airplanes occasionally bombing the area.[249] At the time of the second Chinese Soviet congress in 1934, it hosted not only representatives from all over China, but also from Japanese-occupied Taiwan, Manchukuo, Korea, Vietnam, and Indonesia, thus figuring as a central Communist place of international relevance, as local materials like to proudly point out (*Hongdu Ruijin shi* 2012: 63). When more and more Communists joined the Ruijin Soviet, fleeing GMD pressure elsewhere in China, including the Central Committee which had to give up its clandestine residence in Shanghai to move to Ruijin, new lodgings had to be provided. Usually, the Communists did not build new housing but simply expropriated landlords or re-used temples. An interesting case is how they dealt with Otto Braun, the German-born Comintern-sent military advisor who was later held co-responsible for Communist military failures (cf. below for the Zunyi Conference): he came together with the Central Committee from Shanghai but lived apart from everybody else, and his house, of course, was not included in plans for rebuilding (*Gannan hongse lüyou* 2005: 66–67). For providing an official interpretation of the site, a memorial museum was added in Ruijin in the 1950s, and expanded and re-located in the late 1970s. And this is the key site listed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

As I observed on site in 2014, Ruijin tries to sell itself by now to the visitor, above all, as the PRC *in nuce* and starting point of the Long March. Thus, besides the reconstructed buildings of the time, including 'rediscovered' wall slogans (see fig. 3.3.2), Ruijin provides a new huge outdoor 'Central Revolutionary Base Area History Museum' which is to show that Ruijin had the highest authority of all of the several Chinese Soviet base areas existing at the time, being the 'central' one, and thus stands representative for all. In the park, the single other soviet areas (under various leaders) that existed in China are represented by sculptures and explanation to show how Ruijin 'led' them all to prepare for the later PRC – something important locally and visually impressive for the visitor, but not even integrated into the newer 'official' 'patriotic' representations of the site which also reflects the somewhat problematic character of Ruijin and its claims in Party history, especially if confronted with ideologically less ambivalent places like Yan'an (see below), the subsequent Chinese 'Moscow' after the Long March.

249 For a brief summary of military aviation in China and the GMD's commemoration of those aviators that perished during bombings of Communists in the 1930s, see Müller (2022: 267–289).

Fig. 3.3.2 Re-created wall slogans on rebuilt houses in Ruijin (photograph by the author, 2014)

In filmic representation, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 5), produced by Ganzhou TV's 'special topic department' in 1998, starts with the iconic octagonal hall to then zoom in on the legitimising label of 'Central Soviet Provisional Government' to visualise Ruijin's historical importance. The old grass-covered pagoda, an icon for Ruijin as such, and primary school children who visit the place (clearly showing their economic underprivileged status in the rather poor province of Jiangxi at the time to the national TV audience) introduce this 'patriotic education' site (and its need of investment).

Outdoor locations (Yeping village and the reconstructed buildings) and indoor exhibitions (of maps, photos, and some statues in the museum) visually underpin the narrative, which, however, highlights the venue of the first Chinese Soviet congress, held in Yeping in a local 500-year-old (Xie 谢 family) ancestor hall (which is thus also architectonically of interest for a potential tourist). Representations of Marx and Lenin at the walls, and slogans including 'democratic dictatorship' are to evoke the atmosphere of the time. While shots of the large lawn where the Red Army gathered is accompanied by brass music, inside the re-adapted ancestor hall building, the single tiny sub-spaces created for the single 'departments of the government' are shown, illustrated with some historical photos (though not necessarily

taken there) to suggest to the watching audience how this first more 'stable' Red Government worked. In fact, this first 'Chinese Soviet congress' had to shift the venue from Shanghai (where it originally should be held at the October revolution date, i.e., 7 November in the Western calendar) to Ruijin. To confuse 'the enemy', a fake session venue was set up in Changting 长汀 (in neighbouring Fujian Province) which, in fact, was bombarded by GMD airplanes, while Ruijin was left in peace.

Early published decisions, e.g., on the marriage regulations, the labour law, and the land law are to show how the internal politics were designed. Mao's 'red well' in the village of Shazhouba, in turn, commemorated as a story in Chinese textbooks (with primary school students reading out a section collectively as heard in the background) is to prove that Mao also advised the locals in practical terms (and thus also served them), telling them where and how to dig a well. The famous octagonal building was also newly set up which would serve for the second Chinese Soviet congress in January 1934. Built with a gallery, it guaranteed that all could see well what happened on the stage from everywhere. Many important speeches were held at the occasion, and decisions like to fix 1 August 1927 (i.e., the Nanchang Uprising date, see chapter 4.2), as the foundational date of the Red Army, were finalised here (being already proposed a year earlier in 1933). The octagonal building would be later destroyed by enemy troops, but rebuilt after 1949. The former residences of Party leaders and localities of all the 'departments of government' during the whole Ruijin period are to show that these had been established back then already, including those for the press, bank etc.

But commemoration of those who had lost their lives during the 'anti-imperialist' and the land revolution struggle (in fact over 100.000 people!) was also something the leaders thought of, building a monument in form of a projectile (!) on the base of a star for them (which would be destroyed when the Communists were forced out, as well, and rebuilt in PRC times – this monument is one of the major sites to visit today.) That way, the Party already created its own public way of commemoration of 'martyrdom' at the time, and prepared for further sacrifices. At the fifth encirclement campaign by the GMD in 1934, the CCP had to give up Ruijin (visualised with steps on hill paths) and start the Long March, but in 1949, the Communists nevertheless finally won.

In the end, a visual blending of Tiananmen and Ruijin's octagonal building, and the projectile-formed memorial with the (more classical-style) Tiananmen Square 'monument to the people's heroes' underlines to the national audience of the TV film clip once more as the key message that Ruijin is, in fact, the precursor for the establishment of the PRC, the 'cradle of the republic', and thus a site deserving its place in history.

In comparison to the above national TV film clip, the educational video *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 2), produced by Ruijin Educational TV (which calls the place 'red home Ruijin', i.e., not using the listed name of the 'memorial hall'), places the first focus on the present city of Ruijin as the outcome of all this history. Similar to the educational video on Jinggangshan, it addresses the so-called 'justice' against landlords (with paintings), by this supposedly laying the base for a more just society to be formed. Old footage of the Red Army, intermingled with movie scenes, shows them marching into the larger area. The geographical extension of the central Soviet is stressed to visualise how the 'spark' to cause a prairie fire came from Jinggangshan (to reference Mao's dictum of 1930) to spread all over the large Soviet base area. Later filmed speeches of Mao, Zhu De, and Zhou Enlai are to prove the relevance of the Ruijin period for Party history (when the latter was fixed in hindsight).

The village of Yeping, the earlier of the two main places the Communists chose for settling down in the Ruijin area, is first placed in focus. A relative stress on Deng Xiaoping is notable in this educational video presentation, who had been to the place (if not very long in reality). While the narrative elaborates on the first Chinese Soviet congress (in the Xie ancestor hall), festivities are shown and heard to engender a positive feeling. (Incidentally, one may note that some film shots are identical with the *Ai wo Zhonghua* video, though the overlap is limited. But this suggests once more that both filmic productions fed upon the same locally produced filmed material – an observation we also made with other 'patriotic education showcase bases'.)

With the (Deng-era-like) accent on economy, it is pointed out that women took part in work here, too, and that to develop economy was important (not the least if one thinks of the experience of the economic blockade by the GMD of Jinggangshan). Thus, paper money was also printed to have one's own currency. In educational and cultural terms, textbooks for schooling were produced, and a literacy movement was started, namely under the lead of Xu Teli 徐特立, Mao's former teacher in Changsha in the early years of the Republic.

In fact, this educational video lays a special stress on education (different from the national TV film clip). All kinds of laws were devised (to show it was a fully-fledged government), while the official organs, the 'Red China' (*Hongse Zhonghua* 红色中华) newspaper and the 'Red Star' (*Hongxing* 红星) journal disseminated ideology and information, but were also a forum for critical comments on policies. I.e., the intended watching pupils are made aware how the Party experimented with internal 'democratic' approaches. With Mao's 'red well', the video shows older pupils visiting, taking notes, while the guide is explaining the larger background, namely how Mao diligently made surveys to understand the local situation well,

especially regarding economy, before devising any actions. (This suggests to the pupils that serious investigation was at the basis of all policies.) Mao's thinking formed and developed in Ruijin, the narrative argues, and many of those on the rostrum in 1949 at Tiananmen when the PRC was proclaimed, had lived in Ruijin (including shots of Liu Shaoqi as well as of Peng Dehuai, who both fell from grace in 1966 or 1959 respectively, perished in the Cultural Revolution, and were posthumously rehabilitated in the Deng era). Many institutions familiar to the intended watching pupils are presented as having been first established in Ruijin (including a central library, e.g.). Present-day children proclaiming the Young Pioneers' oath in front of the projectile-formed memorial are also to show the intended watching pupils that the legacy of the site is still of relevance to modern school children.

For the older pupils, ideological problems are carefully introduced over materials, e.g., in 1933, the 'wrong' leftist line of a Wang Ming as well as the rebuttal by those sustaining Mao at the time (including Deng Xiaoping) are visualised with shots of texts documenting the dissenting views. Paintings of ferocious struggles visualise dramatically the bloody Communist in-fighting to find the 'correct' line in the Party at the time (including an oil painting of mourning a dead 'martyr' which is visually striking in its reference to Soviet art tradition).[250] (This accent of the educational video on inner-Communist struggles is notable since most 'patriotic education' materials try to present a sanitised, more sanguine view of Party history to the Chinese citizen to be formed.) The 'wrong' Wang Ming line, however, also helps explain to the intended watching pupils why the GMD's fifth encirclement campaign was effective, leading to the Long March, which included several people from Ruijin. (That way, the murderous inner-Communist struggles are re-channeled into the familiar GMD–CCP rivalry.) Women are said to have 'encouraged' their husbands to join the Red Army (while staying themselves behind). Indirectly, though, the video makes the notable assertion that the locals suffered greatly at this time, by stating that the production team of the video could not find any old man who had participated in the Red Army when visiting one of the villages. In fact, only one had survived the Long March to return, but the man (of whom a photo is shown) had died already when the video was produced. (Incidentally, it is very rare that such filmic productions address how they looked for materials, but this way, they can add a local perspective for a national audience of pupils.) One old woman who could be interviewed, however, spoke about the 5 'martyrs' in her family. She

250 The painting shows the dead lying in a forest, covered with a red flag up to the breast, a middle-aged woman mourning him by kneeling at the side with a handkerchief, and the comrades (some of them wounded) standing around in a half-circle.

had lost both of her parents (who had been Party cadres). This is connected to the statue in the museum's exhibition which figures a Red Army soldier and a young woman (who is sending her husband to join the Communist troops, which is framed in a strikingly romantic vein) to honour the sacrifice of the locals. In fact, the narrative suggests, many widows were resulting of those times, and a plaque on the door, *Guangrong lieshu* 光荣烈属 (glorious family of a martyr), acknowledges this in the village, showing also an old woman still 'waiting for the return of her husband' which is to elicit compassion with the intended watching pupils. Movie scenes of the Long March are also interspersed to visualise how people from Ruijin in China's hot south had to walk through the snow and endure all those hardships in very different climates. Some old Red Army soldiers, obviously found in other places, tell of the times to the camera, and primary school pupils are finally shown bringing wreaths into the memorial hall (the listed site in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system) to underline the enduring legacy (and sacrifices) of Ruijin.

The 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 serves to round out the Jiang Zemin-era presentation of Ruijin as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. Similar to the TV film clip, it profiles the first highpoint of the Ruijin Soviet: the first Chinese Soviet congress in November 1931 which already had Korean guests (Zhong / Zou 1998: 1) (and thus was already somewhat 'international', if less so than the second congress),[251] and where important documents that were a pre-version of what later would be used in the PRC were approved, including a drafted constitution, a land law, and the basics on economic policies (1–2). While Mao was elected chairman there, the whole range of institutions that were set up bring to attention also other major people of the time, notably not evading names in this presentation that would become problematic later, like Zhang Guotao 张国焘 who would leave the CCP years later when he lost the power struggle against Mao. Also Qu Qiubai is mentioned without further ado, after his posthumous *non grata* period mainly during the Cultural Revolution, when he was accused of betrayal (2). (He was rehabilitated subsequently, though.)[252] Given the GMD's blockade strategy, the economy of the Soviet base area was precarious. Land revolution, i.e., expropriation of land to reassign it was key, and everyone, including women with bound feet 'who did not want to appear weak', joined in production (which gives a somewhat different impression of the issue vis-à-vis the filmic presentations discussed above)

251 According to the *Fengbei* narrative (see below), there were also Vietnamese comrades present.

252 One should note that in 1945 in the resolution on Party history, Qu Qiubai, who had been executed in 1935 by the GMD, had been already defended as a 'martyr'. (Cf. the resolution in the 1965 edition of Mao's Works: Mao (1965), vol. 3: 188, 221–222). But in the Cultural Revolution, he was posthumously attacked once more and his tomb vandalised. (Cf. Müller: 2022: 261).

(5). The base area set up some factories, especially for military goods. Mines provided also ore for the mint to make one's own coins, and local products included sugar and bean curd, but also umbrellas and wooden products. A seperate postal system was established as well (7). The problem, however, was to further trade with the 'white' (i.e., GMD-held) territory to exchange goods not available in the Soviet area, namely salt, kerosene, and pharmaceutics. To pool ressources, cooperatives were founded, while wealth was first of all extracted via expropriation (8). The central Soviet base area also established an educative system and cared for cultural work. Here, especially Xu Teli and Qu Qiubai were active (10–11, 18). Hygiene was another area considered important (with some female cadres participating). And sports, too, was not forgotten (11). What is remarkable in this official 'patriotic education' booklet is the detailed explanation of 'democratic' procedures, briefly addressed also in the educational video, where people could not only vote but also comment on single candidates! (12).

Keeping with the 'success story' of Ruijin, the second Chinese Soviet congress of January 1934 is added as the second major event in Ruijin (not pointing out the inner-Party problems at that time, however, and that Mao had lost control in the meantime). Each of the 'state functions' of Ruijin is explained, with the notable case of a 'legal system' (under Zhang Guotao) which included the use of 'labour' to either 'better' the culprit or just as forced labour (which preshadows the PRC prison and lager system) (18). The booklet, however, discloses that the very last months of the Jiangxi Soviet had yet another village as its centre (given the security problems), Yunshishan 云石山 (July to October 1934 when the Long March began), which had not been profiled in the two filmic versions we discussed above.

Ruijin meant, however, also a lot of problems in Party history. Back in 1929, Mao and Zhu De's troops had to leave Jinggangshan, to finally arrive in Ruijin. Mao, however, clashed with others in the Party (which is not spelt out in the booklet clearly – cf. Pantsov / Levine 2012: chapter 16 and 17 for a summary). He is only said to have made investigations of various areas to prepare for land reform there, i.e., moved away from the centre (Zhong / Zou 1998: 25). In neighbouring Fujian, he opposed the directives to changes in the Red Army and postulated that the Army had to stay under the leadership of the Party (as his three basic guidelines of Jinggangshan had prescribed), not the other way round. He also proposed to attack the cities from the countryside as the Chinese way to power, arguing that a spark can cause a prairie fire – his famous dictum of 1930 (27). While the Army was called to attack Changsha in Hunan in 1930 (an enterprise that failed soon), it became clear that after Chiang Kai-shek had dealt with the major warlord rebellion of 1930, he would be free to concentrate again on the CCP. This suggested that only

a revolution which would deliver gains to the normal peasants would guarantee their cooperation with the numerically clearly disadvantaged Communists to give them a chance to survive. Mao always suggested to use deception, ruse, and various tactics of the 'disadvantaged' to not lose men, and by this he avoided frontal battles (for which he was accused by his rivals as a 'coward') (31–41). Mao, instead, would compose a poem on every 'success' to celebrate and eternalise it, as he had done with Huangyangjie in Jinggangshan. Thus, the intended reading pupil is assured, only the 'wrong line' of Wang Ming, who had become a crucial leading CCP figure, caused the defeat of the CCP, confronted with the fifth encirclement campaign of Chiang Kai-shek, which forced the Communists on the Long March (who thus had to give up Ruijin). With the support of Pavel Mif from the Soviet Union and thus a foreigner, Mao had been criticised and sidelined since March 1931 (42), to remain ostracised until well into the Long March. Only at the Zunyi Conference (see below), the crucial turning point in official Party history would be reached.

While ostracised Mao stayed at a sanatorium and lobbied in Fujian for his views, the Party central represented by Bo Gu 博古 (real name: Qin Bangxian 秦邦宪) at the time who had moved from underground Shanghai to Ruijin was dissatisfied with him and attacked Mao's guerrilla tactics as 'cowardly' (43). However, Mao also had people sustaining him, including Deng Xiaoping (which had, as we saw, been highlighted also in the educational video). Chiang Kai-shek, who knew of the internal problems of the Communists, wanted to use the occasion and thus started the fifth encirclement campaign (according to this official narrative), and when Wang Ming ordered open combat, the Red Army was defeated (44). In fact, Otto Braun sent by the Comintern was the one to direct military affairs, and he, the foreigner, simply did not understand the Chinese circumstances (like Pavel Mif), according to Mao. In his mind, Wang Ming had already lost a major opportunity in 1933, when the 19th Route Army of the GMD, stationed in Fujian, had rebelled to pressure Chiang Kai-shek into more action against the Japanese. Mao had suggested to try and use the opportunity for the Communist side, but Wang Ming had declined such a move (45). Given these 'errors', the 'patriotic' booklet argues, it was no wonder that things took a downturn for the Communists. After the Long Marchers had to leave in 1934, locals and guerrilla stayed behind, but Ruijin would soon be captured and devastated by the GMD. Thus, in the end, it was the 'leftist error' of Wang Ming that caused the defeat more than that Chiang Kai-shek drove them out (following the basic narrative of internal problems in the Party being more dangerous than any outside enemy) (48). And it assures the intended young reader that it was after all not Mao's fault that the locals would have to suffer.

In terms of material heritage of the time, the 'patriotic' booklet focuses on the various memory sites, above all the 'martyrs' monument' in form of a projectile. The base is designed as a five-pointed star which sports on the ten side walls calligraphies with endorsements, while the many small stones attached to the projectile are symbolising the many 'martyrs' of the Red Army who died 'since Jinggangshan' (49–53). The monument was destroyed by the GMD when they took Ruijin, but rebuilt in 1955. Another landmark is the octagonal building for the second Soviet congress (which symbolises the octagonal army cap) (53). At the time of the second Soviet congress (January 1934) there was already an emblem and a flag designed. As a cultural programme accompanying the congress, theatre and music were played on stage for the delegates (57), which were to show that arts were designed as conveyors of ideology already at that time and not just for entertainment. When the GMD troops took Ruijin, this building, too, was soon demolished (and rebuilt in 1956) (58). To encourage people to join the Army, decisions were taken to offer special care for the families of Red Army soldiers (62). But the Jiangxi Soviet also rearranged the local economy, establishing a first bank and mint, and the money should be used not only internally, but also for trade with 'white' areas (64–67). To put economic pressure on the Soviet base area, the GMD thus tried to devalue the money by fakes, but Mao's brother Mao Zemin was responsible for the bank and dealt with financial matters ably.[253] Mao's own care for the locals by leading them to dig a well in spite of purported Fengshui fears is, in turn, used to show the Communist scientific mind-set against rural superstition, thus supposedly freeing also their minds (69–71). The GMD would destroy the 'red well' (which is thus above all marked as ideologically important),[254] but only in 1950 when Mao notably sent a 'care for the Southern revolutionary base areas' delegation (to make good for the hardships they had endured after the Long Marchers had left), the well was opened again (i.e., above all for political reasons) (73). It is thus an important memory site in Ruijin today and was also highlighted in the filmic presentations discussed above.

The last spot in the Ruijing area where the Soviet government resided, Yunshishan, was honoured in 1995 as a further 'heritage site', naming it the 'first hill of the Long March': here, the Communists stayed in the village temple from where they started the Long March (74). According to the official narrative, Mao started there to draw closer to Zhang Wentian 张闻天 who was a leading figure in

253 Cf. the comments above on the Urumqi 'martyrs' cemetery': Mao Zemin was supposed to care for the financial matters in Xinjiang and was 'martyred' by warlord Sheng Shicai.

254 One may recall here the Chinese saying that when drinking water, one should gratefully remember who once dug the well.

the Party at the time to win him over from the 'wrong' Wang Ming line (which prepared for Mao's political come-back in Zunyi – see below) (77). Locally, though, to cover the departure of the main Long March group, the production of the Soviet area's internal newspaper went on as if nothing had happened, cared for especially by Qu Qiubai, to not disclose the whereabouts of the Long Marchers. Qu Qiubai (who had been a key Party figure during the problematic 'insurrectionist' period of the Communists after the 1927 break-up of the First United Front, and who would later become a 'martyr' in a GMD prison which did not spare him revilement during the Cultural Revolution posthumously) thus won time for the Long Marchers and delayed the GMD attack on Ruijin, since the GMD assumed the Red Army still to be in Ruijin (82). Qu Qiubai would leave late and hide the printing press. Given that the Long Marchers were not informed about the details either, this meant that when they resumed publication of the newspaper in Northern Shaanxi later, they started with a wrong numbering, unaware of the longer publication by Qu Qiubai to cover their departure (83).

For Mao, the difficult times in Ruijin had proven in hindsight his effective guerrilla tactics, and the error of the 'leftist' call for direct confrontation which nearly extinguished the Red Army. Mao is thus profiled as the superior Communist tactician in the 'patriotic' booklet (85–90). Beyond Mao, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, and Liu Shaoqi are also highlighted (90–104). The most interesting is, however, the portrayal of Deng Xiaoping in Ruijin (105–110). After the celebrated first Chinese Soviet congress of January 1931, he only stayed there somewhat longer from August 1931 to May 1932, but noticed at his arrival in August that the atmosphere had turned very bad. The booklet details that the local Party secretary of Ruijin county had been active to impose the (centrally ordered) campaign to 'exterminate the Social Democratic Party' members. Astonishingly, this 'patriotic education' booklet discloses to the intended reading pupil that almost 80% of the cadres of the county Soviet and the county labour organisation were purged and executed (!). In a witch hunt (which at least for an adult Chinese reader of the booklet might bring to mind later campaigns in PRC times), people were captured in masses as 'social democrats'. According to Deng Xiaoping's investigation, 'between May and July people had been executed almost daily', giving the horrendous figure of from 20–30 to 50–60 daily (!). Many were also tortured (in a vocabulary usually reserved in Communist writings for the GMD or the Japanese) to confess and denounce other 'social democrats'. That way, some people were so horrified that they rather fled from the Soviet area (107, see also 118). Deng Xiaoping thus turned the tide, as is argued, by moving against the 'culprits', executing them in turn! (108–109). And he stopped the search for 'social democrats' (109). Those incarcerated on such charges were to

be released, with the interesting note that those among them that were wealthy should at least pay something for it! (110). Zhang Wentian, who was chairman at the time, is, however, exempted from strong criticism, and rather characterised as someone always willing to help the normal people, e.g., by participating in the Saturday mandatory work to help families of Red Army members (to replace the missing labour force) (111). Likely, this exemption from criticism of Zhang Wentian is due to the fact that he would later make up with Mao (cf. Zunyi below) and change sides. But overall, given the evident internal problems of the Communists during the Ruijin period, in PRC times, Ruijin became a difficult place to remember.

Of the higher-ranking political figures of whom many had been at some point in Ruijin, at least Dong Biwu is mentioned who came in 1960 in person (115). Still, not the least due to the Long March, the area had lost many people (as the educational video also had pointed out): either on the Long March itself, or by remaining behind to bear the brunt when the GMD troops moved in. Thus, in the early PRC, the already mentioned 'care delegation' was sent to at least acknowledge the local contribution, and in 1958, the place received various endorsements sent by high cadres (which are reproduced on the star-formed pedestal of the re-erected monument) (119). Ruijin was also nominated in 1959 as an 'outstanding patriotic education base' (even though personal visits of luminaries were, as said, in want). Notably, during the Cultural Revolution years in 1972, Deng Xiaoping came to this place where he had once opposed the 'leftists' (117).[255] In 1991, at the 60th anniversary of the 1931 official establishment of the Jiangxi Soviet government (on the October Revolution date, 7 November, i.e. at the first Chinese Soviet congress in the Xie ancestor hall), Deng would send an inscription to Ruijin, while then-general secretary Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng did so as well. Only in 1996, though, Jiang Zemin finally came in person, as did Wen Jiabao (121),[256] i.e., representatives of the following Party generations not 'bruised' by the early 1930s' inner-Party struggles, felt free enough to embrace Ruijin fully.

Compared to the above late 1990s framings of the site, the *Fengbei* narrative (Liu 2019), updating the site to the Xi Jinping era, is striking in its evasiveness of all problems this site entailed for Party history in general, and for Mao in particular. In any case, all those traumatised at the time were by now dead. The storyline

255 At that time, Deng who was ostracised during the early Cultural Revolution, tried to stress his 'positive' credentials after the Lin Biao affair of 1971 had shaken the country and opened up new possibilities. (The visit was possibly combined with his visit to Jinggangshan – see above.) He would, in fact, be recalled to Beijing in 1973 (until his next downfall).

256 He was at the time of publishing the 'patriotic booklet' in 1998 politically on the rise, though not yet prime minister (which he became only in 2003).

basically keeps to profiling Ruijin as the forerunner of the PRC. In this vein, it also tends to focus on the first Soviet congress there (in the Xie family ancestor hall), where Mao received his 'chairman' title, not on the second congress (where he was on the sidelines). As to the listed 'memorial hall', categorised as a 'specialised memorial hall', this is also defined as a 'historical museum', merging the memorial and the historical, with the first one being the more important function (as we noticed also with *Fengbei* narratives in other 'patriotic' cases: by now, 'memory' trumps history) (75).[257] The site, opened in 1958 as the Ruijin 'revolutionary museum',[258] and renamed more broadly in 1994 with its present name of 'memorial hall of the Ruijin central revolutionary base area' (with the plaque written by Jiang Zemin), received a major overhaul in 2007, leading to the erection of the more lavish new hall. As 'cradle of the republic', the site is connected on spot to the names of Mao and Zhu De, but also to Zhou Enlai, and more importantly also to Liu Shaoqi, the key Party figure to be posthumously rehabilitated in the Deng era after his persecution in the Cultural Revolution (76).

For the *Fengbei* narrative, the most important aspect of Ruijin's legacy is that the CCP showed there that it was able to govern! The 'memorial hall', by now disposing of various exhibition techniques like oil paintings, dioramas, but also multimedia, including phantasmagoria (*huanying chengxiang* 幻影成像) and hyperrealist simulation statues (*chaoxianshi fangzhen diaoxiang* 超现实仿真雕像), supervises the physical sites, namely the ones at Yeping and Shazhouba. Notably, the sites of Yeping are claimed to have been 'preserved well' (77) (though this holds true only for the old Xie family ancestor hall which was not destroyed by the GMD troops when they moved in). Most important to the new narrative is that Mao was named here the provisional 'chairman' of the central government, and that the 'constitution', the 'land law' and the 'marriage law' were promulgated as acts of 'government'. In 1933, due to a GMD attack, instead of Yeping, the village of Shazhouba became the centre until 1934. At Shazhouba, Mao's 'red well', and also the iconic octagonal building for the second congress are briefly mentioned, but more important to the narrative are the sites where the different sections of the 'government' were placed (which again underlines the key interest of the *Fengbei* narrative to stress the legacy of 'government' functions). The military units, in turn, were physically more scattered. In this context, beyond Zhu De, also Wang Jiaxiang 王稼祥 and Peng Dehuai (both rehabilitated after they were persecuted and died in the Cultural Revolution) are named (78). The military places would all be destroyed

257 Needless to say, this 'memory' is the prescribed current official version.

258 For the new socialist understanding of museums and its Soviet precedent, cf. chapter 6 of the present book.

by the GMD troops after they took the area, to be rebuilt in PRC times. Important to this *Fengbei* narrative is, however, again the functional aspect, namely that Ruijin was the 'red capital' at the time. While there were also other options considered in nearby Fujian Province, Ruijin was chosen as 'capital' since it was relatively centrally placed in the 'central Soviet base area', which combined smaller base areas in Fujian and Jiangxi to become the largest Soviet base area in China at the time (79). It also served the Red Army as a place where to rest. A more practical major argument to choose Ruijin was that the area was not easy to access, had a lot of trees as cover (against GMD airplanes sorting out the terrain from above), and (likely most importantly, given the Jinggangshan experience) that it could produce enough crops to be self-sufficient. The left-overs of the Nanchang Uprising troops had also already provided a political basis in the area when temporarily staying there earlier, and – more importantly – there were no stationed GMD troops in the area either (80–84). Thus, Ruijin 瑞金 was the best choice, and it was programmatically renamed as Ruijing (瑞京, 'Rui capital').

Overall, the narrative suggests to the envisaged reading pupil that all was thoroughly planned to not give any impression that the CCP was only 'reacting'. The leading people were presumably carefully chosen, too, which indirectly hints at the fact that there were also competitors to Mao (cf. 81), but he would be the one chosen at the first Soviet congress and confirmed by the Party central (when the latter was still in Shanghai). Beyond Mao, Deng Xiaoping is also named, pointing out his function to organise land distribution in the base area (although, as mentioned, he did not stay in Ruijin very long, but saw his role against the 'leftists' there as a key contribution, while the latter is of no interest to the new narrative which simply skips the horrendous inner-Party purges) (80). At the first Chinese Soviet congress, various other Soviet base areas in China had sent delegates, and also people from 'white' areas participated, namely representing the sailors or worker unions, but also Korean and Vietnamese comrades, all in all claimed to have been over 600 people, thus demonstrating the relevance, broad representativeness, international appeal, and 'legal' character of the event, which is therewith thrust into the role of forerunner of the proclamation of the PRC in 1949. The *Fengbei* narrative also stresses that the event was held at the anniversary of the October revolution, i.e., 7 November in Western calendar reckoning, and featured the same key figures as 18 years later in 1949 when the PRC was proclaimed, underlining the continuity aspect and revolutionary legacy. Mao is described as having cared for the congress venue personally, discarding the plan to hold it in Changning in Fujian, since Ruijin appeared safer, and the Party central in Shanghai agreed, the reader is assured (83). Deng Xiaoping is named as the one who showed the locals how to build a tribune

(thus marking more pronouncedly Deng's presence at the first Chinese Soviet congress), and they made the 'army parade' with simple uniforms and spears and other arms (no guns) very early in the morning to not be detected by the GMD airplanes and under the cover of the trees (thus also adding the obligatory parade to the first Chinese Soviet congress) (84). Mao later praised this first Soviet congress (which helped Ruijin's status in terms of memorialisation later).

In legal terms, the congress passed not only the 'constitution', the 'labour law', and the 'land law', but also the general policies on economy, on the army, on the minorities(!), on sustaining the destitute, and, very importantly, on the commemoration of the 'martyrs' which paved the way for the whole system of building up an 'ancestry' to the revolution – and a 'pacification' of the souls of those lost on the way. The whole ended with the singing of the Internationale, by this firmly anchoring the establishment of the Chinese Central Soviet in the larger international Communist context (85). That way, the *Fengbei* narrative simply evades all problems connected with Ruijin by focusing on the early first Soviet congress dominated by Mao in 1931 as a predecessor of the proclamation of the PRC in 1949, and it underlines the 'positive' aspects of the broad 'government capacities' of the CCP and its 'legal' procedures, editing out all the bloody Communist in-fighting and the military defeats. This way, the intended young reader should not be given any reasons to develop doubts about the CCP's past, and the Party's ability and legitimacy to rule.

The two 'Party places' above, Jinggangshan and Ruijin, foreshadow much of later Communist history and the problems of how to memorialise them at different times. Jinggangshan is completely bound up with Mao, had its heyday in Cultural Revolution times, and is standing for (Maoist) ideology; Ruijin is a more 'institutional' place for the Party, entailed historically many problems in terms of bloody inner-Party struggles, and could only gain ground in memorialisation after the generation that had lived there had passed away. Framed as the PRC's precursor and proof of the CCP's 'long governmental experience', it makes the best of its potentials. To bring the different threads in Party history together, a 'catalysing point' was needed for constructing a coherent narrative, and this was decided in hindsight to be the so-called Zunyi Conference, which is consequently memorialised in this vein and integrated into the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

Case study: Zunyi

In contrast to the extended areas of Jinggangshan and Ruijin, the place of the **Zunyi huiyi jinianguan** 遵义会议纪念馆 (Zunyi Conference Memorial) (Guizhou Province) (list 1, 1997), in official Party historiography depicted as a 'pivotal moment' on the Long March, following Mao's dictum,[259] is a much more reduced site in terms of space, ressembling more the Shanghai 'founding place' case. (Incidentally, it is Guizhou Province's only first list site.) In its most restricted sense, it is just the one building where this hectic three-days conference which, according to official history, reshuffled the top ranks of the CCP, took place.[260] In fact, the document fixing the 'results' of this conference could not even be written out there but only later, when again on the move, due to ongoing GMD pressure (Shi 2010: 76, 153–157). In a broader sense, the Zunyi site includes all buildings used by CCP and Red Army members during those days in early 1935 when crossing the town of Zunyi in Guizhou Province (and some weeks later when returning there again in an effort to evade enemy troops). In this larger sense, the place has been included in the list of 12 key areas of 'red tourism' (cf. chapter 1), whereas only the conference site with its exhibition is counted among the national 'patriotic education showcase bases'.

Tellingly, for this 'Party place' (similar to the Shanghai 'founding place'), it took some time after the establishment of the PRC to pin down the exact location where the short conference had been held, as locally produced and sold publications disclose. By 1955, the building had been identified and was turned into a memorial museum which in 1964 even received official recognition by Mao himself who, in a rare gesture, wrote the museum's plaque in his calligraphy.[261] (Thus, not long before the Cultural Revolution, Mao made sure 'his' places, like Jinggangshan, were specifically marked.) Other CCP leaders visited in person and confirmed the place which had been a villa of a GMD general, before the CCP occupied it briefly during the conference (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 4–7). Given the time gap and doubts about the location, it is notable that to the modern visitor (as I observed on-site in

259 Mao evaluated the Zunyi Conference in 1945 as a 'key' event of the Chinese revolution (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 63). Therefore, a whole book is dedicated to show how Zunyi served as a turning point in various CCP leaders' life (Shi 2010). This reading is still standard, as the latest resolution on CCP history of 2021 at its 100th anniverary shows. For the official English translation, cf. *Resolution of the CCP Central Committee on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century* (2021).

260 Kampen (2000) has questioned this, arguing that de facto the reshuffle in the CCP leadership only happened later.

261 The memorial boasts that this was the only revolutionary old site where Mao agreed to personally write the plaque (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 7–9).

2014) even the furniture is claimed to be 'original' nonetheless. There is, e.g., the claim that bodyguards of Zhou Enlai confirmed in 1975 (fully 40 years after the short conference!) the interior decoration of the room Zhou lodged in during those few days in 1935 (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 20). Military maps are placed at the wall of the 'strategy room' to suggest to the visitor the military situation at the time of the conference. (In fact, the situation was very tense, since in spite of the conference's shortness, parts of the military leaders could not even spare three days away from the front and had to leave in the middle of the conference.) Via the exhibition, however, a very short moment in the CCP's history becomes memorialised and eternalised to sustain the claim that this was the pivotal point when Mao's ascendency in the Party was decided. Although the conference site exhibition mentions various figures as participants of that conference, some are notably sidelined, above all the later 'problematic' Lin Biao, while others were connected more strongly to the site in hindsight like general Yang Shangkun 杨尚昆 whose memoirs and visits in PRC times were, in fact, decisive to identify and reconstruct the site. To underline his personal role, his relatives donated a shell splitter found in his bones after cremation (!) to the memorial museum although he had stated himself that he had been wounded *later* when in Yunnan, and thus neither in Zunyi nor at the conference's time (13–14). Others like Deng Xiaoping struggled for decades to be acknowledged as having participated in this 'positively' connoted short conference, closely connected to the ups and downs in his political career (Shi 2010: 143–149). It was, however, Yang Shangkun, who also implicitly battled later against a mythification of the site by pointing out (after Mao's death) that although Mao returned there to the inner circle of power after a long time of ostracism,[262] the number one in the CCP at the time was still Zhang Wentian (Shi 2010: 45, 137), whereas Mao would take up this position officially only in 1945 in Yan'an, thus relativising the place's reading in Party history. Since many CCP leaders wrote later in Yan'an during the 'rectification campaign' about the conference in their 'self-criticisms' (see also below for Yan'an), the vested interest of Mao in the official historiography of this conference becomes evident.

Given the fact that in official reading, this conference is said to have reshuffled the CCP leadership by sidelining Bo Gu (and the German Comintern military advisor Otto Braun who seems to be the only one to have never 'regretted' any 'error',

262 He had been stripped of more important roles in the Party since 1931. In Ruijin, his land reform policies had been criticised as 'rightist' and too lenient towards the so-called 'rich peasants', and his advocating guerrilla tactics had been challenged as well (Shi 2010: 49–50). See also above for Ruijin.

but rather defended his role in later writings when living in the GDR),[263] and by letting Mao come back into the inner circle of power, the ideologically most tricky thing for the exhibition is how to deal with Zhou Enlai: he had been in the leadership circle with Bo Gu before, but now made for the transition to sideline the latter without falling from grace himself. In fact, the spatial arrangement of who resided where is claimed to have been masterminded by Zhou Enlai, by this subtly preparing for the new political decisions taken at the conference where he openly changed sides.[264] Some leaders were in Zunyi with their wives, notably Zhu De (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 37) and Mao (who did not live at the conference site, but together with Zhang Wentian and Wang Jiaxiang with whom he plotted the sidelining of Bo Gu),[265] though the women were obviously not allowed to participate in the all male conference. Bo Gu, in turn, was arranged to stay together with Otto Braun, and the house they lodged in was for a long time ignored in the heritagisation process of the Zunyi site and only recently renovated and included in the Zunyi red travel area (85). This 'red travel area' is now also understood as incorporating the activities of the Red Army following the Zunyi Conference. In short, in a way, Zunyi has come to represent the Long March at large.

For filmic 'patriotic' renderings of the site, one may note that the *Zhonghua hun* educational video series did not pick up the Zunyi site at all. This is remarkable, given its purportedly 'pivotal' role in a Mao-centred Party history reading (though Yang Shangkun had relativised it later, as mentioned). In any case, this leaves us to consider only the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 8) of 1998 by Guizhou TV's societal education department. To bolster the site's claims upfront, the filmic presentation starts with the authoritative 1981 resolution on 'some problems of Party history',[266] defining the importance of the Zunyi Conference as the turning point to install Mao as the leader, save the Party and Army,

263 This fact obviously irritated the Chinese communists where 'self-criticism' (under whatever circumstances) is the usual prelude for 'correcting' history, like 'confessions' (under whatever circumstances) are for a verdict (by this continuing Chinese ancient practice).

264 As Yang Shangkun and others, however, stated later, the conference had no fixed sitting order which once more underlines the hectic the conference was held in (Shi 2010: 139), and the tailored versions created thereafter to make it appear differently.

265 Mao in fact lived there with his wife He Zizhen (Zunyi huiyi jinianguan 2009: 60). Although the Zunyi Conference is portrayed in CCP historiography as the come-back of Mao, it was Zhang Wentian who first took over from Bo Gu. As becomes clear from the later visits of Yang Shangkun with his wife, she had been present back then as well (Shi 2010: 139) as was Zhang Wentian's wife (Shi 2010: 82–85).

266 See 'Guanyu jianguo yilai dang de ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi', or the English translation 'Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China' (n.d.).

which supposedly laid the ground to fight against the splittism of Zhang Guotao thereafter! (De facto, the issues with Zhang Guotao, who was not connected to Zunyi but led his own larger troops on another route, escalated only months later when both troops met in summer 1935!) Apart from the historical 'definition' in Party history, Zunyi is presented in the film clip to the TV audience also in a more touristic vein as an old important city, to then turn to the site's educational function. A teacher with his pupils is shown entering the conference site, where a guide explains to the pupils the history of the place, opened as a museum in 1957 and declared a heritage protection site in 1961, assuring the pupils that the building was renovated to show it 'as it has been'. Then the TV audience is introduced to where Mao, Zhang Wentian and Wang Jiaxiang lived together (de facto in another part of the city), focusing on Mao's room. Here, it is suggested, they exchanged their views, concluding that they were all dissatisfied with the course of things, namely with the 'leftists' in the Party. At the (yet different) place of the Red Army headquarters, in turn, the rooms of Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and general Liu Bocheng 刘柏承 serve to introduce their presence and military importance at the time. When the participants of the conference are shown, Mao heads the list (though at the time the higher figure was Zhang Wentian who was also the one to speak out for the critics, namely against the strategies of Bo Gu and Otto Braun). Mao's views are detailed who thought it wrong to only stick to maps, not to reality, and who enumerated various 'errors' of the leadership. Mao's view, it is pointed out to the watching audience, was supported by Zhou Enlai and others, which led to the suggestion to rather follow Mao from now on. (The TV film clip is, however, carefully evading the fact that Zhou Enlai had been part of the 'triumvirate' leading in military strategy matters before, only naming Bo Gu and Otto Braun as responsible for the preceding military failures.) A map at the conference place serves to illustrate how the military situation of the Long March was discussed at this point, while the (later) printed text of the Zunyi Conference's decision documents its official legacy. A handwritten report of Chen Yun and the handwritten *Hongxing* 红星 (Red star) journal, in turn, are to prove the more immediate outcome of the conference which was also propagated to the Long Marchers themselves in a (occupied) Catholic church by Mao and Zhang Wentian. For the Army, from then on, Mao, Zhou Enlai, and Wang Jiaxiang were the new 'triumvirate'. In terms of the site's legacy, the TV audience is assured that Mao's own 1964 calligraphy authenticates the physical place, while children celebrate the anniversary of the site with balloons and singing. Mao's calligraphy of his poem praising the (subsequent) 'victory' at the Loushan pass 娄山关 in the vicinity of Zunyi (shortly after the conference) and a map with the (zigzag) moves of the Long March in the larger area (four times crossing the Chishui 赤水

river to evade the enemy) fix the site's role in the larger context of the Long March, of which it was supposedly the politically 'pivotal' moment which laid the basis for military victory as well, proven immediately by the Loushan pass 'victory', and foreshadowing the CCP's final victory in 1949.

The more in-depth 'patriotic education' booklet produced at the same time as the TV film clip by the key local authority on the site (Shi 1998),[267] places its accent for the intended young readers more on the fact, that the Zunyi Conference site was not only one of the first revolutionary sites to be opened to the public, but that Mao personally favoured the conference site (proven by his providing the memorial hall's name in his calligraphy) (29, 67). Only in 1984, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution and Mao's death, also the other buildings in the city were added to memorialisation. In 1995, Jiang Zemin endorsed the whole ensemble with his calligraphy as a 'national base for societal education of youth' (Shi 1998: 1). In terms of PRC-era high-ranking visits, in 1958 (when the site had recently opened and at the time of the Great Leap Forward), Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun came for the first time (2), and much later Jiang Zermin in 1991 (3). Sections of crucial Party texts are cited to state the official evaluation, from the 1945 Party resolution on Party history which already defined the conference as decisive for correcting the 'leftist line' and reaffirming Mao, while blocking also the dissident 'line of Zhang Guotao' (5–6),[268] to the 1981 Party resolution on 'some historical problems since the founding of the state' (which basically intends since 1949, but also addressed the period before), which again reaffirmed the importance of the Zunyi Conference, putting the stress more on its 'anti-Zhang Guotao' function (with whom the clash occurred, as mentioned, only subsequently!) (6). (This is also the section read out in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip at the beginning as the then normative reading of the conference's legacy.) It had been Mao himself who had handed out the baseline by evaluating the conference in these terms as a turning point (7–8). And Zhou Enlai, who in fact had switched sides during the conference, is cited as of 1943 (in fact explaining his change of sides back then), stating that Mao had convinced him during the conference to take his distances from Otto Braun, as well as from Bo Gu, and rather support Mao (9). Zhu De, in turn, is cited

267 One may note that the same author kept writing on the memorial, and thus one can compare this 1998 work with his later publication (Shi 2010).

268 In fact, the 1945 resolution named both Wang Ming (i.e., Chen Shaoyu) and Bo Gu (i.e., Qin Bangxian) as leaders of this 'line'. Cf. Mao Zedong's works, vol. 3, where the text of the resolution was originally included (Mao 1965: vol. 3) (to be then taken off in the second printing of the volume in the early Cultural Revolution!). The mentioning of the two as the leaders of this 'line' is on p. 192. The 'Zhang Guotao line', in turn, is mentioned in the context (p. 191). One should recall that the 'definition' of the Zunyi Conference was only fixed in hindsight.

with his evaluation of the conference as a final reckoning with the military failure against the fifth encirclement campaign of Chiang Kai-shek because the Communist strategy had been too schematic. And Deng Xiaoping (who was, as mentioned above, for a long time not acknowledged as a participant) is notably cited with a much later evaluation shortly after the bloody suppression of the Tiananmen movement in June 1989 (!) that at the Zunyi Conference, the Party finally achieved an effective and enduring central leadership (which is what should be kept at all costs) (9–10). For the alternative, the booklet explains the 'errors' of the 'leftists' in detail who were against Mao's guerrilla tactics and wanted open battles with 'the enemy', which was unrealistic (12). They had also lost the good opportunity of the rebellion of the GMD's 19th Route Army, stationed in Fujian, against Chiang Kai-shek which Mao had wanted to use for the Communists (cf. Ruijin above). And thus, the wrong leadership caused the outcome of being forced unto the Long March, and it was culpable for the loss of many lives (13). With their open tactics, Chiang Kai-shek could easily anticipate where the Communists would move to and thus defeat them. Thus, Zhou Enlai decided to change sides (which makes explicit to the intended young reader that he, in fact, had 'erred' before) and leave the military leadership and command of Otto Braun, sent by the Comintern, to rather side with Mao (14–15). The narrative also discloses to the intended young reader that Mao had not even had the right to hold major speeches for four years before the Zunyi Conference. Zhang Wentian was the higher-ranking figure at the time, and Mao thus worked successfully to convince him of his views, who would then voice his opinion in his stead. Mao also managed to win over another important figure, Wang Jiaxiang, who had been wounded and had to be taken on a stretcher together with Mao for some time on the Long March, suggesting to him that the Comintern line, represented by Otto Braun, was bookish, while Marxism-Leninism had to be adapted to Chinese circumstances. Thus, Zhang, Wang and Zhou Enlai were all won over by Mao's reasoning, the intended young reader is to conclude (16–18).

Notably, the 'patriotic' booklet provides at least some glimpses on Braun's refusal to accept Mao's criticism, criticising his mongering, in turn, as doing politics 'behind the back' (20). While one defender of Bo Gu stood up, accusing Mao of only knowing the ancient Chinese classics of warfare tactics, but nothing about Marxism-Leninism, Mao is said to have retorted that a Chinese would profit from knowing more of such ancient Chinese *Sunzi bingfa* tactics (26), by this also pointing out in a more nationalist vein that Chinese wisdom provided enough guidance, not needing foreign advice.

The historical site museum, when first opened, tried to re-create the building as it should have looked during the conference days, with the different rooms of the

single leaders (showing always a bed, a work desk, and a photo). (The photos were, in fact, not taken there, but later in Northern Shaanxi.) (32). While the 'patriotic' booklet does not provide any information on how the site fared during the Cultural Revolution, thereafter, in 1985 at the conference's 50th anniversary (which was a major event for the site), Yang Shangkun returned to Zunyi once more. The Communist slogans displayed on the wall had been 'preserved', according to the memorial, having been only 'covered', when the owner of the house wanted their removal (33). In fact, the whole presentation is (understandably) a remake, with tea pots and Siemens telephone, to recreate the (imagined) situation during the few days of occupation for the modern visitor. Aside the conference site itself, the Catholic church (built in 1867) nearby, which was occupied by the Red Army during the hectic conference days, because it offered the most space for the soldiers, was by now integrated into the site's definition. The building in another part of the city where Mao stayed, was also included. While in 1964 (when Mao recognised the conference site as such), only the room where Mao had stayed during the conference time had been rebuilt, after the Cultural Revolution also those of the two others (Zhang Wentian and Wang Jiaxiang) were recreated and shown there (35). Similarly, further Army places were added for display, disclosing to the intended young reader that the Army also simply expropriated 'the local rich' to hand out their wealth to all, if they did not 'donate' it voluntarily, since it needed to feed the soldiers (37–44).

Only when presenting the physical places in detail, it becomes apparent to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that some women were also present at Zunyi, naming Zhou Enlai's wife Deng Yingchao, Mao's wife since Jinggangshan times, He Zizhen (45), but also Zhu De's young wife Kang Keqing, all of whom did not participate in the conference, though. Others in town, including the responsible for education, Xu Teli, in turn, also used the stay in Zunyi in other ways. Xu Teli, e.g., used it to 'gather' important books from literati households (47).

On the other hand, many young students were recruited to join the Red Army and move further on the Long March, and also a 'hospital' could be set up in a temple, while medicine (the region being very rich in herbal medicine) was 'collected' from local pharmacies. After the Red Army left, the GMD would purportedly destroy all these facilities (49–51).

For the highest military rank casualty during the Long March, Deng Ping 邓萍, who died fighting in the Zunyi area (after the conference), a tomb would be finally erected in PRC times in 1957, inscribed by Zhang Aiping, who was later a key figure in PRC military defence activities and had fought with him (53). After the Cultural Revolution, in 1979, Zhang Aiping would add a longer inscription on this

fallen comrade (55).[269] But also less prominent fallen soldiers (in the fightings after the conference) would be honoured, the 'patriotic' booklet assures the intended young reader, sometimes motivated by the locals' reverence who would, e.g., 'pray' at the tomb of one hygiene corps soldier who had served the locals and was bringing them medicine, when shot by 'the enemy' (55–59). That way, the Red Army should appear as not only living off the populace but also as serving and inspiring them, as the story of a young representative of the Dong 侗 minority (Guizhou being a province with many minorities) should demonstrate who would readily sacrifice his life when a young Red Army soldier was shot whom he wanted to emulate (76–77). But the Red Army not only sacrificed, but also won victories. Given the later history of the major fall-out of Mao and Peng Dehuai in 1959, one may note that the 'patriotic' booklet particularly highlights the victory Peng Dehuai scored in the area of Zunyi at Loushan pass, after the conference had ended, which was also praised by Mao at the time in a poem (i.e., the one also shown in Mao's calligraphy in the TV film clip which is also reproduced in the booklet) (62). To add to this triumphant line, in 1985 at the 50th anniversary of the Zunyi Conference, then-minister of defence Zhang Aiping's poem of the 'great victory of Zunyi' was also inscribed at Loushan pass (66), and the calligraphy of *the* Red Army calligrapher Shu Tong 舒同 adorned the Loushan pass site, too (63). This site of 'victory' is thus integrated in the larger story connected to the Zunyi Conference.

In terms of material holdings at the Zunyi Conference site, there is clearly a dearth of things to show. The 'patriotic' booklet thus introduces to its intended young readers mainly some (later) written documents about the conference like its 'resolution' or excerpts of diaries of participants, or the handwritten 'Red Star' Communist journal shown also in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip. The exhibition of paper money and a receipt are to document that the Red Army always payed (if later) when they took something (if not from a 'rich' who would simply be expropriated, but from a peasant), e.g., a pig, guaranteeing they would later hand out the equivalent which they duly did when the peasant asked for reimbursement years later in PRC times! (72–73). This should document that the Army and the Party could be always trusted. Objects like pamphlets of the time (as Zunyi was an important centre of printing) or personal items of guerrilla fighters (who were not allowed to depart with the Long Marchers to stay behind and slow down 'the

269 One may note that Zhang Aiping had been removed from his positions, as so many others, during the early Cultural Revolution, but was emerging later again. Notably, he was among those in the military to oppose the use of force in June 1989! That he is mentioned in the booklet of the late 1990s shows his role in 1989 had been 'forgiven'. (He thus could, as I have written elsewhere, also provide his calligraphy for the Nanjing aviators' cemetery; cf. Müller 2022: 291–292).

enemy') are exhibited, too (74–79). Still, even though the material legacy of the short conference is scarce, the booklet proudly enumerates all the praise the Zunyi Conference received nonetheless to bolster the site's enduring legacy in Party history (80–86).

Moving on from the late 1990s' framing of the site to the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* narrative (Xu / Huang 2019) stresses more openly that while this was one of the very first memorial halls built in the PRC (being Mao-affiliated) (109), it had taken considerable time to individuate the location. This underlines to the intended reader that this 'Party place' was less imprinted in memory, since differently from Jinggangshan, Ruijin, or later Yan'an and Xibaipo, this place was just denoting a couple of days during the many months of the Long March where the Communists were continuously on the move. Only after the Cultural Revolution, the other places now administered by the memorial, where the key people stayed during those few days, were added, and Deng Xiaoping would write in 1984 the plaque for the place where the Red Army's general political department was lodged (where he had been at the time, thus underlining his long-contested presence at the Zunyi Conference) (110). The location where Mao stayed together with Zhang Wentian and Wang Jiaxiang, is also presented in more historical detail as a private mansion used by the three for roughly 10 days.[270] In 1982, it was labelled a heritage protection unit, but in 2001, i.e., after the listing in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system, a new two-storey building was erected, in 2003 adding the bronze group statue of the three as a new item encountered today by the visitor. Back in the 1950s, the exhibition on the conference was first set in the rooms of the conference site, but the *Fengbei* narrative discloses that during the Cultural Revolution, in 1970, the exhibition was temporarily moved over to the local Working People's Cultural Palace (while leaving open what happened to the conference site during that time) (112). Updating the presentation of the late 1990s, the new narrative adds that in 2005, for the 70th anniversary of the conference, and in 2015 even in a larger overhaul (after my on-site observation of 2014), the exhibition was substantially reworked. It is now focused mainly on the Long March, using new methods like 3D simulations, touch screens etc. to address visitors on more emotional fronts as well (113). This new exhibition contextualises the Zunyi Conference with the Long

270 On a side note, the building was in an alley labelled in the beginning of the PRC as 'Zhongshan' 中山 alley, honouring Sun Yat-sen, but in 1966, it was renamed as alley of 'happiness'. In the Cultural Revolution (conventionally dated 1966–1976), renaming of streets was one of the revolutionary practices, and likely this was also the background here. One may note that in 1966 the standing of Sun Yat-sen became problematic, which was best exemplified by the 100th anniversary celebrations of his birth in November. Cf. Müller (2022: 249–250). At the time when Mao, Zhang, and Wang stayed there, the alley had been, however, just called 'ancient-style alley'.

March, necessitated by the 'leftist' errors which had caused the defeat during the fifth encirclement campaign of Chiang Kai-shek against the Ruijin Soviet (114). The present exhibition includes also the memories of the conference of some participants, but also the foreign reporting on the Long March as such in terms of the site's legacy. The local 'martyrs'' cemetery of 1953, in turn, is also part of the new framing, pointing out that it hosts 77 dead that were found after the Long Marchers had left the place, accentuating the topic of local sacrifice (115).

Given the restricted topic of this one conference, the *Fengbei* narrative, however, mainly looks at the conference itself and its 'ideological message'. The conference venue was set in the 'best mansion' in Zunyi, since it had a dining room where there was space for 20 people. The participants and their ranks in the Party are spelt out to the intended young reader, with the telling device that since Mao was not the highest, the narrative ranks 'according to surname stroke number', which puts Mao 毛 (with only four strokes) first and Bo 博 Gu last! (117)

The *Fengbei* narrative goes into much detail for the intended readers about the considerations during the conference of how the Long March should move on (i.e., where to set up a new Soviet area) and why it had been necessary at all, i.e., the reasons for the disastrous failure to keep the Ruijin Soviet. Bo Gu's single arguments and the counter-arguments should demonstrate to the intended young reader why Mao had been absolutely right, by this also introducing them to the military strategies of Mao's war tactics. Neither was the enemy too strong, nor had there been too few attempts of subversion among the enemy, nor had the people of the Soviet area been unsupportive, as Bo Gu tried to argue. Mao's arguments (which he could not voice himself, though) went that the major error was to only bet on defence. The idea of bastion against bastion was wrong, since it cost the Communists their advantages in a 'mobile warfare', while the GMD tried to pressure them into a 'positional warfare' which they were bound to lose. The armed forces of the Communists were therefore also too scattered, instead of concentrating and hitting at one point. Bo Gu's idea to keep the enemy at all costs and everywhere out of the Ruijin Soviet had overstretched the Communist forces to secure the borders everywhere. And the mutiny of the 19th Route Army in the GMD ranks had not been exploited, missing a golden opportunity. Wang Jiaxiang also added the complaint that Bo Gu and Braun did not take in other opinions, thus hurting inner-Party 'democracy'. Zhu De also supported Mao's viewpoint at the conference, and thus the conference drew an official judgement (if fixed in hindsight) on the failure of the fifth anti-encirclement struggle, blaiming it on the 'leftist adventurist errors' as an overall error (118–121). In that vein, the conference also supposedly showed that Otto Braun as a representative of the Comintern should no longer interfere in

Chinese things that he did not understand anyway, and thus the Zunyi Conference is framed also in this new *Fengbei* version very pointedly as Chinese self-assertion *vs* the 'interference' of the Comintern, to find a Chinese way to revolution. The leadership was to be more faithful to 'democratic centralism', by this laying the ground for the 'first generation of leaders around Mao'. Finally, the 1981 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China' is cited as the binding statement and judgment of the Zunyi Conference with its respective paragraph on Zunyi also central for the late 1990s productions, which defines the conference as a 'turning point' on the Long March (122) – an evaluation also taken over after the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative in the newest Xi Jinping-era resolution on Party historiography of 2021.[271] In sum, the supposedly 'pivotal moment' of Zunyi is framed as marking the catalysing event on the Long March leading to the again more stable and long-term 'Party places' of the CCP: Yan'an and Xibaipo, to which we will turn now.

Case study: Yan'an

The final destination of the Long March, Yan'an, listed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system as **Yan'an geming jiniandi** 延安革命纪念地 (Yan'an revolutionary memorial area) (Shaanxi Province) (list 1, 1997), i.e., with the same categorisation of 'revolutionary memorial area' as Jinggangshan (but different from Ruijin, its 'predecessor' in a functional sense), is once more a place that has been severely damaged in a material sense. In 1947, the Communists had to give up also this place, their 'red capital', under GMD pressure, though regaining it in 1948. Compared to Jinggangshan and Ruijin, factual destruction is even less addressed in presenting Yan'an's 'revolutionary sites' today to the visitor (as I observed in 2014), most of which had been restored shortly after the establishment of the PRC (and at times during the later phase of the Cultural Revolution).[272] Here, too, the top leaders moved around between several places over the years, only in 1938 directly attributed to Japanese bombings. Nevertheless, due to the long period of Communist presence over roughly 13 years, the place has become a kind of synonym of the CCP.

271 The *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 was before the newest Xi Jinping-era official version on Party history of 2021, but the latter does not deviate in its evaluation of the Zunyi Conference from the Deng Xiaoping-era resolution. Cf. the official English version *Resolution of the CCP Central Committee on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century* (2021).

272 At least some cemeteries of 'martyrs' were destroyed during the early phase of the Cultural Revolution also here.

Many of the most iconic photos of CCP history were shot here (or in nearby places in Northern Shaanxi), and thus it is one of the main points to show to the present-day tourist where exactly which famous and widely circulated photo was taken. Due to the long presence of the CCP here, many places are closely interwoven with anecdotes of leaders (Gao n.d.), and the Yan'an Memorial Museum of the Revolution, by the way the very earliest of its kind founded after the establishment of the PRC and completely rebuilt and reopened in 2009, focuses on these well-known photos together with dioramas to give the viewer an impression of how one lived at this place back then (Yan'an geming bowuguan 2011). Additionally, a show entitled 'Defend Yan'an' (*Baowei Yan'an* 保卫延安) (based on the like-named novel and designed by a well-known director) should give present-day tourist visitors the impression of how the CCP 'defended' Yan'an[273] (though giving it up in 1947, allegedly for tactical reasons).[274] Since Yan'an, the most iconic 'Party place' of all, has been treated repeatedly in various dimensions, we will place here the accent on its role for 'patriotic education' as a 'showcase base' and for formation of the Chinese citizen at large, including the tourist.

Yan'an's revolutionary heritage is presented today in a spatial sense with the main compounds used in the 1930s and 1940s, but also topically along the main themes associated with Yan'an: as the most important base area of the CCP; as the Communist contribution to the 'Anti-Japanese War of Resistance' (mainly by guerrilla warfare); as an experimental area for Communist policies (land reform; the 'great production movement' or *da shengchan yundong* 大生产运动 to develop land for agriculture, namely in Nanniwan 南泥湾 in the larger Yan'an area, to face GMD economic blockade; 'thought reform' and cultural and literary policies as well as the 'correction' of ideological errors, mainly those of Zhang Guotao and then, above all, Wang Ming during the 'Rectification Campaign'); as the site of foreign contacts (including Westerners temporarily living or visiting Yan'an – or

273 Historical re-enactments are also popular beyond the designated 'patriotic education bases', e.g., with historical theme parks as in Kaifeng's 'living Qingming shanghe tu' – this most famous painting depicting the city at its best times – where in spite of the humiliating loss of that Song-era capital to the Jurchen a daily play is enacted with an (earlier) naval 'defending battle' (very reminiscent of the Yan'an example!) with of course the Chinese winning against the 'barbarians'.

274 The show was regularly running at the time of my visit. Gao Wanbing (n.d.: 47) presents a telling anecdote about Mao and the giving up of Yan'an vis-à-vis followers objecting to simply drop this place that sheltered them for so many years: 'Yan'an is just these couple of caves… If it's destroyed, it doesn't matter: we will build high rises in the future: the people are always ours, so what do you fear?' In fact, the giving up of Yan'an was obviously hard to accept for many and probably stimulated a later fictional treatment in the famous novel to 'prove' the inevitability and good intentions of the CCP and that the Communists did fight the GMD nevertheless heroically to finally win out.

the larger area at least – like Canadian Communist physician Bethune and Lebanese-American physician George Hatem, or leftist journalists like Edgar Snow and his wife Helen Foster alias Nym Wales, Agnes Smedley, Anna Louise Strong etc.);[275] and finally Yan'an as the blueprint and preparation for the PRC. Whereas the Memorial Museum provides the narrative and main topics systematically, the various compounds (de facto reconstructed) are to show how simple the top leaders lived, how they were close to each other etc. Obviously, for all the mass of photos available, nevertheless several key figures barely appear, e.g., Wang Ming, one of Mao's main competitors at the time, and also Mao's wife He Zizhen (who is present on the earlier photos) whom he then dropped. How Mao then 'switched' to controversial Jiang Qing as his next wife is not addressed either: if Jiang Qing is not cut out from photos right away, she simply appears together with daughter Li Na 李讷 and Mao, and all attention is channeled to the father-daughter relationship. Yan'an is therefore a nice illustration that not only a dearth of material distorts history, but also an abundance can be used to mask intentional black-outs.[276]

As its legacy, Yan'an is also linked to various kinds of 'spirit': thus, the 'Yan'an spirit' comprises the spirit to resist (the Japanese), the spirit of the Rectification Campaign (for ideological streamlining), the spirit of a Zhang Side 张思德 who gave everything to the revolution by working at whatever position he was placed to exhaustion, ending up a civil 'martyr' to prompt Mao's slogan of 'serve the people', the internationalist spirit of a Norman Bethune who gave his life for supporting the Chinese during the Second Sino–Japanese War on the Communist side as a physician (for him, cf. chapter 5.3), the spirit of Nanniwan to create crops out of a wilderness by simply relying on one's own hands (i.e., the 'do it yourself' motto), and many other examples of selflessness and dedication to work. (See fig. 3.3.3).

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275 There were in fact a variety of foreigners including Americans, Soviets, some West and some East Europeans, Indians or Southeast-Asians and Australians. Many of them were offering help in the medical sector or with translations. Koreans even cooperated militarily, and Yan'an established a 'Japanese labourer and peasants' school' with Japanese Communists as 'educators', mainly to 're-educate' Japanese POWs. After the war, Yan'an managed to send also Dong Biwu as a Communist representative to the signing of Chinese participation in the UN. And Overseas Chinese with accordingly foreign passports are represented as well in the category of foreign contacts by the Revolutionary Museum to demonstrate Yan'an's 'outreach' which attracted also some 'third party' Chinese intellectuals.

276 One might also note that the Revolutionary Museum, when presenting 'life' in Yan'an with many Chinese intellectual couples active there, shows Mao's childhood friend and Communist poet Xiao San (Emi Siao) alone (i.e., without his Jewish German wife, the photographer Eva Siao, who was the only Western woman not only visiting but really living in Yan'an who bore Xiao San two sons during that time) (Yan'an geming bowuguan 2011: 107).

Fig. 3.3.3 Mao's cave in Yan'an with a photo on the wall showing him write the motto 'ziji dongshou' (do it yourself) aside 'his desk and telephone' (photograph by the author, 2014)

Interestingly, Yan'an is often combined today in tourist tours with the close-by 'Mausoleum of the Yellow Emperor' (see above in this chapter, 3.1, for Huangdiling) which means the revolutionary site is coupled with the reinvented tradition of a shared Chineseness, thus bridging 'antiquity' and 'origins' with 'revolution'. As we noted above, Huangdiling is administered today by the municipality of Yan'an. In fact, the Yan'an Memorial Museum presents a rare photo of Communists and GMD representatives offering *together* at Huangdi's 'tomb' (i.e., in 1937 when Mao provided the 'eulogy' from the CCP side),[277] i.e., shortly after the Xi'an Incident to set into motion a second 'United Front' before the Second Sino–Japanese War broke out in full (Yan'an geming bowuguan 2011: 48). (Cf. also above in chapter 3.1 on Huangdiling.)

In terms of 'patriotic education' representations, the filmic rendering in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 8), produced in 1998 by the CCP Shaanxi Provincial Committee's propaganda department, introduces the Yan'an revolutionary memorial area to the national TV audience as the final destination of the Long March. Shots

277 The photo is not dated but put in a context that suggests at least this timing.

of the iconic pagoda of Yan'an, covered with snow, provide the setting, since the Long Marchers arrived in winter, with old footage showing also how they dug caves in the loess. At first, they settled at the slopes of Fenghuangshan 凤凰山 close to the town centre. While the single caves of leaders (with the ever same simple interiors) are introduced, romantic piano music creates a serene atmosphere. A writing desk links to Mao's works he composed at the time, while old clothes and other personal items of Mao are to show the simple life he meanwhile led. Footage and photos of the time are woven into the visual narrative, the audience seeing also footage of Mao holding speeches. A ballot box and women voting suggest the 'democratic' and gender-inclusive approach Yan'an supposedly represented. Photos with foreign guests like Edgar Snow (who, in fact, never was in Yan'an but visited Mao and the Communists in Northern Shaanxi before they relocated to Yan'an), or Anna Strong are to show the attraction of Yan'an at the time for people all over China and even from further away.

Then Yangjialing 杨家岭 as the next major place where the Party leadership moved to in the larger Yan'an area is introduced, citing Anna Strong who was impressed that these important people lived so simply. With the photos, an accent is always put on work (rather than on private life, with no families shown). Qingliangshan 清凉山 (the inner-city site used by the press organs), and Wangjiaping 王家坪 (where the Red Army had its headquarters) are also introduced to then focus on Zaoyuan 枣园, where the leadership moved to in the later phase, which was more removed from the city. Mao is shown in historical footage, writing in his calligraphy the famous motto: *ziji dongshou, feng yi zu shi* 自己动手。丰衣足食 (Do it yourself, and clothing will abound, and food suffice). That way, production was encouraged, including women as part of the labour force, opening up new fields, for which the exhibition on production in the former 'wasteland Nanniwan' shows the purported exemplary outcome. 'Zhu De's spinning wheel' is to show that the leaders participated in various ways in production, too. 'Mao's vegetable garden' includes also this top leader who bent his back to plant crops by himself. The stone table where Mao talked with his son Anying (reproduced as a scene in many films on Mao) is to show also the family side (evading his wives since Mao Anying was the son of his former wife Yang Kaihui), and that Mao sent also his own son to participate in production. Modern-day visitors posing as Red Army soldiers at spinning wheels illustrate to the TV audience the 'tourist' experience the place offers. But ideology is also packaged in locally sold publications. The 'great production movement' is hailed since it sustained the economy of the area during the Second Sino–Japanese War (when the Japanese tried – as the GMD earlier – to rather use economic blockade against the Communists). 'Zhu De's tree' (who 'cared' for it

when still small and forbade to bind horses to it, by now grown into a huge tree), a recreation building set up at Zaoyuan, and a small canal created there at the time, as well as beautiful nature are to heighten the 'green' tourism appeal as well. Single sites are bound up with stories and anecdotes (sometimes known to the audience from textbooks used in school) connected to the Party leaders to make them more approachable, eliciting familiarity with the Chinese TV audience. The story of the well in Yangjialing which Mao allegedly made the locals dig (cf. also Ruijin's 'red well' above), not only supplied water but also the ideological idea of 'do it yourself' (and the gratefulness due to those that helped you dig it, as the old Chinese saying goes). The stele for 'martyr' Zhang Side (who died by accident on the job), in turn, is to recall Mao's dictum to 'serve the people' (*wei renmin fuwu* 为人民服务). The stele for the 'April Eighth 'martyrs'', in turn, honours (some) victims of the major air crash of 1946 en route from Chongqing to Yan'an which cost several Communists (including Bo Gu, but also general Ye Ting – both already named earlier in this chapter), but also the American crew (which is not addressed here, of course) their lives. With the Luochuan 洛川 conference (1937) place (which is not in Yan'an itself but in the larger area of Northern Shaanxi) and footage of a laughing Mao, another important moment in Mao's career is introduced (since this is where he promoted his guerrilla warfare tactics, which was not adopted immediately, but in the long run). A banner notably praising the Army as 'mother of the people' (a slogan not necessarily easy to swallow for some TV viewers in China after the 1989 Tiananmen events) profiles the place as one where the military was newly organised, highlighted with old photos. The major political event was, however, the 7th Party Congress which was held in Yangjialing (in a church building). To interpret all this history in official reading, the memorial museum (Yan'an geming jinianguan) was set up, the TV film clip showing people visiting the exhibition, while peaceful music suggests the benign legacy of the Yan'an experience. Thus, final shots of the Huanghe as the iconic river of China not far away from Yan'an underline that Yan'an is a past not to be forgotten, flowing on through history like the Huanghe.

Compared to the above nationally broadcasted version, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 6), produced in 1998 by Shaanxi Province's audio-visual education entity, is notable first of all because it treats Yan'an very pronouncedly by assigning it (unusually) even two video instalments, arriving at roughly half an hour together. This educational video labels the site as 'red cradle' (*hongse yaolan* 红色摇篮) (cf. Jinggangshan as the 'cradle of the revolution' and Ruijin as 'cradle of the republic'), and starts, as so often, with scenery, showing the barren Shaanxi mountains in sunrise, while the intended watching pupils hear the 'Mao hymn' *Dongfang hong* 东方红 ('the East is red') sung in Shaanxi dialect. Views of the

iconic pagoda and the city lead to the ideological centre: the memorial hall and the Mao statue in front. Here, the video, which is very didactic in nature with authoritative 'voice of god' explanations, argues, was the real centre in the years 1935–1948 of the 'whole rear' (*zong houfang* 总后方) behind the military front (by this conveniently sidelining the crucial 1947–1948 'intermezzo' of loss of Yan'an to the GMD). In didactic fashion, a guide is shown explaining in front of a map to an old man and supposedly his two grandchildren on which way the Communists arrived. (The same footage showing marching troops entering Yan'an like in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip is used, adding a short filmed scene where Mao jumps over obstacles along the way with a stick, others following in the same fashion, suggesting the way was hard.) The smaller girl asks the 'grandpa' in front of a photo with the Red Army soldiers entering Yan'an: are you on that photo? In this clearly staged scene (in fact, as only the credits reveal, the whole 'family' was enacted, though this is not disclosed in the video itself and not necessarily realised by the intended watching pupils), the old man says, he might not be seen on that photo but had been at Fenghuangshan. When visiting there with the girls, he 'recognises' the tree which is 'older than your mum'. He also explains to the girls that at the time, the usual way to move around was with horses. Switching back to more ideological content, the video enumerates several famous texts Mao wrote there, with old footage showing Mao writing texts by hand. Simple living utensils and a rudimentary kitchen are to show the originally poor conditions that the Long Marchers arriving in Yan'an encountered. The female guide (who was, as the credits disclose, also involved in the script writing of the video) gives explanations and tells stories frontally to the camera (and thus to the intended watching pupils) like a teacher, while the old man and the two children (one of primary school age, one of junior secondary age) listen. The smaller girl (representing the primary school student mind-set) asks again simple questions to 'grandpa' when visiting, like 'where you in Mao's room?' The old man denies, stating he was placed at the gate instead.

The security problem becomes more pronounced with movie scenes of attacking Japanese bombers, which introduce the issue of moving the living quarters of Mao (and others) out to Yangjialing, the next local focus. (As becomes obvious to an attentive viewer, the scenes of the 'grandpa' with 'grandchildren' were filmed over several days since the greater girl is always differently clothed – as is the guide). The 'grandpa' tells the girls that back then, 'we' had only very bad clothes (documented with a photo of Mao in clothes with patches). After 1939, the GMD tried to blockade 'us' to make 'us' starve, and thus 'we' could not export salt, and 'we' could not get cloth. To the children's question as to how they could live then,

he answers simply that 'we' just opened up new fields! (By this, the 'great production movement' topic is raised). Mao himself had also his garden of vegetables. And this 'great production movement' was very lively, as also the guide explains frontally to the camera, once more in teacher-style. Old footage with Mao chatting with locals is shown, adding also the story of how Mao treated famous Overseas Chinese Chen Jiageng 陈嘉庚 (Tan Kah Kee) (for him, see chapter 5.2) here who was impressed by the simple life of Communist leaders (in contrast to the GMD leaders in Chongqing). A photo of a child at a spinning wheel, supposedly catching the interest of the smaller girl, is to suggest to the intended watching pupils that even children joined in the whole movement back then. Footage on 'opening up new fields' by the soldiers (sent to Nanniwan) and the production of various goods is matched with interviewed visiting veterans of the famous Brigade 359 (of the 120th Division of the Eighth Route Army) who, as an authentication device, tell of how they personally participated in the 'great production movement' (in Nanniwan). They would make caves themselves and also lived on wild grass in the beginning. As the narrator continues, accompanied with footage, soon rich fields, cows, and sheep would mark the area! Today's Nanniwan, the viewer is assured, is fully green with crops guaranteeing rich harvest.

Jumping back to 'great history' with Japanese surrender at the end of WW II, the war's effect for children is also spelt out, namely that it meant many orphans and children where the parents could not care or were at the front. For all those children, as the intended watching pupils can observe with old footage, the Communists in Yan'an duly cared, setting up kindergartens (for over 200 kids). Everyone received some money in Yan'an, also the children (again stressing the point that the children were treated well and as fully respected members of society), who are shown happily laughing. Chinese premier at the time of the video, Li Peng (who was once cared for in Yan'an where he was sent to at twelve),[278] is shown visiting this place of his youth, and Young Pioneers greeting the flag while the national anthem is played conclude the first part of this educational video with models the intended watching pupils should feel close to.

The second part of the educational *Zhonghua hun* video starts again with the *Dongfang hong* (the East is red) hymn, now focusing on the later major area where the leadership stayed in Yan'an: Zaoyuan, continuing with the didactic device of the enacted 'grandpa' with two 'grandchildren' family and the same guide. A photo of

278 His Communist father had been executed by the GMD. Adopted or not, he was taken in later by Zhou Enlai and his wife Deng Yingchao and sent to Yan'an. (Cf. Barnouin 2006: 126.) He had been to Tao Xingzhi's Yucai school near Chongqing before. (See chapter 5.2 of the present book for Tao Xingzhi.)

Zaoyuan's people welcoming Mao back from the Chongqing talks with Chiang Kai-shek (to prevent Civil War in autumn 1945 after Japan's surrender) shows that the division in two parts of this educational video basically follows the dividing line of the end of the Second Sino–Japanese War. Old footage of local festivities with lion dance and photos provide the smaller girl with the opportunity to ask again primary school student questions like what a *niangao* 年糕 (New Year cake) is, which is introduced in the context of Shaanxi folk custom as a point to accentuate local specificities. 'Grandpa' explains that people were poor and thus could only eat this delicacy as well as drink alcohol at Chinese New Year. To underline the Communists' purported close relationship with the locals, the commentary points out that Mao would invite all elderly people of over 60 years for a party at New Year, presenting everyone with a towel (which meant he was close to the people but also considered what they needed in terms of hygiene education). Mao, however, cared not only for the old but also for the young in that they would receive schooling (an effort to be particularly appreciated by the intended watching pupils). The present-day Zaoyuan primary school is shown with pupils dancing, clothed in red and with parasols. In an interview, the former Zaoyuan village head, who acts as an authenticating witness, holding his grandchild (which likely also suggests continuity over the generations), says that back then when Mao and the other leading Communists showed such care for the locals, they were all very moved that these important leaders would honour them, the simple villagers, at the New Year. This, of course, implies that gratefulness and loyalty is due. And thus, primary school pupils are seen marching to the stele for Zhang Side and heard swearing loyalty there. The guide then explains Zhang Side's exemplary story of complete dedication to pupils in front of the stele, intermingled with old footage of military training.

On more ideological fronts, in the Lu Xun Academy the Rectification Movement (*zhengfeng yundong* 整风运动) looked after the ideological training of the adults. Notably, the motto to 'seek truth from facts' (*shishi qiu shi* 实事求是) (later commonly associated with Deng Xiaoping's move away from hyper-revolutionary times, though he only re-used this ancient saying already applied also by Mao) is mentioned as one aspect already present in that key Yan'an movement, which also required criticism and self-criticism as a fixed ingredient. Old photos show that top cadres participated faithfully in this enterprise. The guide with 'grandpa' and 'grandchildren' then moves into the building of the 7th Party Congress (1945). At the stage in front, Mao and Zhu De are represented (similar to Lenin and Stalin badges now in profile), while at the wall, a V (victory) symbol with key slogans is put up. Historical footage shows how the participants entered the building at the time. Filmed speeches of Mao, blending in Marx, Engels, and Lenin (likely to

underline Mao was now considered a rightful heir of them, while Stalin is interestingly left out), Liu Shaoqi (who was the 'number two' in Yan'an) and others are to enrich the 'authenticity' feel of that crucial period in the Party's history. Beyond Party politics, Yan'an was, however, also the place where the noted 'Yan'an Talks on Literature and Art' were held, the site of which is shown as well. Here, the musical score of 'the' Mao praise song also heard, as mentioned, repeatedly in the video, *Dongfang hong* (the East is red), is explained in detail and that it is based on a Northwestern folk song. The guide sings it and the 'grandpa' and the girls clap enthusiastically.

Then the village of Wangjiaping is introduced as the location from where Mao would have to leave the larger Yan'an area in 1947. At this place, Mao and his (eldest) son Mao Anying are the main topic. The 'grandpa' reminds the children that Anying 'left his father' when he was 'smaller than you' (which is, of course, historically the other way round – cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book on Mao and his family). The guide explains again frontally to the camera, in teacher-style, that Mao told his son when he came back to China, that it was fine that he graduated from university in the Soviet Union, but that this was only a learning from books. Now he should go to another university which does not exist anywhere else: the *laodong daxue* 劳动大学 (labour university)! That means he was sent to work in the fields, which he would do so well, with hands full of blisters still going on working, that he was praised as a labour model in the end. That way, Mao had wanted to make sure that his own son would enjoy no privileges, and the guide explains that this was his way of showing 'love' to Mao Anying, his son with his (second) wife, 'martyr' Yang Kaihui. Subsequently, he would send him 'back' to Hunan to 'see the relatives and mum Kaihui' (i.e., her tomb, likely to show to the intended watching pupils that Mao still somehow cared for family matters, although it is nowhere mentioned that Mao lived in Yan'an first with his third wife He Zizhen and then with Jiang Qing, his fourth). Later, after the establishment of the PRC, Mao would send Anying to the Korean War (cf. chapter 4.1 of the present book) (where he was killed in 1950). At this point, a very dramatic *mise en scène* with the guide suddenly emotionally talking about Anying's death is added, which apparently deeply moves the 'grandpa' and 'grandchildren'. Mao, in turn, is cited pathetically to the avail that 'he was my son, but also the son of China' to cope with his death. In 1986, the guide adds, when Li Na (the daughter of Mao and Jiang Qing) came to Yan'an, she would cry in front of the photo of 'dad and elder brother', and 'we', the guide adds, cried too. Then the video switches back to the more sober explanatory mode,[279]

279 For the different modes in documentaries, see Nichols (2001). Cf. also Müller (2013) for the uses in Chinese official productions on history.

showing the memorial hall with its director, Zhang Mingsheng 张明胜 (who also wrote the 'patriotic' booklet – see below), now taking over the task of explanation and definition in the more formal setting than the earlier 'guide plus family' one, talking about the 'Yan'an spirit' as the legacy. Then Jiang Zemin is shown who visited in 1989 (after June) (!), stating that the 'Yan'an spirit' of relying on one's strength is still up to date, and that one should not forget that history. In the end, the museum's director, whose speech is obviously rehearsed, invites all to come to Yan'an to study that spirit.

With footage of the iconic Yan'an pagoda, finally the larger historical background is briefly explained, i.e., that the base area had, in fact, been established originally by Liu Zhidan 刘志丹 and Xie Zichang 谢子长 as the Shaan(xi)–Gan(su)–Ning(xia) Base Area (to where the Long Marchers had moved). In a didactic read-out final evaluation, the key lesson of this 'patriotic education showcase base' is summarised for the intended watching pupils: Yan'an laid the foundation for New China, serves as a historical textbook, and the Yan'an spirit is of eternal value. In visual terms, part 2 ends as part 1, showing Young Pioneers saluting the flag while the national anthem is played, thus underlining for the intended watching pupils that this is the expression of the binding legacy of Yan'an for 'patriotic education'.

The director of the Yan'an revolutionary memorial museum, Zhang Mingsheng, who appeared in the above educational video, supervised also the 'patriotic' booklet in the benchmark booklet series for young readers (Zhang 1998: 187). The booklet covers, strictly speaking, not only the Yan'an area in a narrower sense but also the sites in Northern Shaanxi where the Long Marchers moved around in the Communist-controlled Shaan–Gan–Ning Base Area since late 1935 before settling in Yan'an city in January 1937. They would have to give up Yan'an itself in 1947 to GMD general Hu Zongnan 胡宗南 before retaking it in 1948 to then proceed toward the East to finally take Beijing. Thus, the time frame given is roughly 13 years, and it covers the 'pre-Yan'an' crucial episodes of Edgar Snow's visit (in Northern Shaanxi to interview Mao and other CCP leaders, writing his extremely influential book *Red Star over China*), and the Xi'an Incident in December 1936, which equally happened shortly before the final move into Yan'an.

Yan'an would be also the place where the Rectification Movement was to streamline the Party.[280] It was also here where in 1945, the 'Mao Zedong Thought' was finally written into the constitution, while ideological deviations were purged thoroughly. The bulk of Mao's canonical writings was produced in the Yan'an

280 On the rectification movement, see Gao (2018 [2000]), and in general on campaigns as a political device: Wang, Z. (2018).

years, the young intended reader of the booklet learns, marrying Marxist ideology to Chinese realities, based on 'the masses', propagating to rely on one's own strength, and to use the crucial method of criticism and self-criticism which all mark the 'Yan'an spirit', into which political as well as military personnel should be educated (1–6).

Circumventing the 'problem' that Yan'an's Communist 'heritage' had been largely destroyed during the time of GMD occupation 1947–1948, the booklet suggests one sees all 'as it was' (and as it is well-known from the many photos shot at the time). Mao and others left their mark there, and Jiang Zemin, who had not been in Yan'an earlier, would go there in 1989 (shortly after he had become general secretary in the aftermath of the bloody suppression of the Tiananmen Movement!), to invoke the 'Yan'an spirit' to which both Mao's and his successor Deng's policies are said to be deeply connected (7).

Yan'an itself had been made accessible more easily with new infrastructure in the meantime, and already in 1950, the memorial hall (*jinianguan*) was set up, with more and more single sites added during the following times, including during the Cultural Revolution. The first sites included had been those where the leaders had lived, i.e., Fenghuangshan near the city centre, and Yangjialing, Zaoyuan, and Wangjiaping somewhat further out. Nanniwan still further away was added only in 1978, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution (8–11).

While guides were trained not only in the narrative, but also in singing the Yan'an songs (one may think here of the guide in the educational video discussed above) and performing the Shaanxi *yangge* 秧歌 folk dances, stable relations were established between the Yan'an revolutionary memorial and various PLA and other educational facilities, including the Xi'an PLA political academy whose freshmen have to stay for some time for education in Yan'an (11). (This may be also seen as a reflection of the 'problem' that some PLA units did not want to shoot at protesters in 1989 and thus needed more ideological education.)

Historically, when the main group of the Long Marchers arrived in the (already established) revolutionary base area of Northern Shaanxi, they first stayed in the area of Wuqizhen 吴旗镇, a tiny village of just 7 households, some 170 km from Yan'an (13). The leaders (Mao, Zhang Wentian, and Zhou Enlai) lived in newly built caves, while the local Party leaders had their headquarters in Bao'an 保安 (somewhat closer to Yan'an).

There, however, as the intended young reader learns, the 'leftist' current also had caused massive 'purges', i.e., demotions or even executions, which Mao is said to have stopped (15, 55). Together with the local Red Army, the Long Marchers secured the area for themselves. While the original leaders of the Shaanbei Soviet,

Liu Zhidan and Xie Zichang, were killed in battle,[281] they were immortalised later as giving their names to their home regions in Shaanxi: Bao'an would be renamed Zhidan, and Wayaobao 瓦窑堡 as Zichang. At the time in late 1935, Mao advocated the strategy to propagate more united action of all Chinese against Japan (which was popular with the populace and also matched the student demonstrations in December 1935 in Beijing to put up more resistance to Japan which was successfully expanding its influence in North China at the time, and Mao also especially targeted the dissatisfied GMD troops from Manchuria which had been deployed to Northwestern China to convince them to rather turn their energies against the Japanese to regain their homeland somewhen – than attacking locally the CCP as Chiang Kai-shek had in mind) (16–17). Beyond this, the Red Army also moved against warlord Yan Xishan 阎锡山 in neighbouring Shanxi Province and then settled in Bao'an, nearer to Yan'an, where Edgar Snow and George Hatem, the American-Lebanese physician, would visit the Communists, arranged through Song Qingling in Shanghai. According to the official narrative, it was Mao who decided for a peaceful solution of the Xi'an Incident in December 1936, after having had underground Communists infiltrate the forces of Yang Hucheng and Zhang Xueliang to win them over to stage the Incident in the first place. (Stalin's strong intervention for a 'peaceful solution' is notably glossed over in the all-Chinese narrative for the intended young reader.) This prevented civil war and helped to forge the Second United Front of the GMD and the CCP against the Japanese. On the local level, this also meant that the Northeastern Army (of Yang Hucheng) would allow the city of Yan'an to go to the CCP, and thus the CCP could finally settle down in this city better served by roads than the rocky Northern Shaanxi countryside (21). This discloses to the reader that the city went to the Communists via negotiations, not via military conquest.

In Yan'an itself, the leaders first stayed in Fenghuangshan, pursuing land revolution locally. Internally, Zhang Guotao was criticised and finally excluded from the Party, while Wang Ming was now criticised for his 'rightism'. It was also at Fenghuangshan where the photos with Bethune (for him see chapter 5.3) were taken. And Zhu De received Smedley there who wrote his biography (23–27). During the Japanese bombardements in late 1938, the leaders however had to move out to Yangjialing where they would stay the longest time. There, Mao would meet Anna Strong, in turn (29, 33). And the 7th Party Congress of 1945 would be held there as well which took 50 days! (30). Yangjialing was also the place where the 'labour

281 They had, in fact, been arrested during the inner-Communist 'purges' temporarily before. Cf. the official Party history version in the 1945 Yan'an resolution on Party history in Mao's 1965 edition of his works: Mao (1965: 222–223).

heroes' of the base area would be honoured in 1943, but also where the Yan'an talks on literature and arts were held (in 1942) (31). The Rectification Movement was also started here which, in turn, would also include Zhou Enlai's self-criticism on his role during the Zunyi Conference (see above). Parallel to Yangjialing, the leaders also used Zaoyuan (not the least for security reasons). In the unfolding 'great production movement' to counter economic blockade, manual labour was practiced, and Mao praised Zhang Side and his spirit to 'serve the people' at Zaoyuan – which had been also addressed in the filmic presentations discussed above (34). Regarding Mao's care for the local elderly by inviting them for New Year, the intended young reader also learn that they were shown the Soviet film 'Lenin in October' (which pupils would likely know) for entertainment (and ideological education).[282] Meanwhile, Ren Bishi 任弼时 as a key cadre who mainly resided in Zaoyuan, started to write official Party history there, too (37). Wangjiaping, in turn, was a further place in the Yan'an area where the leaders moved in and out (for security reasons). There, too, several famous photos were taken, e.g., with foreign journalists or a delegation of the US Army during the war. From here, Mao and the Red Army would leave Yan'an in 1947 before the advancing GMD troops moved in. Mao, it is argued, only had opted for a 'tactical retreat' at that moment, being sure to come back. Wangjiaping was also the place from where Mao is said to have sent his eldest son Anying to work (which was elaborated in the educational video above) (39–41). (One may note that also in this 'patriotic' booklet nothing is said about Mao's wives even in the context of talking about his family here.) When Mao retreated from Yan'an, it was once more Peng Dehuai – like in Jinggangshan – who would cover the rear.

Finally, Nanniwan, some 45 km from Yan'an, is presented in the booklet as part of the Yan'an experience which is disclosed here as a once very rich area with multiple water ressources up to Qing times. But subsequently, it was devastated by wars which the Manchus are claimed to have instigated between the Hui and the Han! (Here, one may note, the Hui are at least mentioned to the intended reading pupils as also present in the area – which none of the filmic presentations discussed above had disclosed.) (42). The Communists would reinvigorate the agriculture of the place, namely under the guidance of the Red Army, and also establish various educational facilities there subsequently. The 'Nanniwan spirit' to rely on oneself to build the area into a 'Jiangnan' of the Northwest was hailed, and general Zhu De

282 The Soviet film 'Lenin in October' (*Lenin v oktyabre*) (1937) had been designed for the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution to highlight Stalin's role, thus arguing for his being the natural successor of Lenin. It was screened in the PRC repeatedly and among the best-known Soviet films. Cf. Li, J. (2023: 194–197).

made a poem to celebrate (and eternalise) this (which once more shows the important role of poetry for memorialisation framing) (43). In 1943, a propaganda documentary film was produced on Nanniwan (which is, in fact, the footage used in the filmic versions discussed above), while a song on Nanniwan would make it known widely as a place where it had been supposedly proven that it was enough to want to do something to be also able to do it (the 'do it yourself, and clothing will abound and food suffice' spirit). This shows that Nanniwan was carefully designed as a showcase. Obviously, not all, however, survived this 'great production movement' in Nanniwan, since the 'martyrs of Nanniwan' (whose reasons for 'martyrdom' are not spelt out) are also hailed (44–45).

In Yan'an itself, the place where the newspapers and leaflets were produced (Qingliangshan), i.e., the propaganda and communication hub for ideological formation of the socialist individual, is a further site profiled for the intended young readers. A key publication was the *Jiefang ribao* 解放日报 (Liberation Daily) of which Mao penned the title and which still exists (48). Zhou Enlai brought a broadcasting station back from the Soviet Union, and thus propaganda work could be set up. First, people had to sing revolutionary songs live, but then a gramophone could be used when broadcasting such songs. (Mao himself had his personal gramophone). And a printing press replaced handwritten materials (50). The memorial museum (in its new version sporting its name written by Jiang Zemin who thus inscribed himself in this 'sacred place' of the Chinese revolution) displayed various such material items, together with many historical photos documenting the Yan'an years. Since 1990 (!), in the context of 'patriotic education', more and more visitors to Yan'an were counted (53), which suggests that Yan'an visits were reinforced after the 1989 crisis and the crumbling of the socialist bloc in Europe.

To connect Yan'an as a 'Party place' for the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet with what s/he should know from school history classes, the larger historical background is sketched out. It all started, according to the narrative, with Mao reading in a GMD newspaper that the 'Reds' were particularly active in Northern Shaanxi – and thus decided that the Long March should end up there! (54–55). When in 1935 the Japanese heightened their pressure on North China, aiming at a second Manchukuo, the Communists, now in the North, needed to oppose this. Given the realities, it was only logical to try to align again with the GMD (or have them turn their military against the Japanese instead against the CCP) (55–56). Thus, Zhou Enlai was sent to hold secret talks with Zhang Xueliang in April 1936 in Yan'an (at the time not yet in CCP hands, while the base area of Liu Zhidan and Xie Zichang was in nearby rural areas). Also with Yang Hucheng (the decisive GMD general in the Northwest) a deal was secured. In the end, he made sure that

Zhang Xueliang would not attack the CCP (56–59). To not create any problems, the land revolution was stopped (which suggests to the intended young reader that this was the main divisive policy), and the flexible policy of first working together was adopted. Notably, even with Chen Lifu, Chiang Kai-shek's chief ideologue, talks were held.[283] However, when Chiang had eclipsed the warlord threat in Guangdong and wanted to concentrate on the Northwest to finally eclipse also the Communists, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng were purportedly instigated to revolt, staging the Xi'an Incident (60). On that background, the CCP could finally realise the deal and take over Yan'an city. Given the Japanese attack and full-blown war from July 1937 onward, Chiang Kai-shek accepted the support of the CCP with the Eighth Route Army, and with the guerrilla fighters and Red Army contingents in the South of China which were reorganised as the New Fourth Army (under general Ye Ting) (64–65). Still, the official recognition of the Communist base area with Yan'an as its centre from the side of the Nanjing government only happened shortly before the GMD had to give up Nanjing in late 1937 (and only weeks before the massacre, see above chapter 3.2) (67).

Meanwhile, the base area implemented a new government style, first taking in also non-Communists, but also moving against prostitution, concubinage, speculation, and corruption to show to the locals the difference from former GMD rule, administering death sentences in cases of heavy cadre misconduct, to heighten acceptance with the populace (70–72). This new style of governance attracted many youths, and even overseas idealists were flocking to Yan'an. Thus, e.g., two ambulances were sponsored by Overseas Chinese (usually counting as a GMD clientele) (see also chapter 5.2 for Chen Jiageng), and groups of drivers arrived from Malaysia (since personnel having such expertise was lacking). A Korean nurse also joined the common endeavour (73). (The Indian medical mission – see chapter 5.3 of the present book for Kotnis – is notably not mentioned to the intended young Chinese reader.) This influx of many new people, however, also urged the Communists to set up more ideological training. A Communist wartime 'university' (Kangda 抗大 for short) was set up, with dorms dug into the loess (which are also advertised to tourists today). This new type of 'university' integrated art and music for the 'new' society that Yan'an was to embody, with operas and stage performances, but also natural science and medicine were taught. Furthermore, there were also educational facilities for women and minorities. A Russian school, and a specialised one for the military were set up, too. All these endeavours in Yan'an fascinated also foreigners,

283 One may recall that Chen Lifu could be mentioned in this 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 more easily, since he had started to build up ties with the mainland again since the 1980s. Cf. above (chapter 3.1) the case of Yandiling whereto he sent an inscription over from Taiwan.

so that even two reporters from the US, Theodore White and Annalee Jacoby, who wrote *Thunder out of China* on the Yan'an experiment, described it positively for an international audience (74–77).[284] But after the de facto break-up of the Second United Front in 1941, the blockade of the base area made life in reality difficult. Before this, Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng had given money, the GMD had provided for the Army, and people had sent in money from the outside, apart from mild taxation in the base area itself. But thereafter, the economic blockade, which was also due to the Japanese who are, however, left out in the narrative, also meant that the base area could not sell its products like salt any longer. On the other hand, no textiles came in (78–80). Thus, taking Nanniwan as a model, also in Yan'an itself a 'great production movement' was set up, with competitions to outdo one the other, praising the 'labour heroes'. The problem of shortage in goods was aggravated by the many people fleeing the war zone to come to the base area (81). Therefore, on the ideological front, the 'Rectification Movement' was needed to 'correct' wrong developments, first taking Wang Ming as a main target, though he refused to accept criticism. Mao thus modified the movement, arguing it should not be directed against one person anyway, but rather against certain 'tendencies', as the intended young reader learns. But Kang Sheng 康生 (ideologically close to the later Cultural Revolution 'Gang of Four') used it as a pretext to imprison people, which Mao is said to have 'gradually realised', ending in Mao's (forced) apologies for the 'excesses' caused by his 'Rectification Movement'![285] (82–90).

After the capitulation of the Japanese in 1945, Mao hesitated to accept Chiang Kai-shek's invitation to the Chongqing talks (to prevent civil war), according to the 'patriotic' booklet, which does not address in this context the crucial role of the US in guaranteeing for the personal safety of Mao (upon which he accepted) (91). Meanwhile, the CCP cooperated with the Soviets who entered China in the final days of the war from the Sino–Soviet border (in the so-called 'August Storm' of 1945 to drive out the Japanese for good). In 1947, finally, the GMD attacked Yan'an and drove the Communists out. This 'battle for Yan'an' has been popularised in the novel *Baowei Yan'an* 保卫延安 by Du Pengcheng 杜鹏程 (official English translation: *Defend Yenan!*, 1958) (which is, as mentioned above, the background to the show enacted for tourists there today, turning the defeat into a 'defence'). That novel, first written in 1954 and then tellingly revised several times and during the 1960s even for some time banned, had been widely read in the PRC to explain the delicate issue why the Communists withdrew in the end. In fact, when

284 This book appeared in the US in 1946.

285 Well-known victim of the movement was writer Wang Shiwei 王实味. For the movement, see Gao (2018).

the last US Army delegation had left Yan'an, Chiang Kai-shek sent his bombers (while the Communists had hardly any airplanes themselves). Mao, ever the tactician, thus decided to withdraw, but to stay in the larger area, while GMD general Hu Zongnan showed reporters his victory, purportedly faking a huge 'tomb of the Red Army', and allegedly making people wear Red Army uniforms to pose as 'POWs', the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet learns. By staying in the area, however, Mao could bind Hu Zongnan's troops to the place, while Zhu De and Liu Shaoqi went over to Manchuria (where the Soviets had driven out the Japanese and still held parts of it) (93–97).

Beyond the historical and military events, the 'patriotic' booklet also profiles the major personalities of Yan'an for the intended young reader as models in a supposedly more approachable way. That way, the 'Party place' should also appear as humanised, starting with Mao who 'educated' his eldest son Anying just returning from the Soviet Union to go to the countryside to work and learn about China's realities. (Incidentally, it becomes clear that the emotional sentences the guide in the educational *Zhonghua hun* video recites on Mao and his son described above, are taken verbatim from this booklet by the memorial hall's director Zhang Mingsheng, which shows in practice how the 'rehearsal' for guides, mentioned in various 'patriotic education showcase bases' we already looked at, works) (98–103). Mao, the father, however, interfered also with his son's marriage plans since the bride was not yet old enough, requesting a delay (something not mentioned in the 'patriotic' filmic representations above, though well-known and a crucial part of the Mao films of the early 1990s, with one dedicated even to Mao and his son Anying).[286] That way, their relationship is additionally marked as clearly hierarchical. In general, Mao made clear that a Communist had to be ready to sacrifice everything at any moment, including personal considerations, and obey to rules given (105).

Beyond Mao, Zhu De is a figure quite extensively profiled for the intended young reader as someone close to the people, helping them and working himself in the fields, who would also sit down at the spinning wheel during the 'great production movement' (cf. his 'shoulder pole' story in Jinggangshan's memorial discussed above) (109–114). Liu Shaoqi (officially number two in Yan'an hierarchy, but later a key victim of the Cultural Revolution) is the third to be profiled, here notably also as the author of his famous (and later controversial) 'how to be a good Communist' text in Yan'an (thus showing to the intended young reader that Yan'an had not only Mao as a 'theoretician') (115–118). Zhou Enlai, in turn, who went back and forth between Yan'an and Chongqing, is described as unwavering in dedication in spite

286 The film 'Mao Zedong and his son' (*Mao Zedong he ta de erzi* 毛泽东和他的儿子) was released in 1991.

of the many perils he had to survive, e.g., when attacked by bandits (which cost 11 of his men their lives) (119). The fact that he broke his arm (as can be seen on photos of the time) is notably explained here by the behaviour of Jiang Qing (and thus she is finally named!) who alledgedly indirectly caused this accident. Zhou Enlai thus had to be treated in the Soviet Union, since medical treatment in the base area was poor (which also explains the frequent absences and occasional trips to the Soviet Union by Chinese cadres – usually over Xinjiang – see above chapter 3.2 on the Urumqi site) (121). Furthermore, travelling with airplanes was often risky at this time, pointing out with the case of Zhou Enlai, who was much on the move, that he would behave calmly, always helping others, e.g., in the case of the daughter of Ye Ting who wanted to meet her father when he finally came out of prison in Chongqing (see above, chapter 3.2 on Geleshan), which should be a situation to touch intended young readers also emotionally. When the airplane had problems and her seat's parachute was not to be found, Zhou would give her a hand and all went well (123).

Other leaders profiled for the young intended readers include Ren Bishi, who, though being often ill (he had been repeatedly in GMD prisons), served nevertheless 'like a camel' (130–132), and Lin Boqu 林伯渠 who was the cadre heading and managing the base area tirelessly in spite of his advanced age which allegedly impressed even foreign journalists (133–136). An interesting case is Zhang Wentian since he was de facto high in the Party hierarchy already before the Zunyi Conference and up to Yan'an. At Zunyi (see above), he had changed sides according to the official Party history to join Mao. Since he had a 'leftist' past and had been associated with the so-called Wang Ming line, he had to defend himself in Yan'an. Different from Wang Ming, who had Soviet backing and stayed again in the Soviet Union during the Long March time, while coming back in 1937 to create another time of ideological tensions, Zhang Wentian stayed with Mao by now. He is thus presented to the intended young readers as someone who at least understood his 'errors' and repented, while Wang Ming did not. Zhang Wentian is thus said to have understood that one needed to adapt Marxism to fit China and not dogmatically apply it (Soviet-style) (136–140).

Deng Xiaoping, in turn, who only rather shortly lived in Yan'an, is included in this late 1990s narrative as well to stress that he, too, had a 'Yan'an past': he had married (his last wife) in Yan'an in 1939 (in the presence of, among other couples, Mao and Jiang Qing!) and had returned several times to Yan'an also later, notably the last time in May 1966 when he also visited the memorial museum's exhibition. (Soon after, he would have his first Cultural Revolution-era down-fall) (140–143). Peng Dehuai, who did not survive the Cultural Revolution like Deng, is also

included in the booklet's presentations of leaders, pointing out to the intended young readers that he was key to many military victories the Communists scored (143–147). Wang Zhen 王震, in turn, another Army figure, is hailed as the major 'hero' of Nanniwan where he built up all of it with his famous Brigade 359,[287] in fact recruiting also women and even children at the time (147–151). The last personality profiled for the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet is Liu Zhidan, in fact the founding cadre of the Shaan(xi)–Gan(su) base area who was killed in fighting already in spring 1936 – before Yan'an became the home base of the Long Marchers, but who is rather described here as a clever tactician. (Incidentally, he was attacked posthumously during the Cultural Revolution, to be rehabilitated thereafter – which is not addressed in the booklet.) (151–155). With such profiles of purportedly outstanding and capable personalities, the young readers should feel convinced that the Party was legitimated also on moral grounds and able to do the best for the populace.

For the trickier issue of Yan'an's legacy, the 'patriotic' booklet points out that the Communist leadership also cared for Yan'an after 1949, although this statement seems somewhat forced. Mao notably never returned in person, but in 1951, similar to other former base areas (cf. above for Ruijin), a 'care delegation' was sent. In 1953, money was also provided for rebuilding the sites destroyed by the GMD and Hu Zongnan's troops (157). In 1952 and 1961, Mao would receive Yan'an model workers in Beijing, and in 1964, the museum staff would visit Mao in Beijing, too (158–159). But for the 'red cradle', this is an astonishingly poor record. Neither did Mao visit like in 'his' Jinggangshan, nor did he inscribe the site like in Zunyi. In 1997 (at the 60th anniversary of Mao's coming to Yan'an in 1937), a new bronze statue of Mao was erected (designed by noted sculptor Cheng Yunxian 程允贤)[288] on a new square (in front of the museum). Thus, Mao was posthumously made to 'come back' at last (159). Of the other leaders, Zhou Enlai came back in person, but only during the Cultural Revolution in 1973, accompanying a Vietnamese guest (who likely asked for it) (160). At the time they also toured the restored sites (161). Visiting the exhibition, Zhou Enlai, apparently not fully satisfied, requested to put up more images of 'the masses' than of leaders (of whom, after all, several had been purged during the Cultural Revolution, most dramatically former Yan'an's 'number two', Liu Shaoqi) (163). Before coming in person, in 1970, when told that Yan'an had still many economic problems (which was thus obviously ignored before), Zhou

287 One may note that Wang Zhen would be assigned later to Xinjiang where his PLA troops would again combine military and agricultural tasks – recalling the ancient military *tuntian* 屯田 system to have the military ideally sustain itself.

288 He produced many revolutionary sculptures in PRC museums.

Enlai is said to have felt sorry, requesting that Yan'an's economy should be 'looked after' (which discloses that the area had not profited after the founding of the PRC from harbouring the Communist headquarters earlier for so many years) (164–165). After June 1989, finally, then-general secretary Jiang Zemin came, as mentioned. Notably, though, the 'patriotic' booklet mentions explicitely his criticism that a 'small group' (intending the protesters of Tiananmen, which is not openly identified) wanted to overthrow the CCP and the socialist system! Referring to a statement by Mao (which had been historically directed against Wang Ming!), he argued that only those who had 'investigated' things had a right to speak (165). Thus, Jiang Zemin went to Yan'an and surroundings (Zaoyuan etc.) in 1989 for 'investigation'. The 'Yan'an spirit' should be the guideline to rule, and Jiang quoted also Zhou Enlai (of 1970 when hearing that Yan'an was still very poor), stating that this meant he 'did not do enough' (cf. Liu Shaoqi in chapter 5.3 with almost similar wording for the Great Famine caused! – illustrating that this wording is a trope). But the 'investigation' of Zaoyuan supposedly showed Jiang Zemin that when one relied on the 'Yan'an spirit' to ameliorate things, one could succeed (166–168).

Another village in the larger area Jiang 'inspected' was, in contrast, still poor even at his time. Jiang thus drew the 'conclusion' that one can send in doctors, but in the end, it depends on the locals to help themselves (the 'do it yourself' motto). Still, he acknowledged poverty as a long-term problem of the area even at his time (which is why in the 2000s, the former revolutionary areas in poor regions were to be boosted by 'red tourism' – cf. chapter 1) (169). After his highest-ranking visit as then-general secretary, other leaders quickly followed, from Li Peng (who had spent several years living in Yan'an) to Li Ruihuan, Zhu Rongji, Hu Jintao, and general Liu Huaqing 刘华清 (the so-called father of the Chinese Navy) (170). Li Peng visited as prime minister at the spring festival in 1996 (which suggests a 'coming home' for Chinese New Year). Zhou Enlai who had taken him in as an orphan, had once sent him to school in Yan'an, and Li Peng had, in fact, visited already earlier in 1982 and then again in 1990, telling of his time back then in Yan'an and how they grew crops and span at the wheel (171). To promote the site, in 1991, students were brought to Yan'an during the summer holidays (obviously to receive 'patriotic education' after their age group had shown 'problems' in 1989) (175). Apparently, the 1989 protests had engendered a whole range of activities to bring university students from undergraduates to post-docs to Yan'an for 'study'. Also schools for Overseas Chinese were by now to bring their students there (176). Positive comments of students are cited to suggest they also appreciated what they 'learnt': to overcome the ego in a search for a true path. And thus, they would realise that they did not really know the Party, that Marxism is scientific, and that Communism

is the objective law of societal development! (177–181). In a rare moment of criticism of Deng's policies, it is remarked that in the reform and opening period corrupt ideas and practices could easily spread, and thus also universities had been 'contaminated'. For this, these 'investigation tours' served as a counter-measure. In 1991, the PLA (of which some had refused orders in 1989) thus sent its defence university students to Yan'an for education in 'revolutionary tradition', too, acknowledging that the PLA had 'been disassociated from the masses' (183). Since in Yan'an the army had been purportedly sustained by the people (different from the GMD army), one could understand why in Yan'an the Red Army could easily win support. Finally, the spirit of criticism and self-criticism was also diagnosed as something needed to revive (183–186). All this one could learn from the Yan'an experience to apply in the present, namely in the PLA, the late 1990s' 'patriotic' framing of the site suggested.

Overall, though, the late 1990s' 'patriotic' booklet had disclosed that those Communists who had lived in Yan'an for so many years in the 1930s and 1940s, later largely evaded the place. Rather, it was the abstracted legacy (the 'spirit') that was hailed, while the place itself, which once had to be given up, was not embraced and even left in poverty. In this sense, this 'patriotic' material reveals more about Yan'an and its legacy than the glittering façade of its medial presentations (including the carefully selected and edited historical photos) and rhetorical invocations usually associated with it do.

Moving two decades ahead, the *Fengbei* description (Wan / Xue 2019), bringing the narrative into line with the Xi Jinping era, points out what should remain of the Yan'an experience at a time, when the generation involved had passed away. And it adds more information on the site's post-1949 development. The memorial hall, though among the first to be set up in such revolutionary places after 1949, was obviously moved around a couple of times until it was settled in Wangjiaping during the Cultural Revolution. In 2005 in the Hu Jintao era, it was named one of those 'patriotic education showcase bases' that were to be projected anew for serving the broader goal of the 'three educations' (i.e., in patriotism, in revolutionary tradition, and in the 'Yan'an spirit'). Thus, in 2006, the former memorial hall was torn down and rebuilt, and the exhibition newly set up. In 2009 (at the 50th anniversary of the PRC's founding), the new museum was opened, exhibiting mostly photos and publications of the old Yan'an times, at the time also sporting the label of a 'first class museum' (cf. appendix 3 to chapter 1 for such labels), stepping up it's ranking also in the museum hierarchy. The whole setup was enlarged, with a bridge over the river to access the present memorial hall marking the axis, and there is now ample space for activities. The huge bronze statue of Mao of 1997 is placed in front for

which Jiang Zemin had provided the calligraphy. In style, the new memorial building is designed to recall the local cave dwellings, and the exhibition focuses once more on the leaders, beyond Mao placing the accent on Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De (3).

As the intended reader of this 2019 narrative learns, the (reconstructed) dwellings in Zaoyuan were opened to visitors in 1959 at the 10th anniversary of the PRC's founding, as were those in Wangjiaping, where today Peng Dehuai is commemorated who defended the rear when Mao left from there (and who fell from grace in the very year of 1959). Yangjialing was rebuilt and opened in 1959 as well, since most places had been destroyed by GMD general Hu Zongnan. Until the 1980s, the auditorium for the major meetings there, in fact a Christian church originally, had been the largest building in Yan'an. Fenghuangshan, near the city centre and bombed by the Japanese, was also rebuilt, and finally Qingliangshan. The memorial for the press there (the only press-specific memorial of China) was the last, opened only after the Cultural Revolution in 1986, and reopened after an overhaul in 2003 (7). By now, also the site where the government of the Shaan–Gan–Ning Soviet had been placed from 1937 to 1949 (!) further away from the city is included in the 'Yan'an site' (8). And also other places were integrated into the 'revolutionary memorial area' of Yan'an in the 2000s when the new project of revitalising 'patriotic education showcase bases' in economically challenged regions was launched, namely the place of the Northwestern Bureau of the Central Committee. This had once been led by Gao Gang 高岗 (a figure who became noted as target of the first major inner-Party purge in PRC times, taking his life in 1954, who was never rehabilitated), but also by Xi Jinping's father Xi Zhongxun (which explains why it is included in the Xi Jinping era description). The location of the Luxun Academy, in turn, moved to the present site in 1939, and in 1943 merged with the 'university', with four departments: music, art, theatre, and literature, was integrated as well in the 'revolutionary memorial area' during the overhaul of the 2000s and was opened in 2009 (9). At Nanniwan, further away, tourists are by now invited to an exhibition on how the 'great production movement' was implemented by the famous Brigade 359 under Wang Zhen, but also where military training was done, and where Mao stayed during his visit to Nanniwan to express his support. The Party school location, in turn, had been rebuilt only in 1984 in the Deng Xiaoping era, and carries in Mao's calligraphy the famous motto '实事求是 *shishi qiu shi*' (seeking truth from facts) – an old saying turned into a slogan which Mao had used (in his sense) in Yan'an to 'rectify' Party work,[289] but which was very

289 See, e.g., Mao's speech of 1 February 1941 on 'Rectify the Party's style of work' when the Party School was opened in Yan'an, where he mentioned the motto. (Mao 1965: vol 3: 47) He would

much stressed under Deng Xiaoping and his shift away from 'hyper-revolution'. It is thus politically rather ambivalent.

The *Fengbei* narrative, mentioning tourist perspectives repeatedly – cf. the call to use 'red tourism' to boost poorer areas – also points out that since 1991, the site of the bank in Yan'an, the precursor of the Bank of China, which would be used by Hu Zongnan as his own headquarters during the GMD occupation, was also labelled as a memorial and is a place worth visiting. The former site of Wayaobao is by now also included in the larger 'Yan'an' site, where the Central Committee was located from November 1935 to June 1936, as is the place of the Luochuan Conference (in August 1937). The cemetery for the 'martyrs' of 'April Eighth', in turn, commemorates the victims of the airplane crash of 1946, costing various important CCP figures and sympathisers on their way from Chongqing to Yan'an their lives, including Bo Gu, Central Committee member Wang Ruofei 王若飞, and Deng Fa, but also general Ye Ting (cf. Geleshan above in chapter 3.2) and his family, as well as Wang Ruofei's uncle, the educator Huang Jisheng 黄齐生. (The American crew members all died in the crash as well, which is again not mentioned. They would be buried in the US.) (10–11). Mao would write an endorsement for the tomb for the victims, and a photo in the *Fengbei* narrative is reserved for the tomb of the youngest 'martyr', the three-year old son of Ye Ting, which is likely to appeal emotionally to the young intended readers. In 1957, the tombs were set in a larger 'martyrs' cemetery' (when all over China such cemeteries were erected, following Soviet precedent). At this point, the tomb of Communist Wang Ruofei was placed centrally (who, different from Bo Gu) was without political problems. To this collective cemetery, also other 'martyrs' of the Yan'an area and period were moved, e.g., Zhang Side who died on the job and would be praised by Mao with the famous 'serve the people' motto (12). That way, the 'martyrs' cemetery became the central place for commemoriation in Yan'an in the PRC era.

Beyond the above more touristic sightseeing spot description of the Yan'an 'patriotic education showcase base', the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative particularly focuses on Edgar Snow's reports 'on Yan'an' as extremely influential in hindsight, even though, in fact, Snow did not go to Yan'an but interviewed Mao before the latter settled there and observed the whole base area from Baoan. The young intended reader is led to conclude that Mao cleverly used Snow, since Snow could not be censured easily by the GMD and would thus transport Mao's views to the outer world at the time. Snow came together with the American-Lebanese physician George Hatem, who would remain in China and later recalled the visit to

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repeat it several times during the Rectification Movement. (The expression was also taken over in the 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our Party' of 1945, ibid. p. 211).

complement what Snow had written. Here, also He Zizhen as Mao's wife finally appears (since Mao was not yet together with his last wife, the 'problematic' Jiang Qing) who would serve Snow as the guest of the house.

Snow's positive description of Mao as smart, but frugal is cited, and only Snow, the foreign journalist, could motivate Mao to speak also about himself. (In fact, Mao had been enigmatic for most people in China and beyond, up to Snow's reports – cf. Ishikawa 2022.) Mao told Snow that the Communists were 'patriots' and wanted to take back Manchuria. Considering the war against Japan, the Communists also had stopped their land revolution to build up a United Front against Japan, thus signalling over Snow to the rest of China that the Communists could be trusted (and would stall their more controversial policies). When asked about the relation to Moscow, he told Snow that they belonged to the Comintern but were not dependent upon Moscow, and that the CCP would always put the interest of China first. Mao obviously was satisfied with the reaction the Snow reports produced since many young Chinese flocked to Yan'an thereafter, swelling the numbers. (That way, Snow rather appears to the intended young Chinese reader as a 'useful idiot' for Mao to make propaganda for him. In fact, a letter from Mao to Snow, then from Yan'an, even asked him directly to make propaganda for his position!) To honour the efforts of this CCP-friendly American, Snow also was included in the list of 2009 (at the 60th anniversary of the PRC's founding) of the '100 heroic model personalities that made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of New China' (cf. Chen Yannian and Wang Erzhuo above) (12–16).

Many enthusiasts started to move to Yan'an, which in turn meant one needed to bring those in line. They came from 'white' territory, from Japanese-occupied territory, or were Overseas Chinese. Usually they came over Xi'an (held by the GMD) where the Eighth Route Army had a liaison office. Many intellectuals and artists arrived, including people like Ding Ling, the famous female writer (whose husband had been killed in Shanghai's Longhua prison – see above chapter 3.2). They all shared in the materially simple life of Yan'an. But also people like Liang Shuming, the modern Confucian who involved himself in rural reconstruction, came for a visit. He incidentally knew the father of Yang Kaihui well, Mao's second wife who had been executed by the GMD (cf. chapter 5.3 on Mao) (16–17). Given the attraction of Yan'an, which was surnamed the 'sacred place of the revolution' (to distinguish it from Jinggangshan as the 'cradle of the revolution'), for many intellectuals, the Yan'an 'talks' on literature and art were to serve for streamlining the new arrivals. Ding Ling, an author well-known also to pupils, is profiled in this *Fengbei* narrative (though nothing about her problems in Yan'an is said!) who had been in GMD prisons and had come, arranged again through Song Qingling, to Yan'an. Mao would

tell her that she was to leave behind the former identity of a (bourgeois) 'Miss' (referring to her fictional 'diary of Miss Sophia' which made her famous) and rather turn into a female general.[290] In general, Mao suggested the writers should go to the front to 'study'. He himself, he argued, had learnt to walk long stretches only in Jinggangshan, where no trams or buses were available. And in his 'talks' on literature and art, Mao stressed that the key question was whom this all was to serve. Above all, one should not provide a pessimistic outlook (cf. the 'revolutionary optimism' required), and not talk much about 'humanitarianism', but rather be part of the revolutionary vanguard. Mao would first encourage people to speak their minds, taking notes, and then had people returning from the front speak about their experiences so that the attendees would learn to serve the masses (18–20). That way, for the *Fengbei* narrative, the ideological messages for which the Yan'an legacy stood, are of prime importance.

Another particular 'highlight' for the *Fengbei* narrative is Nanniwan, citing the beginning of the famous Nanniwan song. Given the economic blockade of Yan'an by the Japanese as well as by the GMD, in 1941 the situation had grown tense. Thus, Mao wrote the 'do it yourself' slogan. Nanniwan and two further areas were newly cleared for production, and Mao would encourage hard labour with 'model labourers', to achieve self-reliance with grain. Supposedly, even a surplus was achieved, and the cotton production is said to have reached 50% of consumption needs. In 1943, Mao visited to 'inspect' the 'success', while he himself also had his vegetable garden he would daily care for in Yan'an, and would refuse when others wanted to take over his share (21–23). This, then, would be the 'Yan'an spirit': dare to do everything, taking it into your own hands.

All in all, the new Xi Jinping-era framing does not only disclose more on how the site fared during the 2000s when the former 'revolutionary areas' were to be boosted economically over 'red tourism', integrating also a broad range of locations as tourist destinations into this 'patriotic' site, but also shifts the accent of Yan'an's legacy more to the cultural aspects (with the Yan'an 'talks') and Yan'an's translocal appeal (over Snow) which should make Yan'an a place of pride for the modern Chinese citizen to show a new socialist society *in statu nascendi*, even though it had to be given up for the historical moment in 1947.

290 This alludes to her early 1928 work titled 'Miss Sophia's diary' with a 'bourgeois' heroine (in Communist understanding).

Case study: Xibaipo

This leads us to the final 'patriotic education showcase bases' discussed in this chapter: Xibaipo, which was historically the 'last stop before Beijing' on the way to Communist rule over China. After the Communists had to give up Yan'an, where they had stayed for so many years, the Party needed new headquarters, which was to be located in Xibaipo. Today, this site is listed as the **Xibaipo zhonggong zhongyang jiuzhi** 西柏坡中共中央旧址 (Old site of the CCP Central Committee in Xibaipo) (Hebei Province) (list 1, 1997). It is one of the crucial 'Party places' and 'red' sites, representing again a 'spirit', in this case the one to mind Mao's warning that the prospect of taking over the whole country should not lead to complacency. Consequently, later leaders also went to Xibaipo (often as a kind of 'initiation rite') to show they would remain humble and modest though taking over responsibility for the country.

Strikingly, although this place in the Taihang mountain area was never destroyed by the GMD as in the Party places discussed above, the visitor of today nevertheless does not see anything 'authentic' in a material sense in spite of the naming as a 'jiuzhi' 旧址 (old site), since in PRC times, the decision was taken to create a huge water reservoir at this historical place in the late 1950s, i.e., during the 'Great Leap Forward'. (See fig. 3.3.4). Thus, the original site is now firmly under water, although tour guides and tour books are often not explicit about this to keep it as a 'pilgrimage site', and a casual visitor would not even note the reconstruction. The official, internally published guide book which in spite of its title which purports to cover only the memorial museum, also covers the 'original site' of the CCP's Central Committee, does not mention this at all (*Xibaipo jinianguan jiangjieci* 2002), neither does the Xibaipo book series which provides much details and storytelling about the significance of the place in history and memory, though indirectly hinting at a change by providing a photo of Xibaipo in the 1940s (which looks different from the present location).[291]

Only Zhao (2003: 159–161) of the museum provides a brief account, stating that the site was photographed and meticulously registered in 1959 before dismantling, to start and rebuild it in 1970 (i.e., during the Cultural Revolution) higher up the slope. The Chinese Ministry of Culture, in turn, acknowledges briefly that the site was in fact rebuilt in 1971, though assuring it 'basically kept its original

291 Cf. Wang R. (2012a) and (2012b): for the photo see cover of Wang R. (2012b).

appearance' (*Site of the Xibaipo Central Committee of the CPC* 2003).[292] (One may, however, be sceptical that at that point in time during the Cultural Revolution, also Liu Shaoqi's dwelling should have been 'kept in its original appearance'.) In any case, the site was finally publicised on a greater scale after the Cultural Revolution (and the rehabilitation of various Party figures, including Liu Shaoqi), together with the memorial museum built only then.

On site, though, the visitors are made to assume – as I observed in 2015 – that they see the original dwellings of key CCP figures (thus called 'old sites': *jiuzhi*), how they lived in a simple way (with furniture etc. supposedly moved away and stored before flooding the real original site), and even the air raid shelters 'behind their houses' suggest to the tourist an 'authentic' experience. The ranking of the main Party figures is typically according to their hierarchical position at the time, not chronological, reflected in the sequence of naming in the internal official booklet provided at the site: though Mao (and several other leaders) came to Xibaipo only later, he is put first on the list, followed by Liu Shaoqi (who arrived earlier), and Zhu De (who had come together with Liu), and Zhou Enlai. By mentioning Liu Shaoqi right after Mao (according to the Party hierarchy back then, but given the Cultural Revolution in the meantime with Liu as a major victim), the site de facto accentuates Liu Shaoqi's role in Xibaipo. Political sensitivities can be gleaned from the fact that even though all CCP figures lived there with their families, in the case of Mao the mentioning of his unpopular fourth wife Jiang Qing is largely evaded to rather draw attention to their common daughter Li Na, and how Mao lived together with her as well as in a close relationship with his bodyguards.[293] In sum, a certain uneasiness about this final headquarters site before the Communists took over all of China can be clearly sensed, which likely also explains why this seemingly straightforward Party place took so long to be officially endorsed.

292 The website has been changed in the meantime, taking off this piece of information (as observed on 11 September 2025).

293 Again, written material evades mentioning Jiang Qing though the visitor encounters her (locked) room acknowledging her presence. Interestingly, Pomeranz mentions in his reflections on a visit of 2010 the room was already locked by then (though strikingly subtitling the photo of Liu Shaoqi and his wife Wang Guangmei – who in fact married during the time in Xibaipo – in his short reflections as just a 'portrait of a CCP couple': maybe this was the provided Chinese subtitle at the time of his visit – though both are easily recognisable to at least any Chinese visitor) (Pomeranz 2010). The memorial museum tacitly provides now also the 'complete' photo of Mao with Jiang Qing and Li Na, whereas written materials usually reproduce the truncated photo without Jiang Qing and mentioning only a nanny caring for the girl.

Fig. 3.3.4 Water reservoir seen from today's Xibaipo heritage site moved uphill (photograph by the author, 2015)

In terms of filmic treatment of this 'patriotic education showcase base', the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 2), produced by Shijiazhuang TV's societal education department in 1998, introduces the (reconstructed) village Xibaipo as set in a peaceful natural surrounding. A statement by Zhou Enlai (of 1973, i.e., during the Cultural Revolution and when he was already very ill, reflected in his rather shaky handwriting at the time) is read out which defines the place's official role in Party history (in rather neutral terms – see also below). With a map, the viewer is introduced to the complicated route from Yan'an to Xibaipo the Party representatives had taken, and a painting of the former village shows how it supposedly looked like on arrival of the first group of CCP representatives. An old photo in a tent suggests that the very first meetings had still to be held in this makeshift setting. The realisation of land revolution is illustrated by photos of banners propagating the campaign, and of its outcome, the supposedly happy peasants. Marching soldiers with minimal equipment illustrate how the Red Army arrived, and a map shows who of the leaders lived where in Xibaipo. A tree that was 'planted at the time' is also shown (which is ironic, if one considers that the original site has been flooded for the reservoir – a fact never mentioned to the watching TV audience). The decent furniture one sees in Mao's 'former residence' is explained as a gift to

Mao after the Communist victory at the major nearby city of Shijiazhuang (i.e., it was a 'war trophy' – and thus no luxury on his part). At this table and on this chair, Mao is said to have directed the so-called 'three decisive campaigns' (cf. chapter 4.3 of the present book) to seal the outcome of the Civil War, thus turning these material items into tangible 'relics'. In a more private vein, Mao's bath tub and reclining chair are to illustrate his 'normal' life, while the GMD threat of bombing was ever present. Xibaipo was, however, also the headquarters of the PLA. Old newspaper clippings show the reporting of the times on the PLA's victories in battle, and filmed scenes of the military as well as maps illustrate this further. Footage of masses cheering when the PLA marched into the area suggest this military outcome was also what the people had hoped for. In terms of Party history, the filmed key leaders appear in accentuating slow motion entering a major meeting (i.e., the Second Plenum of the Seventh Party Congress in March 1949, the last conference before the Communists moved out), with the Party flag shown, and Mao holding a speech. At the time, he declared that 'we' need to stay humble when going to take over the whole of China as the major message. A painting of Mao speaking to other leaders leads the TV audience back to the present, showing the exhibition hall and normal visitors touring the outdoor sites to provide a view of how the place looks like today, and what the tourist can expect.

Compared to this more touristic national TV version for the general Chinese citizen, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 4) (a notably long one with 22 min. and co-produced by various entities of Hebei Province and the site memorial), directed at pupils, follows a clearly more didactic approach. As an uncommon feature of these videos, it provides commentaries with a female and a male voice alternating (a device very common, though, in TV news)! Very emphatically, the narrative presents to the intended viewing pupils the main definition, that from this place, Xibaipo, the new China 'walked out'. The dominating tall monument (which was not addressed at all in the national TV film clip) is focused upon, stressing that it sports the calligraphy of Deng Xiaoping (who had not appeared in the TV version, having, in fact, never lived in Xibaipo, where he only attended two conferences).[294] The water reservoir (which appears like a lake) and the group statue of the 'five secretaries' (Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Ren Bishi) are introduced, as well as Zhou Enlai's defining statement on a horizontal stele. After the Cultural Revolution, the memorial hall was opened, which is presented with visitors touring the exhibition. Sculpture work on the so-called 'three decisive campaigns' (of the Civil War) directed from here, and on the leaders (in the cases of Zhou Enlai

294 Cf. Dillon (2015: 96–99), and Pantsov / Levine (2015: 134–136).

and Zhu De also showing their – politically unproblematic – wives), and scenes of teaching normal people as imagined moments of daily life, lead over to the various 'former residences'.

Mao's writing desk (not addressing here that it was given to him as a war trophy and interestingly slightly differently equipped, compared to the national TV film clip) is focused upon. The whole filmic tempo slowing down, the presentation becomes heavily didactic, blending in the names of the single buildings for the intended watching pupil. A wooden document box of Liu Shaoqi is introduced as a 'relic', in which he supposedly kept the manuscripts of his works (thus showing him to be a 'theoretician' of the Party as well, similar to Yan'an's presentation – cf. above, thus not leaving only Mao in this role). Zhou Enlai is characterised over his book shelves and also his receiver and telephone, underlining his role as an intellectual and 'contact person' to the outer world. Ren Bishi, and Dong Biwu are also profiled, as well as Zhu De. The latter's 'home', recalling the 'cave' style of Yan'an, is pointed out as being built on purpose (which suggests to the viewer that the others lived instead in homes expropriated from some local villagers). (Incidentally, his unusual metal chairs and table in this rural setting are said to be war trophies.) The video shows the conference hall of the Second Plenum of the Seventh Party Congress (March 1949) to the intended watching pupils, as well as the place where the GMD peace negotiators stayed (something not addressed in the TV version). But the air raid shelters also underline that the Civil War was still raging. Historically, the first to arrive at Xibaipo had been the group around Liu Shaoqi (and Zhu De, in May 1947), who is shown with footage holding a speech, and land revolution was immediately undertaken. Then (a year later), the other leaders would come to Xibaipo, too. The same filmed sequences of Mao and others trekking on foot in the countryside, evading obstacles on the way like in the filmic representations on Yan'an (see above, supposedly on their way in Northern Shaanxi) are reused. Then, Mao, crossing the Yellow River in a boat, illustrates how he, finally, left Northern Shaanxi and came to Xibaipo as well (in May 1948). And there, Mao would write several important texts. (An apparent cut suggests the video was 'reworked' at this point which would also explain its unusual length of 22 min., likely having been of two parts like the one on Yan'an, but not adding up to half an hour: what was cut out is not clear.)

For the first major Party meeting in Xibaipo (in September 1948), drawings of the leaders and filmed sequences are intermingled. Here, they decided China's fate in this rural surrounding, taking decisions on the first of the so-called three 'decisive campaigns', i.e., the Liao(xi)–Shen(yang) Campaign in Manchuria (cf. chapter 4.3.). Movie scenes on this Manchurian Campaign are interspersed, while the intended watching pupil learns (with blended-in figures) how long that campaign took and

how many enemies were annihilated. The same is done for the other two of the so-called three 'decisive campaigns', the Huai–Hai Campaign and the Ping (Beijing)–Jin (Tianjin) Campaign (cf. chapter 4.3), showing how the PLA took prisoners (again integrating film scenes). The Civil War, however, meant a major effort, also in terms of labour, food provisions, or need for transportation that the normal people had to shoulder. The GMD sent a peace delegation, hoping to prevent further defeat, suggesting to divide China into North and South. To this, Mao, however, answered at New Year 1949 that 'we need to go through' with the revolution. That meant that the PLA should also take the South and cross the Yangzi.

In March 1949, the last major Party conference in Xibaipo (the second plenum) is represented by footage of how Mao and other leaders entered the conference building. Much of this footage is identical with the TV version, just showing longer sections of it. Mao and other leaders can be observed holding speeches, stressing that 'we' are not like Li Zicheng (who conquered Beijing at the end of the Ming but then could be overthrown by the foreign Manchus because of treason by Han general Wu Sangui – cf. chapter 2.3 for Shanhaiguan – and because he lost his original revolutionary fervour, enjoying Beijing's luxuries). On this note, in late March 1949, the Communists moved out from Xibaipo to Beijing to prepare for the new socialist phase China was about to enter, as the intended watching pupils learn.

For the legacy of Xibaipo, in turn, visits of the wives of former leading CCP figures who once lived there, namely Zhu De's last wife and widow Kang Keqing, the widow of Ren Bishi and, most notably, the last wife and widow of Liu Shaoqi, Wang Guangmei 王光美 (who had barely survived the Cultural Revolution) are shown. Jiang Zemin who came in September 1991 (in the context of taking over full responsibility for China) was the first to start the 'tradition' of visiting Xibaipo as a sort of 'initiation ritual' for upcoming leaders. But he also stressed that Xibaipo is an important place to educate Chinese youth into 'patriotism' (something much on his agenda since the 1989 Tiananmen Movement, as repeatedly noted in the present book). Pupils as well as grown up tourists are shown visiting, the pupils listening to explanations about Xibaipo and its legacy. In the end, the monument (inscribed by Deng Xiaoping, who thus appropriated this Party place to which he had been barely connected personally) is shown again, while a song with 'patriotic' text, which is blended in, serves as musical underpinning (during the credits). As so often in these videos, the intended watching pupils see meanwhile the offering of wreaths to the monument, and children looking up in reverence. The military is also shown offering wreaths to revolutionary tombs (at Tomb Sweeping Day, while pupils sweep the tombs, obviously in the local 'martyrs' cemetery' which, however, had not been addressed in either of the 'patriotic' film versions as such, since Xibaipo is

perceived as not primarily a place of mourning, but rather as the Party's last stepping stone to victory).

Compared to the two filmic presentations above, addressing the national TV audience as potential tourists to the site, or the Chinese pupils in class, the 'patriotic' booklet in the benchmark 'patriotic' booklet series (Kang 1998) provides a more in-depth and also more local perspective on Xibaipo to the intended young reader. Interestingly, it becomes clear in the introductory illustration section that the locals could be only convinced to cooperate with the CCP when they received land (which had been shown in the TV film clip). In spite of the more local perspective, though, not even here is there any mentioning of the fact that the whole place is a reconstruction! The narrative starts with linking up the place with the (in Mao-perspective) preceding famous Party place: Yan'an. When Mao decided to give up Yan'an, Liu Shaoqi and Zhu De would already move East, while Mao himself stayed on in rural Northern Shaanxi (likely for security reasons, but also to bind Hu Zongnan's troops there – see Yan'an above). Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻, the military commander of the Jin–Cha–Ji Soviet covering the border region between Shanxi (Jin), Hebei (Ji), and Chahar (Cha) (now belonging partly to Inner Mongolia, partly to Hebei), had been the one to point out Xibaipo as the best place. It was considered the 'Ukraine' of the Jin–Cha–Ji base area (in the sense that it had fertile land and produced many crops so essential for the base area to survive on the economic front), and also in 'ideological' terms, the populace was well prepared, having produced several 'heroes' in the anti-Japanese war (2–3). Those having profited from Communist land redistribution would also be ready to join the ranks of the PLA to defend their gains, Nie Rongzhen suggested (which is why this issue of land distribution was introduced in the beginning). However, political purges were also underway in this base area. And 'voicing bitterness' (*su ku* 诉苦)[295] sessions were held here, too, to conduct 'trials' against landlords (whose land was confiscated for redistribution). As in Yan'an, the military was called upon also here to join in production, e.g., of weapons and cloth (5). The place, however, had already been equipped with electricity, although this had to be set up over 80 km to reach Xibaipo. In that sense, it was rural, but not too much of a backwater either. With lenient policies towards POWs during the Civil War, Zhu De is said to have managed to win over former GMD soldiers – and thus obtained crucial information about the GMD armies. That way, the PLA could also secure victory in the battle at Shijiazhuang (the

295 *Su ku* has often been translated as 'speeking bitterness' in parallel to *chi ku* ('eating bitterness'). Cf. Ann Anagnost (1997, chapter 1). The translation of 'voicing' is, to my mind, closer to the literal meaning of *su* (make something heard or even accuse) and also renders the whole expression less awkward in English, too. (See also note 78 above.)

major city in the vicinity of Xibaipo), which Zhu De celebrated with a poem (once more showing that poetry was a key tool for memorialisation and eternalisation of a victory). In 1948, Yan'an, too, was finally taken back by the PLA (7). While Mao wanted to go to Moscow at this time to consult for the future,[296] Stalin decided that it was too dangerous, and that he would rather send someone to China instead. In fact, Mao was almost killed by an air raid due to a spy who signalled to the GMD his whereabouts (when he stayed in rural Hebei's Chengnanzhuang 城南庄, ever on the move). Thereafter, Mao would settle down in Xibaipo (in May 1948) (9).

The Xibaipo site which incidentally sports today also the label of a 'national defence education base' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) is also used by the 'patriotic' booklet to explain to the intended reading pupils the war strategy Mao (on whom the whole narrative is concentrated) adopted, thus supposedly making them share in his thoughts. Mao wanted to first encircle the GMD troops in Manchuria (the 'patriotic' booklet not saying anything about the crucial Soviet presence there, thus telling a purely Mao-centred Chinese story to the readers) (15). The battle at Jinzhou (cf. chapter 4.3 for the Liao–Shen Campaign) served to block the way out for the GMD and to interrupt communication between the Northeast and the rest of China (17). When Chiang Kai-shek decided to move against Shijiazhuang (which is, as mentioned, near Xibaipo, and had been taken and held by the Communists since late 1947), the PLA threatened to attack Beiping, as Beijing was then called, and thus general Fu Zuoyi 傅作义, stationed there, who was supposed to move his troops against Shijiazhuang, could not easily leave. Given the overall aim of the CCP to first take the whole North of the Yangzi from the GMD (19), after the Manchurian Liao–Shen Campaign, the PLA troops there were ordered to take on northern China, and thus, general Fu Zuoyi in Beiping would be isolated between Manchuria and the South (23). Since Fu Zuoyi's homebase was Suiyuan (today part of Inner Mongolia), the Communists would then try to block his way out to the Northwest and attack there. When he would move out to defend his homebase, the PLA would advance on Beiping from the Northeast instead (24). He thus would have to move back again, which gained time for the Communists in Xibaipo. When Chiang Kai-shek decided to move in troops via the sea, Mao is said to have organised to block this, too, thus thwarting all of Chiang's plans (25). That way, Mao is characterised for the intended young readers as a smart strategist, seeing through his enemy's plans.

296 For the repeated attempts of Mao to visit Stalin in Moscow, see the documents translated and made available online by the Wilson Center Digital Archive: https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/search?search_api_fulltext=&items_per_page=10&sort_bef_combine=field_document_date_unix_ASC&f%5B0%5D=topics%3A86435&fo%5B0%5D=86435&page=7. And following page.

On more political fronts, in early 1949 (when the so-called 'three decisive campaigns' had been won), two important guests came to Xibaipo: Mikoyan (sent by Stalin) who supposedly only listened since he had no way to decide anything (which suggests to the intended reading pupil that the Soviets did not interfere and only 'learnt' about the situation in China, but also implicitly, that relations were already not at their best). Mao thus told Mikoyan how China wanted to act after establishing the Communist regime in China as a dictatorship of the proletariat. Mao also said he wanted to settle accounts with all imperialists, i.e., all special privileges should be abolished, and reparations to China should be paid. And all foreign troops should leave China. According to the narrative, Mikoyan was not happy to hear this (since this also affected Soviet interests in China, by this, however, indirectly stating to the intended reading pupil that Soviet troops were in China at the time, and by this supposedly 'patriotic' assertion of sovereignty at the same time covering the historical fact that Mao preferred the Soviets to stay on in Southern Manchuria for some time to be secure).[297] Mikoyan obviously felt Mao was too self-assertive (which again signals to the intended reader that things were not too well even before the establishment of the PRC between the CCP and the Soviets) (27).[298] On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek had to (temporarily) resign from his positions because of the repeated military failures, and thus Li Zongren 李宗仁 took over on the 'enemy' side in early 1949, who wanted to negotiate with the CCP. Zhou Enlai, ever the diplomat, stressed it had all been the guilt of Chiang Kai-shek (to keep the door open for negotiations, now that Chiang had stepped down). Mao, in turn, assured general Fu Zuoyi, who is called here the second important visitor to Xibaipo (after he had handed Beijing over to the Communists but still had loyal troops in Suiyuan), that he would integrate also 'positive' non-Party people. Different from Fu Zuoyi, though, Li Zongren, it is claimed, de facto only negotiated pro forma (to explain why the CCP did not make a deal with him in the end) (28–29). (The crucial issue, i.e., the role of the US that did not decide on unconditional support for the GMD, is unsurprisingly not mentioned in the 'patriotic' narrative). Key to the future domestic programme for a new China was to be (like in the Soviet Union) industrialisation and socialism. Mao warned, however, of the sugar bullets of the capitalists (to prevent corruption on the Communist side, a problem from which

297 In fact, the Soviets stayed in the Lü(shun)–Da(lian) region until 1955. Cf. also Müller (2022: 151–152).

298 For various reports of Mikoyan himself back from Xibaipo to Stalin and the latter's reactions, see ibid. in the Wilson Center Digital Archive: https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/search?search_api_fulltext=&items_per_page=10&sort_bef_combine=field_document_date_unix_ASC&f%5B0%5D=topics%3A86435&fo%5B0%5D=86435&page=7. And following page.

the GMD suffered chronically). Thus, he asked for six rules to be strictly followed: no gifts, no birthday celebrations, less drinking, less gambling, no naming of places after people (which was later, however, not followed, as the naming of cities after 'martyrs', e.g., show – cf. above in Shaanxi with Zhidan or Zichang), no labelling of Chinese on the same level as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin (!) (which was not followed either, given his own status in the CCP already since 1945, and most pointedly later in the Mao cult). According to Mao, 'we' are not like Li Zicheng and will not be corrupted when governing in Beijing, but will go for socialism to arrive at communism (32–34).

As for the Xibaipo site as such, without naming the water reservoir project, the intended young reader is informed somewhat ambiguously that the memorial hall was approved in December 1966, i.e., notably at the high time of the Cultural Revolution, *near* Xibaipo. After the Cultural Revolution, a new exhibition hall was built and in 1978, the exhibition opened. A protection zone (for the outdoor spaces) was finally established in 1987, and some leading cadres (mostly military ones) who once had been in Xibaipo,[299] visited (which also had not been clear from the educational video which had only focused on the widows, likely to highlight Liu Shaoqi's widow Wang Guangmei, since Liu Shaoqi had been the one, together with Zhu De, to set up Xibaipo for the CCP, but then died miserably in the Cultural Revolution) (35). Top leader visits to Xibaipo are missing up to that time. In 1990, during the Asian Games (in Bejing) not long after the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, Xibaipo became more internationally coded as the place where the torch was set on fire to broaden its legacy beyond the Party's historical ideological 'torch trajectory' from Xibaipo, the village, to Beijing, the city, as a still relevant and even crucial place to embody the spirit of New China as such to shine to the larger world! (36). Before, however, in the 1980s during the Deng Xiaoping era, the place was apparently not yet high on the agenda and had, in fact, economic difficulties.[300] Thus, the torch event was the first of several instances in the 1990s, when Jiang Zemin had taken over, which gave the place the opportunity to reorient itself. In fact, in a domestic sense, the great occasions came with Jiang Zemin's visit in 1991, the 100th anniversary of Mao's birthday in 1993 (when the tall monument was installed), and more generally with the 'patriotic education' campaign in the 1990s (37). In 1995, the site would be

299 The 'patriotic booklet' mentions mostly military and only a few non-military figures as visitors: Chen Yi, Su Yu 粟裕, Yang Shangkun, Bo Yibo, Liu Lantao 刘澜涛, Kang Keqing, Hu Qiaomu, and Zhu Miuzhi 朱穆之.

300 In surprisingly direct language, the 'patriotic booklet' expresses that the site had been considered out of step with the new times! (37) That way, the accent on the Deng-inscribed monument (erected only for Mao's 100th birthday in 1993) in the educational video can be also understood as a way to reconnect the two.

labelled a 'national excellent societal education base' (*quanguo youxiu shehui jiaoyu jidi* 全国优秀社会教育基地), preceding its 'patriotic education showcase base' labelling as the crowning.

The intended young reader of the 'patriotic booklet' also learns about the single locations of importance (and potentially for a visit), also here without mentioning that they are all reconstructed. Mao lived in a typical local house (likely used before by a Xibaipo villager) (38), and it is even claimed that every 'grass and tree' authenticate the presence of the great leader at this place! (39). The exhibition, in turn, also displays the Hebei patriotic education sites in general (so that the whole province may share in the glory of this 'showcase base'). The high monument (focused upon in the educational video) was added, as mentioned, in 1993 at Mao's 100th birthday, featuring the calligraphy of Deng Xiaoping (who only wrote 'Xibaipo', though, without any assessment, and had not much personal stake in the site), while Jiang Zemin was the one to accentuate the ideological message, writing the motto that one must 'firmly remember the two must (i.e., to stay modest, and to never give up the fighting spirit which had once been decided upon in Xibaipo – see below) and build socialism with Chinese characteristics', thus being the first of the top leaders to fully embrace the site (40). Bas-reliefs on the monument's base show various historical moments (imitating the Tiananmen Square monument for the people's heroes). Zhou Enlai's stele with his earlier text from 1973 is at closer scrutiny also interesting in that it just describes Xibaipo 'neutrally' as the the last stop before moving to Beijing and as the location where the March 1949 plenum was held, which is reproduced on the horizontal stele also shown in the filmic representations discussed above. He, too, apparently felt not too comfortable with the site, given the complicated Cultural Revolution times when he made the statement. But for the site, it was a way to connect itself to one of China's most cherished historical Communist figures. Today, the '5 secretaries' group statue in bronze is another landmark for tourists, showing them side by side, as they look toward the future. And also the flag pole on Tiananmen Square is imitated in a smaller version (to suggest Xibaipo's immediate predecessor role) (41). The sculpture park of the leaders (with the calligraphy of well-known modern calligrapher Liu Bingsen 刘炳森) also features bas-reliefs with a summary of the revolution's history (starting from the Party 'founding', interestingly not showing the Shanghai site here, but the short sequel of the 'First CCP Congress' on lake Nanhu on a boat!),[301] with a *gongde* 功德 (merit)-stele detailing who donated money for it (to show that many entities and people were involved) (42). And a

301 As mentioned above in the footnotes, the 'Shanghai Founding Congress' had to be ended abruptly, given a police search, and thus was resumed in nearby Zhejiang Province on lake Nanhu.

stone stelae garden figures poems and inscriptions as a further staple we noted also at various 'patriotic education showcase bases' already (43).

The 'patriotic' booklet presents to the intended young reader also reminiscences of military figures who describe both the single Civil War campaigns and life at Xibaipo as such, but in material terms, the single artefacts that are displayed to authenticate the narrative disclose the tangible way of physically memorialising that stretch of history and characterising the agents: Zhu De's metal table and chairs (a war trophy), donated in 1976 still with his own consent (i.e., shortly before his death in July 1976 and thus still in Cultural Revolution times) are to show his simple lifestyle; Liu Shaoqi's document box (also shown as an illustration) which had been preserved by the nanny of his household (which was certainly risky in Cultural Revolution times) and donated by his (just rehabilitated) wife Wang Guangmei after the Cultural Revolution in 1980, points to his role as theoretician and to his formal Party position. Zhou Enlai's receiver was, in turn, donated on behalf of Zhou's widow Deng Yingchao in 1977, as was his book shelf, illustrating his erudition and diplomatic capacities. Mao's eating utensils, Ren Bishi's watch and document box, and Mao's table and chair are also items the tourist will find on display (80–86). Only here, in a short sentence, it is mentioned that this was all exhibited 'after the reconstruction' of the Xibaipo site (86), though it is not made clear that this was an overall *shifted* reconstruction site and what was behind the move. A walking stick of Dong Biwu (another war trophy) and a carpet (produced in Yan'an) were also donated to the museum as well as a ration voucher of the Red Army soldier Tan Hongshu 谭洪书 who donated this for the feeding of the soldiers at the front instead of using it himself – documenting the 'patriotic' enthusiasm of a simple soldier (86–87). This list suggests that most of the materially as such unspectacular items were only received after the Cultural Revolution, and they illustrate the rather limited appeal in strictly tourist terms (which also explains the need for economic boosting).

The above whole presentation shows that only at the time of the 1990s, the site had finally found its position in the hierarchy of Party places, mainly connected to the 'initiation rite' for new incoming leaders which Jiang Zemin started as a tradition. But overall, the memorialisation of the site as such was not very pronounced, being rather restricted to its function as a final stepping stone before moving into Beijing.

Things have somewhat changed in the meantime, as the *Fengbei* narrative (Liu Yiqiang 2019), updating the above framing of the late 1990s to Xi Jinping times, shows. With more distance to the times and agents, it discloses from the outset to the intended reader that the site had been 'rebuilt' after the construction of the water reservoir in 1958 up the slope during the Cultural Revolution, using 'original

materials' (60). The Xibaipo site is presented as mostly covering the houses of the leaders, with the memorial hall added subsequently, which would be visited by all key leaders since Jiang Zemin. The major focus is on Xibaipo's role for the Civil War and the historical revolutionary accomplishments of 'the Central Committee and Mao Zedong and other older generation revolutionaries'. (This phrasing is obviously chosen for steering a middle way between the concentration on Mao and his downsizing by contextualisation as the 'core of the first generation' of revolutionaries as proposed in post-Mao times.)[302] For the Civil War, the headquarters function for the so-called three 'decisive campaigns' (cf. chapter 4.3 for their respective memorials) is accentuated, by this stressing Xibaipo's service to the nation at large (61). Meanwhile, the site is especially designed for young people to learn also the 'revolutionary tradition', combined with the 'civilisation of the times'. And there is by now a notable focus on 'national security' (which had not been clearly addressed as an issue in the former renditions, though the late 1990s booklet had already tried to make pupils share in Mao's military strategic thinking) (62). Overall, Xibaipo is characterised as the 'last village' from where the whole of China would be liberated, and the narrative details the strategy to show how the CCP leaders carefully planned for it. It also outlines that the choice of Xibaipo was only taken after a series of other options, and it makes believe that Yan'an was only given up with a heavy heart to move closer to the front, downplaying GMD general Hu Zongnan's role pressuring the Communists out.

An interesting point in the new 2019 narrative is its description of the role of the Soviet Union which is – in spite of the recent purported closer Sino–Russian relations – once more downplayed, trying to profile Chinese agency. The Soviets are characterised as not really supportive, but at least not blocking the CCP (in spite of their factual historical role, e.g., in Manchuria!). For this, also the reminiscences of the key former Chinese Russian-language interpreter and translator Shi Zhe 师哲 are cited to the avail that 'Mongolia and (Communist-held North) Korea' were considered friendly neighbours (which conspicuously leaves out the crucial 'big brother', the Soviet Union) (63), and thus the Northeast was considered the easiest to secure for the Communists. For the Communist leadership considering how to move on from Yan'an, the first idea had been to settle in Chengde (at the time Rehe

302 Deng Xiaoping introduced the phrasing of 'generations' (eras) (*dai* 代) of leadership with a 'core' (*hexin* 核心) in 1989 when officially handing over to Jiang Zemin, by this also brushing aside Hua Guofeng as Mao's immediate successor to have himself follow directly after Mao as the 'second generation' 'core' to hand on to Jiang Zemin as the 'third generation' 'core'. The *Fengbei* expression, in turn, uses the first-named added 'Central Committee' and uses 'generation' as a measure word (*lao yi bei* 老一辈) to distinguish the wording from the Deng era.

热河, now belonging to Hebei Province) in between Manchuria and North China. During the decision making, Mao and Liu Shaoqi are, in turn, portrayed as side by side, given that Liu was 'number two' in Yan'an. The Soviet Union, in turn, is said to have 'allowed' the GMD-government (after all, at the time still the official Chinese government) to move into Manchuria's key cities (de facto not everywhere, since the crucial strategic city in Northern Manchuria, Harbin, never went to the GMD, neither the Southern ports of Dalian and Lüshun, while the Soviets did facilitate the Chinese Communist presence in much of Manchurian territory). Given the situation, the CCP had to give up the plan with Chengde as new headquarters. The next idea was to move to Northern Jiangsu, which also did not work out since Chiang Kai-shek 'started war' and ordered attack on Yan'an, thus forcing the CCP to evacuate it (64). (That way, the many months of moving around again in Northern Shaanxi are explained as due to the lack of support from the Soviets and the treachery of Chiang Kai-shek.) To reconnect to Mao and dispel any potential doubts of the intended reading pupil, the narrative explicitly stresses that one should not think that by moving out of Yan'an Mao was simply afraid of the GMD, pointing out that he was very cool and thought strategically while doing so, seeing through his enemy Chiang who would assume he would have won when taking Yan'an, but that Mao was already confident at the time of retreat that the Communists would return. When Peng Dehuai (who covered the rear) urged him to leave, Mao would eat slowly and only move at the very last minute, to illustrate to the intended reader how 'cool' he was at this critical moment. In fact, after one year, Yan'an had come back into the Communist fold (without mentioning what this had meant for the locals in the meantime) (65–66). The next option to move headquarters to considered was to rely on the Jin–Cha–Ji base area, where the CCP field armies won victories. Again addressing the intended reading pupils with anecdotes, a captured GMD general is profiled who was in fact a 'pupil' of Nie Rongzhen, the commander on the Communist side in the Jin–Cha–Ji base area, back in the First United Front times at the Whampoa Academy where Nie Rongzhen had been a political instructor. Nie supposedly told this captured former 'pupil' generously that he could 'convert' to the PLA side or 'go home', but never should serve Chiang again. The 'pupil' obviously declined this, and thus this GMD general would be imprisoned by the Communists until 1960! (67–68). Nie Rongzhen then suggested to attack Shijiazhuang (which marks him as the mastermind behind this military move). The Japanese had already fortified Shijiazhuang during the Second Sino–Japanese War, and the GMD thought they would never lose this stronghold, since the Communists had neither tanks nor airplanes. But they succeeded with cleverness and tricks, digging tunnels. In fact, it was only this victory at

Shijiazhuang, not far from Xibaipo, which made it safe enough for the Central Committee to settle down in Xibaipo (68–69). Thus, the five core leaders met again there. For Mao, a house of bricks was built, but he declined, leaving it generously to (older) Zhu De and his family (which had been also shown in the filmic renditions cited above as a 'cave-like' one).

While stressing that Mao worked during the night, to which other leaders had to adapt, though other work had to go on during daytime, leading to exhaustion (70–71), this new 2019 narrative is the only one to point out that there was also fun at Xibaipo, namely when there were dancing parties. Interestingly, it is also in this context that some women are named, i.e., the wives of the leaders (with the notable exclusion of Mao's wife Jiang Qing, just naming the common daughter Li Na) (72–73). Less entertaining was the moment in 1948, when things became critical again (as the GMD tried to retake Shijiazhuang). This was the point in time when Mao used ruses to prevent Fu Zuoyi in Beijing who had been ordered by Chiang to attack Xibaipo, to do so. Obviously, the Communists were well informed over spies and informants what Fu Zuoyi did, namely Fu's own daughter supposedly served as an informant. Mao also used the press to release statements which made Chiang's secret plans he discussed with Fu Zuoyi public. (The cited press releases by Mao notably show the same type of derogatory language Chiang used, branding the enemy at every mention as a 'bandit'.) By publicly exposing his purported plans, Mao thus embarrassed Chiang. Reading between the lines it becomes clear that at first the strategy of Mao did not really work, since Chiang went ahead with his plans to attack Xibaipo. Thus, Mao thought of a bluff, suggesting that by an attack from Fu Zuoyi, Beijing (at the time called Beiping) would be without much protection and thus would offer an open flank to the PLA. This is said to have moved Fu Zuoyi to refuse leaving Beijing, thus also laying open that he would not blindly follow Chiang's command (74–76). That way, however, Xibaipo was de facto saved for the moment, and Chiang would know only later that the whole potential PLA attack on Beiping was a bluff. At the time, in typical socialist 'plan' language, Mao asserted that in five years the whole of China would be 'liberated', but this first 'five year plan' would be fulfilled even earlier. The unexpected quick move of the PLA's Manchurian troops to China proper (see chapter 4.3) after victory in the Liao–Shen Campaign put effective pressure on Fu Zuoyi who was encircled in Beijing. Before taking Beijing itself, Tianjin was on the agenda, and Mao is said to have aimed at a peaceful solution, but the GMD commander there refused to give up (cf. chapter 4.3 for the Ping–Jin Campaign). Thus, Tianjin had to be taken by force, and this was the 'Tianjin method', showing the Communists were always ready to fight, if needed. The 'Beijing/Beiping method', instead, was that Fu

Zuoyi could be convinced to give up, and thus Beijing was spared the fighting and was peacefully handed over. For arranging the handover, Fu Zuoyi had chosen two envoys, including a former Hunanese Communist and a former teacher of Mao, supposedly to show his respect (and give face to Hunanese Mao). But also more practically, the underground Communists in Beijing helped bringing Fu's own daughter around to serve as an informant (77–79). (And, as the 'visit' of Fu Zuoyi after the hand-over of Beijing showed, not mentioned here, the deal with him included to treat him well, since he could not go back to the GMD side, evidently. He would serve in various functions in the PRC subsequently.)

Beyond the momentary military aspect, another key topic of the *Fengbei* narrative is the Party plenum in Xibaipo in March 1949 when the slogan was devised to now move from the villages to the cities (preparing for the move to Beijing). For security, the place of the meeting was faked (similar to the case of Ruijin discussed above) to be in Shijiazhuang, while holding it in Xibaipo, where conditions were very rudimentary (80). The discussions around the future course also revolved around the question of where China's capital should be, and Wang Jiaxiang is named as the one to propose Beijing, since 'close to the Soviet Union and Mongolia' (!). Zhou Enlai had organised the security during this meeting, namely with air defence (which was the weak spot of the Communists). At that plenum in March 1949, the portraits of Mao and Zhu De had been put up to reassert the Chinese character of the Party. But Mao would order them to be taken down and replaced by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin (supposedly out of modesty, but likely at the time also to smooth irritations on the Soviet side on whom one depended to a considerable extent, after all). The plenum decided on the strategy change from the villages to the cities, on the foreign policy (!) (i.e., to stay in the Communist bloc and 'lean to one side', which was publicised only a few months later in June, though), and that the CCP did not only want to destroy the 'old' but also build up the 'new'. The 'two must' were also decided upon (which were written by Jiang Zemin later on the monument of 1993) which are connected to Xibaipo ever since: that one must stay modest, and that one must never give up the fighting spirit (81–82). This, then, should be the enduring legacy of Xibaipo, that should be also of relevance for the Chinese citizens in the Xi Jinping-era.

Taken together, the case studies on 'Party places' discussed above show how the physical locality is used in the formation of Chinese citizens, always linking the narrative to the textbook versions familiar from school to explain, how and why the Party succeeded in the end to govern China, what kind of challenges had to be overcome outside and inside the Party, and to explain the ideological shifts over time by

this tangible mode of 'showcase bases'. These lend the narrative more 'authenticity', being also an accessible way for learners as well as for tourists to get closer to the major figures of the Party and their daily lives. That way, the 'bases' are considered an effective means to sustain the narrative already learnt in school at the given 'places', 'authenticating' them for domestic visitors.

Final remarks

All in all, the different types of 'places' in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system presented in this chapter highlight how the locality is used as a marketing device to address the Chinese citizen, be it as a learner or as a tourist. While 'fictive' places like the 'mausolea' of mythic figures tell of the purported 'ancestors' of 'the' Chinese, engendering pride and serving for an inclusive definition of 'Chineseness', integrating the so-called 'national minorities' internally, as well as the Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese, commemorative places counterbalance this with an accent on victimisation, resistance, and sacrifice. Such sites are of particular emotive force and therefore also especially numerous. The 'Party places', in turn, reassure the learner and tourist in a tangible format that the Party's trajectory, while having its difficulties, always ended up on the 'correct' path. The easily approachable format of a physical site (which often is de facto a reconstruction) renders Party history more human and specific. That way, the three types of 'places' show how locality is used to make Chinese citizens realise their own 'Chineseness' and feel pride in it, to develop a sense of obligation to those who were victimised or had to 'sacrifice' on the way, and to trust the Party's ability, supposedly proven by its trajectory, to lead the Chinese *patria* towards a bright future.

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4 Representing the elusive: tasks and limits of patriotic narration for education and touristic consumption

Abstract This chapter focuses on elusive sites which have no 'natural' or easily to be delineated location for what they are supposed to stand for, and therefore require special effort in presentation and narration to convince the audience. This category covers three types of sites: 1. museums which are made to stand in for topics and groups of people deemed important for 'patriotic education', but per se beyond the realm and reach of mainland China (with case studies on the Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum and the Overseas Chinese Museum in Fujian Province, and the memorial hall on China and the Korean War in Liaoning Province); 2. sites which are to recall instances of former more or less 'spontaneous' action like revolutionary uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities (with case studies on sites dedicated to the Wuchang Uprising and the February Seventh Labour Strike in Hubei Province, the Nanchang Uprising in Jiangxi Province, the Baise Uprising in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and the Hainan Red Detachment of Women in Hainan Province); 3. the more conventional war and battle sites (with case studies on sites standing for the First Opium War in Guangdong Province, for the First Sino–Japanese War and for the Taierzhuang 'battle victory' during the Second Sino–Japanese War in Shandong Province, for tunnel warfare in Hebei Province during that latter war, and for the so-called 'three decisive campaigns' in the Chinese Civil War, paving the way for the CCP's rule over mainland China: the memorials for the Liao–Shen Campaign in Liaoning Province, for the Huai–Hai Campaign in Jiangsu Province, and for the Ping–Jin Campaign in Tianjin).

'Patriotic education showcase bases' are by their very nature physical places. However, their siting may not always come 'naturally' or 'logically', referring to a specific location which, as in the previous chapter 3, is the main point marketed, or attached to materiality as discussed in the preceding chapter 2. Among the patriotic education showcase bases, there are also cases where the referent is neither of both, being spatially and materially elusive. In this chapter, we turn to this category which on the one hand covers patriotic sites referring to events or groups of people deemed important for contributing to the nation and 'Chineseness' at large in various ways, but that transcend mainland China's borders. Museums or memorials thus serve as stand-ins, telling the PRC (People's Republic of China) citizen about places and people physically distant, and their relevance for Chinese 'patriotism' by representing the elusive which cannot be 'presenced' like, e.g., with sites dedicated to individual actors with their former home or tomb in China as addressed below in

chapter 5. On the other hand, the present chapter covers sites referring to inner-Chinese events that are elusive in the sense that they are not easily pinpointed at some particular place, namely when recalling earlier, more or less 'spontaneous' action that took place in the respective area but of which there is not much evidence in the sense of left-over materiality, or a single geographical referent which would allow to easily define the topic. Thus, the former action has to be rather evoked by narration to create a patriotic reading of its historical importance. Typical examples of such 'fluid' sites are those commemorating instances of revolutionary uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities. This elusive nature holds also true for the final sub-category of sites recalling organised fighting during wars, military battles and campaigns, which by their very nature have a rather broad and not easily to be delineated space where they were acted out. While representing the elusive, the physical 'showcase base' at a given locality imbues a site nevertheless with some possible localist meaning to somehow anchor the elusive by such a *lieu de mémoire* (in Pierre Nora's sense). Since there is less tangibility involved in presentation which limits the visitors' experience, the need and task to provide a coherent and compelling narration, sustained at times by visual and audio cues, to reach the audience,[1] be it for education or for touristic consumption, is particularly important in these cases for conveying the desired 'patriotic' message to the Chinese citizen. We will therefore pay particular attention to narratives in this chapter, which reveal their 'intertextuality' (Kristeva 1980) by their intersecting and reinforcing use of language and tropes. Most important is, however, the way narratives are 'framed' (Goffman 1974), in site descriptions as well as on-site in exhibitions. This may be done by labelling or other 'paratexts' (Genette 1997), serving to guide the perception of visitors, but also simply by the spatial arrangement of objects which feed into the framing of narration as well, by this 'performing' the exhibition from the curators' side.[2] Looking at the 'patriotic' framing of the sites in a diachronic way, integrating on-site observations, which are by nature but a snapshot of one moment, systematically with filmic representations and official publications on the sites of different times,[3] we will be also able to trace the evolution of the 'patriotic' narratives themselves, which reflect the political agenda of the respective era, but also the limits 'patriotic' narration runs up against.

1 Studies on narrative power (and its broader application, e.g., in International Relations Studies, cf. Hagström / Gustafsson 2019 for the case of East Asia) usually are focused on texts only, but visual and audio cues are important to consider as well, like in the case of the physical sites we treat here.

2 Cf. Buschmann 2010, Garoian (2001).

3 For the various types of materials used systematically in the case studies, cf. chapter 1 of the present book.

4.1 Museums as stand-ins for the physically unavailable

For those sites that refer to events and groups of people beyond mainland China but deemed patriotically important, museums have been designed which act as stand-ins. Although the siting is not 'naturally' derived, it is not completely arbitrary either, tending to find some historical or logical link to make the siting option at least plausible, even if in some cases the financing might have been decisive for the ultimate choice of placement. Unsurprisingly, such museums directed at the 'beyond' are in 'frontier' regions.

In this subchapter, we will take a closer look at three examples which also represent cases from three different lists in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system (cf. chapter 1 of the present book): first is the most recent of the three, the 'China Fujian– Taiwan kinship museum' in Quanzhou 泉州 (Fujian Province) (list 3, 2005) which is a completely new museum and acts as a stand-in for Taiwan and mainland–Taiwan relations. Since Quanzhou was one of the major areas from where Han migrant waves to Taiwan historically originated, Quanzhou is a plausible (if not the only plausible) choice for the siting, representing here also Fujian (Min 闽) culture (though primarily Minnan 闽南 or Southern Fujian culture is de facto concerned).[4] Next, with the much older Huaqiao 华侨 (Overseas Chinese) museum, first opened in 1959 but only 'patriotically' listed in 2001 (list 2), located in Xiamen 厦门 (again Fujian Province), a place from where many Overseas Chinese travelled abroad, especially to Southeast Asia, the siting is plausible as well, but such a museum on Overseas Chinese could well have been also in Guangdong Province, e.g., from where large overseas migration waves originated as well (especially to North America, but also to Southeast Asia and elsewhere). In fact, in recent years, new museums on Overseas Chinese have popped up in several places in China, mostly in the concerned coastal provinces, but even in the inland.[5] In the case of the 'patriotically listed' Overseas Chinese Museum in Xiamen, historically the very first of its kind on the Chinese mainland, the crucial initiative and funding by Fujian-born famous Overseas Chinese Chen Jiageng 陈嘉庚 (Tan Kah Kee) was behind the siting in Xiamen. (For more on the 'patriotic' framing of this particular historical figure, see chapter 5.2 of the present book.) Finally, with the museum-

4 One may note that Fujian is a linguistically (and culturally) particularly heterogenous province, and even 'Southern Min' is far from being a single entity.

5 For this phenomenon, see Wang (2021). In 2014, even one in Beijing was opened, thus ascertaining the political centre's relevance beyond the coastal provinces from where most overseas migrants came. In fact, checking with the 'patriotic education showcase base' lists, in 2019, this Beijing museum was also labelled as such a site in its own right.

cum-memorial for the Korean War (1950–1953), first established when the last group of the so-called Chinese People's Volunteer Army came back in 1958 (and 'patriotically' listed in 1997 on the very first 'showcase bases' list), the siting close to the Korean border is plausible, with Dandong 丹东 (as this city is called today) in Liaoning Province being the key location over which many Chinese 'volunteers' physically left China and entered the Korean War by crossing the Yalu river, while the war as such was conducted outside China's borders.

Case study: the Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum

Turning first to the **China Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum** (as the Zhongguo Min–Tai yuan bowuguan 中国闽台缘博物馆, literally the 'China Fujian–Taiwan predestined connection museum', is officially called in English) of Quanzhou (on the third list, 2005, Fujian Province), we have a case of a site shouldering the task of demonstrating the close 'connection by destiny' (*yuan* 缘) of the mainland with Taiwan over the shared Fujian (Min) culture. (One may note that the museum's English name has tellingly been framed in 'kinship' terms, while the Chinese original with strong Buddhist / folk religious underpinnings implies a karmic relationship, literally by 'causal condition' or *yuan* in Buddhist parlance,[6] in popular use mostly understood as predestined, in any case not one by socio-biological relation.) While most museums in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists, as we have already seen in examples discussed in earlier chapters, had undergone a slow upgrading process over time, this 'base' is a different case, being a completely new museum, designed on purpose in the context of the 'patriotic education' campaign (and likely with a view to the by then DPP (Democratic Progressive Party)-ruled Taiwan with its centrifugal tendency vis-à-vis the mainland).[7] It is thus a rare case in the whole 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in being opened (in 2006) only *after* being listed. Turned around, this means that one can observe here a case of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in the Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 era (2002–2012) *in statu nascendi*! Beyond the nationalist agenda to argue for 'reunification' of Taiwan with the mainland, the museum also appeals to local-regional, i.e., Min, culture. That means that rather than standing unmitigated for 'Chineseness', it argues for 'Min-ness' as a shared heritage on both sides of the

6 For the originally Buddhist term, in Sanskrit *pratyaya*, see Muller (2010).

7 The formerly oppositional DPP won the presidential elections in Taiwan for the first time in 2000 and took over from the GMD (Guomindang) until 2008. Their mainland-critical stance raised concerns in the PRC.

Taiwan Strait. However, in the 'patriotic education' context this is by definition only to serve as a regional bridge to the nation as the endpoint – similar to the function of the provincial museums discussed in chapter 2.2 –, and thus the museum has 'China' added at the beginning of its name to prevent any exclusively regionalist ('Min-ist') reading. The visitor, entering the exhibition (as I observed in 2014), is confronted with the geological formation of the Taiwan Strait (see fig. 4.1.1), suggesting over geology that Taiwan once was one with the mainland and only split off over time, the Strait being presented as a connection between both rather than a separation of them. This stress is likely also a conscious reaction to the geological 'argument' put forward by Taiwan's independence faction that Taiwan and the mainland are geologically on two different tectonic plates (or rather Taiwan being at the – convergent – boundary between the Eurasian and Philippine Sea plates), and that thus the two are not at all 'naturally' one.[8]

Fig. 4.1.1 Visualisation in the Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum of how the Taiwan Strait emerged geologically over time (Quanzhou) (photograph by the author, 2014)

8 This assertion was, in turn, integrated into the new (DPP-oriented) Taiwanese version of history, placing Taiwan also in an East Asian context to 'de-sinicise' it. The Quanzhou museum, in turn, does not mention the tectonic plates issue.

Beyond the questionable political use of geology, the Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum puts a stress on similar (Min) life-styles and customs on both sides of the Strait, and it refers to the history of Han migration from Fujian, especially from Quanzhou where the museum is located. (Taiwan's aborigines who speak Austronesian languages and are culturally and linguistically close to Southeast Asia and the Pacific Region are rather sidelined as a topic, though, since they are harder to integrate in this 'kinship' argument – evident in the museum's official English name – central to this 'patriotic' site with its de facto ethnic Han focus, though the Chinese name, maybe for that reason, is careful to appeal to a more inclusive common 'destiny' or karmic relationship.) In this 'kinship' vein, the exhibition points out in its 'same blood' section that the earliest migrating people from the mainland were from the Min Yue 闽越 people (living in the Fujian area),[9] and later also people from Guangdong went over, including the (Han-Chinese) Hakka (*kejia* 客家) minority. Taiwan is thus presented as a migration destination for some mainlanders only. Moving to the political, the Qing-era conquest of Taiwan (1683) is framed as 'saving the country's unity' (although the case of the Manchu-Qing conquest is historically complicated by the fact that it served to crush the 'Chinese' regime of Zheng Chenggong's 郑成功 heirs there, see below). The storyline of national unity (which, as claimed by the museum, had existed 'since ancient times') is notably drawn up to Chen Yi 陈仪, GMD (Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party) governor of Fujian in the 1930s and then the responsible official for Taiwan after Japan's surrender at the end of WW II as the last figure to represent that 'unity' (without mentioning anything about the latter's instrumental role in the 28 February massacre of 1947 – a key traumatic event in modern Taiwanese history!).[10] While this presentation obviously is to evade naming Chiang Kai-shek (Chen Yi's superior) as someone representing 'Chinese unity' (and continuing 'Chinese unity', GMD-style, on Taiwan), the narrative 'endpoint' of Chen Yi is a provocation for potential Taiwanese visitors – and an indirect sanctioning of the use of bloody means to realise 'unity'.

Less problematic and to be expected in any cross-Strait relations exhibition is the historical staple figure Zheng Chenggong (or Koxinga, as he is known in the West),

9 One may note that the term Yue was a collective term in ancient China for various ethnicities living in Southern China, including some with possibly Austronesian links (which could be also used for arguing for a closer relationship to the Taiwanese Austronesian aborigines). The Min Yue are one of the Yue groups.

10 This 28 February massacre to crush any opposition in Taiwan, signalling the start of the White Terror on Taiwan, poisoned Taiwanese–mainlander relations ever since. While Chiang Kai-shek dismissed Chen Yi who was portrayed as the one culpable of mismanaging the protest, and later sentenced Chen Yi to death in 1950 (for other reasons), it is by now established that Chiang himself had given the order to quell the 1947 protest movement on Taiwan by force.

son of a Fujianese pirate and a Japanese mother in the 17th century who turned a Ming loyalist and 'liberated' Taiwan from Dutch rule. He is familiar to every Chinese (including Taiwanese) citizen from school history textbooks (though interpretations of this figure vary in and between Taiwan and the PRC) (see chapter 5.1 of the present book on the PRC 'patriotic' commemoration of this specific historical figure). Integrating also the aborigines over the topic of anti-imperialism (i.e., via the 'common enemy'), the exhibition stresses that all, be it on the mainland, be it on Taiwan, were united in fighting against foreign interference and oppression, whenever it happened. Still, the aborigines (as the internal 'other') purportedly needed the 'civilising mission' of the Han. For this, the famous story of the 18th century Han-Chinese Wu Feng 吴凤 is cited who would build up trust with the aborigines to then educate the head-hunters to give up this barbaric tradition by making them take his own head by error, thus sacrificing himself – a 19th century story also eagerly applied in textbooks by the Japanese during their colonial rule to 'civilise' Taiwan, but also readily used by the GMD thereafter. (One should note that on Taiwan, this former staple story has been removed from textbooks after aboriginal protests already in 1989![11] To reapply it in this new mainland museum of 2006 is a further side kick against any potential Taiwanese visitor, while a PRC visitor would likely not even know about the contentions around that story.) The museum's display credits the Han, however, also for other things, having developed Taiwan's industry beyond sugar and tea with manufacturing techniques brought over from Fujian. On the cultural side, in turn, key Taiwanese literary figures like Lai He 赖和 (1894–1943), writing under Japanese occupation, are integrated in the 'patriotic' narrative as well, arguing that Lai He linguistically combined Mandarin (*guoyu* 国语 or the 'national language' in the diction of the GMD) and the Minnan 'topolect' (Mair 1991) to write 'Chinese' during the colonial period. That way, a figure typically used in Taiwan to argue for a 'Taiwanese' literature, is pointedly rechanneled into 'Chineseness' over 'Min-ness'.[12] On the other hand, lists of successful imperial examination candidates from Taiwan are to show via the topic of education that Taiwan had been an integral part of the common Chinese elite in (late) imperial times before that Japanese colonial interference. Referencing Taiwan, the physically 'absent', the museum has not many objects to show and thus mostly has to work with texts, graphs etc. to narrate and represent the elusive.

While the above on-site observations in 2014 reflect the narrative of this early Xi Jinping era, the nation-wide broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (on disc 21)

11 For a brief summary of the textbook issue on Taiwan, see Cheung (2017).

12 Cf., e.g., the National Museum of Taiwan Literature in Tainan which details the role of 'Taiwanese' writers like him. On this museum, see chapter 7 in Denton (2021).

on the 'China Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum' which was filmed shortly after this new museum was inaugurated (2006), provides in comparison a look into the conception at the time of the museum's opening in the Hu Jintao era.[13] At the beginning, the film clip visually emphasises the close connection between Taiwan and Quanzhou, where the museum is located, to the Chinese national audience, while short scenes of minorities living in the Quanzhou area are visually signalling that Fujian is in itself already 'multicultural'. Still, with camera shots of the big Song-era Laozi 老子 statue near Quanzhou, a popular touristic spot, the common 'Chinese' cultural links are stressed for the national TV audience beyond 'Min-ness', as much as with the famous '[We are all] descendants of the dragon' motif (which recalls a hit from Taiwan-born singer Hou Dejian 侯德健 very popular also on the mainland – cf. also chapter 3.1. of the present book).[14] That way, the 'kinship' argument is also introduced over descendance. The basic colour red and the architecture of the new museum as 'Min' style are introduced to the domestic TV audience as 'typical' for this region, soliciting touristic interest, and the golden lotus on top of the building – pointing at Buddhist legacies in this Chinese province associated with rather lively religious practices (also hinted at with the *yuan* or karmic relationship in the museum's name) – is said to express the 'hope' for 'peaceful reunification'. Museum architecture is thus used to embody ideological premises.

Inside the museum, the geological 'argument' of Taiwan having only 'split off' from the mainland is particularly highlighted for the national TV audience, and all possible links between the mainland and Taiwan are didactically ennumerated as a short introduction to the single exhibition halls. On the other hand, modern art performances held at the museum might solicit some TV viewers to consider visiting the museum as tourists in person subsequently. Such activities are to stress, too, that 'we' belong together like branches of one tree with the motto: same seed, same trunk (see also below for the recruitment of internationally renowned artists).

13 For more information on the different materials used to discuss single patriotic sites and their respective context, cf. chapter 1 of the present book.

14 This motif has gained various layers in recent history. When the pop star Hou Dejian 侯德健 in Taiwan whose parents were from the mainland made a song on it, notably originally intended to react to the US diplomatic shift from Taiwan to the PRC to express Taiwan's claims to represent 'China' (!), it became an instant hit on the mainland, where Hou Dejian became famous in the 1980s. Hou, who decided to move to the mainland, which was a sensation, used the slightly modified song again in the context of the 1989 protest movement in which he participated (and after which he was deported). In spite of the motif's association with the protest movement over the song, mainland officials opted for cooptation and used the motif as a slogan also later precisely for arguing that Taiwan and the mainland clearly 'belong to each other'. (Cf. also Cheng 2016: 166). Incidentally, Hou Dejian himself also moved back to the mainland in 2006 and more recently even made a patriotic song on Xi Jinping's 'Chinese Dream'! (Fang 2019).

Thereupon the single halls are didactically introduced to the national TV audience to convey the key 'patriotic' message of the exhibition design. In the first hall, fossils are to show that the same animals lived on both sides of the Strait, and also excavated stone-age tools are to bolster the argument that people, too, were 'the same' already then.[15] (One may recall from chapter 2.2 of the present book that this combination of fossils and artefacts still follows the Soviet 'regional museum' practice.) The second hall belabours the point that both sides have the same ancestors, referring to Han migration from Quanzhou and Zhangzhou 漳州 prefectures to Taiwan. Special attention is therefore given to lineage books to bind Taiwanese back to their (mainland) 'origin'. An interesting solution to deal with the connected issue of ancestor rites, which are a somewhat delicate topic in the PRC, is to show filmed lay actors performing such rites, set behind glass, which creates some distance as modern PRC visitors are not encouraged to perform such rites any longer which smell of religion (and who might wonder how to relate this to their own 'Minness' or 'Chineseness' – given Fujian's 'notoriety' in terms of popular religious heritage). The third hall deals with the 'unification history' under the Qing dynasty (when Taiwan was conquered by general Shi Lang 施琅 to be integrated into the Manchu-Qing empire in 1683), stressing in the commentary that Taiwan was thus under mainland administration long before it became an official province in the late 19th century. In fact, already before Shi Lang, Zheng Chenggong had gone over to Taiwan to 'throw out the foreign invaders' (i.e., the Dutch) in 1662. (The tricky point that Shi Lang only went to Taiwan, in turn, to crush the independent 'Chinese' Zheng family's rule over Taiwan to integrate the island into 'foreign' Manchu rule is unsurprisingly skipped to not interfere with the desired message.) Thus, the exhibition narrative as reflected in nationally broadcasted TV seamlessly moves from the natural (geology) to the biological (descendance) to the military-political (conquering the territory). On this basis, hall four goes on to belabour the ensuing 'development' of the island with agricultural knowhow from the mainland and with trade relations, following the storyline of the benign developmental and 'civilising mission' of the Han on Taiwan. This also makes clear why the Han are de facto the centre of interest. Hall five is thus explicitly dedicated to (Han, more precisely Min) culture, pointing out with touristically attractive topics like music and puppet theatre that culture is, after all, similar on both sides of the Strait. Quanzhou, in fact, exploits this touristically and holds every year a Fujian–Taiwan folklore festival of which camera shots are interwoven to heighten the visual appeal for the mainland TV audience. The more sensitive topic of folk beliefs in hall six of the

15 As mentioned in chapter 2, recently the excavations of stone-age sites in Taiwan have made their way into mainland Chinese history textbooks to show that Taiwan 'has always been Chinese'.

museum connects to this Min folklore aspect, in the TV presentation rather focusing on Mazu 妈祖 worship by Chinese seamen (also beyond Fujian, and thus of more 'national' relevance than more exclusive 'Min' religious practices). Goddess Mazu whose cult quickly spread over the South China Sea, is said to have been originally a Fujianese girl after all. Hall seven showcases custom (food and festivals), i.e., other touristically attractive topics, which are also pointed out as similar on both sides ot the Strait, too (which could motivate the national TV viewer not able to visit Taiwan, to come as a tourist to Quanzhou as a stand-in instead). To conclude, the commentary of this Quanzhou TV-produced film clip emphatically assures the national TV audience with the 'patriotic' key message to convey on mainland–Taiwan relations: no one 'can ever separate us'.

Comparing this visual presentation of the 'patriotic education showcase base' briefly to the official published description of this third list site (in *Di san pi quanguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* 2009: 127–132), one notes the stress on, above all, the symbolism in the museum's architecture to suggest the 'bridge' function to Taiwan, and its other 'artistic' qualities, given this new museum's primary role to serve for 'patriotic education'. The internationally renowned Quanzhou-born artist Cai Guoqiang 蔡国强 had been recruited for elaborating on the theme of 'same culture', 'same race', and 'same origin' in the entrance hall of this new museum. (Incidentally, Cai Guoqiang, who mainly lives in the US, also helped design the fireworks at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, i.e., not long after this museum was opened in 2006.) Given that this museum is a completely new one and is referring to topics beyond the mainland's reach, it has to struggle with the lack of objects to display for the Taiwan side, and thus the official narrative rather argues that the place is also meant as a 'place of memory' of the 'common history' (129). In fact, somewhat ironically and indirectly revealing the point, the intended mainland reader is told the story of a Taiwanese female visitor who was purportedly excited to see a mere photo (!) of a banknote issued by the Black Flag troops in Taiwan that tried to defend Taiwan against the Japanese in 1895 (see below), since she had several such original banknotes at home, kept by her family to recall 'resistance' against the Japanese. Seeing the photo, she purportedly discovered the closeness in historical feelings of both Taiwan and the mainland! (129–130) In any case, it comes as no surprise that the official narrative rather praises all the activities held at the museum, marking the site as an above all 'performative' place, while the new museum's holdings are nothing to be particularly advertised. And this narrative baseline was followed also in the newer framing in the Xi Jinping era.

The whole museum was, as mentioned, from the outset planned as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. Being a 'thematic museum' (*zhuanti bowuguan* 专题博

物馆), dedicated to the topic of mainland–Taiwan relations, its design was already meant to reflect the ideological premises that 'all returns to where it belongs' (*wan wu gui zong* 万物归宗),[16] as the most recent Xi Jinping-era official summary of the museum of 2019 (in the *Fengbei* series – cf. chapter 1 of the present book) puts it for the Chinese citizen as the intended reader (Gu 2019: 144). The whole basement of the building is reserved – apart from occasional temporary exhibitions – for 'common' cross-Strait activities, and thus the 'museum' had been designed from the outset to be more than only an exhibition space. Rather, it is to serve as a physical anchor to host such activities as the most important function, which the didactic exhibition is only to provide some background for. Notably, the narrative presentation of Quanzhou as the 'starting point of the maritime silk road' (145), another up-to-date topic much favoured in the Xi Jinping era with the 'one belt, one road' policy,[17] does not really spell out the factual historical importance Quanzhou had during the Song and Yuan periods, namely between the 11th and 14th centuries,[18] which again underlines that the 'museum' is de facto not to serve a scientific educational function, but one of political education.

Thus, the new narrative is tailored to make Quanzhou serve as the main link to immigration to Taiwan (implicitly at the cost of Zhangzhou, its Fujianese rival in this regard).[19] Notable is furthermore the fact, that by 2019, the narrative even integrates the Austronesian aborigines of Taiwan fully in the mainland-derivative framework (which likely reflects an attempt to refute some Taiwanese argumentational endeavours to stress over the aborigines the evident difference of Taiwan from mainland China) by contending that the aborigines' ancestors were, in fact, the Min Yue who moved there 'from the mainland'.[20] They are thus by now even called

16 The term *gui zong* 归宗, literally: returning to one's ancestoral line, was frequently used for adopted children when returning to their natal families.

17 The official English version has been reformulated from the literal translation of *yidai yilu* 一带一路 to the more 'modern'-sounding 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI). I will keep to the original.

18 Quanzhou was known in the West at the time as Zaytun (or alternative spellings) of which Marco Polo but also the Arabic traveller Ibn Battuta wrote. It was the major port at the Chinese coast at the time and would also be the second seat of a Catholic bishop beyond Beijing during the Yuan dynasty. It had its best times during the Song and Yuan dynasties as starting point of the maritime silk road. Cf. Schottenhammer (2001).

19 It may be recalled that these two groups of immigrants were often in conflict with each other in Taiwan.

20 One can find this tendency to include the aborigines of Taiwan also elsewhere in the PRC more recently when 'minority populations' of China are addressed. Cf., e.g., the minority cultures theme park in Shenzhen. Incidentally, the topic of Taiwan's aborigines had been present in exhibitions also earlier in the 1950s when 'liberating' Taiwan was still considered an option to realise in the near future. (Lu 2014: 125–126, mentions such exhibitions in Shanghai.) One may also note that the former GMD term for the aborigines on Taiwan, *gaoshan zu* 高山族 (mountain people), now deemed

tongbao 同胞 ('compatriots', the Chinese term de facto insinuating being born by the same mother and thus once more framing the relationship in a 'biological' way)! (145–146). The '*precious* island' (*baodao* 宝岛), as Taiwan is tellingly called in variegation of the Portuguese Ilha Formosa (*beautiful* island),[21] unfortunately had a very low productivity and thus needed the Han settlers to finally make the best of the island's potential. The whole started, according to this new narrative version (and in sync with the recent general tendency to push historical arguments backward in time), already with fishers since the Sui and Tang dynasties (roughly 600–900 AD) who would at times settle down on the island and trade with the aborigines. Then, some started to work the fields, with the first settler recorded with his name in Southern Song times (12th / 13th century) finally. But, the intended mainland reader learns, there were also push-effects on the mainland, namely during Ming times, and thus, Zheng Chenggong of the 17th century would further the transfer of people between the mainland and Taiwan, here also occasionally mentioning the equally strong immigration to Taiwan from Zhangzhou in Fujian (146). With the Westerners entering the picture, the domestic reader of the new narrative is told, the originally good relations over the Strait were hampered because the Westerners interfered with their products, hurting 'both' the mainland and Taiwan (and thus suggesting that the malign Western 'interference' in cross-Strait relations is not only a recent phenomenon). To prove the point, the example of the textile trade from Fujian to Taiwan is given which suffered when the Westerners with their colonies in Southeast Asia increasingly monopolised the trade. On the other hand, the rice from Southeast Asia would also compete with the Taiwanese one formerly sold to the mainland. Thus, Chinese citizens as well as Taiwanese visitors to the site should realise that Taiwan, too, had been de facto negatively affected by the Westerners. But only in the second half of the 19th century, the Qing finally understood the great value of Taiwan,[22] the 'precious island', and thus they started to develop it (147). Especially the three 19th century mainland officials Shen Baozhen 沈葆桢,

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politically incorrect in Taiwan and substituted with *yuanzhumin* 原住民 (lit.: people who originally lived here, i.e., aborigines), is still applied by this 2019 PRC official source, indirectly refuting Taiwanese efforts of 'modernising' language to show more respect.

21 Thus, 'Formosa' is the term preferred by people stressing independence and 'Taiwaneseness' today. Translated into Chinese, *meili dao* 美丽岛, it was used by the Taiwanese opposition during Chiang Kai-shek's reign and recalls events like the Meilidao Incident (1979) as a major challenge to the GMD's authoritarian rule which was quickly suppressed. The term 'precious island' is therefore a variant which also underlines the island's 'value' for the mainland.

22 In fact, the Manchu-Qing had at first no particular interest in conquering the island (general Shi Lang had to push for it at court to take it in 1683) and later did not invest much into it until international power politics raised strategic awareness in the 19th century.

Ding Richang 丁日昌 and Liu Mingchuan 刘铭传 are singled out for their contribution to Taiwan's development, though it is notable that the focus in this Xi Jinping-era narrative of 2019 is on Ding Richang also visually with a portrait, and *not* on Liu Mingchuan (who is the one mostly referred to in Taiwan, being the last Qing governor of real impact but also the one under whom Taiwan became a Province of its own, separate from Fujian Province) (148–150).[23]

The new narrative also particularly stresses that when after the First Sino–Japanese War (1894–1895) Japan pressed for the secession of Taiwan, all walks of life on the mainland, but also on Taiwan were against this (without going into the tricky point whether there had been any real chance to prevent it – a question a 'patriot' is in any case not supposed to raise). For the side of the mainland, among the Chinese intellectuals, it is interesting to note that Liang Qichao 梁启超 is singled out in the context of the famed 1895 protest petition movement of Chinese examination candidates in Beijing (the so-called *gongche shangshu* 公车上书) against the 'weak stand' of the Qing vis-à-vis the Japanese, but not his teacher Kang Youwei 康有为 (who was historically more decisive in that context but is a more complicated figure for Communist historiography than Liang Qichao) (150).[24] For the side of Taiwan, in turn, although the narrative of 2019 names Liu Yongfu's 刘永福 Black Flag troops (cf. above) as well as Tang Jingsong's 唐景崧 militia, both active on the island, who tried to resist the Japanese take-over of Taiwan in 1895 (151–152), nothing is mentioned about the 'Republic of Formosa' attempt so much hailed in *Taiwanese* historiography as a lost chance at the time to make Taiwan independent – considering it the first, if extremely short-lived, real republic in East Asia.

Instead, the PRC narrative is all tailored to fit the paternalistic storyline of the 'abandoned child' by the incapable Qing court, but assures the intended mainland 'patriotic' reader that there was resolve to fight all through against the Japanese occupation also on Taiwan, until Taiwan 'finally came back' in 1945 (under the

23 While Shen Baozhen and Ding Richang were responsible for Taiwan as part of Fujian province, Liu Mingchuan was the first governor of the newly established province of Taiwan (set up 1887).

24 Whereas Liang Qichao is also seen critically because of his opposition to 'revolution' à la Sun Yat-sen after the turn of the 20th century, during the late 19th century his role is usually described more favourably, and Mao, e.g., had much positive things to say about Liang's role in Chinese nascent journalism. Kang Youwei, in turn, is usually seen as more 'conservative', and for his role in 20th century history when he advocated a return to the monarchy in the early Republic, he is typically labelled in PRC historiography as 'reactionary'. During the Cultural Revolution, his tomb was destroyed and his skull was paraded through Qingdao city to denounce him, at the end being recovered by the Qingdao museum, and in the mid-1980s finally reburied. (Cf. Wan 2022: 223, 225). Incidentally, his former home in Nanhai, now belonging to Foshan municipality, has at least made it into a local 'patriotic education' base in the 1990s, i.e., on the lowest level of the system. This shows, the verdict on him has somewhat softened.

GMD government, which is unsurprisingly not named, though), not saying anything about why it is by now again not in unity with the mainland (153). Although Chinese readers are well aware of the background nonetheless, the evident fact that the inconvenient things are simply skipped in the narrative, lays open once more the extremely forced character of the storyline to fit 'patriotic' agendas as their task, thus setting the limits to the sayable. It also shows, compared to the earlier version as reflected in the film clip of *Ai wo Zhonghua* filmed shortly after the opening of the museum in 2006 in the Hu Jintao era (if less so in the official description of 2009), that topics like local religion and culture, tendentially raising touristic interest, have been all sidelined to give way to pure political education by 2019, bespeaking the Xi Jinping-era preferences.

Case study: the Overseas Chinese Museum in Xiamen

While Quanzhou's 'China Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum' has been set up in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system specifically for serving as a link to and stand-in for Taiwan, the **Huaqiao bowuyuan** 华侨博物院 (Overseas Chinese Museum) (list 2, 2001) in Xiamen (Fujian Province), in turn, is to show China's close connection to the Overseas Chinese community. This way, the coastal province of Fujian is assigned the double task of not only integrating Taiwan but also the Overseas Chinese into 'Chineseness' according to 'patriotic' agendas. The museum uses the term *bowuyuan* rather than the usual *bowuguan*, which also reflects the terminology more typical for the late Qing and Republican times which then largely gave way to *bowuguan* in PRC times. (One may recall that, as mentioned in chapter 2.2 of the present book, there is a present-day connotation of *bowuyuan* as somewhat more refined and less bureaucratic, and thus the provincial museums, like the one of Anhui, now tend to use *bowuyuan* as a kind of 'name upgrade'.)

The Overseas Chinese Museum was built by one of the most hailed Overseas Chinese in the PRC, Chen Jiageng (Tan Kah Kee, 1874–1961)[25] (on the 'patriotic' memorialisation of this figure see chapter 5.2 of the present book) who moved to the just established PRC in his late years (all alone, his large extended family remaining abroad), and was thus praised by Mao as a model of a 'patriotic' Overseas Chinese coming back and giving his full support to the PRC. Consequently, he was

25 I will use here in this 'patriotic' context his 'national' name in official Pinyin version: Chen Jiageng, while Tan Kah Kee was the name he used himself, romanised on the basis of the pronunciation in his native Min tongue. (As is also address below in chapter 5.2, he did not even speak any Mandarin.)

made a figurehead for Overseas Chinese Affairs in the PRC. At his death in 1961, he received the rare honour of a state funeral, a further political signal to the Overseas Chinese community largely sympathising with Taiwan under Chiang Kai-shek.

The Overseas Chinese Museum which Chen Jiageng tried to establish since 1956 would be finally opened in 1959, the year of the tenth anniversary of the PRC, with private funds collected by Chen Jiageng from Overseas Chinese. Interestingly, he understood this endeavour as an educational contribution and 'donation' *by* the Overseas Chinese to the PRC, since he had seen museums overseas and deplored the backward museal state in the young PRC! I.e., the museum was designed to introduce 'modern' museum conceptions to the mainland, taking Western (colonial) museums as an inspiration, which also might explain why this idea was first greeted with reserve in the PRC in the 1950s with the prevalent strong self-assertive and anti-Western thrust, namely since the Korean War (see below). It was therefore granted only as his local private undertaking.

In the context of 'education', Chen Jiageng also openly criticised PRC museums of the time, pointing out the crucial role of artefacts in display (which went against PRC exhibition practices at the time, focusing on ideological narratives, not on objects: a point not losing its relevance also in the decades to come – and incidentally also criticised by Soviet museum experts in the 1950s – see chapter 6 of the present book). Chen Jiageng's larger design of the Xiamen Overseas Chinese Museum as a broad educational facility could not be realised at the time, but the main display on the Overseas Chinese themselves and their living environment, namely in Southeast Asia, could be established, for which he collected and donated artefacts (Lü 1995). In 1960 in the increasingly tense political atmosphere not very favourable to the Overseas Chinese of whom those that had returned to the mainland were often considered politically unreliable, and at a time when Chen Jiageng was already ill, he even voiced the idea to establish a national museum *on* the Overseas Chinese's *history* in Beijing in a more defensive vein to argue for the Overseas Chinese's contribution to the nation through times. This, however, would be only realised as late as 2014 (Wang 2021), and incidentally labelled as a 'patriotic education showcase base' of itself in 2019 (list 6). Chen Jiageng's own Overseas Chinese Museum in Xiamen was closed after his demise and only reopened after the Cultural Revolution, to be reframed to become the national 'patriotic' site it is now.

The present museum's exhibition displays to the viewer (as I observed in 2014) how the diligent Chinese 'compatriots' struggled abroad to earn a living, how they were exploited by the Westerners, and how they 'developed' Southeast Asia in particular (where they often could quickly grow into some kind of elite in stark contrast to many other migration places where Chinese rather remained on the lower end of

the social scale). The museum takes particular pride in Overseas Chinese 'success stories' of famous cases while reminding the visitor of the point that many Chinese once only went abroad as poor 'coolies' and suffered bullying. Their success was therefore all derived from their ability and thrift, the insinuation goes, and they are by now a Chinese presence all over the globe, as a map on the distribution of ethnic Chinese in the world with figures visualises, suggesting Chinese global influence to the 'patriotic' visitor, be it as tourist or as pupil.

Notably, the history of Overseas Chinese, usually understood as beginning in Song or Yuan times, is enlarged in the display to cover earlier cases of Chinese that travelled abroad. Thus, one finds references to the Silk Road (particularly fitting in the Xi Jinping era with its Silk Road revival rhetoric, but already present before in the exhibition) back in the Tang dynasty, exemplified by the monk Xuanzang 玄奘 of the 7th century who travelled to India and back, while monk Jianzhen 鉴真 (or Ganjin in Japanese) in the 8th century went to Japan and would remain there. These historical figures are thus treated in the museum as part of the history of Overseas Chinese!

Admiral Zheng He 郑和 with his Ming-era maritime expeditions of the early 15th century is cited, too, in this context, though the main focus is on more modern times with Chinese outbound migration since the 19th century. And in terms of politics, the exhibition stresses that the Overseas Chinese, while living abroad, still continued to care for their 'motherland's' development, as the famous sentence of Sun Yat-sen reproduced in the museum underlines in an inverted sense of 'mothering': the Overseas Chinese are the mothers of the revolution (*huaqiao wei geming zhi mu* 华侨为革命之母)! This way, they are bound up with the Chinese revolution (which then would be continued by the Communists to create 'New China').

Compared to this observation of the museum design in 2014, the narrative in the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 14) reflects the state of the museum as of the early 2000s. The film clip took as visual point of entry the museum's architecture: the so-called 'Jiageng style', i.e., a mixture of Western and Chinese elements preferred by many Overseas Chinese and by Chen Jiageng in particular, after whom the style is named. Although Chen Jiageng himself also appears visually as distinct, typically in Western suit with necktie and bespectacled (by this rather evoking 'bourgeois' associations, given the Communist dress code during the Mao era), the viewer is assured that he had been highly praised by Mao and thus may be safely revered as a 'patriot' in the PRC.

The exhibition as introduced by this TV film clip of the early 2000s, summarises the history of the Overseas Chinese, setting the tone by a figure of a rickshaw coolie (to prevent any 'rich man' association a viewer might bring to the topic otherwise,

and connecting it to the colonialism-themed 19th to early 20th century visually).[26] These people went and worked in many crafts and trades, but far from home, e.g. on rubber plantations (especially in Southeast Asia, where Chen Jiageng himself had been in business). In earlier times, when Chinese travelled on their own initiative over the seas with junks, the commentary belabours the point that wherever they went, they went only peacefully. To underline this benign character of Chinese migration, the already named Tang-era Buddhist monks Xuanzang (travelling over land) and Jianzhen / Ganjin (travelling over sea) are referred to as such instances of positive effects of Chinese 'migration'.[27] More overseas contacts were generated since the late Song dynasty, and Ming-era seafaring Zheng He is, too, a symbol of peaceful outreach (implicitly contrasted with the Westerners thereafter). With the Sino–British (First) Opium War of the mid 19th century, many Chinese impoverished and had to look for a way to survive elsewhere (which insinuates it was the Westerners who mainly pushed the Chinese out, by this de facto taking the 'responsibility' for the tendentially 'unpatriotic' act of leaving China somewhat away from the Chinese migrants).[28] But it was also the Westerners who pulled the Chinese, as the narrative suggests to the domestic TV audience: Dutch registers are shown to underline that the Westerners needed coolies from China (e.g. in the Dutch Indies). Others were shipped to the Americas. Photos showing people behind bars on ships provide visual cues as to their not parting very voluntarily (in implicit contrast to the junk travels earlier). The narrative even states that Chinese were at times forcefully abducted in rice bags (!) as coolies, while normal work contracts of the time are not shown in this TV version to not taint the clear-cut image of the 'forced' character of migration. The museum's many recreated scenes (dioramas) of

26 It is somewhat ironic that the originally Japanese means of transport, the man-drawn two-wheeled cart (*jin rikisha* 人力車), and the equally non-Chinese word *coolie* originally used for day labourers in India, later phonetically adapted into Chinese as *kuli* 苦力 (lit: bitter strength), has come to stand for the image of Chinese abroad.

27 Leaving aside the obvious, i.e. that the motivation of these two was rather different, one searching for scriptures and religious teaching in India (a 'pupil role' not consistent with modern Chinese self-understanding), the other as a Buddhist 'teacher' to Japan, one wonders why earlier Chinese famous Buddhist travelling monks, namely Faxian of the early 5th century who went on land and on sea and wrote about his experiences in South and Southeast Asia later, are not named, not to speak about earlier famous 'travellers' of Han times to Central Asia. Also, the Silk Road topic would open up the possibility to go back to Han times.

28 Tellingly, there is no note about the official orders prohibiting the leaving of China, issued during the Qing era (even though such prohibitions had never been easy to enforce). Obviously, there should be no incentive to think of emigration as something voluntarily done (which also has a modern ring in the context of Chinese preoccupations that people leaving China might not want to come back, especially those with a higher educational level).

overseas housing in the exhibition version of the early 2000s are shown to also support the storyline that the Overseas Chinese were not rich (as many people back in China assumed), but poor and hard-working. And they cared for the motherland, showing themselves 'patriots'. Chen Jiageng, once the founder of the museum, and others who actively sustained the Xinhai revolution of 1911 (see below, chapter 4.2 for the Wuchang Uprising as its start) are one example for this. They also 'patriotically' helped China during the anti-Japanese war, i.a. with financing airplanes,[29] or even signing up personally as aviators.[30] The TV narrative also suggests to the domestic audience that many Overseas Chinese came back enthusiastically from richer places overseas to the young and still poor PRC (which showed their 'patriotism') to help build up their motherland after the devastations of war (and after all push factors for leaving or staying away from China were supposedly eliminated – skipping, on the other hand, the anti-Chinese pogroms especially in Southeast Asia during the decolonialisation period after WW II which caused especially Indonesian Overseas Chinese to flee and move over to the PRC).[31] Other Overseas Chinese (though not returning) would show their 'patriotic' care by investing money at their ancestral home region (much encouraged during the Deng Xiaoping era after the Cultural Revolution to bring in capital from abroad). On the other hand, the domestic TV audience is assured that the Overseas Chinese also were able to establish themselves abroad, demonstrating that Chinese are strong also in an international competitive environment. E.g., famous Nobel laureates include Overseas Chinese (especially in physics, mostly with their careers in the US, namely Yang Zhenning 杨振宁 – who reclaimed his Chinese citizenship recently – and Lee Tsung-dao / Li Zhengdao 李政道 are the major cases cited) (cf. also chapter 3.2 of the present book on the Lianda in Kunming). Others became famous world-wide for outstanding merits like female physicist Chien-Shiung Wu 吴健雄 (Wu Jianxiong), or world-class architect I.M. Pei 贝聿铭 (Bei Yuming). While China may be proud of these famous figures, this, it is urged, also should be the case the other way around. Thus, the final message of the Overseas Chinese Museum in this TV version is summarised with the signal inscription blended in

29 This way of collecting funds for airplanes and similar war items was likely modelled on the American example. There, it was even done in schools. Cf. Curren / Dorn (2018: 68–69).

30 Cf. Müller (2022), chapter 5 (on aviators). There were also drivers from Southeast Asia signing up. Cf. also chapter 5.2.

31 Those coming back to the PRC were often assigned to some areas to open up new fields (and be formed into new citizens since they were considered as tendentially politically unreliable – cf. Peterson 2012). The push factors for Overseas Chinese to leave their overseas locations is likely not mentioned to avoid suggesting Chinese might not be welcome abroad.

(and likely addressing both the Overseas Chinese as well as the mainland TV audience): never forget your motherland!

While the TV film clip on the Overseas Chinese Museum accentuated certain 'patriotic' messages visually, the contemporaneous official description of the Overseas Chinese Museum as a second-list 'patriotic education showcase base' adds some historical background to the museum, its founding in 1959, and its development over time until it was finally listed in 2001 (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002).[32] It can thus serve as a balance to the visual cues provided by the TV version.

As is disclosed here to the intended young Chinese 'patriotic' reader, the whole idea of the museum was originally connected to Chen Jiageng's overall wish to further Chinese education. Although his endeavour in this regard was primarily focused on schools, he went also beyond: the whole society should be educated with facilities like a museum. In other words: the museum was conceived by him as a site of 'societal education' (which fits well with the official PRC concept of citizen's education). The Overseas Chinese Museum thus rounded off Chen Jiageng's other major local contributions: the Jimei 集美 school campus for children and youth, and Xiamen University for young adults (see chapter 5.2 of the present book), to offer education to all age groups. He had applied for being allowed to open such a museum already in 1956, arguing that it was for people in China as well as for visiting Overseas Chinese. But it was only approved almost three years later to be opened in 1959 (which signals to a Chinese reader that his original plan did not meet with wholesale approval) when he collected the funds from private donors. His cited application makes clear at a closer reading that he primarily wanted to explain the overseas situation to the Chinese at home in the PRC (and not primarily educate the Overseas Chinese to be 'patriotic', into which the TV film clip discussed above and addressed to an inner-Chinese audience, attempted to turn it) (711). In fact, he had apparently understood the Overseas Chinese Museum as a gift *of* the Overseas Chinese to the people in China and thus not only as a museum *on* the Overseas Chinese or *for* them, but *by* them *for* the people at home. For the museum building itself, with the so-called 'Jiageng style' he intended a 'Western-style' building with a Chinese roof as a merger of both architectural traditions. (One may note that this was precisely at a time when modernist and Soviet architectural styles were the benchmark in the PRC, exemplified in the '10 great buildings' built simultaneously for the 10th anniversary of the PRC in 1959 in the context of the Great Leap Forward campaign, started in late 1957 and officially proclaimed in 1958)

32 For more on the materials used, cf. chapter 1 of the present book.

(712). Integrating a park, paintings and carvings as ornaments (rather 'bourgeois' elements in a Great Leap Forward China), the 'Chinese' (or even more aptly the local Min) flavour was to be heightened.

Most interestingly, Chen Jiageng is also cited on the issue of naming the museum not a *bowuguan* 博物馆 (the standard term in the PRC for a museum) but a *bowuyuan* 博物院. In his view, the *bowuyuan* was a collective larger entity, in which several *bowuguan* would be placed. For these subentities, his plan was to have one *bowuguan* on 'anthropology',[33] one on 'nature',[34] the one on the Overseas Chinese and Southeast Asia, and one on 'industry and agriculture' (713–714).[35] This means that he envisaged a rather broad educational facility for people in Xiamen, going also beyond the 'Overseas Chinese' topic. His plans could not be realised fully at the time, the narrative vaguely states, and after his death in 1961, the museum was closed, to be opened only after the Cultural Revolution and enlarged in 1994.[36]

At that time, the main exhibition was designed to show the hard life of the Overseas Chinese and how they contributed to the motherland as good 'patriots'. The history of the Overseas Chinese was to integrate emigration since Tang times (here providing also an explanation for this option via the fact that Overseas Chinese were often called *tangren* 唐人, i.e., Tang people, abroad, and Chinatowns *tangrenjie* 唐人街, lit. street of the Tang people). Without naming the push factor of the Mongol conquest in the 13th century (to reserve the storyline of the real push factor to be Western colonialism and imperialism of the 19th century), it is suggested that the 15th century maritime expeditions of Zheng He as a Chinese outreach activity in the early Ming entailed that some Chinese would simply remain overseas and thus also helped secure the maritime trade routes as some kind of Chinese outpost, strengthening the connection between China and Southeast Asia. These Chinese were usually from South China and thus begetting a specific 'Southern Chinese characteristic' in these Overseas Chinese communities. (The regionalist aspect of Overseas Chinese communities was, in fact, always a sore point for nationalist acitivists,[37] and Chen Jiageng had dealt with this problem extensively during his

33 This naming is not very clear: according to Lü (1995: 3), this meant ancient historical relics and modern folk relics.

34 According to Lü (1995: 3), this would include animals, plants, and minerals, as well as items on hygiene.

35 According to Lü (1995: 3), this would cover revolution and reconstruction of China.

36 In fact, Lü (1995) reflects this time when the Xiamen Overseas Chinese Museum had just been redesigned (in 1994).

37 Wang Gung-wu, the leading figure in Overseas Chinese Studies, liked to stress as well that the Overseas Chinese are in no way a single unit and should not be treated as such either.

career as an Overseas Chinese leader – see chapter 5.2 of the present book.) Only with the Opium Wars, real push factors are acknowledged since the mid 19th century, and the capitalist Westerners, by then colonialists in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, would also actively pull Chinese out of China with 'contracts', the intended Chinese readers are assured, mainly targeting the coastal provinces. This is to suggest that no Chinese easily left his home (714–716). On the other hand, it was the Overseas Chinese that built up many places in Southeast Asia (similar to the supposed role of the Han migrants on Taiwan in the 'China Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum' discussed above), developing agriculture and mining industries, and even the Americans had their key infrastructure built by them (above all the railways). In short, especially with Southeast Asia, those places owed almost everything to the Chinese who turned wilderness into thriving cities. Key example is Singapore where Chen Jiageng had been active for a long time, but also other Overseas Chinese are named beyond the museum's founder, and their benign influence on local development in Southeast Asia, bringing techniques from China in. On the other hand, they also cared for the locals and helped them in their fight against Western colonialism, be it in the Philippines or Cuba or elsewhere, and they also sustained efforts against the Japanese occupation during WW II (716–719). The Overseas Chinese are furthermore thrust in the role of figures of cultural exchange between China and other countries. While organising themselves to protect their cultural identity as Chinese, the narrative assures the Chinese 'patriotic' reader that they also contributed to their host societies (while any discussion of indigeneous ill-feeling toward the Overseas Chinese is again carefully evaded in the narrative).

To protect their Chinese identity – something of paramount importance in the reading of the museum's supposed 'patriotic' role proposed to the intended young Chinese reader –, three factors are highlighted as particularly salient: organisations, schools, and publications addressing the Overseas Chinese specifically. Among the organisations, there were those based on kinship (a potentially dividing factor in larger Overseas Chinese groups), but also those based on professions. These organisations are positively framed in the narrative as the ones that helped mediate between the Overseas Chinese internally, but also between the Chinese and the local society externally. They were therefore useful in several regards (720). For schooling, Chen Jiageng, for one, made his name, setting up the first Chinese junior secondary school in Singapore to offer some further education beyond the primary level for Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. This means he therewith contributed to a 'Chinese' education to keep cultural identification alive. And in the field of publications, Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionaries became very active, while others started various local Chinese-language newspapers. Also in this case, the (written)

language de facto could bridge the grassroot oral linguistic diversity in the Overseas Chinese communities and bind the Overseas Chinese into one common 'Chinese' identity. Still, after WW II, the 'identity' question of the Overseas Chinese, as the narrative vaguely states, became a pressing issue (with the narrative neither naming the decolonialisation movements and the difficulties and pogroms affecting the Overseas Chinese locally, nor the difficulty of choice between aligning with Chiang Kai-shek's regime on Taiwan or Mao's PRC and many Overseas Chinese siding with the former). The narrative assures the reader that many Overseas Chinese would finally come back to 'New China', while others took the nationality of the host country (skipping the Taiwan alternative). Those remaining overseas were, however, also successful abroad, once more citing the Nobel laureates and others, usually living in the US, here extending the Nobel laureates' list to cover also Ding Zhaozhong 丁肇中 (a physicist who was Taiwan affiliated) and Li Yuanzhe 李远哲 (a chemicist, again Taiwan affiliated). Others named here are Chen Shengshen 陈省身 (who taught at Lianda in Kunming – see chapter 3.2 of the present book – as a mathematician and moved back to the PRC in 1985), the woman physicist Wu Jianxiong, the architect I.M. Pei (Bei Yuming), and the space scientist Wang Ganjun 王赣骏 (again Taiwan affiliated) (721). This shows that while the TV version was careful to avoid showing any potentially 'problematic' cases, here also Taiwan-affiliated people (without saying so, of course) were integrated.

While living overseas, the Overseas Chinese, however, never forgot to care for their motherland. Thus, they had helped with the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 since they loved their country and their home region therein, demonstrating that the Overseas Chinese were also politically of importance for modern China. Many had been in Sun Yat-sen's organisations, most helped with financing, but some even gave their lives. E.g., a substantial number among the Huanghuagang 'martyrs' of early 1911 during the last failed revolutionary uprising before the Xinhai Revolution were Overseas Chinese who thus became 'martyrs' of the revolutionary cause. When the Japanese attacked China in the 1930s, the Overseas Chinese again helped with money, but some young enthusiasts came also over themselves to China to fight, and even women decided to join the war effort personally. At the time, there were, e.g., many Overseas Chinese drivers and mechanics coming over from Southeast Asia to help especially with the Burma Road transfer when the latter constituted the life-line of 'Free China' during the war. Several of those would lose their lives during this 'patriotic' service (see also chapter 5.2 of the present book). But the Overseas Chinese also helped reconstruct China thereafter, investing there, building up industries etc. They thus sustained China's development throughout (722–725). In sum, the Overseas Chinese are framed as true 'patriots' in this official

narrative by focusing on those cases feasible to hold up the desired storyline (and editing out whatever does not fit this task).

While this exhibition on the Overseas Chinese is in line with Chen Jiageng's original design for the Overseas Chinese Museum's section on the Overseas Chinese and Southeast Asia, the part on Chinese historical relics was to represent the 'anthropology' section of his original project and is mainly based on Chen Jiageng's personal collection of Chinese antiques.[38] The exhibition on nature, in turn, mainly presents stuffed animals (usually most appealing to visiting pupils). In a 'patriotic' reading, this, however, should not only educate about animals, but also teach that the environment has to be preserved. This part of the exhibition was also part of the original design of Chen Jiageng to show the life-world abroad, namely in Southeast Asia, i.e., representing the elusive 'absent'. Apparently, the original objects were threatened with destruction during the Cultural Revolution by Red Guards, and thus the former museum's director is credited to have personally cared for them to prevent this! (725–726). Target group of the museum at the time of its 'patriotic' listing (2001) was, however, the next generation of youth in the PRC supposed to be less destructive than their Red Guard predecessors and rather enticed by the exhibits and artefacts, but also Overseas Chinese and visitors from Hong Kong and Taiwan were aimed at. As some sort of an inheritor of the role of Chen Jiageng, an old overseas leader from Singapore, Sun Bingyan 孙炳炎, who highly esteemed Chen Jiageng, is named as the one donating many cultural artefacts for the new exhibition (which sustains the reformulation of the museum over a legitimate successor of Chen Jiageng endorsing it, including items belonging to Chen Jiageng, the founder of the museum who by this becomes part of the exhibition himself) (727). Thus, the reorientation of a museum by and about the Overseas Chinese into one coopted by the state for arguing for 'common' Chineseness is legitimised.

In the Xi Jinping-era official version of the museum, reflected in the *Fengbei* series (Gu 2019), finally, the museum is labelled a 'comprehensive' one (*zonghexing bowuguan* 综合性博物馆) (likely reflecting also the *bowuyuan* idea as once outlined by Chen Jiageng and the broader exhibition content beyond the 'Overseas Chinese' topic). As mentioned, it also covers items once belonging to Chen Jiageng, its founder, personally, including artefacts like ancient bronzes, porcelain, ancient coins, paintings or artistic works of his personal collection (which also function as a statement that he as an Overseas Chinese cared for Chinese culture in general) (138). And it covers the collection of (stuffed) animals, with which Chen Jiageng had wanted to show the life surroundings of the Overseas Chinese to those at home as

38 Cf. also Wang (2021: 28).

an educational measure (cf. chapter 5.2) (138, 140). While this 'comprehensiveness' of the present museum reflects Chen Jiageng's ideas in the 1950s to a certain degree, it reformulates the museum that was more to tell the mainland Chinese about the Overseas Chinese and their living conditions, especially in Southeast Asia, into a place to appeal to the Overseas Chinese to be 'patriotic' via a common 'Chineseness'. Chen Jiageng is the prime example who first had sympathies for Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary activities and helped him in Singapore, then sustained (GMD)-China during the anti-Japanese war with fundraising, and finally went to China in person to inform himself directly about the situation, insisting to not only visit Chiang Kai-shek's war capital Chongqing with his Overseas Chinese delegation, but also be allowed to go to the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) 'capital' Yan'an where he is said to have been deeply impressed by Mao Zedong and Zhu De 朱德 (see also chapter 3.3 of the present book for Yan'an). Somewhat simplifiying history, Chen Jiageng is said to have decided there to throw in his lot with the Communists (which he did only later, cf. chapter 5.2), who are described as having often to hide from the Japanese bombings (notably without mentioning how heavily Chongqing was bombed in comparison through the war!). It was thus only logical, the argumentation goes, that Chen Jiageng would decide to move back to mainland China in PRC times where he cared for Overseas Chinese affairs (141–142). In sum, the Xi Jinping-era narrative framing discloses that the museum is, like the 'China Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum', above all conceived as oriented toward politics, while Chen Jiageng's original 'knowledge education' focus has been completely sidelined.

Case study: the Korean War Memorial Hall

While the China Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum as well as the Overseas Chinese Museum are dealing with groups of Chinese beyond the mainland's borders, the memorial on the Korean War, called the **Kang Mei yuan Chao jinianguan** 抗美援朝纪念馆 (Resist America, Aid (North) Korea Memorial Hall) in Dandong (Liaoning Province) (list 1, 1997) at the border to North Korea, in turn, shoulders the task of presenting a war that was fought outside China in a neighbouring country, and Chinese ('volunteer') participation therein as something 'patriotic' in Chinese perspective.[39] This distinguishes it from the category of war and battle sites below

39 For a widely-used English-language history of the Korean War, see Cumings (2010). The recent work of Chang (2020) places a particular focus on the issue of POWs in that war in a Chinese

(chapter 4.3), addressing wars conducted on Chinese soil. One may note that the site is not simply titled neutrally 'Korean War Museum', but rather uses the slogan of the campaign handed out by Mao at the time: 'Resist America, aid (North) Korea' (*kang Mei yuan Chao* 抗美援朝), which was addressed to the Chinese populace. That way, it is rather a site dedicated to this campaign, covering both its military aspect abroad and (albeit secondarily) its political domestic dimension. Furthermore, Chinese 'aid' given to the North Koreans and their battle against the US (with South Korea and the official UN forces not figuring prominently to concentrate on the US as 'the enemy') is explained as also something needed for China's own safety, since Mao also added that beyond 'aid' to the (North) Korean brethren, China also had a vital interest to not see 'the enemy' approach China's border. The participation in that war, if by a nominal 'people's volunteer army' (*renmin zhiyuanjun* 人民志愿军) on the suggestion of Stalin to avoid escalating the conflict on an international scale, therefore also meant to safeguard China – and thus can be framed as 'patriotic' (distinguishing it from an 'interference' as the US / UN on the other side are accused of, editing out South Korean requests for 'aid' on their part when attacked by the North Koreans). The memorialisation of this war which, especially in the US, has often been labelled the 'forgotten war', partly because of the subsequent Vietnam War taking dominance in remembrance, is therefore much more positive, enduring and valuable in Chinese eyes.

To underline the emotional aspect, the site thus dropped the rather neutral term 'exhibition hall' (*chenlieguan* 陈列馆) (Shi 1998: 7) which it had held in its earliest version, and took up the designation 'memorial hall' which also hints at its not only being conceived of as relevant for knowledge transmission (like a museum), but also for emotional formation of the Chinese citizen, as pupil or tourist. As an additional aspect, such a labelling also deflects any potential criticism of the exhibition as biased since it is not a scientific 'museum' but a Chinese 'memorial hall'. The establishment of this site was connected to the return of the last group of Chinese 'volunteers' from North Korea in 1958 (to commemorate their service). In its more recent exhibition (as I observed on-site in 2013), this 'patriotic education showcase base' introduced the memorial hall's topic visually by a large statue of Mao handing the military command to general Peng Dehuai (though China did not officially declare war), with Mao's calligraphy of the full campaign slogan reproduced above: 'resist America, aid (North) Korea; protect the family, defend the country' (*kang Mei yuan Chao; bao jia wei guo* 抗美援朝，保家卫国). The exhibition itself details the development of the war, battle for battle, mainly using maps, photos, and

perspective, though strangely not naming the work of Diamant (2009) on veterans in China, including those of the Korean War who moved back to the PRC.

texts, and predictably highlights the Chinese contribution besides the much less prominent one of the North Koreans the Chinese supposedly were only to 'aid'. Very briefly, also the Soviet unofficial, though de facto crucial, contribution to the air force is acknowledged (of which the tombs of the over 200 (!) fallen pilots are silent testimonies, located above all in Manchuria in the Dalian 大连 area, which remained in Soviet hands up to 1955 – in itself a taboo topic in the PRC),[40] though Stalin's overall dubious, but instrumental role in the Korean War is not spelt out in the exhibition. The figure of general Peng Dehuai whom Mao made leader of the 'people's volunteer army', is delicate since he would later clash with Mao over the Great Leap policies at the Lushan Conference in 1959 and be dismissed. During the Cultural Revolution, Peng would have to pay the final price, being harassed to death. In the PLA, however, there were many who favoured his posthumous rehabilitation after the Cultural Revolution, providing him with some kind of a monument precisely with this Korean War memorial. Deng Xiaoping who had been a close ally of Peng, by now in power, would write the name of the nearby 'Resist America, Aid (North) Korea Monument' in his calligraphy for the site, and the mentioned large statue in the entrance hall of Mao and Peng is a clear statement of Peng Dehuai's rehabilitation and key military role in the Korean War.

In the presentation of the memorial hall, the war comes across as basically a 'defence action' by the Chinese on Korean territory (not detailing that the North Korean attack initiated the war which just 'broke out' to not taint the storyline of the legitimacy of the Chinese intervention) where the Chinese – above all – 'helped the (North) Korean *populace'* (i.e. not putting the North Korean *military* in the spotlight) against 'foreign invasion', thus marking the US ('and Allies') troops as the real adversaries, not giving much consideration to the South Koreans. The main reason (and legitimation) for Chinese involvement, however, is given as the one connected to Chinese security: the threat to China's own borders (in fact voiced by the US at the time), and the American naval interference in the Taiwan Strait, blocking possible 'reunification' of the PRC with Taiwan by force. To underline the narrative of a basic peaceful attitude of the PRC, the efforts to prevent war are highlighted to suggest to the Chinese visitor that the Chinese were literally

40 Cf. Müller (2022, chapter 3) on the Lüshun cemetery and the Soviet aviators' tombs buried there and in Jinzhou, both in the Lüshun–Dalian (LüDa) area, which was in Soviet hands until 1955. Though this has been largely edited out in Chinese historical accounts, and if addressed, is described as a 'thorn' in the PRC's flesh by backreading the later Sino–Soviet split, de facto Mao had wanted the Soviets to stay at the time, to secure the area until the threat of the Korean War at China's door step and possible confrontation with the US / UN forces spilling over the border was over. Only after Stalin's death and the Panmunjom armistice of 1953, things started to change, and thus the last Soviet troops left LüDa in 1955.

compelled to enter it, recruiting 'volunteers' as the Chinese populace's 'most beloved people' – as a well-known literary piece of the time by writer Wei Wei 魏巍 was titled, familiar to every Chinese from school textbooks and represented in the exhibition by a 'volunteer's' typical items, from gun to drinking cup.[41] On the other hand, when the war was underway, the Chinese would supposedly practice impeccable generosity and strictly observe the international rules in treating the foreign POWs, which is to be proven by, e.g., exhibited photos of smiling POWs of colour and apparently different backgrounds – likely of the multi-national UN forces – who supposedly came to understand in captivity that the Chinese cause was just, and that they themselves had been only exploited; or showing propaganda material of the time in English soliciting the enemy soldiers to oppose further war and rather go home to their beloved, aiming at the mounting unpopularity of the war in American society when it dragged on longer than the promised quick intervention to be 'home by Christmas'.[42] Even the religious beliefs of the foreign POWs are said to have been respected by the Chinese (atheist) Communist side, as a photo is supposed to document. The 'reformed' POWs, in turn, are shown holding up posters to the photographers asking for peace – and for the handing over of Taiwan to the PRC!

The PRC 'volunteer soldiers', in contrast, are framed as heroically enduring unspeakable cruelties in the reverse case of becoming POWs, and that they were intimidated not to ask for repatriation to the PRC – a sore point for the Chinese side as many Chinese POWs whom the Americans insisted on giving the choice, opted for not being repatriated to the PRC but rather be transferred to Taiwan or elsewhere which was a huge loss of face for the PRC at the time and one major reason why the war dragged on (as Chang 2020 has argued).[43] The stress on illegitimacy of the US / UN involvement is also furthered by the contention that against all international rules, the desperate US / UN forces even retorted to bacteriological weapons. (This, of course, has a special ring in Manchuria where the memorial hall is sited,

41 The text 'Shei shi zui keai de ren?' 谁是最可爱的人 (Who are the most beloved people?) was first published in *Renmin ribao* on 11 April 1951. (See Wei 1951). It appeared in textbooks and, after a hiatus, it figures today once again in junior secondary textbooks in China! (See *Yuwen, qinianji xiace* 2025, lesson 7).

42 General MacArthur had assured the Americans at the beginning of the war with the prospect of 'home by Christmas', which proved unrealistic after the Chinese had joined the war on the North Korean side.

43 Chang (2020) states that the US propaganda was instrumental in making the POWs double-think to opt for the PRC, fearing to be put into prison there (though he acknowledges that those who did opt for the PRC were de facto not treated well upon return) (Chang 2020: 357–361). The exhibition does not detail the point, avoiding to disclose the numbers of those who opted for Taiwan (the large majority) and those who opted for the PRC.

since the Japanese manufactured and tested bacteriological weapons during the 1930s and 1940s in Manchuria, the results of which were traded to the US against freedom from prosecution for the Japanese perpetrators after WW II) (cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book for the notorious Unit 731 in Harbin in Northern Manchuria).[44] For this, a map is to show that the US attacks also covered areas on Chinese territory to further sustain the argument of the absolute necessity for the PRC to intervene. Given the US / UN dominance of the airspace, the Chinese had to enter the war clandestinely,[45] often using tunnels to hide, and the visitors are made to walk on their tour through recreated tunnels, with dioramas showing how daily life therein should be imagined, with typical Korean food, but also with hospital care for the wounded etc., adding to the 'emotional' education the exhibition is supposed to provide. (See fig. 4.1.2).

Fig. 4.1.2 A recreated tunnel in the memorial hall for the Korean War showing typical Korean food items so suggest how the Chinese 'volunteers' experienced the foreign land (Dandong) (photograph by the author, 2013)

44 The issue whether these allegations of US / UN use of bacteriological weapons in the Korean War were mere propaganda or had a real basis is still not decided, though it seems likely they were not completely unfounded.

45 Stalin did not immediately send Soviet aviators for cover which meant that the Chinese entry into the war without proper air protection was dangerous, and war was not declared. However, for convincing Chinese visitors of the legitimacy of China's military involvement at the time, this 'sneaking into Korea' is an argumentational inconvenience.

Key scenes of the war (in Chinese understanding) like the Chinese successful defence of the Sanggamryong Hill (Shangganling 上甘岭), later (in 1956) turned into a famous film with that title to frame the official Chinese commemoration of the Korean War as 'victorious', or the successful raid on the South Korean White Tiger Regiment (celebrated in a famous opera oft-repeated over the Cultural Revolution period, *Qixi baihutuan* 奇袭白虎团 or 'Raid on the White Tiger Regiment'), which a Chinese visitor will expect, are shown as dioramas too, the latter event being a rare case displaying the *South* Korean flag in the exhibition. (Typically, while the 1956 film put the accent on defence, the opera in its final version of the Cultural Revolution times focuses on attack.)

The exhibition narrative includes a special focus on the PRC air force which had – so to speak – its international debut in this war,[46] highlighting individual pilots,[47] but also briefly acknowledges the (de facto decisive) contributions of the Soviet aviators. On civilian fronts, Chinese railway workers and engineers were also crucial for sustaining the war effort since functioning supply lines from China over the Yalu to North Korea were key to the Chinese ground forces and often a problem, given the exposure to enemy planes with little air defence available. On the other hand, on the PRC side of the border, the Chinese populace which was affected at times directly by the war, was especially involved in the whole societal campaign, donating blood, providing food, caring for the wounded transported back, or for orphaned children from Korea. People further away in China, in turn, were mobilised by the domestic campaign and participated in the war effort by donating money, from little children made to hand over their pocket money (a practice still used in 'patriotic education' today – cf. chapter 5.2 for an example at the site for Chen Jiageng) to adults, with a particular focus on religious groups which thus showed themselves 'patriotic' at a time when religions came under particular attack (especially those with 'foreign contacts'). Airplanes financed this way, would then be named after the donating group as an acknowledgment, by this also suggesting that these were weaponry 'of the people'.[48] Artists went to the front to boost the morale of the Chinese 'volunteers', while students are said to have eagerly enlisted for the

46 For the air force during the Korean War, see also Zhang (2003).

47 At the time of my visit (2013), the 'merit' of Chinese aviator Zhang Jihui downing US ace Davis was briefly mentioned, though not exploiting the 'war trophy' in a direct way as it was done at earlier times in the exhibition (reflected in the 1998 booklet version on this memorial hall when it had just been labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base', giving this 'war trophy' high prominence in its illustrated section – see below).

48 This practice was not new: already the GMD had made similar efforts to collect patriotic donations for weapons and planes in Republican times, modelled on the American example (cf. for such endeavours in US schools: Curren and Dorn (2018: 68–69)).

'volunteer army'. Men, weapons, and other goods were also needed because of the dire situation the 'volunteers' were in in this far-away war. This is all to show the breadth of the inner-Chinese campaign accompanying the war, which served in fact also as a major tool for forming and homogenising the citizens of 'New China' in the very first years of its existence (and for quelling any domestic dissent in general – as Chin (2023) has recently argued).

The North Korean populace, in turn, as the exhibition part on Sino–North Korean friendship is to show to the Chinese visitor, was very grateful and thus legitimises the Chinese involvement also from that side. This is exemplified in a 'moving story' provided on a plaque connected to an exhibited pair of small shoes, telling of a Korean mother who carried her little child on the back while transporting goods to the front under fire. When the child was unfortunately hit and killed, she would still first fulfill her task in gratefulness for the Chinese 'volunteers' helping the Koreans, and only then return and bury the dead child on her back. The mother would donate the child's shoes later as a sign of Sino–North Korean friendship to a Chinese 'volunteer' (who supposedly then handed the little shoes on to the memorial hall). And after the armistice was finally reached, the Chinese 'volunteers' would help the Korean people clear away the remnants of the war and restart civil life before returning home to the Chinese motherland (which should explain why the 'volunteers' did not all come back to the PRC immediately in 1953 – in fact, the Chinese returned in three major waves over the years until 1958). This way, however, the 'friendship' is clearly displayed in an asymmetrical way for the Chinese visitor, the fighting Chinese males protecting the simple Korean populace, pointedly represented by a woman and a small child.

Some Chinese 'volunteers', however, would not return, losing their lives in the war, and thus a section on 'martyrs' (a common feature also of the war memorials discussed in the third section of this chapter) is included. Notably, the eldest son of Mao, Mao Anying 毛岸英, who died in Korea, is only named in passing, giving more space to other 'heroes' and 'martyrs'. (He died when serving as an interpreter for Russian – which hints also at the role of the Soviets in that war.) In a sense, this low-key treatment is striking since the death of Mao Anying is often suggested as a 'proof' of the personal price Mao had to pay for joining the war and dramatised, e.g., in films (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book for Yan'an, and chapter 5.3 for Mao). Apart from the fact that Mao father and son had no easy relationship, it obviously reflects a curatorial choice that the memorial hall is downplaying the issue. The locally provided materials do not provide any clues to the reasons for this very limited treatment of Mao Anying. The booklet explaining the exhibition, not dated but seemingly from the late 1990s or early 2000s, does not treat him at all ([Yin], n.d.),

neither does a locally available collection of photos about the war to commemorate the 50th anniversary in 2000, based on the collection of the memorial hall together with the Liaoning News Picture House (Sun / Zhang 2000). One can only speculate, given that there had been rumours that Peng Dehuai was held responsible for not protecting Mao's non-combattant son better, that this was one reason. As it seems, the memorial (and the PLA which has the main stake in this memorial hall in commemorating the Chinese military) tries to stress general Peng Dehuai's merits in that war who is to be fully rehabilitated via this memorial. The role of Soviet-trained Mao Anying as Sino–Russian interpreter also would highlight the Soviet inofficial involvement *vs* a more 'China-focused' narrative put forward. Taken together, this could explain the reserve.

The touristic and educational highlight of the memorial hall's visit is, however, supposed to be the 360° panorama painting hall – a new technique in Chinese exhibition culture at the time it was built, which is to provide a feeling by visual and audio cues of being in the middle of battle ('defending' the Chongchon river 清川江 in North Korea well above the 38th parallel in 1950, the first important 'successful' battle in Chinese view, pushing the US / UN troops back to the 38th parallel),[49] observing it from the commanding heights with added sound and light effects to suggest to the visitor a 'real-life' impression of how the war was like in that foreign country. It is thus a very good example of how to present 'the absent', and it is telling that this type of representation has been used also for other wars (see below chapter 4.3) equally tackling the problem of how to tell the story best, without much tangible experiences otherwise. Moving outdoor after the visit, military equipment, weapons, and military vehicles as tangible items are exhibited, and the nearby huge monument on the hill top, written (in 1991) in Deng Xiaoping's calligraphy and with an endorsement added by Jiang Zemin (in 1993), underlines the memorial aspect of the whole site for 'patriotic education'.

While the impressions above are, as mentioned, observations of the state of things in 2013 when Xi Jinping had just taken over as China's supreme leader (and before the exhibition would be closed for several years in 2014 to be reworked),[50] the nationally broadcasted TV *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (on disc 2) on this 'patriotic education showcase base', produced immediately after its listing with the very first batch of sites in 1997 by Liaoning TV's science education department, reflects the state and stance of the Jiang Zemin era in condensed and visual form for the national audience. From the start, this version provides a very heroic impression with tragical music, thus introducing the site on a 'memorial' tonic keynote,

49 This battle thwarted the American hope to end the war quickly by driving the Chinese out.
50 It was reopened in 2020 with a new modern main building.

underlined visually with the focus on the monument close to the museum before moving into the memorial hall itself. In fact, China lost a great number of its 'volunteers' (though more often for non-military reasons like bad nourishment and equipment, especially during the stern winters, or lacking hygiene and health care facilities). However, the monument does not explicitly call for only commemorating the dead but also includes implicitely the survivors (and thus the veterans) by generally naming it the 'Resist America, Aid (North) Korea Monument'. The music, however, insinuates a tragic note (which is taken up again at the end). China, as the commentary assures the TV audience, went to help the (North) Koreans in a war 'against aggression' (which legitimises the Chinese participation). Well-known intellectual, writer, and long-time head of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Guo Moruo 郭沫若, who wrote so many site names in his calligraphy (cf. in the chapters above in the present book), wrote also this memorial hall's title (which had in fact to be cropped because the former place name Andong city had changed into Dandong city since he wrote '[Andong-shi 安东市] kang Mei yuan Chao jinianguan'), while the longer endorsement of general secretary Jiang Zemin links the audience back to the political present. The delicate issue of naming who started the war is evaded by just stating that the North Koreans 'had already 90% of the South' in hand, when the US intervened from outside, driving the war back up North towards the Yalu river, i.e. the border to the PRC, while the (North) Koreans tried to 'resist' heroically. The 360° panoramic painting of the memorial hall is didactically used with old photos laid over as a background to the voice of the commentator who states that China's safety was thus at stake, and Kim Il-sung had also asked for help: given this state of things, China responded and recruited 'volunteers'. Mao was the one to hand out the basic strategic direction, suggesting mostly *yundong zhan* 运动战 (mobile warfare), less *zhendi zhan* 阵地战 (positional warfare) or *youji zhan* 游击战 (guerrilla warfare) (given the Western superior arms, and the fighting in a foreign country on unfamiliar terrain).[51] By this, the TV film clip de facto also contributes to 'defence education', which is a further task this memorial is to fulfil, teaching about Mao's war strategies and the theory behind them. The 360° panoramic painting is repeatedly interwoven as a point of reference for the elusive, always focusing on one quick take of a scene, with the manuscript of Wei Wei (the named writer acting as war reporter who had composed the text on the 'volunteer' fighters as the 'most beloved people' everyone knows from school in China) in the background as a didactic measure to support the narrative visually. Douglas MacArthur (who led the US / UN troops that crossed the 38th parallel into

51 Mao had differentiated these three types of warfare earlier, most famously in his essay 'On protracted war' (1938). See Mao (1965a), esp. pp. 170–174.

North Korea in the early phase of the war) is profiled here as the key culprit to individualise 'the enemy', and to underline once more that China was forced by this 'crossing of the line' to enter the war (which in fact puzzled many Chinese at the time who just recently had thought the Americans were at China's side – during WW II).[52] The Chinese people fully sustained the war effort at the time, the commentator assures the modern Chinese TV audience, and they readily contributed funds for buying planes, financing, e.g., a plane of the Tianjin women's association, a Buddhist plane etc. This underlines visually the Chinese populace's support of this war acted out beyond China's borders (in spite of the preceding long years of war against the Japanese and then against the GMD). But also the intellectual and artist elites sustained the war effort: e.g. Chinese opera star Mei Lanfang 梅兰芳 as well as the noted writer Ba Jin 巴金 went to the front to encourage the 'volunteers'. This is to demonstrate that all walks of life were behind this war effort, before Mao is shown to write his encouragements, too, insinuating he only 'picked up' the people's wishes. North Korea's Kim Il-sung finally appears on screen, and the Chinese soldiers and the North Korean people became very close, according to the narrative, which therewith stresses the protective function of the Chinese soldiers towards the Korean civilians (while North Korean comrades in arms hardly appear and are obviously not considered on an equal footing: after all, the target audience of the TV film clip is Chinese). While the enemy purportedly 'faked' interest in peace to gain time,[53] the Chief of Staff of the American Air Force, Hoyt Vandenberg, is shown (who supposedly went on scheming, the viewer concludes).[54]

In this context, the Chinese fledgling air force (to fend off the US Air Force) is highlighted (since the air force was the most prestigious and recent addition to the PRC's war capabilities, de facto heavily sustained by the Soviets who flew under Chinese flag – cf. Zhang 2003), and several Chinese pilots are introduced with photos.[55] Photos and dioramas dominate the filmed exhibition of the memorial hall in the late 1990s, showing also daily life (food etc.) in Korea to nourish the viewer's

52 Cf. Diamant (2009: 126–133), who notes that based on archival material from Shanghai, many workers there could not understand this sudden 'switch' of roles from friends to enemies.

53 This refers to the long time of negotiations to reach a signable armistice which was finally signed in 1953. In fact, in the US, in 1953 the new Republican president Eisenhower wanted to end the war waged under his Democratic predecessor Truman as quickly as possible.

54 As Air Force Chief of Staff, Vandenberg opposed cuts on the Air Force budget proposed by the Secretary of Defence at home.

55 One may recall the 'star cult' around aviators as often 'solo performers'. Cf. also Müller (2022: chapter 5) on the Chinese memorialisation of earlier (Republican-era) aviators in the case of the Nanjing aviators' cemetery.

imagination who might never have been to Korea. Models of mountain areas in the exhibition are to represent the foreign battle settings (of which the Chinese populace could only read from reports at the time). For those 'volunteers' acquiring special merit, honouring diplomas are put on display. As a photo documents, general Peng Dehuai would finally sign the armistice (for the 'Chinese People's Volunteer Army'), as did Kim Il-sung (who is tellingly shown here only second), and it is called a major achievement that this armistice at Panmunjom could be 'forced upon' the US / UN. (In fact, the only real 'winner' of the Korean War was ironically Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan who had not contributed any troops at all.)[56] In short, for the US / UN it had been all through a wrong (and illegitimate) war. On the Chinese side, however, many 'heroes' had made their mark, though many also died (including Mao Anying). Thus, to bind the whole topic back to 'patriotic education' in practice, the commemoration of this war effort is central to the TV version, ending by showing red-scarfed children, i.e. Young Pioneers, saluting the 'heroes' represented by the towering monument near the memorial hall (a performative act for children similar to many commemorative sites as discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book), zooming in on Deng Xiaoping's calligraphy on the body of the monument and Jiang Zemin's endorsement of the 'People's Volunteer Army' on the large staircase leading up to it. In short, the monument next to the memorial hall, inscribed by the two recent leaders Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, is the major item to anchor commemoration of this war in a foreign land, binding later generations to the 'patriotic' ideals the 'people's volunteers' had fought for, and simultaneously to the political leaders of the present – less to Mao who had once ordered China's participation in that war.

Notably, in terms of filmic representation of 'patriotic education showcase bases', which are all covered by the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clips, Dandong's Korean War memorial has, however, not been included in the alternative *Zhonghua hun* 'patriotic education' video collection for classroom use on (first list) 'patriotic education showcase bases' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book for these materials). While this may seem at first glance unsurprising, given that the *Zhonghua hun* series de facto covers only a selection of the first list sites (which we also noted in the preceding chapters in various cases where sites had not been taken up, e.g., the atrocity sites – see chapter 3.2), the surprising fact is that the *Zhonghua hun* educational video collection does represent the topic of the Korean War, but exceptionally over a second-list (!) (2001) site: the Shenyang 'martyrs' cemetery' of the Korean War (disk 7) where several of the more famous 'martyrs' are buried (while the fallen

56 Cf. also Chang (2020).

Chinese 'volunteers' were usually buried in North Korea, most importantly in the 'Cemetery for Martyrs of the Chinese People's Volunteers'). The filmic presentation in this educational video on the Shenyang 'martyrs cemetery' of the Korean War is very emotional (in line with 'patriotic' presentations of 'martyrs cemeteries' we discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book), showing how pupils of the Shenyang Teachers College are moved by the visit, telling the official lessons of dedication to the *patria* etc. to the camera. While the first list sites on the most famous *individual* heroes commemorated in the Shenyang cemetery, Huang Jiguang and Qiu Shaoyun – see below, i.e., their Sichuan / Chongqing homes, are included in the *Zhonghua hun* educational video series, one wonders what the reasons are for the rare choice to represent the general topic of the Korean War via this second list Shenyang site, instead of the first list Dandong memorial. In any case, it is obvious that the Dandong exhibition on the topic of the Korean War has been contentious also in China and was, in fact, repeatedly reworked, depending on political necessities – and the military's particular stake in this memorial hall. It is therefore not very 'stable' in its reading of history and potentially divisive, given that the problems on the Korean peninsula and the PRC's role between North and South Korea are still far from being 'settled', while a 'martyrs' cemetery' is in tendency more straightforward (and with fewer pitfalls) for educational use.

When comparing the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV version on Dandong's Korean War memorial for the general audience in China, which puts the accent on commemoration and emotional binding, as we noted, with the corresponding 'patriotic' booklet on this (first list) site (Shi 1998), designed for young readers in the late 1990s,[57] incidentally with a host of authors who apparently had not much time for writing (which discloses the tough timeline to finish the whole project of this first '100 patriotic education showcase bases' booklet series we continuously use in this book for first list sites – cf. chapter 1), one notes an overall different accent. Rather than appearing tragic as in TV, the focus is put here on rivalry and self-assertiveness, calling the war a 'historical contest' (between the US and the PRC). The need in the context of 'patriotic education' to explain why a military campaign beyond the PRC's borders was (and can be) necessary and why this is 'patriotic', involves the question of legitimacy. Basically, the booklet version

57 As will be recalled from chapter 1 of the present book, the booklet series of the late 1990s on the single first list sites of 'patriotic education showcase bases' was on the stacks of school libraries and reprinted also through the 2000s, with a new layout version started in 2012 at the very end of the Hu Jintao era. These booklets thus can serve as a mirror for the official reading of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras handed out to Chinese youth. For consistency, I cite the original layout version throughout.

is following the line of argument that it was the US that 'interfered', manipulating the UN (which for the intended readers of the 1998 booklet has a positive 'neutral' ring as at the time of writing the booklet, the PRC was since long a member of the UN, but not at the time of the Korean War when Chiang Kai-shek's government on Taiwan still represented 'China' in that international body). Therefore it is underlined that the UN at that time took an 'illegal' decision to intervene (once more skipping the South Korean appeals) (1). To drive home the message, lest modern-day readers might misinterpret, the UN troops are always only given in quotation marks as 'so-called' ones. While this implies one may not state openly that it was North Korea starting the war (keeping to the official wording that it 'broke out'), it is still evident to the attentive reader that the North was at first very successful in its attack on South Korea, which, in turn, is interestingly differently labeled in the booklet when it is – rarely – addressed at all: either as 'Nan Chaoxian' 南朝鲜 (Chaoxian 朝鲜 being the old Chinese name for Korea *in toto* but later restricted to North Korea), not using Hanguo 韩国, the usual term to refer to South Korea with which the PRC had established official relations in 1992,[58] i.e. before the booklet was written (!); or using outright the *wei* 伪 label to imply that the South had an illegitimate regime comparable in Chinese history to the labelling for Manchukuo or for the Wang Jingwei 汪精卫 and similar collaborationist regimes during the Second Sino–Japanese War. The wording thus suggests to the intended young Chinese readers that the North Korean regime was the only legitimate one on the Korean peninsula. In this vein, while North Korea is addressed as a state and not identified primarily with Kim Il-sung in the booklet, the South is mostly identified with the singular figure of Syngman Rhee (who is, needless to say, not called a 'president') to not lend his regime any legitimacy. (In fact, at the time of the Korean War this was the official PRC position until the normalisation of relations with South Korea much later. One might, however, wonder how a young Chinese reader at the turn of the 21st century is supposed to react to this.) The move up North toward the Yalu river was, in any case, a threat to China herself, for which the main culprit – beyond the US president – is seen in the US military head, general MacArthur. The PRC, it is argued, wanted a 'peaceful solution' of the Korean conflict and warned to not get nearer to the border, but this warning was simply ignored. Also in this booklet, nothing at all is said about Stalin's ambiguous role in the Korean War. This is especially notable since, as mentioned, many Soviet aviators took part – unofficially, to not trigger a Third World War – and were operating from Chinese territory as 'Chinese aviators'. Thus, the role of Stalin who rather wanted Mao to enter the war,

58 One may point out that in Taiwan, which sided politically with South Korea, the Korean War is termed *Hanzhan* 韩战, while in the PRC it is termed *Chaoxian zhanzheng* 朝鲜战争.

and the preoccupations of general Peng Dehuai, who is hailed as a 'hero' of that war (but was the one to confront the difficulties on the ground and had rather lobbied for waiting for adequate Soviet aid before entering, which Mao did not grant), as much as the many hardships the 'Chinese People's Volunteer Army' encountered due to bad equipment etc., are conveniently edited out. Many 'volunteers' were de facto recruited from the far-away Southwest of China barely 'liberated' by the Communists from long-term GMD rule (and thus in particular need to show their new loyalty). Given the tricky legitimacy issue, the patriotic booklet's description of the memorial hall very much plays up symbolic capital with honours and magnanimous 'internationalism' by China's helping North Korea (the leadership of which plays only a secondary role to the Chinese 'volunteer heroes'). Given the threat to China's borders and the purported US use of bacteriological warfare, the Chinese people are presented as fully backing the war, being aroused and 'wanting' to join the war.[59] Men and also women thus built up a 'volunteer' troop (soldiers, but also civilians in various functions) and were led by general Peng Dehuai to cross the Yalu river into Korea (2–3).

A particularly interesting part of the booklet is the explanation of the background of the memorial hall's establishment in modern-day Dandong, formerly Andong and in 1965 renamed Dandong.[60] It is now placed on the so-called 'heroes' hill', named this way since 1993 (reflecting the context of 'patriotism' stepped up after the 1989 Tiananmen protest movement – and the end of most Communist regimes worldwide) (6). Back in time, a first exhibition hall had been put up when in 1958 the last Chinese 'volunteers' returned from Korea, being honoured at the time with trains transporting them decorated for their arrival, while the famous songs connected to the Korean War were sung like *Zhiyuanjun zhange* 志愿军战歌 (war song of the volunteer army) (see below) and *Wo de zuguo* 我的祖国 (our ancestral land) (the latter actually becoming a popular song only after the war itself via the 1956 *Shangganling* film of which it was the title song).[61] This first exhibition hall (*chenlieguan*) had been sited at the banks of the Yalu river, and in 1960, the already mentioned writer, intellectual, and long-term CASS president Guo Moruo wrote the name in his calligraphy for the by then renamed 'memorial hall' (*jinianguan*). At

59 For a more recent assessment of the campaign's grassroots effectiveness among the Chinese populace, see Chin (2023).

60 One may note that the former name 'Pacifying the East' was now turned into the more assertive '(Cinnabar) Red East'.

61 The 1956 film *Shangganling* 上甘岭 addressed the 1952 battle during the Korean War where the Chinese defended their position on Sanggamryong Hill successfully. Incidentally, this title song sparked a new Sino–American controversy when Chinese pianist Lang Lang 郎朗 played it in 2011 at a reception of US President Obama for Chinese President and general secretary Hu Jintao.

the start of the Cultural Revolution, the memorial was, however, closed, in 1970 'revolutionised' and temporarily renamed as 'Dandong-shi jieji jiaoyu zhanlanguan' 丹东市阶级教育展览馆 (Dandong city's class education exhibition hall), but already in 1972 it was revived as 'Resist America, aid (North) Korea memorial hall'. After the Cultural Revolution (during which general Peng Dehuai, the 'hero' of the Korean War, had been harassed to death), some higher military pushed for setting up a larger memorial hall, purportedly for promoting 'patriotism', 'internationalism', and Sino–North Korean friendship (7–8). A relocation was to make sure the memorial could be seen from everywhere in the city, highlighting this site, and it should especially stress Peng Dehuai's role (who had been rehabilitated after the Cultural Revolution). This way, in 1990 at the 40th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War (and after the 1989 Tiananmen protest movement's bloody crushing which had been controversial in the PLA as well and in any case had damaged the PLA's domestic reputation), the memorial hall was rebuilt at the new hill-side location with the monument visible from all over the city. As the 'patriotic' booklet openly states, the exhibition design, in turn, was thoroughly and repeatedly scrutinised and adapted before it was finally approved, and thus the new memorial hall could be finally opened in 1993 at the 40th anniversary of the signing of the armistice at Panmunjom (9). In short, the narrative at this new location reflected the then politically correct history view, although in 1992 the PRC had also taken up diplomatic relations with South Korea which meant that the Korean War topic had become politically even more sensitive. The established designation as 'memorial hall' was likely useful also in this context since a 'museum' could have raised expectations for a more 'scientific' approach, while the clearly present bias in the exhibition could be explained by its focus on commemorating the PRC contribution at the time of the war. The most spectacular part, the 360° panoramic painting hall, was added at that time (13), and general secretary Jiang Zemin's endorsement of 1993 at the opening was engraved, praising the 'patriotism', 'internationalism', and 'revolutionary heroic spirit' of the Chinese 'volunteers' (10). Deng Xiaoping, in turn, had written the name of the huge monument to be seen all over Dandong on the hill already in 1991, while the memorial hall itself still sports the (cropped) Mao-era calligraphy of its name of Guo Moruo (11). Mao's calligraphy is present, too, with the already named motto *kang Mei yuan Chao, bao jia wei guo* over the sculpture of Mao and Peng (whom he would dismiss on the Lushan Conference in 1959, as may be recalled). That way, over calligraphy, the political leaders appear as seamlessly reunited for the present generation of Chinese citizens visiting the site or reading the booklet, glossing over Peng's subsequent clash with Mao and his tragic end.

In terms of artwork that serves as a major tool to represent the elusive, a bas-relief shows the entry of the 'volunteers' into Korea, dramatising their leaving the homeland, which highlights Dandong as the very place where one crossed the Yalu river and left Chinese soil, in some cases to never return. To underline the 'patriotic' value of the 'volunteers'' service, Mao is shown giving them the order to depart. Upon this artistic introduction, the exhibition of the memorial hall is devided into 6 topics: the military battles in Korea, the Chinese domestic campaign, Sino–North Korean friendship, outstanding heroes, the air force, and the 360° panoramic painting. While the first two, the military and the domestic campaign, are the issues the intended young readers know best from history classes, the third, i.e., the friendship topic, is to demonstrate, how grateful the North Koreans were for Chinese aid, providing also numbers to quantify Chinese contributions, including the non-military as well.

The 'heroes' (which terminologically includes also survivors), in turn, are presented here hierarchically, including 2 heroes of 'special class', 50 'first class' ones, and 4 'first class models'. Individual names of the Chinese 'martyrs', in turn, are listed, with short biographies added in the case of higher-ranking casualties among the cadres. The memorial displays also weapons, including airplanes, tanks, canons etc. as 'material' elements to illustrate the situation with which the 'heroes' were confronted (14). But it is the stories about 'heroes' that are, in fact, used by the 'patriotic' booklet, designed for a young readership, as the major device to render the elusive more imaginatively accessible.

The unquestionably most important 'hero' (and 'martyr') of the Korean War is Huang Jiguang 黄继光, a Sichuanese, who has been advertised since the early 1960s with posters and little comic-style picture books (*lianhuanhua* 连环画) all over China to become a household name. Although he was in the end without weapons during the famous defence of the Sanggamryong Hill (Shangganling), he would do everything to fulfil his task and purportedly finally blocked the enemy machine guns with his own body to allow the comrades to take the hill. For this deed, he was notably posthumously made a Party member! And he was posthumously showered with merits and honours, including those by the North Koreans (15–19). Interestingly, Huang Jiguang was obviously inspired himself to act like this by Soviet WW II hero Aleksandr Matrosov on whom a film had been produced in the Soviet Union (1947) which was also quickly translated and shown in China under the title *Putong yi bing* (普通一兵) (a simple soldier). That way, Huang became a model by emulating a model.[62] In any case, Huang Jiguang, this great 'hero'

62 This also holds true for other cases, showing that the Soviet example of hero stories (even if fabricated) was closely studied in China for mobilising the populace.

for youth (who has a personal 'patriotic education showcase base' in Sichuan on list 1, too), never had a photograph taken, so the problem was to represent him thereafter. This is another instance clearly showing how difficult it is to represent the elusive. The 'solution' was that two sketches were made according to the memories of those who knew him who decided on one as being 'like him' (143). For the painted version, two artists from Beijing went to North Korea and took some other Sichuanese as a model (!) (since Huang Jiguang was from Sichuan – once more revealing that locality is somehow perceived as defining physiognomy!), then modifying and correcting their drafts, and when many Chinese 'volunteers' returned in 1953 from Korea, the mother of Huang Jiguang would be asked to acknowledge the painting now standing for him, and thus to 'authenticate' it (145).

Another 'martyr', Yang Gensi 杨根思 from Jiangsu, whose remains were transferred back to China and buried in Shenyang (with several other dead of the Korean War which also means that the Shenyang 'martyrs' cemetery' of the Korean War is topically connected to the Korean War memorial hall in Dandong, but counting as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in its own right on the second list of 2001 – see above for the *Zhonghua hun* educational video presenting that Shenyang site instead of the Dandong memorial), has still his (first) tombstone in Dandong where it was discovered in 1983. His story, however, reveals to the attentive reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that the Chinese volunteers suffered greatly from cold and hunger also because they were insufficiently equipped from home (21). Doing everything out of 'patriotism' and 'internationalism' ('for the ancestral land and for the North Korean people'), his case also discloses to the intended young reader that the Chinese side suffered heavy losses.

The narrative, however, tries to deflect any potential questioning of the Chinese warfare with a particular stress on the symbolic value of the flag – an issue not new per se, but accentuated very much in China ever since the 1989 Tiananmen protest movement when Chinese youth had shown they were not 'patriotic' in the Party sense. Thus, in 1990, a special law was promulgated to make reverence of the national flag obligatory, starting in school.[63] (This, in turn, means that the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet are familiar with this practice from their daily lives.) The story connecting the flag issue and the Chinese 'patriotic' hero Yang Gensi is that when the US soldiers wanted to plant the American flag on top

63 The 1990 legislation on 'defending the dignity of the national flag' prescribed a flag-raising ceremony in schools once a week (§13). Cf. the official English version of the law: *Law of the People's Republic of China on the National Flag* [1990]. (The law has undergone revisions in the meantime.) This also parallels practices elsewhere in the world, not the least the American flag-raising ceremonies.

of the hill to mark victory,[64] Yang Gensi as the responsible Chinese commander had sent his men away but remained there all alone to blow himself up together with the Americans rather than let them plant their flag there, and thus other Chinese troops could also finally take the hill back (23).

Other 'hero' tales focus on the recurring topic of caring commanders and self-sacrificing 'volunteers', who work against all odds, in the dark, in spite of illness or wounds, and in the end succeed. At the same time, some stories point out how the 'volunteers' helped the local Korean populace, blocked flooding etc., and when no material was there, men would create devices themselves, much reflecting the 'do it yourself' spirit propagated by the CCP since the Yan'an days. Thus, e.g., linked swimming oil tons made up for a destroyed bridge over a river (another scene of the Korean War much propagated in China), being 'constructed' by 'heroes' not able to swim themselves, and thus taking great personal risks (27). In other cases, stories of visitors of the exhibition outing themselves as former 'volunteers' suggest to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that these people are 'among us'. (In the background lingers, of course, the question why these people did not out themselves earlier, but only after the Cultural Revolution, since it was often not feasible to do so in the times before, given the distrust the real-life 'volunteers' encountered when returning – cf. Diamant 2009.) As in one case becomes clear, it was also not easy for former 'volunteers' to claim some reward after the war, and suspicions were high since receiving rewards was much sought after and envied. In any case, one can read those things only between the lines.

In the context of heroism stories, the Chinese air force is of special pride, while the (unnamed) Soviet aviators' de facto decisive contribution on the Communist side is completely sidelined. Rather, the Chinese 'patriotic' narrative highlights the tiny PRC air force of the time. Especially noteworthy in this thematic context is the illustrated section of the 'patriotic' booklet which shows the major 'war trophy' of the exhibition at the time the booklet was written (in 1998) which had not been picked up in the TV version (and is rather sensitive, in fact; at the time of my on-site observation in 2013 it was not to be seen): parts of the crashed airplane of the US 'ace' George Davis.[65] The PRC aviators (with the PLA just starting to build up

64 This, of course, triggers also other visual reference points like the Soviet flag on the Reichstag, or the American flag on Iwo jima during WW II, or the American flag on the moon etc. For an interesting collection and discussion of such 'visual icons' in modern history, see Paul (2008/2009).

65 As mentioned above in the notes, in 2013, there was only a reference to the purported Chinese victorious aviator Zhang Jihui, but no display of items of Davis and his plane. The inclusion of the plane wreck parts as a 'war trophy' in the illustrated section give these material objects a highlighted relevance.

an air force at the time),[66] who are named, as mentioned, instead of the more experienced Soviet aviators, are said to have shot him down, thus demonstrating how young 'patriotic' Chinese could down an experienced top-ranking US 'ace' who had shown his skills in the Second World War (when the US aviators had sustained China against the Japanese). This storyline of 'red' trumping 'expert' recalls the respective framing of people's 'heroes' in Maoist times. The purported successful young Chinese aviator Zhang Jihui 张积慧 had been made into a hero at the time of the Korean War and was showered with honours (though later his claim has been disputed even in China: other Chinese aviators laid claims to this major triumph, as well as Soviet aviators, in fact stating that Zhang Jihui was shot down before by Davis and bailed out, while Davis was in turn shot down by others).[67] Since the body of Davis was never returned to the US, he is thus counted in US files as 'missing in action',[68] much to the dissatisfaction of the Chinese who complained that the Americans did not give them the desired credit. Notably, although the purported victor over the US 'ace' George Davis was so famous at the time of the war, the first aviator mentioned in the 1998 booklet is, however, not Zhang Jihui, but the Communist later general of influence in the PLA Air Force, Liu Yudi 刘玉堤. Liu Yudi was an 'ace' himself and later wrote his reminiscences (thus framing also the commemoration of the PLA Air Force). In the narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet, Liu Yudi is presented as a major 'hero', taking on dozens of enemy planes all alone (which suggests that the 'patriotic' narrative framing in the booklet was closely connected to the PLA's preferences of how to present itself) (35–39). Single exhibition items, in themselves not of apparent value, serve the booklet as a prompt for telling more of such heroic stories. These include also 'heroes' among the sanitation staff who would do their jobs in spite of heavy wounds, the horrendous details going into the absurd to underline how much they were dedicated (e.g., 43–44) (which makes one wonder how modern-day Chinese youth might feel about these at times almost stomach-turning details). Some stories are very obviously freely invented as they describe 'heroes' who supposedly acted all alone and perished, where nobody

66 For a short summary of the development of the PRC air force, see Mellinger (2002). For a brief summary of the military aviation history in pre-PRC China, see Müller (2022, chapter 5: 267–277).

67 Some evidence seems to suggest that Zhang was actually downed by Davis who later was downed and died by someone else. Cf., e.g., Cheung (2018). Cf. also Zhang (2003: 163–168) who argues that all claims by Chinese as well as Soviet pilots to the 'credit' of dowing Davis are difficult to sustain for lack of evidence, but that the attention in the US caused by the death of an American ace, his widow insisting on an investigation, spurred the PLA into making Zhang into a hero for the Chinese domestic audience craving for 'good news'.

68 See the report to the United States Air Force on the Korean War personnel missing: Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (2010): Davis, George Andrew jr. is listed on page 5.

could have reasonably testified to any details. This turns the whole narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet into something like a film script, trying to capture the readers' imagination (e.g., 54–55). (In fact, Chinese heroes are sometimes said to have been themselves inspired by Soviet film models – like Huang Jiguang above, which corroborates Bakken's characterisation of China as an 'exemplary society' – cf. Bakken 2000.) An aviator who purportedly shot down 9 planes, or a gunner who 'scored the highest' (while taking care to not use ammunition 'for nothing') are presented as outstanding models to the intended young reader. The admission into the Youth League is a 'reward' in one case for being good at shooting, but the highest praise is supposed to be when foreign POWs would say (or were said to have stated) how impressed they were by the Chinese 'hero' (55–62). Obviously, this is all to heighten the intended young readers' national pride, but also their respect for the Chinese military!

The topic of Sino–North Korean friendship, in turn, is also illustrated over the example of a 'heroic' young 'volunteer', Luo Chengjiao 罗盛教, who is presented to the intended reading pupils as someone who not only helped the Koreans but had proven his outstanding personality also earlier at home when he selflessly helped elderly people in China, before coming to Korea. This Chinese embodiment of a good 'filial son' would be particularly appreciated by the (Confucian educated) Koreans, and full of gratitude they would even name their village after him! In Korea he purportedly helped civilians to safety, including the elderly and children, and drowned when saving a child. Thus, Kim Il-sung (here finally named) would personally write a stele for him, praising his 'internationalism' (69). This way, Confucian ethics are blended into a Communist-inspired narrative, and they are to convey to the intended reading pupils the idea that beyond military prowess, Chinese heroes also excel in filial duty, which should be emulated as well.

While one 'hero' story discloses to the attentive reader also that the enemy troops, in fact, included non-Americans as well, telling of how a Chinese 'hero' fought a Turkish brigade (73), and elsewhere, that there were also the British as well as Ethiopians and Colombians of whom some were taken as POWs (cf. the POW photos shown in the TV film clip) (120), the narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet places a further focus on another Chinese top 'martyr': Qiu Shaoyun 邱少云. He and Huang Jiguang, both from China's Southwest, far away from Korea or Manchuria, are the most famous 'martyrs' of the Korean War in the PRC of all. Qiu Shaoyun had to hide in a field of grain, but suffered from an illness that made him cough easily. The narrative details to the intended young reader how Qiu Shaoyun went at great length to not make any noise, and when 'the enemy' threw incendiary bombs, he rather suffered to be slowly burnt to death than reveal the Chinese

position (75). His half-burnt jacket in the exhibition served to authenticate this story. (Incidentally, more recently, his case has sparked a controversy of how one should deal with such stories, and the jacket was also not on display during my on-site observation in 2013 – like the disputed George Davis airplane parts) (77).[69]

Less spectacularly, also civilian 'heroes' figure in the 'patriotic' booklet, including some women, typically with sanitary care who also gave everything to save others in the spirit of Canadian Communist physician Norman Bethune (cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book), the paragon of 'internationalism' according to Mao's praise (77–79). Other civilians are profiled to show the breadth of possible 'heroism' to the intended young reader, e.g., a train driver who saved trains from being bombed, taking many risks. For commemoration (and authentication), he donated a distorted piece of railway tracks to the museum (80–83). According to the story told, he always hid the trains so precious for logistics in a tunnel, when the enemy planes arrived. To cover train movements, he would at times not let the black smoke out until possible without danger, so that the enemy planes would not spot it, while making sure that the locomotive went on and delivered all goods in time. This, too, became part of the exhibition (135–139). The displayed objects in the museum thus serve above all as prompts for telling stories to feed the Chinese citizens' imagination about the elusive. It is in this 'civilian heroes' context, that Mao's son Anying is also integrated in this 'patriotic' booklet, if only in between. Serving as a 'translator' (this is not clearly spelt out to the reader but he had been to the Soviet Union and translated between Russian and Chinese for the military), he was killed during an air raid after only a brief time in Korea. Interestingly, for the effects, it is even suggested at first that it was Peng Dehuai who would insist on having Mao Anying buried in North Korea and not transferred back as Mao Anying's young wife had asked for.[70] Subsequently, the booklet's narrative however suggests that Mao ordered this, and argues he did not want his son to be treated differently from anyone else. (This latter storyline, incidentally, is all conforming to a textbook piece pupils know from school, written only in 1989 (!) by an author *imagining* how Mao might have felt when hearing of his son's fate. This emotional piece on Mao 'in private' was notably introduced into textbooks since the early 1990s and is still included today.[71] Given the popularity of this story via textbook use, it is all the more notable

69 The new PRC law to forbid ridiculing of military personnel, 'martyrs' and heroes is said to have been triggered by cases like his, since Qiu Shaoyun's purported action had been ridiculed by a Chinese netizen. See for the law *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo yingxiong lieshi baohufa* (2018).

70 For the 'drama' around Mao Anying's delayed marriage with his very young bride due to his father's interference, cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book on the case of Yan'an.

71 'Qingshan chuchu mai zhonggu' 青山处处埋忠骨 (loyal bones are buried everywhere in the blue-green mountains) is a short piece included in the fifth year primary school textbook for Chinese

that the issue of Mao Anying is not played up more in this memorial hall.) (83–86). In any case, Mao Anying was buried after his death in North Korea in the 'Cemetery for Martyrs of the Chinese People's Volunteers' set up there (86).

For youth, in particular, a very young female worker is profiled as an outstanding model. In 1952, still during the ongoing war, a delegation of the 'volunteers' came together with one North Korean to Zhongnanhai in Beijing. The Chinese 'volunteers' were represented by this very young female civil worker at this occasion who had joined the war effort, working as hard as anyone though not yet an adult. The girl helped with transporting rice, handing out water and medicine (91), cut wood, or helped with surgeries. Her story (bringing to mind the 'iron girls' image – see chapter 2.3 of the present book for Hongqiqu) discloses, however, again that the 'volunteers' – military or civilian – suffered, above all, from lack of basic equipment like warm shoes for the bitter winter cold. Beyond donating blood for the wounded, she thus 'warmed the soldiers' feet' (which is to evoke the typical image of the caring Chinese woman). When enemy planes attacked the field hospital, she even rescued a higher commander who was wounded – and who would ask for awarding her later. The whole scene is recreated in the booklet's narrative once more like in a film script, as happens in various instances and is a sign of how the narrative tries to evoke the elusive by imagination (93).

The sensitive issue of the Chinese POWs is represented as well, here with a more detailed case of one former POW (who had returned to the PRC) who is said to have visited the newly opened museum in 1993 (and tellingly paused in front of the sculpture showing Mao handing the command to Peng Dehuai) (94). Since it was usually considered a shame to be taken prisoner, his case is to illustrate a point important for the returned POWs, namely that even those Chinese who could not avoid being taken prisoner by 'the enemy' found ways to 'patriotically' continue to 'struggle' in the POW camps. According to the man's testimony, he had proudly refused the medical treatment offered by the enemy and thus proved his patriotic 'loyalty' (95). There were however, according to him, also traitors among the POWs, and there was pressure to have oneself tattooed as a POW with anti-Communist slogans, while being scared on the other hand that one would end up in prison in the PRC if one were to move back. (Background to this narrative framing was the already named choice the Chinese POWs were given to either opt for Taiwan – where they likely knew no one – or for their home in the PRC, and the sore point from the PRC's point of view that nonetheless only a minority opted for

(*yuwen* 语文), written by 'Xiaonian' 晓年 (likely the writer Nian Weijia 年维佳 who wrote this in 1989). It still figured in recent textbooks as an emotional piece on Mao in private. See *Yuwen, wunianji, shangce* (2008), lesson 27.

repatriation to the mainland).[72] This POW, however, said that he refused to opt for Taiwan and remained steadfast in spite of mistreatment (96). Forced to be tattooed with anti-Communist slogans, he had to erase the tattoo himself, showing the scar in the museum as an authentication of his story.[73] Notably, though, with that whole story the narrative discloses the sensitive fact to the intended young reader that of the over 20.000 Chinese POWs only 6.673 moved back to the PRC, while not going into the reasons of the others to refuse repatriation there! To outbalance this major propaganda victory for Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan at the time, in a rather overdrawn 'patriotic' gesture, the story of one 'volunteer' is added who had lost both arms and legs but still insisted on being transported back home to the PRC (where his family was) (97). Very obviously, this memorial hall was to shoulder also the task to explain the main critical POW point in the for the rest upbeat memorialisation of mainland China's role in the Korean War. On the other hand, with the figure (particularly popular for the issue of Sino–North Korean friendship) of Tang Fengxi 唐凤喜 whose photo was ubiquitous in the PRC at the time of the Korean War, another issue of relevance for many war veterans is brought up: while he is presented as a 'hero' battling all alone against many enemies, he became deaf due to the explosions (99–101). With his story, the maimed 'volunteers' and their sacrifice are called to attention (who had not been rewarded or cared for much after their return – cf. Diamant 2009). That way, the PLA could also point out with this memorial hall the general need to do more for the veterans and those disabled in war while serving the nation.

Still, most stories show the Chinese military as brave and skilled to the intended young reader, to solicit respect, illustrating that the Chinese 'volunteers' were disadvantaged in a material sense during the war, but were able by wit and courage to still battle successfully against modern machinery like tanks. The most critical issue was the disadvantage in air force capacities, but nonetheless, major triumphs could be reported, like the downing of the US 'ace' Harold Edward Fischer who would, in turn, become a POW of the Chinese (and North Koreans). According to the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative, the Americans did not want to acknowledge this Chinese success either, saying at the time that he was 'missing', but Fischer himself, when a POW, purportedly wanted to meet the man who had downed him and is said to have

72 Chinese-American author Ha Jin whose father was a veteran of the Korean War, wrote a well-known English-language novel on this problem: *War Trash* (2004). The issue of the POW repatriation problem and its effects on the prolongation of the Korean War has been recently treated in detail, as mentioned, by Chang (2020).

73 Again, one may note that this was apparently used against the POWs returning to the PRC since it was hard to prove the tattoo had been forced upon them.

been deeply impressed. (According to an interview with Fischer in the US years after, his time as a POW was more than harsh, and this meeting happened only much later when he went to China with a Flying Tigers delegation – in glaring contrast representing the in Chinese eyes 'good' American aviators of the Second World War.)[74] At the time of the 'patriotic' booklet's writing (1997/1998), though, the narrative for the intended young reader would point out that the Sino–US relations were 'by now better', and thus the two adversaries could meet once more and finally shake hands – like after a good match (108–113).

For the commemoration of the Korean War and its legacy in the military dimension, the exhibition had to find ways to document the events and sustain the imagination of visitors. The 'patriotic' booklet thus describes to the intended young reader how the last returning 'volunteers' in 1958 handed some stone splinters and barks of trees with shooting holes to the memorial hall for recalling the elusive battles they fought abroad (123). There is no 'victory' to be told in this case, but it is presented as a great success that in spite of all difficulties and disadvantages, and in spite of 'Syngman Rhee's feet-dragging' (conveniently shifting the responsibility for the war's length to him), the 'volunteers' had managed to push the US / UN troops back to the 38th parallel (127–129). Thus, in 1953, finally, the Panmunjom Armistice was signed by Kim Il-sung and Peng Dehuai with the already third commander on the 'US side': Clark, who is claimed to have called himself the first 'not winning' American general signing an armistice to heighten the 'victory' association with the result of an armistice (129). (General Mark Clark, in fact, represented the UN forces.) That way, the booklet tries to argue for the respect due to China's Armed Forces which had mastered their 'historical contest' with the US.

For the domestic dimension (and legacy) of the war, in turn, the 'patriotic' booklet concentrates on one hand on single material items exhibited, e.g., documenting how people willingly donated blood, especially locally in Andong (today's Dandong) – which accentuates the local contribution, including a girl who wanted to donate blood for her father who was in war, movingly not knowing that he was already dead (140–143). But on the other hand, more nationally, the Chinese domestic campaign also involved the realm of music, most famously with the already mentioned song *Zhongguo renmin zhiyuanjun zhange* 中国人民志愿军战歌 of

74 The interviewer, Bob Bergin, had done interviews both with Fischer and Han Decai 韩德彩 who was credited with having shot him down. (In this case, too, a Soviet pilot raised a counter-claim: cf. Zhang 2003: 265n69). For the Fischer interview of 2007, see Bergin (2007). Fischer had been held captive in the Shenyang prison, tried to escape, and was tortured! Only in 1955, he would be finally released and returned to the US. See his obituary: Davis (2009). The Han Decai interviews were published in English by Bergin (2012).

household knowledge in China to this day and thus an enduring legacy of the Korean War, which was said in the booklet to be based on a poem by a simple soldier.[75] The *Renmin ribao* 人民日报 (People's Daily) printed the poem in 1950 (147), and with the musical scores, it was published there again as a song and thus was propagated nation-wide (148). The intended young reader, being familiar with this song, thus learns the 'background story' – see also below. Another key item is the flag of the South Korean White Tiger Regiment (*baihutuan* 白虎团), a narrative well-known in China as well as framed by the already named opera on the topic, played repeatedly during the Cultural Revolution times (and thus combining, once more, a locally displayed object with the national realm of art). The hero of the plot, based on a historical figure, dresses as a US counselor, and two of his helpers as South Koreans (who obviously speak Korean). Their task is to annihilate the White Tiger Regiment, which they do successfully by tricks, detecting also a spy. In the end – the story goes – the enemies had to give up and surrender their flag, which is proudly exhibited in the museum as an authenticating object (and thus presents, as mentioned, at least once the *South* Korean flag in this display) (149–152). (Like we observed also in several other 'patriotic education showcase bases' in this book, the intended young readers as well as the Chinese tourists visiting are by socialisation and exposure to other media also bound to expect a certain item to be included in a site's exhibition, in this case the White Tiger Regiment flag because of the named well-known opera, and thus it is duly presented.) In sum, as the afterword of the 'patriotic' booklet also openly states, all the many stories and framings are intended to serve for inculcating 'patriotism' into Chinese youth, while the exhibited items and the recollections of the participants in the war are only there to enliven (and authenticate) the widely-known stories of the 'heroes' of this war played out beyond mainland China's borders (153). Thus, storytelling is consciously advertised as an effective 'patriotic education' device to which the objects on display only contribute as prompts.

Moving 20 years ahead in time to the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* version of 2019 (Li / Chen 2019) and its official narrative framing of the Korean War memorial in the 'patriotic education' context, one notes that the site is by now called a 'thematic memorial' on the Korean War, being assigned the task to provide *the* (official) Chinese memorialisation of that war, but also the shifts this has undergone (60). Outside the memorial hall, a 'National Defence Education Park' has been added which is designed as an experience park to 'turn passive spectators into active participants', with the primary target group being youth, which says much about the

75 Notably, in the exhibition version that I observed in 2013, the author of the poem is not portrayed any longer as a simple soldier but as a (political) leader in the field!

more proactive way the military presents itself by now. The outdoor exhibition of weapons used by 'our army' (notably quietly dropping the former mandatory 'volunteer' label!) in that war and some captured weapons of 'the enemy' are to sustain this more hands-on approach. The war, notably called here a 'just war' (*zhengyi zhanzheng* 正义战争) – a new terminology recalling international debates, is explained as driven by the plight of the North Koreans back then, and China's own security concerns. While the US 'intervened militarily' and also sent their fleet into the Taiwan Strait, the 'Central Committee and Mao' decided after effectless warnings and according to the 'request by the Workers' Party and the government of North Korea and the will of the Chinese people' to organise a 'volunteer' troop. This was to hold high 'patriotism, internationalism, and revolutionary heroism' (62). What is interesting here is the fact, that Kim Il-sung is not named at all, but North Korea's Workers' Party and government, while in the Chinese case the Central Committee and Mao are named, Mao here standing as the personification of the government in the PRC, which has a special ring in the Xi Jinping era, with the 'collective leadership' idea toned down to concentrate again more on the figure of the leader. Given the argumentation with China's security concerns (which leaves out once more Stalin's role), the joining in the war in Korea was thus 'patriotic', and given the help to North Korea, it was also 'internationalist', while the new Chinese citizen is expected to live and experience 'revolutionary heroism' at this 'patriotic education showcase base'. In this 2019 narrative version, the North Korean *military* is at least named, and the various stages of the war and types of warfare (according to Mao's three categories) are explained in their application (as a kind of national defence education, supposedly also for reference in case of fighting situations abroad more generally). Historically, at first, 'mobile warfare' was the key Chinese device. In the context of the second battle (which is the topic of the 360° panorama painting since it is considered a turning point of the Korean War) where the UN is said to have realised that the PRC had de facto (without announcing it) entered the war, the South Korean military (*Hanguo*[!] *jundui*) is named as well. That battle drove the US / UN troops back to the 38th parallel, and thus, the intended young reader is informed, the US / UN realised that the PRC was not only there to defend her own borders but had broader aims! (This all shows the rhetoric has become much more aggressive and proactive, leaving behind the former pure defence argument.) That way, the American calculation to finish the war quickly, was thwarted (63). The single attacks and counterattacks are detailed for the intended young reader, which meant that Seoul changed hands several times, while American president Truman dismissed General Douglas MacArthur (in fact a very contested decision in the US at the time). The back and forth is also explained

with the difficult supply lines, making 'tactical retreats' necessary, before attacking again (64). As the present-day reader is to learn, Mao calculated that the war would drag on for a longer time,[76] and that the Chinese should apply their forces with prudence. Nothing is mentioned at all, even in this 2019 narrative, about the undercover, but historically important Soviet contribution in this war! Rather, the Korean War is framed as, above all, a Sino–American contest. The US, it is pointed out, had also domestic problems in explaining to the American people why so many soldiers were kept in far-away Korea, and realised there was a potential risk for their military presence in Europe which was closer to the American public's heart – signalling the Chinese policy also highly relevant for the present Xi Jinping times to push for an American retreat from the Far East. Consequently, the intended young reader of today learns, domestic opposition to the war arose in America at the time and pressured the US into going for negotiations, while the Chinese 'volunteers' and the North Koreans went over to trench warfare with occasional extinguishing campaigns during the ongoing negotiations (and thus did not give in) (65). During the longer second phase of the war, battles and negotiations thus went parallel. The US / UN tried to attack Chinese supply chains mainly by bombarding trains and infrastructure, while the Chinese 'fought back'. A main issue was the repatriation of POWs (though this delicate point is once more not spelt out further even in this new description for present-day Chinese young readers), and after further military back and forth, the 38th parallel could be finally 'forced' upon the US / UN as a dividing line for signing the armistice (66–67). All in all, one can clearly observe that this new framing has become much more self-assertive than the earlier framings, and it reflects also current political and military considerations.

Beyond the military development of the time, the *Fengbei* version gives particular attention to another, domestic legacy of the Korean War: the genesis of the well-known 'war song of the Chinese volunteer troops' (*Zhongguo renmin zhiyuanjun zhange*), as it is usually called today.[77] While this poem-turned-song had been addressed also by the 1998 booklet, some shifts in framing are discernible also here. The text of the song tells of a soldier 'during a cold starry night in a foreign land' who had no idea of music but had been enthusiastic about joining the war after Mao called for 'volunteers' to sign up, and supposedly wrote the original simple poem

76 This is an interestingly open statement insofar as it indirectly admits that it was the Chinese who calculated with a longer war, while the 1998 'patriotic' booklet version had still ascribed this outcome to 'Syngman Rhee's feet-dragging' – see above. The intended reader is, however, likely to take this as a proof of Mao's realistic farsightedness.

77 In 1953, the Ministry of Culture had, however, fixed the title 'military song' (*junge* 军哥) instead of 'battle song'. (Li J. / Chen 2019: 71).

version. Since it is said to have captured well the feelings of many 'volunteers', the poem made the round, until a journalist purportedly 'picked it up' and published it, slightly 'improving' it by using some more ideological phrasing. (During my on-site observation in 2013, the claim of the authorship in the exhibition had, in fact, shifted to a political leader in the field, dropping the 'simple soldier' storyline.) Then music was added by musician Zhou Weizhi 周巍峙 (who would become Minister of Culture after the Cultural Revolution), and published again in *Renmin ribao* at the end of 1950 (to become Chinese household knowledge thereafter) (68–70). The song, circulating to this day, was thus a rather high-end production, and underlines by its accent on 'volunteers' an image of the benign military as one of service, which should also attract young people to join.

The 2019 *Fengbei* version provides also some intersting shifts in its 'hero' narratives: the ones it particularly points out are notably not the most famous 'martyrs' Huang Jiguang and Qiu Shaoyun, but rather surviving 'heroes' (which also sustains the more self-assertive tonic keynote this new framing comes with): first Hu Xiudao 胡修道 who was (together with Yang Yucai 杨育才, the hero of the 'Raid on the White Tiger Regiment') the only survivor among the 12 'heroes' that received also honours from North Korea (and thus is also acknowledged for his 'internationalism' from the Korean side). Hu Xiudao is said to have tried himself to emulate heroes of whom he had heard the stories (which indirectly explains once more why so many 'hero stories' are told to Chinese youth to solicit emulation – and why they often appear so stereotyped). The *Fengbei* narrative states in its own storytelling fashion to the intended modern reader how the originally simple worker Hu Xiudao who obviously went to Korea for working behind the lines, ended up becoming a heroic fighter, how his commander educated him patiently on the job, how he wanted to learn and then was able to help others. When his commander was shot, he 'turned his grief into vengeance' (which is obviously what youths should learn). That way, he could purportedly repel 41 attacks all alone, killing 280 enemies, and thus was named a 'solo hero' (71–73). This type of person should make clear to the intended 'patriotic' readers why the US / UN (who were not legitimated either, according to the presentation) had no chance against such Chinese 'volunteers' – and that anyone with this dedication and legitimacy could achieve similar things.

The second hero presented to the intended reader is notably aviator Zhang Jihui: this shows, that in this 2019 narrative there was no more hesitation to choose this highly contested example: rather, it is stated how the Americans were shocked about the death of their 'ace' George Davis. In this new framing, it is also pointed out to the intended reader that Zhang Jihui was, in fact, a Party member, who would shoot down the experienced and highly decorated Davis (which once more

resurrects the trope of ideology trumping expertise). On the other hand, Davis is also presented as a 'culprit' deserving death since he had bombarded trains and supply chains of the Chinese. The purported events of how Davis was overwhelmed by his Chinese adversary are even detailed (likely to refute the challenging claims others had raised – see above). After Davis' plane was shot down, the 'volunteers' found the wrecked plane, and only when seeing his tag, they saw whom they had downed. Thus, they took the tag and parts of the wreck back as a war trophy (74–77).

The third hero important to the 2019 'patriotic' framing of the Korean War memorial is the shooter Zhang Taofang 张桃芳, who is said to have been able to kill 214 enemies with 442 bullets. Site of his main heroic feat was purportedly exactly where famous Huang Jiguang had shed his blood (thus underlining the 'succession' imagery in 'revolutionary tradition'). Zhang Taofang is described as at first having difficulties with aiming, but he would train himself and then showed others how to do it. In a bizarre contest, his commander ordered him to complete the target of 214 killings. As a prize, the commander tellingly offered his leather boots against the cold, which, needless to say, the hero humbly rejected to use for enjoying more personal comfort, and would rather use for collecting shrapnel to be frugal with materials (as a service for the greater good) (77–80). This tells the intended modern reader: only by humility to learn, let oneself be corrected where necessary, and by never giving up, one will perfect oneself. An element reflecting the post-Mao stance in education, however, is that talent is a factor not completely denied in this new framing, and the addition that heroes will be also rewarded (without 'martyrdom' being necessary). Overall, though, this 2019 narrative, while being even more self-assertive than the late 1990s framings, above all the 'patriotic' booklet, is astonishingly close to Mao-time hero stories, bespeaking the Xi Jinping-era preferences, while it is hard to imagine how Chinese youths could positively respond to such storytelling of yesterday in the present age.

Taken together, the above three cases of stand-in museums for elusive topics beyond mainland China's borders, the Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum, the Overseas Chinese Museum, and the Korean War Memorial Hall, show that narrative framing is key. Artwork, too, serves to help the imagination of visitors, be they pupils or tourists. Links to other materials used in school, or widely known in society via various media, including films or songs or operas, are to support a travel of the mind, assuring the visitor that 'patriotism' is relevant also beyond the PRC's borders, be it by inclusive 'Chineseness' covering rhetorically also Taiwan or the Overseas Chinese, be it by a militarily engaged 'internationalism' tightly bound to

the service for China like in the Korean War. Both ways retain a relevance for the present-day Chinese citizen, who is to be educated into considering 'Chineseness' at large, but also into not shying away from involvement beyond the borders to protect the *patria*'s interest, even if that should mean military engagement. As a tourist, the Chinese citizen, however, can also use these stand-in museums as an introduction to the places he or she might not yet have been able to visit, encountering narratives about the places and people beyond the reach of the mainland that are nonetheless deemed relevant for the Chinese tourists' 'patriotism'.

4.2 Sites of revolutionary uprisings, strikes, and guerrilla activities

While sites standing in for people or events beyond mainland China's borders have to struggle with how to represent the physically absent, 'showcase bases' for revolutionary uprisings, strikes, and guerrilla activities are recording former action which was more or less 'spontaneous', in any case very dynamic and fluid, and not easily pinpointed at one location to be 'statically' represented in a 'base' (like the cases discussed in chapter 3 of the present book). For illustration of the difficulty engendered by the scattered nature of such cases, the Autumn Harvest Uprising of 1927 connected to Mao himself can serve well: places in Hunan as well as in Jiangxi – in both cases on the second list of patriotic education showcase bases (2001) – are acknowledged to have a claim to parts of this 'uprising' otherwise elusive: in fact, this is the only case in the lists where the same topic is not designated as *one* site or one covering various physical, but nearby locations, but where actually different places are named as independent sites, likely because of the uprising being played out between two provinces (in fact, in the border region between them which was already in imperial times a classical tactic 'from below' to exploit administrative responsibility conflicts for gaining manoeuvering space). This double listing additionally corroborates the fact that in 'patriotic education' site listing, province structuring dominates (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), and thus also overrules any content 'consistency'. Still, this 'doubling' case remains an exception.

The 'patriotically' listed sites of revolutionary uprisings or *qiyi* 起义 (in itself a positive label in Communist language), though mostly connected to the Communists, do however also integrate the GMD (or rather the Revolutionary Alliance or Tongmenghui 同盟会 out of which the GMD grew) in the 'patriotic education' context, if only for the pre-CCP times in a 'predecessor' function. Although this 'predecessor' role of Sun Yat-sen and the Tongmenghui / GMD in the revolutionary

legacy had been sanctioned by Mao himself,[78] the public appraisal of the GMD remained delicate in the PRC lest people might misunderstand, given the subsequent historical 'enemy role' of the GMD, and an open acknowledgement of its early 'positive' role would have to wait for the times after the Cultural Revolution, when such sites were also considered exploitable as potential links to Taiwan, especially since the major 'stumbling block' Chiang Kai-shek was also dead by then. Thus, the Wuchang Uprising of October 1911 as start of the Xinhai revolution to overthrow the Qing dynasty and turn China into a republic was taken up in the PRC's 'patriotic education showcase bases' system and thus deemed 'patriotic'. The memorial site listed is the building used as headquarters at the time to somehow anchor the uprising physically.

Equally elusive in physical terms is former labour agitation for which the 'patriotic education showcase base' of the (anti-warlord) railway workers' strike (1923) is discussed below. The strike was carried out along the whole Beijing–Hankou (Wuhan) railway line, and the crushing of it after only three days also occurred at various places. Choosing the city of Wuhan for the siting of the memorial is as such a plausible, if not the only plausible,[79] option, since the leadership of the short strike had moved to Wuhan. In consequence, the major massacre to end the strike (which is what is de facto memorialised) occurred in this city with its foreign concessions and thus also a foreign press observing it, making it known worldwide at the time. The concrete location of the listed memorial site is, however, somewhat arbitrary and only 'in the area'.

The brief Nanchang Uprising of 1927 discussed below, in turn, is a Communist example of an uprising which gained its more enduring relevance only in the early 1930s, when it was officially declared (in Ruijin – see chapter 3.3 of the present book) the founding moment of the Red Army, today's PLA. Similar to the case of the Wuchang Uprising of 1911, the 'patriotically' listed memorial is sited in a building used as headquarters, in this case located in Nanchang city (with a new museum added later). Whereas the Wuchang Uprising is positively connected to the GMD (if before the existence of the CCP), the Nanchang Uprising (1927) example is anti-GMD in essence, but it somewhat balances out the preponderance of Mao-

78 Mao had repeatedly referred positively to Sun Yat-sen (if not any longer when the Cultural Revolution started), by this also sustaining Song Qingling, Sun's last wife who was the only of the closer family to remain on the mainland (cf. chapter 5.2 on Sun); and the Xinhai revolution was also integrated in the visually canonised 'short course' of the revolution as bas-reliefs on the base of the monument for the 'people's heroes' on Tiananmen Square. (For an in-depth study of this key symbolic monument by an art historian, see Wu 2005).

79 In fact, there are also memorials elsewhere which were, however, not chosen for the national patriotic education showcase bases lists. The Wuhan memorial is also the largest.

connected places with an accent on Zhou Enlai 周恩来 and other leaders, going well with trends to emphasise 'collective leadership' after the Mao-centrism culminating in the Cultural Revolution.[80] The same holds true for the Baise Uprising of late 1929 (in this case connected to Deng Xiaoping and on the second list of 2001 – after Deng himself had passed away). However, in this case a new 'memorial' had to be built since almost nothing remained of the time to anchor the uprising. The 'memorial park' for the Hainan Red Detachment of Women (*hongse niangzi jun* 红色娘子军) of the early 1930s (equally on the second list of 2001), in turn, recalls the specific role of revolutionary women as representatives of 'the people', fighting in dynamic and fluid guerrilla style against the GMD and warlords, without much left-over physical traces. The two latter cases of the Baise Uprising Memorial in Guangxi and the Hainan Red Detachment of Women Memorial Park also bespeak the augmented elusiveness of rural and ethnic minority areas, and in the last case additionally of women, since these are all marginalised in official discourse. The Red Detachment of Women Memorial Park, however, is a good example for how other modes of memorialisation, namely the many artistic renderings of the topic with the most famous being the film of the ballet, but also filmed interviews of the survivors, interact with the physical area designated, substituting for what cannot be grasped easily in significance, given the lack of material remnants, to represent the elusive and 'frame' it.

Case study: the Wuchang Uprising Memorial Hall

Turning to the first case, the listed memorial for the Xinhai revolution of 1911 is in terms of space connected to Wuchang, one of the three cities constituting today's Wuhan, where the initial uprising of 10 October 1911, leading to the revolution, started. The physical place listed as one of the first '100 patriotic education showcase bases' in 1997, is the **Xinhai geming Wuchang qiyi jinianguan** 辛亥革命武昌起义纪念馆 (Memorial Hall of the Wuchang Uprising of the Xinhai Revolution) (Hubei Province), sited in a building once representing the imperial and then the revolutionary government locally. Because of its red bricks, it is called the 'Red

80 In fact, there had been also voices arguing that the Mao-affiliated Autumn Harvest Uprising (of September 1927) should be considered as the founding moment of the Red Army. In the early 1930s in Ruijin (see above chapter 3.3), when the decision was taken to settle on the (earlier) Nanchang Uprising (of August 1927), Mao had been temporarily sidelined. At an on-site visit in the Nanchang Uprising Memorial, the local frustration that Mao, in turn, would sideline the Nanchang site later, became evident.

Building' (*honglou* 红楼). Theoretically, one could also have opted for other locations in the city, playing a role in the uprising, but the focus on government and legitimacy is telling. Incidentally, the larger Xinhai revolution is by now also commemorated elsewhere in China, namely with a huge new museum in Guangzhou in Southern Guangdong. Although the latter city was a GMD stronghold (and the location of earlier uprisings in connection to revolutionaries around Sun Yat-sen that failed), there is, however, no direct link to the de facto start of the Xinhai Revolution (with the Wuchang Uprising) in terms of space. Thus, the museum in Guangzhou, called the 'Memorial Hall (*jinianguan* 纪念馆) of the Xinhai Revolution' and built with a view to the 100th anniversary in 2011, tries to invoke an at least indirect personal link via the many Cantonese revolutionaries and via Sun Yat-sen, a Cantonese. In Wuchang, in turn, where the Xinhai revolution started (in hindsight), the 'Red Building' as the listed place in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context, has been in the meantime joined by a huge new museum as well, like in Guangzhou in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the event in 2011, here in the form of 'V' for victory, and called the 'Museum (*bowuguan* 博物馆) of the Xinhai Revolution', which (as I observed in 2013) provides the larger story, notably mostly focusing on the Qing giving in to the Western imperialists,[81] whereas the 'patriotically' listed 'Red Building' is in a kind of division of labour assigned to provide the 'feel' of the place (and termed the '*Memorial* Hall *of the Wuchang Uprising* of the Xinhai Revolution'), linking itself to 'the first shot fired' (as the common trope goes, though historically the uprising did start elsewhere in the city at the armory when the revolutionaries managed to get in and take out guns and ammunition, to then capture the 'Red Building' as the locally crucial seat of power). In sum, the 'Red Building' mostly presents itself now as the 'original' place where the new Republic started, with the single rooms rearranged to suggest how they were used in the very first days of the Republic, with some explanations and photos added as a short-hand introduction to the topic, to leave the larger picture of the Xinhai revolution to the new museum placed opposite the square.

Comparing the state that I observed on-site in 2013, as discussed above, with the nationally broadcasted film clip of *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 6), produced in 1998 by Wuhan TV's societal education department, one gets an impression of the state of things at the time of the 'patriotic' listing (i.e., years before the new Xinhai revolution museum was added for the 100th anniversary in 2011). (Incidentally, the *Zhonghua hun* educational videos do not cover this Wuchang Uprising site.) The *Ai*

81 At the time of my visit (2013), the storyline of this new museum argued mainly that the Qing were incapable to shield China from the imperialist Western threat, and therefore toppling them was a patriotic act to save China.

wo Zhonghua TV film clip introduces this 'patriotic education showcase base' with an outside view of the 'Red Building' and in front of it the statue of Sun Yat-sen (who was not present during the uprising but is the 'national' figure to represent the Xinhai revolution at large), connecting this to a highlighted visit in 1992 of one of Sun's grandsons, Sun Zhiqiang 孙治强,[82] who came over from Taiwan to write an endorsement for the place as 'gate to the Republic' (*Minguo zhi men* 民国之门), embodying also the 'common' legacy of Sun Yat-sen bequeathed to both Taiwan and the mainland. Originally, though, the 'Red Building' had been built to serve for the local Qing-era consultative body. A big map of the foreign concessions in Hankou, the second of the three cities making up today's Wuhan and opposite of Wuchang across the Yangzi, as well as photos of the last Qing emperor Puyi 溥仪 at his abdication provide to the TV audience the larger historical context, why the revolution had been necessary and in which historical context it was played out, while the memorial for the Huanghuagang 黄花岗 'martyrs' of early 1911 in the city of Guangzhou is a reminder of the last failed revolutionary uprising and its human cost before the 'successful uprising' of Wuchang later that year. The Sichuan railway protest movement of 1911 (which caused the Qing to temporarily transfer troops away from Wuchang to quell the protests in Sichuan which provided a golden occasion for the local revolutionaries) and a table of revolutionary associations, with photos of key early revolutionaries added, describe the more immediate historical context of the Wuchang Uprising, while a group statue of the three revolutionary 'martyrs' (Peng Chufan 彭楚藩, Liu Fuji 刘复基, Yang Hongsheng 杨洪胜)[83] who had been arrested and were executed the very morning of the day of the uprising, underlines that also the Wuchang Uprising was not without human cost (interweaving shots of the commemorative pavilion at the place of their execution, the *San lie ting* 三烈亭, not on the grounds of the 'patriotically' listed 'showcase base', though). A photo of the (no longer extant) former building of the construction brigade of the New Army that was instrumental in staging the uprising, shows where all began.

The narrative is illustrated in general with photos, or paintings of how things might have looked like during that long-ago uprising. A key artefact to present to

82 Sun Zhiqiang was the second son of Sun Ke 孙科, Sun Yat-sen's only son (aside of two daughters), who was, however, a *persona non grata* in mainland China and blacklisted there. (Cf. Müller 2022: 224). Skipping that 'problematic' generation (Sun Ke had in any case died in 1973), the next one with Sun Zhiqiang could serve again to embody the 'bonds' between Taiwan and the PRC. Sun Zhiqiang, in turn, had a fall-out with his elder brother (the main representative of the family line), who would visit the PRC only almost a decade later when Sun Zhiqiang had died. (For the complicated story of the Sun family, cf. also Müller 2022: 215–236.)

83 Yang Hongsheng's given name has been written with various characters.

the TV viewer is the flag of 18 stars (9 in the centre, 9 at the periphery) as used in the first weeks of the Republic to represent the provinces of China. Rooms in the 'Red Building' with (recreated) furniture are supposed to provide an impression of the time. The figure of officer Li Yuanhong 黎元洪 who was taken (or rather pressured into serving) as commander by the revolutionaries is introduced, showing the proclamation he was to sign as an abolishment of imperial rule, dating it as 'Huangdi (Yellow Emperor) year 4609' (to evade the imperial reckoning of time after the Xuantong 宣统 emperor Puyi 溥仪 of the Qing dynasty).[84] Since Li Yuanhong was not convinced of the revolution, the narrative explains, he did not want to sign the proclamation, and thus only 'military governor Li' 黎都督 appeared there (shown by zooming in and supposedly not even written by himself). The proclamation of the Republic by Sun Yat-sen weeks later at New Year 1912 is shown, in turn, in handwriting (which underlines that handwriting is supposed to provide a special aura of authenticity). The draft of the constitution by Sun's close collaborator Song Jiaoren 宋教仁 which was the precursor of the Nanjing provisional constitution, leads on to signal the revolutionaries' attempts at legitimacy. With the topic of the battle around the Wuhan area (Yang–Xia baowei zhan 阳夏保卫战),[85] it becomes obvious that the revolution was, however, not that quick and easy: in fact, the Wuhan area almost fell again to the Qing court when the Qing troops marched back to it (only stopped by a cease-fire in December 1911 and negotiations with Yuan Shikai 袁世凯, the strong-man at the time, nominally still serving the Qing at this point).

In 1912 in April, when Sun had already resigned from his brief provisional presidency of the new Republic to leave the post to Yuan Shikai according to their deal, Sun finally came to Wuchang in person for the first time, shown by a photo of Sun Yat-sen and Li Yuanhong, and a photo of Sun (with his travelling entourage) together with the revolutionaries of the Wuchang Uprising in front of the 'Red Building'.[86] (This indirectly visualises that Sun's role for the Wuchang Uprising as such

84 This kind of 'calendaric opposition', using instead of the Manchu emperors' era names the (Han-Chinese) 'Yellow Emperor' (cf. also chapter 3.1 in this book on Huangdiling), which in fact imitated also the Japanese reckoning of 'imperial years' from the legendary Jinmu 神武 Tennô onward, had been proposed by late Qing radicals, notably by Liu Shipei 刘师培.

85 The battle waged, above all, in Wuchang's sister cities (making up today's Wuhan) Hankou (once named *Xia*kou) and Han*yang*, thus leading to the term Yang–Xia.

86 One may note that Sun appears here with his children, and his secretary Song Ailing 宋霭龄 between them. As I have argued elsewhere (Müller 2022: 234), this arrangement is very telling and tried to insinuate Song Ailing being his wife (which she refused to become), while his wife as well as his additional year-long 'revolutionary companion' Chen Cuifen 陈粹芬 had been sent away. (Song Ailing would soon after marry Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙 / H. H. Kung, while her younger sister Song Qingling became Sun's secretary instead and would marry him.) (Cf. Müller 2022: chapter 4.)

in which he was not involved, had to be established and confirmed afterwards.) The film clip introduces the national TV audience to the large meeting hall in the 'Red Building' with flags exhibited (one with the 18 stars, one with the 5 colours of the early Republic to represent the major '5 ethnicities' of the Han, Manchus, Mongols, Hui, and Tibetans) as the major space for anchoring the memory of the uprising's larger historical role. Stating that after the Xinhai revolution, the 'Red Building' became a 'holy place' of the revolution not only for Republican times, but also inherited by the PRC, the site's importance and relevance is enhanced for the modern Chinese citizen. Plaques of the site demonstrate that in 1961, the 'Red Building' was labelled (as a building) a province-level protected unit, though interestingly at that time not standing for the Wuchang 'Uprising' as it is now, but as seat of the 'Hubei military government' as the first representation of Republican-style rule! Much later after the Cultural Revolution, in the 1990s, Jiang Zemin would then elevate the site to a 'national education base for youth' (*quanguo qingshaonian jiaoyu jidi*); and in 1995, it became a municipal 'patriotic education' site for Wuhan (*Wuhan-shi aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi*), to be finally upgraded in 1997 to the 'national showcase base' level.[87] This seemingly positive evaluation of the site was, however, obviously not a given during all of the PRC times. In fact, the memorial hall could be finally opened as such to the public only in 1981, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution, at the 70th anniversary of the Wuchang Uprising, as the narrative indirectly discloses. The director of the memorial hall summarises for the audience of the TV film clip the by now standard historiographical evaluation of the Wuchang Uprising in post-Cultural Revolution-era understanding to authenticate this rather positive 'revolutionary precursor' reading with the physical site. Brief shots of the indoor exhibition and of the outdoor setting lead to a final poetic praise, celebrating the site's historical role, by PRC historian (and son of a Tongmenghui member) Li Xin 李新,[88] thus ending the film clip on an emotional note (but, one may note, not one granted by a political key figure who are usually the ones cited as endorsing 'patriotic' sites).

In comparison to this nationally broadcasted TV film clip, the 'patriotic booklet' on this first list 'patriotic education showcase base' (Wang X. 1998), written at the same time and for a young intended readership, provides a somewhat different take, and also some more glimpses into the background of the development of the physical site through time. Given the 1938 Japanese bombardments of Wuhan in the Second Sino–Japanese War (as well as later 'unfavourable' times during the PRC era for this 'GMD-affiliated site'), the present state is acknowledged as overall a

87 For such labels and upgrading processes, cf. chapter 1 of the present book.
88 Li Xin is also the father of the present-day writer Li Daxing 李大兴.

'reconstruction' (*fuyuan* 复原). Song Qingling, the last wife of Sun Yat-sen, nominally holding high positions in PRC times, endorsed the site with a calligraphy (not long before her death).[89] The 'Red Building' is, however, introduced with more of its historical background since it was already the building where the Hubei Provincial assembly of 1909 as a consultative body had been placed: this had been a concession of the Qing in their final years to appease the calls for a constitutional government. (This way, the intended young reader also learns about the early attempts for such a 'parliament' via discussion of the building.) Long before, during the early Qing, the location where the 'Red Building' was to be placed in 1909 had been used by the military, and it was also the site of the military exams of imperial times. In 1688, the local Green Standard Army uprising already had its headquarters there,[90] but also the anti-Qing Taiping rebels in the mid-19th century used the location for recruiting soldiers into their armies. This way, the location as such was connoted with the military (and uprisings), while the new 'Red Building' for the consultative provincial assembly, built in 1909, which took inspiration from the Japanese parliament's building (in turn based on Western examples) added a civilian connotation to this very location. The church tower-like structure on the top was notably only added after the 'Red Building' had been damaged during the very Xinhai Revolution days and is thus not 'original' to the architecture (2–5). Designed as a form of 'parliament', the building was to reflect also architectonically the difference to the former imperial official *yamen* 衙门 with their courtyards encircled by high walls: the new 'parliament', instead, was to show openness (which again stresses to the intended young reader this concept of a 'parliament') (7). After the Wuchang Uprising of 10 October 1911, the building became the seat of the Hubei military government as the representation of revolutionary rule. As soon as the uprising started, the calendar was changed (as was shown also in the TV film clip), abolishing the year reckoning after the Qing emperor and replacing this with a counting 'since Huangdi', the mythical Yellow Emperor (cf. chapter 3.1 of the present book) (9). One should also note that on the local level, the revolutionaries could not hold on to the Wuhan area for very long, while other parts of China pushed more successfully for independence. This means that the revolutionaries who had stumbled into the uprising because of an accidental

89 This is rather rare since she was not good at calligraphy and on a daily basis rather wrote in English, but she was the main link to the PRC leading figures this site could bank on – and she had important relatives abroad, given that her stepson Sun Ke's descendants as well as her native family members (of whom some were politically highly relevant, above all Chiang Kai-shek's widow Song Meiling who survived her sister Song Qingling) were in Taiwan or the US.

90 The Green Standard Army were troops of Han Chinese in Qing times.

premature explosion which exposed their plans (and personal networks), had difficulties in defending the very place of origin. After the establishment of the Republic, the area would soon come into warlord hands for years. Only as late as with the Northern Expedition in 1926, it was de facto secured again by the GMD, then in a United Front with the CCP. Thereupon, in 1927, when Wuhan (as the former three cities of Wuchang, Hankou, and Hanyang were termed collectively by then) became seat of the Wang Jingwei government (rivalling the one of Chiang Kai-shek) for some months as headquarters of the leftist GMD, the 'Red Building' served once more official functions. Many years later during PRC times, the building would become the seat of the Hubei provincial committee. But only in 1981, the 'Red Building' was finally opened as the Wuchang Uprising Memorial, as mentioned, i.e., after the ('GMD-unfriendly') Cultural Revolution times (10, 13). Before that, the building, as such protected as 'historical architecture' since 1961 (as shown in the TV film clip), had been simply used as office space (11–12).

The idea of establishing a memorial for the Wuchang Uprising, which led to the successful revolution (in hindsight), had been already voiced during Republican times, but did not materialise back then (possibly since Wuhan was not central and unequivocal enough, neither for Sun Yat-sen nor for his de facto successor Chiang Kai-shek, and after serving briefly as a Chinese interim war-time capital in 1938, would in any case fall into Japanese hands thereafter). In PRC times, if only many years later after the Cultural Revolution, the time was finally ripe for the memorial, and Song Qingling, Sun Yat-sen's last wife, wrote the name of the site and of the memorial (in 1979) before her death (May 1981). In October 1981, the 70th anniversary of the Wuchang Uprising was celebrated with a first large conference, and the memorial finally opened (11–13). From then on, the site would regularly celebrate Sun Yat-sen's birthday and death, even though Sun, as mentioned, had not participated in the uprising in Wuchang and would come to Wuchang only after he had stepped down from provisional presidency. The 'Red Building' is, however, well known in Taiwan, too, and is thus a place over which a connection to the GMD in Taiwan can be built. It thus figures as the central place to commemorate the larger Xinhai Revolution of 1911/12. That revolution, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is assured, had been necessary since neither the former peasant movements nor the capitalist reformers were able to change China. Thus, Sun had to go for the 'revolution of the capitalist class' (which in turn served as a predecessor to the Communist one) (14–16). To highlight the advantages of the Wuhan area as a place to start an uprising, the local background is outlined, pointing out that late Qing official Zhang Zhidong 张之洞 had once spearheaded the reformist 'New Policies' in the final years of the empire to build up modern facilities there (especially

the arsenal in Hanyang), and to send out students, while the foreign concessions in Hankou brought in foreign capital (18–19). Realising the failure of reformism, revolutionary-minded intellectuals started entering the 'new military' – another of the 'New Policies' measures, which meant that around the time of the Wuchang Uprising, there were many in the 'new military' stationed there sympathising with revolutionary ideas.

On the other hand, locally, several revolutionary circles had prepared the ground, setting up revolutionary groups since 1904. After the founding of the Tongmenghui in Tokyo in 1905, revolutionaries would enter the 'new military' in rising numbers (21). An additional push for the revolutionaries was the protest movement spreading out from Sichuan in 1911 against the foreign domination of railways (23). When the Qing deployed troops stationed in Wuchang to quell the unrest in Sichuan, the occasion of their absence was quickly noticed by the revolutionaries as a golden opportunity, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic booklet' learns. The premature accidental explosion caused by one of the revolutionaries and the swift reaction by the authorities who had seized their name lists, drove the revolutionaries to act without delay. The first revolutionaries had been already arrested by the Qing and executed the very morning of 10 October 1911, and thus the uprising went ahead with the 'first shot' fired that day (25–26). To prevent chaos, the revolutionaries pressured the unwilling commander Li Yuanhong into leading them (which suggests to the intended young reader, that revolution still needs to be organised, if it is to be successful). This sort of temporary fix with Li Yuanhong as a locally available figure of authority was chosen since, e.g., Huang Xing 黄兴, the military key figure of the Tongmenghui, was not there (and would arrive only later in October). Sun Yat-sen, in turn, the ideological key figure of the Tongmenghui and blacklisted by the Qing, was far-away abroad. The revolutionary insurgents soon lost Hankou with the foreign concessions and then fought in Hanyang, the third of the three cities making up Wuhan (28–29). Hanyang, too, was lost, and since Wuchang was threatened by the Qing as well, the revolutionaries moved their headquarters to Nanjing. That way, Wuchang had already lost its central role after only a few weeks. Sun Yat-sen, in turn, would, when he arrived from abroad, travel to Nanjing to take up the position as first provisional president of the Republic, declared on New Year 1912. In short, Nanjing had quickly eclipsed Wuchang in importance for the revolutionaries.

Sun Yat-sen would visit Wuchang for the first time only after he had stepped down from the provisional presidency in spring 1912, as mentioned (and when the deal with the military power-holder Yuan Shikai guaranteed also his personal safety to move around for the time being). There he would, however, honour all those

revolutionaries who had lost their lives during the battles since October (31–34). The well-known photo of Sun with the representatives of the military government of the revolutionaries, reprinted also in the 'patriotic' booklet's illustration sheets, documents this visit, and thus connects Sun and Wuchang visibly (as the TV film clip had also shown), if retrospectively.

As tangible evidence of the Wuchang Uprising itself which is not easy to document, some items were collected from descendants of the chief actors for the exhibition of the memorial hall over the years, while other more general historical items would be discovered by chance later (e.g., the French Concession boundary stone found during construction work in Wuhan which is, in fact, not directly connected to the uprising, but included in the exhibition, bespeaking the dearth of materials it had to struggle with) (35–37). Some 'veterans' of the uprising also wanted to commemorate their fallen comrades with portraits (likely a way to substitute for the usual 'ancestor portraits' or tombs as sites to commemorate them). Examples now in the holdings of the memorial show such 'martyrs' portraits' (39–46). These include one of the local Christian pastor Liu Jing'an 刘静庵 who had been jailed for revolutionary activities and died in prison in the months *before* the Wuchang Uprising, on whose portrait several influential GMD figures left their calligraphies and inscriptions (43). Such 'martyrs' are notably usually called – in reference to the Japanese Meiji era heroes – *zhishi* (jap. *shishi* 志士), rather than *lieshi* 烈士 (the usual Chinese term for 'martyrs'). Sometimes, old photographs could be used for the portraits,[91] but sometimes even these did not exist, which underlines the difficulty to visualise the elusive. Such portraits would be moved around during the years of the Second Sino–Japanese War, if feasible travelling with their owner, or otherwise given from hand to hand, which renders the object itineraries quite complicated (45–46). The descendants of the revolutionaries are usually claimed as the ones that would have 'donated' the items to the memorial.

Other material items held by the memorial hall include a diary of a Hubei revolutionary who died shortly *before* the Wuchang Uprising (like Liu Jing'an), but providing glimpses into the revolutionary scene, detailing the experiments with bombs, the relations with secret societies etc. It is thus a major source to reconstruct the historical events preceding the uprising (47–49). What becomes also obvious to a careful reader of the descriptions of these objects and of how they came to the memorial, is that many relatives of these (GMD) revolutionaries resided abroad at the time of writing the booklet in the late 1990s, i.e., had not chosen the PRC for

91 As Ishikawa (2022) has noted in the case of Mao, cutting out someone from a group photograph was often the only way to find a photographic representation to use for a portrait at a time where photographs were not yet ubiquitous.

home, providing those materials from abroad (while the relatives living in mainland China would likely not have been able to keep such GMD-related things during the Cultural Revolution times, if they had not disposed of them already earlier). Another item considered important in this 'patriotic' context is once more flags: while the Republic (before the Nanjing Decade, 1927–1937) would use the five colours for the major 'five ethnicities' as a flag, the participants of the Wuchang Uprising rather used the 18 stars flag, representing the provinces of China (and also shown in the TV film clip) (49–50). (This, in fact, means, that while the official discourse would be based more on 'biology', the early revolutionaries had a rather spatial-geographic conception of the new 'Republic'!) The production of the flags was, in turn, said to have been taken over by a secret society-affiliated tailor shop (which discloses via this material item the role of the secret societies in the revolution at large – a somewhat sensitive topic often evaded, but also relevant to some degree for the Communist revolution later) (51).

Another interesting material item presented to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is the name plaque of a former city wall gate renamed as 'gate of the uprising' (*qiyi men* 起义门) during the Xinhai revolution. This kind of 'renaming' was a common practice also continued into PRC times, not the least in the Cultural Revolution when street and place names were revolutionarily 'updated'. A vague remark suggests to the intended young reader that this name, given the Cultural Revolution's assertion that the Cultural Revolution was the only real (and legitimate) 'revolt' (*qiyi*), became objectionable, and thus the plaque had been damaged at the time.[92] (53) That way, this material object speaks about the agenda at the time of the Xinhai revolution as much as about the one during the Cultural Revolution (and the 1992 calligraphy of Sun's grandson 'gate to the Republic' shown in the TV film clip could be read as an implicit comment on this as well). A textual item on display, in turn, is the proclamation of the establishment of a local judicial institution after the Wuchang Uprising to show the populace that law and order was to be maintained by the revolutionaries – to not associate revolution with chaos (which could be also interpreted as a veiled comment on more recent 'revolutions') (55). A cenotaph by the Red Cross of the time, in turn, discovered by chance in 1991, was to commemorate those fallen revolutionaries who died defending the Wuhan area against the Qing (when much of it would be lost again shortly after the uprising until the negotiated cease-fire would prevent the imminent fiasco) (58–60).

A further notable item on display is a propagandistic folk woodblock print advertising the revolution, showing various scenes of the time: the battle for Hankou,

92 The text tactfully evades the term 'Cultural Revolution', just speaking of events 'during the 1960s'.

foreigners (residing in the Hankou concessions) who are shown supporting the revolution, the revolutionaries only having simple weapons at their disposal, foreign journalists reporting, Huang Xing's arrival, the punishment of 'traitors' (displaying the severed head of a culprit to the masses as a warning in imperial-era style),[93] the symbolic Great Wall Pass Shanhaiguan (cf. chapter 2.3 of the present book) from where the Manchu-Qing once entered China which was by then to be the 'gate' to take over also the Northeast for the Republic in a Northern Expedition hoped for already at the time (but realised only much later in the 1920s, as at the time the revolutionaries had to strike a deal with Yuan Shikai and the North), and finally Sun's visit in Wuchang in April 1912 (61–65). This woodblock print is one example showing also that the memorial hall, though only opened in 1981, received some items that had first been kept by the Hubei Provincial Museum,[94] which in turn demonstrates that museums also had cross-connections among themselves – or had to hand over artefacts when a new specialised museum was opened. Finally, the material objects on display also include a laudatory inscription by Sun Yat-sen for Cao Yabo 曹亚伯, a revolutionary comrade from Hubei who had helped him many times (and was a founding member of the Tongmenghui). This is an object that obviously serves to strengthen the links of the memorial hall in Wuchang in Hubei to Sun himself. This inscription was only saved by chance by Cao's daughter when his house in Shanghai was bombed during the Second Sino–Japanese War (65–69). It however also serves for stepping up the local contribution of Hubei Province, where the memorial is sited, to the Xinhai revolution.

Apart from these single items on display, though, the 'Red Building' is the main tangible thing to be seen at the site for the Wuchang Uprising, displaying 'reconstructed' (*fuyuan*) parts and furniture, recreating the single rooms and the assembly halls to suggest the original look (evidently reversing the in-between use of the rooms as office space in earlier PRC times) (70–73). The memorial exhibition placed therein uses photos and relics to illustrate the elusive development of the uprising. In 1986 at Sun Yat-sen's 120th birthday, the 'Red Building' was used to show an exhibition on him, but also Huang Xing, the key military leader of the revolutionaries, was honoured with an exhibition in 1991 at the 80th anniversary of the Xinhai Revolution (73–75). That way, the memorial tried to diversify its offers. But the 'patriotic' booklet also enumerates the memorial's special activities for 'patriotic education' (in response to the respective call by Jiang Zemin for all 'patriotically

93 This is ironic since the Republic thus presented itself as 'barbaric' as their imperial predecessors.
94 As mentioned in chapter 2.2, provincial museums often received items from private donors (especially in the Mao-era) who wanted to make sure things would be preserved – and feared they would be a political liability for those keeping them at home.

labelled' entities to detail their endeavours – cf. chapter 1 of the present book). Obviously, many contracts had been signed with various institutions to provide 'patriotic education' for them, mostly schools of all levels (in fact over 30), but also for the military. The site served for celebrations of students entering school or cadets joining the Army, but also coming-of-age ceremonies were held there (as we noticed already with various 'patriotic education showcase bases'). The Central Committee of the Communist Youth League (*tuan zhongyang* 团中央) labelled the site a 'national youth education base' (*quanguo qingshaonian jiaoyu jidi* 全国青少年教育基地) of Hubei Province. That this proved effective is supposedly corroborated by the comment of a military commander who is cited as having been impressed in his youth by the visits to the site, namely by the revolutionaries' resolution, which supposedly spurred him to dedicate all his energy for the country henceforth. Thus, it is claimed, he had even decided to volunteer for going to Tibet![95] (81–87)

The 'Red Building' was also used to show around international delegations like a visiting group of Japanese Socialist Youths, trade union representatives from Hong Kong, a Sino–North Korean friendship delegation, a US religious (!) visiting group as well as one of noted Chinese Americans, or political representatives from Macau, beyond the thematically more directly concerned Taiwanese Xinhai Revolution Society. Notably, in autumn of the crucial year 1989, after the Tiananmen protest crisis, the female US director of the Texas Museum was shown around this site standing for China's throwing off imperial rule to move to a republican new system, and in 1990, a representative of the Zambian National Political Museum (today's Lusaka National Museum)[96] was led there as well (84). The latter is said to have shown himself impressed by Sun Yat-sen whose ethnic equality thought was in his view suited for developing countries! That way, the site could also serve for foreign relations. But the most important group of visitors were considered those from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau to 'feel' themselves 'at home'. Also, several of the grandchildren of Sun Yat-sen came: from the US, the two (out-of-wedlock) daughters Sun Suifang 孙穗芳 and Sun Suifen 孙穗芬 of Sun's son Sun Ke 孙科 (who is a name largely evaded in the PRC) visited, but also Sun Ke's second son Sun Zhiqiang from Taiwan (who was shown writing his calligraphy in the TV film clip).

95 This, obviously, shows that volunteers for Tibet were needed at the time and did not easily come forward.

96 Cf. 'About Lusaka Museum' (2015). Notably, the museum building was started as a cooperation of Zambia with the PRC in the early 1980s to document Zambia's 'struggle for independence'. Given the changing political climate of 1990/1991, the function of the museum changed completely and is now focused as a 'national museum' on cultural history.

Huang Xing's son-in-law came from the US, too, sending also photos over, and the son of the already named Cao Yabo arrived from Hong Kong, who provided Taiwanese materials for the memorial (85). Most importantly, visitors from Taiwan are pointed out to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet, who would come to see the site where their 'ancestors' had been active. The international scholarly community, in turn, was also addressed via the academic conferences organised by the site (86–87). In sum, at the time of listing, the memorial, while 'patriotically' serving the domestic public, tried to also make the best of its potential to use its overseas links and especially address also Chinese residing beyond the mainland. This special potential is also a point advertised to the mainland young readers to enhance the site's importance in 'patriotic' educational perspective.

Compared to the above framing of this GMD-affiliated site in the 'patriotic' booklet of 1998, which is a rather short one in this booklet series, the 2019 *Fengbei* treatment of this first-list memorial is very low-key, bespeaking an apparent declining interest in the site during the Xi Jinping era (Xia 2019: 63–68). Most strikingly, nothing is said in this 2019 description on the by now neighbouring new museum. Instead, as a background to the memorial, the revolutionary history is retold with a focus on the connection of the Wuchang Uprising to the protest movement in Sichuan against the Qing's 'selling out' of China's railways to the foreigners, which made the Qing send troops from Wuchang to Sichuan, thus enabling the uprising in Wuchang. That way, the uprising is above all integrated into the larger national picture. The few days before the uprising, from the accidental explosion in the Russian concession in Hankou to the hours of the uprising with the respective moves of military groups are retold, marking the 'Red Building' as the key trophy that the revolutionaries could wrest from the Qing governor who fled. The 'Red Building' is thus standing for the Wuchang Uprising, and the latter is the Xinhai revolution *in nuce*. But for the rest, the 2019 description does not add anything significant as an 'update' to the exhibition's evolution since the late 1990s, in spite of the major event of the 100th anniversary of the Wuchang Uprising in 2011 and the new museum added, which documents that the site's 'patriotic' utility has apparently decreased in present-day official perception (and likely its service as a bridge to Taiwan's GMD has also not fulfilled what it was supposed to render).

Case study: the Wuhan labour strike memorial site

While the 'Red Building' is made to stand for the elusive topic of the Wuchang Uprising, in Hankou across the Yangzi, a further variety in this category of sites for

the elusive is commemorated: a strike, in this case the railway workers' strike of 1923 which was brutally crushed by the warlord Wu Peifu 吴佩孚. This **Wuhan er qi jinianguan** 武汉二七纪念馆 (Wuhan February Seventh Memorial Hall) (Hubei Province) (list 1, 1997) commemorates the bloody end of the few days of this strike of 1923 which blocked one of the major infrastructural arteries in China, the Beijing–Hankou railway, and was integrated subsequently into the Communist framing of the history of the labour movement.

The strike is hard to pin down locally, since it was acted out along the whole railway, and its suppression is also not easily localised. The February Seventh memorial was set up only during PRC times and also shifted locally in the Wuhan area. In terms of exhibition, as I observed on-site in 2017, there is almost nothing material to show but for some items said to have belonged to the 'martyrs' (like a small oil lamp, a mosquito net, an umbrella, or a watch) which means the exhibition almost exclusively depends on photos and narrative, occasional recreated scenes of worker households with clay figures or as bas-reliefs, or paintings.

The lack of material items is also underlined by the display of pieces with an only indirect connection with the strike, including an iron stele for the inauguration of the railway itself back in 1905, with Qing and Belgian representatives, which had not even been in Wuhan, but held at the crossing of the Huanghe, i.e., near Zhengzhou in Henan Province! That means the item is neither spatially nor chronologically in immediate relation to the memorial hall's topic.

In another case, an old hat as well as shabby clothes are supposedly rendered meaningful by adding photos of the time above them to insinuate these items are to stand for the poor exploited workers. (See fig. 4.2.1). Or a worker's badge is suggestively displayed together with a broken leather whip in one glass case to solicit associations of brutal exploitation.

The narrative in the exhibition (as I observed in 2017) also claims that this strike – de facto not the first major one in Chinese labour history – is the one where the Communists took over a leading role in the labour movement. In other words, the labour movement (which is briefly summarised in the exhibition with an astonishing accent on Mao Zedong by paintings)[97] is taken up in the 'patriotic education

97 Historically speaking, Mao's role in the early Communist involvement in the Chinese labour movement was not particularly outstanding, if compared to other Communist leaders, but inflated in later Communist historiography. For an assessment focused around the Anyuan mines that had their first large strike in 1922 and were considered the main fountain of the Communist labour movement, see the detailed study by Perry (2012). As it seems, in Xi Jinping-era historiography, this Mao-centred narrative is to be continued.

showcase bases' system only if connected to the Communists, sidelining other historical actors in the Chinese labour movement.[98]

Fig. 4.2.1 Display of daily life objects (like a hat and jacket) contextualised by historical photos and texts on working conditions in the exhibition on the railway strike of 1923 at the Wuhan February Seventh Memorial Hall (photograph by the author, 2017)

To rouse 'patriotism', the strike is explained in the context of foreign imperialism (since foreigners provided the funds and thus dominated the railways at the time, namely Belgium in this case of the Beijing–Hankou Railway). Thus, according to the exhibition's narrative, it was the foreigners who forced the Chinese warlord Wu Peifu to crush the strike which hampered foreign capitalist interests. By focusing on two Communist 'martyrs', labour agitator Lin Xiangqian 林祥谦 (of the Hankou railway station Jiang'an 江岸 at the (Northern) bank of the Yangzi from where one needed to ship over to opposite Wuchang if one were to connect to the railway to move on south to Guangzhou), and the lawyer Shi Yang 施洋, who both had been killed in the Wuhan area (one in Hankou, one in Wuchang), the narrative tries to pin

98 For an overview on Chinese anarchism and syndicalism, see Müller (2023a). The GMD was a further actor in the early labour movement in China.

down the materially rather elusive topic of the strike and its bloody ending. Both 'martyrs' are presented in the exhibition also as wax figures in chains with their purported heroic mottos to not back down, written above. Although the strike ended in failure, the incident is framed as a major step in the development of the Chinese labour movement, and the narrative goes at length to show that the fledgling CCP cared for the families of those killed during the suppression, including photos to document the late 'justice' in PRC times by a public 'trial' in 1951 on the former head of the Beijing–Hankou railway bureau held responsible for the death of worker Lin Xiangqian (and other strikers). He would be condemned and executed at the very place of Lin's 'martyrdom', while the 'February Seventh martyrs', i.e., all those killed at the time of the strike's suppression in Wuhan, were collectively honoured contemporaneously by a posthumous funeral celebration to demonstrate to the Chinese populace that no 'culprit' will escape the 'people's justice'.

Moving outside the museum, which proudly displays an impressive amount of plaques documenting the museum's many local schools for which it serves as an outdoor education location, one encounters near-by the monument for the February Seventh 'martyrs' inscribed by Mao Zedong which had been erected in 1963, according to the plaque, and moved to the present location near the new museum in 1997, accompanied by bas-reliefs displaying the strike and its 'martyrs'.

Compared to this 2017 on-site observation in the Xi Jinping era, the nationally broadcasted TV *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 6), produced by Wuhan TV's societal education department in 1998, represents the state of things almost 20 years earlier when the site had just been nominated as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. The national audience of the TV film clip was to observe how pupils of the time visit the site. The watch of Lin Xiangqian, suggestively put at 9 o'clock when he is said to have ordered the strike to start (on 4 February 1923) is blended in, both to symbolise the elusive strike and to commemorate Lin himself. The railway is introduced as built 'by the Qing and Belgium', which is marked as a supposedly self-evident sign of 'exploitation' by foreigners. Slogans-cum-word play as songs sung by (school) children, namely *Ping–Han lu shi pin han de lu* 平汉路是贫寒的路 (the (Bei)Ping–Han(kou) railway is a railway of poverty and cold) as well as *Changxingdian shi shangxin de dian* 长兴店是伤心的店 (Changxingdian (station) is a hurting your heart station), are underlining the emotionalising approach of this 'patriotic' TV version. The tombs of further 'February Seventh martyrs' erected in July 1966 at the railway station in Changxingdian close to Beijing for 'martyr' Wu Zhen 吴祯 and others document that the crushing of the strike was also acted out well beyond Wuhan, i.e., was not only of local relevance. Artistic representations of the heavy lift would-be railway workers had to carry as a test of physical strength

before being employed (and exploited) are shown in bas-relief, and scenes with clay figures are a further artistic display technique (calling to mind the famous Sichuan Liu manor scenes of Mao times which were to show the exploitation of rural peasants,[99] here transferred into an industrial setting). Shots of the site of an old railway bridge (once built to bridge a local small river in the Jiang'an area in Hankou) are shown to the TV audience, adding the comment that many of those who built it died during the process, suggestively moving on to the French-language part of the (1905) iron inauguration stele of the railway (mentioned above as from Zhengzhou), which insinuates the foreigners (here the Belgians) were de facto the ones behind all this exploitation and suffering of the workers, then moving the camera up to the Chinese part (insinuating that the decrepit Qing had simply given in to the foreigners – and thus made it possible for the foreigners to exploit the Chinese). That way, this stele of historical value (but not directly connected to the memorial hall's topic, as mentioned) is integrated in the narrative.

To provide some further visual material for the TV audience, copies of labour journals of the time are blended in while revolutionary songs can be heard. In 1922, the commentator suggests, labour activities were reported in various journals, marking the rise of the labour movement to culminate in reports on the attempts to establish the railway workers' union, and on warlord Wu Peifu's prohibiting the latter's founding in Zhengzhou (in Henan Province), all accompanied with dramatic music. Given this situation, Lin Xiangqian is profiled as a heroic leader who would fearlessly command the strike in protest. News reports on the strike itself are also blended in for the TV audience, and the strike is said to have received immediate support from other workers, too, throughout the country. Sketches of caricature-like evil foreigners are supposed to show how they conspired to stop the strike, telling Wu Peifu to crush it. The ensuing fighting, in turn, is visualised with electric bulbs on a modeled map in the exhibition for the way of attack by Wu Peifu's troops (serving the 'knowledge' part in education), and with paintings representing the heroic resistance of the unarmed workers (serving the complementary part of 'emotion' Chinese educational aims require). The huge statue of Lin Xiangqian (in Jiang'an, of 1983) is the backdrop to the storyline on how he was put under pressure to order the end of the strike (which he declined), underlined with dramatic music,

99 This artistic rendering with life-size clay figures of the purported 'blood sucking' landlord Liu Wencai 刘文彩, brother of the Sichuan warlord Liu Wenhui 刘文辉, exploiting his tenants, created 1965, became a famous travelling exhibition in Maoist China, named 'The Rent Collection Courtyard' (*shou zu yuan* 收租院), showing various dramatic scenes of abuse of peasants. The clay figures are still on display in the manor of Liu Wencai in Sichuan. Cf. also Ho / Li (2016). Incidentally, the veracity of these allegations against Liu Wencai have been called into question in the meantime.

showing the site of his 'martyrdom'. However, only few material items remain to tell of Lin, the hero: his watch, a lamp, and his patched mosquito net. His grandson (a Party member) is thus to tell the audience about his grandfather (whom he never met) to emotionalise the story.

The film clip then turns to the second major Communist 'martyr': lawyer Shi Yang, with a photo of his former tomb, while a larger collective tomb (of the early 1950s) commemorates those who died during the strike's suppression. Immediately after the bloody event in 1923, the CCP had published an indictment, and also the Comintern protested against warlord Wu Peifu's suppression of the workers, shown in Chinese translation from the Soviet *Pravda*. Photos of single killed workers provide a personalised legacy, while endorsements of later CCP leaders shift over them in the foreground to interpret this legacy's significance. As a further live commentator beyond Lin's grandson, the head of the Jiang'an railway station trade union (at the time of filming in 1998) is also included in the TV film clip who gives a brief summary of the suppression at his railway station and Lin Xiangqian's 'martyrdom' there, stating that the task is by now to educate the coming generation in the 'revolutionary tradition'.[100] This leads to camera shots of many groups, pupils as well as soldiers or tourists, coming to receive such 'education', accompanied by romantic music. The film clip concludes asserting on an emphatic note that like water of the Huanghe and the Yangzi, China's two major rivers, flows on, the 'martyrs'' legacy flows down in history as well, to culminate visually in the image of the monument with the ultimate authoritative legitimation of the site, the inscription by Mao: the 'February Seventh martyrs' monument'.

While this TV film clip had to struggle with the lack of visual cues to trigger images of the elusive strike (and the educational video series *Zhonghua hun* does not even cover the site), the 'patriotic' booklet for youth on the strike's memorial, produced at the same time, had the advantage that it could base itself more on written sources as references to create its narrative. The booklet's title labels the site with the (May Fourth era) slogan of *laogong shensheng* 劳工神圣 (labour is holy),[101] and the illustration pages show the (few) major artefacts of the exhibition, including the 1905 (French- and Chinese-language) Belgian–Chinese iron stele, which is the highest-ranking artefact in terms of museological hierarchy and is therefore considered an object of pride by the memorial hall (though being a more indirect background piece in terms of content) (Feng 1998). Other materials on display illustrating more concretely the workers, if not the event of the strike as such, is a worker's

100 As Perry (2012: 1) aptly remarks, the term 'revolutionary tradition' is 'inherently ironic'.
101 This slogan was used, e.g, by Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 and then during the May Day demonstration. Cf. Müller (2001: 341–344).

badge, and the few personal utensils of worker Lin Xiangqian. The monumental memorial cemetery for the other key Communist figure, the intellectual Shi Yang in Wuchang, which is in terms of space not included in the memorial located in Hankou, is also represented by a photo, as well as a Chinese pamphlet of the time accusing the British of having cooperated with the reactionary militarists to suppress the strike. In 1958, Mao would write the 'February Seventh martyrs monument's' inscription (which thus preceded the memorial hall, and which underlines that February Seventh was high enough on the agenda in the Mao era to deserve his calligraphy), and in 1963 the memorial hall was opened. The monument was to be shifted to the memorial, and in 1987, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution, a new building opened at a new location (in the Jiang'an district of Hankou), with the memorial hall's name plaque written by Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 (the 'reformer', before his downfall). That new memorial hall displayed all kinds of endorsements of high CCP representatives praising February Seventh and thus sanctioning the site politically (1–2). For better 'patriotic education', artwork (i.e., the clay figures) was to recreate scenes of how groups of workers were waiting all the night, anxious to be called to work again, while women and children were shown to toil, carrying coal, with tombs at the side suggesting how many lives ended prematurely because of this exploitation. Another scene was to show how a child worker, obviously maimed by a Western superior, lay helpless on the ground since he could not afford a doctor.

Thus, to render the elusive more approachable and emotional in spite of the dearth of material items for display, exhibition tools used were statues, oil paintings, animated graphics, static miniature or animated models, together with sound and light effects, to illustrate the provided narrative. This was to enliven in a modernised way the elusive historical strike to 'move and rouse' the feelings of the visitors (and were display techniques introduced also elsewhere in Chinese museums at the time to achieve such an effect).

The outdoor monument, in turn, was to be flanked by two group statues (still under construction at the time of writing the booklet, i.e., 1997–1998, but finished at the time of my visit in 2017, as described above), while the top of the monument which sports Mao's calligraphy, recalls the railway worker badge with winged wheels (3). The intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet learns that the layout of the whole monument is in the form of the character *gong* 工 (work), and the (train) whistle recalls the sign of start of the strike on 4 February (which would be crushed on 7 February). Bas-reliefs at the side of the monument are to show the stages in which the events evolved: the oppression of workers, the founding of the trade union, the strike, the worker hero Lin Xiangqian, the workers' lawyer Shi

Yang, the societal support for the strike, the bloody suppression, and the legacy (4). This image programme is thus a soteriological one: from the darkness to the light, going through hardship and sacrifice, but led by outstanding people. In a sense, the Communist framing repeats here a religious imagery, substituting Communists for Christ at the cross to save mankind, or the Bodhisattva renouncing Nirvana until all sentient beings have become enlightened. This process is designed like a drama on stage: the valley of tears, the pressure to do something, the saviour figures, the concerted but guided action, the sacrifice, and the binding of the later generations to honour the sacrifice and go on fighting for the same ideals. In short, the whole image programme is educational, using art to recreate the elusive strike and the revolutionary movement of the working class, to educate the Chinese citizen into carrying on this legacy.

Apart from the February Seventh memorial hall and monument, there are also other locations close-by connected to the strike which make up a 'patriotic education' programme together – and also show that it is hard to pin down this historical action locally. In the memorial hall, in turn, temporary exhibitions are to variegate the programme which is above all focused on pupils (and integrates the strike in a larger narrative). E.g., special exhibitions were presented there on the (thematically not connected) Long March, or the Nanjing Massacre, but also on how the Yangzi floods were fought against (a very pertinent topic once again in 1998 when the 'patriotic' booklet was written). This shows that the memorial hall as such looked for some additional boost, given the dearth of its own materials for display, but also that the 'patriotic' thread could weave together otherwise very disparate topics, using the space simply as exhibition rooms. After all, the location in this major city of Wuhan is convenient for many people to reach for receiving 'education'.

In the reverse direction, to bring the memorial hall's own message into schools (an activity similar to those that we noted already at other 'patriotic education showcase bases'), it produced a special booklet on the two main heroes, and the staff went out to schools to teach about the February Seventh events (5). At the time of writing the booklet, the memorial counted the notable number of 46 schools and other units that had established 'their' 'patriotic education base' there and thus had a contractual relationship with the site.

The strike as such, though only lasting a few days, is framed for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet as a major one 'led by the CCP' (which de facto suggests that the strike was more of a political than of an economic character). (Nothing, in turn, is mentioned here about earlier strikes, e.g., the long Hong Kong–Guangzhou seamen's strike in early 1922, or about the one contested between the anarchists, the GMD, and the CCP in Hunan in early 1922 with Pang Renquan 庞人

铨 and Huang Ai 黄爱 as the early 'syndicalist martyrs').[102] This shows that it is not the labour movement as such that is of interest, but the claims of the CCP to the labour movement. The Beijing–Hankou railway is characterised as a tool of the warlords to use for their continuing wars (to move troops and material), and warlord Wu Peifu as well as the imperialists are said to have lived off the railway (which should explain why a railway strike was particularly feasible) (7). Since the CCP decided at their 'first Party congress' (in Shanghai, cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book) in 1921 that the labour movement was to be their major field of action, they started building up structures (8). (Notably, the trade unions used at the time the Japanese-derived word *zuhe* 组合, i.e., *kumiai*, and then 'club' or *julebu* 俱乐部, not yet *gonghui* 工会 or union.)

Since Wuhan was a major hub for the railway, being the Southern end of the Beijing–Hankou railway and the Northern start of the Wuhan (more precisely Wuchang)–Guangzhou one as the main North–South logistics artery through China,[103] the railway workers were a target for Communist propaganda, and the political aim was to build up a nationwide railway workers' union. The railways, mostly financed with foreign money, involved foreign interests in China (which implied that a strike would also have an 'anti-imperialist' character), and the endpoint in Hankou of the Beijing–Hankou line was close to the foreign concessions there, which guaranteed heightened visibility of any actions at this location. In 1922, a short (economic) strike of the railway workers near Beijing had been successful to ameliorate working conditions (9), whereupon trade union branches sprang up all over the railway. Zhengzhou in Henan, a major railway hub on the line between Beijing and Hankou, was to be a centre to establish there the all-China railway union, but the warlord Wu Peifu banned the founding meeting. The unionists went ahead nonetheless, leading to an emergency in Zhengzhou, as the intended young reader learns (10–13). The headquarters were then moved from Zhengzhou rather down the line to Wuhan, since in Hankou the foreign concessions were near-by (which implied advantages for visibility and effect). The requests of the unionists named in the 'patriotic' booklet were de facto more about changing leading personnel and refunding of the expenses of the banned meeting than about ameliorating working conditions as such, bespeaking the more political thrust of the requests in this case. The strike started along the railway on 4 February, and it is admitted that there were also workers ready to break the strike (13–14). Hubei CCP cadre Chen Tanqiu 陈潭秋 (cf. the

102 See Müller (2023b: 17.).

103 The problem was to cross the Yangzi: Hankou connected to the North, Wuchang to the South. The trains had to be ferried over the Yangzi until finally in PRC times a bridge would be built with Soviet advisors.

Urumqi 'martyr's cemetery' in chapter 3.2 of the present book) was an active supporter of the strike, and also students and other workers showed solidarity. To link the topic to anti-imperialism for everyone to see, they also marched through the Hankou concessions, which caused the foreigners, in turn, to pressure the Beiyang government in Beijing to do something. According to the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative, it was in the British consulate in Hankou where the suppression of the strike was planned, and Wu Peifu, the local warlord, would carry it out on 7 February. As becomes obvious for the intended young reader even in this 'patriotic' narrative at close reading, Wu Peifu had tried to assuage the workers at first, but was rejected and only then acted the hard way (which makes an attentive reader wonder whether the CCP had only used the workers here for its own political goals). In any case, the police tried to track down labour leaders to order the workers to resume work. Reminiscent of a theatre play or film, the story of 'hero' Lin Xiangqian is told who is tortured to order the workers back to work with one cut at a time, followed by the question whether he would back down. He did not, and finally died (15–17).[104]

Besides the 'worker hero' Lin Xiangqian, Shi Yang, the intellectual, is profiled for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet as the other major 'hero'. Shi Yang defended the workers as a lawyer and wrote pamphlets for them: when thrown into jail, he would (and could!)[105] write a prison diary to expose the evildoers and would be executed as someone fanning the flames. Worker schools had to be closed, publications were banned, and also sympathisers were incarcerated. On 9 February, the reader learns, and thus quickly after the events of February Seventh, the workers resumed, which meant that this strike had basically ended in failure, and many workers also lost their jobs because of it (18–19). Nevertheless, the event is told as a major memorable strike since the accent is not on the workers themselves, but on the ideological impact of that strike which had a high visibility, given the economic importance of this key logistics artery in China (and the physical closeness to the concessions where foreigners observed and wrote about it). The wife of Shi Yang, the executed labour lawyer, made the case of her husband known at the time as well. (Likely she was literate and as wife of an intellectual – Shi Yang had a scholar family background – could do more propagandistically than a simple worker's wife as was Lin Xiangqian's.) Support for the strikers came from various quarters, including the Comintern which at least sent also money for the families of the striking workers now destitute (20). Korean and Japanese trade unions were sympathetic, too, as well as Chinese workers overseas, including those in the Soviet

104 Incidentally, this recalls the most cruel punishment of late imperial times, the slicing to death by '1.000 cuts' (as *lingchi* 凌迟 is often called in Western sources).
105 Cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book on prisons.

Union. In typical Communist argumentation with which the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet are familiar from school, the strike's failure is explained with the 'objective reasons' that the workers were overpowered by the military of Wu Peifu, and 'subjectively', that the CCP was still in its infant stage. Thus, it did not yet know how to ally with other societal groups to become successful. And the workers were not yet armed! While the labour movement came to its nadir after this strike's bloody end, according to the Communist reading, the CCP moved toward the United Front with Sun Yat-sen and wanted to build up with him the Whampoa Military Academy for laying the ground for what was lacking: armed revolutionary forces. Furthermore, the Communists also started thereafter to care more for the peasants (and not only workers) to prepare for a later, again more revolutionary time (21–22).

The most feasible way of narratively dealing with the fact that the strike as such is lacking in tangibility is to concentrate on the 'heroes' of the strike more closely. This strategy also easily solicits emotions. The 'patriotic' booklet thus presents, above all, the two major heroes to its intended readers as models, detailing their biographies to explain how they became what they were to be (and what their connection was to the CCP). Lin Xiangqian, the worker, hailed from Fujian where he had worked at the docks of Fuzhou's Mawei 马尾 (again a place dominated by foreigners), but then came to Hankou to the railway, where Hubei key CCP cadre Chen Tanqiu approached him. At the time, in September 1922, the workers of the railway connecting Wuchang south to Guangzhou made a successful strike for better working conditions, and this obviously impressed Lin. He thus entered the CCP, the intended young reader learns (23–26). During the February 1923 Beijing–Hankou railway strike, Lin, responsible for the Jiang'an area close to the foreign concessions, commanded the workers, but also is said to have cared for the workers' families by distributing money (likely the one provided by the Comintern, cf. above) (29). Like in the TV film clip, the narrative of the booklet also thrusts Wu Peifu in the role of someone acting under the pressure of the foreigners (cf. Chiang Kai-shek who was often belittled as well by the Communists as someone totally dependent on the foreigners). The film-like scene of Lin's being tied to a pole and tortured cut by cut, heroically always answering he would never back down, is retold, making the whole read like a hagiography (30–32). The intended young readers are assured that Chinese workers all over the world were impressed by his figure, and his wife who was pregnant (editing out he had already children for greater effect), would educate the son born after his death in his legacy subsequently. The CCP, in turn, cared for his wife, the reader is further assured, though it becomes obvious that she and the baby (and the further family members) obviously had a very hard time at first until

the Lin family in Fujian took them in, but she would of course refuse politely the benefits offered by the government in PRC times later. In 1958, Mao had received old workers of the February Seventh strike and the wife and son of Lin Xiangqian during the national congress of trade unions to honour them.[106] (As will be recalled, Mao also wrote his calligraphy reproduced on the monument at that time.) Leading Communist intellectual Guo Moruo (whose family was originally from Fujian as well – before moving to Sichuan) would also commemorate Lin Xiangqian, this worker 'hero' (32–33). He Xiangning 何香凝, the left-wing widow of GMD key figure Liao Zhongkai 廖仲恺 and a noted painter, in turn, painted winter plums (as a symbol for enduring hardship).[107] In 1964, Lin's tomb in his native Fujian was embellished and enlarged, with an inscription by marshal Zhu De. However, if belatedly, he would also be honoured at the place of his 'martyrdom' in Hankou by a statue that would be erected there in 1983 at the 60th anniversary of his death (the one shown in the film clip). In 1992, his 100th birthday was celebrated with endorsements by Jiang Zemin as well as by then-prime minister Li Peng who wrote the Lei Feng-inspired (cf. chapter 5.3 of the present book) slogan:[108] 'learn from martyr Lin Xiangqian, be a steadfast believer in Communism' (*xiang Lin Xiangqian lieshi xuexi, zuo gongchanzhuyi jianding de xinyangzhe* 向林祥谦烈士学习，做共产主义坚定的信仰者), to draw a generalised legacy from this model figure (34).

The other great 'hero' profiled in the 'patriotic' booklet is Shi Yang, the lawyer, thus balancing the worker with the intellectual as models for the intended young readers, and explaining them how he came to join the Party. Hailing from an intellectual family of Hubei, Shi Yang was at first a teacher, focusing on agriculture and sericulture. Seeing the Xinhai revolution 'fail' in the long run, he then turned to law and practiced since 1918 as a lawyer. He participated in the May Fourth movement in Wuhan, launched a publication with the noted local young radical intellectual Yun Daiying 恽代英, and also expressed (internationalist) support for the Korean Independence Movement (the March First Movement of 1919 against Japanese occupation of Korea, briefly before the Chinese May Fourth Movement, spurred by the Wilsonian 'self-determination' promise after WW I). Together with Yun Daiying, he gravitated towards Marxism (likely after being interested in anarchism first,

106 They both died in 1972 during the Cultural Revolution. Notably, the 'patriotic' booklet does not spell out the details, just stating that the mother died of illness, skipping the fate of the son, who was also a worker and unionist. One may recall that the unions were suspended during the Cultural Revolution.

107 He Xiangning remained on the mainland and was a close friend of Sun Yat-sen's last wife Song Qingling with whom she led the block party version of the GMD in PRC times.

108 For Lei Feng and the 'learn from comrade Lei Feng' slogan handed out by Mao, see chapter 5.3.

as was in any case Yun Daiying).[109] (35–37) Finally, he went over to Communism, seeing the Soviet Union as the great model. Shi Yang supported the workers, defended them, advised them on law, and created evening schools for them. He was also the one to conduct negotiations for the rickshaw drivers in their strike in Hankou in 1921, who would in fact be the first group to found a trade union in the Wuhan area. Then he negotiated for the steel workers (in the Hanyang arsenal) and for tobacco workers, and in 1922 joined the CCP. At the time, a close cooperation existed between the workers in Hubei and the neighbouring Hunan province, and his pen recruited support for the striking workers, trying to teach the workers to look at common interests beyond regional differences! (38–41). (In fact, this issue was a chronic one that plagued the syndicalists in China, namely because many workers were illiterate and were thus particularly bound to their region of origin by language variety and customs.) For the founding meeting of the all-China railway union in Zhengzhou in early 1923 which was then banned by Wu Peifu, many journalists had been on board of the train to Zhengzhou, making the whole affair known nationally and internationally. Shi Yang encouraged the workers arguing that Wu Peifu used weapons that had, after all, been built by them, and that they could not tolerate his attempts at suppression. But soon, the events in Zhengzhou unfolded, and Shi Yang was arrested in the Wuhan area as one of the instigators (42–45). During his imprisonment, he also summarised the grievances of the workers on a more labour-relation-centred note: bad treatment in factories, no right to organise meetings (like in Zhengzhou), too low wages, too many hours of work etc., thus going beyond the mere political struggle. He also pointed out that the military court had no jurisdiction in his case as a civilian. In prison, he wrote defences for others, but also composed poetry, thus showing to the intended young reader the ideal of a Communist personality with 'revolutionary optimism' who would struggle to the end. But outside prison, Shi Yang was attacked in the press of the time (45–47). He could, however, write a farewell letter, and after execution, his dead body was also handed over,[110] as is stated here – a far cry from later CCP practices with their prisoners. His body lay in state and was only buried after 5 months, his wife publicly denouncing Wu Peifu and his 'Western masters'. She would also meet with Sun Yat-sen in Beijing where the latter was hospitalised (i.e., obviously in early 1925) (48–49).[111] In 1953, Shi Yang's 'tomb' was relocated to an inner-city location of

109 Yun Daiying was first attracted by anarchism and only subsequently moved on to Marxism. Cf. Müller (2001, e.g., 370–372, 443–444).

110 In the 2019 *Fengbei* version – see below, the body had to be secretly snatched.

111 As Xia (2019: 27) mentions, Shi Yang had met Sun Yat-sen in 1922 in Shanghai (and thus Shi Yang's wife could likely draw on that relationship).

Wuhan and a bust added, and in 1993 a full body statue was erected. (According to the 2019 narrative on this site – see below – his remains were, in fact, not transferred, which means the uphill 'tomb' is only a *yiguan zhong* or substitute tomb.) In any case, his new 'tomb' park area was very extended, and every year at February Seventh and at Qingming (Tomb Sweeping Day), activities were held there, the intended young reader learns (which conforms to the practice at other 'martyrs' tombs' – cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book for some examples) (50).

Finally, the 'patriotic booklet' enumerates the material evidences for the strike still to be seen, including the old site of the federation of trade unions of the Beijing–Hankou railway (a building) which was restored only in 1980/1981, the one of the Jiang'an branch of the trade union (another building) where the massacre on February Seventh mainly happened, and a pamphlet shown in the illustration section on the 'revenge' of the workers for February Seventh, written by two labour leaders in 1923 (one of whom, however, later 'defected'). This Communist pamphlet obviously served as the major source for the narrative to detail the happenings of the strike and its suppression, accusing the British and the US already at that time of being behind it (51–54). (To stress this point of the malign foreign role, the Sino–Belgian iron stele of 1905 is to serve for illustrating that the founding of the railway was already a sign of foreign exploitation.) Other material items were supposedly handed to the memorial hall by the relatives of Lin Xiangqian or other workers like the badge also shown in the TV film clip, or Lin's personal belongings (55–56).

Shi Yang's prison diary is another key material object on display, though only as a copy since the original is in Beijing's History Museum (Zhongguo lishi bowuguan) (57–58) (i.e., now in the National Museum – which once more shows that local sites have to struggle with the fact that the 'top' items might move up the museum hierarchy, cf., e.g., chapter 2.1 of the present book for such examples). Shi Yang's house, where he was arrested, is preserved, too, in Hankou (58–59), as is his memorial park in Wuchang to where his 'tomb' was shifted: he was, it seems, buried before in Wuchang more simply, but in PRC times in the Mao era, the new hill-side 'tomb' visible from afar and a new stele and the larger park were established. Dong Biwu 董必武, the Hubei CCP leader and considered one of the founding fathers of the PRC (and incidentally a former law student as well),[112] wrote an endorsement in 1957 as a poem, and many years later in 1993, the full body statue of Shi Yang was erected (59). This means that in terms of space, the February Seventh events are

112 Dong Biwu was the only one besides Mao Zedong present during the 1949 inauguration of the PRC who had been also at the first Party Congress back in 1921.

commemorated in Wuchang as well as in Hankou.[113] And another Communist railway union leader who was 'martyred' later in 1927, but who had participated in the 1923 strike, Shi Liya 史力亚, a former student in the Soviet Union, is also included in the commemoration retrospectively, represented by his watch in the exhibition of the memorial hall (which shows that the exhibition searched quite desperately for objects somehow connected to the strike). In this case, a comrade had kept the watch and donated it in 1974 (during the Cultural Revolution) to the memorial (60–61). Other material items exhibited include on the 'negative' side a guarantor's agreement and a working card which are to document the more general exploitative system when a worker needed someone to guarantee for him (which meant one had to give presents to people to take over that function), while the card controlled the work time (arguing the clock was often manipulated against the workers' interest) (61–62). Further 'negative' exhibited items include handcuffs and ankle cuffs, pointing out to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that the first director of the memorial hall had been in prison himself because of the strike, if not in Wuhan but further north along the line in Baoding 保定 (in Hebei) whereto the strike had extended. This lends additional 'authenticity' to the memorial hall and its exhibits. Other signs of exploitation are the heavy lift (also shown in the TV film clip) any applicant for work had to carry to show he was fit enough – a trial which supposedly ruined many weaker people's health, and a whip, said to have been used by 'foreign' foremen (63–65). On the 'positive' side, some money paid by the CCP (which had apparently received it from the Comintern) to workers who had been crippled or were ill because of the strike's suppression, are to prove that the Party cared for the damage caused by the strike (though the exhibited money had been paid to a Communist worker, which could mean there was preferential treatment of comrades) (67). But overall, the 'patriotic booklet' of the late 1990s shows that narrative, especially concering the two major heroes, is key, while material evidence is very limited to document the elusive short strike of 4 February to 7 February 1923.

Two decades after this late 1990s' presentation of the 'patriotic' booklet, the narrative framing of the February Seventh memorial in the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* series (Xia 2019) discloses some shifts in official perception. It also markedly differs from the case of the physically close Wuchang Uprising memorial discussed before which had apparently lost in significance in the Xi Jinping era: this memorial for the labour strike, in turn, is still treated very prominently in 2019, which bespeaks the enduring ideological importance of the February Seventh memorial in present-day

113 While the listed site is the memorial hall, the other thematically connected locations in the Wuhan area are mentioned and also shown on the map of this 'patriotic education showcase base', thus de facto including them. Cf. *Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* (1999: 58).

view. The shifts over time in the site's description include the relative treatment of the two major heroes: while back in the 1950s, the major hero had been at first Shi Yang who also received his lavish 'tomb' park, which is disclosed here as obviously a 'substitute tomb',[114] and the late 1990s had both him and the worker hero Lin Xiangqian more or less on the same level, by now the worker Lin Xiangqian has moved to the centre stage. In the new framing, it is also pointed out that the memorial hall is above all to recall the 'massacre' of 7 Feburary (and not just 'the strike') (Xia 2019: 2). [115] In 1956, the memorial hall started to be built (though only opened in 1963), and in 1958, Mao wrote the monument's name. While not disclosing what happened during the Cultural Revolution, after it, in any case, the former exhibition space was purportedly considered too small, and thus the new location was chosen, with then-general secretary Hu Yaobang (soon to be ousted) writing the plaque. (One may recall that Xi Jinping's father was rather close to Hu Yaobang, and thus Hu is mentioned more frequently in the Xi Jinping era – cf. also chapter 3.1 of the present book on Yandiling.) The new exhibition was opened in 1987, and the monument (with Mao's calligraphy), the near-by headquarters of the railway workers' union, as well as the 'tomb' park of Shi Yang in Wuchang across the Yangzi are also administered by the memorial hall (and thus part of the site in a sense). The significance of the whole memorial is profiled for the intended reader of this new narrative in the sense that the workers supposedly understood with this strike that they did not only strike for better conditions, but more fundamentally for a new society. In other words: this strike was political rather than economic (2–4). When 'the foreigners' threatened to use force, this obviously made the workers resume work, thus ending the strike in failure (9). But beyond this summary of events, the 2019 description gives a very detailed biography or rather hagiography of Lin Xiangqian, while Shi Yang is only briefly treated. (It makes however also clear that beyond the dramatised story of his pregnant wife, Lin Xiangqian also had at least an elder daughter.) (14). The new importance of Lin Xiangqian is also underlined by the fact that in 2009, he was taken up as one of the major '100 heroic model personalities that made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of New China' (26). That way, his model is to inspire also the present-day Chinese citizen. And it shows that labour heroes have not lost their appeal in the 21st century PRC. Strikes,

114 Notably, the description states that his present 'tomb' up the hill in Wuchang is only a *yiguan zhong* (substitute tomb) (Xia 2019: 4). He had been first buried outside the city and then moved back to the hill where he had been also supposedly executed. Apparently, if the description can be believed, in 1953 his tomb had been in the way of road construction, and thus his 'tomb park' at the present location up hill was established (but without moving his remains).

115 In all, the victims of the 'February Seventh massacre' are said to have been 52 (Xia 2019: 9).

however, are not supposed to be relevant in the present any longer, since (at least in theory) exploitation no longer exists in China.

Case study: the Nanchang Uprising Memorial Hall

Different from the two previous cases in this subchapter where the 'enemy' were the Qing or the warlords (with the foreigners in the back), the brief Nanchang Uprising of 1927 is very straightforward in terms of a Communist anti-GMD ideological alignment and thus should be also straightforward in its 'patriotic education' function in the PRC. Still, one may note that this event, subsequently declared the founding moment of the Red Army (today's PLA), is one rather connected to Zhou Enlai, Zhu De and others, but not to Mao. This made for a long-time low-key position of the respective memorial site in Maoist times in spite of being the Army's purported 'place of birth'. In the context of rewriting the history of the CCP with more accent on 'collective leadership' and less Mao-centrism after the Cultural Revolution, though, the commemoration of the Nanchang Uprising profited. Since the uprising was acted out in different parts of the city, the memorial museum **Nanchang ba yi qiyi jinianguan** 南昌八一起义纪念馆 (Nanchang August First Uprising Memorial Hall) (Jiangxi Province) (list 1, 1997) could in principle be located at different places, but was set in the largest historically connected building (as in the above Wuchang Uprising case serving as headquarters, if much more briefly). The memorial, however, also nominally integrates other buildings in the city which were (positively) connected to the uprising, bespeaking the scattered nature of such a historical event. In front of the memorial (as I observed in 2013), placed in the former Grand Hotel of Nanchang, the visitor encounters a group statue of the 'five leaders' (Zhou Enlai as the only civil one in the middle, representing the purported leading function of politics in the military uprising, the other four military: commanders He Long 贺龙, Ye Ting 叶挺, Zhu De, and Liu Bocheng 刘柏承), and further key Communist figures as busts at the side flanking the way for the entering visitor. These figures include some more of the civilian 'leaders' like Li Lisan 李立三 (a delicate figure in CCP historiography whose subsequent political 'line' was criticised later and who would die in the early Cultural Revolution, officially by suicide) and the intellectual and educator Wu Yuzhang 吴玉章 (who would also be harassed and died in the early Cultural Revolution).

Entering the memorial, the visitor is confronted with a strikingly aggressive introduction to the exhibition, setting the tonic keynote: a gun pointed up by a huge hand with the August First ('8–1') red flag behind. In the exhibition, texts explain

the background of the uprising, and maps visualise the spatial movements in the city. Photos, and sketches of moments where no photo can serve as a stand-in, are to represent the historical development. Songs supposedly of the uprising (with new texts to common Nanchang folk songs) are displayed (though one might wonder how the few days of the uprising could 'teach' anyone to sing a new text collectively: it thus rather belongs to the later myth-making around the Red Army and its purported founding event with this uprising). Jubilant masses of locals (displayed as mannequins) are supposedly welcoming the new era.[116] The insurgent troops, however, started to leave Nanchang already two days later on 3 August (which, according to the narrative, had been planned before the uprising already, i.e., should not be interpreted by the visitor as simply an escape) to move south, aiming at securing a new Communist base in Guangdong Province. No comment is provided on those left behind in Nanchang and what happened there thereafter (when the city was quickly retaken by 'the enemy'). Rather, the focus is on the insurgent troops (or their soon heavily decimated remainder), and that they (or better: parts of them) would ultimately move to Jinggangshan to meet the troops of Mao there as the crowning achievement (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), which at least indirectly connects the Nanchang site with Mao.

Beyond the exhibition, the main thing for the visiting tourist, cadet, or pupil to be seen is the building itself, the former Grand Hotel (*da lüshe* 大旅社) of Nanchang, of which single rooms were appropriated by the revolutionaries for different uses during those brief days in 1927. The rooms are reconstructed to show how they presumably looked like at the time and what they were used for by the revolutionaries (similar to the case of the 'Red Building' of the Wuchang Uprising discussed above, or of the Zunyi Conference site discussed in chapter 3.3 of the present book). Apart from this former hotel building used as temporary (political) headquarters, the patriotically listed site also covers the place where Zhu De stayed, who had lived in the city months before the uprising as security chief of Nanchang (when the United Front between the CCP and the GMD was still working and the Northern Expedition underway). Guo Moruo (who temporarily lived there in spring 1927 who served in the Northern Expedition as well, though in a political function) and Zhou Enlai (who came for preparing the uprising after the United Front had broken down) also temporarily stayed in the house. Also the places where other key actors of the uprising lodged are covered by the Nanchang 'patriotic education showcase base'.

Comparing these on-site observations of 2013 with the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 5), which reflects the state of the memorial in 1998,

116 From a museological discussion of the ways of using mannequins in museums, see different examples in Cooks (2022).

produced by Jiangxi TV's 'special topics' department, shortly after the site was nominated, one notes how the PLA chose to use this 'patriotic education showcase base' to celebrate itself. The film clip starts with bombastic music, accompanying views of the PLA ('8–1', i.e., August First) flag, and the statues of the leaders. Shots of the Grand Hotel and marching soldiers introduce the topic, while Nanchang as a 'city of heroes' is represented by the huge monument with the '8–1' flag on a gun-flagpole in stone (erected in 1977 after the Cultural Revolution at the 50th anniversary of the uprising and thus of the Army's 'birth').

Thereafter, the acoustics change to a more relaxed atmosphere, with present-day soldiers marching in formation to visit the memorial hall, curiously accompanied by American entertainment music (possibly referencing the main site's being a former hotel and entertainment establishment, but also insinuating the peace and security provided by the existence of the Army). The commentary tells the viewer that the memorial was opened in 1959, and that by the 1990s at the time of filming, many school children but also groups of soldiers would regularly visit the headquarters hotel-turned-memorial.

Moving the camera to the interior, a clock (as a common trope) comes into focus which is to stand for the hour of the uprising. As a didactic background for the 1 August uprising in Nanchang, the preceding April 1927 massacre (i.e., the coup of Chiang Kai-shek in Shanghai), the Changsha shootings of Communists, and the Wuhan left-wing GMD's break-up of the United Front by Wang Jingwei on 15 July 1927 is quickly recalled as a historical reference to show how the Communists were literally pressured into acting. Historical film clips and photos of executions and exposed heads are to visually substantiate the historical reading of the bloody break-up of the United Front familiar from school history textbooks to the Chinese audience. Zhou Enlai, the commentator narrates, was sent to Nanchang to lead an uprising there and stayed at Zhu De's home. Paintings or sketches of the Party front committee members Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Li Lisan, Yun Daiying, and Peng Pai (all 'positive' figures in Party history but for the more problematic Li Lisan who is, however, meanwhile 'rehabilitated' posthumously as well) are shown to illustrate the meetings of which no photos exist, making the elusive more approachable.

General He Long, who commanded official (GMD) National Revolutionary Army troops (in the context of the ongoing Northern Expedition), was not yet a Party member, but after Zhou Enlai met him, he is cited as aggreeing to 'obey' the CCP. (In fact, historically speaking, He Long was the crucial military figure who had to be convinced to join the Communist ranks for staging the uprising.) Ye Ting, a Communist already, was another important military leader commanding official National Revolutionary Army troops. And thus, the camera moves to the group

statue of the '5 leaders' (as declared by CCP historiography in hindsight) of the uprising in front of the memorial: Zhou Enlai for the leading role of the Party, together with the military commander He Long, and the Communist ones Liu Bocheng, Zhu De, and Ye Ting. Ye Ting's as well as He Long's headquarters elsewhere in Nanchang are covered by the 'patriotically' listed site as well. With camera shots of interiors, tea cups come to stand for the meetings to discuss the uprising. Insurgents would wear a red necktie (an example is displayed on-site – incidentally linking this to the Young Pioneers' similar practice who are also supposed to visit the exhibition and which links them, in turn, this way to the military), have a cross on the lamp as a sign, and wear a white headscarf. They would also use a code word, all fully in Chinese secret society fashion. For preparation of the uprising, Zhu De, who had many long-standing connections in the GMD military, invited several of their leaders to the Grand Hotel (which is staged by actors as a scene, projected on glass), to dine and play Mahjong.[117] When they were indoors, he would quickly lock them there (an old military trick), but since a traitor is said to have leaked the plans of the uprising, the insurgents had to strike 2 hours earlier than planned (which suggests there was some chaos), with the celebrated 'first shot' against the GMD 'reactionaries'. Sound and light effects with uprising scenes as paintings or models are supposed to enliven the narrative provided by the commentator, and animated maps are to didactically show where in the city the fighting evolved, blending in paintings of scenes to visualise the elusive, while some war film scenes are cut into the film clip to stand in for the fighting. Paintings of surrendering soldiers are to show the 'victory', and propaganda leaflets and newspapers of the time are to support the historical relevance of this brief uprising. Bas-reliefs are a further mode of making the elusive visible and tangible. As for the legacy of the whole event, in the central Soviet base area headquarters Ruijin (which is shown, notably taking over shots from the respective TV film clip on Ruijin – see chapter 3.3 of the present book, equally produced by Jiangxi TV) it was decided in 1933 (and finalised in January 1934 at the second Chinese Soviet congress), that 1 August 1927 was henceforth to be considered the founding day of the Red Army (and present-day PLA). The landmark monument in Nanchang city with the red '8–1' flag in stone, erected in 1977 at the 50th anniversary of the Nanchang Uprising and shown in the beginning of the film clip, is the physical embodiment of the uprising's legacy. In the end, marching soldiers and all military branches of the PLA are to suggest to the national TV audience that China's strong and capable Army of today ultimately has grown out of this brief uprising.

117 Gambling was widespread, but this evokes with viewers the usual trope of the enemy being only keen on fun and morally deficient.

The Nanchang Uprising and its supposed founding role for the PLA also made for the fact that beyond the nationally broadcasted TV film clip discussed above, this site is also among those covered in the (competing) educational video series *Zhonghua hun* (disc 1) on (some of) the patriotic education 'first list' sites. This video was produced by Jiangxi educational TV in 1998 with the support of the memorial hall. Compared to the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV version aiming at adults, this educational video for classroom use is much more didactic, in the beginning providing with blended-in text the key message for the pupils of '8–1' as the 'first shot' against the reactionary GMD. Scenes of the military then and now are contrasted, and the Grand Hotel and the present-day visitors of the exhibition lead to a photo of general secretary at the time of filming, Jiang Zemin, writing the site's motto in 1997: 'the place where the military flag was raised'. The busts of the leaders, the bas-relief and the large hand with a gun (reminding the viewer of Mao's famous sentence uttered only days after the uprising that political power grows out of the barrel of the gun)[118] lead the intended viewing pupils to the indoor exhibition. As in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip, Chiang Kai-shek's 12 April coup against the Communists or leftists in Shanghai, the massacres in May in Changsha, and the 15 July event when Wang Jingwei in Wuhan turned on the Communists as well, are quickly retold. But also in Beijing in Northern China where the Beiyang government was still ruling, the CCP came under pressure (showing the news of the time on Communist founding figure Li Dazhao 李大钊 who had been imprisoned and executed there, by this connecting the Nanchang Uprising more actively with the greater national picture than in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip). Many historical scenes of shootings and dead people (similar to the film clips in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film, but not identical) are shown. But, the narrator assures the intended watching pupils, the Communists would resist: Cai Hesen 蔡和森 (a close friend of Mao and influential Communist, but not directly connected to Nanchang), for one, suggested to fight.[119] Thus, instead of the 'capitulationism' of Chen Duxiu (the general

118 Mao stated this on the 7 August conference of 1927, i.e., only a few days after the Nanchang Uprising, as a lesson to be drawn from the bloody end of the United Front. (The version appearing in his *Selected Works* is of 6 November 1938 when he used the expression once more: Mao (1965a) vol. 2: 224. That version made it also into the 'little red book' of Mao quotations, the so-called Mao Bible, chapter 5, and thus was one of his most famous sayings every Chinese citizen is familiar with. The origin of the utterance was, however, connected to the break-down of the United Front in 1927.)

119 Cai Hesen who had been to France was instrumental for Mao's early understanding of Marxism by sending letters home to his friend. (Cf. Levine (1993)). That people like Cai, who had not been to Nanchang but belonged to the core group of leading Communists when discussions of how to react to the GMD purges were conducted, are named here show that the *Zhonghua hun* video is trying to connect the Nanchang Uprising with more educational content of national relevance the pupils will have encountered in class before.

secretary of the CCP at the time who would be made the scapegoat for the *annus horribilis* 1927 for the Communists), a new leading committee with Zhang Guotao 张国焘, Li Lisan, Zhou Enlai, commander Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻, and Yun Daiying was created. Wu Yuzhang and Lin Boqu 林伯渠 are also pointed out as of political importance.

This shows in comparison to the *Ai wo Zhonghua* version, that much more general historical background is addressed, and even 'problematic' names (which the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clips always edit out, if they were never rehabilitated, here namely the later Mao rival and final 'apostate' Zhang Guotao), are mentioned. News reports of the time are to substantiate the provided historical reading. A didactic map with movements of armies in red (for Communists like Ye Ting) and blue (for the 'enemy' GMD) and arrows visualise the situation spatially. The intended viewing pupils are told that the Party decided to make an uprising in Nanchang as an answer to the anti-Communist purges, while Chiang Kai-shek planned to use a military meeting up at Lushan 庐山 (equally in Jiangxi Province) to sideline the 'leftist' commanders Ye Ting and He Long (whom he suspected to defect). Communist Ye Jianying 叶剑英, placed undercover in the entourage of Chiang Kai-shek, acted as the whistle blower of Chiang's plans, and thus the Communists decided to target Nanchang (where 'friendly' troops were present or could easily arrive) for staging the uprising. Since the troops used trains for transport, a major bridge was broken by 'the enemy' (to prevent defection of the suspected left-leaning National Revolutionary Army troop contingents), but the Communist-friendly workers would quickly repair it, the intended watching pupils are told, 'authenticated' by working tools on display in the exhibition.

To underline the primary role of politics to which the military only contributed, Zhou Enlai is focused upon who came to Nanchang to plan the uprising with Zhu De (who stood for the Communist military). Camera shots of the Grand Hotel's interior and some paintings blended in, try to evoke the situation by filmic means. Also here, Zhou Enlai is described as instrumental in getting the most important left-leaning (but not yet Communist) military commander He Long around to 'obey' the CCP. With scenes taken from a feature film, Zhu De's inviting GMD military leaders to dine and gamble (which reinforces the classical trope of 'the enemy' being corrupt and mean) is retold who would then be trapped in the building and disarmed. An animated map of Nanchang shows didactically where all the 'enemy forces' were stationed in the city.

Also in this filmic version, the role of a traitor (who would of course be found and justly punished) is pointed out, who made it necessary for the revolutionaries to strike 2 hours earlier than envisaged. Written calls to arms by He Long and Ye Ting

and movie scenes diversify the visual representation, and various places where fightings took place are shown on photos (taken at other times, though). Communist military leader Nie Rongzhen is introduced in this filmic version who was meanwhile approaching the city with his troops to sustain the insurgents. The local people also supposedly backed the revolutionaries, exemplified by water buckets (!) displayed in the memorial hall which were provided by them, or by a tailor's sewing machine (who supposedly made uniforms for them quickly – cf. the Wuchang Uprising case above with a similarly 'revolutionary' tailor figure). In terms of relevance of the whole event, a well-known painting which in fact framed the later memorialisation of the Nanchang Uprising, shows Zhou Enlai leading it. But also statistical results of the uprising are to prove its more tangible importance: 3.000 enemy troops are said to have been annihilated, over 800 machine guns captured, and over 4.000 hand guns. Ammunition of over 700.000 bullets were another trophy. (This discloses the likely real main aim of the uprising: to capture weapons and ammunition before moving south to where the Communists were supposed to go for building up a base there.)[120] This, the commentary explains to the intended watching pupils of PRC times, was the start of 'our Army', and now, 70 years later (i.e., in 1997), 'we' have a modern Army, visualised by the national military parade at Tiananmen. Nanchang, in turn, is shown as having become in the meantime a green and peaceful city. Shots of the deputy chairman of the central military commission ceremonially laying down wreaths at the '8–1' red flag monument in Nanchang during a 1997 ceremony conclude the video, suggesting one has to remember and honour these military beginnings which made possible the present peaceful life Chinese people (and pupils) enjoy.

While the two filmic versions above provide a visual approach to evoke the elusive historical uprising and its legacy, the 'patriotic' booklet (Chen Sh. 1998) of the same time is free to provide more historical context for those brief days of the uprising itself. The booklet, addressed to youth, was titled after Jiang Zemin's endorsement of the Nanchang Uprising as 'the place where the military flag was raised', thus becoming the purported founding place of the PLA. The site in the former Grand Hotel and amusement establishment, occupied during the uprising, is the physical anchor for the latter, which is in the illustration section rather represented

120 One may recall that the Northern Expedition had started out from Guangdong as a United Front endeavour, and the Communists had worked behind the lines of the military advance of the nominal National Revolutionary Army of the GMD (which included Communists), starting to 'revolutionise' the gained territory in their own sense (which caused the rifts in the United Front between the GMD and the CCP to grow). That way, when the United Front broke down when reaching central China, the South was the logical place to go for in their perspective.

more dynamically by later paintings, and some proclamations printed. This already hints at the fact that the number of artefacts to display is very limited, including as most treasured items things like the pistol of Zhu De, or the watch of general He Long. Nanchang, called a 'city of heroes', was honoured in 1956 in the context of reviving historical places of the revolution. At that time, the original (political) headquarters in the Grand Hotel was decided upon to be used for the memorial exhibition. Subsequently, also other sites in the city where the leaders had stayed were integrated as well, reflecting that an uprising is difficult to locate. Here places connected to Zhu De, He Long (purged at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution and posthumously rehabilitated), and Ye Ting (who died in an air crash in 1946 and thus did not live to see the founding of the PRC)[121] were chosen. Apparently, the military education association site of Zhu De who had been in the city the longest, already featured an exhibition at the time (i.e., in 1956) (1). The places where He Long and Ye Ting stayed when they arrived in Nanchang with their troops, were appropriated sites, namely school buildings (conveniently available due to summer vacation in late July and early August) that they occupied during those few days.

For the exhibition design, the Nanchang Memorial looked to Beijing and Shanghai for best practice examples when it was set up. The Grand Hotel had, in fact, been used before (since 1954) by the Jiangxi Museum. The building would be officially handed over in 1957 at the 30th anniversary of the PLA's purported founding (i.e., of the Nanchang Uprising) to the Nanchang Uprising Memorial to be newly established. Given the scarcity of artefacts, photos and explanations made up most of the exhibition. The photos were taken from the archive of the PLA (and were likely not shot during the chaotic couple of days of the uprising itself). In terms of exhibition content at the time of the late 1950s, it covered the history of the Communist army from the Northern Expedition times up to the then recently concluded Korean War (1950–1953) (cf. above, chapter 4.1)! That way, the rather scarce content on the uprising itself could be made up for with materials on the Army up to almost the time of the opening of the memorial. In 1957, also He Long's headquarters and Zhu De's military education association site were already designated as branches of the site. But only in 1959 at the 10th anniversary of the PRC, the memorial in the former Grand Hotel was opened officially to the public, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet learns (2). In the 1960s, the large hotel building (built in 1922) was, however, in need of repair (since not properly built, as is argued), and in 1964, the surrounding decrepit buildings had to be razed. Notably, the exhibition content was by then shortened to have as its final point no longer the

121 Cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book for Yan'an where a 'tomb of the April Eighth Martyrs' was set up, including Ye Ting.

Korean War but the meeting of Zhu De's troops with those of Mao in Jinggangshan (in 1928, cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book), thus finally integrating Mao (who was not present at Nanchang) into the whole as the pinnacle – which already reflects that the memorial was not totally fitting the official line of Mao-centrism of the 1960s (3).

This was the version presented to the public in 1965, but in early 1967 during the Cultural Revolution, the exhibition was closed. In 1970, some 'foreign friends' are said to have been requesting a visit, but a part of the exhibition would be reopened (if not for the general public) only in 1971, including the room in the Grand Hotel where then-premier Zhou Enlai had had his 'office'. He Long's headquarters and Zhu De's military association site were re-acknowledged in 1974 (which is notable since He Long was purged in the early Cultural Revolution, as mentioned, and died in prison in 1969, but was posthumously rehabilitated already in 1974 which made this possible). Only in 1977, however, after Mao's death and tellingly in explicit commemoration of not only the Nanchang Uprising but simultaneously also of Mao's founding the Jinggangshan base area (weeks later) in 1927 (!), the museum was fully reopened, adding also Ye Ting's headquarters and Zhu De's former home as sub-sites. Again 10 years later, in 1987, foreign military attachés were shown around the place (which suggests that at this point, the PLA was proud of showing its 'place of birth') (4). As is openly stated in the 'patriotic' booklet, the exhibition was 'readapted' to the then current political line, stressing 'historical materialism',[122] but also enriching the exhibition with new modes, including light and sound effects. A TV screen with a film was installed to somehow visualise the elusive uprising, dioramas were to display it, and computer-directed videos with explanations were added. Further ten years later, in 1997, the exhibition had become even more technically advanced (5). While the endorsements of Party leaders were exhibited as an official backing, the memorial hall now tried to display also the part normal people participating in the uprising played, showing details on 104 'personalities of the uprising' (which, one may recall, lasted just 1 to 3 August!) to demonstrate to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that this was also something of 'the people'.

Furthermore, the memorial hall's building, once constructed in 1922 as Nanchang's Grand Hotel, is described in more detail, having been a place where also all sorts of entertainment were provided; including drinking tea, or alcohol, smoking (opium), gambling, but also prostitution (6). He Long (then a GMD officer as will

122 This thrust of the Deng era to return to a more classical Marxist framework in history education is very clear when looking into the changes of the history curricula. Cf. Müller (2011) and Müller (2018).

be recalled) had in fact 'rented' the hotel for these days, and the civilian leaders Zhou Enlai, Li Lisan (like He Long someone later attacked who would die in the early Cultural Revolution as well, officially of suicide, as mentioned), Yun Daiying and Peng Pai (the latter two executed by the GMD later) all stayed there at the time. Lin Boqu (who died before the Cultural Revolution but was posthumously purged then) had stayed there as well (7). This row of (political) figures thus legitimises the Grand Hotel as the main (political) 'headquarters' – although the military key figures He Long and Ye Ting did not lodge there themselves. (Incidentally, after the brief days of the uprising, the Grand Hotel would go on as before with its business.)

He Long's own headquarters in a school building in the city is also part of the extended site, as mentioned. That place was of the Anglicans, built in 1916, who had a school there which was occupied by He Long's (GMD) National Revolutionary Army troops. He Long (the de facto crucial military figure of the uprising with his men) is briefly presented to the intended young reader as someone who had joined Sun Yat-sen's 'Revolutionary Party' (Gemingdang 革命党, later re-labelled as Guomindang),[123] and directed troops during the Northern Expedition. The Communists approached him and he had them reorganise his troops, while he also profitted from arms and new recruits whom the CCP channelled to him. Supposedly, however, it was not those material benefits but above all the diplomatic Zhou Enlai who won He Long over to the Communist side. The building of his 'headquarters', i.e., the Anglican school, still bears signs of the shooting during the uprising, and it was restored 'as it was' in 1977 after the Cultural Revolution for opening it to the public at the 50th anniversary of the uprising (and thus of the PLA's purported founding), 'authenticating' the fighting with those material signs (8–12).

The other crucial military commander of official (GMD) National Revolutionary Army troops, the Communist Ye Ting, had his 'headquarters' in an old school, too, built in 1925. Ye Ting had been associated with Sun Yat-sen as well, but in 1924 also entered the CCP. He commanded the first troops led by Communists in the United Front, (parts of) the so-called armored convoy (*tiejia chedui* 铁甲车队). Being sympathetic to the peasant movement and against the GMD rightists, his troops developed into a revolutionary entity. They also helped knock out warlord Wu Peifu's troops, as (part of the) 'iron troops' (13–15).[124] Two of his regiments were in fact central forces of the uprising in Nanchang. The local school buildings

123 This was the brief phase after the 'failure' of the Xinhai Revolution when Sun Yat-sen refounded the Guomindang as Gemingdang (revolutionary party) with more centralised leadership style. Later, he would re-create it again as a new Guomindang.

124 Although the 'patriotic' booklet tends to credit here only Communist Ye Ting, the formal superior was general Zhang Fakui 张发奎 who however changed sides to temporarily realign with Chiang Kai-shek and would end his days in 'neutral' Hong Kong in 1980.

in Nanchang which they occupied were restored in 1977 for the 50th anniversary and opened for visitors (16). A further location integrated under the umbrella of the 'patriotically' listed memorial is the 'military education association site' of Zhu De who had shouldered most of the on-site preparation for the uprising. In late Qing times, the intended young reader learns, Zhu De had been in the Yunnan military academy in Kunming, and had joined the Tongmenghui. Many years later, in 1922, he joined the CCP in Germany, and then went to the Soviet Union in 1925. In Nanchang, he had served as a United Front-times security chief in the months before the uprising which also is likely a major practical reason why the uprising happened in Nanchang at all which he knew well by then. In his 'military education association', there were many from Yunnan (where he had his connections from the times of the Yunnan military academy), and locals from Jiangxi.

Given the heightened tensions and final break-down of the United Front over spring and summer 1927, the Communist Zhu De had been pressured to leave Nanchang in June 1927 by 'reactionary forces' (one may recall that in 1927 after Chiang Kai-shek's move against the Communists in April, also the Wuhan rival government under Wang Jingwei was to finally end the collaboration with the CCP in July after deteriorating relations between both). Zhu De, however, came back 'clandestinely', according to the booklet's narrative, to command insurgent troops during the Nanchang Uprising. Later, Zhu De would revisit Nanchang in PRC times,[125] namely in 1954 (when, as will be recalled, the Grand Hotel was in use of the Jiangxi Museum). Thus, his rooms in this 'military education association' building were also renovated and subsequently reopened in 1956 (17–19). Furthermore, Zhu De's living place was also a site added, i.e., his home in the months before the uprising (when still serving as the Nanchang security chief in United Front times, before he was forced out). Guo Moruo also stayed there for some time in March/April 1927 where he wrote his indictment of Chiang Kai-shek (*before* the events in Shanghai on 12 April!). Zhu De who had to officially leave his post in June, returned 'secretly' in July to stay there once more and receive Communist Ye Ting's 'iron troops' in Nanchang. He worked also for bringing parts of the military of the GMD over to the Communist side, and also Zhou Enlai briefly stayed there in late July to prepare the uprising, thus marking this site as of historical interest, too. (During the Second Sino–Japanese War, the building would be incidentally used by the Japanese who kept their horses there.) (20–21).

Beyond the single sub-sites and their histories, the 'patriotic' booklet also sketches out the historical background of the uprising for the intended young reader

125 The 'patriotic' booklet of the late 1990s does not mention other leaders of the uprising coming back in PRC times, but the *Fengbei* narrative (see below) also mentions Zhou Enlai and He Long.

(to connect this to the modern history lessons they would have received in class), suggesting that with the United Front, the Communists could profit for getting closer to the military (which should explain why this had been feasible at all in spite of its bloody ending). The previous creation of the Whampoa Military Academy (in 1924) near Guangzhou where Zhou Enlai served as political commissar had been a decisive step. During the Northern Expedition (started there in 1926 under the lead of Chiang Kai-shek), this United Front strategy paid off for the Communists (23–24). Ye Ting's troops belonged to one of three major troops of the National Revolutionary Army enacting the Northern Expedition. In 1927, already in March (and thus before Chiang Kai-shek's Shanghai coup in April) some Communists had been killed in Jiangxi Province on Chiang Kai-shek's orders. Nanchang, that province's capital, was in the hands of the GMD Left critical of Chiang, whereas Chiang himself was stationed in Jiujiang 九江 (in Jiangxi as well). Already then, Mao stressed that the Communists needed weapons and military themselves. And when in April 1927 the bloody suppression of Communists set in after Chiang's Shanghai coup, also in Northern China (ruled by the Beiyang government) Communists were hunted down. On the other hand, following the official Party historiography, CCP then-general secretary Chen Duxiu is accused in the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative as the one who gave in to the GMD and tried to continue cooperation with the GMD 'left-winger' and Chiang's rival Wang Jingwei, instead, but appeasing the latter by disbanding the workers' guards in Wuhan (where Wang's counter-government was located). But Wang's Wuhan government turned finally against the Communists in mid-July as well, marking the final end of the First United Front. In fact, already before Wang Jingwei's official break with the Communists on July 15, the CCP had accused him as anti-revolutionary on July 13 (which makes the storyline of the purported great surprise about Wang's turning against the Communists rather incredible for the intended reader, however)! In any case, the intended young reader should understand that these events strongly underlined the neccessity of the CCP to build up its own military (which it would purportedly do with the Nanchang Uprising as the PLA's foundational event).

In terms of Party history, instead of Chen Duxiu, a first new 5-man committee (Zhang Guotao, Zhou Enlai, Li Lisan, Li Weihan 李维汉 – who survived the Cultural Revolution, and Zhang Tailei 张太雷 – who would die soon after during the Canton (Guangzhou) Uprising in late 1927) took over as an interim solution and went for land revolution and uprisings.[126] For the latter, parts of the National

126 One may note that this committee of five is not identical with the one named in the videos above but was in place briefly in July and August 1927 to be then replaced by the one named in the videos. (Cf. 'Di wu jie zhongyang weiyuanhui' [n.d.]).

Revolutionary Army could be won over to the Communist side (25–28). These troops were ordered by the CCP to make an uprising and then go back to Guangdong to build up a revolutionary base there. Since in Nanchang there were already some Communists present, the place was chosen to be the point to gather. He Long, who was not yet in the CCP, could be won over, but officially, they all posed as the 'true' (GMD) National Revolutionary Army to the populace (which suggests that the people 'welcoming' the troops did not know about the Communist background) (29–31). Zhou Enlai was supposed to lead the uprising politically, while both He Long and Ye Ting would bring in their troops, motivated also by the fact that they were both threatened to be relieved by Chiang Kai-shek from command which they knew via Ye Jianying, the whistle blower placed in Chiang's entourage. Potential problems were quickly resolved with the help of the people (when the major bridge on the way to Nanchang had been destroyed on Chiang's orders to prevent the defection of Ye Ting and He Long to move their troops away on train, whereupon the CCP supposedly organised the workers to rebuild it in no time so that they could move their troops on nonetheless) (32–33).

But also inner-Pary problems were resolved: Zhang Guotao, the later rival of Mao and 'apostate', is named here as the one who tried to postpone (and thus obstruct) the uprising, arguing he was the one representing the official line from the Comintern in the name of the Party Central (then in Shanghai's underground). (This discloses to the intended young reader that Zhang Guotao, a name evaded in the TV film clip but mentioned in the educational *Zhonghua hun* video, had been high in the Party hierarchy of the time.) Zhou Enlai, however, opposed him and simply ignored his authority (which is in hindsight one of Zhou's major credits). When news came that Wang Jingwei and Sun Yat-sen's son Sun Ke (i.e., the GMD 'Leftists' of Wuhan) intended to move to Nanchang, the uprising started immediately, in spite of Zhang Guotao's claim to authority, and following Zhou Enlai's lead (suggesting also that Zhou was actively defying the purported Comintern line) (36–37).

The meetings to prepare for the uprising (usually in the schools free because of summer vacation) and the plans are detailed in the 'patriotic' booklet for the intended young reader (which once more shows that 'defence education' is also part of educational aims as we noticed already at many 'patriotic education showcase bases' and very much so understandably at this 'place of birth' of the PLA). Preparatory spying was done to see how one should attack best. The 'enemy troops' in the city itself where mostly camping in the Catholic Church building (38–39). Others were located in the former imperial *yamen*. Further 'enemy troops' were stationed in temples or native place organisations (*huiguan* 会馆). The day before the uprising, students and workers were recruited (and thus informed, which signals to an

attentive young reader that the whole cannot have been that conspiratorial after all), and a bank was occupied (which suggests that getting money in hand was a further real aim of the insurgents).

Since the uprising was scheduled during the night, a white headgear was to distinguish friend and foe, together with slogans (like a secret society). The story of Zhu De inviting the Yunnanese military leaders whom he knew well to dine and gamble (and to then lock them up) also suggests his 'clandestine' coming back to Nanchang in July could not have been too secret either. The figure of a traitor explains the purported anticipation of the uprising which led to some chaos, it seems, but the 'enemy headquarters' were blocked and the troops there gave up, while the traitor leaking the plans of the uprising was caught. On the other hand, Communists imprisoned in the city were quickly liberated to sustain the uprising (40–43). The day of the uprising (1 August), Communist commander Nie Rongzhen also openly defected from the GMD with his own National Revolutionary Army troops and came to Nanchang, where the normal people are also said to have supported them and young men would supposedly readily flock to them (45). However, the label they still used was, as in United Front times, the National Revolutionary Army, of which Guo Moruo functioned as political head (which had been the background of his stay in Nanchang in spring).

This Nanchang Uprising was, according to the description and conforming to the official Party historiography, the beginning of the Party leading the military (which Mao famously mandated thereafter when moving with the rest of his men after the failed Autumn Harvest Uprising of September to Jinggangshan – see chapter 3.3 of the present book, which, however, puts Mao that way in a second line). Many important figures are said to have openly supported the brief uprising at the time in 1927, including Xu Teli 徐特立 (Mao's former teacher), Song Qingling (widow of Sun Yat-sen), He Xiangning (widow of Liao Zhongkai), and even GMD calligrapher Yu Youren 于右任 (who would end his days in Taiwan, but had been close to the GMD Left at the time) (46–47). Officially, a new Jiangxi government was declared on 2 August to claim legitimacy, and Li Lisan argued at the time that they were, in fact, the true successors of Sun Yat-sen (dead since 1925), thus challenging also the claim of the Wuhan government of Wang Jingwei who, however, called for a swift suppression and purge by the GMD also from his side, preparing for a compromise with Chiang Kai-shek's GMD faction.

Ye Jianying, in turn, who worked under cover on the GMD side, tried to channel military leaders over to the CCP or at least convince them to not move against Nanchang and the insurgents. Apparently, many GMD military leaders were, in fact, not very interested in a suppression (47–50). But in any case, the insurgent troops

would leave Nanchang quickly before enemy troops were brought in: during 3 to 5 August, most of them had moved out with the aim to arrive in Guangdong. (This, once more, makes obvious to the intended young reader that the whole uprising was just an affair of 1 to 3 August.) The remaining or left-behind Communists or collaborators would predictably pay the price thereafter.

The insurgent troops, in turn, met many difficulties on their way on, since the people were afraid to give them food (now that their 'illegal' character had become obvious). Many deserted, but the true revolutionaries remained, as the narrative assures the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet. While the later 'apostate' Zhang Guotao is cast in predictably negative terms, stating that he was an opium addict and thus feeble,[127] others are profiled as positive figures, including the elderly Xu Teli (once Mao's teacher) and others who would briskly walk all the way, and even showed revolutionary optimism (thus demonstrating to the intended young reader that setbacks could never hamper a true revolutionary who draws strength from his convictions).

The insurgent troops went over Ruijin (in Jiangxi) to Fujian and then to Guangdong, and on the way, young people are said to have willingly entered their ranks, while also Chen Yi, another future important military figure of the CCP who had not made it in time to join the uprising itself, joined on the way. Obviously, however, they had to also cooperate with local bandits on the road for survival (a somewhat delicate topic as we noticed, e.g., with Jinggangshan in chapter 3.3 of the present book) who, however, would betray them.

Thus, near Ruijin, battles had also to be fought by the remainder of the insurgent troops. During those battles, the Communists, it is argued, did not kill many but just scared them away, while their own numbers were decimated (which an attentive reader easily understands as that they were on the flight and many deserted) (51–60). Only when briefly settling in Ruijin for the first time (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book on Ruijin, time before that place became the 'Chinese Moscow'), they would openly drop the (GMD) National Revolutionary Army flag. And there and then, incidentally, Guo Moruo would officially join the CCP, as did He Long (in fact initiated by Zhang Guotao)!

Moving on to Fujian, people proved supposedly more helpful, but when entering Guangdong, where the insurgents were supposed to build up a Communist base somewhere, in consideration of the many foreigners there, they rather used again the 'National Government' (*guomin zhengfu* 国民政府) label for themselves (i.e., covered their Communist identity once more). The decision to split up the troops in

127 Incidentally, also Zhu De had likely been a consumer of opium earlier but then managed to stop.

moving around was declared in hindsight as 'wrong' since this de facto led to repeated defeats. In Shantou 汕头 at the coast, the building of a Soviet base area was finally attempted, and in Shantou and nearby Chaozhou 潮州, 7 'red days' were lived out (in late September 1927), but also here everything quickly crumbled. When having to give up both places, Shantou and Chaozhou, the remaining troops decided to use henceforth clearly the red flag. Their aim was by now Haifeng 海丰 and Lufeng 陆丰 in Guangdong (where Peng Pai was about to establish a Soviet base area).[128] Another part of the troops was on the move to Hainan, others fled by sea to Shanghai or Hong Kong – which bespeaks the military crisis during this first phase of the 'Communist Army'. Zhu De, in turn, moved around with his troops in the border region of Jiangxi, Fujian, and Guangdong, and many deserted. But Zhu De and Chen Yi, who stayed together, trained their men in guerrilla tactics, and they finally led the rest of their troops to meet Mao in Jinggangshan (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), the by then already established first Communist base area (61–68). That way, it becomes obvious that the narrative line to connect the later Red Army (and subsequent PLA) back to the Nanchang Uprising is a very thin thread, mainly represented by Zhu De. But it would lead over him and his final move up to Jinggangshan to the merger with Mao's men to build up a more sustainable Red Army (while those not being of either Zhu De's or Mao's troops are edited out from the storyline – different from the more recent *Fengbei* narrative, see below).

To provide 'historical proofs' for the presented narrative, the 'patriotic' booklet focuses on several material items on display in the memorial hall, which are, however, often only indirectly connected to the uprising as such: paper slips show how money of the (GMD) National Revolutionary Army was cleverly channeled by two Communists to the insurgents. Guo Moruo's anti-Chiang article of March 1927 is another 'proof' displayed (though being in fact only a rather remote background piece). The working tools purportedly used to restore the demolished bridge to prevent the quick defection of He Long's and Ye Ting's troops also shown in the *Zhonghua hun* video are a further material 'proof'. (In fact, these tools had been donated years afterwards to the museum.) This is to strengthen the storyline that the 'success' of the uprising was only possible with the active help of the populace. Some of the original interior of the Grand Hotel is also on display, with the rooms recreated to look 'like at the time'. Four large water buckets are also taken as a 'proof' that the people sustained the uprising, since the cook of the Grand Hotel purportedly filled them with drinking water for the insurgents! (The Japanese would use them later during the war for bathing, but this example also shows the very

128 For more on this Soviet base area, cf. Galbiati (1985).

forced way to find some material to 'document' the brief uprising.) Utensils of the tailor who quickly made uniforms for the young recruits who are said to have readily flocked to the insurgents are shown as another 'proof' of popular support. He Long, in turn, is represented by a tea set, which he gave to the school principal of the Anglican school he had occupied (to thank him, which had been also shown in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip). That former principal would hand it to the memorial hall in 1956 (when religious schools could not operate as such any longer since many years). Zhu De's pistol is another key artefact: he is said to have deeply cherished it and had it always with him even into PRC times, the reader learns (though there is no obvious particular relation to the Nanchang Uprising, rather serving as an object standing for Zhu De). The pistol is to also show the 'truth' that political power grows out of the barrel of the gun, as Mao termed it (at the '7 August conference' of 1927). On the other hand, He Long's watch is to symbolise the starting hour of the uprising, and Wu Yuzhang's suitcase is on display, too. He had come to Nanchang to join the 'leftists' there and went with the insurgents to the South, keeping the suitcase until PRC times. (As mentioned, he would be harassed and died during the Cultural Revolution.) (69–77) He Long's CCP registration is another item displayed (though not directly connected to Nanchang): as mentioned, he joined the CCP together with Guo Moruo only later the year in Ruijin. According to He Long's later statement, he had tried for a long time to join the CCP, but as a militarist had to be 'tested' before (which obscures the fact that he switched sides only at the time of the Nanchang Uprising) (77–78).

Zhou Enlai, in turn, is materially present in the exhibition with a blanket that he supposedly took with him and then donated in the Hailufeng 海陆丰 Soviet (Guangdong) to an old woman who cared for him when he fell ill there. In 1957, at the 30th anniversary of the Hailufeng Soviet (established in November 1927 by Peng Pai in the area of Haifeng and Lufeng, hence the name), the woman's family donated the blanket (which, again is thus an item only very indirectly connected to the Nanchang Uprising, bespeaking the dearth of artefacts to show for this elusive event). Zhou Enlai's role as the purported political leader of the whole uprising came into focus during that year of 1957, when the 30th anniversary of the PLA was celebrated. A *lianhuanhua* picture booklet was to be made on '1 August' (which reflects how the event of the Nanchang Uprising was to be memorialised in PRC times): Zhou Enlai would correct the draft (which is on display), stressing that it was, in fact, not only him, but also He Long, Ye Ting, and Zhu De who should be credited for the Nanchang Uprising; and that it was also not only him to block the later 'apostate' Zhang Guotao (who wanted to postpone the uprising) at the time. That way, Zhou Enlai tried to channel the commemoration of the event into a

broader perspective. Zhou also added some cautious hindsight self-criticism because he supposedly thought only militarily at the time, and not enough about the land revolution and peasants (which Mao, the insinuation goes, justly did already then).[129] He also pointed out the land revolution undertaken in Jinggangshan (to get in Mao) aside of the military Nanchang Uprising (which explains why the two movements should be linked later in commemoration), and he added also commander Liu Bocheng to those with merits (which meant much for the individuals thus 'sanctioned').[130] Zhu De, in turn, the top authority for the Communist military, stressed that He Long and Ye Ting had key merits as it were their troops who in the end did the uprising. That way, one sees how the early PRC-era memorialisation had to be very careful to consider the history of the Nanchang Uprising in terms of the then normative ideological context and with a view to the fate of the people named to have had 'credits' (or 'culpability'), and to consider Mao's sensibilities. The memorial hall's name, in turn, was written by then vice premier Chen Yi in the late 1950s (who had not participated in the uprising himself but joined the remainder of the troops moving around Southern China later, as mentioned) (79–82).

Interestingly, this 'patriotic' booklet also hints at some of the problems the exhibition entailed, which obviously met many criticisms. This becomes clear when it is stated that it needed 'many revisions'. There were too few materials (given the elusiveness of the topic), and no 'scholarly adequate level' in the explanations (likely alluding to the problems of the political line to be followed). In 1997 at the 70th anniversary of the uprising (and thus the Army's purported 'birth'), all was rewritten again (which shows that the definite version of the PLA's history remained a contested issue). Using some artefacts and many photos, charts, paintings, statues, endorsements, sound and light effects, models and moving electronic media, the memorial tried to update the exhibition. Also 'new historical discoveries' were to be worked in (i.e., necessary adaptations of the narrative), and also non-CCP people should by now be integrated. The 'enemies' archives' were checked, too (to provide a supposedly well-informed presentation). Obvioulsy, it had, e.g., not been clear (or disclosed) before that Zhu De had officially acted as the GMD security chief in Nanchang in the months before the uprising (84–85). In sum, the narrative had to be calibrated carefully, and – as will become obvious when comparing the framing of 2019 to it – some sensitive names were not yet to be mentioned in the late 1990s.

129 One may recall that Zhou only became a close collaborator of Mao after the Zunyi Conference – see chapter 3.3. There, the main issue had been military tactics. But his 'self-criticism' might be also an additional reason why he is stressed in artwork as the only 'civil' between the military leaders in Nanchang.

130 Liu Bocheng had been criticised at the time, but managed to stay on, if with little real power.

For the 'patriotic' use, the site also discloses some of the concrete workings of such a 'patriotic education showcase bases'. The memorial hall itself was to serve as main 'authentication' of the uprising and its legacy. The former Grand Hotel was therefore encircled by a wall to distance it from the surrounding to not disturb the view, and the new group of statues was designed. To better serve 'patriotic education' in practice, the staff received additional training, and the explanation was polished. The guides were also called upon to transmit the sense of the artefacts (which are, in fact, not self-explaining). Guide competitions should motivate them, and they should be able to also answer questions. Free entry was to help augment visitor numbers, and souvenirs and a photo service (at the 1990s still in demand) were considered helpful to make the site attractive. Travelling exhibitions or special exhibitions should also heighten the attractiveness, as well as focused publications. In terms of use, the site was chosen to serve as a 'patriotic education' base for the military area of Nanjing (in Jiangsu), as well as for Jiangxi Province (which explains the many cadets shown in the videos), to be expected at such a PLA place. The site, however, served also for the Communist Youth League, and for the secondary and primary schools (which the videos also showed). *Renmin ribao* also wrote about the site to propagate it nationally. Groups of students and of the Communist Youth League came also for summer camps, and the site also served for their swearing-in ceremonies. Furthermore, the families of the insurgents would come to visit. Some who found their forebears not represented, sent photos to be taken in as further material to expand the exhibition. Party leaders endorsing the place included Chen Yi who had, as mentioned, written the memorial's name in the late 1950s when it was recently set up, and Jiang Zemin in the 1990s (who was not only the general secretary at the time, but also the chairman of the central military commission) wrote its motto (86–90). Still, it is obvious that this place which had no connection to Mao was rather neglected until after the Cultural Revolution and in fact only gained in importance due to the rising weight of the PLA in the 1990s. It thus serves also to counter to some degree the stain on the PLA's vest caused by the military's role in the Tiananmen events of 1989 (like in the Korean War memorial discussed above in chapter 4.1).

Moving on two decades from the above late 1990s' framing of this 'patriotic education showcase base', once can observe with the 2019 *Fengbei* (Liu Yuyan 2019) description, how the concerns of the Xi Jinping era have changed the narrative. Here, it is pointed out from the start that the site covers five locations in Nanchang (and is thus less centred on the Grand Hotel, where the civilian 'leaders' lodged, than before). After the opening of the Grand Hotel as a memorial in the late 1950s, many political leaders (though not Mao) apparently did visit over time (which had

not been disclosed in the above 1990s' narrative which only names Zhu De and Jiang Zemin): Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Dong Biwu, He Long, Chen Yi, Peng Zhen 彭真, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping all came at some point (26). The Grand Hotel, built in 1922, is explained to the intended reader as a convenient place insofar as all kinds of non-local people lodged there, and thus the influx of the revolutionaries would be less noted. Today, the 'recreated' rooms can be seen there by the visitor. He Long's headquarters at the Anglicans was in fact the place from where he, Liu Bocheng, and Zhou Yiqun 周逸群 directed the uprising militarily. There are still bullet holes to be seen, and in 1982, the place became a historical protection unit. Ye Ting's headquarters, in turn, was in a secondary school, while Zhu De's 'military education association' site was located in a former primary school (which also suggests to the intended reader how schools could be used revolutionarily). In sum, the accent is more on the military side of the uprising in this new framing. After the founding of the PRC, Zhu De would visit Nanchang in 1954 (when the Grand Hotel still served as the Jiangxi Museum), and wrote on 'his former table' (in the 'military education association' site which was soon labelled as a cultural relic) a long endorsement (27–28). At Zhu De's former home, in turn, the modern tourist can visit the building, built in the 1920s but imitating Ming architecture style. Since Zhou Enlai also briefly stayed there, Zhou Enlai's briefcase is placed on a table to suggest how this might have looked like, back then (29–30).

The narrative quickly summarises the background and evolution of the uprising, to then describe how the insurgent troops moved on and how they nearly dissolved. For the aftermath, the *Fengbei* narrative adds that He Long would attempt to set up a base area between Hunan and Hubei, while Zhu De, with Chen Yi, would finally lead their remaining men to Jinggangshan to meet Mao's men. Many of the other Nanchang Uprising insurgents would be involved subsequently in further uprisings. But in the long run, most importantly, many of the Nanchang participants would be of influence in the Red Army later, fighting also against the Japanese (which is to underline their 'patriotic' credentials), or in the Chinese Civil War (1946–1949). In this context, the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative also mentions the delicate name of Lin Biao 林彪, the later 'fallen angel' of the PLA,[131] who would dominate the PLA in the 1960s. He is thus 're-admitted' as a man of the PLA's 'first hour'. A less delicate name is commander Nie Rongzhen who was also already participating in the Nanchang Uprising – although he was not there at the 'first shot' but leading his

131 It is notable that Lin Biao is mentioned in this Xi Jinping-era summary. After his purported assassination plans on Mao and deadly flight out of China in 1971, his legacy in the PLA had become sensitive. But things have relaxed in his case, as we will see also in the case of the Civil War campaigns where he was crucial (see below chapter 4.3).

men to quickly join the insurgents in Nanchang. Other later military leaders were also already participating in Nanchang, including Su Yu 粟裕 (who would become an important military figure in the Civil War – see below chapter 4.3 for the Huai–Hai Campaign). Likely this broad legacy in terms of later military careers is why the memorialisation of this short uprising of 1927 has been not only institutionalised in 1933 in Ruijin, but also survived into the PRC and was stepped up after Mao's death by the PLA. For the institutionalised commemoration of the Red Army's 'birth', in 1933 in June, it had been decided by the Party in Ruijin that '8–1' should be the date. (Interestingly, the day was called at the time the '8–1 *anti-imperialist* war day', although the 'enemy' had been the GMD. Possibly, this was to downgrade the GMD as just a long arm of the 'imperialists'.) In any case, the Red Army was profiled as the armament of 'the people' in contrast. In July 1933, the specific activities to be held on this Army Day were decided upon (which was by now addressed only as '8–1'). At that 1 August 1933, the acknowledged leaders of the Nanchang Uprising (which did not include Mao, one may recall) were honoured, and a military parade was held. Similar activities were held in other smaller Communist base areas, suggesting the official and binding character of this decision.

The institutionalised commemoration of the uprising also meant that one had to consider the flag of the Red Army (later the PLA). Interestingly, Mao's Autumn Harvest Uprising had used on the banner the sickle and *axe* (which was also used in the Hailufeng Soviet and in Guangzhou and later in Jinggangshan). Only in 1931 the axe was replaced (!), taking over the international symbol of *hammer* and sickle, with the hammer intending industry, while the axe had also stood for agriculture like the sickle. A further interesting point is that '8–1' was to be written in calligraphy on the flag (which once more shows that handwriting has been assigned a special role – cf. Kraus 1991), while colours were to distinguish the different types of regiments (infantrist, cavallerist, artillerist, engineering, sanitary). In 1934 at the second Chinese Soviet congress in Ruijin (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), various national symbols were discussed and decided upon, including this flag. In March 1949, finally, the definite form of the flags as they are today were chosen in a 'democratic' process by the Party Congress delegates, then still in Xibaipo (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), to choose between various proposals. At present, the flags should thus be revered and cared for 'as much as one's life' (32–39). This shows that in the Xi Jinping era, the flags and similar national symbols have become ever more important, as also the legislation on flag reverence, above all of the national flag, introduced in 1990 and reinforced ever since, proves.[132] But the

132 Cf. also above the remarks for the Korean War memorial in chapter 4.1.

broader legacy of the Nanchang Uprising in the sense of later military careers of the participants who had a stake in its commemoration also broadens the relevance of this brief uprising: while the late 1990s' narrative on this 'patriotic education showcase base' could only present a thin line of continuity over Zhu De, the new framing takes in many other actors who could in hindsight prove that the PLA had, in fact, many personal links to this otherwise seemingly marginal event in Nanchang, and thus clung to this date of 1 August 1927 as the foundational moment of the Army.

Case study: the Baise Uprising Memorial Hall

While the brief Nanchang Uprising was granted its enduring legacy by its being chosen as the moment of 'birth' of the Red Army, today's PLA, which has also a major stake in the whole 'patriotic education' endeavour, as we repeatedly noted, other Communist sites of 'revolutionary uprisings' covered by the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists, have been less secured in their legacy. These lesser secured ones include sites equally connected to Communist leaders beyond Mao: e.g., the Hunanese Pingjiang 平江 Uprising of early 1928 connected to Peng Dehuai (who was, as mentioned, only posthumously rehabilitated after the Cultural Revolution), or the Baise 百色 Uprising in Guangxi of late 1929 connected to Deng Xiaoping (though he had only helped to prepare it but was not even present during the uprising itself!).[133] The latter place, upgraded after Deng's death (1997) and banking on its relation to Deng, China's paramount leader since the late 1970s, had its memorial **Baise qiyi jinianguan** 百色起义纪念馆 (Baise Uprising Memorial Hall) (Guangxi) (list 2) declared a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001. To highlight Deng's contributions beyond the established ones of Mao, the place was subsequently even designated as one of twelve key areas of 'red tourism' years later. Thus, in 2009, the 80th anniversary of the Baise Uprising was celebrated with an added huge memorial park as a 'red travel destination', to boost the local economy.[134]

The 'patriotic' listing of the site is the more telling as in this case almost nothing of the times survived physically, but for a building used as headquarters, which is, however, not even at the place of the memorial hall listed. (The said building was originally a *huiguan* or native place organisation hall of merchants from eastern Guangdong.) However, with the topic of the Baise Uprising in today's Guangxi

133 See Zhou (2013: 254–255). Cf. also Pantsov / Levine (2015: 71) and Dillon (2015: 37).

134 Cf. chapter 1 on the connection of Red Tourism and the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.

Zhuang Autonomous Region, the special contribution of ethnic minorities to the Communist Revolution can be underlined which goes well with policy priorities since the 1990s.[135] That way, this site clearly reflects more present-day policy priorities than real historical significance and is supposed to encourage tourists to come to this otherwise still fairly remote area with a substantial minority population, mostly Zhuang 壮, but also Yao 瑶, Miao 苗, Yi 彝 and others. The memorial park in Baise, enlarged in 2009 as the central place to commemorate the event, includes besides the memorial hall of the uprising by now also an ethnic minorities museum, by this providing an interesting link to a local identity reading of the place, incidentally even arguing for stretching the latter back in time to the Neolithic.[136]

The 'Baise Uprising Memorial Hall' plays up the minority area aspect already in its outer design. Given the elusiveness of the historical referent, due to lack of physical remnants of the 1929 uprising and the ensuing temporary Youjiang 右江 Soviet base area, the exhibition of this memorial hall mostly provides maps, some written rules published later, and a few paraphernalia, including Deng Xiaoping's horsewhip which a peasant is said to have kept as a treasured relic in his home and passed on to his family to save for later times – suggesting the simple peasant sensed early on that this young short man would finally become an important figure. (The wall with the hole where the peasant supposedly 'hid' Deng's whip is duly recreated in the exhibition). To further make up for the lack of tangible heritage, outside of the memorial hall, the visitor (as I observed in 2016) encounters Deng Xiaoping's calligraphy on stones in the park (once more underlining the importance of handwriting we already noted at many occasions in the present book applied for 'patriotic' sites), as well as sculpture art from artists all over China which acknowledge the minorities' contribution to the revolution, if clearly as only supportive to the guiding Han who helped the minorities in turn to be 'liberated'.

Trying to make the best of the lack of material, the park advertises above all its 'modern' and 'multi-facetted' way of presenting revolutionary history this way.[137] Thus, outside the memorial hall, the sculptures in the park accentuate the cooperation especially between the Zhuang and the CCP. The visitor is also told that in 2010, the Baise Uprising Memorial Hall was granted the additional label of a 'national integrity education base' (*quanguo lianzheng jiaoyu jidi* 全国廉政教育基地)

135 In fact, this aspect is particularly stressed in the semi-official history of the Youjiang Soviet (see below) (Zhou 2013).

136 For a brief account on the museum in the context of 'patriotic sites' in Guangxi, see Shen (2004: 165–167).

137 This becomes clear from the various leaflets provided at the place. See also the description of the memorial hall in the context of remembering revolutionary 'martyrs' of Guangxi: Guangxi Zhuangzu zizhiqu minzhengting (2007: 22–27).

by the Central Discipline Inspection Commission– see chapter 1, appendix 3), thus linking 'patriotism' with 'anti-corruption' campaigning so central to recent political priorities (but without any apparent connection to the Baise Uprising topic as such).

Linked to the minorities issue, the role of songs in propaganda is a peculiar feature of the Youjiang Soviet base area (and its former counterpart, the Zuojiang 左江 Soviet base area to the South around Longzhou 龙州,[138] the two rivers of Youjiang and Zuojiang merging downstream into one river near the regional capital Nanning 南宁). This role of songs points to a common characteristic of local minority culture, given also the rather low level of formal education. [139]

In terms of history, the Youjiang Soviet base area which had been established with the help of the military commanders Yu Zuobai 俞作柏 and Li Mingrui 李明瑞 (incidentally cousins) who had an on and off relationship with the GMD, was largely left to itself already after less than a year when most of the Communist soldiers (the so-called Seventh Red Army) moved on in 1930 under the pressure of enemy troops (as well as under central Party directives) to finally join the Jiangxi Central Soviet in 1931 (cf. Ruijing in chapter 3.3 of the present book), and the local finishing blow came for the Youjiang Soviet in 1932 when enemy armies conquered the last remaining areas.[140] (Incidentally, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip – see below – leaves this out, framing the move of the Seventh Red Army rather as a 'successful' reunification with the main part of the Red Army in Ruijin, i.e. the Central Soviet in Jiangxi.)

At that point in time, in 1932, commander Li Mingrui was already dead. In spite of having joined the Party and led the Seventh Red Army out of Guangxi, he had been liquidated 'erroneously' by the Communists after arrival in the Jiangxi Soviet in 1931 since they did not trust him (which recalls the fate of the leaders of the local militias in the Jinggangshan case – see chapter 3.3 of the present book).[141] Notably,

138 General Li Mingrui's troops there, close to the Vietnam border, were then named the Eighth Red Army, to be later merged with the Seventh Red Army.

139 Obviously, the numerous minority population made for this Soviet base's special consideration of basic education and the marked use of songs for propaganda. In fact, when celebrating the 80th anniversary, the local 'Deng Xiaoping's early thinking study group' came up not only with historical volumes on the Youjiang Soviet, but also with a collection of 'red songs' used in the whole area, including also the adjacent Zuojiang area (Liang 2009).

140 For an official summary of this Soviet base area's history, see Zhou (2013). The publication was one of the long-term outcomes of the celebrations of the 80th anniversary of the Baise Uprising in 2009. A perspective with more attention to ethnic contributions is provided by Han (2014).

141 Like with the Jinggangshan 'bandit' supporters, also the Guangxi commander Li Mingrui's execution in 1931 as a suspected 'traitor' was blamed in hindsight on 'leftist' tendencies in the CCP. Only later, he would be rehabilitated. On the problems of how to evaluate him during PRC times, see

in the memorial hall, the enumeration of 'martyrs' (who are acknowledged by a 'revolutionary martyr certificate', of which one of 1991, handed out by the Minzhengbu 民政部 or Ministry of Civil Affairs, is also on display in the exhibition) includes several cases of those declared killed 'errouneously' by their Communist comrades during the 'wrong enlargement of purges in the Party' in Ruijin 1931–1934, often to be posthumously acknowledged as 'martyrs' in 1945 by the very same Party. (On the 'patriotic' reading of Ruijin as a Party place and its witch hunt purges, cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book.)

This open statement of the Party's former deadly 'errors' in the context of the 'martyrs', affecting people of local importance, is a very peculiar feature of this 'patriotic education showcase base' in Baise, though only openly addressed on-site. By this, it also implicitly reasserts its local(ist) positioning in the overarching 'national' agenda. Other deaths were (more predictably) occuring when 'the enemy' moved in (although the exhibition remains vague on the details), i.e., those who were locals or had to stay behind and could not move away together with the Seventh Red Army, often paid with their lives.

The 'Xiaoping hall' in the memorial, in turn, puts the accent on Deng Xiaoping who 'guided the Zhuang' and other minorities (see fig. 4.2.2), and also points out that Deng realised when on the way with the Seventh Red Army, that the order of the Central Committee to attack large cities was simply unrealistic. Thus, he would change the plan on his own (somewhat like Zhou Enlai in the case of the Nanchang Uprising, deciding on spot in defiance of orders) and rather had the troops move toward the Jiangxi Soviet. In short, the disastrous evolution of the whole aftermath (since only a fraction of the Communist troops ever arrived in the Jiangxi Soviet) which was to haunt Deng's later career, is presented as not having been his fault. Rather, he had prevented the worst. In 1931, however, he, too, would be punished 'erroneously' in Ruijin, but could thereafter save himself and participate in the Long March in 1934 nonetheless.

To bridge the time to the present (as I observed on-site in 2016), the exhibition presents a photo showing present general secretary Xi Jinping visiting the memorial museum, singing red songs with minority people, thus moving beyond the accent on Deng Xiaoping who is hailed throughout as a Party leader deeply caring for the Zhuang minority. Most crucial for the commemoration of this brief uprising and the local Soviet base area is, however, the fact that several of the Zhuang who participated in the Baise Uprising would also later become important figures in the PLA

Hutchings (1985). As will be recalled from chapter 3.3 on the Ruijin case, Deng Xiaoping later claimed that he had stopped the worst 'leftist' excesses there.

and would have a vested interest in making sure that this particular history and contribution would be duly remembered.

Fig. 4.2.2 Indoor diorama of Deng talking with minority people before the uprising (Baise) (photograph by the author, 2016)

Before the major enlargement of the Baise Uprising site was undertaken in 2009, the situation at the time of the 'patriotic' listing of the memorial hall (2001) can be gleaned from the filmic representation in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 16), produced in the early 2000s by Guangxi TV. The camera moves fast through the winding exhibition route of the time which is supposed to allude to the 'winding path of history' (hinting at the difficulties on the ground, but also in commemoration, given Deng Xiaoping's problems he encountered later because of that uprising and its consequences). While many texts and only few artefacts are shown, the narrator tells the national TV audience the story of how the commanders Yu Zuobai and Li Mingrui cooperated with the Party which was represented at the time by Deng Xiaoping (under alias), Zhang Yunyi 张云逸, and Chen Haoren 陈豪人 (an alias of Chen Zhaoli 陈昭礼) locally. Preserved written materials on decisions to make land revolution on the one hand, and to fight against the GMD in Guangxi on the other are shown. To achieve this, Deng Xiaoping favoured a base in Youjiang (where in fact a local Zhuang, Wei Baqun 韦拔群, had already prepared the

ground). Deng, starting from realities, decided to attempt a cooperation with the militarists Yu Zuobai and Li Mingrui. In Baise, 'the enemy' was weak at the time, while the peasant movement (under Wei Baqun) was strong. Wei Baqun, the Zhuang, is presented as a student of the Guangzhou Peasant Movement Training Institute where Mao had also taught, from where he had come back to Guangxi to set up a place for ideological study in a cave, the so-called 'Lenin cave', as headquarters for a local peasant movement. There, new cadres were to be trained for all of Guangxi.

According to the TV film clip (and twisting history), Deng Xiaoping himself led the attack on Baise city, while a painting shows the insurgents, including many minority men, with guns. They would meet with Wei Baqun's peasants, making a *huiguan* (native place organisation hall) their headquarters which is presented in the film clip (though not being at the place of the 'patriotically listed' memorial hall, as mentioned). But this is at least a physical remnant of the time of the Baise Uprising in December 1929. Exhibited materials like maps, machine guns, and a trumpet are shown, while a painting recreates a scene of how the insurgents disarmed the enemy troops and thus took their guns. Another important physical item is the printing press with which the local revolutionary newspaper *Youjiang ribao* was printed (during the times of the Youjiang Soviet), thus counterbalancing the military aspect with the propagandistic one.

In December 1929, the Baise Uprising, presented as led by Deng (who had, in fact, already left) and Zhang Yunyi, together with Chen Haoren, was successfully staged, the national TV audience learns. On the second day, the insurgents would hiss the flag for a Youjiang government which became the centre of the larger Soviet base area (and shows once more the importance of legitimation via the purported government function). A Guangxi native would be named head of the government, while an old flag as one of the few original items is presented, and a model of the whole area with little red light bulbs illustrates the borders to mark the geographical extension of the base area for the national TV audience. In May 1930, land revolution started in the base area, and for the local workers, evening schools were set up. Equality of the sexes and free marriage are further accomplishments named for the Communist government in the Soviet base area. Deng's horsewhip he had once forgotten there was supposedly recovered in the wall of a house and is, in fact, the only material thing left to tell of that history with Deng Xiaoping at all. In October 1930, the main Communist troops would leave the base area and move north to Jiangxi to become part of the Red Army, while the left-behinds under Wei Baqun and Chen Haoren tried to secure the Soviet base area thereafter (without much chance). After they lost their lives in 1932, others took over, but the TV film clip

indirectly discloses that only in 1949, the area would be finally 'liberated' for good (i.e., in the meantime, it had been lost for the Communists, the TV audience may conclude). From the times of the base area, Wei Baqun's watch, bell, and some handwritten materials are on display to tell of this local hero, while some hats, calabashes, or towels that the red soldiers used are other material objects in the exhibition. For the use of the site, the national TV audience is made to observe children, some with minority clothes, going up to the memorial hall with a flag, then swearing loyalty, which is to demonstrate that the memorial hall serves its function of a 'patriotic education showcase base' well in this minority area. On the other hand, as for the political legacy of this uprising, Deng made a report in 1931 on the whole Baise Uprising and Youjiang Soviet affair (when in Ruijin and needing to defend himself), thus memorialising it and 'drawing lessons' from it (in fact, he would be strongly criticised for it by the Party), while the camera focuses on his seated (upper-half) statue, laying his hand at his ear to 'hear the people' according to his motto: 'I am a son of the Chinese people, I love my country and my people' (which incidentally extends the recently reappraised value of 'filial duty' to the Chinese nation at large). (Cf. also on Deng Xiaoping chapter 5.3 of the present book). That way, any possible local reading of the Baise site is brushed aside in the national TV film clip. In the end, the TV audience is assured that then-general secretary Jiang Zemin praised the Baise Uprising in 1990 (i.e., shortly after the Tiananmen protests the crushing of which remained as a blood stain on Deng's vest), arguing that this Baise Uprising was a historical moment pointing to China's future. In 1999 when the memorial hall was newly set up at the 70th anniversary of the uprising and after Deng's demise, Jiang Zemin also wrote the hall's name in his calligraphy as a late tribute to the passed-away leader, salvaging the latter's legacy.

Compared to this nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip, the 2002 official collection on narrative framings on the second list 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002) puts more stress on the larger context in which the (in itself elusive) Baise Uprising was played out. The latter, the narrative summarises, was after all a consequence of the 1927 desaster of the bloody end of the United Front with the GMD, which taught the CCP that it had to arm itself, but also, that it had to rely on itself rather than on the Soviet model (which prepares for the 'Chinese characteristics' so central to Deng Xiaoping's later ideological framework). The Baise Uprising served in this historical context to bring anti-GMD activities to the minority areas. At first, the 'errors' of commanders Yu Zuobai and Li Mingrui in siding with Chiang Kai-shek in the latter's confrontation with the Guangxi clique militarists (who lost the contest and had to flee to Hong Kong) are explained to the

intended reader as due to their not yet giving full attention to the CCP 'guidance', but then they supposedly 'learnt' and asked for more CCP instructions. The CCP thereupon sent people openly and clandestinely to Guangxi, while Deng Xiaoping successfully worked to sideline the inner-Party 'leftists'. He convinced Yu and Li to free all incarcerated Communists in the area, and to hand out weapons to the peasant troops (that had been built up mainly by the local Zhuang peasant leader Wei Baqun). When Wang Jingwei tried to garner the support of Yu Zuobai and Li Mingrui against Chiang Kai-shek, the CCP warned them, but they still intended to collaborate with him (i.e., they had not yet completely 'learnt' to follow CCP 'guidance') and consequently failed. (Their own troops also were apparently not convinced to now move against Chiang Kai-shek on whose side they had fought before.) This supposedly spurred Deng Xiaoping into planning for an uprising on his own, using the occasion when the regular troops had left the area (1180–1182). (One may note that this 2002 narrative has Wei Baqun only as a minor figure, as could be seen also from the *Ai wo Zhonghua* narrative, to concentrate on the Han cadres, namely Deng Xiaoping – something that would change later, see below). Li Mingrui and Yu Zuobai finally decided to make common cause with the CCP, and Li Mingrui would even join the CCP later. (Incidentally, like the national TV film clip, this 2002 narrative does not mention anything about the end of Li at the hands of the Party thereafter.)

Meanwhile, the CCP made preparations for the uprising by recruiting people and by propaganda (namely via publications). The uprising itself was set to start exactly 2 years after the (failed) Guangzhou Uprising of 1927, i.e., on 11 December 1929. The so-called Seventh Red Army of the Communists had many Zhuang among them, and mountain songs as a typical local minority custom were used as an effective propaganda means. While local resistance by the landlords was there, the Soviet base area could nevertheless be established and sustained over the following months until August 1930, and the city of Baise could also be 'retaken' in May 1930 (i.e., had been lost in the meantime, which is not spelt out, though), due to Li Mingrui's successful leadership who was the central commander in all these military moves. The insurgents handed the expropriated goods to the people to solicit their support. Deng (who had returned to Guangxi some weeks after the Baise Uprising) had intended to leave the area with the Communist troops only after the harvest (which would have also meant food and money), but the CCP's Central Committee ordered the troops to leave immediately to attack major cities in China's South (due to the so-called 'Li Lisan line'). Thus, the Seventh Red Army left earlier, and only a small group, including locals, remained to defend the base area over the following months (1183–1189).

However, for the Seventh Red Army, it turned out that it was not realistic to conquer large cities, and thus Deng changed plans on his own (also given the difficult communication with the Party central in Shanghai's underground) to lead the ever smaller remainder of the so-called Seventh Red Army to the Jiangxi Soviet. These men, the narrative assures the intended reader, endured hardships, hunger, and cold, and they also had to cross the Yao minority area which was apparently no easy task. In July 1931, the men finally arrived in the Jiangxi Soviet. There, the narrative states, they were welcomed with banners (not mentioning that they would be persecuted by their Communist 'comrades' thereafter!). Wei Baqun and others had meanwhile remained in Guangxi to defend the Youjiang Soviet, fighting as guerrilla. The local people who sustained them would be killed by GMD troops in revenge, while especially the Guangxi general Bai Chongxi 白崇禧, often called the 'new Zhuge Liang 诸葛亮' (181–234 AD, China's iconic strategist) due to his military strategic ways, systematically wiped out the revolutionaries to put an end to the Soviet base areas. In typical heroising fashion, the narrative points out to the intended reader that the leaders, namely Wei Baqun, the local Zhuang leader, could nevertheless be killed only by treason among his own entourage (1190–1194).

As for the political legacy of the Baise Uprising, the 2002 narrative points out the various important figures that visited the site and thus endorsed it: beyond Jiang Zemin in 1990, also Zhu Rongji 朱镕基 (at the time of writing this 2002 narrative, China's premier) came in person in 1995 (then being vice premier), and in 1999 at the 70th anniversary of the Baise Uprising, the PLA's political head Yu Yongbo 于永波 opened the new memorial hall with great media coverage. In the exhibition, in terms of material heritage, some weapons of the Seventh Red Army or the watch of Wei Baqun, some printed propaganda materials, and Deng's horsewhip are presented. Back then, the Soviet system in the base area is said to have brought liberation, land revolution, and specifically the liberation of women to an area where up to then at the marriage of a peasant, the prerogative of the 'first night' was entitled to the landowner. The Soviet system should thus be acknowledged as clearly 'benign' for the locals. Deng's manuscript of the report on the situation in the Soviet base area is a further 'treasure' of the exhibition which was authenticated by Deng himself in 1989 (!) and given to the museum (though not mentioning the many problems this report had created once for Deng Xiaoping and his career). Since there is not much material that can be shown, a recreation of a scene of how the GMD massacred villagers is integrated to suggest how the locals, in turn, also suffered for the revolution. Finally, the 'martyrs' and 'heroes' of the uprising and the Seventh Red Army are mentioned (without any details of their fate under their fellow Communists thereafter, though), as well as how Baise had developed in recent times,

under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping when the paramount leader of the whole of China. To round out the overall sanguine presentation, the narrative adds that in 2001, the year of its patriotic listing, the memorial hall even won a museum prize in China (its meagre material holdings notwithstanding) (1194–1198). As one may note, this presentation, like the TV film clip, was careful to evade all problematic aspects (which are, as mentioned above, more obvious in the more recent exhibition observed on-site in 2016).

Compared to the Deng-focused narratives of around the time when the memorial was listed in 2001, not long after Deng's death in 1997, the new official narrative for the national public in the *Fengbei* series of 2019 (Peng / Feng 2019) of the Xi Jinping era develops a somewhat different storyline, being much more reserved on Deng's role. The memorial, as is here finally disclosed, was in fact already opened in 1961 as the 'Youjiang geming wenwuguan' 右江革命文物馆 (Youjiang revolutionary cultural relics hall), i.e., not labelled after the brief Baise Uprising but referring to the (more enduring) Youjiang Soviet base area! (95) In 1961, as might be recalled, Deng had started with Liu Shaoqi to redirect the economic disaster of the Great Leap Forward policies of Mao and the ensuing Great Famine (1958–1962). The renaming of the exhibition hall into Baise Uprising Memorial Hall happened, according to this new narrative, in fact only in 1996 when Deng (for whose later political career the uprising entailed more negative than positive effects though he tried to defend his role repeatedly)[142] had officially stepped down from his positions but was still alive. (In fact, the present memorial hall as a 'new' version, is only of 1999 as mentioned, i.e., was reworked after Deng's death, and this also means, that the visits of Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji in 1990 and 1995 were, strictly speaking, not to the 'Baise Uprising Memorial Hall' but to the preceding exhibition.)

Two actors involved in the uprising (or its preparation) who would survive into PRC times, Deng and Zhang Yunyi (who was like Deng a non-Guangxi Communist, becoming a general of the PLA later) are in this 'new' version of the memorial hall of 1999 depicted in the bas-reliefs embellishing the memorial as the central leaders. In fact, it becomes evident that it had been above all Zhang Yunyi (who had – different from Deng – personally participated in the uprising) who actively pushed for the memorialisation of the Baise Uprising. The new 2019 narrative briefly introduces the intended reader of the Xi Jinping era to the single halls of the exhibition, pointing out with Deng Xiaoping's role, who has 'his' exhibition part still there, that he had been very young at the time but was already aware of the 'leftist' errors in the Party and realistic enough to cooperate with the militarists Yu Zuobai and Li

142 Cf. Pantsov / Levine (2015: esp. chapter 4).

Mingrui. To his credit, he thus supposedly saved the Guangxi CCP, and manoeuvered the revolutionaries through the unpredictable and ever changing military events of the time to organise the uprising. But the narrative on Deng Xiaoping is far from hagiographic. The few material items on display are enumerated, mainly personal belongings, and finally, the exhibition part on the modern development of Baise to become a modern city, which again reflects indirectly positively on Deng as a politician, is briefly mentioned. To historically contextualise the uprising, a link to the collapse of the 1927 Canton (Guangzhou) Commune when several of the survivors moved into Guangxi, is drawn (like in the 2002 narrative), and there the Communists soon came into key military and civilian positions. They also led troops to join the locally already extant peasant troops, and managed to channel weapons to the peasants. Deng, in turn, was the one to travel several times between the central committee of the CCP (then in Shanghai in the underground), reporting on the situation, and bringing in the directives. It was however, as is stressed here, in fact others who led the Baise Uprising on 11 December 1929, and who thereafter started land revolution and built up the Soviet base area, thus relativising Deng's role (97–99).

This way, this 2019 narrative belabours the point that Deng is no longer to be seen as the main central figure (in spite of the memorial's keeping to this tradition on the ground), but the local Zhuang, Wei Baqun. (Notably, he has even two photos in the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative and is visually dominating the whole chapter on the memorial). Together with Mao Zedong and Peng Pai (the latter equally known as a particularly radical revolutionary Communist),[143] Wei Baqun is here noted as one of the three major 'peasant leaders' that the early CCP produced! That he has become very much favoured is corroborated by the fact that in 2009 the ethnic Zhuang, Wei Baqun (who died in defence of the Youjiang Soviet base area back in 1932), was nominated as one of the '100 heroic model personalities that made an outstanding contribution to the establishment of New China' (like Lin Xiangqian of the 1923 Wuhan strike above). His biography in the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative is written in outright hagiographic style.[144]

As is pointed out to the intended reader of the Xi Jinping era, Wei Baqun came from a well-off family (incidentally like Deng Xiaoping, see chapter 5.3 of the present book), but proved his character already as a child when he would share secretly his own food with poorer classmates. The story that he stole money from

143 Cf. the critical assessment by Galbiati (1985), stressing the immense violence in Peng Pai's Hailufeng Soviet in Guangdong.

144 This goes well with Han Xiaorong's observation (Han 2014) that he has been turned into a demi-god with lots of stories told around his life.

his grandfather to pay for a doctor when his poor friend's father had hurt himself at work and could not afford the doctor, being scolded for the 'benign' theft, incidentally strongly resonates with a similar story told about young Deng Xiaoping (see chapter 5.3 of the present book). There is also the trope that he was a rebel already in school, standing up against injustice or nonsensical traditions, organising his classmates and thus showing leadership qualities early on. (Cf. similar stories told in the case of Mao, chapter 5.3 of the present book, showing to the intended readers that they, too, should consider their own agency.) Wei Baqun's early joining the army to fight strongman Yuan Shikai in the first years of the Republic is a life trajectory fully 'politically correct' in CCP view as well. Since he experienced the rampant corruption in the army, he however quit and went back to his home to build up local organisations. There, he agitated against the gentry, the intended reader learns, and supposedly helped the poor and disadvantaged, including a molested girl as representative of a particularly vulnerable group. The girl he defended would become his wife in return – a 'romantic' colouring of this 'hero narrative' (which at times verges on picturing him rather as a local bully, if for the 'just cause').

Soon, however, Wei Baqun would realise that he needed more ideological 'guidance', and thus, the narrative points out to the intended reader, he went to Guangzhou to the Peasant Movement Training Institute where Mao also taught. During his absence, the peasant organisation that he had built up in Guangxi at home was, however, attacked, and his village bore the brunt. His wife was also taken into custody (who then disappears from the storyline). He would then move back to take revenge, and asked the CCP for help (which portrays the Party as handing out 'justice' to right the wrongs).

On the other hand, when Deng Xiaoping came, he would use Wei Baqun as a local Zhuang to get the Zhuang but also the Yao minority on board (which is to show how the Party skillfully enlisted the minorities). Wei Baqun himself had apparently joined the CCP only in 1928 (i.e., years after he had been to the Peasant Movement Training Institute in Guangzhou which had only operated 1924–1926). His final fighting trajectory is also told to the reader in a novel-like fashion: he stayed on (or had to stay) when the Seventh Red Army moved away, fighting in a (Mao-style) guerrilla tactic way, but had a hard time evading the Guangxi general Bai Chongxi who was after him. Although Wei knew the territory well and could hide here and there, a traitor was in his closest entourage. In fact, according to the narrative, a relative of Wei 'sold his soul' (a very Faustian or Judas-like trope!) and tricked him to then kill him in sleep (to receive the bounty on Wei's head). The locals, however, purportedly wanted to shield his remains and buried Wei Baqun clandestinely, building a temple on top.

In PRC times, Wei Baqun would finally receive a tomb of honour, apparently proposed by another Zhuang general from the same village, the PLA general Wei Guoqing 韦国清 who had already participated in the Baise Uprising! (100–106) This way, for the 2019 narrative of the Xi Jinping era, the real 'hero' was Wei Baqun, not Deng Xiaoping. And it becomes also clear that figures in the PLA, not the least those of Zhuang ethnicity, were instrumental for making sure that this ephemeral uprising would not be forgotten, in spite of the lack of tangible remnants.

Case study: the Red Detachment of Women Memorial Park

A somewhat special example in this category of elusive sites in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system so closely connected to the PLA's interests, is finally the commemoration of the 'Red detachment of women' of the early 1930s in the **Qionghai-shi hongse niangzijun jinianyuan** 琼海市红色娘子军纪念园 (Qionghai city Red Detachment of Women Memorial Park) (Hainan Province) (list 2, 2001). This 'detachment' on Hainan Island has been immortalised by film and music,[145] and even more importantly as a ballet (famously also performed for Nixon during his epochal visit to the PRC in 1972), which itself was turned into a film.[146] During the Cultural Revolution, it became part of the official art canon, and is household knowledge all over China. (In 2005, a TV version was produced though it rewrote this 'red classic' in ways which spurred discussion.)[147] The basic thrust of the whole narrative is to show that also women can join active fighting – when properly led by (ironically fictitious!) male revolutionaries.[148]

In this physical Hainan 'patriotic education showcase base', however, the local problem is, once more, that not much in terms of historical materials of this

145 There was an early film version by Xie Jin 谢晋 of 1961, as well as the famous ballet version (1964) and also a Beijing opera version, which were turned into films, too. Cf. Harris (2010).

146 Nixon was apparently impressed, while his staff was more critical. (Cf. MacMillan 2007). The scene is rewritten in the Western opera *Nixon in China* of 1987 by John Adams (libretto by Alice Goodman, directed by Peter Sellars), turning Nixon's national security adviser Henry Kissinger into the landlord's evil torturer of the revolutionary heroine while Nixon's wife rushes to the stage to intervene and help the mistreated woman. (For an interpretation, cf. Johnson 2011: 218–241.)

147 See Qian (2008: 160-161). Already the 1961 film version done by famous PRC director Xie Jin originally had some scenes of romantic love between the female heroine and her CCP 'liberator' in, which however had been censored at the time as blurring the main message of class struggle. The TV version of 2005 played up this 'romantic' relation as was done with various remakes of 'red classics' at that time to raise interest with the audience.

148 In fact, the mainland-born fictive male figure was added in the plot! (Cf. Murray: 2017: 71, 185)

detachment survived, and thus the listed site is termed a 'memorial park' (which has been opened only in 2000 and 'patriotically' listed in 2001).[149] Notably, (as I observed on-site in 2016), the visitor is greeted at the entrance with a film scene poster showing the main female character in ballet pose (see fig. 4.2.3).

Fig. 4.2.3 Red Detachment of Women Memorial Park entrance with a film poster of the major heroine in ballet pose (Qionghai) (photograph by the author, 2016)

The park also covers a recreated manor of the evil landlord figuring in the opera / ballet / film versions of the tale, to provide something tangible to the visitors, in accordance to what they would expect to see, to 'show' where dramatic scenes they are familiar with from the fictitious renderings would have 'been'. In the memorial hall in the park, two of the three levels of the exhibition are based on the film, referring to particular scenes known from the film of the ballet, and at times recreating the scene settings in the memorial hall, while only the third level goes into the 'history' of the whole. The heroism of the women is mostly recreated by sculptures, whereas there are few photos, and these were often taken only later when the women had been arrested by the GMD.[150] The rebellious spirit of the girls is explained as

149 Cf. Lin (2023: 102).

150 Cameras were still rather rare at the time and mostly found in cities, so the lack of pictures of these rural women is unsurprising.

rooted in the extremely suppressive societal customs versus women,[151] which connects to the issue of land rights, thus creating a mix of land revolution and women's liberation.

Key to the women's societal awareness was, however, the possibility of several leading ones to go to school. Possibly, some of the known photos of the girls were also from the school files. The main organisers of the women who took over 'special tasks' (including spying) were, however, male CCP cadres. While some girls were killed fighting in 1931 and 1932, many survived, even though several of them had been taken into custody by the GMD until the outbreak of the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937). Notably, though, a leading female Communist (Feng Zengmin 冯增敏) who had personally received from Mao a gun and bullets (!) at a special reception in 1960 (since she was historically the real leader of the women's detachment),[152] was harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution, precisely at a time when the film version of the ballet (with its fictitious rewriting of history) became so famous! The few material items exhibited in the memorial include a flag, a trumpet, and an outfit the women wore at the time.

In filmic 'patriotic' presentation, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 17) TV film clip, produced by Hainan's Radio and TV Station, notably uses the device (otherwise rather rare in these film clips) of eye witnesses, having surviving old women talk about how they joined the detachment, how it functioned etc. The stress on the over 90-years old women (at the time of filming in the early 2000s) as individuals is notable, of whom many had hardly any formal education. They are made to talk as a 'proof' of this particular history. Obviously, the tricky question as to how they – usually teenagers back then – fared after the months of guerrilla activities, is not addressed. Most had to consent to a marriage afterwards and thus had to return to the 'normal' life they had tried to leave behind earlier. For heroisation, the famous ballet Chinese viewers will be familiar with is blended in, and the music and songs associated with it, while showing the idyllic Hainan Island landscape with cocos palms. Whereas a group statue (de facto placed in the city of Qionghai, not in the memorial park) presents the young women in their prime artistically, some of the by now old women are shown to the national TV audience visiting the new memorial park and the exhibition, featuring mostly texts, which they are likely to authenticate. At the park's entry the large poster of the ballet and a statue with doves, a straw hat with '*niangzijun*' written on it, and a trumpet are to artistically recall those times of which not

151 In fact, the substantial minority population in Hainan (above all the Li 黎) distinguished itself by a rather strong status of women vis-à-vis the Han standard. Eg., uxorilocal marriage was often practiced.

152 Cf. the historical study on Hainan's Communist movement of Murray (2017: 71).

much is left in a material sense (and therefore the precise location of the memorial park is also obviously somewhat arbitrary). The motto of the memorial park is vaguely 'for peace' (*weile heping* 为了和平). In front of the statue, younger generations posing as a ballet scene try to evoke the times gone by. In a more filmic language, the camera zooms in on the face of an old woman, with fire blended in in the background. An old photo of a group of the girls (possibly when already in custody) is almost the only material item left, showing them at the time. The GMD 'white terror' is recounted, and a graph of how they were organised at the time of their guerrilla activities explains their status and organisational structure to the national TV audience.

In terms of motivation to join, the suppression of women is pointed out as the major reason. The armed group was thus supposedly the first one to 'liberate the women' locally. Their 'uniforms' are shown, and a photo of a gun, as well as their eating utensils. A present-day young woman poses as if she was a *niangzijun* (since the old ladies the viewer sees hardly can provide the right impression by now). Then, one of the old ladies talks to the camera, telling how she swore in the others, namely to keep discipline and do revolution to the end. Artwork in the park at least refers to their minority identity on the walls' bas-reliefs. Only in the context of the revolution did most of them learn to write their names (exemplified by a statue with one girl writing, the other observing.) When they had learnt to write, they would also write revolutionary mottos, and old photos show some woman soldiers. A present-day male local cadre then explains the local topography to the national TV viewer, telling how in May 1931 the women's detachment was created. They fought their first 'battle' in June 1931 against the 'reactionary troop' under Chen Guiyuan 陈贵苑 (a Whampoa alumnus and key villain in the fictional renderings) who wanted to eradicate the Communists there (thus making indirectly plausible the choice of the location of the memorial park). The detachment was, however, supposedly also part of women's liberation in China. Photos of surviving women in uniform with a red star army cap are shown to underline visually that women were and are still part of the military in China. Back at the time, when in August 1932 Hainan was in danger (showing film material with shooting during the campaign to kill all Communists), the CCP purportedly wanted to avoid unnecessary deaths and thus led the (male) CCP troops out (for safety). An old woman retells how the GMD then attacked the women's detachment (who had had to stay on). The women, she states, had only 5 bullets left each, and when she, the narrator, arrived to join them, she found her comrades already dead. With a photo of spears, it is insinuated that the women had had not much chance, having not enough weapons and ammunition, but they still would fight with all they had, including with stones or by biting. A list of 17 fallen

girls documents their sacrifice. Up in the hills where their training ground had been, a statue recalls the two male Communists who had trained them, with an exhibition added also there, again with texts and only few photos. After one year and seven months, Hainan Island had to be finally given up by the Communists to 'preserve their military forces', and thus the women's detachment was disbanded. Ballet scenes are blended in again, but at the end, present-day female soldiers show that by now women are also part of the PLA in reality, whereas the public comes to the place to try and rediscover the history behind the fictitious famous ballet. Thus, the TV film clip concludes by showing visiting groups who shake hands with the old women who once participated in the historical detachment (to learn 'patriotism' from these real-life models).

The above filmic rendering is fleshed out by the written 'patriotic' benchmark narrative, the collection on second list 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002), explaining to the intende reader that the detachment was called officially a *nüzijun tewulian* 女子军特务连 (women's army special agent (or spy) detachment), but was known colloquially simply as *niangzijun* 娘子军 (girls' army). The memorial park is to celebrate 'peace' via the reliefs and sculptures set up, whereas the old women were supposed to tell their stories to school children who are said to flock to the place since 2000 (i.e., shortly before the nomination as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001 took place). The park was also set up for attracting tourists (who might look for the reality behind the well-known artistic renderings). That this peculiar place produced these active women is explained in various ways (but notably without mentioning anything about minorities). From the perspective of China's central areas, Hainan had the historically long-standing image of a far-away place of banishment, but it was and is also a strategic place geopolitically (and thus should not be considered any longer as peripheral, quite to the contrary). Historically, many men from Hainan went abroad to look for work, thus leaving the women behind. That way, the households de facto often consisted only in women, while the men were far away (1199–1201). Thus, the women were particularly used to take things in their own hands (and many had no bound feet – which also connects to the minorities issue not addressed, though). The CCP, the intended reader is told, had established itself in Hainan since 1926. Yang Shanji 杨善集, a Hainanese who had been to Guangzhou and became a Communist, sent his own wife to a professional school, and she would be the one to start the women's movement in Hainan. After the bloody end of the First United Front in 1927, when the CCP line was to go to the countryside, take up the arms, and build small Soviet base areas, the Communist activists became also active in Hainan militarily. While

the two early leaders Yang Shanji and Chen Yongqin 陈永芹 were killed in battle in autumn of 1927, Wang Wenming 王文明 would take over, becoming the key figure for creating a Soviet base area in Hainan and starting land revolution there.

Women were especially addressed by the Communists (since they made up the majority of the population anyway, given the absence of many men who had gone abroad), and in 1930 (while Chiang Kai-shek was busy to fend off challenges to his rule elsewhere), one third of the participants in revolutionary mass organisations in Hainan were women. The trajectory of the later leading woman, Feng Zengmin, is cited as an example. She stated in her memoirs that when her brother was caught as a revolutionary and was about to be executed, he asked her to continue and take up the gun he had left behind, thus explaining how she came to be a fighting woman (1201–1205). That way, the women's detachment was created, comprising girls between 16 and 22 years, all in all 100 girls. They were officially created as a detachment in 1931 and sworn in by the Hainanese Communist Wang Wenyu 王文宇. While the GMD mocked them, they still tricked the GMD troops that moved into Hainan in 1931 to eradicate the Communists there into a trap where they would be severely beaten by the (male) Red Army. That way, the women mainly served to divert the attention of the GMD while the Red Army dug tunnels etc., thus also being able to capture the enemy commander Feng Chaotian 冯朝天 (1206–1208). In 1932, the internal purges in the Communist ranks and the Soviet base areas, which are only vaguely addressed in this official 'patriotic' narrative framing of 2002, weakened the Communists, while the GMD was now freer to concentrate on eradication of the revolutionaries (after putting down other rebellions). To shield the retreat of the main Communist forces, the women again served, with a group of eight women sacrificing for the others.

In 1932–1933, basically all of the small base areas in Hainan had crumbled, thus necessitating the women's detachment to disband. Some disappeared into 'the masses' (i.e., had to go back home), some went abroad to try and make a living in Southeast Asia (as their husbands etc.), others chose suicide! Some were caught, and rather than betray 'the organisation' (i.e., the CCP), they would endure cruelties or kill themselves collectively. The survivors of those thrown in prison would be set free in 1937 when the Second Sino–Japanese War broke out (and with the Second United Front by then in place). Feng Zengmin (the one who received the gun from Mao in 1960 and was harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution) was apparently the only one among the women who would ever officially join the CCP, if only in 1940, i.e., years after the women's detachment (1209–1211). That way, the detachment, in the end, only existed for more than one year. But for propagandistic use, Zhou Enlai clearly saw its potential and proposed already in 1953 to make a film on

the topic, although it notably took until 1962 for the film to be finally shown (which suggests that there was controversy surrounding it). In 1964, Mao saw the ballet version and praised it, thus sanctioning the topic. Notably skipping the Cultural Revolution times altogether, where the topic received, after all, its major boost (!), the official narrative of 2002 simply jumps to the year 1985, when it would be Hu Yaobang, the soon-to-be-ousted reformer, who wrote the plaque of the group statue of the 'red detachment'. Kang Keqing (the last wife of Zhu De) wrote an endorsement, too, as well as former Minister of Culture Huang Zhen 黄镇. Notably, according to the statistics of the PRC's All-China Women's Federation, 70% of the female 'martyrs' of China were, in fact, from Hainan! As the narrative points out, the women had the 'advantage' of being in a close connection to 'the masses', helped in agriculture (not making explicit the minorities issue playing into this), and also the children of many of them would make outstanding contributions to the nation (i.e., they were also good mothers). Thus, the memorial park also serves now (with its large square) for swearing-in ceremonies for the next generations, but the final remark in the 2002 official narrative is the most telling, stating that it is the sculptures that 'show it best' – since not much remained to tell of the history of this women's detachment (1212–1215). This makes very explicit the elusive character of the girls' guerrilla activities, and their missing representation by conventional means, thus leaving it to narrative and art performance to recreate an idealised image of their historical experiences.

Moving from 2002 on to the Xi Jinping-era *Fengbei* presentation of 2019 (Wen Huimin 2019), one notes that there is apparently no longer a particular interest in this 'patriotic education showcase base', although the referent is called the 'only' women's detachment in modern Chinese history. The new framing restricts itself to pointing out the large square with statue, the reliefs and memorial trees (a recurring topic in such sites, as has been repeatedly noted in the present book), adding that only in 2002 (i.e., *after* the nomination in 2001) the memorial hall was built with an exhibition and spaces for multimedia presentation (which bespeaks the performative aspect).

As a very general background, it is notably the classical fictional model of the warrior girl Hua Mulan 花木兰 that is mentioned (which never appeared before in the context of this site or the individual women's mind-set as a possible role model), to then briefly move to history. In 1931, the Xi Jinping-era intended reader learns, it was mostly young women without a family (or not yet having a family) of whom some were of the Party (!) and some of the Youth Organisation,[153] who were there

153 As mentioned, only Feng Zengmin would become a Party member later in 1940.

to 'help' the Red Army, mostly doing jobs like watching over the caught enemies, making propaganda, only rarely combatting, though. The most recent addendum in this 2019 narrative is that in 2014, the last survivor of the detachment of women died (of whom some had appeared in the TV film clip of the early 2000s). The women are described as mobilising support for the Communists in villages and helping with ariculture (while once again nothing is said about the minorities issue here). The women supported the fight against the GMD troops rather by tricking them, and thus the (male) Communists could get more weapons in hand. In 1932, the women's groups swelled, but soon the GMD troops started their more effective and systematic attacks. When the CCP commanded military retreat, the women were there to shield this, and in that context, the particularly praised group of eight women heroically died. The detachment of women (the military function of which appears as almost nil to the reader) had thus to disband, and some women were imprisoned (while nothing is said on the delicate issue of suicides after the male red soldiers had left, or on the surviving women's later fate) (140–143). In sum, the whole phenomenon is described in this Xi Jinping-era narrative as short, though with historical repercussions, but the real interest in this site (and in the military role of women) seems to have dropped by 2019. The fictional element, too, apparently does not meet the more recent political taste any longer.

Taken together, the above cases of sites of former action like revolutionary uprisings, strikes, or guerrilla activities illustrate how these 'patriotic education showcase bases' try to cope with the problem of elusiveness of their referent. Narration is key for a 'patriotic' framing of the often minimal material remnants, and artwork is a further device used to help imagination of pupils as well as tourists. Where possible, links are created to other media and to textbook knowledge learnt in school. Still, the lack of material evidence on-site is clearly a limiting factor for substantiating historical claims, and for attracting tourists. The diachronic view on the narrative representations, however, also disclosed the changes in political preferences at different points in time, documenting also that some topics are no longer favoured or deemed important in Xi Jinping times. In other words: the different framings reflect the tasks of 'patriotic' narration in a given era for the formation of Chinese citizens, but also, how these changed over time.

4.3 War and battle sites

While the dynamic and fluid phenomena of uprisings, labour strikes, or guerrilla activities discussed above were hard to represent in a physical 'base', former action by organised fighting in a war context is not easy to represent in a localised 'base' either, involving challenges for educational presentation and touristic consumption. As such, this is comparable to battlefield sites around the globe.[154] Basically, battlefields memorialised can be also of a long time ago, say of the Greco–Persian Wars of the 5th century BC memorialised in Greece. In China, there are also several ancient battles remembered, even if locations are elusive and contentious (e.g. the so-called Zhuolu 涿鹿 Battle between the mythical figures Huangdi and Yandi against Chiyou, said to have taken place in the third millennium BC in the Hebei / Shanxi area – cf. chapter 3.1 of the present book; or the battle at the 'Red Cliffs' in the 3rd century AD somewhere at the middle stretch of the Yangzi, to just name two of the most famous ones, one a land battle of purportedly pre-historic times, one a naval one in historic times). These battles were, however, internal ones, which are less conducive to 'patriotic' use, for which external 'enemies', namely when they proved stronger, are more convenient. In any case, the wars and battles picked up for the PRC's 'patriotic education showcase bases' system focuse on the more modern times of the 19th and 20th century, when China suffered defeats at the hands of foreigners. In fact, prior to the CCP's existence, the 'anti-imperialist' quality is obviously the criterion to include a site into the 'patriotic education' framework. This also means that 'inner-Chinese' battles do not figure before the CCP–GMD divide. The selection of 'patriotic education showcase bases' discussed here includes sites for the 19th century (First) Sino–British Opium War in Guangdong province and the First Sino–Japanese War in Shandong province, and for the 20th century battle of Taierzhuang in Shandong during the Second Sino–Japanese War (one of the rare cases where China scored a victory and notably to the credit of GMD troops!), to which the 'people's war' (in Maoist diction) added 'tunnel warfare' (as commemorated in Hebei), to move on to the inner-Chinese so-called 'decisive campaigns' of the Communists against the GMD troops during the subsequent Chinese Civil War in Manchuria, in the Huai–Hai region around Xuzhou, and around Tianjin and Beijing (then named Beiping), which paved the way for the Communist final victory and establishment of the PRC. That way, the 'bases' also reflect the key trajectory of China's modern history, according to 'patriotic' reading, from its most shocking and 'humiliating' Opium War experience as the nadir up to 'liberation', i.e., the

154 For a comparative view on battlefield tourism more broadly, cf. Ryan (2007) and Baldwin / Sharpley (2009).

founding of the PRC, as the supposed climax. This serves to reinforce the mandatory reading of modern Chinese history domestic citizens are supposed to have internalised since their days at school.

Case study: the Opium War Museum and Humen Forts

The **Yapian zhanzheng bowuguan (Humen paotai)** 鸦片战争博物馆 (虎门炮台) (Opium War Museum (Humen forts)), a 'patriotic education showcase base' in Humen (Dongguan, Guangdong Province) on the first list (1997), is, as the name already discloses, a combination site. On the one hand, the museum is to shoulder the task of explaining everything around the First Opium War (1839/40–1842) – a historical event that is considered in the PRC as of epoch-making significance, marking the beginning of 'modern' (*jindai* 近代) Chinese history by the advent of capitalism in the form of foreign imperialism. This site therefore stands out as of particular weight to Chinese history views. The First Opium War started in the Pearl River Delta area with the important prelude of the destruction of (above all British) opium in Humen, downstream from Guangzhou, to then involve the Chinese empire at large. The significance for official history views in the PRC can be also gleaned from the fact, that this episode of the opium destruction in Humen is depicted as the first of the bas-relief scenes on the base of the Monument to the People's Heroes on Beijing's Tiananmen Square, following Mao's and the Party's reading of modern history and its 'key events'.[155] On the other hand, the 'patriotic education showcase base' also comprises the Humen Forts as an important place of action during the ensuing war, and in this sense it is also a 'site museum' recording these battles, while rendering the siting of the 'showcase base' to stand for the general topic of the whole Opium War also plausible over this material connection. Furthermore, in the meantime a museum close by has been added which focuses on naval battles more specifically, and provides also additional space for a modern anti-drugs exhibition for schools, which is a secondary educational function of the Humen site, warning youths about drug consumption and addiction.

The Opium War Museum, which has been treated more generally already in a chapter by Flath (2012), is often significantly called a 'three-dimensional textbook' to underline its primary educational function, and will be considered here in its 'patriotic education' aspect. It was opened already in the late 1950s when Chinese politics took an ever more radical leftist turn. As a 'patriotic' site, it is intended to bear

155 Cf. above for the Wuchang Uprising which is a further scene represented there. For this key symbolic monument in art historical perspective, see Wu (2005).

witness to Chinese bravery on the one hand, and humiliation by the foreign imperialists on the other, since the First Opium War is seen as the beginning of China's 'century of humiliation' (understood as ending only with the establishment of the PRC in 1949).[156] Humen 虎门 (in Western sources called *bocca tigris*) close to the mouth of the Pearl River stands for both, as it was here where the famous Qing official and 'national hero' Lin Zexu 林则徐 (cf. chapter 5.1 of the present book for this 'patriotic' model figure) had British opium destroyed over weeks in two ponds in 1839, marking Chinese agency (in contrast to the rather deplorable part China played in the ensuing war later). When the British took this action as a *casus belli* and started to wage war in 1840, Lin Zexu was well prepared, having set up strong fortifications in the area (suggesting he knew that his assertiveness might provoke military consequences). But since the British simply went on to attack other places further up the Chinese coast less well prepared (and beyond Lin's jurisdiction), the court demoted him for having caused war. Therefore, Humen is now celebrating Lin Zexu as a model Chinese 'patriotic' official who was hampered only by the corrupt Qing government of the Manchus ('patriotically' suggesting that the war could have ended also otherwise than it did). While Lin Zexu was demoted and replaced by Mongol and Manchu officials who tried to appease the British by reducing the fortifications, other Chinese military leaders like admiral Guan Tianpei 关天培 or general Chen Liansheng 陈连升 and their 'loyal troops' embodied local Chinese military resistance against the invaders, sacrificing for the nation as the true 'patriots'. Consequently, they are particularly hailed in the museum exhibition (as I observed in 2014), but also at the forts themselves.

A striking feature is the legends constructed around these 'heroes' recorded on spot as if facts, namely the (late Qing-era) story of the 'loyal horse' of general Chen Liansheng which is said to have been as 'patriotic' as its master (who was incidentally an ethnic Tujia 土家) and is honoured by a statue on site (see fig. 4.3.1). After its master's death, the story goes, the horse would refuse to obey the British, and remained 'loyal' even when beaten severely and abducted by them to their new colony Hong Kong, daily neighing in the direction of the fort where its master died, rather starving to death than eating the food of the new masters (a clear reference to the ancient story about Boyi 伯夷 and Shuqi 叔齐 of late Shang times who declined to eat the food of the new Zhou dynasty at the end of the second millennium BC, starving to death for loyalty). The story of the 'loyal horse' is to rouse 'patriotism' with the visitors by 'moving them to tears' – and for ascertaining that 'if the foreign invaders could not even subdue a Chinese horse, how could they subdue the great

156 For the use of this trope, cf. Callahan (2010) and Wang (2012).

Chinese nation'? [157] Consequently, also Chinese present-day leaders in their various gifts or references to the site pick up on such stories to boost Chinese morale.

Fig. 4.3.1 Bronze statue of general Chen Liansheng's loyal horse neighing at the Humen forts (Dongguan) (photograph by the author, 2014)

In filmic representation, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 7) on the Opium War Museum, produced by Guangdong TV in 1998, introduces the topic with a huge sculpture of two hands breaking an opium pipe (standing in Humen city, not at the museum itself, though) to visualise Chinese agency and resolve. Camera shots of the heroising group statue in front of the museum which represents the Chinese people defying the enemy, and of the statue of model official Lin Zexu (accompanied by the film music of the old 1950s film on Lin Zexu many Chinese are familiar with, not the least from school where it is still

157 The fairly long version of the story of the 'loyal horse' can be found in Wang / Zhou / Xing (1998: 409; 411; last citation on 409). The horse statue with a plaque providing a shorter description can be seen on site at the Shajiao 沙角 fort.

recommended),[158] lead to the museum itself. In the exhibition, old photos and sketches of the foreign factories in Guangzhou, together with the traded goods, i.e., porcelain, tea, silk etc. which were shipped from China to various destinations abroad, show the flourishing trade.

A sketch of London's main building of the East India Company and of an opium factory and storehouse in British India introduce the 'enemy-to-be', who would send ships to smuggle in this 'black weapon' (since the opium was contained in black balls) in return for the Chinese attractive goods. The key opium dealers Jardine and Matheson personalise that illegal trade for the national TV audience, while present-day views of Humen's seaside show the physical destination of their smuggling activities. A chart with rising opium imports and old photos of opium smokers document the growing problem, becoming more tangible with mannequins in the museum staging an opium smoking scene, while on a material level, opium smoking utensils are on display. For the terrible consequences of addiction, contracts of people selling their land or even their children (to finance their opium consumption) are presented. But 'patriotic' official Lin Zexu was willing to carry through with the prohibition of opium, showing to the TV audience the ponds where opium was destroyed, and the forts where Lin Zexu prepared to defend China, if need be, suggesting Lin Zexu was circumspect and ready for confrontation.

A drawing of how the British landed to start the war, and miniature models of the forts and landscape visualise the ensuing events, while views on the present sites and physical remains provide a more touristic introduction to the material heritage the visitor will encounter on spot. The Shajiao 沙角 fort (at the first line of defence) and the statue of general Chen Liansheng stationed (and dying) there, contrast with paintings of the battles (as photography was not yet available at the time), adding the sound of shooting to provide a more 'real' feel to the narrative of the film clip. The tomb of the 75 Qing soldiers who died at Shajiao fort is shown, with the Qing triangled dragon flag flying, while present-day young marines bow thrice in front of it to honour and commemorate their predecessors' sacrifice. The (reconstructed) fort displays also the internal communication channels provided, thus making the functioning more tangible (and potentially soliciting the TV viewers to visit the site as tourists). The Weiyuan 威远 fort, in turn, served as part of the second line of defence of the elaborate set-up of defence structures. Admiral Guan Tianpei, represented by a modern painting of him, stood for that second line defence as the major (tragic) 'patriotic' hero. Nonetheless, the local battles and the overall Opium War

158 Though its asthetics are rather far from present-day viewing habits, the 2011 curriculum standard for History still advocates the use of this film. See Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jiaoyubu (2012: 18).

would end in defeat, as the national TV audience is of course aware of, which, the narrative suggests, was to blame on the lack of modern weaponry (and not on lacking morale of the troops locally). That way, the simple weapons, and the traditional uniform of a Qing commander are to explain this outcome in spite of all the individual heroism. But this war is also credited with having opened the eyes of the Chinese regarding the world (in both a positive and negative sense). A present-day view of Humen city which is by now a modern city in the Pearl River delta, provides the audience with the confidence that by now, this backwardness of the 19th century is firmly of the past, and the lessons have been learnt. With 'patriotic education' at this site, the former history is, however, remembered as a warning. As the narrative teaches the viewer emphatically, a nation without heroes is a pitty, and a nation forgetting its history has no hope. Camera shots of young marines are to underline in contrast China's new power, but the message that 'we should not forget the national humiliation' and learn to respect ourselves and strengthen ourselves is what should be taken out of this 'patriotic site' by the Chinese citizen watching this national TV film clip.

The educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 3) on this 'patriotic education showcase base' on the Opium War, in turn, aiming at classroom use, discloses how this site should be framed for the young generation in school, where the Opium War is a very important topic in history education. Compared to other *Zhonghua hun* videos, one notes that this one is an unusually long one (20 min.), marking the particular significance of this topic. The video, produced by the Guangdong provincial audio-visual education entity in 1998, starts with an air view of Humen, showing visitors walking along the corridors in the forts to underline the touristic appeal, while the Tiananmen monument to the people's heroes in Beijing with the bas-relief scene of the opium destruction in Humen (reproduced in every history textbook) recalls the national relevance of the locality. The heroic group statue in front of the museum is introduced here as a tribute to all normal people who lost their lives in the war (thus enlarging the war's impact beyond the 'heroes' to the 'common fight' of the Chinese people also beyond Humen, since the war involved subsequently also other parts of China). The entry gate (newly set up in 1989) to the site of the ponds where Lin Zexu had the foreign opium destroyed, sports the calligraphy of former Chinese premier Li Peng (the 'butcher' of Tiananmen in the very same year of 1989). The intended video-watching pupils see Young Pioneers of their age enter the place, visiting also a row of cannons, and Lin Zexu's statue, while the plaques shown demonstrate to them that this place is supposed to serve specifically as an educational site for youth (*quanguo qingshaonian jiaoyu jidi* 全国青少年教育基地 – cf. chapter 1 of the present book, appendix 3).

A visual tour of the exhibition, featuring artefacts, paintings, models, and dioramas, show how the museum is organised to serve as a didactic tool. In the first section ('before the war'), a chart of British designs on China provides the larger historical context: the intended watching pupils learn (or repeat the lesson) that already in 1637, the British tried to get a foothold in China but failed. Scenes from the famous *Lin Zexu* film of the 1950s (still advocated, as mentioned, for classroom use in the curricula – see also chapter 5.1) are interspersed between the narrative and the views of the museum exhibition, to illustrate how they should be understood in connection. Like in history textbooks, charts and illustrations explain the growing opium import, which render the presentation very didactic (and close to the textbooks familiar to students).[159] The displayed diorama of an opium smoking scene, like in the TV film clip also shown in this video, visualises the content in more tangible form. Notably, different from the less didactic TV film clip, this educational video blends in a citation of Marx to add an authoritative 'official' evaluation, who criticised the British for their opium export at the time,[160] which also shows that Marx (and his followers in far-away Europe) were early on standing on the 'right side' of history, correctly analysing the situation in distant Asia. And Lin Zexu's writings against opium and its harmfulness make up the Chinese counterpart. Chinese historian Zhang Lei 张磊 (at the time of the video head of Guangzhou's Academy of Social Sciences) adds to this the voice of the authoritative official historian, lauding Lin Zexu's action of destroying opium as showing that China resisted, citing also Mao who called this the beginning of China's modern history (which is up to this day the official periodisation baseline in PRC historiographical view).

Returning to the site itself, the video presents materials which are to prove to the intended watching pupils how China tried to resist at the time, always interspersing film scenes and present-day location shots to render the narrative plausible. Defence was, e.g., set up by linking wooden rafts together for bridging the various small islets in the *bocca tigris*, and the single defence lines are explained to the pupils in detail, as well as the different types of ships (which also adds to the 'defence education' the 'patriotic' site is also supposed to serve for). An oil painting visualises the confrontation at the Shajiao fort (at the first defence line) and general Chen Liansheng with his 'loyal' horse. Here, it is also disclosed that the story was of Qing times already, written down on an old stele, and the modern horse statue is to recall this. On the second defence line, admiral Guan Tianpei was the responsible, who is

159 For an analysis of the means used in history textbooks to 'persuade' pupils of the content, see Müller (2013 [2008]).

160 Marx wrote an article for the *New York Daily Tribune*, 20 September 1858, condemning the opium trade. See the collection of Marx' writings on China: [Marx, Karl] (1951: 52–55).

represented materially by his displayed telescope and a plaque of his local ancestral temple built in 1930 (!) (i.e., during Republican times and thus also long after his death). Various weapons that the people are said to have used for defence, and some British weapons they got in hand are on display as well to show that also the normal people 'resisted'. Ammunition jugs and a helmet, here explained as of a *gansidui* 敢死队 (dare to die group) of the populace, are to prove the point that the locals were no cowards, in spite of their meagre weaponry. A statue in the exhibition of normal people holding ammunition jugs also visualises this.

As to the nonetheless disastrous effects of the war, the Manchu Qing are blamed for having given in, and thus defeat and the concluding Nanjing Treaty of 1842 came about. Again, the official historian Zhang Lei is made to explain to the intended watching pupils the important point why China did not win at the time and why defeat was inevitable. Reinforcing (and thus authenticating) the official narrative also provided in history textbooks, it was the Qing who had no stamina, and thus suppressed people like Lin Zexu. Zhang Lei further adds, that 'we were also economically too backward, and thus received blows' (which refers to the oft-repeated dictum, commonly associated with Deng Xiaoping, though originating from a Stalin speech, of 'the backward being beaten').[161] Turning thereupon to the brighter future for the intended watching pupils, making sure that such a history should never be repeated, the area is now shown to be very touristic, including the forts, the tomb of the Qing soldiers, and the modern bridge at Humen's Weiyuan fort, crossing the Pearl River with modern engineering technology where once rafts and boats had to serve. The at the time of the video (1998) very recent 'home-coming' of Hong Kong in 1997 (whose loss to the British was sealed by the Nanjing Treaty as an immediate outcome of the Opium War) had also finally cleared the 'national shame', which, however, should never be forgotten. Thus, the celebration of the 158th anniversary of Lin Zexu's destroying opium (i.e., 1997) is presented in the video, combined with the determination to never become drugged again (which also renders feeble and is a topic seen as particularly important for the target group of youths in terms of drug prevention education).

In 1990, i.e., shortly after the 1989 Tiananmen events that had brought the 'unruly' young generation to particular attention, and amidst the momentous system changes in Eastern Europe, general secretary Jiang Zemin visited the Humen site and left his calligraphy to this significant 'patriotic education showcase base',

161 As already noted in chapter 3 of the present book, the dictum was from a speech of Stalin in 1931, defending the speed of his industrialisation programme, which was translated into Chinese. But, as Wang (2020) has pointed out, the dictum gained currency in the PRC only in the era of Deng Xiaoping.

stressing that China absolutely needed to start with 'patriotic education' early on from primary school, to which this unusually long video thus contributes. The site was therefore obviously one of the central points for the whole 'patriotic education' endeavour of the 1990s.

Produced at the same time as the two filmic renderings discussed above, the 'patriotic' booklet in the benchmark publication series on first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Ye 1998) shoulders the task of situating this 'showcase base' in a somewhat broader context. In its illustrated section, it already marks the key themes: the museum, the newly set up entrance of 1989 leading to the ponds, the forts, and Jiang Zemin and Li Peng visiting, thus representing the various localities as well as the official endorsement by the then top leaders. Swearing-in ceremonies for the China Youth League as well as photos of marines and army soldiers visiting, document the uses of the place in its civil and military dimension. The first part of the 'patriotic' booklet is focused on the outdoor sites and the physical remains, followed by a section on several outstanding figures for personalisation, and finally a part on the site's function for 'patriotic education' documents how it should be used. As becomes obvious, what is presently called the 'opium war museum' was once also named 'Lin Zexu memorial' – which already hints at the history of the memorial site itself, shifting between a focus on a 'hero' (Lin Zexu), and the focus on the war as such, which includes also the outdoor forts and the ponds. Notably, the destroyed opium is called here as of the British *and* the Americans (reflecting the growing anti-American atmosphere, since, historically speaking, there were even more countries involved in the local opium trade, but the British clearly had the lion's share), and Lin Zexu's 'heroic' deed was supposedly also decisive in the worldwide battle against drugs (to contextualise the topic once more as something beyond a simple Sino–British problem). The strongly ideological framing becomes also obvious in the formulation that the forts are called in the 'patriotic' booklet a 'Great Wall' at the sea, enforcing the image of the Great Wall standing for China (cf. chapter 2.3 of the present book on the Great Wall and Shanhaiguan) and for China's 'defence'.

Prior to the PRC, the place is said to not have been cared for much (implying that the GMD did not consider Humen and the Opium War important, and therewith supposedly was not caring much for anti-imperialism either – a certainly disputable assumption, but underlining that the CCP is claiming anti-imperialism exclusively for itself). In 1957, a Lin Zexu memorial was established on spot (which shows that the first memorial activity was, in fact, centred on this historical figure also hailed in the late 1950s with the famous film *Lin Zexu*). But in 1972 during the Cultural Revolution, the site was renamed 'The Humen People Resisting Britain in the

Opium War Memorial' (moving the accent from an individual to 'the people'). The group statue of the heroised resisting people in front of the museum likely also refers to this framing. After the Cultural Revolution, in 1985, the memorial was renamed again, putting once more an accent on Lin Zexu as 'Humen Lin Zexu Memorial Hall' (which distinguishes it from other Lin Zexu memorials elsewhere – see also chapter 5.1 of the present book), while the name 'Opium War Museum' was added to it (i.e., a compromise was achieved between the two approaches). That name was written by (soon to be ousted reformer) general secretary Hu Yaobang in 1986. In 1987, the physical places of the forts were finally handed over by the Chinese navy to the city of Dongguan and thus became part, i.e., turning the whole also into a site museum with a memorial as well as an educational function, if opened for the general public only in 1990 after Jiang Zemin had come (and thus authorised it). Thereupon, many Overseas Chinese, Taiwanese, or Hong Kongers started visiting as well.

The site was quickly labelled by various entities and on different levels, of Dongguan city, of Guangdong province, but also nationally, e.g., as a 'national excellent societal education base' in 1993, in 1995 as a 'national youth education base' and 'civilised unit', and in 1996 as 'national patriotic education base' which would be stepped up in 1997 to a 'showcase' base (1–4). (Cf. chapter 1 of the present book, appendix 3, for such labels.) This physical 'textbook for patriotism', as the whole place is called for the intended reader of the 'patriotic' booklet, materially tells of the history of a Chen Liansheng who died at the Shajiao fort in defence, in fact even together with his son, while the tomb of the 75 loyal (Qing) soldiers shows the ultimate price the military once paid for China. The local people were participating as well, as is stressed here (once more evoking the Great Wall topic), making up the 'Great Wall of flesh and blood' (alluding to the respective line in China's anthem 'March of the Volunteers'), sustaining this defence and fighting examplarily for every inch of territory with their own means (5).

On the other hand, Lin Zexu's ponds (for the destruction of opium) are materially telling also of that history. The ponds were formerly at the beach (though sedimentation of the Pearl River changed the topography in the meantime somewhat). Thus, at the time, sea water easily entered. Notably it was, however, only in 1972 (i.e., at the time of renaming the site in a more 'people-centred' manner) that the ponds came to attention and were reconstructed (which the bas-relief scene on the Tiananmen Monument to the People's Heroes also referred to). After the Cultural Revolution, they were re-labelled as 'Lin Zexu's ponds' (going again in tandem with the post-Cultural Revolution refocusing of the site on him once more), setting up a fence around them to mark them off as a visiting site. At Lin Zexu's time, the

intended young reader learns, there was a pipe for channelling the opium-contaminated water out, and a ditch to channel fresh water in. This, as is stressed once more, was only necessary since the supposedly 'civilised' countries of Britian *and* the US brought this deadly poison to China (underlining that at the time of writing it seemed narratively feasible to step up the role of the US on the 'culprit' side) (6–7).

As for the forts as the other major tangible on-site remains, which should also contribute to 'defence education', the intended 'patriotic' young reader is instructed by the detailed narrative about the intentions and the setup to sustain his imagination. Admiral Guan Tianpei had been the one to have a tower built at the Shajiao fort on the first defence line to spot potential enemies early on. Since the length of shooting of canons was limited, if ships did not react to the warning shots from there, the next defence line would be already alerted. General Chen Liansheng, however, ordered a round platform to be made (to be able to shoot in various directions) which the British found threatening. And thus, this fine defence structure would be all destroyed during the war. Although the Qing rebuilt it subsequently, it would be destroyed once more in 1856 (during the Second Opium War). Only much later under leading official Zhang Zhidong, these and more forts were set up again in the 1880s in the context of the Chinese self-strengthening movement, and some of them are accessible today for visitors, the intended young reader learns (which means that what will be encountered on-site is mostly of these later times, while only the other modern major tourist spot among the forts, the Weiyuan fort, is claimed to still look like in the times of the First Opium War). The forts' inner working is also detailed for the intended young reader, featuring hidden staff rooms, and also on the hills, there had been hidden forts (suggesting that the preparation of Lin Zexu and his supporters had been well thought out) (8–13). The barracks of Qing times are also still there, showing where and how the soldiers lived. The biggest fort, like the Weiyuan fort placed on the second defence line, where admiral Guan Tianpei died, was however not rebuilt, leaving only the foundations to tell of that history.

In the sense of 'defence education', the intended young reader also learns more about the weapons: the cannons used were either produced in China or imported, with the ones produced in China being from Foshan 佛山, another city in the Pearl River Delta where weapons were, in fact, produced since Song times (13–20). The victorious British, however, destroyed the cannons' 'ears' and blocked the 'mouths', thus making them unfit for use – while taking away the (superior) imported ones, which included Armstrong and Krupp cannons. The muzzleloading cannons (which were incidentally also used against the region's endemic pirates) needed, however,

time to be loaded. In practice, that meant that in one hour only four cannon balls could be fired (which renders the evasive 'war scene' narratively more concrete for the intended young reader) (21–24). In 1841, general Chen Liansheng served at the Shajiao fort (on the first defence line), and almost all of the men died there during the fighting with the British. Those who could not be transferred home for burial, were thus collectively buried there (i.e., the 75 soldiers 'without families' now honoured there with the tomb also shown in the filmic representations discussed above). In southern secondary burial style,[162] they received this collective tomb, which was purportedly only rediscovered in 1958, moved in 1964, and in 1971 again restored with a new stele added (25–27). Nearby, the 'loyal horse' statue (see above) of Chen Liansheng (who died together with his son at the Shajiao fort as well) is placed. The well-known story of the horse that would take no food of the British, while Hong Kong people supposedly added to their own credit that they then treated it, though it would only accept something from them if they spoke well of Chen while offering it food, 'weeping' at every mentioning of Chen, is presented to the intended young reader as 'authentic' since an old story. The story originated in 1862/63, when a local admiral made a stele for the horse and wrote down this story. That stele had once been placed at Guan Tianpei's local ancestral temple (as mentioned, obviously only set up in 1930, though), but was broken during Japanese bombings at the time of the Second Sino–Japanese War. The parts were, however, reassembled, and the original is now in the Guangzhou Museum, while locally, only a replica can be seen. This item and story is explicitly called an 'unusually fitting teaching material' for 'patriotic education' even for modern pupils! Jiang Zemin purportedly also sustained this view during his (1990) visit. Thereupon, the statue of the horse was placed there, and thus, visitors should first read the story in the museum, and then see the statue as an effective way to reinforce the 'patriotic' message it conveys (27–30).

On the Pearl River islets (in the *bocca tigris*), in turn, during the battles of 1841, many soldiers died also there, and these, too, were buried by the locals together. The Qing also remade that collective tomb in 1885, and in 1974 during the Cultural Revolution, the tomb was transferred and set up anew at a better accessible place (30–32). But also the normal local populace had sustained the defence during the Opium War, the intended young readers are assured. People's jugs were used to

162 Secondary burial, usual in the hot climate of Southern China (a practice not specific to China, of course) intends that after the first phase of physical decay in a 'blood grave', the bones were cleared and placed in a box which would be buried in the final tomb. Cf. the contributions of Rubie and James Watson in the 'classical' ethnographic work edited by Watson / Rawski on Chinese death rituals (1988).

prevent the ammunition from getting wet in the humid local climate and are also a material leftover, telling of the times. One 'creative' method used by 'the people' was to fill burnable materials in the jugs, and use a fuse. Showing such popular inventions and fighting methods (which we will also encounter again when discussing the 'people's war' in Ranzhuang's 'tunnel warfare' below) is considered effective for 'patriotic education', documenting Chinese agency and smartness in technologically 'uphill' battles (32–35). Furthermore, in terms of material heritage, a stele discovered in 1963 showed that 'education' for the service to the country was already on the mind of the (patriotic) officials of the mid-19th century, namely of admiral Guan Tianpei, who thus termed it *yixue* 义学. This term stressed learning in the sense of the Confucian cardinal virtue *yi* or righteousness, but referred also to the group of recruited volunteers who joined the professional military out of their sense of *yi*. Since many army people were stationed in Humen by the Qing, their children as well as the soldiers themselves and the recruited volunteers needed educational facilities, and thus, admiral Guan Tianpei stressed education (instead of the popular past-time of gambling, e.g.) to fill the non-combatant time also for the adults. He therefore collected money for this educational facility and wrote a stele (which is the material proof of his idea). After his death, the whole 'patriotic' educational endeavour came, however, to a halt, once more underlining that his 'patriotism' had been hampered by others (35–37).

Given the Opium War topic's importance in Chinese history education, the 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 dedicated itself to situating the war in a larger context, reminding the intended young readers that the British wanted to enter China since long. First, they had tried with diplomacy, but failed. Then they tried with trade, but China was supposedly not interested, while Britain craved for Chinese goods. Opium had been prohibited in the West itself, the narrative asserts, whereas it was used in China only as medicine. The drug had horrible consequences, however, and the British also warned of it themselves (thus fully knowing what they did). Earlier, the Portuguese had already imported some opium to China, but the British were those who brought it in in masses. Like Marx (who is cited in the 'patriotic' booklet in a more economic sense and less 'morally' as in the educational video) said in *Capital*, capitalism aims inherently at maximising profit, and the East India Company had large production facilities in British India. Thus, it appears almost logical that the British would try to sell their opium. As the intended young reader should understand, a seventh of the company's income came from the opium trade in China alone for which they traded tea, and with the tea tax the British empire, in turn, earned a tenth of its income (39–42). In other words, this was no real private business, rather it was the British state, in the end, that profited. William Jardine,

presented to the reader as a Scot of an evil character, was a key figure and smuggler, and even advertised for investments into his 'business'. At first, opium consumption was only an upperclass phenomenon, but in China, all walks of life would soon take up the bad habit. Because of the growing trade deficit on the one hand and tax payments on the other, the people impoverished when the ratio between the daily copper money and tax money (i.e., silver) worsened ever more. And for the Chinese empire, no money was left for the military either (43–44).

As the intended young reader is also reminded, there had been many opium prohibitions in China already earlier, but at the Qing court there were two factions in the 1830s: the hardliners and the compromisers. Lin Zexu, the 'national hero', had first tried to only scare the foreigners in Guangzhou by having Chinese opium traders publicly tortured and executed in seeing distance of the foreigners. And he even shielded the foreigners against the Chinese public wrath. Magnanimously, the narrative asserts, he also wanted the regular trade to go on. Thus, for someone of his time, he was an outstanding figure (and no blind xenophobe). On the foreigners' side, though, there was only cheating. When Lin Zexu destroyed the handed-over opium in the end, he needed 38 days to do so, since it turned out that there was even more opium handed over than British superintendent Charles Elliot had ever admitted to exist. Lin Zexu first thought to show the enormous amount to the emperor but feared it would get stolen on the road. Thus, he decided to rather destroy it thoroughly with salt and lime (in a well-studied way). The lime would start a chemical process, and with the ebb, the (contaminated) sea water would be washed out, while fresh water would be filled in.

The foreigners had not believed that the Chinese would carry through, the intended young readers are told, but Lin invited them to attend (to regain the foreigners' respect for the Chinese). The foreign missionaries attending were impressed (not making explicit to the intended 'patriotic' young reader, though, that they had been vocal against the opium trade before that, too). The Westerners are only said to have praised Lin's meticulousness, and thus he should be considered not only as important for China's fight against opium at the time, but also more globally for the worldwide fight against drugs. Mao (the ultimate authority), too, had praised Lin Zexu, saying that 'our democratic revolution' started with him. In short, this opium destruction in Humen was a historical heroic deed, even marking a new era in Chinese history to which also the Communists can relate as 'inheritors' of this 'revolutionary' 'standing up' of China (45–52).

Lin, however, had obviously expected that military confrontations might ensue, and thus farsightedly strengthened the defence. Before entering the sea, the Pearl River narrows at its end in the Humen area like a bottle, and Humen thus serves as a

protection for upstream Guangzhou. This strategic location of Humen was already acknowledged and fortified in Ming times, but the Qing had neglected it. Only with admiral Guan Tianpei, fortification was resumed. He ordered regular military training, and he also fortified the islets in the river, with support from Lin Zexu. Further down south, Jianshazui 尖沙咀 (Tsim Sha Tsui at Kowloon, Hong Kong) was another critical location since the British anchored there. Lin Zexu thus bought strong foreign weapons and war ships and built up several lines of defence. Floating wooden barriers that one could close in case of need were also installed. When the British refused to hand over a British culprit to the Chinese authorities, a fight ensued, and the British sent war ships. Lin Zexu responded by not providing any food (which marks him as of resolve, but not escalating the confrontation on his part by his 'measured' reaction). The confrontation at that time ended in Chinese 'victory' and should underline that Lin Zexu and Guan Tianpei and the resisting Chinese people could stand up against the British (suggesting to the intended young reader therewith that the negative outcome of the Opium War was not a given) (53–60).

In 1839, once more a short skirmish occurred: at that time, admiral Guan Tianpei was wounded on his ship. Several further skirmishes followed, but in these, Lin and his line always prevailed (reinforcing the impression that China could resist, if it dared to) (61–65). According to the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative, it was, after all, Queen Victoria who wanted the war,[163] and the British thus had an official approval to start full-scale war. That way, in 1840, the real war began, but since there was too much resistance in Guangdong, the British simply went north along the coast, which made the Qing emperor panic, in turn. At that point, the Mongol Qing official Qishan 琦善 promised to the emperor that he could make the British return down south to Guangzhou again, but in fact the British also had overstretched themselves anyway (suggesting to the intended reader that they would have returned south also by themselves). The emperor thus betted on Qishan and dismissed Lin, while the British, in turn, were supposedly aware of Qishan's weakness. He would only hesitate once when they claimed Hong Kong. The British had also demanded that general Chen Liansheng should be dismissed, since he had put up so much resistance. In familiar fashion of this kind of heroising historiography, his end is attributed for the intended young reader to 'a traitor' who showed the British the way, and only thus, the Shajiao fort on the first line of defence where he was stationed could fall. The British are claimed to have hated him so much that they

163 One may note that the Chinese 'patriotic' narrative always tries to simplify history to the point that the highest authority on the enemy side is claimed responsible. Thus, it is important to argue that the Queen in this case was behind it, as is in the case of the Japanese where the Tennô is purportedly behind aggression against China (see below, e.g., for the First Sino–Japanese War).

hacked Chen Liansheng's dead body in pieces (in revenge), since Chen had shown that resistance was possible. But later, the Chinese would erect a statue for him to honour this hero.

Admiral Guan Tianpei, in turn, managed the second defence line. He was degraded because of the fall of the Shajiao fort on the first defence line, but then had to take up the battle against the British himself. Since he already expected to die, he would send a box with some of his clothes and a broken tooth back to his home, likely for a *yiguan zhong* (substitute tomb) to be set up there for him later. Meanwhile, Qishan, sitting upstream in Guangzhou in his office, would not send troops to help him (and thus abandoned the 'hero' to his fate). Since Guan Tianpei and his men were fighting all alone, they prepared for the end and all died there, some jumping together in a well to kill themselves when there was no way to win. Most dramatically and in film-like narration, Guan Tianpei is presented to the intended young reader as operating the cannon personally, but rain made the ammunition wet. Thus, this old admiral died for the honour of his country and for its 'holy territory', the narrative pathetically states. Even the British enemies were supposedly impressed by him, and Guan thus represented the real soul of Humen (65–76). To prevent the worst, the demoted Lin Zexu, in turn, who was still in Guangzhou at the time, as the intended young reader learns, would pay soldiers privately to fight, but the British had already taken the most strategic points in the area. The Manchu official Yishan 奕山 (who had meanwhile replaced the 'coward' Qishan) thus gave up and signed a first treaty in Guangzhou 1841. But the Guangzhou populace would not accept this.

The 'patriotic' booklet assures the readers that there are many stories about how the local people resisted in spite of that capitulation. The British are furthermore claimed to have raped Chinese women, and the villagers thus took matters in their own hands, making dare-to-die troops for self-defence, using their own methods and tools. Various simple cheating methods are detailed to the intended young reader, and the hailed resistance of the village Sanyuanli 三元里 near Guangzhou is the example every Chinese citizen knows from school history textbooks for such popular resistance. The rain, the story goes, made the British ammunition wet, and the swampy ground was not easy to walk with the British boots. Thus, the Sanyuanli villagers could overwhelm some British soldiers and also grab their weapons. The British superintendent Elliot obviously feared such a people's resistance, shown by his request to the Qing authorities to disband such peasant troops. The Daoguang emperor, in turn, tried to appease the British (instead of sustaining his own people). Thus, the narrative concludes, the war ended for China in defeat, with the Nanjing Treaty and later addenda standing for China's humiliation. Hong Kong was lost to

the Chinese, but meant for the British an important point for controlling China at large. The staggering reparations, in turn, equalled one third of the Qing's yearly income (77–84). The single items of the Treaty are presented in detail to the intended young readers (who learnt this from history textbooks already), bound to come to the conclusion that general secretary Jiang Zemin had already drawn for them: 'patriotism' is therefore important for all citizens of China to learn, regardless of their ethnicity, to never make something like this happen again. In didactic fashion, the main people who sacrificed during the First Opium War are enumerated once more to sum it up, including the various places where the war was played out (also along the coast to the north) beyond local Guangdong. These 'heroes' all fought for China's honour, and at all those places, the Chinese populace resisted (to underline it was only the weak Manchu court that cowardly gave in, and to suggest that another outcome of history could have been possible) (87).

The last section of the 'patriotic' booklet is dedicated to the 'patriotic education' work of the site and thus discloses how this important historical place is used in that specific context: the museum with the ponds and the forts, serving as an outright 'classroom' for 'patriotism', provides facilities and services for education and study, but also for entertainment. Art is also an important tool used. The museum is furthermore actively going out to society (as we noticed also at other 'patriotic education showcase bases').

In the museum itself, the main good officials are to be in the focus, and it also accentuates local specificities and the contributions of the locals, thus playing up the local component. For functioning as a good 'patriotic' textbook, images and objects are merged, with models, dioramas, sound, and light effects, to recreate scenes like the one of an opium den *vs* the scene of destruction of opium, with oil paintings in the back, and the scenes staged in front by mannequins. Outside the museum building, at the forts, there are further explanations added on spot. But since 1990, the Opium War Museum also hosted temporary exhibitions on various other topics in its halls, something we encountered also at other places, e.g., the Wuhan strike memorial putting up thematically unconnected but 'patriotic' travelling exhibitions and thus serving as a local exhibition space (see above chapter 4.2). Thus, the Opium War Museum also hosted exhibitions on modern history, *guoqing* 国情 (national conditions) (a term propagated under Jiang Zemin – cf. chapter 1 of the present book), calligraphy, local custom, but also on other topics like on the ancient educational 'three character classic' *sanzijing* 三字经, or on how Dongguan fought against the Japanese in the Second Sino–Japanese War, on technology, or on Hong Kong's 'coming home'. Other exhibitions focused on the success of the Reform and Opening policies started under Deng Xiaoping after the

Cultural Revolution. That way, the space was used more broadly to serve the local audience.

For the 'patriotic' standard opium war exhibition, in turn, the way of how guides should work is of special interest to disclose how the 'patriotic education showcase base' wanted to fill out its specific educational function in this regard. The guides are notably called to approach the visitors on their own to provide them with 'explanation'. As narratives for the guides (obviously to learn by heart), different versions were worked out, depending on the target groups. For primary school children, stories like the one of Chen Liansheng and his 'loyal' horse, or Guan Tianpei's tragic fate are deemed fitting. For older pupils it is rather the 'lessons' of the war, i.e., more rational explanations that are proposed. With political leaders, the guides should rather accompany them in a chatting mode. In sum, the guides should adapt their narrative to the target groups, their schedule and level, to serve efficiently. Historical films or videos complete the offer. In general, the explanations should be heard first (to guide perception), then the films could be watched.

The Opium War Museum also arranged special meetings on how to do 'patriotic' education (cf. the Longhua site in Shanghai discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book which also served as such a 'best practice model' for other sites). Furthermore, as so many other sites in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system, the Opium War Museum set up contracts with various entities, mostly schools and universities in the area (from Guangzhou to Shenzhen 深圳), even including medical schools in this case (because of the drug issue). Similar to what we observed also with several other such 'patriotic education showcase bases', this place is not only to serve as an outdoor education for history, but also for performative acts like the swearing-in ceremonies to be held there, for summer camps, and for the 'first lesson' of new recruits in the army! (Cf. chapter 3.2 on the site of the Kunming 'martyrs' at Yunnan Normal University where, *mutatis mutandis*, the 'first lesson' of the future teachers should be held.) Factory workers will receive a training there, too, thus joining the function of serving for education of the military with the one for civil workers. Those who join the Party also make their swearing-in here on 1 July (the official founding date of the Party).

The Opium War Museum, however, tries to add also entertainment to education. To heighten the site's appeal, there is the possibility to play shooting with cannons, there is a stage, an observation tower, or archery offers. This supposedly attracts young people more (and suggests that the 'normal' offer is not that attractive after all). The museum cooperated also for shooting TV programmes and films on the Opium War, and holds collections of 'patriotic' photos (evidently of the times after the First Opium War, when photography became available). The premiere of the

major film produced in the context of Hong Kong's 'home-coming', *The Opium War* (*Yapian zhanzheng* 鸦片战争) was staged here, and this (internationally successful) film had, in fact, been filmed also in part in the forts. Furthermore, the museum also arranged anti-drug activities. Beyond the local permanent exhibition, there were also wandering ones set up by the Opium War Museum (as a going-out strategy we also already noticed at various other 'patriotic education showcase bases'). E.g., an exhibition on this topic travelled to Nanjing's Taiping History Museum. And the museum also contributed to the 1990 Lin Zexu exhibition in Beijing which then travelled around the country. In 1996, the Opium War Museum also contributed to the exhibition on China's revolutionary history.

Hong Kong people, in turn, are said to have been moved to feel more 'patriotic' by the exhibition in Humen so close to Hong Kong, and also a visitor from the Zhuhai 珠海 Special Economic Zone (opposite Macau, which at the time of writing the booklet was still pending to 'return' to China in 1999) is said to have expressed himself in that sense, thus showing these various Pearl River Delta locations shared easily in this Humen site's commemoration of local history. A student of Zhongshan daxue 中山大学 (Sun Yat-sen University of Guangzhou) (note: a 'patriotic' university student, underlining that times have changed since 1989), in turn, is cited repeating the official phrasing that when entering the Party, we should 'never forget the humiliation' (as the standard saying goes) (89–99). In short, the museum tries to demonstrate that it is very active in promoting 'patriotic education' among all of the Pearl River Delta to lead them to the 'correct' understanding of what the Opium War meant for the whole area, and for China at large.

The museum, which retells primarily the heroic feat of destroying opium (since the war itself had no triumphant ending), was first opened in 1957, and beyond the political leaders, also the descendants of Lin Zexu and Guan Tianpei, and scholars of the opium war, who sustained the museum's (Marxist) historical materialist reading, came to visit. Calligraphers and writers praised Lin Zexu and Guan Tianpei, while school children learnt from the visit the standard message that 'one should not forget the humiliation'. Interestingly, the 'patriotic' booklet discloses that even 'reform through labour' prisoners (*laogai fan* 劳改犯) were guided there, said to have been moved to better themselves by the museum. (Whether these were people whose crimes were drug-connected, is not stated, though likely.)[164] (101) In any case, they are said to have felt ashamed in front of the 'patriotic' heroes. The

164 Cf. also chapter 5.3 of the present book with several examples of sites connected to Communist model figures in the 'patriotic education showcase base', where prisoners (of various types) are sometimes mentioned also as a target group (and are even occasionally appearing in the filmic renderings).

visiting Overseas Chinese, in turn, supposedly understood the 'shame' that Hong Kong was given away after that war, while a British scholar is claimed to have 'apologised for Hong Kong' to the Chinese people (101–102). All in all, it becomes clear that the presentation of the 'patriotic' booklet for which the general plan was obviously handed out by the publisher, i.e., Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe, was instructed to reinforce textbook narratives, and to play up the emotional components of humiliation and shame. Compared to, e.g., the Lin Zexu memorial in Fuzhou (see chapter 5.1 of the present book), it is a rather pronounced propagandistic case even for 'patriotic education showcase base' standards, underlining the issue of 'humiliation history' so dear to Jiang Zemin.

Moving on two decades, the *Fengbei* version (Wen 2019), updating the site to the Xi Jinping era, one notes that it is much less focused any longer on 'humiliation'. The new framing characterises the site more neutrally as a thematic museum that joins a memorial character with historical relics in terms of a 'site museum' (*yizhixing bowuguan* 遗址性博物馆), i.e., the museum on the Opium War, and the historical sites of Lin Zexu's destruction of opium and the various forts (38). Apart from the 'patriotically' listed Opium War Museum site, there is also a specific memorial for Lin Zexu in Humen city elsewhere. In 1999, i.e., shortly after the nomination of the Opium War Museum as a first list 'patriotic education showcase base' in 1997 (and after the above framings of the site of 1998), the 'Naval Battles Museum' (Haizhan bowuguan 海战博物馆) was added, which is technically equally not included in the listed site, but was lauded in 2001 for its exhibition design and was made to serve as the key anti-drugs education site as well (39–40).

The main part of the 2019 *Fengbei* description is, however, reserved to the opium destruction and to Lin Zexu as a person, i.e., focusing on Chinese agency and assertiveness. Compared to the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative of the late 1990s, this newer one is taking a somewhat more rational approach. It explains that opium was used since Tang times as a medicine in China, but the use for smoking it was, the reader learns, introduced by the Dutch, who brought it over Taiwan to Fujian. Then the British took India and grew opium there. When the Qing emperors repeatedly forbade it, trade became smuggling, but there were different opinions at court whether to legalise it or not. Qishan, who was for legal use, warned Lin of the foreigners and that they might attack. I.e., by ignoring this warning, Lin showed himself from the start an anti-imperialist. His friend, the noted intellectual Gong Zizhen 龚自珍, too, warned him to be prepared for a foreign invasion. In consequence, taking this warning to heart, he stepped up local defence in Guangdong. This, the intended reader is told, obviously worked since opium merchant William Jardine fled to Britain, when he realised that Lin Zexu meant

business. Lin, as is acknowledged here, was, however, not well informed about Britain, and thus wrote his famous letter to Queen Victoria, assuming that opium was prohibited also in Britain, though this was not (yet) the case at the time!

That way, the *Fengbei* narrative tries to cautiously readjust the usual, but historically problematic Chinese propagandistic engrained narrative on the whole topic, implicitly showing awareness of the extant scholarship (which we noted also, e.g., in the case of the Lüshun Massacre site in chapter 3.2 of the present book with the *Fengbei* framing in that case).[165] Some foreigners, the narrative also adds here, were ready to comply with Lin, but the British were the ones who refused this. And thus, Lin started the blockade of the factories and withdrew the Chinese staff. Since the foreigners also did not believe that the Chinese would not cheat, Lin studied meticuously how to destroy the opium well, explaining his plans to the intended 'patriotic' reader in more scientific detail (40–45). Though Mao's praise of Lin and his role as a 'national hero' is addressed, interestingly, the *Fengbei* narrative mentions also that Lin, after all a Fujianese, was a dedicated worshipper of goddess Mazu 妈祖! (46) In that sense, he is framed as still a child of his age, and a 'typical' Fujianese. Nonetheless, even though he was unjustly made into a scapegoat for the Opium War by the court, he would still remain a 'patriot', caring for defence also subsequently when banned to Northwestern Ili (at the Russian border). However, he was also aware that one needed to know more about the outer world to be able to stand one's ground, and thus had books translated on geography as well as on international law. In this sense, he was China's first *modern* patriot and national hero! (51–52) (For more on him at his Fuzhou home, see chapter 5.1 of the present book.)

That way, the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative keeps to the baseline of the established narrative of this key historical event with which supposedly the modern history of China started, but carefully readjusts the more propagandistic tone of earlier to focus more on rational explanations to render the elusive topic more approachable for present-day Chinese citizens. With the 'home-coming' of Hong Kong in 1997 by now firmly in the past, the emotional tension of the late 1990s at the time of listing the place had also relaxed somewhat after two decades, at least in the PRC's perspective relevant for the 'patriotic education' endeavour. In this context, the accent on 'humiliation' has also given way to a more self-assertive stance in the present Xi Jinping era.

165 Two of the newer English-language book-length historical summaries on the Opium War are Lovell (2011) and Platt (2018).

Case study: the Liugongdao Museum of the First Sino–Japanese War

While China's main enemy of the Opium War had been Britain, which pushed China, according to the official PRC narrative, into 'modernity', if in a 'humiliating' way, the increasingly threatening major historical enemy would become Japan which is the main foreign power against which Chinese citizens' 'patriotism' is to be formed. The **Zhong–Ri Jiawu zhanzheng bowuguan** 中日甲午战争博物馆 (Museum of the 1894 Sino–Japanese War) (Shandong, listed in 1997), focuses upon the story of that war of 1894–1895, commonly known in the West as the First Sino–Japanese War, which was acted out on land and on sea, first in Korea, then in Manchuria (cf. chapter 3.2 for the Lüshun Massacre site), and finally in Shandong. There, it concentrated on the naval base of the Chinese Beiyang Fleet at Weihai 威海, more precisely on the island Liugongdao 刘公岛 off the mainland city Weihai. This war moved the victorious Japanese to the front row of China's enemies. The museum on that war marks it also as above all significant for China's emerging navy – a topic of increasing military importance in recent decades for the PRC on its way to 'Great Power' status.[166] Since the site of the museum is also the place of final Chinese defeat, it feeds into the 'history of humiliation' narrative as well and was also honoured by Jiang Zemin's handwriting of its name – like with the Opium War Museum. Given that several key figures committed suicide there or on their ships to wash off that 'shame', it also represents a place recording tragic heroism.

This First Sino–Japanese War was especially problematic in Chinese eyes as it was the first time that China did not suffer from 'superior' Western powers bullying her as with the Opium Wars, but from 'little Japan' (*xiao Riben* 小日本) that had been in China's sphere of cultural influence for so many centuries. As in the case of the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century, blame for the disastrous outcome at the end of the 19th century is put mainly on the Manchu-Qing government, though Chinese key official Li Hongzhang is also held responsible to some degree (who in Chinese history school textbooks has been conventionally labelled a 'traitor' selling out his nation, or *maiguozei* 卖国贼 – cf. chapter 2.2 on his more recent reappraisal in Hefei's Anhui Museum).

Locally on Liugongdao, as I observed in 2015, the defeated navy commanders are framed therefore as the ones who had to pay for misguided policies conducted above their heads. The museum exhibition mainly retells the war with photos (photography being by then a technique available, different from the First Opium War),

166 Cf. Müller (2013: chapter 2) on the Chinese evaluation of maritime power for a nation's rise, reflected in world history since 1500 as discussed in the influential TV documentary series *Daguo jueqi* 大国崛起 (The Rise of the Great Powers) of 2006.

maps, and some items of sunken ships, namely recovered from the protected cruiser 'Jiyuan' 济远 which, irony of history, did not sink at the time of the First Sino–Japanese War, but ten years later during the Russo–Japanese War in 1904 near Lüshun in Manchuria when in *Japanese* use after the victory over China, hitting a sea mine of the Russians! (The recovery of this sunken ship in the late 1980s by Chinese archaeologists is detailed in an exhibition at the former Beiyang naval headquarters on Liugongdao, and the single recovered items were transferred to the island to illustrate there that ship's role in the 1894 war when fighting under Chinese flag.)

Some Krupp cannons (in several cases replicas) of the numerous forts in the area are on display as well to add to the objects telling materially of that war. The single war ships which at first were bought abroad, and some later constructed Chinese war ships are detailed in the exhibition to show how China tried to build up a coastal defence at the time as a lesson drawn from the Opium Wars. Therefore, the museum – set up in the 1980s when the formerly military base Liugongdao was opened to the public – is also designed as an 'educational base' for the present-day PLA navy.

But due to the unfortunate negative outcome of the First Sino–Japanese War for China, the 'patriotic' part of it consists mainly in detailing Chinese heroism in spite of all odds – like in the Humen Opium War Museum discussed above. The main lesson to be drawn is to build up a strong naval defence today.[167] To underscore that message, the flagship of the time, the iron-clad 'Dingyuan' 定远 once bought from Germany and under the command of admiral Ding Ruchang 丁汝昌, the de facto major 'hero' celebrated on Liugongdao, damaged in the war and finally destroyed by its last commander Liu Buchan 刘步蟾 in the harbour lest it would fall in Japanese hands (as did the other iron-clad 'sister ship' 'Zhenyuan' 镇远), has been rebuilt for visitors in 2005 on the mainland shore in Weihai to show how life was on board, and how the navy looked like at that time. The exhibition in the museum on Liugongdao, in turn, also features models of warships for displaying the different types of ships involved in the battles, and ends, as I observed on-site in 2015, with the call to (Chinese) visitors to sustain a strong coastal defence in the present as a lesson drawn from that humiliating experience of the First Sino–Japanese War.

For filmic presentation of this 'patriotic education showcase base' at the time of the late 1990s when the site was labelled, one notes that, different from the case of the Opium War Museum, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video series did not pick

167 To strengthen the point, there is an adjacent exhibition detailing Liugongdao's 42 years under the British after the First Sino–Japanese War, who took the island in 1898 until the Japanese conquered it once more during the Second Sino–Japanese War.

up on this case. For the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clips, in turn, the respective film clip (disc 5) was produced by Shandong TV's societal education department in 1998. It introduces the site with the 1988 recovered old sunken cannons of the protected cruiser 'Jiyuan' 济远 discovered near Lüshun in Manchuria (which had, as mentioned, participated in the First Sino–Japanese War, editing out, however, the narrative 'inconvenience' of its later fate of being captured by the victorious Japanese and having sunk in their service during the subsequent Russo–Japanese War). In 1992, the 'Jiyuan' cannons were exhibited on Liugongdao.

The museum as such is dedicated to both the Beiyang fleet and the war, placed (at the time of 'patriotic' labelling) in the headquarters building on the island (before the new museum building of today was built at its shore – see below). The museum exhibition of the time of filming in the late 1990s featured historical photos and some artefacts (often recovered from the sea). Summarising the history of the Beiyang Fleet, the first students going abroad for study, and the single ships the trained personnel then commanded are profiled with photos. This Beiyang fleet made Li Hongzhang as the responsible official feel assured about China's defensive strength, setting up the navy headquarters on Liugongdao. On the 'enemy side', in turn, the Tennō and officials in Japan are said to have been worried about China's growing strength and decided to quickly built up their own navy in competition. Film clips show Japanese people (likely of later times) supporting their navy.

In China, in contrast, the empress dowager Cixi 慈禧 did not care for it, rather misusing the money intended for the fleet to embellish the new summer palace for her 60th birthday, ironically with a marble boat. Thus, between 1888 and 1893, no new investments into the Beiyang Fleet were made (which thus fell behind in technological competition and encouraged the Japanese to start war).

Films and paintings are to illustrate how the war on sea (which is in the focus here) evolved. The Beiyang fleet used a 'ren' 人 character formation (shown with a model) to start the naval battle, commanded by admiral Ding Ruchang. Commander of the cruiser Zhiyuan 致远, Deng Shichang 邓世昌, well-known to the Chinese public as a tragic 'hero' from the most iconic film on the First Sino–Japanese War, *Jiawu fengyun* 甲午风云 ('The Naval Battle of 1894') (1962),[168] tried heroically (but unsuccessfully) to ram the Japanese flagship Yoshino 吉野 when his own ship was hit and started to sink into the Yellow Sea. (Photos and clips of the film *Jiawu fengyun* – like the old *Lin Zexu* film on the Opium War up to this day recommended for classroom use in China – and paintings are blended in as visual cues to the

168 For more on this film, see Müller (2006).

national TV audience to recall the narratives on this figure already familiar from school.)

In a less emotional way, models of defence structures at Weihai are to explain the details for the ensuing war focus in Shandong. Li Hongzhang, who had the final say over the Beiyang fleet, did not allow an attack on the Japanese, since he wanted to save his fleet, stationed at Weihai. The Japanese, in turn, found out and simply landed elsewhere in Shandong to attack from the rear. Photos of the Japanese army general Ōdera Yasuzumi 大寺安純 (who was the highest-ranking casualty on the Japanese side, dying during the battle of Weihai on land) and of Liu Buchan, last commander of the Chinese flagship 'Dingyuan' (after admiral Ding Ruchang had been wounded), fighting on sea, illustrate the impending showdown (though done in a way to suggest to the national TV audience that the Japanese had substantial losses, too, attempting to counterbalance the objective result of the contest, i.e., Japanese victory).

A wax figure of admiral Ding Ruchang in the exhibition, who would kill himself because of the defeat by taking 'poison' (in fact, an overdose of opium), shows his 'heroic' sacrifice, while the 'shameful' treaty of Shimonoseki reflected the real outcome of that war. Li Hongzhang's signature on that treaty (sidelining the obvious, i.e., that he did so as representative of the Qing court) meant a disaster for China, and also the lesson (so often repeated by Deng Xiaoping), that who is backward will be beaten (see above – a Stalin quote).

Moving the camera to the outside, the Chinese TV audience is made aware that by now, this location has turned into a touristic place (similar to the case of Humen discussed above with the Opium War), soliciting the audience to consider a visit as tourists. Still, the TV audience is admonished, that even though this war is times gone by, 'we will not forget'. This message is sustained with filming in a classroom, showing to the national audience how primary school pupils learn about that war in the present, dutifully repeating the textbook wording. On the other hand, the viewer observes Deng Shichang's descendants visiting the site at the 100th anniversary of the war in 1994, coming up from Guangdong in China's South to honour their ancestor's death (at the Yellow Sea, near Korea) at this Shandong commemorative place for that war, laying down wreaths. Deng Shichang's great-grandnephew says to the camera that he is moved and grateful to the PLA for 'protecting us', and he thanks the CCP as an able government, in contrast to the corrupt Qing of once. At the end, photos of the main heroes, above all of Ding Ruchang, Liu Buchan, and Deng Shichang, are shown to reinforce the 'patriotic' message, to then focus the camera lense on the monument for the Beiyang Fleet's 'martyrs' (i.e., including also the 'normal' marines who died in that war): the 'haijun zhonghun bei' 海军忠

魂碑 (monument for the loyal souls of the navy) – which demonstrates once more that the term 'loyalty' stands for 'patriotic martyrdom' in the pre-Communist era. (Cf. the *Wanzhongmu* 万忠墓 or 'tomb of the 10.000 loyal ones' for the victims of the Lüshun Massacre in that First Sino–Japanese War, discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book.)

The 'patriotic' booklet on this museum, equally of the late 1990s (Liu / Qi 1998), in turn, spells out the basic programme of the museum between material remains, a memorial function, and the crucial political service for 'patriotic education'. It provides the intended young reader with the background for the establishment of the Beiyang fleet, to then detail the phases of the war, the outstanding 'patriotic' figures, the lessons of the war in the negative and in the positive sense, the material leftovers to be visited on Liugongdao, the exhibition in the museum, and finally explains, how the museum tries to meet the requirements for a 'patriotic education showcase base'.

Recounting the establishment of the Beiyang fleet, this site on Liugongdao is also to solicit 'patriotic' pride in this early version of a modern Chinese navy which had been formally established in 1888. Before, the Qing, being averse to modern Western technology, had only an old-style fleet at their disposal. Lin Zexu (see above with the Opium War) had been instrumental also in this regard, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is assured, being the first to buy a US trade ship some decades earlier to transform it into a warship, and he had been also the one who wanted to copy Western ships, building those in China during his life time. But his openness to learn from the West was not supported or followed up. Only because of the shock of the Taiping uprising (1850–1864), which almost toppled their rule, the Qing started to pay more attention to the issue and decided to acquire Western gunboats. The British Horatio Nelson Lay (who was recruited by the Qing), suggested that his co-national Osborn transfer the bought British ships over for the Chinese flotilla, i.e., not putting them under Chinese command. Because the Qing felt offended by this implicit distrust in Chinese capabilities, the ships were returned to England – the booklet tells his 'patriotic' intended readers, and Lay was dismissed from his post in Shanghai. (This story reads somewhat differently in Western accounts, though.)[169] Thereupon, high official Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 proposed to build a wharf in Fujian Province, more precisely in Fuzhou 福州, and thus Fuzhou would become the starting point for the Chinese modern navy in the late 1860s.

169 Another version is that Osborn brought the gunboats (the so-called Lay–Osborn Flotilla) to China in 1863, but because of quarrels about the subsequent command there, Osborn quitted and sent them back to England, while Lay, who had arranged the whole, was dismissed by the Chinese. Cf. Gerson (1972).

Until 1874, 19 small ships were built and 10 bought, which would patrol the coastline. With the Japanese 'punitive expedition' to Taiwan (1874), which was under Qing jurisdiction, after Ryūkyūan sailors had been murdered there, the Qing started to realise that the Japanese were becoming a new threat to them. High official and future admiral Ding Ruchang thus lobbied for strengthening the navy, and Li Hongzhang agreed. That way, three naval bases were established, but every one of them managed itself on its own. In 1884, during the Sino–French War, the French destroyed almost all the ships built in Fuzhou, and thus, after this debacle, the Qing decided to unite the command for the navy in the hands of Li Hongzhang. The latter bought two iron-clad turret ships, the 'Dingyuan' and 'Zhenyuan', and five cruisers smaller but faster, as well as seven torpedo boats from Britain and Germany. It was these 14 ships that made up the Beiyang Fleet in 1888, with Weihai in Shandong as its main base, while Lüshun in Manchuria on the opposite Liaodong peninsula mainly served for repairs (1–5).

The island Liugongdao off Weihai was thus turned into an 'unsinkable ship', featuring also a school to learn shooting torpedos etc., and there are still remains of the machinery production site, the telegraph, the port, the docks, and the ammunition depot to be seen on site. These very promising beginnings, when the Chinese navy was superior to the fledgling Japanese one, were not sustained, however, and further funding was not coming forward (being syphoned off for the empress dowager's pet projects, as mentioned), while the Japanese continued to build up their navy and finally got the upper hand. Li Hongzhang realised the problem, and noted the growing competitive advantage of the Japanese, who started to aim at China with their navy (but he did not dare to act, the suggestion is, given the court's other preferences) (6–9). In 1894, the Japanese jumped on the occasion of the Tonghak uprising in Korea, when the Korean court, bound to China by tributary relations, asked the Chinese for help to suppress it. Before the Qing troops arrived, the Korean court had already made an arrangement with the rebels, though, but the Japanese pressured for reforms in Korea. In the end, they aimed at war, the intended young reader is told, putting the Daewongun (father of the Korean emperor Gojong not yet grown up) in charge of Korea as their puppet, forcing him to sign that they could drive out the Qing from Korea. Then, the Japanese attacked, and thus the Qing were forced to declare war, the reader is to conclude via this somewhat one-sided framing of the war's background.[170]

While the major battles were on land (especially at Pyongyang in Korea, at the Yalu river as the border between Korea and China, in Lüshun in Manchuria, and in

170 For a seminal English-language scholarly treatment of the First Sino–Japanese War, see Paine (2003).

Weihai in Shandong), on sea, the first confrontation was near Pungdo in Korea, but the great battle would be the one on the Yellow Sea (near the mouth of the Yalu river). Before the latter, the Pyongyang land battle had been particularly fierce. At first, the Qing prevailed in defence, but they had less men in Pyongyang, and thus commanding general Zuo Baogui 左宝贵 faced difficulties. Seeing the end approaching, he handed some clothing (for his presumable *yiguan zhong* or substitute tomb) to send home (similar to what is told about Guan Tianpei in Humen during the First Opium War, cf. above). He proudly wore his court clothing which made him, however, an easy-to-spot target, and thus he was shot by the Japanese (and died a 'hero', though the reader might wonder whether his ceremonial acting had been the best of choices). On the other hand, commander Ye Zhichao 叶志超 was the one to retreat and give up Pyongyang (for which he would be nearly executed by the Qing thereafter) (10–17).

After the fall of Pyongyang on land, admiral Ding Ruchang left Shandong and came over with his fleet to sustain the war effort, and thus, the epic Battle of the Yellow Sea (1894) took place. The Qing fleet was slightly larger than the Japanese one, and the naval battle is recounted to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet in detail.[171] Commander Deng Shichang of the 'Zhiyuan' was attacked and tried at the end to at least ram the Japanese flagship 'Yoshino', as mentioned, but his ship was sunk before, while he refused to be saved out of the sea. Other Chinese ships ran into a similar fate. The 'Jiyuan' (i.e., the one found in the sea near Lüshun and now exhibited), though, had a cowardly commander, Fang Boqian 方伯谦, who tried to escape. (He would be executed for this later.) All in all, the intended young reader is told, only the two iron-clad ships and two smaller ones, that had participated in that naval battle, 'survived' it well. The two smaller ones went to shallower waters when they were hit as well, which left the two large iron-clad ones: 'Dingyuan' and 'Zhenyuan'. An English observer present on the 'Dingyuan', however, praised the Chinese fighting, the intended young reader is assured, and even the Japanese (and an US observer) acknowledged this. Still, the naval battle had ended in Chinese defeat (18–24).

The final battle of Weihai in Shandong would seal the Qing empire's fate in this war. There, in Weihai, the Qing had fortified the area with 13 forts, having Krupp cannons installed, and thus Li Hongzhang thought that the place was well prepared. But the problem was that this was only designed for attacks from the sea. The Japanese, however, would smartly come from behind. This showed that the purely defensive thinking of Li Hongzhang was wrong, since one needs also the capacity to

171 Since there were also foreign observers on both sides at the time who would also report on them later, the battles are rather broadly documented.

attack, the young reader learns (which, in terms of 'defence education', implicitly hints at Mao's later strategies who stressed agency throughout in warfare). The Manchu-Qing had been completely fixed on Manchuria (their home), but neglected the Shandong peninsula opposite to it. The local Shandong Qing officials, in turn, had not envisioned that the Japanese might land there and thus were not prepared either. The Japanese, in contrast, had investigated the local situation well to find spots for landing, and thus came swiftly from the rear. At that point, the local Qing landed troops simply fled, the intended young reader is told, and the Japanese could thus take the terrain without resistance, attacking from land and simultaneously also from sea, the remaining ships of the Beiyang Fleet thus being tragically caught in the middle. While the Chinese could score some successes on sea, the Japanese started to use torpedos, and when the Chinese tried to save their few remaining ships by driving them back to the harbour, four of them were hit by torpedos nonetheless. The marines fallen into the water were either shot by the Japanese (underlining their inhumanity for the reader) or taken prisoner. On the other hand, Ding Ruchang, who had asked for relief troops from the near-by major city of Yantai 烟台 in Shandong, received none, being left alone. And thus, with defeat approaching, he committed suicide in his office, notably by taking an overdose of opium (as is openly stated here, while otherwise this fact is often not mentioned but termed as 'poison', due to the unwelcome association of a Chinese post-Opium War 'hero' obviously being an opium consumer). Others followed his example, while the intended young 'patriotic' reader is told that it was the foreigner George Howie who proposed to surrender in Ding's name, with Ding's treacherous Chinese underling Niu Changbing 牛昶昞 handing over Ding's seal (which made the surrender official)! In the end, the remaining Chinese ships that could not be destroyed in time (the iron-clad battleship 'Zhenyuan', three protected cruisers including the 'Jiyuan', and six gunboats) went to the Japanese, and China's Beiyang Fleet was history (25–34).

The main section of the 'patriotic' booklet, however, details for the intended 'patriotic' young reader the tragic 'heroes' who lost or gave up their lives during the war, above all Ding Ruchang who died at Liugongdao in his office where the 'patriotically' labelled museum was also placed. Li Hongzhang, who had wanted to keep his ships and was against an attack as proposed by Ding, is therewith implicated in Ding's death. Ding Ruchang had been wounded in the Battle on the Yellow Sea (underlining his bravery, since he died in office and not in battle). The German military advisor of Li Hongzhang (i.e., Constantin von Hanneken) is presented as the one to have suggested retreat of the navy from Lüshun to Weihai. (Notably, the Japanese Lüshun Massacre on land is not mentioned here – cf. chapter 3.2 of the

present book.) When the Japanese tried to 'lure' Ding out of the protected Weihai, he declined, but the Qing court accused him of cowardice for this (and threatened to punish him). In fact, the 'patriotic' narrative defensively argues, Ding had wanted to move, but Li Hongzhang did not allow it. Ding, however, refused Japanese requests to surrender in the end, proving to all that he was no coward, and thus it was once more foreigners, namely British and US staff (i.e., the Scotsman John McClure and the American George Howie), who are said to have suggested surrender. To prevent such an outcome, Ding Ruchang is said to have tried to save his seal so that no one could seal a capitulation in his name, but it was already stolen, the 'patriotic' reader is assured, and thus he committed suicide. The Qing punished him nevertheless *post mortem* for the defeat with chaining his coffin thrice, and he could at first not be buried. Only in 1910 (!), i.e., fully 15 years after his death, he would be rehabilitated and then buried with his wife, the 'patriotic' reader learns (37–41).

The second major 'hero' profiled in the 'patriotic' booklet is Deng Shichang, so famous from the 1962 film *Jiawu fengyun*. Like so many others, he had been trained in Fuzhou, and he was already involved in fighting the Japanese when they attacked Taiwan in the 1870s while he protected the Penghu 澎湖 archipelago (the Pescadores) and Jilong 基隆 (Keelung) in Northern Taiwan. Deng Shichang had been to Germany and Britain to help bring the ships newly bought there over to China, but he ('patriotically') refused to use Western experts. During the Sino–French War (1884–1885) he would not even go home for his father's funeral, arguing that the loyalty to the nation was more important than filial duty! (Like we noted repeatedly in the present book, this line of thought appears frequently in the 'patriotic education' context.) As the argument goes: to love the nation is to love the people, and to love the people is to love the military (which is a statement with a special ring for a reader after the Tiananmen events of 1989).

Back at the time, though, Deng Shichang showed himself also a 'patriot' in other ways. E.g., he would pick up Chinese workers in Gibraltar who had been 'sold there' by the Spanish (!), since they had begged him to rescue them and bring them home, when he passed by on his way back with the newly bought ships from Europe. When a Chinese sailor died en route, he would not tell the British (who obviously supervised the transport) to avoid having him thrown into the sea, thus making sure he would receive a proper earth burial at the next stop (showing his personal care for his men, shielding them from the foreigners). During the Battle on the Yellow Sea, he tried to protect the main Chinese battle ships with his cruiser 'Zhiyuan', but when his ship started to sink, he refused to be fished out of the sea. Even his dog (!), the story goes, wanted to help him, but, the narrative assures the intended reading pupil, he heroically refused, rather pulling the dog under water to die

with him (and teach him a final lesson in 'loyalty'). To honour him, the Qing Guangxu emperor would write a eulogy for Deng Shichang and send money for his ancestral shrine. His mother (back in Guangdong from where he hailed) received an honorary plaque, and locally in Weihai in Shandong, the people made a statue for him in commemoration (since he had drowned at sea) (42–47).

The third major 'hero' presented to the intended 'patriotic' reader is Liu Buchan who gave up his life in the end as well. He, too, had been trained in Fuzhou, and thereafter in Britain. While he dutifully noted down everything he had learnt in England for Li Hongzhang, he is credited as having been the one to foresee the danger Japan was posing early on, warning to be more proactive with the navy, and even daring to oppose the more passive Li Hongzhang. He is also presented as someone standing up against the 'bad foreigners', the Germans and the British, who served Li Hongzhang. And only therefore, the 'patriotic' booklet defensively argues, he was rather negatively portrayed by a British foreigner (i.e., William Ferdinand Tyler) in the latter's memoirs! [172] Liu Buchan would take over the flagship command when admiral Ding Ruchang had been wounded in the naval battle on the Yellow Sea. While empress dowager Cixi had tried to arrange for peace via the US, Liu Buchan was for fighting and supported Ding Ruchang in this. Liu Buchan also protested when Ding was to be punished by the court. That way, Ding Ruchang was kept on his position for the time being, and the situation at Weihai, where the threat of his dismissal had roused emotions, calmed down again. (This should all show that the negative portrayal of Liu Buchan by Tyler was biased and unfounded.) When a Japanese torpedo nearly sank the flagship 'Dingyuan' he was by then commanding in February 1895 in Weihai during the last phase of the war, Liu Buchan managed to 'limp' with it to shallow water where the Japanese ships could not approach it. To prevent the Chinese flagship falling into enemy hands, Liu rather ordered to blow it up (and then took his life with an overdose of opium, like Ding Ruchang, therewith showing himself a 'patriot') (48–54).

Beyond these three main 'heroes', the 'patriotic' booklet presents also further models that not only reflect the Beiyang Fleet's history in a positive light, but also should be examples of outstanding 'patriotism' to emulate for the intended young

172 Tyler wrote his reminiscences of 30 years that he worked for the Chinese navy under the title: *Pulling Strings in China*, published in 1929 in London. He wrote critically about Liu (naming him Commodore Liu Poo-chin) as someone rather obstructive and keen on saving his skin (p. 47), only forced by tradition (and the expectation of his men) to take an overdose of opium to commit suicide (80–81). The book's part on the First Sino–Japanese War was quickly translated into Chinese after publication (and thus had to be addressed by the authors of the 'patriotic' booklet to counter this negative view of Liu Buchan). (Incidentally, the book has been in the meantime translated in full into Chinese.)

reader of today. That way, their respect for China's navy should be also enhanced (which once more underlines that the 'patriotic education' campaign is strongly underpinned by military factors).

Many of these exemplary men had been trained in Fuzhou, e.g., Lin Yongsheng 林永升, a further commander once educated there, who then studied in England and helped steer the acquired ships over to China. He is described as caring for his men, never using harsh punishments. During the naval battle on the Yellow Sea, his ship was isolated, and he fell. The Qing thus praised him and Deng Shichang posthumously together, and thus they became known as the 'two martyrs' (though Deng Shichang has become the more famous one in later commemoration, due to the 1962 film and his attempt to ram the Japanese flagship) (54–58). Yang Yonglin 杨用霖, equally hailing from Fujian, was also among those to categorically refuse surrender, which is to recall Song-era 'national hero' Wen Tianxiang's famous dictum that 'since antiquity, who would not have died, but I will leave my red heart to shine on the pages of history', which, the 'patriotic' booklet asserts, embodies the true Chinese values! In contrast to the afore mentioned cases, Yang Yonglin was, however, a man without much education, and thus he could not enter the Naval College in Fuzhou, but started as a simple sailor. Because of his outstanding performance, he would be promoted step by step, however (which shows to the intended young reader that also less advantaged young people can leave their mark in history by 'patriotic' service and will be rewarded). Yang, too, helped steer the acquired ships over from England. The British were purportedly impressed by Yang's capability, praising him even as a 'Nelson' of China! He, too, swore to die if defeated, and his comrades all wanted to follow his example. Western observers of the war (who are always cited to prove Chinese bravery) commented that his actions were, in fact, very audacious. Under Lin Taizeng's 林泰曾 command (see below), he steered their ship to Weihai where they, however, ran upon a shore for which Lin Taizeng committed suicide to take over the responsibility, but Yang had the ship repaired. When surrender was approaching, he, however, took his life, too. The court praised him as well, and the noted writer and translator of foreign literary works into Classcial Chinese, Lin Shu 林紓 (who also hailed from Fujian), wrote an inscription (*mingwen* 铭文) for him to immortalise Yang, the former simple marine (58–63).

The already named commander Lin Taizeng, in turn, was the grandnephew of no one less than Lin Zexu, and also from Fujian (which, incidentally, also hints at the personal networks behind many of those 'patriotic' navy figures). Lin Taizeng had been to England and also acted as a translator in Taiwan, i.e., had a broad education. In England, he stayed together with Liu Buchan, and they would also steer the

newly bought ships over to China together. Lin is credited with having opposed the Japanese already in the 1880s, realising the threat they posed early on (like Liu Buchan). In the First Sino–Japanese War, when the Japanese concentrated on the land war around Pyongyang, Li Hongzhang refused the proposal to have the Beiyang fleet attack, and thus, in Lin's eyes, the momentum was lost. When his own ship ran aground, entering Weihai harbour, he took his life, as mentioned (63–67).

A further 'hero' who fell in the war, Lin Lüzhong 林履中, also hailed from Fujian. He, too, had once gone abroad to steer home the bought ships, in his case from Germany, and then went to England for study. The cruiser he commanded was one without special protection. Since the Chinese formation in the naval battle on the Yellow Sea was like the character 'ren' 人, as mentioned, the strong battleships were ahead and had their cannons to the front. But thus, they could not help the smaller ships at their side (which means the formation was not that ideal after all). That way, Lin's cruiser was easily sunk by the Japanese, and he 'patriotically' refused to be saved out of the sea (67–70).

Chen Jingying 陈京莹, in turn, who hailed from Fujian as well, was a case of those educated in the naval college of Tianjin. The intended young reader is told that he already expected death when going to war, supposedly proven by the fact that he said so to his family at leave. In fact, his cruiser was sunk and he died (70–71).

The case of Shen Shouchang 沈寿昌, a 'hero' from Shanghai, is (together with the following cases) serving in the 'patriotic' narrative, in turn, to salvage the honour of those who served for China on the already named 'problematic' 'Jiyuan' of which the recovered parts are exhibited in the museum, but which had been 'shamefully' lost to the Japanese who used it subsequently until it was sunk by a Russian sea mine in 1904. Although the 'Jiyuan's' commander Fang Boqian was a coward, the marines were not, the insinuation goes, proving that 'the people' are 'patriotic' even if their commanders are not. Shen Shouchang, one of them, is said to have tried to take over the ship and attack on his own (i.e., did so without orders). However, he was tragically shot by the enemy in action (71–73). Similarly, Huang Chengxun 黄承勋 from the naval college of Tianjin, took Shen Shouchang's resolve as a model, and in view of Fang Boqian's cowardice, rather died fighting (73–74). Wang Guocheng 王国成, a further simple marine serving on the 'Jiyuan', being a Shandong local, also proved his determination to fight. He, too, had said goodbye to his family before leaving, and planted a tree in front of his home (which incidentally stresses once more the issue encountered repeatedly in the present book of the connection between trees and death). When Fang Boqian fled with the 'Jiyuan', and the Japanese went after his ship, Fang, it is argued, put up a white flag

and even would put up the flag of the Japanese navy (!) (to underline his cowardice). But the Japanese went for attack nonetheless, and the simple marine Wang Guocheng insisted that they should shoot back (and not surrender). Back in port, Ding Ruchang would praise him for this. But in spite of such heroism 'from below', after Ding Ruchang's suicide at the defeat in the Battle of Weihai, Niu Changbing 牛昶昺 would nevertheless sign the surrender of Weihai. Wang, the simple marine, thus had to return home and would die normally (which makes his story stand out since he 'only' opposed the cowardice of Fang Boqian, but survived the war) (74–76).

A further survivor presented as a model to the intended 'patriotic' reader of the booklet is Sa Zhenbing 萨镇冰, who was responsible for the defence on Sun Island locally at Weihai harbour, located between the mainland and Liugongdao. Like most of the 'heroes', he was from Fujian, trained at the Fuzhou Naval College, and went to Britain thereafter. He was doing his best in local defence, as even a Hong Kong report on the fall of Weihai is cited for proof. Since it was risky to go up to the platform of the cannons as one could be easily spotted by the enemy, he had to give up the cannons in the end, and Ding Ruchang ordered retreat because of the Japanese coming from both sides. But it was unfair, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is told, by the court to later put the blame on Sa Zhenbing and dismiss him. (In fact, he was readmitted to service later.) Notably, he would even live into PRC times (!) (and thus would be able play a role in framing the war's historiography in China, one might add). Back at the time of the war, though, when his wife wanted to look after him when he was ill, he purportedly refused any care, but when she, in turn, died, grief-stricken, he vowed not to marry again (to repay her loyalty). He was also incorrupt, the narrative assures the reader, so that even when relatives or friends asked him to favour them, he would not, though he helped them set up small businesses in the Weihai area, and later was active in charity. Sa Zhenbing thus serves as a locally outstanding person who also contributed to Weihai concretely, and he is among the few survivors praised as a model in the 'patriotic' booklet (76–81).

The final 'hero' presented to the intended young reader is Ye Zugui 叶祖珪, who was also from Fujian and trained at the Fuzhou Naval College. He went to Britain, too, and helped steer the bought ships over from Britain and Germany to China. On Ding Ruchang's orders, at the end of the war, his protected cruiser was blown up to not fall into enemy hands. Similar to Sa Zhenbing, Ye Zugui was threatened with punishment but then kept on duty. Some years later in 1899, when the Italians tried to bully him (aiming at occupying the Sanmen 三门 bay in Zhejiang), he would show strength, and thus the Italians gave up, which demonstrates that 'patriotic' resolve could fend off the foreigners. All through, he would never stop lobbying for

the navy, and thus showed himself a true 'patriot' by caring for China's defence capacities (81–84). In sum, these 13 outstanding people are to prove to the intended young reader that China always had people ready to sacrifice and serve their fatherland 'patriotically', including also those who survived but had been steeled by the experience.

A crucial topic the 'patriotic' booklet tries to tackle is the lessons modern Chinese citizens should take out of the First Sino–Japanese War. At the time, China had a sizeable modern navy and 'patriotic' marines, so why did 'we' not succeed? According to the narrative, the reason was that the Qing were not like the West or Japan, going for capitalism and industrialisation, but were still feudal and autocratic. Their *ti-yong* 体用 (essence and application) thinking (hoping for preserving the Chinese 'essence' by applying Western knowledge and technologies) was simply short-sighted and wrong: Li Hongzhang only thought that China needed better weapons. But the Westerners at the time already realised that the Qing lacked a centralised army, i.e., the military was not strong enough (which signals to the modern reader that this is what should be changed). Already at the time, some Chinese said they needed also a reform in the system (*bianfa* 变法) (hinting at the subsequent 1898 reform movement). But the Qing rather wanted to close off the country and be self-sufficient. Thus, they lost the chance to build up a strong navy, while the Japanese used their time well. After 1888, when in China nothing further had been done, innovations (a topic increasingly of interest since the 1990s in the PRC) went on, and thus the Qing quickly fell behind. Education, too, was superficial, with training often consisting in hollow speeches, instead of technical skills. Ammunition was often stolen or faked, too. Thus, in spite of heroic people like Deng Shichang, China simply could not win, given this context. And, more importantly, the message is driven home that defence is not something only passive. Individual guilt was, of course, a further factor for defeat, with Li Hongzhang being too optimistic and only wanting to save his ships, and with some cowards in the military. On the other hand, when the Japanese came also from behind, there were no relief troops sent even though Ding had asked for it, obstructing his efforts (85–90). That way, defeat had been inevitable.

Nonetheless, there are also positive things to remember from that war, including the 'people's spirit' which was impressive, the intended young reader is told. There was responsibility for the nation shown, and filial duty was put behind the service to the nation (as the 'hero' stories were to illustrate). To underline this point (which has been contested in Confucian view) of the priority of loyalty over filial duty, Chinese intellectual figures from Zhou-era Mengzi 孟子 over Song-era Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 to Ming / Qing-era Gu Yanwu 顾炎武 are cited to the avail that the first

thing one needs to do is to put the country in order, and that this is the duty of everyone, suggesting to the intended young reader that this was a 'Chinese tradition' all through. Like the 'hero' stories illustrated, many said goodbye to their families before they went to war, which means that they were not old-style filial duty advocates (which indirectly admits that 'Chinese tradition' was not that clear-cut regarding the priority of the *patria* after all), but modern ones with 'patriotism'.

People not combatting sustained the war effort as well: influential official and writer Huang Zunxian 黄遵宪, for one, who had played an important role in Sino–Japanese relations in the late 19th century, wrote poems about the loss of Taiwan (which was one of the results of the First Sino–Japanese War). The defeat in this war also spurred many into action, including the reformers Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao as well as Yan Fu 严复 (who translated many Western works). Thus, the (1898) reform movement with the Guangxu emperor's support would try to do something to change the situation (i.e., the Guangxu emperor and his tutor Weng Tonghe 翁同龢 should be seen as 'patriotic')! In other words, heightened 'patriotism' is a positive legacy of that First Sino–Japanese War. On the other hand, some would also take their lives to show loyalty to the nation (and to 'clear' the 'shame') (which praises suicide as a method to prove one's 'patriotism' for the intended reading pupils – a certainly problematic issue from a modern pedagogical perspective). Those killed in action, in turn, included Zuo Baogui as a Hui (and thus a minority person), who is also addressed in history textbooks in school, who proved himself a hero during the land battle of Pyongyang (thus showing that all ethnic nationalities are potential heroes and were sustaining the Chinese nation at the time). The Taiwanese people, in turn, would also continue to fight against the Japanese (when they were colonised by them, due to the Qing defeat in the First Sino–Japanese War).

That way, there were many positive things to remember from that war as well. As Confucius is cited, a person needs above all *dao* 道 (moral way) and *zhi* 志 (high purpose). This was, the argument goes, lived out by the various heroes presented, when, e.g., Liu Buchan did not let the flagship fall into Japanese hands but rather blew it up and killed himself. Or when Ding Ruchang, in turn, first sent all the documents to Yantai for safe-keeping, and only then took his life. This 'Chinese' way is contrasted with the foreigners who simply suggested surrender (which Ding had refused), and even worse, in spite of his proposal to bring some ships to safety in Yantai, the foreigners (and their Chinese collaborator Niu) had surrendered on spot (and thus made it possible that the Japanese could take over the remaining ships). The 'Chinese' way of honour was different, as supposedly shown also by others beyond the military, citing the example of a scholar in Lüshun, who refused to show

the Japanese the way. After purportedly giving a dramatic speech, he was killed by them for his refusal (92–101). As a lesson to draw from all that, the intended young reader should understand that a people that does not have such a spirit will fail in the competition between nations, i.e., the Chinese must strengthen themselves and their resolve to serve the nation. Thus, historically, after the defeat of 1895, the 1898 reformers tried to ameliorate the situation, and Sun Yat-sen would subsequently move on from saving China as a country (Zhong*guo* 中国) to saving China and its people more broadly as a civilisation (Zhong*hua* 中华)! (101–103) This, the argument goes, shows that he was already moving beyond the old system of dynastic rule, aiming at a (modern) republic, learning from the West, but ultimately spurred by the First Sino–Japanese War lesson.

The 'patriotic education showcase base' on the First Sino–Japanese War on Liugongdao presents to the visitor several material remains, which are introduced to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet for rendering the narratives told about that war more tangible, concrete, and localised. In that context, the reading pupils also learn about the previous and, more importantly, about the subsequent history of the place (which also discloses much about what can be expected to have remained after the place's specific vicissitudes). Weihai (formerly called Weihaiwei 威海卫), was fortified since Ming times, but became more important only in the 1880s. After the First Sino–Japanese War, in turn, in 1898, Weihaiwei would be taken by the British, and at that point in time, Liugongdao starting harbouring British Royal Navy ships. In 1930, Weihaiwei was given back to China but for Liugongdao, the strategic island off the mainland. During the Second Sino–Japanese War, in 1938, the Japanese, however, occupied all of it, and the area became then the main base of the 'puppet government' navy, collaborating with the Japanese. The local people would not easily accept this, the 'patriotic' reader is assured, and staged an uprising in 1944 (which, however, was unsuccessful), and in 1952 after the founding of the PRC, the place was turned into a PLA navy base. Liugongdao was finally opened to the public in 1988 and turned into a sightseeing area. Ever since, it serves for 'patriotic education', 'defence education', and an education to develop a 'maritime perspective' (*haiyangguan* 海洋观) – reflecting the new political priorities of the Jiang Zemin era (107).

The damaged parts on Liugongdao were restored in the meantime 'as they had been' (intending at the time of the First Sino–Japanese War). Ding Ruchang's office building (i.e., the listed museum site), was also the place where Li Hongzhang stayed at his visit of 1891, which explains why it is featuring the calligraphy of Li Hongzhang on its name plaque. Furthermore, the tourist encounters on Liugongdao the Dragon king temple with depictions of scenes taken from the popular historical

novel *Sanguo yanyi* 三国演义 ('Romance of the Three Kingdoms') and the popular 'gods and demons' novel *Fengshen yanyi* 封神演义 ('The Investiture of the Gods'), which reflect the mind-set and religious custom of the time. Two honouring stelae placed there for Ding Ruchang by the local gentry are to demonstrate the local support for him (especially when he was blamed by the Qing court for the defeat), since this had been the place where his chained coffin was placed (as long as he could not be properly buried because of the Qing court's post-mortem 'punishment' – see above). For the temple itself, the 'patriotic' narrative explains to the intended reading PRC pupils that the fishermen believed in the Dragon king, and the marines as well, and therefore this temple was erected there. Furthermore, a visitor to the place will encounter Ding Ruchang's former residence. A statue and an exhibition tell about this major 'hero' there more personally.

Nearby, there is the school for marines, where also an American, Philo Norton McGiffin, had served as a teacher (which is to underline that the place was a first-rate educational facility). The model of this Liugongdao school was the Tianjin Naval College. But, while the other naval colleges of that time have all disappeared in China, this one still remains (and thus is a tourist attraction of particular local pride). The 'iron harbour', in turn, is the place where the ships were repaired, and there was also a hospital for sick marines. A telegraph made communications with Yantai closer by, but also with Lüshun on the opposite Liaodong peninsula, and with the major port city of North China, Tianjin, possible. The forts have been largely reconstructed as well in the meantime (like in Humen). There, the visitor can see that the cannons could, however, only aim at the sea, not at the rear (which prevented their use against the Japanese attack from behind). But before the Japanese took the forts, Ding Ruchang had at least the cannons ordered to be destroyed, though one could be repaired by the Japanese nonetheless who then quickly used it to shoot at the Chinese ships in the harbour. Unfortunately, also the Chinese sea mines and other ammunition stored on Liugongdao fell in Japanese hands (108–119). But overall, the outdoor material remains provide a tangible access to this 'difficult' history, and they are, touristically speaking, a highlight.

Indoor in the museum, in turn, the exhibition joins objects and narrative, seeing itself, like in the Opium War Museum's case discussed above, as a 'three-dimensional textbook' to bring history alive. The museum exhibition was, as mentioned, first placed in the naval office building, and in 1994 (at the 100th anniversary of the war's beginning), Jiang Zemin wrote the name for it in his calligraphy. The museum is termed a sort of site museum (*yizhi-lei bowuguan* 遗址类博物馆), playing up the locality and the material remains (122). The intended young reader is assured that for preparing the exhibition and for collecting materials, the museum

staff went all around in China to the places of birth of the 'heroes', and for meeting their descendants to authenticate what would be displayed thereafter. The staff also went to collect weapons and other material items from the populace, and they received also help from Beijing with photocopies and photos. (Though not spelt out, the obvious background is that, given Weihai's post-1895 history, the island did not hold much 'original' materials of the First Sino–Japanese War times any longer.) There was also a notable cooperation with the Military Museum in Beijing set up, given the war topic.

As a major attraction (not the least for children), the exhibition features also models of the single ships (which were also focused upon in the TV filmic treatment – see above), and when the 'Jiyuan' near Lüshun was recovered, parts, including the two front cannons, were put on display in a dark black glass corridor (editing out the later 'fate' of the ship, though). Since the museum was sited (at the time of 'patriotic' listing) in the naval office building, it is authenticated by this fact (and by Ding Ruchang's tragic suicide). A few things were, however, recreated on the basis of old photos, the intended young reader is told, e.g., the ceremonial hall, and wax figures recreate the crucial strategic meeting of Ding Ruchang with his staff. The place where Ding finally took his life is also turned into display.

But beyond the major 'hero', there are also photos exhibited to remember the normal marines fighting in that war. The PRC scholarly authority on the First Sino–Japanese War, Qi Qizhang 戚其章, provided a preface to the list of names of the commanders and marines on the black wall to commemorate all those that had lost their lives during that war.

Although it had ended in defeat, the war had still served as a wake-up call for China (suggesting at least some positive legacy), and only therewith the new China had become possible. And thus, substantial scholarship on that war drew lessons, the intended reading pupil learns, including among the named studies also one of a Taiwanese scholar, and of a Japanese one, to represent the various regions involved over scholarly contributions. To sustain this scholarly analysis, the museum added an information centre and library, in cooperation with Beijing Library, to its offers.[173]

To heighten its 'patriotic' effectiveness, Jiang Zemin proposed that also literary products should be added to scholarship to praise 'patriotism', which is another way of rendering the elusive more imaginable via narration, while locally, good guides needed to be trained for the visitors to receive 'patriotic education' on spot. The

173 One may note that several 'themed museums' have added such research facilities to propose themselves also as 'the' site to do research on the given topic. Cf., e.g., the Zheng Chenggong memorial in Xiamen discussed in chapter 5.1).

staff was also to go out of the museum to spread the contents (again a recurring feature of these 'patriotic education showcase bases', to bring 'patriotic' narratives to 'the people'), while adapting to various types of audiences, including guests coming from afar, political leaders among them (a call we encountered also at other 'patriotic education showcase bases' like Humen discussed above) (122–129).

The Liugongdao site is, however, also to serve as a 'second education base for the PLA'. The museum's director thus also teaches recruits. In fact, the place is designed more broadly as an education site for the navy bases of the PLA, including Qingdao in Shandong, Lüshun and Dalian in Liaoning, but also for Yantai's Naval Aeronautical Engineering College of Shandong. But beyond the PLA, connections with local schools are also established. For all of such groups, there are 'fitting narratives' provided (like in the case of Humen). Films and newspaper outreach activities, TV films etc. are completing the offer (129–130). And the 'patriotic' booklet on this Liugongdao site also takes pride in the fact that specialist on the war, Qi Qizhang, also supported it with many materials, as the afterword states, thus authenticating its late 1990s narrative framing from the scholarly side.

Compared to the late 1990s, the *Fengbei* narrative of two decades later (Zheng / Bai 2019), updating the Liugongdao site's 'patriotic' description to the Xi Jinping era, sets a somewhat different tone. It stresses that the museum as such is not very old, only built in 1985 (since the place was closed off as a military zone before), but being a historical museum-cum-site location (similar to the Opium War Museum in Humen), it covers several sightseeing spots on Liugong Island, including the only well-preserved imperial naval office in China.

Since 2008, the (newly built and more spectacular) exhibition hall is furthermore included in the recently established list of China's top museums (*shoupi guojia diyiji bowuguan* 首批国家第一级博物馆 – cf. appendix 3 of chapter 1 of the present book for such labels), underlining the ongoing relevance of the topic of the First Sino–Japanese War and of China's navy (27–28). The well-known Chinese architect Peng Yigang 彭一刚 built the new museum like a ship, merged with the huge statue of an admiral (Ding Ruchang) looking out to the sea.

The indoor exhibition, the intended 'patriotic' reader of the new narrative learns, presents not only historical photos, but also reconstructed (!) weapons, sculptures and dioramas, e.g., showing how a family in (Manchurian) Jinzhou threw themselves into a well before the Japanese advanced (which suggests that the new exhibition is to present the First Sino–Japanese War at large, not only the events in Shandong or those involving the navy like the old version of the exhibition). The scene of Li Hongzhang at the ('humiliating') final Shimonoseki Treaty negotiations also points to the more general 'lesson' of that war to be drawn in the modern age.

In sum, the exhibition is to provide the authoritative reading of this war as the first large confrontation with China's new major enemy, the Japanese.

Outdoor, on the island, the new *Fengbei* narrative points out also a further temple beyond the likely Ming-era one for the Dragon king to heighten the touristic appeal as a secondary focus of its framing of the site for the intended reader. That other temple was dedicated to the Liu couple that was said to have saved people from distress on sea, back in the times of the Han dynasty already (and thus finally explains the naming of the island after that 'Mr. Liu' or Liu *gong* 刘公). The British, however, are said to have moved the statues away in 1898 when they held Weihaiwei, but the statues would be finally replaced in 1994 and can be seen there today.

The present-day tourist will also encounter a stage for operas on the island (for entertainment) which duplicates the one at Weihai on the mainland, and the Qing-era naval college which was modelled on the ones in Fuzhou, Tianjin, and Guangdong. As mentioned, this is the only one of them still well preserved, but, different from the other colleges, it is characterised as one where theoretical learning and practice on the ships were integrated, i.e., it surpassed its earlier models!

At Ding Ruchang's memorial at his former living quarters, the key PLA figure and minister of defence during the 1980s, general Zhang Aiping 张爱萍 (whose calligraphy appears at various 'patriotic education showcase bases' discussed in the present book), wrote the place name (to honour this tragic key navy figure who had once been wronged by the Qing government).[174] Ding Ruchang was, in fact, the only one who had a residence on the island, since all other commanders (and staff) were supposed to live and stay on their ship (to keep discipline) (29–30). Overall, while the new reframing of the site also provides a description of the historical war as such for its intended readers, it clearly shows the particular focus in the Xi Jinping era on commemorating the wars with Japan, profiling the Liugongdao site as the major one to stand for the whole First Sino–Japanese War, and it reflects the particular stress on the importance to proactively build up Chinese maritime power for an 'active defence' of the *patria*.

174 Zhang Aiping inscribed various sites connected historically to the military with his calligraphy, also beyond those labelled as 'patriotic education showcase bases'. See, e.g., also the cemetery for military aviators in Nanjing: Müller (2022: 291–292). Because he opposed the use of the PLA in 1989 against the demonstrators during the Tiananmen Movement, though just having retired from office, he was sidelined thereafter for a while. He had been an instrumental figure in modernising the PLA (and for the nuclear armament of the PRC).

Case study: the Taierzhuang Battle Memorial Hall

While the First Sino–Japanese War as commemorated on Liugongdao as a 'battle site' had to focus on China's 'humiliation' in that first major military confrontation with Japan, the memorialisation of the Taierzhuang battle of 1938 during the Second Sino–Japanese War in the **Taierzhuang dazhan jinianguan** 台儿庄大战纪念馆 (Taierzhuang Battle Memorial Hall) (Shandong Province, listed in 1997), in turn, is in a victorious mood, even though that victory over the Japanese was only a very temporary one. Furthermore, it is an intriguing case in the 'patriotic education' context of the PRC, because here the fight against the Japanese during the early phase of the Second Sino–Japanese War was shouldered by GMD troops. In (reform-era) PRC history textbooks, this battle has been newly acknowledged and is a kind of offer to Taiwan's GMD to seek commonalities between the two rivaling parties of once over the fighting against the 'common enemy' Japan – which also underlines why the confrontations with Japan are so important to memorialise in the 'patriotic education' endeavour for inner-Chinese unification. As Waldron has noted, the 'new' (reform-era) PRC historiography on Zhang Zizhong 张自忠, the GMD general who died in anti-Japanese action later during the war (in 1940) (but also was connected to the Taierzhuang Battle, if de facto only indirectly), prepared for a cautious taking-in of GMD anti-Japanese legacy on the mainland (Waldron 1996). The Taierzhuang Battle was thus also integrated into the authoritative narrative of the Beijing War of Resistance Museum by the 1990s (Mitter 2000). Though predictably the (de facto very limited and indirect) connection of the CCP to the Taierzhuang Battle – the major, if short-lived, Chinese triumph against the Japanese which was turned into a media sensation at the time – is highlighted, the GMD's role is expressly acknowledged as a 'patriotic' contribution. In fact, this is – besides the pre-Communist GMD uprising sites like the one of Wuchang initiating the Xinhai revolution (see above chapter 4.2) – one of the rare sites connected *positively* to the GMD in the whole lists of 'patriotic education showcase bases' where the GMD for the rest figures as an 'enemy'. In the Taierzhuang case, the major 'hero' (in present-day PRC reading) is general Li Zongren 李宗仁 (who would also return to the PRC in 1965 after living abroad for years after 1949, thus demonstrating himself a 'patriot' in mainland Chinese understanding). His photo in wartime under the railway station sign of Taierzhuang became a visual icon of Chinese determination to resist the Japanese assault.[175] Although he directed GMD troops and accepted Chiang Kai-shek as the supreme military leader in war times, he had his own standing as a

175 The picture is reprinted almost everywhere. See, e.g., Shen / Yuan (2012: 89).

leading general of the Guangxi faction, thus not being simply one of Chiang Kai-shek's men but rather an ally cooperating in a time of national crisis.

The Taierzhuang Battle Memorial Hall, erected in 1993 at the 55th anniversary of the said battle, would be even visited in 2011 by Taiwan's GMD leader Lien Chan (Lian Zhan) 连战 in person who had sent a written endorsement to the museum already earlier,[176] thus marking the site also from the (GMD-)Taiwanese side as symbolic for PRC–Taiwan relations, adding to the emotionalised (and politicised) character of this particular battle site. Apart from the museum, the old town has been also rebuilt for the modern-day tourist (as I observed in 2015 and 2016) and is by now to show single locations of fighting with old photos displayed throughout the town at the respective places, statues of hiding and shooting soldiers, and some surviving and restored buildings with bullet holes all over, to evoke the gone-by battle. To augment its touristic attraction, the town, however, also presents itself today as the embodiment of 'canal culture', i.e., of the Great Canal, thus reviving also its pre-war traditional Ming–Qing face of a wealthy trading port that received even the praise of the (Ming) Wanli and (Qing) Qianlong emperors. Thus, the town took also part in the 2014 UNESCO world heritage listing of the Great Canal as such, and therewith diversifies its branding beyond the 'battle association'.[177]

While the Taierzhuang site was not covered by the educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection on several first list 'patriotic education showcase bases', the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 5) TV film clips provide a filmic view of this 'patriotic education showcase base' in the late 1990s when the site was labelled, produced by Shandong's Zaozhuang TV in 1998 (since Taierzhuang belongs administratively today to the municipality of Zaozhuang 枣庄). It starts dramatically with a written '1938' in the focus, and scenes of bombings in the background. In white and bloody red, the key message is hammered home: let us remember this bloody history! Let us remember the dead! In contrast, the camera then moves to peaceful scenes of today's Taierzhuang as an important historical town in Shandong, leading to the Great Canal as the local touristic highlight. That way, the suggestion is that today's happy and leisurely life was only made possible by the heroic military defence back then. On this basis, the memorial museum on the historical battle is introduced with present-day Chinese military cadets visiting the exhibition. The peaceful musical soundtrack provides a relaxed atmosphere, making the viewer feel assured that today no threat is there any longer, with the

176 For photos see Shen / Yuan (2012). One should note that Lian Zhan had signed a 'landmark agreement on cooperation with CCP general secretary Hu Jintao in 2005' (Hughes 2017: 63).

177 Cf. also chapter 5.3 for the Kong Fansen memorial in Liaocheng, another Great Canal town further north in Shandong Province.

PLA protecting the people. Notably, though, military-clad children and youths follow who are led through the exhibition which suggests that peace can be there only if also the next generation is prepared to defend the country in the case of need.

The famous photo of general Li Zongren under the Taierzhuang railway station sign, as well as maps, lead over to the historical part. The soundtrack consequently changes into evoking a feeling of danger, with historical film scenes shown in the background. The routes of Japanese attack are visualised on a map, with fighting at Tengxian 滕县 (in Shandong, today's Tengzhou 滕州, north of Taierzhuang) being the prelude to the Taierzhuang Battle. Remarkably, a laudatory calligraphy by Chiang Kai-shek (likely for commander Wang Mingzhang 王铭章 who died in Tengxian) is shown, thus acknowledging the GMD-troops' contribution even by referring to Chiang himself. Close-ups of military-clad children in the museum listening attentively are to show to the national TV audience that the narrative apparently moved them. The 'martyrs' of Tengxian could not stop the Japanese advance, though, but they helped gain time for Taierzhuang. The key responsible commanders on spot, Sun Lianzhong 孙连仲 and Chi Fengcheng 池峰城, are presented, and the battles are described in some detail. A large 360° panorama of the Taierzhuang Battle, which joins painting and sounds to suggest the experience of being right in the battle, is the highlight of the memorial museum (cf. the similar feature of the Korean War Museum discussed in chapter 4.1 above). The single battle scenes are recounted with film soundtrack in the background, presenting also an elderly eyewitness telling of his memories. A key location of the fighting was at the mosque, as camera shots of the many bullet holes in the walls are to authenticate. Another eyewitness recalls the trees that were all burnt down by Japanese fire. Camera shots of some bullet holes in the few remaining trees meanwhile authenticate also this memory. The national TV viewer furthermore observes a small screen in the exhibition showing historical film clips which are to bring the elusive battle to life for the visiting military-clad youths. But beyond the fighting soldiers, also the normal people are said to have sustained the war effort at the time. Only this way, the narrative argues, China could win the Taierzhuang Battle at all. Tombs of Japanese fallen soldiers and Chinese newspapers of the time, jubilant over the victory, as well as people celebrating conclude the storyline on the battle itself on an upbeat note.

For a hindsight assessment of the battle's impact, the Jewish Communist journalist and 'old friend' of China, Israel Epstein, who visited Taierzhuang at the time as a war reporter, is interviewed. He praises the victory, stating that it demonstrated the weakness of the Japanese who could not even conquer this small place at the time (not mentioning they did so, however, soon after). Cheng Siyuan 程思远 (of the National People's Congress and former secretary of general Li Zongren who

also proved helpful for inviting Li Zongren back to the mainland in 1965 as a major PR coup for the PRC), in turn, talks about the significance and the cost of that battle. The Chinese had 30.000 casualties, and the Japanese over 11.000 (with that – smaller – figure written bigger and both in red!). Commander Wang Mingzhang is profiled as a leader who lost his life (though in the preluding battle of Tengxian, not in Taierzhuang). And in Taierzhuang, a 'dare to die' group (*gansidui* 敢死队) of 57 men was formed, of whom only 13 survived. For commemoration of the whole battle in later times, the Party secretary of Zaozhuang, in turn, explains to the national TV audience how the memorial hall was built in the early 1990s, and that the site is intended to serve as a place for 'constructing spiritual civilisation'. Children in rows in front of the museum are to show that this is put into practice. Since the memorial's exhibition is rather short on material objects for displaying this evasive historical event, the gone-by battle is mainly recreated via the 360° panorama for inculcating the major lesson that the present peace owes much to that history of 60 years earlier. Children in rows, culminating in shots of those with red scarfs, i.e., Young Pioneers (who have learnt the lesson), and final camera shots of boats on the Great Canal thus conclude the presentation of how traditional culture and military aspects are both offered by this place to a potential visiting tourist, sustaining once more the new branding as both related to the battle as well as to 'canal culture'.

The 'patriotic' booklet (Xu / Hou 1998) on the Taierzhuang site in the benchmark booklet series on the first list 'patriotic education showcase bases', directed at young readers, in turn, which is like the TV film clip of 1998, points already in its illustration sheets to those major issues it is going to highlight. These include not only the memorial hall as such, but also later academic studies of documents, suggesting a 'scientific' treatment of that history (similar to the Liugongdao site on the First Sino–Japanese War discussed above). Most interestingly, the illustrations also feature 'Russian friends' (though Russians played no role in the Taierzhuang Battle historically!) besides Chinese cadres visiting the museum.

In its first part, the 'patriotic' booklet recounts the phases of the Second Sino–Japanese war and the prelude to the Taierzhuang Battle (where the Communists had virtually no part in), to then introduce some 'martyrs' for the more emotional narrative. As non-military figures connected to that battle and its impact in a larger perspective, leftist Dutch documentary film director Joris Ivens and his 1939 film *The 400 Million*, which played a key role in making the Taierzhuang Battle known to the world, the Communist war journalist Israel Epstein, and the noted Chinese writer Yu Dafu 郁达夫 are introduced as sustaining the war at the time with their filming or writings, while Zhang Aiping, the later CCP minister of defence (see above for the First Sino–Japanese War Museum) stands here for the underground

resistance movement in Central China during the Second Sino–Japanese War from the Communist side (to suggest at least some Communist, if indirect, contribution to this historical, if brief, moment of Chinese 'victory'). As the CCP had no part in the Taierzhuang Battle itself, it is argued that before the battle of Taierzhuang, the Communist Eighth Route Army had at least 'won the very first victory' against the Japanese in the whole Second Sino–Japanese War in Pingxingguan 平型关 (September 1937 in Shanxi, though even the Pingxingguan Battle was not fought by Communist troops alone, and thus the GMD also took credit for that 'battle' – if this is what it could be called at all:[178] this evaluation is contested up to the present, but in CCP historiography it was Communist general Lin Biao who 'won' it, though he himself was to become the 'fallen angle' of Mao times later, hampering his memorialisation also from that side.)

In any case, the Taierzhuang Battle in the spring of 1938 was extremely important for China at the time to boost morale, not the least after the Chinese government had lost its former capital Nanjing to the Japanese (cf. chapter 3.2 for the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall), but also internationally to heighten respect and belief in China. In its PRC reading, the battle is thus rather framed as a 'victory of the Chinese people', obviously 'with the help of the CCP' (but de facto fought by the GMD troops). To argue for this role of the CCP, the (second) United Front, which Chiang had 'accepted' (i.e., under pressure because of the Xi'an Incident of December 1936),[179] is pointed out as pushed for by the CCP. In spring 1938, when the Japanese tried to take the strategic city (and railway node) of Xuzhou 徐州 (in Jiangsu) from two sides (i.e., from North and from South, which would have opened the way to Wuhan where the GMD government had moved its capital to, after Nanjing had been lost), Taierzhuang in Southern Shandong was on the way from the North to Xuzhou and was strategic to block the Japanese coming from there. Although the Chinese side had more troops, they were less well equipped which meant, the intended young reader should understand, that the Japanese were de facto 'stronger' (1–3). In fact, it becomes obvious to the attentive reader that the Japanese also had many 'puppet troops' (of the collaborating Chinese regimes, and thus Chinese soldiers) in their rows. On their way down south through Shandong, the Japanese had been blocked several times, the booklet notes, stressing that even one-time rivals among the Chinese put aside their enmity at that point to fight 'patriotically' together against the Japanese invaders (once more illustrating that it is

178 Well-known PRC historian Yang Kuisong has analysed the reports and concluded that the whole topic was propagandistically overblown, predictably creating a stir. See Yang (2005).

179 One may recall that the background to this 'acceptance' was the Xi'an Incident of December 1936 where Chiang was kidnapped by generals Yang Hucheng and Zhang Xueliang.

foreign threat that unifies the otherwise in-fighting Chinese best). However, all those blockings were only temporary and cost the Chinese side dearly. The military engagement in Linyi 临沂 in Shandong, to Taierzhuang's Northeast, proved particularly useful for the Taierzhuang Battle since the Japanese troops could be cut off from relief troops. Still, some GMD commanders would rather give up defending Shandong cities, and thus Chiang Kai-shek executed one of them as a lesson, while sending troops from Sichuan Province into Shandong (which, the intended young reader should conclude, was at least a positive 'patriotic' move to the credit of Chiang Kai-shek) (4–6).

Although the Chinese troops defended Tengxian in Shandong to block the Japanese advance toward Taierzhuang, in the end they were overpowered, since the Japanese also had an air force and bombed them. CCP general Zhu De is pointed out as having sent a telegramme to a wounded (GMD) commander (Chen Li 陈离 from Sichuan like Zhu De) he knew well to express his sympathies (showing to the intended young reader that the Communists sustained the fighting GMD troops morally, though that commander was, in fact, already someone close to the CCP) (7). Rather than falling into Japanese hands as a POW, GMD commander Wang Mingzhang, in turn, who defended Tengxian to the end, and many of his people rather chose suicide, the reader is told, and Chiang Kai-shek thus would hold a state funeral for Wang Mingzhang in his temporary war-time capital Wuhan (to praise his loyalty which demanded to commit suicide rather than being taken prisoner, the narrative suggests – though there are reports on his death stating that he was, in fact, killed in action, not by suicide, as the 'patriotic' booklet tells its readers). In any case, in Tengxian, there is today a memorial pavilion for commander Wang Mingzhang (8–9). But also the normal Chinese people tried to block the Japanese in all ways, the intended reading pupil learns, e.g., by destroying bridges over the Great Canal. However, since China had only 14 airplanes left, the reader should understand that they were simply in great disadvantage. General Li Zongren had given orders that Taierzhuang be made into a sack to enclose the Japanese, since it was a strategic location as a smaller railway node and at the Great Canal (as another logistic artery). The Japanese would use their tanks to attack this city, rich of history, trade, and culture (with a mosque and temples also showing its multi-religious character). Even though Chiang Kai-shek sent in additional troops, the Japanese still managed to occupy parts of the city (9–15). As becomes clear to the intended young reader, fighting usually went on only during the day, and Chiang tried to motivate the soldiers by praise – but also by threat of execution. But the real 'heroes', the 'patriotic' narrative suggests, only wanted to be remembered with a stele, should they die in battle. A 'daring to die' group of 57 men was formed, of whom only 13

survived, as mentioned. Their (surviving) leader, commander Chi Fengcheng, would be interviewed by war reporters at the time and thus became famous (and told the world about his fallen men) (17–20).

The decimated Chinese air force also scored some points, but on the ground, GMD general Tang Enbo 汤恩伯 whose troops were supposed to provide help from the outside, did not move immediately to Taierzhuang, thus hampering the defence. (Here, one should add that Tang Enbo has fought against the Communists later and is therefore a negative figure in PRC historiography, influencing the backward reading of his role in the Taierzhuang Battle.) Still, Tang's troops at least blocked the Japanese from uniting their troop contingents (21–24). To nationalise the narrative, the 'patriotic' booklet argues that the Chinese soldiers at the time were motivated, above all, by the wish to wash clean the 'shame of hundred years' (i.e., since the First Opium War). The Japanese, in turn, tried to encircle Taierzhuang but were encircled themselves by the Chinese. Although the Japanese still managed to occupy up to 2/3 of the city, they were forced to retreat in the end, killing their own wounded soldiers (to not fall into Chinese hands as POWs) and retreating, supposedly, against the will of their leaders. The Japanese also left behind some of their war material due to the forced retreat (which the Chinese could collect), and the Japanese commander was punished thereafter for this defeat, the reader is assured (26–36).

From the Chinese Communist side, Zhou Enlai evaluated this victory as very important for China (which bolsters a possible celebration of it also in the PRC, in spite of the battle being fought by GMD troops). And general Li Zongren's evaluation is cited as well to the avail that this battle even bought China the respect of Japan where the Chinese had been despised up to then, as an ultimate praise (37).

As for the 'martyrs' and 'heroes' of the Taierzhuang Battle profiled for the intended young readers as models in the 'patriotic' booklet, which is to emotionalise the narrative after the more fact-oriented description of military developments, they include notably the Hunanese high-ranking commander Luo Fanggui 罗芳珪 (in the booklet, his last character is misspelled!) who was instrumental for bringing war reporters in to gather material on the battle (which was, in fact, decisive for making it possible that the battle could achieve international impact at all) (38–41). Luo's funeral was embellished by endorsements from many GMD notables, from Chiang Kai-shek and Lin Sen 林森 (the nominally highest politician in the Republic), to Yu Youren, He Yingqin 何应钦, Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙, Sun Ke 孙科, Shao Lizi 邵力子 and other top-ranking GMD figures. Luo Fanggui would be also enshrined in the GMD 'martyrs' hall' (Nanyue zhonglieci 南岳忠烈祠) (established later in Hunan in 1942). From the Communist side, Zhou Enlai wrote an endorsement as well, and

at the 50th anniversary of the Taierzhuang Battle (i.e., in 1988), Luo Fanggui was finally also acknowledged in the PRC officially as a 'martyr'![180] (40–41).

A further 'martyr' the Communists acknowledged too, is He Xin 何信, who had been in the aviation school in Guangxi (which once more underlines the importance attached to the air force which was the Chinese Achilles' heel in the war).[181] He Xin had, in fact, once learnt to fly in Japan. And in Lanzhou 兰州 in China's Northwest, he cooperated with the Soviets (who sustained China's air force in the early phase of the Second Sino–Japanese War) (which likely also helped his commemoration by the Communists). He Xin is presented to the intended young reader as someone who wrote to his wife a farewell letter stating that he was ready to sacrifice his life for his country (that way proving himself a 'patriot'). He, too, was eventually counted as a 'revolutionary martyr' by the Communists in PRC times, notably in his case already under Mao who personally approved it! (41–45)

Of the 57 members of the 'dare-to-die' group, in turn, their (surviving) organiser, commander Chi Fengcheng, is singled out, who had additionally a gate-keeper function, given that all war reporters or high military who wanted to check on the front, had to consult with him. He thus played a key role, not the least for the propagandistic effect at the time on which the later commemoration is also based (45–49). To further enrich the narrative presentation of the elusive battle, the 'patriotic' booklet uses various tales of heroism to render that history more emotional for the intended reading pupil, feeding their imagination. One commander is presented who went on fighting even though he was severely wounded (49). Another 'hero' was a gifted cannoneer who knocked out five of seven tanks of the Japanese (50–52).

Beyond such individuals, the CCP is finally credited as well, arguing that over the contribution via its underground activists who are said to have been particularly daring, it should be also counted in. The activities of these Communists were propagated (later)[182] in Chongqing in the Communist newspaper *Xinhua ribao*, arguing that general Li Zongren simply was not aware that these people were, in fact, Communists. Since the GMD, however, became overbearing after the Taierzhuang victory, according to the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative, the next battle at Xuzhou would end in defeat, i.e., suggesting to the intended young reader that the CCP was

180 As mentioned in chapter 3.2, the 'martyr' label entails also certain privileges for the relatives.

181 One may recall that large parts of the GMD air force were, in fact, former warlord air forces, and Guangxi had a rather large one. See also Müller (2022: 271).

182 One may note that the Taierzhuang Battle was in the spring of 1938, when the *Xinhua ribao* was still published in Wuhan, the temporary war-time capital, which Chongqing became only later that year, to which also *Xinhua ribao* moved, due to the advance of the Japanese who conquered Wuhan in fall.

the true force to hold up the continuing will to fight the Japanese, while the GMD slacked down! (52–55)

At the time of the Taierzhuang Battle, though, Chiang Kai-shek had come several times to the vicinity of Taierzhuang, together with general Li Zongren, to inform himself about the situation, and commander Sun Lianzhong, the real main figure directing the Chinese fighting in Taierzhuang (who would end his days in 1990 on Taiwan), was interviewed after the victory. Sun pointed out that the soldiers were supposed to die and not become POWs, and he also recorded the actions of the mentioned 57 members of the 'dare-to-die' group, thus making sure the merits for the victory would be duly remembered.

Many war reporters thus flocked to him and visited the surviving 'heroes' of Taierzhuang, and this created nation-wide and world-wide sympathies (56–59). Joris Ivens produced his famous documentary film on China in war, and the well-known photographer Robert Capa joined in as war photographer.[183] Ivens, the booklet tells the intended young reader, witnessed the fighting and documented the Japanese cruelty as well as the plight of the normal populace. His film *The 400 million* on wartime China (wherein the Taierzhuang Battle featured prominently in the end as the sign of Chinese chances to win) was produced in the US, with a professional dramatist writing the narrative and a famous actor taking over the narrator's voice. Notably, the hymn 'March of the Volunteers' (today's PRC anthem) appears (which had a 'leftist' background but was popular also more broadly in war times). Ivens' film was positively received in the world, and this, the intended young Chinese reader learns, contributed to the larger 'anti-fascist' struggle at the time. The income of the film Ivens would, in turn, donate for medical equipment in China, and he would also donate a camera to the Eighth Route Army (suggesting he was clearly supporting the CCP). (This gift was, in fact, of great significance for the filming in Yan'an which provided iconic camera shots, thus framing much of the visual heritage of the Communists – see chapter 3.3!).

Polish Jewish war journalist Epstein who would become a Chinese citizen and edit the English version of the PRC journal *China Reconstructs* later,[184] reported on the Taierzhuang Battle back then, too, for an English-reading target audience. Epstein, who published his wartime impressions in his *The People's War* in 1939 (referencing Mao's military strategies), claimed that it had been, in fact, Zhou Enlai who had 'advised' general Bai Chongxi (usually credited in Communist sources as

183 Cf. Bosma (2011).

184 The journal was eventually published in several languages and was to project a positive image of the PRC to the world. It was nominally established by Song Qingling.

the best strategist on the GMD side) and general Li Zongren on how to fight (59–62).

For propagating the battle domestically, in turn, several Chinese writers and artists contributed as well. From the literary side, Yu Dafu, the well-known Republican-era writer, is pointed out who would write a *ci*-poem at the shrine for Qi Jiguang 戚继光 (the Shandong-born Ming-era general fighting against the 'Japanese pirates' – cf. the Shanhaiguan site discussed in chapter 2.3) to hail resistance against the Japanese. Yu Dafu worked with Communist writer-intellectual Guo Moruo at the time. He also visited Taierzhuang in person to talk with Commanders Sun Lianzhong and Chi Fengcheng and also wrote articles on what he had seen. Yu Dafu (in fact someone having a good command of Japanese, since he had lived in Japan repeatedly, and was also a bridge to Japanese literature) was, the booklet tells its intended young readers, killed by the Japanese in September (!) 1945 when they discovered him in Southeast Asia (though this assertion about his end is contested: in any case he disappeared at that time) (62–63). But Yu Dafu was not the only Chinese literary figure praising Taierzhuang. The Chinese poet Zang Kejia 臧克家 also met with Chi Fengcheng and wrote on it (while another commander used the occasion to ask him for tips how to write poems!). Zang Kejia also wrote reportages on Taierzhuang to be published (64).

Beyond these literary figures, the presentation for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet singles out also one woman in this for the rest all male narrative, Wang Ying 王莹, who organised a drama troop which played, i.a., the famous Communist agitation drama 'Lay down your whip' in Taierzhuang.[185] General Li Zongren lauded her for her propaganda work. She would also create two new plays on Taierzhuang, which would be played later in 1939, and Li Zongren's wife would hold the opening speech before the plays were given. (This serves to show general Li Zongren in a clearly 'patriotic' light, and includes women over the issue of propaganda. One may add that Wang Ying was, in fact, an actress of some fame in the 1930s.) Zhou Enlai, the intended young reader is told, later sent her and her husband to the US (where she incidentally played the 'lay down your whip' drama for President Roosevelt, suggesting that the couple's move to the US was also a propagandistic one!) from where she supposedly returned to the PRC with difficulties 'against the will of the US' in 1954.[186] (65–67) (She, however, died in the Cultural

185 Cf. above in chapter 2.2 for the Ningxia museum's display of this street play on the displacement of normal people due to the Manchurian Incident of 1931 in a Ningxia setting.

186 Her acting for President Roosevelt might be understood as a Communist move to counter the GMD-sympathies in Washington, sustained, not the least, by Song Meiling's US visits, and it is a

Revolution in prison, supposedly harassed by her 'rival', the former actress turned Mao's last wife, Jiang Qing.)

All in all, the Taierzhuang victory is explained to the intended young Chinese reader as only possible because of the Second United Front (thus counting in the CCP which did, as mentioned, not participate in the fighting) which heightened the awareness that all Chinese had to stand together vis-à-vis the common enemy. General Bai Chongxi thus also conferred with Zhou Enlai and the Communist general Ye Jianying in Wuhan, supposedly to consult them on strategic matters. Zhou Enlai, in turn, sent Zhang Aiping (the future PRC Minister of Defence) to general Li Zongren, and the CCP organised additional guerrilla warfare, thus helping to organise the people to destroy bridges etc. This contributed to the fact that the Japanese could not send reinforcements to Taierzhuang in time and thus indirectly contributed to the victory, one should understand. Furthermore, underground CCP people worked with general Zhang Zizhong who would agree to cooperate for this moment of crisis even with his personal enemy among the military to join forces, and the people also provided help with logistics and food. Even girls (as the supposedly most feeble group) sustained the effort with propaganda and street theatre (for which the afore mentioned Wang Ying stands), while the populace helped to spy on the Japanese. Zhang Aiping was the crucial underground CCP figure active in the whole area, and thus, when Li Zongren came back to China in 1965, it would be Zhang Aiping (at that time supervising the nuclear armament programme of the PRC) to welcome him (67–69).

As for the memorial museum itself, the 'patriotic' booklet tells its intended young readers that it was finally built in 1992 (and apparently opened in 1993 at the 55th anniversary of the battle, i.e., very late and after the collapse of the Eastern Communist bloc). Placed near the Great Canal, the memorial offers calligraphies, videos, images, and the large, more spectacular 360° panorama. The name of the memorial hall was written by noted calligrapher Qi Gong 启功 (incidentally a descendant of the Manchu emperor Yongzheng), while the name of the stele was written by Zhang Aiping.[187] The stele text's calligraphy was, in turn, written by Li Zongren's former secretary Cheng Siyuan (who is also shown on the illustration sheets studying documents, and apparently one of the key promoters behind the whole memorialisation). This, once more, shows the importance of calligraphy also

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precursor to the performance of the 'Red detachment of women' ballet for US President Nixon in 1972 – see chapter 4.2 above.

187 He had opposed the decision to use force during the Tiananmen Protests in 1989, as noted earlier, and thus was sidelined thereafter. His calligraphies on such sites were a hint as to his being 'pardoned'.

for 'patriotic education' sites. The Ivens documentary has been, of course, of crucial importance for commemorating the Taierzhuang Battle internationally, but the whole memorial museum also bespeaks the fact of the dearth of material to display, and thus calligraphies are also to fill in this blank. Some eyewitnesses are screened for the visitor to add to commemoration a more 'authentic' voice, and Taierzhuang's development during PRC times is also part of the exhibition, especially focusing on the one since 1978.

Similar to the First Sino–Japanese War site on Liugongdao, the importance of a good training of guides of the museum is something openly discussed in the booklet. In this case, they supposedly needed to learn one foreign language (to guide foreign visitors) additionally. Cooperations with neighbouring institutions, e.g., schools, were set up, and thus, the memorial hall is to serve as a 'patriotic education' site for them locally. Foreign, Hong Kong, or overseas visitors are expected to visit as well, but also PRC pupils should come from all over China. Notably, 'Sino–Japanese friendship' should be connected to the site as well – similar to the declared intentions of the Japanese atrocity sites we discussed in chapter 3.2. Interestingly, a 'defensive war tour group of the former Soviet Union' is pointed out as visitors (which are likely the group of 'Russian friends' shown in the illustration part with a photo, suggesting a 'common' interests, while Western visitors do not appear).[188] Publications on Taierzhuang and the battle were locally produced as well, and the memorial hall is also to serve for education in 'revolutionary tradition', as well as locally for pupils' practical 'societal education', thus broadening the site's educational offers (75–82). To underline the message of Sino–Japanese rapprochement, in turn, the afterword of the 'patriotic' booklet expresses the hope that there will be never again a war between China and Japan. But the memorial museum's real main point is to show the success of the Second United Front, thus hoping to prepare for a peaceful cross-Strait reunification, since all Chinese were and should be 'patriotic' (83). To this, the Sino–Japanese issue as such is only secondary and a convenient device.

The above official 'patriotic education' reading of 1998 in the national benchmark 'patriotic education showcase bases' booklet series can be contextualised and contrasted with the framing in publications available on site, which also fill in the developments in chronological regard of the memorial itself. One of those locally available publications, written in 1995 (Wang / Guo 1995) and thus in between the establishment of the memorial hall (obviously opened to the public in 1993) and its listing as a 'patriotic education showcase base' (in 1997), is, in fact, the long version of the museum's own subsequent shortened brochure of 1998 (which has been

188 The wording 'defensive war' means in the Soviet case the 'Great Patriotic War', i.e., WW II in Soviet perspective.

written by the second author of the long version, Guo Mingquan 郭明泉) (Guo 1998). The already named former secretary of Li Zongren, Cheng Siyuan, added the preface to the long version of 1995, thus emerging as a key figure in the whole Taierzhuang site's promotion. A further proof that this locally available book is the memorial hall's own version and blueprint is the fact, that the charts and maps are identical to those displayed in the museum. Cheng Siyuan dutifully points out those figures most palatable to the CCP history view, and stresses Zhou Enlai's endorsement of the battle victory at the time, as well as Deng Xiaoping's call for 'one country, two systems' (to approach Taiwan) as well as Jiang Zemin's call to go on fighting for reunification, to link up the memorial site with the political agendas of the day (Preface 1–3, Wang / Guo 1995). This all discloses that 1995, being the 50th anniversary of the Second Sino–Japanese war's end, was thus perceived as an opportunity to put the Taierzhuang Battle more into spotlight.

The Communist discussion of the Taierzhuang Battle had evolved in two major steps: the first was during the war in 1938, the second was after 1978 (which indirectly admits that in between, the topic was completely off the agenda). In the 1980s, some memory literature was published in the PRC addressing the topic, also from the side of former GMD people. In 1986, a decisive step was the production of the movie *Xuezhan Taierzhuang* 血战台儿庄 (The bloody battle of Taierzhuang) in the PRC (see below), which would eventually popularise the topic to become known all over the country. More and more sites of fighting were restored in Taierzhuang locally, and materials were collected for the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Second Sino–Japanese War's end (in 1995 to underline the 'victory' association). This was to frame domestic views on the Taierzhuang Battle, while Epstein's description and Ivens' film were shaping, in turn, the understanding of the Taierzhuang Battle abroad (1–5). This locally sold book shows a surprisingly positive attitude toward Chiang Kai-shek (e.g., 22), suggesting it was to serve for a rapprochement with the GMD on Taiwan in 1995 over commemoration of the 'patriotic' fighting against the Japanese.

Another locally available publication in the memorial hall itself and of a newer date, instead, focuses on the key role of the war reporters who made the Taierzhuang Battle known to China and the world at the time (Shen / Yuan 2012).[189] This discloses the eminent propagandistic value this site is to represent, and the role of the media for disseminating it. As the afterword makes clear, this newer publication of 2012 is to promote 'patriotic' feelings and a spirit to lead to 'patriotic' action. It particularly refers to Ivens' internationally received documentary, but also to the

189 For a general scholarly take on war reporters in China during the Second Sino–Japanese War in English, cf. Coble (2015).

(leftist) Chinese reporter Fan Changjiang 范长江 who wrote on the battle at the time for a Chinese target audience (109–111). (Fan Changjiang would join the CCP shortly after, but was harrassed and committed suicide later during the Cultural Revolution. Thereafter, a journalism prize was named after him in the PRC to honour this outstanding reporter posthumously who had served as chief editor of, i.a., the *Renmin ribao*.) Beyond this sort of rehabilitation of Fan Changjiang via this publication, this more modern approach to the Taierzhuang site connects the battle also to Taierzhuang's larger touristic appeal as a Great Canal city (of which the UNESCO inscription was underway at the time).[190] Also in this publication, the former secretary of Li Zongren, Cheng Siyuan, though already dead at the time of this book's publication in 2012, is addressed, suggesting once more his obviously crucial role for setting up the whole commemoration site. As is documented with a photo, in 2008, an endorsement was sent to the site by 'honorary chairman' (evidently not calling him former 'premier' or 'deputy president' of Taiwan) Lien Chan (Lian Zhan 连战) from Taiwan's GMD, who even finally visited Taierzhuang in person in 2011 and wrote another endorsement. The year after, in 2012, in turn, another event showed that Taierzhuang payed off as a site to further cross-Strait relations with one more (Taiwan) GMD 'honorary chairman' coming, Wu Po-hsiung (Wu Boxiong 吴伯雄) (who is even a born Taiwanese, while Lien Chan had been born on the mainland).

Apart from this political use of the Taierzhuang Battle memorialisation, the physical remains are also highlighted in a more touristic vein for the intended Chinese reader, poining out the heavily bullet hole-marked wall of the mosque which has been 'preserved' as authenticating the fighting in the city (as will become obvious, the latter has been moved to Beijing, and thus what can be seen locally is a replica), while another major site of the battle, the northern city gate, is completely rebuilt. The iconic railway station sign where Li Zongren took the photo, is supposedly 'preserved' as well. (All of this is documented with photos in the illustration section of this 2012 book). Incidentally, one of the authors of this publication, Yuan Jiping 苑继平, is a professional journalist and takes care also of the promotion of 'canal culture' locally, thus looking after the 'touristic' part in the book, while the other author, Shen Guodong 沈国栋, is a journalist with a faible for film (which is why he addresses also the filmic treatments of the Taierzhuang Battle in more detail). That way, this publication corroborates the on-site impression of Taierzhuang as branding itself as a memorial site for the battle (which would be enhanced also by the media) but also as a touristic spot.

190 One may recall that the Great Canal was to be labelled a Chinese UNESCO world heritage site, listed in 2014, and thus briefly after the book's publication (2012).

The major 'hero' of the two journalists is, however, in fact, war reporter Fan Changjiang, the leftist journalist (who then joined the CCP)[191] who reported on the Taierzhuang Battle, shooting also photos at the time. His colleague Lu Yi 陆诒 (who, different from Fan, survived the Cultural Revolution) was their major source, who stated that he and Fan both wrote together on the battle (5). Fan Changjiang reported at the time for *Dagongbao* 大公报 ('Ta Kung Pao') (namely its Hankou edition), and his reports are reproduced in this 2012 publication (6–8). He usually would interview GMD Commander Sun Lianzhong who gave him a press briefing. After returning to Wuhan – which was China's war capital at the time in 1938, Fan Changjiang would write more extensive reports.

That this 2012 book on war reporters in Taierzhuang follows not only the agenda to bring the elusive battle of 1938 to life, but simultaneously also the journalistic one to memorialise journalist Fan Changjiang via his role in reporting on the Taierzhuang Battle, becomes also obvious by the framing of his biography in this book, adding to the publication's various layers. Fan Changjiang hailed from Sichuan and had participated in Wu Yuzhang's preparatory school to go to France as a work-study movement participant (similar to Deng Xiaoping)![192] (9). Notably, he is mentioned as someone who had already participated in 1927 in the Communist Nanchang Uprising (the 'birth' of the Red Army and future PLA) under He Long – cf. above chapter 4.2 on the Nanchang Uprising – thus proving his 'merits' in CCP understanding (9–10). In 1931, Fan, however, entered the GMD (at a time when leftism was dangerous), but then left it again (thus showing a rather on and off relationship politically in reality). In 1933, he would start writing as a journalist. After the Taierzhuang Battle, in late 1938 he, however, quit the *Dagongbao*, and in PRC times, he would become head of *Renmin ribao* or the 'People's Daily' and thus a key figure in Communist journalism. During the Cultural Revolution, his not too straight past caught up with him, and he was harrassed to death in a May Seventh Cadre school in 1970, but already in 1975, i.e., still in Cultural Revolution times, his case was reevaluated, and his remains were transferred to Babaoshan, *the* top revolutionary cemetery in the PRC! In his honour, a prize for journalism was installed in 1991, later combining it with the one named after Zou Taofen 邹韬奋, the early activist journalist who did not live to see the PRC,[193] as 'Changjiang Taofen

191 The book gives different dates for his joining the CCP: 1935 and 1939. As it seems, the latter date is correct, i.e., after the battle.

192 Cf. chapter 5.3. on Deng Xiaoping who was also from Sichuan and visited Wu Yuzhang's preparatory school for work and study in France as well.

193 Zou Taofen had died in 1944 of illness. He was posthumously awarded Party membership of the CCP.

news prize'! (11). That way, the Taierzhuang Battle serves also to rehabilitate Fan Changjiang, who once reported on it, but also is to show that domestic journalism played an important role already at the time of war.

The whole situation of war reporters at Taierzhuang was later recounted by Fan's colleague Lu Yi, who particularly mentioned beyond Fan also Ivens, Epstein, and the (leftist journalist) Cao Juren 曹聚仁 couple (12, see also 19).[194] At the time of the Taierzhuang Battle, Lu Yi himself had interviewed general Zhang Zizhong who had not been able to participate personally in the Taierzhuang Battle (contrary to the often stated 'key role' of Zhang Zizhong, the major GMD 'hero' and 'martyr' of the whole war in CCP historiography). Lu Yi (who only entered the CCP after the Cultural Revolution) mentioned, however, also various reporters of the GMD newspapers, and also a Soviet one from TASS, and his own summary of the Taierzhuang Battle is reprinted in the book as well, reporting also that he saw evidence that the Japanese had used poison gas at the time against the Chinese in Taierzhuang (13–24).[195]

Then the Ivens film as an internationally decisive 'document' is introduced by the two authors of this 2012 publication, noting also that much later in his 1988 film *Une histoire de vent* (A Tale of the Wind), Ivens presented (in this last film co-directed by him, mixing footage of his 1939 documentary film *The 400 million* with fantasy, and with his impressions of a more recent tour through China in the 1980s) once more the Eighth Route Army, and also Zhou Enlai and Ye Jianying (who all did not fight in Taierzhuang) (25–26). The original film *The 400 million* had dedicated 12 minutes to Taierzhuang. In the 1930s, Ivens had also made films in Spain (during the Civil War there) before he came to China (proving himself an 'anti-fascist'), and he would keep his interest in China also later. During the Cultural Revolution, Ivens and his partner had also made the 12-part *Comment Yukong déplaça les montagnes* (How Yugong moved the mountains),[196] with 12 hours and 12 life courses. Ever since 1989 (when he died), a film prize in the Netherlands is

194 Cao reported with his second wife Deng Keyun 邓珂云 on the war. Cao would mainly work in Hong Kong later. When he died in 1972 in Macau, he notably was allowed to be buried in Nanjing during this time (see below). Finally, he was transferred to the Fushouyuan of Shanghai. (Cf. on the Fushouyuan and relations to Hong Kong also Müller 2022: 87, 242.)

195 This topic has been very much stressed in China in recent years as can be observed also in the case of the Japanese atrocity sites discussed in chapter 3.2.

196 This picked up the Maoist reading of the tale about the 'foolish old man' who started with his sons to remove two mountains, much hailed during the Cultural Revolution, insinuating that will and perseverance overcomes all obstacles, even removing mountains. Mao's speech (of 11 June 1945) was turned into an essay and became one of the 'three old articles' mandatory to 'study'. For the official English version of Mao's speech, cf. the *Selected Works* of Mao (1965b: vol. 3: 321–324).

called after Ivens. He had visited the PRC repeatedly, and talked to key figures including Liu Shaoqi, Song Qingling, Zhou Enlai, Mao's short-time successor Hua Guofeng (!), Ye Jianying, Li Xiannian, and Deng Xiaoping. Back at the time of the Second Sino–Japanese War, he had, as mentioned, donated a camera to the Eighth Route Army after the filming (which is still in the National Museum of China) (27–28).

An excerpt of the documentary text (of *The 400 million*) is also presented to the Chinese readers of the 2012 publication to illustrate the international image created (28–30). In short, the film (with music by Hanns Eisler) shows first the brutal Japanese attack on China, with its great civilisation, but also its Republican-era modernisation, to then tell the Americans (the major target group of the documentary film) that they de facto favour the Japanese by selling them scrap iron which the latter use to attack the peaceful Chinese. These, however, have the will to resist. While the national flag (of the GMD government) is shown, it is accustically accompanied with the 'March of the volunteers' (!) (today the PRC's anthem, but, as mentioned, a song that appealed also to non-Communists in wartime – appearing at minute 20 of the film, which is incidentally easily available on the internet). The documentary film shows also (Communist) intellectual Guo Moruo holding a speech, as well as the GMD general and chief of staff Chen Cheng 陈诚 to illustrate the military as well as the civil part in the Chinese war effort. The tomb of the unknown soldier of Shanghai tells, in turn, of the defence of Shanghai (while the defeat there and subsequent traumatic Japanese attack on Nanjing and the massacre there are not spelt out, documenting this way that the Nanjing Massacre was not yet well-known in its dimension in 1938 at the time of Ivens' filming)!

Chiang Kai-shek's wife Song Meiling, in turn, is shown organising welfare (one may recall the Ivens film was done in the US where she was particularly well-known and where contributions were also made financially for the Chinese), and also her sister and Sun Yat-sen's widow Song Qingling, their brother-in-law and important GMD financial and political figure Kong Xiangxi (H. H. Kung), and Chiang Kai-shek appear briefly (which marks the major figures also well-known to the American target audience). The Ivens film, however, introduced also the Communist Eighth Route Army, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De (while Mao is not to be seen!), thus counterbalancing the GMD. Chiang Kai-shek is, however, profiled as the supreme commander in wartime. The Japanese, in turn, are described as only holding cities and railroads at the time, while guerrilla warfare goes on in the countryside. At minute 39, the documentary film (in total of 54 minutes) finally turns to Taierzhuang. Sergeant Wang from Guangxi is cited who recounts the battle there. Camera shots of dead animals prove meanwhile to the audience that the Japanese

would simply destroy whatever they could not take. Commander Sun appears as well in the documentary, and at the end of the Taierzhuang section (which makes up almost the last third of the whole film), Taierzhuang is declared the 'first victory' the Chinese scored in the war. That way, the film ends on a note of conviction that the Chinese will prevail in the end in that (yet undeclared) war (and thus was to solicit American support for the Chinese side).

The two journalist authors of this locally sold publication in the Taierzhuang Memorial present, however, beyond Ivens and his documentary film also Israel Epstein as another foreign observer. Epstein, who would live out his life in China, in fact revisited Taierzhuang in 1982 (when it started to become important for the political agenda once more). In *The People's War* which Epstein had written in 1939, there were also parts referring to Taierzhuang in 1938 (31–34). Epstein would enter the CCP in 1964, and an excerpt of his book part on Taierzhuang during the war is reprinted in Chinese translation in the two Chinese journalists' publication of 2012 as well (35–52). Epstein had interviewed Li Zongren as well as Chi Fengcheng, and he disclosed that at the time, the Chinese had to operate mainly during the night, because during the day there were the Japanese airplanes.

But apart from these foreigners, Ivens and Epstein, various Chinese war correspondents made the Taierzhuang Battle known also to the domestic public, as the two journalists point out in 2012. Among them was Sheng Cheng 盛成 who had been to France as a work-study student in the May Fourth period. He later lived in Taiwan (i.e., had been on the Chiang Kai-shek side at first), but then left in 1965 to teach in Paris. After the Cultural Revolution, he eventually moved back to Beijing (which is likely why he appears in this book since this move to the mainland showed him to be a 'patriot' after all)! Only in 2005, years after his death, his daughter sent the manuscript of his reportage-cum-literary work on Taierzhuang from the US to China, making this report available. During the battle, he had been assigned as a reporter to the 31st division (led by Chi Fengcheng) (53–55). An excerpt of his summary of the Taierzhuang Battle is also included in this book on war correpondents reporting on Taierzhuang, commemorating his contribution, and bringing to life the battle (56–69).

Journalist Cao Juren and the photographer Shu Zongqiao 舒宗侨, in turn, are covered as well since after the war, they coproduced a pictographical history of the War of Resistance (*Zhongguo kangzhan huashi* 中国抗战画史), including the Taierzhuang Battle, thus adding also to the visual memorialisation of that history beyond the text form of the usual war reports. In the post-war era, Cao Juren visited the mainland from Hong Kong in 1956 to meet with Mao and Zhou Enlai. Cao Juren would end his days in Macau in 1972, but Zhou Enlai allowed his burial in

Nanjing (!),[197] even writing his tomb inscription, naming him a 'patriot'. Cao Juren had reported in 1938 about Taierzhuang as well (70–73). (An excerpt of the pictorial history is therefore included in this 2012 publication on war reporters, providing some interesting photos of the time) (74–91).

While these reports of the time serve to bring the elusive battle of 1938 more to life, the final historical overview of Taierzhuang included in this locally sold book is particularly intriguing since it adds some crucial information not disclosed elsewhere as an important context for this 'patriotic' place. Taierzhuang had been historically a place of cultural and natural attraction, not the least honoured by visits of Qing emperors Kangxi and Qianlong, but the overview makes finally evident that in spite of the hailed brief battle victory of spring 1938, Taierzhuang was in the end and very soon lost to the Japanese and could only be 'taken back' in 1945! In other words, the Japanese held the place over the whole rest of the war (which also determines much of what could be 'preserved' from the Chinese point of view). But it was also in 1945, that the people were told to tear down the city wall! This, in turn, discloses to the attentive reader that the present-day city wall and central gate (*zhongzheng men* 中正门 – Zhongzheng being the preferred name of Chiang Kai-shek!) the visitor encounters, were all reconstructed. Tellingly, this reconstruction was, in fact, done in 1985–1986 for the filming of the epic (and propagandistic) movie *Xuezhan Taierzhuang*! (99) Journalist Shen Guodong, the second author of this 2012 book, also writes about that latter film, which was released in 1987 and was very influential in more recent memorialisation of the Taierzhuang battle (100). When general Li Zongren moved back to the PRC in 1965, Zhou Enlai already proposed to make a film on the Taierzhuang victory, but because of the Cultural Revolution shortly thereafter, the plan was stalled, and only taken up again later. Notably, the original plot had been written around Zhang Zizhong as the most famous Chinese 'anti-Japanese' (GMD) general who had died in the war and was, as mentioned, the key historical figure around whom the careful rewriting of the GMD's role in the anti-Japanese war had been tailored in post-Cultural Revolution times (101). Given Li Zongren's return to China, who was historically closer to the Taierzhuang Battle than Zhang Zizhong, the plot was supposed to be rewritten (in fact it was apparently rewritten 17 times!) to now focus on Li Zongren. Even Chiang Kai-shek's son and by the 1980s acting president in Taiwan, Chiang Ching-kuo, is said to have been surprised, since this mainland movie of the mid-1980s did not smear his father as usual before, and also in Hong Kong it was purportedly well received.

197 Cao Juren hailed from Zhejiang. His tomb was sited, supposedly by Zhou Enlai, in the vicinity of – but not in – Yuhuatai, the execution site and cemetery for anti-GMD 'martyrs' in Nanjing (cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book on 'martyrs' cemeteries').

(This shows that the movie was made with the clear agenda of offering a hand to Taiwan and the Overseas Chinese over the common 'resistance plus victory' tale.)

Since 1993, at the side of the ('patriotically' listed) memorial hall for the battle, a Li Zongren historical material hall (*shiliaoguan* 史料馆) was to add more 'history' to the commemoration, and in 2009, the PRC's Taiwan bureau made use of Taierzhuang once more for cross-Strait relations (102). The memorial was placed close to the railway station where Li Zongren took the iconic photo, and it was designed by two specialists from Shanghai (which is considered the technically most advanced place in China and provided advice also for 'patriotic education showcase bases' elsewhere – e.g., in the case of Jinggangshan, as we noted in chapter 3.3 of the present book) (106). The Taierzhuang Battle Memorial Hall thus could serve not only locally as a 'patriotic education base' for primary and secondary schools (*zhong-xiaoxue aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi*), but also as a 'patriotic base' for Overseas Chinese (*qiao-lian aiguozhuyi jidi* 侨联爱国主义基地). In 2004, it became furthermore part of the red travel zones and routes (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) (107). That way, this 'GMD-place' became safely integrated into the larger 'red' reading of modern history over the fight against the common enemy, Japan, and as a proof of Chinese capabilities.

Moving ahead in time into the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* description of this site (Zheng / Bai 2019), updating its framing, stresses that in Taierzhuang, after all, it was elite troops of the Japanese that could be beaten, putting the accent more on military competition. However, Taierzhuang is also relativised by claiming it as the only second 'major victory' in the war after the one of Pingxingguan (which, as mentioned, is a very contested assertion)! This means, in turn, that in terms of narrative, the contribution of the GMD in the war against Japan is once more toned down for the PRC citizen (and the description of the site is also comparatively brief). The memorial hall, sited at the beautiful Great Canal near the famous railway station (which proves once more that the photo of Li Zongren at the railway sign is by now firmly established as a visual icon in collective memory), features (beyond the exhibition hall and the 360° panorama hall) also a film hall for screening documentaries and films, which stresses again that this battle is by now meant to be above all framed by filmic representations (given also that objects standing for the elusive war are rare).

Some buildings remaining from the time of the battle (with bullet holes) are supposedly preserved (though nothing is said here once more about the fact that Taierzhuang later fell to the Japanese for years and that much was simply reconstructed during the time of the mid-1980s' filming). The best-preserved building of the time is said to be the old mosque with many bullet holes. At least it is disclosed

here to the intended reader that one wall was taken out there in 1988 and transferred to Beijing, moving up the museum hierarchy, to be exhibited in the National Museum (as it is called since 2011) as a 'relic'! Thus, locally a replica was obviously installed in its place. The railway station and the city gate where many died, are also places in the city pointed out for the hard-to-grasp historical events.

The narrative then moves on to retell the background of the battle, also narratively integrating the CCP in this (de facto GMD) victory as having sent the (Communist) New Fourth Army to help in guerrilla fashion in the larger area to block the Japanese from sending in further troops (to give a freer hand to the defenders of Taierzhuang). The Chinese thus managed to encircle the Japanese, and the victory, it is stressed, moved all 'anti-fascists' in the world. Ivens and Epstein are named as the key foreigners documenting the victory, and in China, the poet Zang Kejia 臧克家 (who would stay on in mainland China after 1949) is pointed out as hailing the victory.

The *Fengbei* narrative, however, tellingly focuses once more on the medial representation, namely of the Chinese film *Xuezhan Taierzhuang* of 1986 which is profiled as a major step in cross-Strait relations! Here, it is argued that the son of Li Zongren came over from the US (where he obviously lived, the intended reader concludes), and wanted to see the yet unfinished film, being supposedly moved to tears. The film, as the careful reader learns, was notably first shown in Hong Kong, not on the mainland (where it would be screened only later)! The representative of Taiwan in Hong Kong was purportedly impressed positively, since Chiang Kai-shek was not painted as a villain, but rather positively as giving a 'patriotic' speech at the funeral of fallen commander Wang Mingzhang without showing fear, while Japanese bombers attacked. The director of the film is cited arguing that he showed this that way because it was based on historical material. Such a 'positive' rendering of Chiang Kai-shek was in fact something new in the PRC at the time, the narrative tells the young intended reader. When Chiang Ching-kuo heard of it, he purportedly asked for a copy and watched it with Chiang's widow Song Meiling. Chiang Ching-kuo concluded thereafter that the PRC wanted to ease tensions, and thus he was also ready to respond, allowing GMD veterans to visit their homes (which suggests to the reader that the film fulfilled its mission).

Noted general Bai Chongxi's son (and himself a well-known author) Bai Xianyong 白先勇 in Taiwan is also cited to the avail that one should remember that particular history as something of 'all us Chinese': that this was a 'national' fight (i.e., beyond party politics), and that even the PRC would also acknowledge this by now (i.e., the film successfully contributed to better cross-Strait relations and stood for the desired reading of the historical events) (20–26).

In sum, the new framing of Xi Jinping times shows that in the case of the Taierzhuang Battle Memorial Hall site, the accent has moved and is now largely restricted to the issue of its usefulness for modern cross-Strait relations.

Case study: the Ranzhuang Tunnel Warfare site

While the Chinese military tried to fend off the Japanese, as celebrated in the above Taierzhuang case, a major point to highlight for the 'patriotic' formation of PRC citizens is, that 'the people' were important actors as well, given that China's official military at the time was (at least nominally) under Chiang Kai-shek's general command. Thus, the 'people's war' (in Maoist diction) is to underline that the populace actively participated in organised resistance, suggesting the 'closeness' between 'the people' and the Communist fighters, namely those of the Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army, the two major Communist military formations.

The **Qingyuan Ranzhuang didaozhan yizhi** 清苑冉庄地道战遗址 (Qingyuan Ranzhuang tunnel warfare site) (Hebei Province) (list 1, 1997) is such a case among the 'patriotic education showcase bases', where it is commemorated how normal village people joined in with their own means to 'resist the Japanese' (which would be perfected by Communist 'guidance'). In this case, once more, a film plays an important role in memorialisation of the topic, namely a Mao-era movie of 1965 (one of the so-called *lao san zhan* 老三战 or the 'old three warfares' as they were called during the Cultural Revolution)[198] which made the villagers' 'tunnel warfare' famous all over China. The movie *Didaozhan* 地道战 (Tunnel Warfare) celebrates the villagers who cleverly outwitted the Japanese by their underground communication network and knowledge of place, digging a whole tunnel system with traps and safety measures as well as necessary facilities to hide and surprise the invaders.

The visitor of today (as I observed in 2016) thus may tour some of the tunnels (which are to authenticate the characterising label as a physical 'site' or *yizhi* rather than an indoor museum), see the village with 'anti-imperialist' slogans duly painted on the wall (while the Cultural Revolution-era slogans have faded beneath, and empty niches tell of some deleted folk religious paraphernalia of earlier times), and visit the added museum which provides explanations and a screening of parts of the famous movie. Ranzhuang village was also chosen in 2007 as a 'historically and culturally famous village', stepping up its touristic significance, and in 2011, it was

198 The two other ones were *Dileizhan* 地雷战 (Mine warfare), also on the Second Sino–Japanese War, and *Nanzheng beizhan* 南征北战 ('Fighting North and South') on the subsequent Civil War between the Communists and the GMD.

declared a AAAA national scenic spot. (For maintaining that qualification, the village had incidentally posted various posters at the time of my visit with calls for proper behaviour).

Fig. 4.3.2 Derogatory 'Little Japan' soft toys sold on the street in Ranzhuang among other soft toys (photograph by the author, 2016)

In less purely touristic but more ideological terms, the village was declared in 2014 a national war memorial spot as well, and is a 'red tourism' site, too. The homes of the major 'heroes' profiled in the movie can be visited in the village, while notably an outdoor diorama scene of popular punishment of a 'traitor' displayed in a courtyard serves to show 'people's justice' against any 'enemies of the people' (though this hints also at the fact that there had been also villagers not sustaining the 'people's war'). Street stalls, in turn, bank on local pride in having been able to fight 'little Japan' by simple peasants' cleverness. (See fig. 4.3.2). A locally displayed statistic, however, disclosed also some information of the 'use' of this 'patriotic education showcase base' of Ranzhuang, stating that 30% of the visitors are, in fact, pupils, but even more, namely 35%, are military, while foreigners only make up 2%. This means that only one third of the visitors are normal Chinese tourists, while two thirds are 'guided visitors'.

The *Zhonghua hun* educational video series does not treat this first list 'patriotic education showcase base' (with heavily Maoist overtones), but the national TV film

clip series *Ai wo Zhonghua* (disc 2), which covers all national sites, introduces this one tellingly with repeated references to iconic shots from the Mao-era movie to represent the elusive. This shows that the site is living in commemoration largely through that movie. A present-day view of approaching the village leads to the inner-village old dead tree with the alarm bell iconic ever since the movie had been released, and bullet holes in walls are to authenticate the fighting of once. The narrative of the film clip, produced by Baoding TV in 1998, tells the national TV audience about how the Japanese raided the village in 1942, while the filming, called *ziliao* ([historical] material) (which here obviously intends scenes taken from the 1965 movie) illustrates the storyline: under the lead of the CCP, the people organised their own anti-Japanese 'tunnel warfare', supposedly taking up Mao's ideas.

The TV film clip then shows present-day visitors at the site watching the 1965 movie to understand what they visit via its filmic (fictive) representation. A small-scale model of the tunnel system in the exhibition provides the general idea, and then the camera moves on to the street level to show holes from where one could shoot without being seen. Scenes of people on boats or of people burying mines, cut in, are again taken from the 1965 movie. On a larger scale, sabotage of railway lines was another way how the villagers could obstruct the Japanese troops' movement through the area.

Returning to the present, the national TV audience is presented with the explanation given by a guide in the museum, namely on local 'hero' Zhang Senlin 张森林 who was the first CCP member of the village and the one to start digging a tunnel. An old *minbing* 民兵 (militia member) explains in detail how Zhang Senlin had to hide underground and could not go back home. Sketches illustrate the dramatic scene of when he was betrayed and killed by the Japanese, and shots of his tomb stele are to authenticate his 'martyrdom'. There is also his purportedly last (*ci*)-poem as a farewell on a scrap of paper on display (which once more underlines the point that poetry is seen as the best fitting format to express one's 'last words' – cf. also the prison sites discussed in chapter 3.2, here even for a villager).

Meanwhile, the soundtrack of the 1965 movie accompanies the 1998 narrative. The whole 'tunnel warfare' place, it is argued, was repeatedly restored to supposedly show the whole site to the tourist of today 'as it has been'. The viewer learns that the tunnels had been used in various ways at the time, for storing goods, but also for caring for the wounded. There were also traps prepared for intruders. The villagers, as is claimed, willingly cooperated with the Communist Eighth Route Army (which operated in the near countryside), thus integrating their local warfare tactics with the larger designs of the Communists. A (subsequent) laudatory pennant for their contributions is thus exhibited ('courageously killing the enemy'). Clay models of

how the villagers fought against the Japanese are to illustrate the ways they did so, an old man authenticating this by telling of his own experience to the camera, while an old woman sings anti-Japanese songs of the time to add to the recreation of the elusive past a more emotional feel. A bas-relief, in turn, celebrates artistically how the courageous villagers went about fighting. In the end, the TV film clip focuses once more on the visitors of the site, namely young military cadets who are led through the exhibition to learn from this example the will to defend one's home, and by extension, one's country.

The 'patriotic' booklet (Wang Shulin 1998) on the 'tunnel warfare' site, equally of the time the place was listed in the late 1990s, features in its illustration section once more the most iconic views known nation-wide from the Mao-era movie, like the tree with the alarm bell, the tunnels, the major well (used as one of the entries into the tunnel system, as also shown in the movie), several covered entry points (e.g., under the kitchen stove), and the holes used for covered shooting. Reflecting the dearth of material beyond the tunnel system as such, the booklet on this 'Maoist' type of site is also a rather short one. The leading role of the CCP, namely of the local first Communist Zhang Senlin who would organise the villagers to dig tunnels, and died as a 'martyr', is thus the main narrative focus. As the young intended reader of the 'patriotic' booklet learns, tunnel digging started already in 1938 in a more simple way, but in 1942 during the Japanese campaign to clear the countryside of resistance nests with their 'three all' policy of killing all, burning all, and looting all, the need to hide was particularly strong. Under CCP guidance, the narrative assures the young intended reader, a more elaborate and sophisticated net of 16 km of interconnecting tunnels was finally dug, with facilities underground, including a kitchen and wells for water supply. The place would thus be honoured as an exemplary anti-Japanese village later, and today, the whole village is claimed to still 'look like in wartime' (with defiant slogans painted on the walls). In 1959, the exhibition on the 'tunnel warfare' was first opened, with Nie Rongzhen (the CCP commander of the Shanxi–Chahar–Hebei or, for short, Jin–Cha–Ji area – cf., e.g., chapter 5.3 of the present book on Bethune and Kotnis – to which Ranzhuang belonged) writing the museum's name.[199] Much later, Jiang Zemin, wrote the tablet of it being an 'educational base', thus appropriating the site into his system of 'patriotic education bases'. The place had been visited frequently in PRC times, and many important public figures wrote endorsements. Several movies were shot there

199 Incidentally, Nie Rongzhen had a rather well-educated family background and had been to France, studied at Belgium's Labour University in Charleroi, and also in Moscow's Communist University of the Toilers of the East. He would be one of the few leading figures that manoeuvered through the Cultural Revolution without major problems.

also beyond 'Tunnel warfare' (*Didaozhan*), the most famous one. The artefacts on display include mostly tools used to work and dig (i.e., they are not spectacular, but usual agricultural tools). Personal utensils like lamps, simple weapons, and items of the 'martyrs' add to this as authenticating devices. In fact, though, many things had to be 'reconstructed' for the exhibition, and the site serves by now not only as a 'patriotic education base', but also as a 'defence education base' (hence the many military cadets visiting) (1–4), and also as a general touristic site for the Chinese citizens at large.

An overview in the museum explains that since 1938, the villagers organised anti-Japanese resistance behind the lines. In the beginning, they tried a middle way without open resistance – and in defence against local bandits (*tufei* 土匪) (which suggests that the tunnels had also a function beyond the Japanese threat). Under CCP guidance, the villagers would, however, then move toward a more direct 'anti-Japanese resistance' stance, recruiting also women and children. For this, the first Communist, Zhang Senlin, was crucial. He also enlisted some more people for the Party locally. In 1939, when a fire destroyed the village (elsewhere claimed as a Japanese first major raid), the CCP, in turn, provided some grain, that way gaining the villagers' trust. In return, the latter would thus readily participate in sabotage acts like routing up railway tracks (given that the nearby city of Baoding is on the major railway line from Beijing to Wuhan – cf. chapter 4.2 above on the railway strike), and they would also provide food for the (Communist) military and make clothing etc. for the soldiers (since the Eighth Route Army was operating in the countryside near Ranzhuang). The 'patriotic' narrative asserts that young people would also readily volunteer to go to the front as soldiers (i.e., on the Communist side). In 1938, when Japanese troops first arrived in Ranzhuang, the people searched for hiding underground. Zhang Senlin had started digging a first hole under his own house for shelter, and other villagers imitated him. But a 'traitor' disclosed some of the locations (which suggests that some villagers were ready to cooperate with 'the enemy'), and thus some people were caught. This failure, however, taught the villagers 'the lesson' to not only dig a hole for personal hiding but a whole tunnel network with connecting outlets as a common endeavour. This way, in a very Maoist framing, their 'passive' hiding turned into 'active' fighting against the Japanese. Underground, they built a commanding centre, invented door traps, but also installed facilities, including a toilet or a kitchen. The entries were covered, and they dug in mines. The special feature of Ranzhuang was the system of tunnels connecting houses and yards, also leading to open or covered shooting points (which are all familiar to the Chinese audience from the *Didaozhan* movie) (5–9). In 1942, the Japanese, however, heightened the pressure, having set up many

strongholds in the vicinity. But the people would punish any 'traitors' (which once more shows that there were also obviously villagers who tried to cooperate with the Japanese rather than with the Communists). Chinese collaborationist troops (who were sent in by the Japanese) were also tricked by the villagers (who had to bear their revenge thereafter, though).

In much detail, the 'patriotic' booklet explains the whole system of tunnels, and the simple weapons (10–17), to then move on to the major figures, above all Zhang Senlin, the key local 'hero'. He had some education and was the first of the villagers to join the CCP (which insinuates to the intended reading pupils that education leads to political awakening). Zhang Senlin dug the first tunnel and hid underground during day time. He then hid at another villager's home underground, until he was caught. Before his death, he wrote his already named farewell *ci*-poem (which, as we observed in several cases already, namely in chapter 3.2, shows the importance of expressing oneself in poetry – something rather far from today's pupils as key addressees of the 'patriotic education' campaign and the 'patriotic' booklet) (18–25).[200] Another local 'martyr', Li Lianrui 李连瑞 became a CCP-member, too. He organised the sabotage acts and mobilised the people to provide food and send men to the front. Because of the augmented repression since 1942, the fighting tactics had to become ever more clandestine. Li Lianrui, too, would be betrayed (once more suggesting that not all villagers were sympathetic to the Communists), and the Japanese exposed his corpse publicly as a warning. Later, during land reform (i.e., when the Communists finally ruled the area), the 'traitor' culpable for his death was liquidated by 'the people' (i.e., was executed after a public trial), and Li Lianrui and over 30 other Ranzhuang 'martyrs' were then buried in the cemetery of Ranzhuang in an act of belated justice (26–30).

The 'patriotic' booklet, however, also details those sustaining the commemoration of the site's role in warfare subsequently in PRC times, i.e., the site's 'patrons', starting with Communist commander Yang Chengwu 杨成武 who had directed the Eighth Route Army contingent in the area during the Second Sino–Japanese War. (He would become a leading PLA figure also in PRC times and was temporarily purged during the Cultural Revolution, but survived and was finally rehabilitated.) When a new exhibition hall was set up in Ranzhuang in the Deng Xiaoping era (to replace the old one of Maoist times which had been in a Soviet-style building), Yang Chengwu wrote the name for it (in 1991). He had also written on the 'tunnel warfare' from his own memory (thus playing a key role for the whole commemoration to be set up in the PRC in the first place). The (new) exhibition, however, also

200 One may recall that Mao had a particular liking for the *ci* genre as a more popular form.

pointed out that tunnel warfare was nothing specific to Ranzhuang (thus relativising this 'Maoist' place), but that Ranzhuang was simply a particularly good example for it (31–32).

Inside the museum, with Lü Zhengcao 吕正操, a Communist cadre from the outside, who played a major role in winning the villagers over to the Communist side, is addressed (showing the site is not only of local importance and has not only local 'heroes', but was connected to the Communists at large, somewhat recalling the case of the Hainan 'Red Detachment of Women' discussed above in chapter 4.2 with the outsider cadre 'guiding' the locals). When the Japanese had killed several people in Ranzhuang in 1939 (cf. above: the destructive 'fire'), he was not only the one to whip up the locals' will for revenge, but also convinced them more tangibly by bringing some relief grain for them to go on resisting rather than submitting to the Japanese. In return, Lü Zhengcao received a cup of water from the villagers, and this cup is on display in the museum, recording the event and thus supposedly proving the close relationship between the CCP and 'the people'! (33–36). The villagers thus started with the real ('active') 'tunnel warfare', and women joined in, too (which is to show the civilian side and broad appeal of the Communists). In 1938, a *funü jiuguo hui* 妇女救国会 (women's national salvation association) was formed, especially upon the suggestion of local cadre Zhang Senlin who recruited Wang Xin'e 王新娥, a young woman. The women participated in sabotage acts and transport of food for the Communist troops to the Taihang mountains (where Nie Rongzhen and the central organs of the Communist Jin–Cha–Ji base area were located). The women also served as messengers, and for leading people into tunnels in case of danger. The women's association also held singing meetings (which once more underlines the role of songs in mobilisation, especially in the case of illiterates which included mostly women, and therefore, the TV film clip had also presented the old woman singing the anti-Japanese song to the national audience, as mentioned above.) The women also sewed clothes, or ammunition bags, donated money, or cared for the wounded. After the war, in turn, the women's association would care for education, women's rights, and 'patriotism' (36–38). That way, it made sure the ideological training would be carried on among the female villagers to pass it on to their own children.

The 'patriotic booklet', directed at young readers, also puts a focus on education and childhood during the war to enliven the imagination of this evasive past and show how also children were integrated into the overall endeavour of 'resisting the enemy': back then, even children were recruited for delivering messages. Education for children was, in turn, provided with simple hectographed textbooks, teaching them anti-Japanese songs easy to memorise. The children thus learnt, e.g., how to

serve as sentries. This sort of village 'school' had around 60 children of around eight to nine years of age. At times, lessons were held at the graveyard, the intended young reader learns. When enemies arrived, the 'class' would quickly dissolve. The children would also learn some military skills (which would also explain to the intended reading pupils of the 1990s that some military training in school – which they also receive today – is important) (39–40). A bit of romanticism is also added to the narrative: the marriage of a couple in the tunnel, unsurprisingly of Wang Xin'e, the major local 'heroine', with an anti-Japanese fighter (and future 'martyr'), while Zhang Senlin presided over the simple ceremony, thus showing that an exemplary CCP cadre cared for everything, including emotional needs. The couple was, however, dramatically betrayed, and the husband executed, while the wife, Wang Xin'e, was released – but went on fighting against Japan to honour and vindicate the legacy of her dead husband (41–44).

Militarily, though, the villagers had to confront the problem of dearth of ammunition and weapons, and thus they tried to produce them underground by themselves. They shot from above and put mines in the ground. By putting up fake positions, they tried to entice the enemy to shoot into heaps to later collect the bullets for themselves – a sign of the peasants' cleverness and wit much hailed in the Mao era (45–48). For a tourist at present, door traps are shown, and how the villagers had smartly provided for provisions to not be easily flooded in the tunnels, connecting the wells to redirect water (as also shown in the movie). Those villagers who had produced firecrackers before the war, dedicated themselves to producing explosives during the war. But they had to learn to be careful to avoid accidental explosions. They would use scrap iron, and as becomes obvious, the uprooting of railway tracks not only served for blocking the Japanese, but also for gaining metal to make weapons. Given the scarcity of metal (a problem a viewer of the movie in Mao times with the Great Leap Forward experience in mind will have found familiar), the villagers also used various natural materials creatively as well to devise their own weapons. The working on iron underground, the narrative states, had to be done carefully to lead out the smoke in a controlled way to avoid suspicion. The wells also served for preventing fire inside the tunnel system, given that the ammunition was also stored underground. Some outlets to lead away poison gas (which the Japanese might use) were also dug, as well as blocking walls so that the enemy could not simply walk through the tunnels. Temples were favourite places to hide and enter the tunnel system, but (aiming at the widespread 'superstition' of the peasants) it is stressed here that the gods of the village temples were not the ones to help them. In fact, it was at a temple where several people (in the 1939 raid of the Japanese) were shot. 'Hero' Zhang Senlin's mother, however,

'creatively' used religious custom, bringing food to him there, disguised as offerings to the gods, and a temple was also the place where Zhang Senlin is said to have written his farewell *ci*-poem displayed in the museum (49–54).

Another iconic place in the village known from the movie is a brick well as a further entry point to the tunnel system. As the intended young reader learns, this was just one of 13 wells. However, this particular well was even doubly worth of commemoration since a local who had become an official in Ming times had ordered this well to be made. The famous late Ming rebel Li Zicheng 李自成 (a 'hero' in Communist historiography – see also chapter 2.3 on the Shanhaiguan Great Wall site) purportedly drew water from this well on his march on Beijing to oust the Ming, and for making this possible, the locally-born official would be executed by the Ming court (which adds in a somewhat forced manner this kind of premodern 'revolutionary' credentials to Ranzhuang over this particular well). In any case, in 1950, when a multi-national youth group visited and was made to search for the entry points to the tunnel system throughout the village, they did not find any, i.e., these young foreigners proved therewith that the whole tunnel system had been done very smartly by the villagers. Even though some in the village supposedly still believed at the time that the defence of their village depended on the gods (which suggests the strong folk beliefs in the area bespoken also by the empty votive spaces in walls the modern visitor may detect throughout the village), in fact it had been the militia that did it (using the tunnel system). What tells physically of that history today, is apart from the Guandi 关帝 temple (which served as a meeting point for the militia), also the former anti-Japanese committee site where the celebrated active sabotage plans had been devised (thus adding the strategic and organisational factor to the people's natural cleverness) (55–59). For documenting the ideological work in Ranzhuang, the historical 'joining the CCP' oath text, archived in the nearby city of Baoding, is cited for the intended young readers of the 'patriotic booklet' (60), assuring them that the CCP attracted local young people at the time of the war who would at times also leave their mark later.

As to the preservation of the site, it was deemed important for sustaining 'patriotism' by the CCP (not the least also during the Civil War, at that time to counter the GMD!). Communist general and later marshal Nie Rongzhen had once written in commemoration that the gods had been thrown out, while tunnel warfare was established as the new method to fight in the plains, and also Communist commander Yang Chengwu had praised the villagers. This is what Ranzhuang could bank on ever since, whereas the for the rest rather unspectacular place would otherwise not attract tourists, as the 'patriotic' booklet freely admits! That way, the site attempts to render its offers interesting by showing the simple weapons used,

making videos and models to help imagination and further 'patriotic education', using all kinds of visual methods and new methods of display to render the site more attractive for visitors coming on their own. On the other hand, to preserve the old looks, the state bought the major buildings, and thus new buildings are now placed only outside the old core of Ranzhuang, while the core is protected in its entirety (61–63). By this way of cultural heritage management, the villagers can enjoy modern comfort in their homes beyond the old village core, whereas the latter remains as a tourist and educational site.

Moving on from the late 1990s, when the Ranzhuang 'tunnel warfare site' was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base', to the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* description (Liu Yiqiang 2019) puts the accent even more on the heritage character, arguing that the village is still preserved 'as it was'. The *yizhi* of Ranzhuang's 'tunnel warfare' is thus the whole village, comprising structures above and beneath the ground. In fact, the reader learns that since 1961 already, the site was declared a cultural heritage of the PRC. And it serves as a model village for 'tunnel warfare' in general. Of the originally 16 km, only a part is, in fact, still there and can be visited. Underground, there were also crossroads leading to neighbouring villages (thus going beyond a 'one village protects itself' imagery), but also to a cemetery and to the countryside. This served for protection, but also actively for attack (a point very important in Communist framing to point out). Updating the site's history from the late 1990s, the *Fengbei* description adds that since 2010, there is by now a new memorial hall, opened at the 65th anniversary of the Second Sino–Japanese War's end (adding, like in the Taierzhuang case discussed above, to the 'victory' association as the final outcome of that war). In the new memorial hall, there are also films and other visual media to serve more effectively for 'patriotic education'. In fact, in Ranzhuang, many films were shot beyond the 'classic' *Didaozhan*. For the villagers' 'successes', by now numbers are provided, claiming that all in all, 267 enemies were killed (without addressing the fact that those were mostly collaborationist troops, i.e., Chinese, not necessarily Japanese, to not taint the black and white framing). At a major conflict, in one day the villagers managed to kill 13 enemies, and then even 33. As is stressed here, this was a contribution to the fatherland and thus to the world. And it supposedly also saved the face of China to show that Chinese were not willing to be bullied and shamed by foreigners! That way, one clearly detects a new accent on shame and nationalist defiance. Focusing once more on local 'hero' Zhang Senlin, the narrative points out that the people supported him, when he stayed almost two months underground to fight during the night. In a dramatising fashion, the intended young 'patriotic' reader of this new version of 2019 is, however, told that Zhang Senlin was caught when altruistically rescuing two 'patriotic

students', while his friend committed suicide. (Here, one may note, no Chinese 'traitor' is named.) Zhang Senlin would, of course, not recant, but proved to the Japanese that Chinese will not let themselves be bullied and shamed! His corpse would be snatched by the villagers, and they supposedly found also his farewell poem, which became a 'national-level first class revolutionary documentary relic'. In sum, Zhang Senlin supposedly had shown national pride, and how righteous wrath turned into determination to fight (51–58). This, in fact, reinforces the already familiar storyline: do not submit but be enraged, and then turn rage into systematic struggle. With this framing, the legacy of this 'people's war' site is defined for the Chinese citizen in the Xi Jinping era, insinuating agency of 'the people' to defend the *patria* against its enemies – if properly guided in terms of Communist ideology.

Case study: the Liao–Shen Campaign Memorial Hall

While the anti-Japanese struggle is a very important historical reference in the Chinese 'patriotic education' perspective, especially regarding its potential to bridge the Taiwan Strait over the 'common enemy' of once, the most crucial issue for legitimating today's Communist rule over mainland China for the PRC citizens as the target group is the history of contest with the GMD and how the CCP won the Civil War to build up a 'new China'.[201] The first of the so-called three 'decisive campaigns' (*da juezhan* 大决战) (as understood in PRC historiography)[202] that were to tip the balance in favour of the CCP to emerge as the final winner of the Civil War, was fought from September to early November 1948 in Manchuria,[203] more precisely in Jinzhou 锦州 in today's Liaoning Province (Jinzhou being at the time the capital of the province Liaoxi 辽西) and then in Shenyang (at the time the capital of the province Liaodong 辽东, and today capital of the 1954 merged Liaoning 辽宁 Province). The **Liao–Shen zhanyi jinianguan** 辽沈战役纪念馆 (Liao(xi)–Shen(yang) Campaign Memorial Hall) (list 1, 1997) was first set up in 1959 in Jinzhou and moved in 1988 to the present location. It was the very first (according to the museum's flyer, collected on site in 2017) to experiment in its

201 For more recent English-language scholarship on the Civil War, see, e.g., Westad (2003), Lew (2009), and for the social history of it Lary (2015).

202 Notably, there are also other interpretations of what the 'three decisive campaigns' were: historian Westad sees the first of them as the one preceding the Liao–Shen Campaign, equally in Manchuria, but in the central range of it, the Liao–Shen Campaign thus is for him the second, and the Huai–Hai Campaign the third (and most crucial one) (Westad 2003: 10).

203 For an English-language assessment of the Manchurian Campaign more specifically and its commemoration, cf. military historian Tanner (2015).

exhibition with an added large 360° panorama painting with sound and other effects (a mode to render the elusive topic more accessible, to be taken over subsequently, as we saw above, also in Taierzhuang, or at the Korean War memorial – see chapter 4.1, and also at the later Ping–Jin Campaign Memorial Hall – see below). The present Liao–Shen Campaign Memorial Hall integrates modern exhibition techniques by, e.g., creating a 'natural surrounding' with trees for the visitor to get a 'feel' for the local flora.[204]

In terms of narration, as I observed in 2017, by now, the memorial hall acknowledges the early role of the Soviets in cooperating with the CCP to provide the latter with a solid foothold in Manchuria, and it (cautiously) asserts the historical role in the Manchurian Campaign (as the Liao–Shen Campaign is usually called in English) of general Lin Biao (the later 'fallen angel' of Mao times, written out of history for many years after the still somewhat mysterious events leading to his death in 1971).[205]

As we will see, the above was not yet the secured storyline earlier when the site was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base' back in 1997. The huge movie trilogy *Da juezhan* on the so-called three 'decisive campaigns' (understood as those that led to Communist rule in Beijing where the PRC would be formally established, while the Civil War went on for some months in the South of China) of which the first details the Liao–Shen Campaign, is an important background to the reception of the site with the Chinese public. That trilogy of 1991/1992, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the CCP's official founding in 1921, came out amidst the momentuous changes in Eastern Europe and the end of the Soviet Union, and was to explain how mainland China became Communist in the first place, and to reinforce the Chinese citizens' belief in the CCP and that China would remain Communist, regardless of what was going on around the globe. The historical framing of the Civil War campaigns in this *Da juezhan* movie trilogy, with its title written in calligraphy by then-general secretary Jiang Zemin, conformed to the official reading established since the 1980s of key actors, some of whom had only been politically rehabilitated recently, or even had moved into positions of power in the 1980s, thus propagating their own former roles via the movies. Given that context, the local representation of the 1990s would base itself on that mandatory

204 This also conforms to Soviet museologists' earlier suggestions to recreate scenes with flora and fauna, though these were usually realised as dioramas the visitor passively looks at. Here, though, the visitor is to walk through the scene in a more immersive mode.

205 For the commemoration difficulties with Lin Biao in the context of the Manchurian Campaign, see Tanner (2015: 285–289).

reading.[206] In the memorial hall, as I observed in 2017, the local contribution by recruiting young men, as well as logistic or other support by the normal people, is, however, to drive home the message that the CCP troops did not win just because of military genius, but because they were sustained by 'the people', and thus, the CCP's victory supposedly only conformed to the larger will of 'the Chinese'. The 'martyrs' (who are, as in many other similar memorial museums, honoured in an extra hall with names, some additionally with a portrait), in turn, call for the later-born to duly remember and never forget their sacrifice as a legacy.

Back in the late 1990s, when the memorial hall was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base', the filmic representation in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 2), produced by Liaoning TV's science education department in 1998 and broadcasted nationally, documents how the site was introduced at that time to the Chinese TV audience (that may largely have been familiar with the official movie version in the huge *Da juezhan* trilogy of the early 1990s), and also reflects the exhibition's narration of that time. Starting pathetically with the outdoor monument featuring a soldier in action and an inscription of general Zhu De for the 'martyrs' of this campaign, credit is given, first of all, to the soldiers and the Party for the outcome to turn all of Manchuria communist. Moving through the indoor exhibition, the film clip shows visitors touring, moving from hall to hall, and thus serves as a stand-in for visiting the exhibition in person. For the first hall on the military aspect of the Liao–Shen Campaign, the commentator states that after Japan's defeat of 1945, Chiang Kai-shek aimed at dicatorship and thus wanted to quickly occupy Manchuria (while the Soviets and their successful 'August Storm' of 1945, attacking the Japanese in Manchuria from the north all through down south to the tip of the Liaodong peninsula, resulting in the Soviet presence there, is not even mentioned!). A painting of Mao, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Ren Bishi, and Liu Shaoqi (the 'five secretaries' in Xibaipo – cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book on Xibaipo) studying the map, historical footage, and displayed maps in the exhibition with attack arrows visualise, in turn, the CCP's agenda for the Liao–Shen Campaign to take the whole of Manchuria for the Communists, and their careful masterminding. Lin Biao, Peng Zhen, and Luo Ronghuan 罗荣桓 are named as key figures for the CCP's role in the Liao–Shen Campaign. Brief footage on Chiang Kai-shek visiting Manchuria by plane (supposedly an American one) shows the rivalling GMD efforts to dominate this area formerly held by the Japanese, while (movie scene) views of the PLA

206 More recently in 2021 (at the 100th anniversary of the CCP), there has been once more a TV series on the topic which is to legitimate CCP rule as a historically logical outcome for China, bearing the same title *Da juezhan*.

marching on foot to the Northeast (in contrast to flying-in Chiang) prepare for the military conflict in the Jinzhou area (in 1948).

This crucial battle for Jinzhou is also the topic shown in the 360° panorama hall. For the capture of Jinzhou, Li Shigui 李世贵 is named as a daring figure who symbolically planted the red flag (later donated to the memorial hall) on Jinzhou's city gate,[207] while Liang Shiying 梁士英 is the major 'martyr' who sacrificed himself in this action supposedly by blocking a breakthrough with his own body (a trope we will encounter repeatedly). (The meanwhile shown filmed material is not identified as later reenactments, though.) In didactical mode, red letters point out to the viewer the key message to take away with, namely the date when Jinzhou was taken. The defeated GMD troops, in turn, retreated or revolted like the one of Zheng Dongguo 郑洞国 (in Changchun) (to change sides). Thus, more and more cities in Manchuria fell to the Communists, whose soldiers are shown peacefully entering Shenyang (during the second part of the campaign which plays only a secondary role in this Jinzhou-located memorial).

Displayed tables with figures detail the CCP troops, machinery, losses etc. for the visitor of the memorial hall as a didactical summary to the exhibition part on the military aspects. The film clip then moves on to the section on 'the people' who sustained the front (on the CCP's side), since military alone is not sufficiently explaining the CCP's victory, with a peaceful musical soundtrack providing a relaxed atmosphere. Household items like a lamp supposedly used by a 'model in front support' (*zhiqian mofan* 支前模范) making shoes for the troops (duly with political slogans on the sole),[208] or a sewing machine for making clothes for the soldiers are to substantiate this storyline of popular support (and its due credit) tangibly in the exhibition. Photos of people 'happily' sending their sons to the front (on the Communist side), are to document a further standard form of 'popular support'. Weapons were, however, also a form of contribution (which hints at the heavy industry developed in Manchuria mainly under the Japanese), and statistics of how much grain was given or how many cattle provided etc., as well as how many stretcher bearers joined in, all are to quantify 'the people's' (explicitly including 'all minorities') significant contribution to the CCP victory as a didactical summary to this second part of the exhibition.

Finally, there is the 'martyrs' hall' which, in fact, covers the whole three years of the Northeast's 'liberation' (after WW II) (i.e., not only the Liao–Shen Campaign in

207 The donated flag likely explains why this military minor figure that plays usually no role in accounts of the campaign, is mentioned here.

208 This category of 'model' people was installed by the CCP to encourage civilian support for the army by material or labour means.

the narrow sense, and not only covering military casualties), while outside the building, black walls with names have been added, serving as collective stelae. To render the topic of sacrifice more accessible, some single 'martyrs' are quickly profiled for the national TV audience: Zhu Rui 朱瑞 (the highest-ranked Communist military leader who died in action), Mai Xin 麦新 (a musician and Communist propagandist, best known for his earlier composed anti-Japanese song *dadao jinxing qu* 大刀进行曲 (Sword March), who was killed in Manchuria, though not by the GMD), Zhang Shaoke 张绍柯 (an artist and photographer), while Jiang Renfu 姜仁福 (a Korean minority military woman) represents the Korean minority and also the role of women, and the young Zhang Dexin 张德新 of 16 years stands for the support by children and youth (as head of a youngsters' group). Thus, all walks of life should feel represented. In the end, the nationally broadcasted TV film clip reconnects to the beginning, with shots of the visitors of the exhibition (as 'the people' learning about the background), and the outdoor monument with the soldier in action (standing for the military and the sacrifice necessary).

The educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection, in turn, equally of the late 1990s, but addressing pupils, notably starts its whole collection of (selected) first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' with this very site, bespeaking the perceived importance of the Manchurian Campaign topic for 'patriotic education' (disc 1). While the above TV film clip put an accent on commemoration with the soldiers' monument, this educational video, produced by the museum together with the Shenyang Teachers College (which not only this way integrates Shenyang as the second part of the Campaign in this Jinzhou-based memorial, but also involves the most important institution of Liaoning Province for the formation of teachers as the key agents in education), starts in a more 'historiographical' vein. The video uses war films, intermingled with shots from the 360° panorama hall painting which is thus to be authenticated in its content. Only then, the memorial hall and its exhibition are introduced.

Compared to the emotionally and acoustically very charged TV film clip, the educational video is presenting the site more soberly and didactically, providing first an overview of the larger space where the memorial hall is situated, and the monument with soldier placed in the park. Bird-eye views of the black walls at the side with over 40.000 names of all those who died for the Northeast (also beyond the Liao–Shen Campaign), lead over to guide the intended watching pupils with the camera all along the way in zig-zag form, to finally arrive at the exhibition indoor.

Like the nationally broadcasted TV film clip, the educational video takes the viewer through the exhibition step by step as a stand-in for a visit on site, starting with the first hall on the war itself, which is presented mainly with photos and text.

In this educational video, however, the fact that the Soviets declared war on Japan and were the major actors, if with Chinese 'support', to 'liberate' the Northeast, is acknowledged right from the beginning. It thus comes across as more balanced regarding facts than the very nationalist TV version. Chiang Kai-shek's invitation of Mao to the Chongqing peace talks (in autumn 1945) is also mentioned for the larger context, but on the other hand, it is argued, Chiang tried at the same time to get the better of the CCP (which should assure the pupils that Communist actions in Manchuria were only a 'reaction' to the scheming of Chiang). With the help of the US (who are also named in this video version), Chiang had troops transferred to the Northeast, and thus, supposedly only in response, the CCP's Central Committee decided on its strategy to 'block towards the South and expand to the North' (for driving a wedge between the GMD troops in North China and those in Manchuria).

The same filmed material as in the TV film clip is to illustrate how the Communist troops moved into Manchuria from North China. At the second day of the Chongqing talks (in 1945), leading Communist cadres Peng Zhen, Chen Yun and others already arrived in Shenyang (then held by the Soviets), and also Luo Ronghuan joined. In 1946, at the 'July Seventh conference' in Harbin (i.e., in Northern Manchuria held by the Communists thanks to the Soviets), the basic strategy on how to move on in China's Northeast was decided. A Communist base area was subsequently established in Manchuria (in eastern Jilin province), but the major GMD general in Manchuria, Du Yuming 杜聿明, wanted to get rid of the Communists (whom he had put under pressure already before).[209] Peng Zhen (as the key CCP political cadre at the time responsible for Manchuria, then replaced by Luo Ronghuan) and Lin Biao (as the key military commander) thus led Communist troops from Northern Manchuria down south.[210]

Showing the same (movie) scenes as in the TV film clip of shooting soldiers, the military confrontation is introduced. From the GMD side, general Chen Cheng 陈诚 (who had meanwhile replaced Du Yuming) and general Wei Lihuang 卫立煌 were supposed to block the Communist troops, which in turn encircled and besieged the GMD troops in several cities, including Changchun, Jinzhou and Shenyang. Thus started the Liao–Shen Campaign. For the decisive battle of Jinzhou, GMD commander Fan Hanjie 范汉杰 stationed in Jinzhou received orders from Chiang

209 Cf. also Lew (2009: 28–39).

210 One may note that for Peng Zhen, who would be persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, but rehabilitated thereafter and then tried to recast his former role, his time in Manchuria had been full of problems which had led to his being soon replaced there, given his conflicts with Lin Biao and others. (Cf. Tanner 2015: 41). In fact, it had been Luo Ronghuan who was the one to lead the troops down to Jinzhou with Lin Biao. The filmic representation thus blurs Peng's real role in Manchuria.

Kai-shek, while Lin Biao directed the Communist attack on orders from Mao. A diorama in the exhibition of soldiers and a machine gun shooting at the painted background is to illustrate the scene of attack for the intended watching pupils. Meanwhile, Communist hero Bu Fenggang 卜凤刚 managed to block additional GMD troops trying to come in over Tashan 塔山.[211]

The intended watching pupils then are to observe guided visitors of the museum looking at honorary red banners which celebrate particular contributions. Chiang's orders are also reproduced as historical evidence in the exhibition. The troops of GMD commander Zheng Dongguo (in the besieged major city of Changchun, the former Manchukuo capital) are said to have revolted and changed sides when news arrived that Jinzhou had fallen, and thus, Changchun was 'liberated' as well (while the long-term siege of Changchun by the Communists with its horrendous starving rate among the city population is not even mentioned, rather crediting the fall of Jinzhou as the major reason for the GMD to 'give up' Changchun).[212] Thereafter, the major cities of Shenyang and Yingkou 营口 were taken by the PLA as well, as news of the time are to illustrate in an 'objective' vein.

Compared to this military part of the campaign, the exhibition part on popular support for the front is only briefly introduced to the intended watching pupils. With this topic, the educational video focuses mainly on the train with Mao's portrait at the head of the locomotive, bringing grain to the front. (Incidentally, this way of making the leader known throughout the country had been a mode already used in the case of Lenin in the vast territory of the Soviet Union, and taken over by the GMD with the Sun Yat-sen train when Sun's coffin was transported from Beijing, where he had died in 1925, to the Nanjing mausoleum in 1929. The 'Mao train' picked up this mode, connecting it, however, to 'the people's' provision for the military front.)[213] To produce these goods 'donated' to the front, people's agricultural tools on display like grain mills, not spectacular of themselves, also serve as authenticating items to claim that 'the people' helped the PLA willingly.

211 For the battle of Tashan in military perspective, cf. Tanner (2015: 204–207). The place was on the way from Huludao 葫芦岛, where the GMD relief forces set out from to advance northeastward, to Jinzhou.

212 The long siege of Changchun by the Communists caused widespread starvation in the city. The storyline that Zheng willingly 'changed sides' is open to question (cf. Tanner 2015: 247–249). In any case he stayed on in the PRC after 1949, and apparently never went to prison, which suggests at least a timely arrangement with the Communists.

213 Apart from the fact that Russia's main large-scale infrastructure was the railway, and that the similarly extended territory in the Chinese case made railway a modern and far-reaching means of transportation, Manchuria was physically connected to the Russian railway system. On the other hand, by attaching the leader's portrait to the locomotive's head, it was a means before modern media technologies were widely disseminated in the hinterland, to make him known also there.

The shoes with slogans on their soles are also briefly shown in this educational video, as well as a photo of a mother sending off her son to the front. Women and even children purportedly sustained the Communists as well, which means that this was in Maoist terms a 'people's war'.

For the 'martyrs' hall', concluding the exhibition triad of military, civilian, and memorial aspects, Zhu Rui, the highest-ranking Communist and artillery commander, is profiled more than in the TV film clip. His relief portrait and written biography is presented, and a large stone monument (in the park outside the memorial hall) shows his bas-relief portrait, stressing that his artillery training was an important legacy and of use also a few years later at the time of the Korean War (which once more involved Manchuria and thus argues for an enduring legacy of this Civil War 'martyr'). 'Martyr' Liang Shiying as the one who blocked a breakthrough hole with his own body (which is a further staple in such 'heroes' stories') is also profiled more, adding to the educational effect aimed at in this didactic video. His (substitute) tomb at the side of the museum is also briefly shown. Further 'martyrs' are only quickly enumerated (incidentally not including here the Korean minority military woman Jiang Renfu). Notably, though, the famous Civil War 'martyr' Dong Cunrui, while mentioned, is not particularly stressed (although he has his own 'patriotic education showcase base').[214]

Views of the black walls with names of those who sacrificed for Manchuria during the Civil War years then lead to the 360° panorama hall which especially focuses on the local over 30 hours of fighting around Jinzhou and is praised as a special way of artistically rendering this history accessible. The female director of the museum explains to the intended watching pupils of this educational video that this panorama hall is like a 3D textbook, while the plaques for the site are to underline the site's educational and political value, namely being labelled as a 'patriotic education base' (*aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi*) in 1995 (i.e., the step before it became a 'showcase base') by the Ministry of Civil Affairs (Minzhengbu), and simultaneously as a 'national young people's education base' (*quanguo qing-shaonian jiaoyu jidi*) by the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, and as a 'national secondary and primary school patriotic education base' (*Quanguo zhong-xiaoxue aiguozhuyi jiaoyu jidi*) by various entities in 1996. A swearing-in ceremony of youths and children, either to the Party for the eldest ones, or to the Communist Youth League, or down to the Young Pioneers in front of the monument, with white paper flowers and heads down in reverence of the 'martyrs', conclude this educational video, underlining the aim of the site in serving as a 'patriotic education

214 His tomb park in Hebei is also among the first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' and is also included in the *Zhonghua hun* video collection.

showcase base'. That way, the next generation demonstrates that it has received the message and is ready to fight for a bright future of the *patria*.

The 'patriotic' booklet (Chen / Song 1998), equally of the late 1990s like the two filmic representations, in turn, bespeaks already by its length the Liao–Shen Campaign's perceived significance as the major step to CCP rule over China. In contrast to the filmic narratives, the booklet version is not only more detailed, but also more systematic in its approach. After providing a general background to the Civil War, it presents the already familiar sequence of the single parts in the exhibition which first focus on the development of the war, then the help from the populace (following the familiar pattern: military actions, then civil support), the 'heroes' and 'martyrs' to personalise and emotionalise the topic, and finally the institutionalised ways of commemoration. For the military part, the baseline of the narrative is to argue that while the GMD was chaotic in its leadership, Mao followed a clear strategy, directing the Communists from his Xibaipo headquarters (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book on Xibaipo) (1). With the key strategic move to attack Jinzhou where the memorial hall is located and which is strategically placed in the Liaoxi (i.e., West of the Liao River) corridor which connects Manchuria to the North China Plain, the PLA successfully separated the GMD troops in Manchuria from those in North China. (However, even in this rather detailed 'patriotic' booklet, the important historical background of the Soviets holding the North of Manchuria and the Dalian–Lüshun area in the South, favouring the CCP when retreating from other areas and leaving also some war material captured from the Japanese to them, while the GMD was holding only areas in between and often had to airlift troops into their areas, namely the urban centres, is not clearly spelt out to the intended young readers).

Since the city of Jinzhou itself was held by GMD troops, the reader only is told that the GMD did not expect an attack there, but Lin Biao (the real champion on the CCP side of the Manchurian Campaign), would do so on the order of Mao (who thus receives the credit). Lin Biao and Luo Ronghuan (the latter as political commissar who had, in fact, replaced Peng Zhen in Manchuria) thus led Communist troops from their secure base in Harbin in northern Manchuria down south to Jinzhou. In their move south, the PLA had also tanks at their disposal for the first time (de facto namely due to the Soviets who handed some captured Japanese war material to the CCP). In desperation, the GMD is said to have also retorted to poison gas, but to no avail. The GMD commander of Jinzhou (i.e., Fan Hanjie) was taken captive and purportedly defended himself saying that he had been completely surprised by the PLA attack.[215] While, according to the narrative, the GMD had an advantage

215 Fan Hanjie would remain in mainland prisons until 1960, when he was released with the second batch of 'war criminals'.

in airplanes and US weapons, the PLA made up for this with particularly daring groups who helped block the GMD relief troops. That way, the GMD could be also isolated in the major city of Changchun in Jilin province (formerly the Manchukuo capital), and this city could be 'liberated' since it was pointless to defend it from within. Thus, the narrative explains to the intended young reader, some of the GMD troops understandably revolted there. (This framing, once more, completely leaves aside the sensitive topic of massive starving of the city population during the months-long siege by the Communists.)[216]

With Changchun already besieged, the PLA could then concentrate on the Liaoxi area. On the other hand, to the east, Shenyang, the city where the GMD had their stronghold in Manchuria, had been cordoned off as well and thus could not send relief neither to Jinzhou nor to Changchun, which caused several parts of the GMD troops to rebell. When Jinzhou fell, the remaining GMD troops were trapped in between, leading to many, including GMD commanders, capitulating and rather becoming POWs (3–17). Finally, the GMD stronghold, Shenyang, was attacked as the last domino. Many tried to flee, but the city was finally handed over, again, as is claimed, accompanied by mutinies led by several commanders. The balance between the GMD and the CCP in the Civil War had changed with this Liao–Shen Campaign, which is its fundamental historical significance (17–20).

Beyond this historical summary, the booklet, however, adds also more background of the memorial hall itself for the intended reading pupil, historicising the memorialisation of the 1948 Manchurian Campaign: the memorial hall was built in 1959 (i.e., at the tenth anniversary of the PRC's founding), and in 1988, i.e., in the Deng Xiaoping era when so many museums were 'reworked' (or newly set up), a new building at the 40th anniversary of the campaign was opened, designed by the leading official architect Dai Nianci 戴念慈.[217] (How the memorial fared between 1959 and 1988 is, however, not disclosed.) In the entrance hall there is a bas-relief with the map of Manchuria and the head of Mao placed therein, clearly conveying the key message of Manchuria (which had been so long under foreign domination)

216 The issue of Communist responsibility to starve the population in Changchun is a sensitive topic in PRC historiography and evaded. The writer Zhang Zhenglong 张正隆 who published a book *Xue bai xue hong* 雪白血紅 (Snow is white, blood is red) in 1989, notably with the PLA publishing house, bringing this up, was censored soon after. For a brief summary on the siege, see Lary (2015: 122–127). Neither the official movie on the Liao–Shen Campaign of 1991 in the *Da juezhan* trilogy nor any of the 'patriotic' materials of the late 1990s mentions this, but suggests Changchun was taken 'without shedding blood'.

217 Dai Nianci designed many official buildings in China, including the National Art Museum, the Exhibition Centre, or the Central Party School in Beijing, with clear signs of Soviet stylistic influence.

having finally become Communist. One side of the entrance hall represents the military, the other 'the people' sustaining the campaign. The basic tone is to cheer about the victory in war (i.e., not accentuating suffering, but rather the 'natural' victory of the PLA) (21–22).

As for the exhibition and its narrative, the first three halls on the military campaign are to show with artefacts, photos, art, and documentaries, how the Civil War changed with this campaign to the favour of the PLA. In this context, the Soviets are at least briefly mentioned in the booklet. Back in the Yan'an days, there had been, the intended young reader learns, a special department for the CCP's cooperation with the Soviets, led by Peng Zhen and Chen Yun, who went to Manchuria as CCP representatives immediately after the Japanese defeat in 1945. At the first time (in 1945), the Soviets even held the airport of Shanhaiguan at the critical connecting point between Manchuria and the North China Plain (cf. chapter 2.3 of the present book on Shanhaiguan), from where the CCP cadres could fly to Shenyang in Manchuria.

From the military side, in turn, general Lin Biao was quickly sent to Manchuria, too. Although he would later go down in history as the 'crown prince turned traitor' of the Communists, the narrative presents him in the 'patriotic booklet' rather positively as someone who always went on working in spite of his frequent health problems. (This means that Peng Zhen, who was attacked in the Cultural Revolution but would be rehabilitated thereafter, as well as Lin Biao who counted as one of the 'culprits' for the most violent phase of the Cultural Revolution and has never been absolved officially, are both positively presented to the 'patriotic' reader of the booklet over the topic of the Liao–Shen Campaign!)[218]

Luo Ronghuan was sent to Manchuria (in 1945) as well as a political commissar serving the military, who travelled from Shandong in disguise over sea to Lüshun and thus safely reached Soviet-held territory (the Lüshun–Dalian area). More Communist troops were sent into Manchuria, while the GMD received Shanhaiguan

218 One may note that the Resolution of 1981 on Party history named Lin Biao as one of the 'culprits' for the early Cultural Revolution. (See 'Guanyu jianguo yilai dang de ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi' (1981), or the English translation 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China' (n.d.)). In the latter part of the Cultural Revolution itself, he came posthumously under attack in the 'Pi Lin pi Kong' 批林批孔 campaign (see also chapter 5.1 on Confucius.) Lin Biao was officially never pardoned ever since, but one notes that in more recent years, there is a tendency to credit him for his military merits of pre-PRC times. In fact, the 1991 movie on the Liao–Shen Campaign as part I of the *Da juezhan* trilogy, mentioned above, presented him visually for the first time after his death in the PRC in a basically positive vein (though most of the credit – beyond Mao – is directed to Luo Ronghuan who sometimes had to stop Lin Biao when he was about to take 'wrong decisions').

back (in late 1945, according to the accord between the Chinese national government and the Soviets).

Meanwhile, the Soviets had sent emissaries to Yan'an by air to talk over the next steps with the CCP at the time when Mao and Zhou Enlai were in Chongqing to negotiate with Chiang Kai-shek (in the fall of 1945) (23–28). The city of Shenyang was a delicate terrain for the Communists, since all sorts of political agents (from former collaborationists with the Japanese to GMD underground agents) were around at first, and the economy of this industrialised city was down, but they set to work in the city for garnering support from below, building up networks (not the least among the industrial workers). Because of the treaty between the Soviets and the (GMD) Chinese national government, the Soviets would not openly support the CCP (and had to hand several cities over to the GMD). The CCP thus decided to change tactics and sent more troops of its own into Manchuria.

At first, the 'patriotic' booklet argues, the people in Liaoxi did not trust the CCP since they did not yet understand their motivations. But Lin Biao is once more given credit as the one to bring the local 'people' around, being called by a foreigner 'a fox' (implying, needless to say, a compliment in the 'patriotic' narrative). While the GMD–CCP infighting was temporarily suspended (due to the ongoing negotiations), Lin Biao prepared for the next move and analysed the GMD's weak points in Manchuria, to prepare for attack (which is again a notable presentation since the standard framing is rather that Lin Biao only followed Mao's directives, and sometimes even obstructed them, while he is here presented as the one to have de facto masterminded the Communists' most decisive military moves in Manchuria in the context of the Civil War!).

Liu Shaoqi who was in command in Yan'an during the absence of Mao (while the latter was in Chongqing in fall 1945 for the negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek), had been the one who decided to send troops to Manchuria (which once more credits someone beyond Mao, and even his subsequent major victim during the Cultural Revolution). The US (while aiming at a truce between both parties) even unconsciously helped the CCP, the narrative suggests, by shuttling some Communists out of the cordoned-off Yan'an (who would then clandestinely move into Manchuria), others travelled on Soviet trains and cars (which provides a somewhat internationalised picture of the prelude to the full outbreak of the Chinese Civil War, while highlighting the difficulties on the ground for the Communists to circumnavigate the GMD blockade) (29–41).

Meanwhile, the Communist cadres pushed for land revolution and mobilised the masses, wherever they arrived, to gain 'the people's support', but leading cadre Zhang Wentian 张闻天 (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book for Zunyi and his role in

the Party since the 1930s) was the one to make sure that land revolution was conducted in a 'sensible' way (which signals to the 'patriotic' reader that there must have been some 'insensible' excesses), preventing the killing of those talents that were still needed (which, in turn, suggests that those not longer needed could be killed).[219] Zhang Wentian (who, years later, would be among the few to support Peng Dehuai against Mao at the Lushan Conference in 1959 to point out the Great Leap Forward 'problems', would be criticised during the Cultural Revolution, but then posthumously rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping) thus emerges as an exemplary cadre who went through with his principles but still showed flexibility (42–46).

Another cadre in this narrative who would be persecuted later in the Cultural Revolution and then rehabilitated is Tao Zhu 陶铸 who is shown as having gained merits in Manchuria as well. He would die under arrest during the Cultural Revolution, but the narrative points out that he had given everything to the people back then, not to his family, and also cared for his underlings at the time of the Civil War (46–49). (This all shows that some authors of this 'patriotic' booklet used the occasion to provide more positive assessments of some historical figures that would undergo criticism during the more radical times of the Mao era subsequently, thus conforming also to the Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin stance to open up chosen individual cases for reevaluation.)

A further notable personal case profiled, being from the 'other' side in this case, is former GMD commander Pan Shuoduan 潘朔端 with his Yunnan troops who, however, chose to go over to the PLA. He led his Yunnan troops to revolt, arguing that 'we need a pause after the eight years of anti-Japanese war', and 'the people' supposedly sustained this revolt. They thus became a 'democratic alliance troop' to the PLA, and the commander himself entered the CCP. The duped GMD tried to claim that he had been pressured into the Communist camp and made his wife in Yunnan say so, the intended young reader learns, but a diary purportedly found later of the wife showed she had never said this and was, instead, upset that the GMD lied in her name (which shows the PLA did not want to appear as blackmailing anyone). The wife was 'saved' by the CCP and brought to Manchuria at the time. After 1949, the couple went back to Yunnan, and Pan Shuoduan was rewarded for his change of sides with the position of mayor of Kunming, the provincial capital (49–56). On the Communist side, in turn, the few material items on display in the exhibition on the military side of things include the patched vest of Chen Yun (who was the Party's specialist for economics and a highly influential politician also in the

219 Cf. Seybolt (1996) who cites a local cadre's view whose personal trajectory he studied in detail, to the avail that bloody violence in land revolution is a necessary part of it, but that it should be done with measurement.

Deng Xiaoping era). He is credited as the one who argued to keep the South of Manchuria at a decisive moment during the campaign. The vest he would keep until the 1980s, though patched many times (which thus symbolises his frugality, but also the memorialisation of the campaign which he supported while being often ill) (56–61).

On the other hand, the story of the impressive feat of a military 'hero' serves to enrich the imagination for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet, telling of a Communist who supposedly took over 60 POWs all alone! He had been mistreated by the Japanese before (thus harbouring feelings of revenge, which, as we saw, is a frequently named explanation for someone's ideological zeal), then became a commander in the Eighth Route Army, and fought also against the (endemic) bandits in Manchuria, the intended young reader learns. Since he was a particularly strong fighter, he is said to have overwhelmed more than ten people single-handedly! And thus, the others would simply give up to be taken as POWs (61–65). (As we will see in chapter 5.3, such tales are recurring with Communist 'heroes' of Mao times.) In all those ways, by narrative, actor-focused storytelling, and few artefacts, the exhibition argues for the necessarily victorious outcome of the campaign for the Communists.

In a more tangible vein, the exhibition halls 4–6 show reconstructions, paintings, and models to provide a sense of the scenes during the key battle of Jinzhou (which is the major part of the whole Liao–Shen Campaign addressed in this memorial located in Jinzhou). This is to bring the per se elusive topic more to life for the visitor. At this crucial point, Lin Biao is notably said to have contemplated retreat from Jinzhou, while it was supposedly Luo Ronghuan who pushed forward, conforming to the decision of the CCP headquarter by then in Xibaipo (i.e., here Lin Biao is rather shown as wavering, which incidentally suggests that the authorship of these 'patriotic' booklets was in different hands, and thus discrepancies occur which the final editor did, however, not choose to iron out, leaving some ambiguity and divergent historiographical reading possible). In the exhibition, the binoculars of Luo Ronghuan are on display that should illustrate Luo's farsightedness also in a symbolical sense during that crucial battle (66–70). Based on his experience, Luo Ronghuan calculated that the GMD would give up when the PLA dug tunnels under the city walls. According to the narrative, he observed the whole battle of Jinzhou closely with these binoculars, and his observation helped identify the best spots to attack, which justifies their display in the exhibition on a more practical level. Since the PLA was dug in, the GMD airplanes could also not easily spot them (71–73).

On the other hand, the particularly daring 'White Tiger' group which surprised the enemy is highlighted. Supposedly, they, in turn, modelled themselves on the

'five heroes of Mount Langya' of the preceding Second Sino–Japanese War (*Langyashan wu zhuangshi* 狼牙山五壮士) who courageously fought the enemy in 1941 in Hebei to then jump off a cliff (incidentally a disputed topic in itself, having ended up in more recent years in court, but also showing once more the strong impact of models in the Chinese 'exemplary society' – as Bakken (2000) has aptly called it).[220] In any case, Jinzhou would become a GMD debacle, called pathetically a 'Second Verdun' for the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet (74–79). Key to this was, as the reader is to understand, once more wit, since underground CCP members managed to get hold of strategic information and maps from the GMD through their undercover contacts in GMD ranks. Even though the GMD magistrate of Jinzhou distrusted some in his staff, the Communists still managed to get the needed information by using third people with access, and smuggled the crucial information out of Jinzhou, thus scoring victory (84–88).

The story of one single hero, Bu Fenggang, supposedly taking 124 POWs all alone (!), is another narrative highlight. Notably, his purported amazing feat was even treated by Soviet author Konstantin Simonov in his book on 'Fighting China'.[221] The GMD is said to have followed the so-called 'German method' of shooting full power, and then attack in waves. Given this dangerous situation, Bu Fenggang who was originally only a deputy commander, took over when the commander himself had fallen, to fight with hand grenades and stones, somehow finally managing to convince the enemy to give up. Thus, the narrative asserts, he could take the many POWs. Bu Fenggang survived into PRC times, but no one knew where he was. Only after his death, the memorial hall could finally individuate him, suggesting to the intended young reader that he was too modest to claim a reward, but also, that the CCP never gave up on searching for those who had merits (89–92).

But for all the individual heroism, key to the PLA victory in the campaign remained the trapping of the GMD commander Liao Yaoxiang 廖耀湘, who had been on the way to bring in relief troops. He is notably described to the intended reading pupil as a coward: when his troops realised the trap and fled, he supposedly tried to disguise and flee, too, even trying to bribe a Communist, but failed and was

220 The case of the five heroes of Mount Langya has been a recent scandal since the historicity of this celebrated heroic fight of five Chinese against a large number of Japanese and their final heroic suicidal jumping from a cliff to not fall into enemy hands (though two of the five survived) has been disputed but led to a court verdict that this official version of history may not be challenged. The journal *Yanhuang chunqiu* 炎黄春秋 was closed for publishing this doubt about historicity, and the author was forced to apologise.

221 The original was in Russian, published in 1950: *Srazhayushchiysya Kitay* (Fighting China).

found. Thus, he had to shamefully admit his identity, the film-like story goes. When he would visit Beijing's Military Museum later, he is said to have duly acknowledged that he had 'underrated' the PLA (92–97). (What is not mentioned is the fact that Liao Yaoxiang was taken prisoner and was obviously obstinate enough to be only released with the third batch of 'war criminals' in 1961,[222] to then be harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution.)

For the topic of civilian support of the Communists during the campaign, the 'patriotic' booklet makes sure to point out that all minorities of the Northeast were for the Communists, not only the Han, e.g., helping with logistics. That way, carts and sacks for carrying food or else are on display (which are an exhibition staple for suggesting this otherwise elusive topic of popular support). All ages supposedly joined in, answering Mao's call for a 'people's war'. They would produce simple weapons (*tu wuqi* 土武器), and they were recruited for specific tasks to form an ad hoc commando and then disband. 'The people' are also said to have organised themselves for tearing up railway tracks to block the GMD's retreat (similar to the case of Ranzhuang above in the earlier Second Sino–Japanese War, directed then against the Japanese troops). All kinds of sabotage acts were thus conducted, leading to cuts in electricity etc. 'The people' supposedly also served to convince the GMD troops to give up their arms, while the CCP tried to bring the GMD soldiers around by arguing that they were only misused by the GMD and would be treated well by the PLA (98–102).

To individualise the topic of popular support, Sun Yi 孙义 as one of those civilians who caused trains to derail, is profiled who would be honoured in 1950 in the PRC, counting as a 'national fighting hero' (*quanguo zhandou yingxiong* 全国战斗英雄).[223] Other forms of popular help included transporting ammunition, e.g., by railway workers. (As will be recalled, railways were a key means of transportation in Manchuria, and led to the North and South ends held by the Soviets). Because of GMD air supremacy, the people supporting the CCP had to operate during the night. The ammunition trains were thus covered with Manchurian sorghum (*gaoliang* 高粱) during daytime to keep it all secret. The trains also transported food for the PLA, though. Later, the train crew would be honoured as well in PRC times (102–106).

Another exemplary case profiled was notably a Korean woman, Li Yujin 李玉今, standing for female contribution as well as for 'foreigners' support' (different from the Korean minority woman Jiang Renfu profiled in the TV film clip who was a Chinese citizen): Li Yujin (Lee Ok-geum), born in Korea, had been exploited by a landlord, her story goes. But when he wanted to exploit her also sexually (in typical

222 There were four batches in all: 1959, 1960, 1961, and 1975. Cf. Lary (2015: 145, n. 12).

223 The such honoured people were invited in 1950 to a celebratory meeting in Beijing.

fashion, nothing sexual is allowed to taint a heroine), she finally fled over the border. There she heard of the anti-Japanese Chinese Communist 'hero' Yang Jingyu 杨靖宇 (in fact his pseudonym) (active in Manchuria in guerrilla warfare until he fell in 1940, becoming a Communist 'top hero'). Li Yujin and her new husband thus became politically active, opposing the GMD, and sustaining Communist land revolution. Her husband joined the PLA, while she cared for the family. Although her husband fell, she still convinced others to let their young sons go to the front, finally became a CCP member herself and organised the women. That way, she (though a born Korean) showed herself a Chinese 'patriot'![224] (107–109).

Other people distinguished themselves by organising food for the PLA, and even a practitioner of Chinese medicine lent the Communists his support. That way, all walks of life where supposedly on the Communists' side. Meanwhile, the GMD commander Liao Yaoxiang (cf. above) is said to have tried in all ways to block further supply for the PLA. But cases like the one of an old woman thankful for the CCP policies, who thus made food for them, showed where the sympathies of the normal people were. After victory, the woman only thought (in familiar slogan phrasing) how she could produce even more in gratitude, while another woman is also individuated who would make shoes for the PLA (110–114). That way, all kinds of popular help and the exhibited rather unspectacular material items are connected to individual stories to render the content more accessible.

The 'martyrs' hall' as the third part of the memorial exhibition, in turn, features single biographies and the faces in relief. 29 'martyrs' are profiled with such bronze faces, wreaths and biographies, covering the whole three years of the Civil War in the Northeast (i.e., also beyond the Liao–Shen Campaign). All in all, the names of 247 'martyrs' are known which also are said to include 'foreigners' (possibly intending Koreans) (115). These 'martyrs' stories' are to stimulate the readers' phantasy since nothing tangible remains to be displayed. The most famous 'martyr' in the PRC for the Civil War era is the PLA soldier Dong Cunrui (though he in fact died before the Liao–Shen Campaign took place). While he was only briefly named in the educational video discussed above, he is treated somewhat more in the booklet, typically represented with explosives in hand since he blew himself up for destroying a GMD bunker. (His case had been particularly advertised in 1955 as a hero story by the movie *Dong Cunrui* and is thus household knowledge in China). In a narrative closely resembling the one of subsequent Lei Feng (see chapter 5.3 of the present book), the archetypical PRC-era hero, he is presented as someone who

224 She would remain in China and served, i.a., as a cadre in Jilin Province's women's association.

could receive education only thanks to the CCP. He had been supposedly already planning revenge on evil landlords, being impressed by revolutionary tales (which provides incidentally the reason why these tales are told). Thus, he conducted many sabotage acts, but also saved a child that was going to naively touch an explosive (i.e., he was punishing the evil by sabotage, but helping the innocent, therewith showing the key capability to know 'whom to hate and whom to love' that every Chinese citizen is supposed to learn – cf. chapter 6). Dong Cunrui used explosives for damaging a bridge, and died when attacking the GMD bunker. In 1950, he would be declared a 'fighting hero'.[225] (116–122)

Another top-ranking 'martyr' profiled in the booklet is Yang Zirong 杨子荣 (who had also already died before the Liao–Shen Campaign took place, but was popularised in the PRC not the least via the revolutionary opera *Zhiqu Weihushan* 智取威虎山 or 'Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy', becoming one of the model operas during the Cultural Revolution). He had served as a spy (which are for friendly ones called reconnaissance or *zhencha* 侦察 staff, for enemy ones *tewu* 特务). Yang Zirong hailed from Shandong, but worked in Manchurian Andong / Dandong (cf. chapter 4.1 on the Korean War memorial there) as a child worker. He would finally join the PLA and enter the CCP. Yang Zirong first fought against bandits in Manchuria (which highlights to the intended young readers throughout China the endemic banditry problem of Manchuria), but then convinced them to give up (which means that persuasion is an important tactic, too). However, he then cleverly tricked them and thus took them into custody. In 1947, when still fighting against bandits, he was hit and died as a Communist 'martyr' (122–129).

While the above two examples may not be ones rendering it easy for reading Chinese pupils to relate to, another profiled 'martyr' should appear closer to the intended readers of the 'patriotic' booklet, namely a boy named Xie Rongce 谢荣策 who served as a children's group leader (*ertongtuan* 儿童团). According to the narrative, he supported the PLA and purportedly even discovered a 'GMD spy' while also observing when people stole things (which suggests that children at least may observe people closely and serve as spies). The GMD, however, caught and executed him cruelly. A stele at his tomb thus commemorates this very young 'martyr' (129–133).

A further notably case, who was also mentioned in the TV film clip, is musician Mai Xin (in fact his pseudonym) who wrote passionate songs, namely the famous 'Sword March' (*dadao jinxing qu* 大刀进行曲). According to the 'patriotic' book-

225 As mentioned above for the case of Sun Yi, in 1950 a ceremonial meeting was held in Beijing to honour all such cases. Dong Cunrui was, of course, honoured posthumously then, while those still alive were invited to Beijing.

let, this song had been written (in 1937) to commemorate the 29th Army that fought against Japan (in the area around Beijing and Tianjin after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident had started off the Second Sino–Japanese War in practice). Mai Xin entered the CCP and went to Yan'an where he composed many more songs. He, too, lost his life to bandits (again before the Liao–Shen Campaign took place), and thus is de facto not directly connected to the campaign, which one more shows that the Memorial Hall is rather used as a place to somehow integrate all those who died for the Communist side during the Civil War in the whole area (133–139).

Another 'child martyr' likely closer to the intended reader, in turn, who, however, died before the campaign as well, is the youngsters' group leader named also in the filmic renderings discussed above, Zhang Dexin, who was also propagated throughout China by the Communists more systematically. He was made famous by books written on him, including novels. Zhang Dexin, too, supposedly modelled himself already on other Communist heroes (which discloses the relevance of internarrativity), in his case Liu Hulan 刘胡兰, a young girl supporting the Communists, mostly by spying. (Liu Hulan had been killed by the GMD in early 1947 during the Civil War at only 14 years of age, though not in Manchuria; but her story had been made known all over China by Communist propagandistic means.) During land revolution (which went on wherever the Communists had already militarily secured an area), Zhang Dexin became a children's leader at his home village in the vicinity of Jinzhou, and actively 'fought the landlords' (cf. the framing of children acting similarly in Jinggangshan in chapter 3.3 of the present book). E.g., he is said to have discovered a 'bad trick' by one landlord feigning to be a ghost (to escape the villagers' wrath by banking on their 'superstition'). That way, Zhang Dexin is thrust into the role of the rational youth enlightening the elder generation to free themselves from the fetters of religious thinking. Zhang Dexin also supposedly discovered enemy spies. (This, one should underline, is all obviously seen as a potential example of 'patriotic' conduct for the intended young readers, though this Maoist-style agency of youth has become somewhat discredited ever since the Cultural Revolution's young Red Guards.) More unambiguously, Zhang Dexin proved a 'martyr' by keeping the identity of the local Party secretary secret even under torture, and was finally executed (similar to his model Liu Hulan) (139–145). (As mentioned, even his example is not directly connected to the Liao–Shen Campaign, which shows that only a minority of the 'martyrs' honoured at the memorial hall are de facto of this campaign itself. This, in turn, facilitates also the presentation of the campaign as rather on the tonic keynote of 'liberation' than on one of 'suffering'.)

In its final section, the 'patriotic' booklet addresses for its intended young readers the commemoration of the campaign, namely with the 360° panorama hall

which prides itself as having been the first of its kind in all of China. Painted in oil, it shows autumn in Jinzhou (when the battle of Jinzhou was conducted in 1948). The scenes are very realistic and describe the development of the battle. Sound is added, and an explanation is also acustically provided for the visitor, to create a more holistic and also emotional impression of the battle which as such remains an elusive topic (146–149). Outside the building, there is the monument with soldier and the inscription of general Zhu De in the 'martyrs' cemetery', and on two sides of the base, bas-reliefs show scenes of the battle. The cemetery is to commemorate the 'martyrs' who died in the area during the whole Civil War years before the dawn of the PRC. The long walls carrying the names of the 'martyrs' were added only in 1993, the reader learns, at the 45th anniversary of the campaign (which also shows that the design of the black wall of names merged the Chinese tradition of tomb stelae and the artistic language diffused ever more in memorial culture worldwide, exemplified, e.g., by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington of 1982).[226] That long memorial wall has three parts and sports a preface in the calligraphy of famous calligrapher Wu Zhongqi 吴中奇 as well as two endorsements in the end, including one of Peng Zhen (whose role in Manchuria was, as mentioned, rather complicated, but who had stakes in being integrated in the commemoration of this Communist 'victory' later). In between, there are almost 50.000 names of 'martyrs', and there is space for more (i.e., for those that might be established in the future). Outdoor, there is also an extra monument for the highest-ranking CCP 'martyr': general Zhu Rui, mentioned in both filmic representations discussed above, who fell when unfortunately stepping on a mine, which was erected in 1991 (149–154).

As a further point of commemoration, at some distance (20 km) from the memorial in Jinzhou itself, is a pagoda which recalls those brave men (including Bu Fenggang) who blocked the GMD relief troops coming from the Southwest at Tashan 塔山 (lit. pagoda mountain),[227] inscribed by Chen Yun in this case (who was another of those surviving cadres who had a stake in being connected to the commemoration of this Communist 'victory' later). That Tashan blocking had been important for securing Communist victory in the Jinzhou battle. The pagoda was built already in 1953 (and thus obviously earlier than the memorial hall!). The Jinzhou memorial hall subsequently integrated this place, offering occasional activities there (154–156) (i.e., the place is under the memorial hall's administration.

226 One may recall that Maya Lin, the architect of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is of Chinese ancestry. Cf. also Müller (2022: 309).

227 For the single places and the whole military development of the Liao–Shen Campaign in a Western study, see Tanner (2015).

Another important additional memorial stele in the vicinity of Jinzhou is at Heishan 黑山 (lit. black mountain), where the GMD relief troops arriving from the Northeast from Shenyang, the GMD stronghold in Manchuria,[228] were blocked which was even turned into a film early on (thus once overshadowing Jinzhou itself)![229] The memorial stele erected on spot features two guns with red flags in between (156–158). Thus, the commemoration of the Jinzhou battle includes as a 'patriotic education showcase base' those two outlaying sites beyond the main one in the city itself.

A particularly interesting part of this booklet on the 'patriotic education showcase base' of Jinzhou is the afterword, which discloses some information on this 'patriotic' publication itself. In terms of timing, the booklet coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Liao–Shen Campaign, i.e., 1998. More significantly, though, the authors of the booklet also cautiously address how they dealt with the delicate issue of describing Lin Biao (whose role, given his later career, is a bone of contention, not the least among the military). Taking a defensive stance, the authors of the 'patriotic' booklet argue that their narrative is merely sticking to 'historical materialism' to positively credit Lin Biao in the context of the Liao–Shen Campaign! As an additional back-up, they also point to the CCP's economic specialist and political heavy-weight of the 'reform' era under Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, who had written on the campaign in which he had been personally involved (and whose views, published above all in the 1980s, obviously mainly shaped the Liao–Shen Campaign Memorial Hall's exhibition).[230] Another point of reference the authors point to was the official entry on Lin Biao in the 'Chinese encyclopaedia' (*Zhongguo dabaike quanshu* 中国大百科全书, the publisher of the whole 'patriotic' booklet series being, as may be recalled, this very Chinese encyclopaedia press!) (159–160). That way, obviously, the authors felt more assured to put forward their historical reading in a 'patriotic' booklet designed for educating the next generation of Chinese citizens, though, as mentioned, several inconsistencies can be detected which were not ironed out – on purpose, one may assume.

Roughly 20 years later, in Xi Jinping times, the Liaoning volume of the *Fengbei* series (Li / Chen 2019) presents an updated framing of the Liao–Shen Campaign Memorial Hall, reflecting a new approach. In its narrative, it discloses for the first time that the predecessor of the current memorial hall had in fact been located in the

228 For the Heishan blocking operation, cf. Tanner (2015: 256–259).

229 The movie *Heishan zujizhan* 黑山阻击战 (Blockade battle on the Black Mountain) was produced in 1958.

230 Chen Yun cared for the official memorialisation of the Liao–Shen Campaign also by a collection of historical documents in the 1980s. Cf. Tanner (2015: 289).

temple that hosts the Jinzhou Museum today. That predecessor of the Liao–Shen Campaign's memorial hall had been called the 'Jinzhou preparatory bureau of the Liaoning geographical exhibition hall' (cf. provincial museums, chapter 2.2; see also chapter 6) which then turned into the 'Jinzhou historical relics exhibition' (since, as mentioned above, Shenyang became the provincial capital of the 1954 created Liaoning Province, downgrading Jinzhou in an administrative sense). The original exhibition of the Liao–Shen Campaign Memorial Hall was, however, only finished in 1963 (which suggests that the 1959 establishment of the site as the Memorial Hall did not yet mean that it was accessible to the public). Similar to the late 1990s' framing, the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative also simply jumps to the post-Cultural Revolution times, not addressing what happened in between, stating that the memorial hall was reopened at the new location in the new building next to the 'martyrs' cemetery' on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Liao–Shen Campaign in 1988 (46). (In 2004, the exhibition would be once more overhauled.) Its present name was provided in calligraphy by general Ye Jianying (who obviously penned it interestingly already in 1978 – which suggests that there might have been the idea to open the memorial already then, at the 30th anniversary, which did not materialise, possibly given the complicated times and the involved evaluations of various figures who had undergone political ups and downs more recently then:[231] Ye Jianying, who had served as a successor to Lin Biao in the capacity of Minister of Defence until 1978, in any case died in 1986, i.e., before the memorial hall's relocation of 1988).

At the new location, aside the memorial hall, there was not only the bronze soldier on the memorial stele placed, but to the side of the monument also two 'martyrs' tombs': of Liang Shiying (de facto a substitute tomb, *yiguan zhong* 衣冠冢), and of Zhang Shiyi 张士毅 (a real tomb of the first short-term Communist mayor of Jinzhou in 1945 before the GMD moved in, who was later killed during the Civil War, if, once more, before the Liao–Shen Campaign took place, but not addressed in the late 1990s' versions discussed above). The memorial hall itself, in turn, has been modernising its offers, including documentaries and TV clips to serve for education by e-mediums on this per se rather elusive topic of the campaign. Historiographically speaking, the narrative of 2019 is still rather cautious regarding the 'hot potato' Lin Biao, pointing out his role, but also suggesting that after all Mao at his

231 One can only speculate that this might have to do with the complicated historical and personal evaluations involved at a time when the situation in the PRC was very critical, due to the power contest between Mao's immediate successor Hua Guofeng and Deng Xiaoping, in which Deng only emerged in December 1978 as the long-term winner. Ye Jianying, in turn, had been a key figure for ousting the 'ultra-leftist' so-called 'gang of four' after Mao's death in 1976.

far away headquarters had been always right in the end, whenever he dissented from Lin Biao's point of view (48–52). In short, Lin Biao, the subsequent 'ultra leftist' of high Maoism, can obviously hardly be turned into a champion even in the Xi Jinping era.

Case study: the Huai–Hai Campaign Memorial

While the Liao–Shen Campaign of September to early November 1948 tipped, historically speaking, the balance in the Civil War in China's Northeast, the immediately subsequent Huai–Hai Campaign in Central China, conducted in the area of the present provinces of Jiangsu, Shandong, Anhui, and Henan, broadened the basis for the Communist takeover of China.[232] The **Huai–Hai zhanyi lieshi jinianta (guan)** 淮海战役烈士纪念塔 (馆) (Martyrs' memorial stele (and hall) of the Huai–Hai Campaign) (Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province) (list 1, 1997) commemorates this longest (November 1948 to January 1949) and bloodiest of the so-called three 'decisive campaigns' (in Communist historiography, and popularised by the already named movie trilogy of 1991/1992) between the GMD and the CCP in the Civil War. This 'patriotic education showcase base', located in the major city and railway hub Xuzhou in Jiangsu (i.e., physically close to Taierzhuang in neighbouring Shandong, see above), focuses on the strategic decisions and, above all, on tales of heroism and self-sacrifice which made the Communist victory possible. Thus, the Huai–Hai 'martyrs' memorial' on this 'decisive campaign', which also many Western scholars see as the most crucial military contest of the whole Civil War,[233] serves as an 'eternal textbook for education in patriotism, revolutionary tradition, and revolutionary heroism', as the 'patriotic' booklet on the site sums it up in the late 1990s (Shen 1998: 160–161). However, the narrative of the exhibition also discloses the extent to which undermining enemy troops by infiltrating Communist agents to stir up revolts among the GMD troops was used as a device.[234]

In terms of a more recent exhibition version (which I visited in 2016), most items are not very spectacular in themselves but are presented as 'relics' rendered valuable because of the context of the tales of heroism connected to them. Thus,

232 In fact, the term Huai–Hai consists of Huai, the river Huai's area, and the sea, *hai*, in the East, where *Hai*zhou 海州 (today's Lianyungang 连云港) marked also the endpoint of the major railway line linking China's West to the coast (the Long [i.e., Gansu]–Hai 陇海 railway). Xuzhou is the junction where this East–West artery intersects with the North–South artery.

233 This view is shared by several military historians, e.g., Bjorge (2004: 1), or Westad (2003: 10).

234 See, e.g., Shen (1998: 11–14; 32–37; 57–63).

although the campaign itself can hardly be shown otherwise than with some maps or dioramas (e.g., using mannequins to display the 'ten men forming a bridge' – see below, a story also widely disseminated and popularised by the *Da juezhan* movie trilogy – or recreating trenches in the museum), these everyday items said to have belonged to a certain 'martyr' are designed to make those personal sacrifices 'tangible'.[235] They are to testify the 'reality' of the times which seems the more important as this single campaign cost the Communists ten percent of their total death toll during the whole Civil War period.[236] Therefore, by giving credit to the 'martyrs', their personal sacrifices are acknowledged posthumously. It also reassures the present-day visiting Chinese citizen that personal sacrifice for the greater cause will not be forgotten. Remarkably, in the late 1990s' version of the exhibition, even a Japanese soldier who had switched sides during the Second Sino–Japanese War and stayed on with the Communists to fight against the GMD during the Civil War (see below), was commemorated since he died as a 'martyr' for the Communist cause (and thus provided a good starting point for a discourse on possible Sino–Japanese friendship if goals are shared).[237] The present-day exhibition in the overhauled museum (opened in 2007) still presents such tales of heroism, but also tries to reach out to the visitors with more dioramas, explanations and maps. As of 2016 (when I visited the site), the 'Japanese martyr story' had, however, gone. Rather, in the more pronounced anti-Japanese mood of recent years, a further museum has been added to the whole memorial site nearby to specifically focus on Xuzhou in the earlier Second Sino–Japanese War and the local anti-Japanese resistance credentials.

While in filmic representation of the 'patriotic education showcase bases', the educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection on (chosen) 'first list' sites of the late 1990s notably does not cover the Huai–Hai Campaign memorial, thus leaving the major credit in the Civil War and for Communist victory to the Liao–Shen Campaign discussed above, the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip series starts its presentation of the Huai–Hai Campaign site (disc 4), produced by the Jiangsu provincial committee's propaganda department, with a remarkably upbeat (dance) music, engendering a feeling of joy and ease. It focuses on the monument on the hill (which is the primary 'patriotic education showcase base', with the memorial hall only added to it).[238] As we observed in other cases, such

235 For such exhibition techniques in a more general museological context, cf. Cooks (2022).
236 See Shen (1998: 107). For the GMD, the losses were dramatic, too. Cf. Lary (2015: 145–146).
237 See Shen (1998: 145–147).
238 Incidentally, the film clip names only the memorial stele in its title, thus counterbalancing the booklet version's title with only the memorial hall addressed, while the official listing covers both.

memorials are usually presented in the filmic genre with a keytone of contemplation and reverence, while in this case, the audio cue for the watching TV audience rather suggests joy over victory.

Black and white footage of soldiers in action, and Mao's handwritten orders (to suggest he masterminded the campaign from Xibaipo – see chapter 3.3 of the present book on Xibaipo) are shown, but it is Deng Xiaoping who is notably pointed out in this late 1990s TV film clip briefly after Deng's demise (in 1997) as the head of the operational command on the ground. A photo of the 'five (Communist) front committee members' (Liu Bocheng, Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping, Su Yu, Tan Zhenlin 谭震林), however, de facto contextualises Deng's role as one among five in the vein of 'collective leadership' increasingly stressed since the Deng era. Tables with figures of the PLA *vs* the GMD manpower are to suggest that the PLA had less people (not mentioning the irregular troops, though) (but still won due to the able command).

A blended-in map visualises didactically the whole area where the campaign was conducted, and the famous scene of the ten men holding up a bridge of wooden planks in a river with their own bodies (taken from the movie version) also integrates this iconic story for rendering it easier for visitors (who were likely familiar with the epic movie trilogy *Da juezhan* of the early 1990s) to relate to the topic. While shooting can be heard in the background, the voice-over recounts the official narrative on the development of the campaign to the TV-watching Chinese citizen. An old Communist soldier serves for authenticating the narrative in the memorial hall, telling in his participant's perspective of how they took Xuzhou and found fleeing GMD soldiers.

After this personal illustration, the three phases of the campaign are more systematically addressed, with the last one being dominated by trench warfare (which was a rather new fighting method in Communist use). Once again, movie scenes of digging trenches are to stand for the historical developments, while triumphant trumpets signal the major victory when GMD general Du Yuming was caught and had to walk out from hiding, facing the guns of the PLA soldiers. (As mentioned above, he had been a major stumbling block in the Civil War, not the least in Manchuria, for the Communists earlier, and his capture during the Huai–Hai Campaign was a particular triumph for the Communists – see also below.) War songs are added to the soundtrack of the TV film clip which integrates various movie scenes for helping visualise the of itself rather elusive campaign.

As a further eyewitness, Communist commander Wang Fuyi 王辅一 (at the time of the TV film clip in the late 1990s serving in Jiangsu province's Nanjing military region as a counselor) is interviewed who tells of the time. According to him, Stalin

'admired us' at the time, since we could 'beat with our 600.000 men the 800.000 men of the GMD'.[239]

But, the commentator adds, Communist general Chen Yi had stressed that the victory was not only military but, in fact, was also won by the carts of the people, i.e., due to the PLA being supported by 'the people' who helped with all they had, and also volunteered to work for them. This leads over to a camera shot of a bamboo cane with many place names carved in, displayed in the exhibition, once belonging to a certain Tang Heen 唐和恩 who is also shown on a photo. He is said to have walked long distances for supporting the Communists with logistics (and thus must have been fully literate to write those characters).[240] Photos of carts pushed by civilians further illustrate this topic of 'popular support'.

Moving the narrative on to the topic of commemoration, the background to the memorial hall itself is addressed which was built in 1959 (i.e., at the tenth anniversary of the campaign's end – and of the subsequent founding of the PRC). Similar to the Liao–Shen Campaign's memorial hall, a directory of the 'Huai–Hai martyrs' (including the non-military ones) with dates and where they served and died is added (though here not in black, but in white, suggesting a less somber style closer to Chinese stone stelae). (As mentioned, the Huai–Hai campaign took the biggest death toll of the Civil War for the PLA.) Bas-reliefs (on the memorial stele's base), artistically recreating the battles, are to help the imagination, the camera switching back and forth between the bas-reliefs and the wall of names, while the commentator points out that the casualties were even more than the number of the other two 'decisive campaigns' (the Liao–Shen and the Ping–Jin ones) combined. A key 'martyr' profiled for the Huai–Hai Campaign is the Communist Zhang Shucai 张树才 who is introduced with a sketched portrait (since there are likely no photos of him, the sketch thus standing for his elusive looks) and a biography in the indoor exhibition.[241] Other 'martyrs' pointed out (all visualised with sketches) include a CCP cadre, a PLA soldier, and a transportation corps member to stand for the different groups. The camera, moving outdoor again, leads to a horizontal monument inscribed by Mao, praising the 'victory of the people' (*renmin de shengli* 人民的胜利) (which explains why the accent of the narrative

239 The '600.000 men' were only counting the regular troops on the Communist side. De facto, the Communists had more combatants in this campaign than the GMD, though the equipment of the GMD was better.

240 He would be honoured for this later as a 'front-supporting outstanding meritorious subject' (*zhiqian tedeng gongchen* 支前特等功臣).

241 Incidentally, his story is closely paralleling the case of Huang Jiguang of the subsequent Korean War (see above, chapter 4.1), dying during a suicide attack, and similarly hailing from Sichuan, with unknown precise looks.

had been on the people's contribution rather than on the PLA as such). Views of oil paintings with fighting scenes serve to help the viewers' imagination also by this artistic mode, while indoor displays of weaving looms or carts are to illustrate materially the elusive topic of 'people's help' to enforce the combination of the civilian and the military aspects.

The camera once more moving outdoor, the marked location where parts of the ashes of the key commander Su Yu (in fact the major Communist champion at the time of the campaign) had been scattered, conforming to his own wish, is focused upon, thus bringing the topic back to the memorial mode. With camera shots of the monument, snowy movie scenes (since the campaign was conducted in the winter of 1948/1949), and the 'five front committee members group statue' (Liu Bocheng, Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping, Su Yu, Tan Zhenlin), suggesting that the superb command was after all the decisive factor for winning the campaign,[242] the TV presentation of this 'patriotic education showcase base' visually sums up the official storyline on the Huai–Hai Campaign.

Complementing the visual, the 'patriotic' booklet (Shen 1998) of the same time as the TV film clip, i.e., of the late 1990s, like in the case of the Liao–Shen Campaign a notably long one, highlights the importance this campaign has for official PRC history for the intended young reader to explain, why China could become Communist in the end. It focuses in its illustration part particularly on the monument and the group sculpture of the 'five front committee members', as well as on the wall of names (which shows notably an English subtitle as 'directory on Huai–Hai martyrs' [sic]). This shows that memorialisation is key in this 'patriotic education showcase base', and thus discloses an emotional approach. Similar to the booklet on the Liao–Shen Campaign (with which it shares the title *Da juezhan*, calling to mind the widely received movie trilogy of the early 1990s), this 'patriotic' booklet starts with the military battle part, then moves on to the civil support, then to the 'martyrs', and finally to the commemoration. The military part introduces the whole topic didactically with the baseline that it had been the GMD that had wanted the Civil War in the first place, while the CCP only 'defended' itself. But, the narrative explains to the intended young reader, the PLA received more and more support from 'the people', and thus started to pursue the war more actively, i.e moved from 'passive' to 'active'.[243] From autumn 1948 onward, the Communists were attacking

242 This suggests that while rhetorically the merit of victory is given, following Mao and Chen Yi, to 'the people', this was only possible after all due to the CCP's 'guidance'.

243 In fact, military historians point out that the crucial step with the campaigns of 1948–1949 was the Communists' transition from guerrilla warfare to conventional operations. (Cf. Tanner 2015: 5).

on all fronts. Mao and others were clever enough to use the good occasion to pressure for intensified military confrontations which would make up the longest campaign in the whole Civil War. The Communists were supported by irregular troops as well and, of course, by 'the people', thus being also legitimised for their 'active' warfare.

In the first phase of the campaign, the intended young reader learns, the CCP also managed to instigate a substantial number of GMD troops to revolt, and before the final battles, the Communists would briefly pause the attacks to try and win people over politically (to minimise the death toll). Only then, they would go on with their attacks against those that had not given up (underlining the leniency the CCP practiced in general, only using 'hard means' whith those who would not respond to the 'soft means' tried before). Xuzhou, the major railway hub north of the Yangzi, was a strategically located city and on the way south to Nanjing, the GMD government's capital. Contrasting with the on average less charged narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet discussed above for the Liao–Shen Campaign (which also had meant a much lesser death toll for the Communists), the whole narrative in this 'patriotic' booklet on the Huai–Hai Campaign is presented in an almost theatre-like story-telling fashion, dramatising the topic. General Su Yu is particularly highlighted in this context. (Compared to the complicated case of Lin Biao in the Liao–Shen Campaign, Su Yu was at the time of writing the booklet a case fully rehabilitated, even though he had had his PRC-era difficulties, too, after being criticised in 1958 and thereafter largely sidelined, to be rehabilitated only posthumously.)[244] Already in September 1948, weeks before the Huai–Hai Campaign as such started, the military confrontation between the CCP and the GMD escalated in the area of Qufu in Shandong (cf. chapter 5.1 of the present book on Confucius' 'home').[245] Qufu, in fact, became the headquarters of Su Yu who would start the first moves in the Huai–Hai Campaign on the ground, for which Mao, the indisputable authority, also praised him (Shen 1998: 1–6). When rivers had to be crossed where there were no bridges, the men would devise their own means. In that context, the famous iconic story which had also appeared in the TV version discussed above with a movie scene, and is on display with mannequins in the indoor exhibition, of ten PLA soldiers who purportedly stood in the water, holding up planks as a bridge, is once more addressed (7–11). Meanwhile, several

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See also Bjorge (n.d. [2004]) specifically on the 'operational art' of the Communists in the Huai–Hai Campaign.

244 He died in 1984 and was only fully rehabilitated in 1994. His rehabilitation was thus recent when the 'patriotic' booklet was written in 1998.

245 At that time, Confucius' 'heir' had already left the place (cf. chapter 5.1).

troops of the GMD, de facto led by underground Communists who had infiltrated the GMD military staff, revolted. The PLA then cut off the logistical line for the GMD between Bengbu 蚌埠 in Anhui and Xuzhou in Jiangsu.[246] Taking the town of Suxian 宿县 (today's Suzhou 宿州 in Anhui, between Bengbu and Xuzhou) with obviously high losses, the Communists made many POWs and could take the war materials of the GMD piling up there for themselves (11–18).

On the other hand, taking the GMD by surprise with the direction of attack against Xuzhou, the 'heroic' spirit of the Communists supposedly proved to be stronger than the GMD's many modern weapons, the intended reader is to understand. The GMD is said to have even tried with poison gas (in desperation, similar to the narrative of the Liao–Shen Campaign above), but to no avail. The GMD troops that were encircled by the PLA were asking for help from Chiang Kai-shek who sent some relief troops, but those were successfully blocked so they could not arrive in time (similar to the case of the battle of Jinzhou in the Liao–Shen Campaign). With an old *Sunzi bingfa* 孙子兵法 (Master Sun's 'art of war') stratagem,[247] the relief troops were enticed to enter a trap where they could be easily surrounded. When they had their weakest moment while crossing a river, the Communists attacked. Meanwhile, underground Communists enticed further GMD troops to revolt and even go over to the Communist side. Those troops thus showed themselves 'patriotic' and were originally of (former warlord and Chiang critic) Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥 (who is rather positively viewed in Communist historiography).[248] In fact, many leaders in the GMD were even underground Communists, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is told, thus suggesting that the Communists mostly won by cleverness and by infiltrating the enemy's ranks. The GMD commander of troops going to defect was thus totally surprised to find out that his own former alumnus of the Whampoa Military Academy (the key military training institution of the GMD still set up under Sun Yat-sen in 1924 during the First United Front of the GMD and the CCP), leading the defecting soldiers, would be an underground Communist (which is once more to underline the smartness, but also the appeal of the Communists) (23–35).

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246 The Huai–Hai Campaign is, in fact, called from the GMD side the Xu–Beng campaign.

247 As is well-known, Mao very much appreciated the traditional military classic *Sunzi bingfa* (usually rendered in English as 'the art of war'), and this has been a staple framing for CCP (or in fact 'Chinese-style') warfare also inside China. However, as Tanner (2015: 16–23) has pointed out, this oversimplifies and misreads much of the CCP's military strategy during the Civil War.

248 Feng Yuxiang had built up links to the Soviet Union, and broke with Chiang Kai-shek after 1945, lobbying in the US against supporting Chiang further. When he was invited by the CCP to return to China, he died en route in a fire outbreak on a Soviet ship on the Black Sea in 1948. His widow would be appointed as the PRC's first minister of health.

On the other side, in the GMD there were endemic differences of opinion, as well as communication problems, explaining the weakness among the enemy ranks.[249] The Communists, however, also managed to catch people who could be made to tell them the GMD positions, thus gaining crucial information on the enemy. That way, they managed to encircle GMD general Du Yuming's troops. At the city of Bengbu, in turn, there was even Chiang's son Chiang Ching-kuo present on the GMD side, who, one is to understand, marked that contest as of particular symbolic weight. The major problem for the Communists was that the GMD had tanks, while they themselves had not yet much experience of how to combat them best. But they learnt to use hand grenades to blow up the binoculars of the tanks so that those could no longer point well. And they attacked the 'feet' of the tanks, and used the fact that the waste gas of the tanks was flammable (39–46). (By such descriptions, the narrative tries to make the fighting more imaginable for the young readers.)

But the Communists also had the advantage of having their five able front committee members Liu Bocheng, Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping, Su Yu, and Tan Zhenlin as leaders, who were interconnected in different ways, but fought together for the common goal in this campaign. To profile their former interconnectedness for the intended readers, Su Yu and Liu Bocheng are pointed out as having a common history over the Nanchang Uprising (for the latter cf. above, chapter 4.2, and thus were men of the PLA's 'founding moment') who would now meet again to once more fight side by side. Liu Bocheng and Deng Xiaoping, in turn, had been together on the Long March in the 1930s, while Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin had not left with the Long Marchers, but had been assigned at that time to stay on to continue with guerrilla warfare in the South. Su Yu, finally, had moved North where he then fought against the Japanese (48–56). (All these credentials thus merged for conducting together the Huai–Hai Campaign.)

But beyond the military moves, propaganda was also important. As becomes obvious to the young intended reader of the narrative, there were Communist journalists at every war theatre who reported and interviewed the leaders to serve for propagating the Communist viewpoints to the Chinese public.[250] The 20 days of pause during the campaign, in turn, served for dissuading Chiang Kai-shek from moving in troops from the North, and for doing political work to win the GMD soldiers over without fighting. As the intended young reader learns, this political work was done with theatre, music, and propaganda, especially during the night, suggesting to the

249 Incidentally, this all closely follows the narrative as popularised by the second part of the *Da juezhan* movie trilogy of the early 1990s, dedicated to the Huai–Hai Campaign.

250 This, too, is a recurring topic in the movie version in the *Da juezhan* trilogy.

GMD soldiers that they were only misused by their superiors, and thus many would simply surrender and walk over. Thus, only after those 20 days of GMD soldiers coming over (during which the Ping–Jin Campaign – see below – which had already started, however, went on, which means that both sides were involved in battle elsewhere, which took off the pressure momentarily from the Huai–Hai region), the final military showdown started (57–63). Tanks were attacked and blocked, so that the crew came out on its own, or cavalry followed the tanks until the latter ran out of gasoline. Thus, the narrative assures the intended young reader, ten US tanks (used by the GMD) could not beat 'our' cavalry. GMD general Du Yuming (who had, as mentioned, already made things difficult for Lin Biao and the Communists during the Liao–Shen Campaign, but was then recalled by Chiang Kai-shek and redeployed) refused to give up, and thus, the young intended reader is to understand, the final military confrontation was simply unavoidable. In four days, a war reporter from the Communist side stated, the Huai–Hai Campaign was finally finished off (63–69). Together with many others, general Du Yuming could be taken as a POW as a Communist major triumph. (He would remain in PRC prisons for a decade until 1959 when the first batch of 'war criminals' was released, headed by himself, likely also helped by the fact that his by then son-in-law, physicist Yang Zhenning 杨振宁, living in the US, had been awarded the Nobel Prize as one of the two first Chinese-born laureates, whom both sides of the Taiwan Strait tried to draw on their side – cf. also chapter 3.2 on Yang Zhenning).[251]

After framing the military side of the campaign in the above way for its intended young readers, the 'patriotic' booklet moves on to dwell on the people's support for the front, serving as transporters etc., setting up a whole network. The civilians also provided food, shoes, clothing, repaired roads and railways, telecommunication infrastructure, railway bridges, and – not the least – sent their sons to become soldiers on the Communist side. They also cared for hygiene, for the wounded, and

251 Yang Zhenning, meanwhile living in the US as did Du's eldest daughter whom he married in 1950, earned the Nobel prize for physics in 1957, together with equally China-born Lee Tsung-Dao (Li Zhengdao) (both former Lianda alumni in Kunming, as will be recalled from chapter 3.2) as the first ethnic Chinese ever receiving a Nobel prize. Imprisoned Du Yuming, thus father-in-law of the physicist of world fame, would be released soon after in 1959 from prison (at the 10th anniversary of the PRC's establishment, heading the list of the first batch of released 'war criminals'), serving thereafter in the PRC, i.a., for lobbying for future reunification with Taiwan. Du's wife, in turn, had first moved with Chiang Kai-shek to Taiwan, but then went to the US (where Yang Zhenning worked, supposedly for trying to convince him to align with Chiang Kai-shek after his great success of earning the Nobel Prize), but then moved on to the mainland to join her released husband there. As noted in chapter 3.2, Yang Zhenning, too, would opt for the mainland in the end. When assessing the framing of Du Yuming's role in the history of the Civil War, one needs to count in this subsequent personal history and family background.

kept an eye on the POWs. Thus, Communist general Chen Yi had concluded that 'we owe the victory to the carts of the people'. Even children are presented as having taken an active part (similar to the Liao–Shen Campaign, and particularly targeting the young intended readership of the 'patriotic' booklet). As an example, also for this campaign a children's leader is profiled who wanted to 'compete' with the women in grinding grain for the Communists. (Incidentally, 'children' intended here age 8 to 15 roughly.) Singing songs helped to keep the rhythm of work, but many children obviously also fell ill! They were not supposed to eat any of the grain (which hints at the topic of famine, which is, however, never spelt out), but still would volunteer, the reader should understand, to carry heavy things.[252] Even bits of grain under the shoes were carefully grinded (which once more points to widespread famine at the time) (70–75). Self-made shoes are a further topic addressed, this way also integrating women more pointedly via the example of a woman who made shoes for the PLA and organised other women to do the same. She is said to have been moved by gratefulness to the CCP for her 'liberation' to act that way. Shoes made by her are thus on display (which provide the prompt for telling her story), though it is also mentioned that she suffered a heart attack because of overwork (which, like in the case of the children's failing health, is supposed to engender appreciation of utmost dedication with the reader, not a feeling of compassion) (75–78).

On the other hand, and in a more sober way, the booklet also mentions the fact that many weapons for the Communists came from Dalian in Manchuria which was held by the Soviets at the time who did not allow the GMD to enter the area there (which is disclosed here, while the Liao–Shen Campaign booklet had tried to evade the topic)! The workers there are said to have encountered 'difficulties' to test the weapons, though – which could be read as a hint that many did not function well. In any case, commander Su Yu (the de facto major champion of the Huai–Hai Campaign, similar to Lin Biao in the Liao–Shen Campaign) acknowledged the crucial importance of receiving weapons and ammunition from Manchuria's Liaodong peninsula opposite of the Shandong peninsula, summarising the Huai–Hai Campaign by enlarging Chen Yi's definition: it could not have been won without the carts of the people of Shandong, but neither without the weapons and ammunition from Manchuria! (78–80)

To win over the populace, the Communists, however, also showed their versatility. When electricity cuts (caused by the GMD) emerged as a problem to be solved, the people were supposedly impressed by Communist efficiency (and thus gained

252 Needless to say, this adult-serving exploitation is framed positively, without giving the children's health a second thought.

trust in their capabilities and were ready to cooperate). Thus, when a damaged bridge had to be repaired very quickly, the people readily joined, and after only three days, the trains could pass again. This moment of success after common effort was photographed (for propaganda purposes), and, more importantly for them, those working for it received meat in reward (which was particularly sought after, given the widespread hunger which is, however, never openly addressed) (81–84). Fleeing GMD commanders were also identified due to the people's support, the reader learns. When caught, one of them would (shamefully) only admit his identity in the very end – suggesting in typical fashion the cowardice of enemy commanders to the intended young reader.[253] (87). Another item of the 'people's support' on display in the exhibition (and also shown in the TV film clip addressed above) is the cane with marks: this stands for the story of Tang Heen, who supported the people's militia. He had a cart for transport, the reader learns, and noted down all places where he went to on this bamboo cane, doing all that he could to cover the precious grain to transport to the front (while, as mentioned above, hunger was obviously widespread among the populace). Against all personal odds, he would deliver everything well, walking 1.500 km in all on foot (87–91).

But those supporting the Communists with transport of goods included also women. Some would push carts at the risk of their lives. The lamp and medal of honour of a woman organising such transports are on display in the exhibition, which serve as the prompt for this story (92). Another case, an exemplary 'mother of the soldiers', stands, in turn, for care for the wounded, organising also medicine for them. Narrative details, described for the intended young reader, like how she helped one wounded soldier suffering from obstipation, are going into the extreme, making one wonder what the intended young reader is supposed to learn from such rather unsavory descriptions (95–98). (Cf. also chapter 4.1 on the Korean War, or chapter 5.3 of the present book on Kong Fansen).

On the male civilian side, a stretcher bearer is introduced in the context of care as well, who was wounded himself but would transport the wounded soldiers nevertheless, gaining nominal distinction as the 'steel transporter' for his toughness (99–102). A transporter who volunteered to carry explosives, in turn, is memorialised by his torn jacket as another material item on display. The man is said to have also repeatedly taken some strips from the jacket to bind the wounds of soldiers, to stop their bleeding. And he also supposedly helped a wounded soldier to relieve himself by sucking, which makes one wonder what kind of didactic effort this kind of descriptions is going to serve for the pupils as intended readers of the

253 In this campaign, a substantial number of GMD commanders was taken prisoner. Many served long prison terms in the PRC.

'patriotic' booklet. In any case, some more strips of the jacket he would also use to protect the feet of soldiers when their shoes were broken in this campaign conducted in winter. In 1950, the man was duly honoured for all his deeds, and his torn jacket was put on display to memorialise them as an example for others (102–106).

From the people's support, illustrated in the above manner to the intended reading pupils, the narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet then moves on to the presentation of the 'martyrs'. In familiar fashion, it stresses that the later generations should ponder the fact that they owe their comfortable lives of today to the sacrifices of those 'martyrs'. Given the particularly large number of casualties in the Huai–Hai Campaign, there are as many as 14 volumes with the names of the 'martyrs' in the archives. All in all, there were over 30.000 casualties known by name which, as is stressed once more, is more than in the Liao–Shen and Ping–Jin Campaigns combined (107). Deng Xiaoping thus would write to the following generations of Chinese citizens in the name of the 'martyrs' the admonition: 'Sons and daughters of China, remember forever: your happiness has been gained by the martyrs with blood'. This is to underline, that victory was not easy to achieve (110).

On this official baseline, once more individual cases are presented to get closer to those elusive exemplary people and the deeds with which they distinguished themselves, illustrating for the intended young readers what kind of values are considered as 'patriotic', and how those exemplary people supposedly came to embrace them at the cost of their lives. These stories thus read like a handbook of model conduct.

One model figure (Zhang Shucai, also profiled in the TV version) was ready to sacrifice himself by a suicide attack on the barricades of the GMD. His motivation is deducted for the intended young reader from his purported personal history of having been forced in young years into the GMD army, then opting for the Communists, though. His suicide attack made it possible for others to enter through the hole he had blown into the wall (which is a staple scene in such 'patriotic' 'martyr' stories) (111–112).

Another model figure is said to have behaved (anachronistically) 'like Huang Jiguang' (the famous hero of the Korean War of some years later! – see above chapter 4.1): being a dedicated Communist, he purportedly blocked the enemies' guns with his own body (like Huang) (113–114). (As mentioned above in chapter 4.1, in fact the model behind was Soviet WW II hero Aleksandr Matrosov hailed in a film produced in the Soviet Union in 1947, quickly translated and shown in China under the title *Putong yi bing*, which was thus known in China at the time of the Huai–Hai Campaign; to not name the Soviet example to the Chinese reader of the 'patriotic'

booklet but rather the *later* Chinese one, if blatantly going against chronology, is in itself telling.)

A further model named, in turn, is a 'martyr' whose face cannot be found in the 'martyrs' hall' which presents the faces of 86 'martyrs', since no one could remember his exact looks, the booklet argues – which also shows the difficulty of rendering the evasive tangible (and something we already encountered several times: the heroes of such modest backgrounds had not only no photo, but no one could even remember their looks; it is in any case the deed that counts, not the individual). Being very poor, the narrative asserts, he had been given to a temple as a child to be raised there, but then became a Communist (leaving this 'religious' background behind). Notably, he died while protecting his superior. (Likely, the latter would later care for his posthumous honour) (117–119). The narrative assures the young intended reader that those 'martyrs' who had not yet been Communists, had, however, wanted to join the CCP, and even had the application form already in their pockets, when they died! Obviously, cadres had told them that by being brave at the front, the chances to be taken into the CCP were higher. Thus, even heavily wounded men would take up weapons again, supposedly to earn the Party membership! (120–123).

Another model stood out because he managed to entice GMD soldiers to defect (124–125). One other had supposedly only joined the GMD army because his own father had been picked by the GMD to go to the front instead of the son of a rich landlord, and thus he (as a good filial son) went in place of his father, but then defected to the Communists. He is claimed as the one to develop a method to fight against tanks with fire, and to block the 'feet' of the tanks (in the vein of peasants' cleverness). When the GMD tried with using tear gas attacks, he also had simple methods to propose: just use urine to wash your eyes. In the end, he was, however, killed, and thus declared a 'martyr' (127–130). Another 'martyr' is said to have defended a village with primitive means, fighting even when wounded, pressing his dangling intestines back into the belly while fighting (an old trope we already encountered in the case of the Opium War – see above) (133). A further 'martyr' died protecting his wounded commander with his body (which once more clearly shows that sacrificing for superiors is promoted as a key virtue) (133–136). Another one, in this case a civilian, helped transport grain and covered all before dying (136–138). A further civilian one cared for the wounded as a transporter (similar to the 'steel' transporter): he, the intended young reader learns, had been recruited during land reform and learnt 'class consciousness' there, to then become a Communist. His merits not only included transporting the wounded, but also the fact that he even readily gave up his tea pot for those who had to relieve themselves (which, one may

note once more, is a recurring topic, supposedly for drawing the attention of the intended young readers). Using his own little money, he also bought sugar and eggs for them, covered them in the cold, and shielded them with his body from shooting. He also carried explosives to the front, and since he had been of a people's militia earlier, he could also teach civilians more practically how to handle explosives, thus combining various 'exemplary' behaviours (139–141). That way, a variety of options for emulation are provided for civilians.

Beyond the 'normal' people, however, a particular stress is put in the booklet on Han Liansheng 韩联生, since he was a Communist cadre, and in fact the highest in rank in this campaign who died. Han Liansheng had participated in the Long March, had been alphabetised only by the Party, and went in Yan'an to the Party school (thus enforcing to the intended young reader the point that the Party is the one to provide real education). Having been wounded several times before, he finally lost his life in the Huai–Hai Campaign (142–143).

A particularly intriguing case mentioned in this narrative of the late 1990s is, however, the one of a Japanese who died as a 'martyr' for the CCP. His brother, the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is assured, was a Japanese Communist, and he himself had lived and gone to school in Shanghai (in the 1920s) for several years as a child, thus speaking Chinese fluently, before his family moved back to Japan. Although he was against Japanese fascism, he is said to have been forced to join the Japanese Imperial Army and go once more to China, now as a soldier. There, he witnessed the brutal Japanese 'three all' campaign (cf. the Ranzhuang 'tunnel warfare' above) and was punished for his opposition to it. He thus tried to contact the (Communist-directed) New Fourth Army and married a Chinese. Still during the Second Sino–Japanese War, he served as a spy for the Communists and helped point out particularly evil Japanese. In reward, when he was caught by the Japanese, the CCP would care for him and managed to get him out, whereupon he openly joined the CCP. In the Civil War, he was killed fighting for the Communists, and had, the young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet learns, a dried cherry blossom in his diary for 'Sino–Japanese friendship'! (145–147) (As mentioned above, during my on-site observation in 2016, this 'Japanese story' was notably gone.)

But beyond this Japanese 'internationalist fighter', also some women are highlighted in the profiling of 'martyrs' to add to the male models for the intended reading pupils – and to the role of propaganda which was an area women were also active in. The major case pointed out is the one of a girl who, having been exploited in a factory, escaped to the New Fourth Army and finally joined the CCP. She would work in a propaganda troupe, acting as the 'white-haired girl' (in the famous opera

of the same name, *Baimaonü* 白毛女, later also turned into a film and a ballet – similar to the Red Detachment of Women, see above chapter 4.2 – describing exploitation of the peasants by the evil landlords).[254] A defected GMD soldier not accustomed to this kind of propagandistic plays was supposedly so enraged by the acted cruelty against the girl that he wanted to shoot the culprit, but was benignly told by his new Communist comrades that this was only a play and he should calm down. When GMD bombers attacked, the performing woman was, however, hit and thus died a 'martyr' to the Communist cause (148–151). In sum, all these various examples make obvious what kind of values and models the 'patriotic' narrative puts forward to the intended young readers for reference to train the new generation of Chinese citizens in 'patriotism'.

The final section in the 'patriotic' booklet, in turn, provides more background to the local Huai–Hai Campaign's 'patriotic education showcase base' as such, explaining that the memorial stele (which is the major item listed) and its siting in Xuzhou was decided only in 1959 (ten years after the campaign's end). But it took until 1965 for all to be finished, with monument and the memorial hall in the memorial park, laid out in Chinese 'national style'. Notably, Mao himself wrote the monument's name, and several important figures added endorsements. Skipping the Cultural Revolution period, as so often in these booklets on 'patriotic education showcase bases', and rather jumping to the 1990s, it is highlighted that in 1992, then-general secretary Jiang Zemin would come and write his endorsement for the site as one for education in 'patriotism and revolutionary tradition'. At Qingming (Tomb Sweeping), a ritual practice officially revived in the PRC only in more recent years (making Tomb Sweeping Day a national holiday only in 2008), the site (placed in Jiangsu, but close to Shandong and Anhui, and also not far from Henan, all affected by the Huai–Hai Campaign at the time which also had made it hard to choose one point for commemoration of this hard to pin down former action) would be visited by groups of the surrounding provinces. This, incidentally, marks the place as transcending the province boundary in content. Namely, pupils come for sweeping tombs, laying wreaths, and young people for taking vows during ceremonies to join the Communist Youth League, or the Party, or the Army. In 1986, the site had been already declared a 'national key martyrs' memorial construction protection unit' (*quanguo zhongdian lieshi jinian jianzhuwu baohu danwei* 全国重点烈士纪念建筑物保护单位) (similar to Longhua discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book, though here even a 'key' site), and the monument, sporting Mao's calligraphy, is also *the* landmark for Xuzhou. The trees (a typical

254 For the 'White-haired girl' and the reception of the film version, cf. recently Li (2023: 183–187).

feature of cemeteries and memorial sites, as we have repeatedly noted) are put in line to 'honour' the dead. On the monument, more specifically, a star and two guns are to symbolise that the CCP leads all (as the star), the two guns standing for the two major areas in this war theatre: the Central Plain and East China. The text on the stele's base, in turn, was written by Zhang Aiping (a former key Communist cadre in the area during the Second Sino–Japanese War, though not involved in the Huai–Hai Campaign due to his health problems, but later Minister of Defence whose calligraphy we have already encountered at several 'patriotic education showcase bases' – see above for the First Sino–Japanese War and for Taierzhuang), and it was 'checked' by general Chen Yi (one of the 5 key leaders during the historical campaign), the booklet points out, thus authenticating it. And on the two sides of the monument, bas-reliefs serve for visualising the elusive campaign (153–158).

The memorial hall, in turn, sports general Chen Yi's own calligraphy for its name. Given that it displays a very limited number of material objects, only some are highlighted by the memorial itself: Mao's handwritten orders, a telegraph, Liu Shaoqi's orders, and those of other commanders; a letter by general Chen Yi to a GMD general ready to change sides; a lathe of Dalian workers for producing ammunition (which explains why that topic was addressed in the 'patriotic' booklet – cf. Su Yu's 'definition' of the campaign); and a cart of 'Shandong people' (which explains why the contribution of Shandong and the role of carts for logistics is something pointed out in particular – cf. Chen Yi's 'definition' of the campaign). The marked cane of Tang Heen and some weapons are further displayed materials the memorial is proud ot. But for the rest, the exhibition has to rely mainly on texts and images, as the curators acknowledge. Still, the site is to serve as a textbook not only for 'patriotism and education in the revolutionary tradition', but also for 'heroism education' (*yingxiong zhuyi jiaoyu* 英雄主义教育) (which explains the strongly emotional approach over the many human models cited). To achieve this, the exhibition was designed to appear as realistic and moving.

Some written reactions of visitors are thus cited by the curators as reflected in the guest book to show the 'success' of the memorial's approach. Supposedly, some visitors even went to apply for Party membership thereafter (which is to 'prove' to the intended reader, which included likely also the superiors of the curators, that the exhibition had been effective). One guest supposedly wrote that the exhibition was like a textbook written with 'martyrs' blood', which once more sounds like a 'politically correct' comment. Outdoor, as is disclosed here, the group sculpture showing the five key Communist leaders (Liu Bocheng, Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping, Su Yu, Tan Zhenlin) was, however, only added in the 1990s (in the context of more accent

on 'collective leadership', and for honouring Deng Xiaoping), but this was done with 'red stone from Beijing' (thus asserting the ideological centrality of Beijing).

On the local level, general Su Yu's parts of his ashes scattered here at his death in 1984, also serve to assert the 'national' relevance of the locality. But it also makes obvious Su Yu's decisive military role in this campaign on the Communist side (similar to Lin Biao's in the Liao–Shen Campaign). In fact, Su Yu, who, as mentioned, was only partially rehabilitated at his death (and fully only posthumously) wanted all of his ashes to be spread over the four concerned provinces to join the 'martyrs' of the Huai–Hai Campaign since he had survived them (but by this, he also would be connected to this major Communist triumph in commemoration). In 1986, two years after his death, an extra monument was erected to mark the site where his Xuzhou part of ashes were scattered (buried) near the memorial (which was also addressed in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip discussed above). He had wished that from this soil, many revolutionary flowers would grow, the 'patriotic' booklet pathetically concludes its own framing of the campaign and its commemoration (159–166).

A final issue to mention in the context of this 'patriotic' booklet is connected to the afterword, since this is one of the few cases where more is disclosed about the process of writing these booklets on the 'first list' 'patriotic education showcase bases' in general. As becomes obvious in this case, many people were involved in its production, five people serving as supervisors for this publication alone, and even 18 (!) authors writing it, given that it had to be written in just 4 ½ months, with the apparently handed-out aim for the narrative to be both historical and readable (167–168). This shows that the whole benchmark booklet series on the first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' had been a very time-critical endeavour, involving local staff as authors, and the multiple authorship also explains the frequent overlaps and inconsistencies in many of those booklets (which were, however, not chosen to be ironed out by the supervisors, leaving open, as we noted above in the case of the Liao–Shen Campaign case, also the possibility of divergent readings). (Cf. chapter 1 on the booklet series as such.)

Moving from these narrative descriptions of the site and its content in the late 1990s to the Xi Jinping era, the narrative of the respective *Fengbei* volume on Jiangsu (Yang / Song 2019) provides an updated version of this place commemorating a major Communist military triumph. While also here nothing is added about how the site fared during the Cultural Revolution, it is pointed out that a defence education exhibition and an anti-Japanese war exhibition hall was added subsequently. In 2007, the new setup of the memorial was opened, and a panorama hall included (cf. above the Liao–Shen Campaign, but also the Taierzhuang and the

Korean War memorial, as well as the Ping–Jin Campaign below, underlining that panorama halls had meanwhile become a new trend for such war sites to render these evasive topics more tangible). The fact that the site is also the place where parts of the ashes of general Su Yu, whose commemoration has been obviously stepped up, are located, is stressed, but here it is also added that Hu Yaobang planted a tree there as well (in commemoration) (Yang / Song 2019: 82). (The latter is notable as the name of Hu Yaobang, the ill-fated reformer of the 1980s, had not been mentioned in the late 1990s narratives, but has been taken up once more under Xi Jinping, whose father Xi Zhongxun had been close to Hu Yaobang who in turn played a decisive role in Xi Zhongxun's successful rehabilitation in the Deng Xiaoping era.)[255] (83) Around the museum there is by now a 'defence garden' (*guofang yuan* 国防园), with weapons and space for military training added, stepping up the PLA's more assertive role, and the supposed need of enhanced military education for Chinese youth. One may also note that the intended reader is informed here that the Huai–Hai Campaign has, in fact, another name in GMD history writing, where it is called Xu(zhou)–Beng(bu) huizhan 徐蚌会战 (84) (which can be read as a cautious invitation to the GMD to look at history together, and it explains to some degree the placing of the site in Xuzhou). For the *Fengbei* narrative, a special accent on cadre Han Liansheng, the highest-ranking Communist 'martyr' in this war, however, makes clear the centrality of Communist sacrifice for winning that largest (and bloodiest) campaign of the Civil War as the key legacy (91–94). Thus, the site is not only to explain CCP victory, but also to commemorate those fallen for it, including the cadres, joining knowledge and emotions in an educational sense for the formation of the next generation of Chinese citizens.

Case study: the Ping–Jin Campaign Memorial Hall

With the (Bei)**Ping**–(Tian)**Jin zhanyi jinianguan** 平津战役纪念馆 (Ping–Jin Campaign Memorial Hall) (Tianjin) on the second list of patriotic education showcase bases (2001), the third of the so-called 'three decisive campaigns' (according to PRC historiography) between the Communists and the GMD (laying the ground for establishing the PRC government in Beijing) is memorialised,[256] which also

255 Cf. above chapter 4.2 for the Wuhan strike.

256 One should not forget that the Civil War was not finished with the capture of Beijing (or rather Beiping at the time), but that fighting went on to capture also China's South. While usually the Civil War is dated 1946–1949, given the official proclamation of the PRC's establishment on October 1,

concludes our row of examples of battle sites in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. The Ping–Jin Campaign in North China picked up on the just concluded Liao–Shen Campaign, starting slightly later but then going on largely simultaneously with the Huai–Hai Campaign in Central China, November 1948 to January 1949. Given that the Liao–Shen Campaign and the Huai–Hai Campaign provided the major basis for the Communist victory and are thus memorialised in first list sites, the Ping–Jin Campaign is of more symbolic importance for capturing the crucial cities of Tianjin and Beijing in North China, and thus was only taken up on the second list of 'patriotic education showcase bases'.

In fact, the memorial was only created late, opened in 1997, and was apparently pushed for by Jiang Zemin himself, though PLA representatives involved in that campaign had also lobbied for it earlier. Its siting in the big city of Tianjin makes it, however, a very easily accessible memorial and thus convenient for education of Chinese citizens in 'patriotism and revolutionary tradition' to build a 'socialist spiritual civilisation', as the leaflets on-site put it,[257] reflecting Jiang Zemin's words, and it is to stand for the 'liberation' of the whole North of China over the two key cities concerned. The memorial hall, as I observed in 2016, has to work mainly with photos, statues, paintings and dioramas, like other battle sites, to visualise the elusive campaign, and it, too, provides a huge 360° panorama, to involve the visitors' different senses. This site particularly accentuates the aspect of national defence coming to the fore since the 1990s,[258] showing also weapons outside the museum to underline China's capability to defend herself by now. Thus, 'patriotism' and the military are once more closely connected, which has become an important issue in the 'patriotic education' campaign (reacting to the critical year of 1989 with the bloody role of the military in suppressing the civilian Tiananmen protests).

All in all, in the commemoration of the Ping–Jin Campaign, there is less accent upon suffering and 'martyrdom' than on the imminent brilliant future, underlined by the group statue of Mao, flanked by Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Ren Bishi (the five leaders who directed also this campaign from their headquarters in Xibaipo – cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book on Xibaipo), walking briskly toward the new era ('marching to victory'). In front of them, there is space for groups of people

1949, there is good reason to even include 1950, since parts of the southwest were only secured by then, and Tibet only in 1951.

257 See the leaflet of the memorial: Zhang Shizeng (n.d.).

258 The integration of national defence into school education, which was mandatory since the 1980s, was significantly enlarged by the law on national defence education of 2001. See the 2001 version of the law, available in English over the web archive: *Law of the People's Republic of China on National Defense Education (Order of the President No. 52)* (2001). The law has been revised in the meantime.

to swear loyalty to the Party (and at the time of my visit with the respective oath, written on a board, set on the floor to the right of the group statue.) The memorial's exhibition also stresses that here, too, the CCP 'won over' substantial parts of the GMD troops to avoid further slaughter. The 'keys' of Beijing (shown in the exhibition) were thus peacefully handed over by general Fu Zuoyi 傅作义 to spare that city possible destruction. And the close relationship between the Communist army and the common people is another point much stressed. In all, the memorial provides the visitor with the impression that it was the predictable and almost unavoidable outcome that the Communists would be the ones to win the Civil War and 'liberate' China.

In filmic representation, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 10), produced by Tianjin TV's 'special topics' department, provides a glimpse into the time when the site was nominated as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001. It starts with a bird-eye view of the museum, the park, and the eye-catching round panorama hall. The camera leads from bronze group sculptures showing soldiers in action in front of the hall, to the memorial hall's name written by general Nie Rongzhen (who was dead since 1992, suggesting the plans to set up such a memorial were in fact older), to the entry hall, where the bronze sculptures of the five leading CCP figures set the tone. The commentary in a soft female voice introduces the exhibition to the TV audience, while one observes male military cadets visiting it.

Several material items are on display (weapons, but also personal items of single figures). A model on a large table shows didactically the topography of the area where the campaign was conducted with place names, while animated arrows visualise who moved in which way. The 360° panorama hall, in turn, features figurines in front of the painted scenes, while written explanations are projected on the wall. Clips of filmed material (covering also feature film scenes), figurines, and mechanical devices like Mao in a miniature moving car, are integrated in the presentation. Very young children can be observed visiting with a guide (who are likely to be attracted by adding such playful modes of display), receiving explanations, then switching the camera once more to cadets visiting (which suggests the trajectory from Young Pioneer to soldier, while normal tourists are no focus in this case).

Many photos and a life-size Mao of wax at his desk (sitting in Xibaipo – cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book), looking afar, envisioning China's future, set up as a scene in a large glass case, are to recreate the historical moment of decision making for the campaign in the Hebei countryside. Chairs looking worn out (supposedly original) also serve to authenticate the narrative of the exhibition. A reproduction of Mao's drafts on the Ping–Jin battle strategy, worked out in Xibaipo, is on display –

similar to the memorials of the other two of the 'three decisive campaigns', suggesting he always kept things in hand in his rural headquarters, while a painting shows the leaders pondering their next moves over a map together (thus contextualising Mao, the visionary, with other leaders with whom he would care together for the details to put visions into practice). A further painted scene of a crucial military encounter (in the panorama hall) is also interspersed with film scenes which serves to authenticate the panorama hall paintings as faithfully describing the events of the campaign. Footage of the Communist Northeastern Field Army that had just fought in Manchuria, entering China proper in Shanhaiguan, introduces the topic of how the Communists surprised the enemy GMD. Historical footage is also used to show the locally leading commanders studying a map, supposedly in Tanggu 塘沽 (at the coast near Tianjin, today integrated into Tianjin), and likely discussing how to apply the directives from Xibaipo. Field receivers in the exhibition, in turn, stand for the communication network necessary for effectively conducting the campaign. The key figures of the campaign, namely Liu Yalou 刘亚楼 (who had served before in Manchuria during the Liao–Shen Campaign under Lin Biao – whose name is evaded in the TV presentation – and would die of illness before the Cultural Revolution), Xiao Hua 肖华 (who would be persecuted but survive the Cultural Revolution), and Wu Fushan 吴富善 (who would navigate through the Cultural Revolution well, all in 1948 of the Northeastern Field Army),[259] supposedly used a woolen blanket together for covering themselves during sleep in this rush to march into China proper from Manchuria. The woolen blanket is on display as a material proof for this story of close comradeship of the Communist commanders. Liu Yalou would be the one to direct the attack on Tianjin.

An old soldier of the Northeastern Field Army then tells of the attack in front of the camera. Thereupon, footage shows GMD commander Chen Changjie 陈长捷 who was caught alive in result and had to march in front of a PLA soldier at gunpoint. In 29 hours, Tianjin was thus 'liberated', showing the locals happily waving flags, while portraits of Mao and Zhu De were paraded through the streets. Then, with peaceful music and in contrast, the tone is set for Beiping, showing the diary of elderly scholar Liu Houtong 刘厚同 on the peaceful liberation of Beiping, the former capital city. The narrative explains how Liu Houtong (being Fu Zuoyi's advisor and former teacher) convinced Fu Zuoyi of a peaceful handover. With this military background, the filmic presentation moves on in the by now familiar manner of adding the civilian to the military, to focus on the 'people's support to the front' to show that this development of things also conformed to 'the people's' wishes. Wax

259 For assessing the hindsight framing of historical events, one always needs to consider the fate of the individuals in between the events and the subsequent commemoration.

figures show women, old and young, making shoes for the Communist troops, and grinding grain for them. Transport and logistics are once more pointed out, with the people supporting the Communists with their mules or boats. The train with Mao's portrait at the front, familiar from the Liao–Shen Campaign, shows the propaganda efforts of the Communists to popularise their leader, and in Mao's calligraphy, the motto of 'soldiers and the people are the root of victory' (*bing min shi shengli zhi ben* 兵民是胜利之本) is on display to accentuate the point, that Communist victory was of common interest. In the exhibition, a pathetic sculpture showing soldiers charging on (and representatives of 'the people' sustaining them from behind), and red stars and wreaths beneath, frame the whole in a visual and tangible format.

The names of the 'martyrs' of the campaign, over 6.000, are listed, while the young children visiting are taught about them, and thereafter (rather playfully) point at single names. An old photo shows the monument erected for the Tianjin battle 'martyrs', with a soldier on top (similar to many Soviet monuments),[260] while some photos or sketches of martyrs with short biographies are also presented to the TV audience, their personal belongings being on display in the exhibition, to underline the familiar key message (which finally moves the narrative to change briefly into an emotional mode) that they paid with blood for the happiness the Chinese citizens thereafter could enjoy. (The fighting around Tianjin – different from the bloodless handover of Beijing – is thus likely also the reason to place the memorial in Tianjin and not in Beijing.) Honouring pennants, and highly coloured modern painted war scenes (in popular style) (from the entrance hall murals) conclude the presentation of the exhibition for the national TV audience on the keytone of gratitude. Finally, the camera returns outdoor, where many cadets on the square in front of the memorial hall visualise the site's function for the PLA to celebrate its own role for the establishment of New China, to direct the audience's gratitude to those supposedly deserving it.

Since this site is on the second list of 'patriotic education showcase bases', proclaimed in 2001, the official, more detailed 'patriotic' framing for the Chinese citizen at large as the intended reader, especially focusing on the young (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), is to be found in the multi-volume collection on these second list sites (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe 2002), published, like the booklet series on first list sites, by the Chinese encylopaedia press (which also served as coeditor in this case). Here, the memorial hall is defined as a 'thematic' one, which uses multimedia, electrified movable models etc. in the modern and technically advanced city of Tianjin. The

260 For a discussion of Russian (including Soviet-era) battle and war memorials, cf. Cohen (2020).

memorial hall's task is to trace the evolution of the Ping–Jin Campaign, praising the leading genius of the CCP and of Mao's strategic thinking. The major space is, however, the large 'victory square' in front of it (where activities can be conducted on a larger scale). Indoor, as also shown in the TV film clip, the five CCP leaders are represented in bronze, and Mao's calligraphy is to inscribe the space with his manuscript reproduced on the wall about how to conduct this campaign. Mao, the intended reader is to understand, foresaw the development and made clever decisions of how the single major GMD positions were to be encircled and thus cut off from supply and reinforcement, and also from retreat. General Fu Zuoyi, in turn, was finally convinced in Beijing (then called Beiping) to hand over the city peacefully. Thus, the army and the people were de facto victorious together (166–167).

The exhibition is also to show how the Ping–Jin Campaign was connected to the Liao–Shen and Huai–Hai Campaigns, and it presents several key 'martyrs' and model groups, though these are not the focus of the narrative. As to the background of the campaign, the intended reader is to understand that the Civil War was already at a critical point when the campaign began. GMD general Fu Zuoyi was isolated, and Mao realised well that the GMD troops were tired of fighting. He also calculated that they assumed that the CCP troops would also need some time after the Liao–Shen Campaign to rest, but Mao denied that pause and pressured the Communist troops into battle to surprise the GMD. In Tianjin, GMD commander Chen Changjie refused to surrender, and thus the battle had to be fought. Chen was captured alive (and incidentally would remain in PRC prisons until 1959, to finally be harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution), while Fu Zuoyi in Beijing still hesitated to accept surrender, but understood at that point that Mao would pressure on. Chiang Kai-shek then stepped down to ease the way for negotiations, but, given the momentum of their Tianjin victory, the Communists had no reason to stop (168–170). Fu Zuoyi thus accepted the unavoidable and retreated, and thus, the Northeast and North were united under the CCP, which was the basis for then 'liberating' also the South of China.

The exhibition makes this elusive history more tangible via personal items of the leaders, and some testimonies of old veterans, together with documents and weapons. The narrative highlights for the intended reader several of those items considered of particular significance. E.g., the coat of Liu Yalou who brought it in haste with him from Manchuria to Tianjin, is on display. When the movie trilogy *Da juezhan* (cf. above for the Liao–Shen and Huai–Hai Campaigns) was produced in the 1980s (to be released in the early 1990s), the film crew, it is claimed, used that very coat as a prop (once more suggesting the crucial role of that trilogy for commemorating the so-called 'three decisive campaigns', forming the background for

the respective memorials' framing of these campaigns). The wife of Liu Yalou would hand the coat to the Tianjin memorial subsequently, as the narrative states to authenticate the piece, which thus connects the movie version and the memorial hall on a material level. Further displayed objects include also the pistol of Communist general Nie Rongzhen, or the woolen blanket also shown in the TV film clip with which the Northeastern troop leaders supposedly covered themselves collectively. More interestingly, there is also a Leica photo camera named as on display with which documentary photos (for propaganda purposes) had been shot at the time of the campaign, and a mattress made of fox-skins which Mao had once given in Yan'an as a gift to a GMD commander who was CCP-friendly, and who would act during the campaign for Fu Zuoyi as a negotiator (in the Beijing peace talks), is on display as well (suggesting the hand stretched out early on to the opponents to change course in time). The diary of the teacher of Fu Zuoyi who convinced him to accept the deal, in turn, details Fu's wavering during those days. On the other hand, the pen with which the negotiator of the CCP side signed the deal is among the objects exhibited as well. He had handed it to the museum (which also shows the ways how one dealt with the difficulty to represent the elusive events, and how one searched for some 'authentic' material objects to display). A poem by a GMD commander in Suiyuan (the homebase of Fu Zuoyi, today part of Inner Mongolia) who switched sides is also shown, praising his last-minute 'uprising' as a just act (though this was in September 1949, i.e., months after the Ping–Jin Campaign!),[261] while the medal for a Communist lower commander who took great risks for breaking through a GMD encirclement during the campaign is a further object on display, which is to document that contributions have been always credited. Thus, the museum exhibits also many 'authentic' honorary pennants to underline this point (171–174).

As this official framing of the Ping–Jin Memorial Hall argues, the decision to set up this memorial in Tianjin in 1997 was taken by Jiang Zemin himself, supposedly fulfilling the wishes of the broad masses – and of the former military leaders Chen Yun, Peng Zhen, and Nie Rongzhen (which hints at the fact that the idea to set it up must have been older, since Nie Rongzhen had died in 1992 already). Also, the veterans wished to have a memorial for the campaign they had participated in, suggesting the PLA's role behind the establishment of the memorial hall. The mission of

261 The details are not spelt out in this ironed-out narrative, but while Fu Zuoyi had given up Beiping, his homebase Suiyuan was still in the hands of his troops and, as will be recalled from chapter 3.3 of the present book on Xibaipo, he went on to negotiate with Mao in Xibaipo over Suiyuan. It thus took until September 1949 that Suiyuan was secured by the Communists due to the said uprising and change of sides of the local commander there.

the memorial is described as carrying the legacy of the topic on to the next generation, and Jiang Zemin is even said to have personally cared for the design and content of the exhibition, visiting in 1999 to check for himself (before it was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001). He handed out the task to provide a good education in 'patriotism and revolutionary tradition' for the young (which the leaflet of the museum, as mentioned, also underlined as having been fulfilled). Also other cadres and PLA representatives came to visit this new authoritative place, one PLA general supposedly lauding the exhibition saying that he had seen other memorials abroad and thus could compare, and this one could well stand the test, thus acknowledging the memorial also from the PLA side. The memorial itself also engaged in many activities typical for 'patriotic education showcase bases', including going out to advertise the exhibition, but also cooperating with other museums, e.g., to make exhibitions together.

The issue of 'defence education' is an important issue as well, and therefore, the memorial exhibits also weapons. But it also made special exhibitions on its own in the few years between its setup in 1997 and its labelling as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 2001, more connected to local history than to the Civil War alone, e.g., on the 100th anniversary of the 'Eight Allies' invasion of China' during the Boxer Uprising (since back in 1900, the Allies had landed near Tianjin), or an exhibition on Tianjin's 'model workers', to point out local contributions to national history more generally. Many cadres, but also students, people in retirement, police officers etc., are said to have come to visit the memorial, as well as foreigners (officials, but also museum or historical experts as well as foreign students) in this very international city of Tianjin, which likely means that these were all led there on organised visits as soon as the memorial had been set up.

The large square in front of the memorial hall, in turn, was used for swearing-in ceremonies, for the flag raising ceremony (of stepped-up importance since the 1990s), or the ceremony for demobilisation from the army, as well as for honouring specific people. In a more historically memorialising way, the first flag that once was raised over 'liberated Tianjin' was again raised at the event's 50th anniversary in 1999 to bind the place back to its authenticating content of the Ping–Jin Campaign.

In special summer camps organised by the memorial, in turn, young people are to learn about military life and experience it – which shows a further use this site is put to, involving the PLA. From the side of the memorial's curators, materials were collected for the guides to design moving stories and bring them to schools and to society. That way, the whole memorial is presented as a collective endeavour in which both the military and civilians engage in. In fact, it was, however, primarily

the military that had a stake in the memorial and invested also many labour days to build the hall (and remains most closely connected to the site), which also serves as an education site and as a teaching space for the PLA. On holidays, the memorial's staff, in turn, would also 'go out' to the military to provide 'education'. Beyond the military, the site, however, also serves as an education site for various units, including schools and universities locally, and addresses with its outreach activities also a broader public, cooperating with TV and radio, using the internet as well, to actively promote the site to various target groups. Furthermore, the staff produced various publications, including, e.g., one on 50 years of 'liberation' (1949–1999), or went to interview veterans to publish their stories and those of the 'martyrs', gathered from the families, to engender more understanding for the PLA's contributions.

In the final evaluation, though, while the fallen soldiers have to be remembered, the Communist victory in the Ping–Jin Campaign (and by extention in China at large) is declared in this 2002 narrative as mainly due to Mao, this campaign thus standing as a monument to the 'liberation' of all of China (which, however, took some further months historically) (174–181). And this should explain why it was important not only for the PLA but also for Jiang Zemin, after all at the time not only general secretary but also chairman of the central military commission, to have this site set up and integrated in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system to redefine the relationship between the army and the people, which had been severely shaken during the 1989 crisis, not the least in the eyes of the younger generation.

Compared to the official framing of the site briefly after it was nominated in 2001 in the written and visual forms discussed above, which had profiled Jiang Zemin's role in setting up the Ping–Jin Campaign Memorial Hall, the more recent version in the *Fengbei* series of Xi Jinping times, in turn, rather shifts the accent away from former general secretary Jiang Zemin, and more to the PLA itself (Wang / Du 2019).

This 2019 narrative stresses that victory in this campaign had been mainly won due to the two combined armies of the Northeast Field Army and the North China Army (thus putting the accent on the military). The outdoor military park presents cannons, tanks etc., while three guns and wreaths symbolise the three major war theatres of the Ping–Jin Campaign: Tianjin, Beijing, and Suiyuan (in today's Inner Mongolia – which had not figured prominently in the former narratives, but is in fact standing in an ideological-educational sense for the third Communist 'method': Tianjin for the military solution, Beijing for the negotiation solution, and Suiyuan – after the Ping–Jin Campaign's conclusion – for wearing down the enemy troops to instigate them to change sides, as the above cited case of the local revolting commander's poem of September 1949 showed).

To advertise the site, the Ping–Jin Memorial Hall's experiments with various exhibition techniques like permanent film loops, background painting, mannequins, miniatures, and added sound (in the panorama hall) are pointed out, which are to render the elusive topic more approachable for the visitor. To enlarge the site's national relevance beyond the campaign's area, the CCP and the 'liberated zones' under its domination are claimed to have sustained the campaign on a broader scale. Furthermore, the phase between the victory in the campaign (in January 1949) and the founding of the PRC (in October 1949) is also covered by now in the exhibition (which thus is to include also more of the 'Suiyuan part'). Several Party leaders also left endorsements for the campaign's memorialisation (thus indirectly taking away once more the accent from Jiang Zemin alone) (38–40).

For the framing of the campaign itself, it is also admitted here to the intended reader that the PLA had already an advantage in the number of men at this point. And it had successfully separated the GMD troops from one another in the North. In the Northwest, GMD general Hu Zongnan 胡宗南 (who, one may recall, had occupied the former 'red capital' Yan'an!) was isolated, and former warlord of Shanxi, Yan Xishan 阎锡山, was encircled. Thus, GMD general Fu Zuoyi in Beiping (i.e., today's Beijing) was also on its own. Overall, the reader is to understand, the PLA controlled most of the countryside at this point, while the GMD was only holding the cities. Furthermore, the leadership of the GMD was also deeply divided. General Fu Zuoyi was per se not very close to Chiang Kai-shek, the narrative points out, but loyal to Yan Xishan, and he had once also participated in the 1930 rebellion against Chiang Kai-shek. He thus followed his own agenda and wanted to keep his troops. That way, he repeatedly would not follow Chiang Kai-shek's orders, e.g., to help Jinzhou before, during the Liao–Shen Campaign, or to move to the south now (where the Huai–Hai Campaign was going on). Rather, Fu Zuoyi argued that he needed to block Lin Biao (who is thus cautiously named in this 2019 narrative) from entering North China from Manchuria (and thus had to stay on in Beijing). That way, the rifts and diverging agendas in the enemy ranks are described for the intended reader as an important background to the Communist victory, too, in the vein of the motto: 'unity is strength'. Fu Zuoyi was also ready to negotiate, as the Communists well understood at the time. Mao, seeing the situation, thus decided that the Communist troops in Manchuria had to immediately move on to meet with the North China troops and then press down South. This was not easy to convey to the men since many soldiers in Manchuria were from there and did not want to leave their just 'liberated' homes to go on fighting somewhere else. But Mao ordered Lin Biao to quickly enter China proper (i.e., Mao had to be 'hard' to the troops for the larger common good). They did so clandestinely, and Fu Zuoyi had

not anticipated this move. Some would even be transported by cars from Shenyang, while Lin Biao, Luo Ronghuan, and Liu Yalou (who had 'directed' the Liao–Shen Campaign before, as it is framed here, though Liu Yalou was under the command of Lin Biao historically, who is, however, a still delicate figure – see above for the Liao–Shen Campaign) came by train and then by car up to the vicinity of Beijing.

At that point, Mao officially broke off negotiations with the GMD to signal his resolve for a showdown, which is detailed for the intended reader of the 2019 narrative in its military dimension. For conducting the campaign, Lin Biao and Luo Ronghuan (who had come over from Manchuria), as well as Nie Rongzhen (who was the major Communist commander in North China) were appointed. The PLA was to occupy the airfield Nanyuan at Beijing, so that the GMD air force could not use it any longer to start or land in Beijing (since the air force was the GMD's major advantage over the Communists). And it was to occupy Fengtai near Beijing, which was strategically located on the railway line to Wuhan and to Nanjing. That way, Fu Zuoyi would also be blocked from fleeing to the South. Meanwhile, the PLA was ordered to treat cultural heritage carefully. Having their informants in the enemies' rows, the PLA had also the advantage of knowing their opponents' plans well. They thus attacked Fengtai as a surprise and made many POWs. At that point, the narrative points out, Fu Zuoyi was completely encircled.

At the same time, the Communist Northeast Field Army (i.e., the troops moved in from Manchuria) encircled Tianjin and coastal Tanggu. Thus, after one month, only three isolated cities were left to the enemy in the whole area: Beijing, Tianjin, and Tanggu. Tianjin as an important industrial centre in North China had been fortified on suggestion of general Bai Chongxi (whom the Communists respected most on military fronts among the enemy generals). The Tianjin commander Chen Changjie wanted to negotiate, the narrative assures its readers, but the PLA demanded his surrender which he did not dare to accept. He thus asked Fu Zuoyi, his superior, who himself negotiated for Beijing, but Fu Zuoyi simply ordered Chen to defend Tianjin to get better conditions for himself in Beijing (a storyline notably proposed by Chen Changjie later after serving ten years in PRC prisons while Fu Zuoyi remained free and was even given positions in the PRC). The PLA thus attacked, and Chen was taken alive as a POW, shamefully found, the narrative tells the intended readers, in the cellar of the local 'martyrs'' shrine. Thereupon, the GMD troops in Tianjin and also in Tanggu simply fled over sea (41–53). In Beijing, in turn, the trapped Fu Zuoyi had two inner-city airports quickly built (to make up for the loss of the Nanyuan airfield, and as his way out), but he also went on negotiating with the CCP. He sent an emissary to suggest building up a common government in North China, but the Communists simply requested his surrender.

One of those who worked with Fu Zuoyi had been an underground Communist, the intended reader learns, once more emphasising that the Communists also won due to their able infiltration tactics. He and Yanjing 燕京 University's Zhang Dongsun 张东荪, a noted intellectual, philosopher, and political figure (who would die in prison during the Cultural Revolution), negotiated then with the Communists over Beijing's fate on behalf of Fu Zuoyi.[262] Lin Biao, in turn, suggested that they should change sides. When Tianjin had fallen and Chen Changjie been taken as a POW, and after a stern warning by Mao, Fu Zuoyi finally signed surrender, sparing the city of Beijing destruction, which was the official end of the Ping–Jin Campaign. Thus, the Northeast and the North was 'liberated' and united, the intended reader should conclude, which is said to have been a success militarily, but also politically (i.e., by negotiations, the Tianjin model standing for a a military solution, the Beiping model for a peaceful one) (53–58).

That way, the hard and the soft way of 'unification' are a lesson to be taken away from this campaign, but also, that the Communists would go through with their agenda, either way, which should be remembered well also by the present-day Chinese citizen.

In sum, the battle sites, a category found also elsewhere around the globe, struggle with the problem of how to represent former military action which is largely elusive. They thus rather live by narration, in more recent cases with eye witnesses, diaries or other written (or filmed) documentation, and some weapons or other equipment for physical display, rendered significant by 'paratexts' (Genette) like labelling. A popular feature has become by now the 360° panorama paintings in several of the Chinese cases, adding sound to the visual to suggest an immersion experience. In terms of 'patriotic' agendas, the issue of 'defence education' has been also closely linked to the site offers, so that the Chinese citizens will not only learn about the past, but also learn to be ready to fight, if need be, for their *patria*. For this, also the many stories on heroes, which often are framed as imitating earlier ones in a rather stereotyped fashion of action, and on utmost loyalty (including even animals, as we saw with the 'loyal horse' in Humen) are to serve. These narratives, which also disclosed their 'intertextual' (Kristeva) character, are to render the elusive more approachable, taking over the task of 'patriotically' educating the visiting pupils or tourists, but they also showed the limits narration runs up against.

262 Zhang Dongsun had been one of those socially engaged intellectuals who advocated a 'third force' between the two political blocs of the GMD and the CCP, but to no avail. He remained on the mainland but died in prison during the Cultural Revolution on charge of having leaked secret information to the US during the Korean War. Cf. Cowan (2003).

Final remarks

The above examples of war and battle sites as much as the other two categories of sites treated in this chapter which have to confront a spatial and material elusiveness of their referent show that narration to evoke the referent for the pupil as much as for the tourist is key. Storytelling becomes the main task for these 'patriotic education showcase bases' which is also sustained by and connected to filmic representation, where feasible, especially in those cases where people are familiar with filmed (re-tailored) reenactments (like in all the wars and battles discussed), or it might in some cases tap into images already engrained via education or popular literature or theatre (like in the case of the Red Detachment of Women). This way, the Xi Jinping-era stress on 'telling China's story well' (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) is a very apt description: the story has to be gripping and compelling, regardless of history which is only used as a prompt for content to develop a narrative consistent with political goals of the moment and consistent with textbooks from which people visiting (either as pupils or cadets or tourists) have taken their 'knowledge' which they should expect to be reinforced and not challenged on site. The fact, that the 'patriotic education showcase bases' are used not only for exhibitions on things gone by, but also as performative sites where people would pledge allegiance to the Young Pioneers, the Communist Youth League, the Army, or the Party to show resolve to 'fight for China', suggests that such sites clearly need to meet expectations to form China's citizens throughout their life cycle by 'drawing lessons' for the future. This is to serve as a contribution to lifelong learning which consists in reinforcing continuously the desired 'patriotic' message. Borrowing a term that was originally used for TV ('main melody dramas') but then extended into society at large, this is designed to be the 'main melody' (*zhuxuanlü* 主旋律) for every Chinese citizen throughout life.

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5 Presenting-presencing the agents: localising role models of patriotic values

Abstract This chapter looks into 'patriotic education showcase bases' which are connected to chosen role models to embody 'patriotic values'. This category comprises three types of sites: 1. those of 'traditional' role models (with case studies on Confucius in Shandong Province, and Zheng Chenggong and Lin Zexu, both in Fujian Province) to integrate also pre-modern Chinese values selectively into the 'patriotic' framework; 2. those of non-Communist modern models (with case studies on 'old-style' revolutionary Sun Yat-sen in Guangdong Province, the educator Tao Xingzhi in Anhui Province, and the educator cum entrepreneur and outstanding Overseas Chinese Chen Jiageng / Tan Kah Kee in Fujian Province) to illustrate the transition during the modern period, leading to the final category, i.e. 3., the Communist models and CCP leaders (with case studies on the sites for the Canadian and Indian physicians Bethune and Kotnis in Hebei Province, for the iconic Chinese all-round model Lei Feng in the provinces of Liaoning and Hunan, for model worker and 'ironman' Wang Jinxi of the Daqing Oilfield in Heilongjiang Province, for the model cadre Kong Fansen 'caring' for Tibet who hailed from Shandong Province, and for the CCP leaders Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi, both in Hunan Province, and Deng Xiaoping in Sichuan Province), whose sites update the 'patriotic values' to the Communist era.

This final category of 'patriotic education showcase bases' focuses on sites which are connected to individual outstanding people who are presented as embodiments of 'patriotic values', most often localised in their 'former homes' (*guju* 故居). This way, the place of origin of such selected relevant agents of the past may share in the individual's contribution to the nation,[1] arguing for its key role in 'shaping' that person (by education, custom, environment, dialect, cuisine etc.), while the nation (in practice usually as pupils or as tourists) may find a localised role model of general relevance there. The values these figures stand for become tangible and more

1 One should note, though, that as such also other places where the respective person lived for some time may be called a *guju*. Thus, e.g., at the more long-term 'Party places' Jinggangshan, Ruijin, Yan'an, or Xibaipo (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book), there are also Mao's (and other people's) *guju*, intending their living quarters (house or cave). As a 'patriotic education showcase base' name, however, the term refers in most cases to the natal place.

concrete in 'their' respective site and its exhibition. While any exhibition, placed somewhere else, on a person might also convey the ideals and values in a general vein, the specific site connected historically to the person, mostly suggesting to be able to explain how the person came to embrace those values later in life, provides an aura of authenticity, presencing the individual behind the values embodied. This renders this mode particularly effective also in educational regards, not the least since many of these sites attempt to show how a 'normal' child could evolve into a role model, soliciting emulation by 'normal' Chinese citizens. Only in some cases, it was not the 'former home' or beginning of life used for commemorising the individual, but the end of life with the tomb which then entails an enduring physical presence of the individual and focuses on the (localised) death, usually connected to the values the individual is to embody for commemoration. Or some place closely identified with the historical figure may be turned into the person's *jinianguan* 纪念馆 (memorial) (sometimes connected to tombs like in some of the cases discussed below).

Many of these very numerous 'individual' sites in the overall 'patriotic education showcase bases' project are devoted to revolutionary figures, whereas only a few 'traditional models' are covered. These include most notably Confucius, and one-time 'patriots' like 17th century Zheng Chenggong 郑成功 (de facto of half-Chinese, half-Japanese descent) who drove the Dutch out of Taiwan (which is in this 'patriotic education' perspective framed with a clear view to the hoped-for reunification with Taiwan), or the model official Lin Zexu 林则徐 of the mid-19th century (cf. also chapter 4.3 of the present book on the Opium War site in Humen). Confucius, Zheng Chenggong, and Lin Zexu all appear on the 'first list' of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (1997) (see below). Incidentally, there is one, and only one, 'scientific' premodern figure included in the 'first list' as well, i.e., Ming-era physician and pharmacologist Li Shizhen 李时珍.

Interestingly, though, several staple figures of premodern Chinese 'patriotism' (in modern parlance) one might expect are *not* named, most eye-catchingly the following two cases. The first of them is poet Qu Yuan 屈原 of pre-imperial China, who was hailed as a 'patriot' in modern times, not the least by Communist writer and intellectual Guo Moruo 郭沫若, so often named in the present book since he was a key figure in Chinese historiography on ancient China as taught in school, as well as in the cultural heritage system of the early PRC (People's Republic of China), who wrote a play on Qu Yuan in 1942, framing him as a 'patriot'. Nonetheless, Qu Yuan was not taken up on the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases', and would only appear on the much later list 4 (2009) with his 'temple', since biographical details are not clear at all, and thus he has neither a

guju nor an undisputed tomb 'to show', given that he is said to have drowned himself in political protest (or despair). His 'temple', a building from imperial times rennovated for the 1953 commemoration of Qu Yuan's presumably 2230th anniversary of death, is placed close to where he is said to have thrown himself into the Miluo 汨罗 River (in today's Miluo city in Hunan Province).[2] However, several places claimed his 'tomb' over time, arguing he had been found later and thus was not eaten up by the fish in the river, as the traditional Chinese Duanwu 端午 festival celebrates with its dragon boat races and the *zongzi* 粽子 (wrapped rice dumplings), which the people supposedly threw in the river to feed the fish and save his corpse while racing after him with their boats. In PRC times (i.e., after presumably over 2200 years since his death), a 'burial mound' some kilometers away has been finally 'fixed' as his 'tomb'. The fact that Qu Yuan was taken up in the end in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in 2009 (on list 4) in spite of the uncertainties about locations, might also have to do with the fact that he is deeply connected over the dragon boat races to Chinese folk custom and 'intangible heritage', which became a state priority in the 2000s. That way, it was likely feasible to integrate him somehow in the end.

The other suprising absence, when checking through the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' for premodern individual models of 'patriotism', is Song general Yue Fei 岳飞 of the 12th century AD, who had been a staple figure for 'patriotism' in Chinese historiography and school textbooks since long. He did not even make it into later lists which might reflect the more recent controversies about Yue Fei's historical role since he was traditionally hailed as a 'national hero' standing up against the Jurchen invaders of Northern China which is today seen as sensitive in terms of minorities politics aiming at ethnic integration. His label of 'national hero' was thus deleted from textbooks after the 2001 curricula prescribed this, to deflect criticism that 'the nation' would thus be defined in purely Han-centric ways in a multi-ethnic China.

In consequence, in today's textbooks the term 'national hero' is restricted to those cases where foreigners are 'the adversary' against whom the hero protected 'the nation' (e.g., Zheng Chenggong vis-à-vis the Dutch on Taiwan).[3] Lin Zexu 林则徐, the Chinese 'hero' of the Sino–British Opium War, is fitting this bill as well, and is a pre-20th century figure greatly appreciated in 'patriotic' terms. Although he was in Marxist view a part of the 'feudal' imperial system, he is cast into the role of a defender of the Chinese nation against foreign imperialism, and at the same time also into the one of a model 'patriotic' official who may serve as a 'traditional'

2 For Qu Yuan's myth, see Schneider (1980).

3 For more on this textbook development, cf. Li (2011: 144).

standard for upright behaviour at the threshold to modernity for present-day Communist cadres, too.

Beyond the 'traditional' role models of 'patriotic' values, some modern non-Communist (though tendentially 'like-minded') figures are included in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' as well, foremost among them Sun Yat-sen as the 'father of the Chinese (old-style, i.e., bourgeois) revolution' (see below), who cooperated with the Communists late in life, as is Song Qingling 宋庆龄, his last wife who would opt for the Communist side subsequently and lived on in the PRC. Further outstanding non-Communist, but sympathising, figures listed are writer Lu Xun 鲁迅 and educator Tao Xingzhi 陶行知 (for the latter see below), who both died in pre-Communist China, and the Overseas Chinese Chen Jiageng 陈嘉庚 (Tan Kah Kee) (see below). The latter lived into the times of the PRC and moved there late in life. Tao Xingzhi as well as Chen Jiageng are connected to the 'patriotic education' system even more closely, since they serve also as models for how to devise Chinese citizen formation over their personal life-long contribution to education in terms of methods, content, and financing.

The largest group among the role models for 'patriotic values' picked up for the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, are, however, Communists. These notably include also as 'patriotic' models for Chinese citizens two foreigners (of whom the connection to China is localised in their tombs for commemoration, as their places of birth are in any case abroad): Norman Bethune (Canadian Communist physician who went to China, drew a sepsis and died there in 1939 during his medical service for Communist troops in the Second Sino–Japanese War), and Dwarkanath S. Kotnis (Indian physician who served Communist troops during that war too, and died in China in 1942, likewise of illness: he had married a Chinese, and formally became a Communist only in China) (for both, see below). Most model figures, however, are Chinese Communist ones, well reflected in someone like Lei Feng 雷锋 – the archetypical Communist model of values for everyone (see below). Other figures include (in rough chronological sequence) the 'martyrs' Zhao Yiman 赵一曼 (one of the few women and an anti-Japanese resistance fighter executed by the Japanese) and Yang Jingyu 杨靖宇 (equally an anti-Japanese resistance fighter who was killed in action) of the Second Sino–Japanese War times, Liu Hulan 刘胡兰 (a Communist young girl executed by the GMD / Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party in the subsequent Civil War) and Dong Cunrui 董存瑞 (another key Civil War hero who died in a suicide attack, i.e., in action),[4] Huang Jiguang 黄继光 and Qiu Shaoyun 邱少云 (both soldiers during the Korean War,

4 Cf. also the comments in chapter 4.3 of the present book on the Civil War memorials and their serving as a model for conduct in the narratives there.

again one dying 'in action', one 'passively', rather burning to death than disclosing the Communist positions);[5] and beyond the 'martyrs', also role models like Jiao Yulu 焦裕禄 (the early PRC model cadre),[6] Wang Jinxi 王进喜 (the model worker and 'ironman' of the Daqing 大庆 oil field exploration of the Mao era as well – see below), Kong Fansen 孔繁森 (a cadre 'caring' for Tibet in the Deng Xiaoping era – see below), and, beyond this row of 'Chinese' models, the Mongol Ulanhu (Wulanfu 乌兰夫, leading minority cadre of the Mao era and Communist general from Inner Mongolia),[7] to just name those on the 'first list' of 'patriotic education showcase bases'. This group of sites dedicated to Communist role models includes, however, also CCP (Chinese Communist Party) leaders, whose 'former homes' (*guju*) have been turned into 'patriotic education showcase bases', like those of Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (see below), Zhu De 朱德, Zhou Enlai 周恩来, Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 (see below), and, notably, the rehabilitated Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 (a chief target during the Cultural Revolution – see below), as well as the 'forerunner' Li Dazhao 李大钊, one of the founders of the CCP, killed in 1927 (who were all on the first list, suggesting who was seen as of particular importance).[8] As with other 'patriotic education showcase bases', these sites also serve as locations for ceremonies to swear in children to the Young Pioneers, later in adolescence to the Communist Youth League, and for adults to join the Army or the CCP itself.

5.1 'Traditional' role models

Models taken from 'traditional China', i.e., up to the last imperial dynasty, the Qing, are rare in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists which also reflects the problem of how to appraise earlier historical figures according to CCP-defined 'patriotic' standards today. Only three cases will be addressed here which carry particu-

5 Cf. the comments in chapter 4.1 of the present book on the Korean War memorial.

6 Jiao Yulu is newly stressed in the Xi Jinping era because he has been a favourite model of Xi since the (renewed) Jiao Yulu campaign of the early 1990s. Cf. Barmé (1999: 107–112) and Sorace (2016: 49).

7 For a differentiated summary of his role for the Mongols, see Bulag (2002: chapter 7). One may note that he did not even speak Mongolian but belonged to a very sinicised group of Mongols, the Tumed. Cf. also the comments in chapter 2.2 in the present book on the Inner Mongolia Museum.

8 List two (2001) would include another posthumously rehabilitated figure of significance: general Peng Dehuai 彭德怀, the former Minister of Defence fallen from grace after the clash with Mao at the 1959 Lushan Conference over the disastrous Great Leap Forward policies, to be harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution.

lar weight and represent the cultural (Confucius), the military (Zheng Chenggong and the Taiwan question in its cross-Strait as well as in its 'anti-imperialist' dimensions), and the political (Lin Zexu and his model of responsibility and incorruptibility as an official as well as in his 'anti-imperialist' Opium War dimension). All of them have to be reframed, however, in ways tailored to fit the present-day 'patriotic' (*aiguo* 爱国) agenda: Confucius or Kongzi 孔子 (conventionally dated 551–479 BC) lived long ago in a time of political fragmentation, wandering around various *guo* 国 (states) which complicates a straightforward *aiguo* ('loving' or *ai* which *guo*?) narrative. Zheng Chenggong of the 17th century AD, son of a Chinese pirate-turned-official and a Japanese mother, situated between his loyalty to the Ming, the emerging dynastic successors, the Manchu-Qing, and his own regime on Taiwan, engenders the problem of how to frame this for what kind of 'patriotism'. Even Lin Zexu who died in 1850 as a Han official serving the Manchu-Qing is not unambiguous in a clear-cut 'patriotism' agenda according to modern standards. Thus, the sites need to be presented in a way to conform to 'patriotic' expectations to show these figures as embodying 'patriotic values' for educating the new generations of 21st century Chinese citizens.

Case study: Confucius

Foremost among these models taken from 'traditional China' is the notable and prominent case of Confucius. While treated intensively in scholarship in general, and partly also with his Qufu 曲阜 home as a tangible heritage site (Flath 2016), this has been less the case in the particular 'patriotic education' context. While Confucius was controversial over much of the 20th century ever since the first peak of criticism during the New Culture Movement (1915–1923), and especially in the perspective of many Communists, becoming the object of a whole denouncing campaign during the Cultural Revolution,[9] he has made a 'come-back' since the 1980s in mainland China, if a highly selective one in terms of what he is going to stand for.[10] Today, he is presented as the positive embodiment of 'traditional Chinese culture', in spite of the at times hefty criticism directed against him and his

9 For a summary, see Kam Louie 1980, chapter 5. A more recent reflection on the campaign in the context of Marxist historiography is Weigelin-Schwiedrzik (2014).

10 There is a growing body of literature on this. For a sympathetic take, see, e.g., Hammond / Richey (2015). Needless to say, beyond mainland China, Confucianism was often thrust into the role of equalling 'Chinese' (or even 'East Asian') values, not the least by Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan to oppose the 'un-Chinese' Communists on the mainland. After 1949, 'New Confucianists' were therefore particularly vocal in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and the US.

'feudal' teaching earlier by several Communists.[11] His home in Qufu in Shandong Province, not only a top tourist site but also an age-old honoured place through Chinese history, was integrated in the very first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (1997). (Cf. also chapter 1 of the present book, fig. 1.2, for the overlap of tourist and 'patriotic' labellings at the place.)

One may note, though, that even if the site is usually considered a combination of three: the Confucius temple (Kong miao 孔庙), the residential 'Kong (family) mansion' (Kong fu 孔府), and the large and tree-filled Kong clan cemetery named 'Kong forest' (Kong lin 孔林), the listing of the place in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context figures as **Kongzi *guju*** 孔子故居 (*former residence* of Confucius) (Shandong Province) (list 1, 1997) which, in fact, is part of the temple in the sense that it is supposedly the place of his former (no longer extant) dwelling upon and around which the large temple was built, while the 'mansion' was the subsequently built living place of his descendants only. The naming of the site as *guju* in the 'patriotic education bases' list, in line with the many other *guju* on the lists, clearly circumnavigates the more 'religious' aspects of the 'temple' (and the cemetery).

Formerly, it was the temple (Kong miao) as the place for ritual sacrifices that was central to the cult, and in the Kong cemetery, his tomb was the object of veneration. The act of disgracing Confucius' tomb as well as those of his recent descendants during the Cultural Revolution is notorious in China,[12] while the 'mansion' was attacked as a 'feudal' housing at that time as well.[13] (See fig. 5.1.1.)

Tourists as well as pupils would visit all 'three Kong places' together today – in fact the 'mansion' being accessible only over the temple grounds, and they have also been listed together in 1994 as a UNESCO world heritage upon the Chinese state's application. But the official 'patriotic education showcase bases' listing is careful to restrict the site's naming to a simple *guju* to 'normalise' Confucius, the former 'sage'. In the end, the last mainland-born 'legitimate heir' to 'the sage', Kong Decheng 孔德成, bearing a title conferred to the direct descendant since Han times which in the definite version (since Song times) was to be 'Duke Yansheng

11 As Louie points out, evaluations among Communists of Confucius varied considerably over time and among single actors. In general, in the 1950s evaluations were diverse, in the early 1960s he was seen rather positively with even a large conference convened on him, in the 1970s he was denounced (Louie 1980: 44).

12 Cf. Sang and Barmé (2009) who include photographs of the time. See also Wu / Qin (2016).

13 Cf. Wang, Liang (2002: 384) on the basis of interviews and some documents of the Cultural Revolution times.

衍圣' (lit.: extending the sage), moved with Chiang Kai-shek to Taiwan, where an alternative 'Temple of Confucius' was built for continuing the sacrificial tradition.[14]

Fig. 5.1.1 Confucius' tomb in 2015 (note the new parts, the cracks, and filled-in missing pieces) (Qufu) (photograph by the author, 2015)

The 'Kong family mansion' is thus not used any longer by the descendants today – the 'Duke Yansheng', Kong Decheng, living there only up to the Second Sino–

14 At present, the grandson of Kong Decheng has succeeded as head of family, though the 'Duke of Yansheng' title has been abolished in Taiwan.

Japanese War when he fled before the advancing Japanese troops would arrive. After that war's end in 1945, he only came back briefly to then leave the mainland for Taiwan before the Communist takeover.[15] Thus, the labelling as 'former residence of Confucius' is also indirectly reflecting this state of things (and leaves aside the tradition of the 'Duke Yansheng' institution not continued any longer)[16] by rather pointing back to Confucius, the man, himself.

The term 'patriotic' (*aiguo* 爱国 or 'loving one's country') as such is, as mentioned, difficult to match with Confucius who lived in an era of political fragmentation and offered his service to various states (*guo* 国) also beyond his native Lu 鲁. Thus, rather than classifying Confucius straightforwardly as a 'patriot',[17] the 'patriotic education showcase base' labelling suggests that the site as an emblem for cultural 'Chineseness' should be visited by Chinese citizens as a sign of 'patriotism' on their behalf. That Confucius' 'patriotic' credentials are somewhat difficult to assert is also reflected in the fact that the educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection on (some of) 'the (first) 100 patriotic education showcase bases' does not include a video on the *guju* of Confucius at all, in spite of Confucius' being so central for 'Chineseness' in general, and for education in particular, as reappraised since the 1980s. (In fact, for ancient times, this educational video collection only includes excavation sites, iconic constructions, or 'mausolea' of mythical figures on that list – cf. chapters 2.1, 2.3, and 3.1 in the present book.) The all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip series does of course cover the site (disc 6), but doing so by narratively stressing chosen Confucian *values*, above all, while the physical 'three Kong sites' are presented visually as foremost touristic heritage of China. Focusing in terms of values on the aspects of *ren* 仁 (humaneness, here interpreted as 'love of the other'), *li* 礼 (ritual behaviour, here interpreted as propriety and orderly behaviour), and above all *gong* 公 (public mindedness), an association with 'patriotic' *values* is established. This way, Confucius appears foremost as

15 Incidentally, while the legitimate 'heir', Kong Decheng, was precious to Chiang Kai-shek and taken to Taiwan by him, his elder sister Kong Demao 孔德懋 remained on the mainland and was asked to compose a description on life as a child in the 'mansion'. (The eldest sister among the three siblings had died early.) Predictably, the times after 1949 are largely evaded in that book, but the publication was also designed as to appeal to the brother for a possible 'family reunification'. See Kong / Ke (1989).

16 At the death of the last mainland-born 'Duke of Yansheng', Kong Decheng, in 2008, this title was not conferred to his successor in Taiwan, while Kong Decheng had been appointed by the Republican government already in the mid-1930s, still on the mainland, also to a new title of Sacrificial Official to Confucius. This title is now held by his grandson in Taiwan.

17 At the most, the official 'patriotic' booklet on the site ventures to call Confucius someone with a 'patriotic consciousness' since he wanted to unite the many states into which 'China' had split up under the only nominally still ruling Zhou kings. (Cf., e.g., Zhang / Zhao 1999: 65).

someone educating people to consider also the greater context against any selfishness, which obviously plays into modern political agendas of citizen formation in the PRC. Though it is claimed in the film clip that Confucius' thought was formulated in his 'feudal' age when there was still a society based on family clans,[18] while today people are individuals and equal, Confucian *values* are addressed as nevertheless valid also for the future, not the least since the family – now as then – remains the nucleus of society and the state. This enduring legacy is underlined with a final assertion that even important foreigners sustain this, referring to 'Nobel laureates in Paris' who are said to have claimed that for the 21st century, mankind needs to go back to the wisdom of Confucius to survive. (The background to this is obviously that Swedish Nobel laureate of Physics in 1970, Hannes Alfven, made such a remark in early 1988 at a meeting of Nobel laureates in Paris.)[19]

The respective booklet on Confucius' *guju* in the benchmark '100 patriotic education bases' print series, which, as will be recalled from chapter 1 of the present book, provided the official reading of the single sites for pupils (and was usually on the stacks of school libraries),[20] however, tries to put Confucius himself more in context with his home region. As the booklet is designed for youths, it dwells upon the 'sage' as a child (though de facto there is not much reliable historical information on Confucius' life at all which then predictably left space for many invented additions): how he grew up near and in present-day Qufu, how his mother (a second concubine to his elderly father who died early) and his mother's father influenced him (which is incidentally a feature encountered several times in such *guju*: the role of maternal relatives in the officially patriarchal society, somewhat balancing the usual patrilineal view), how he did household chores, learnt early how to cook, was nevertheless eager to study, did hands-on activities to

18 One may note that the definition of Confucius' time as 'feudal' was not uncontested in China: Guo Moruo, who shifted his dating of the ending of the slave-holder society, but always rather late vis-à-vis some other historians, finally claimed that the 'feudal' period only started with the Warring States period, while Confucius tried to uphold the old system, i.e., slave-holder society. Other Chinese Marxist historians opined that at the time of Confucius China was already well into the 'feudal' period, while a third position would opt for a later transition, i.e., the Han dynasty as start of the feudal phase. Cf. also the comments in chapter 2.1 of the present book on Guo Moruo's influential historiographical views.

19 See Marnham (1988). The statement was included in a final document signed by the laureates present at the time, so this statement is in this sense 'by all'.

20 As mentioned in chapter 1 of the present book, this booklet series published by Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe was reprinted also through the 2000s, with a new layout version started in 2012 at the very end of the Hu Jintao era. These booklets thus can serve as a mirror for the official reading of the Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao eras handed out to Chinese youth. For consistency, I will cite the original layout version of the late 1990s throughout.

sustain himself and his mother, and by this got to know society well – a far cry from his established 'sagely' image as someone removed from mundane problems to only ponder 'important issues'. That way, it should be easier for youths to identify with him and see him as a model. Furthermore, this is also to stress that he was a normal human being which includes also the fact that he erred as others, too (Zhang / Zhao 1999: 11).

This way, the narrative retains some cautious distance from the 'sage' for such a long time attacked for ideological reasons in the 20th century and especially by several leading Communists. Evaluations varied, however, over time (and between the Communists themselves).[21] In fact, youths who were the primary group of addressees of these 'patriotic' booklets published in the late 1990s, had encountered Confucius in school history classes as a figure that was described at the time again as rather positive.[22] Remarkably, a citation in one of Mao's poems of a well-known saying of Confucius in the *Lunyu* 论语 ('analects') is inserted in the booklet's narrative (12), which obviously is supposed to legitimise Confucius via the unquestionable authority of Mao![23] Also elsewhere in the booklet Mao is cited a

21 As noted above, although Confucius is often described as standing for 'feudal' times and values, in 1970s' Chinese textbooks he started to be described as maintaining the 'slave-holder society', trying to block the new trends towards the 'feudal' stage. The discussion behind was the question of when 'feudalism' began in ancient China (before Confucius, at his time, or later), and on which side Confucius stood, if the shift occurred at his time. Guo Moruo, who saw Confucius as a largely 'progressive' force, changed his views on the issue in the early 1970s to make Confucius into a backward, anti-feudal, pro-slavery figure to conform with Mao's historiographical preference (cf. his respective 1972 article reprinted as a foreword to the reworked edition of his book: *Nulizhi shidai*), which of course presupposed that Confucius had to be set at the point of transition (cf. also Louie 1980: 111). Accordingly, textbooks thereafter followed Guo's new paradigm of criticising Confucius. (See, e.g., the widely used Beijing textbook on Chinese history when the established textbook production by the People's Education Press was suspended due to the Cultural Revolution: Beijing-shi jiaoyuju jiaocai bianxiezu (1973) vol. 1: 22–23, which thus was in stark contrast to another Beijing municipal textbook of only a few months earlier where Confucius was still presented rather positively.)

22 The evaluation of Confucius had changed back with the 1980s when the curricula, reinstalled after the Cultural Revolution, again stressed the educational and thus 'positive' sides of Confucius. While the first history curriculum for junior secondary school after the Cultural Revolution in 1978 still denounced Confucius as 'reactionary', the following in 1980 pointed out his 'contributions', and the curricula became even laudatory of his achievements in the 1990s. (Cf. the collection of Chinese history curricula over the 20th century: Kecheng jiaocai yanjiusuo 2001.) Guo Moruo, the former orientation point for school historiography, had, in any case, also died in the meantime (1978), and the whole periodisation problem with the slave-holder *vs* feudal society was downplayed by a new focus on the dynastic cycles.

23 The saying is simply asserting that time flows continuously by like a river (*Lunyu* chapter 9). Mao cited this saying in a poem ('Swimming') after a swim in the Yangzi in 1956 (not 1965, as Zhang / Zhao wrongly state) on the occasion of the construction of the huge Yangzi bridge in Wuhan

couple of times, though always only with affirmative utterances (taken out of context) which insinuate to the intended young reader that even Mao – who de facto criticised Confucius repeatedly and sanctioned the anti-Confucius campaign of the 1970s – after all appreciated Confucius! Most astonishingly, even the Confucian maxim of 'impartiality in ordinary practice' (*zhongyong* 中庸)[24] is given a 'positive' turn with a (again rather general) citation of Mao (62), although the latter's concept of contradictions and class struggle is diametrically opposed to this. (In fact, Mao as much as Lu Xun, the most hailed Republican-era writer in PRC times, saw the *zhongyong* ideal as one of the major obstacles which China had to remove for catching up in development.) And the only work attributed to Confucius himself, the 'Spring and Autumn' (i.e., annals) (*Chunqiu* 春秋) of his native Lu state, is even associated in this 'patriotic education' booklet with the inverted old saying (originally reflecting Confucianism's treasuring the past) preferred by Mao as a slogan: to accentuate the present, less the past (*hou jin bo gu* 厚今薄古)! (69). Thus, Confucius himself is retailored as already in line with a Maoist historical vision! Later uses and abuses of his teachings are thus explained to the young intended readers as the work of later generations. All this clearly shows the very defensive strategy and often very forced argumentation the authors of the 'patriotic' booklet apply to argue for Confucius as a model in a modern 'patriotic' perspective.

A poem of 1959, written by the influential Communist writer, intellectual, scholar of ancient China, and key figure for PRC history views, Guo Moruo – who was repeatedly criticised by Mao for being too positive in his evaluation of Confucius[25] – is also cited as a legitimating device by the booklet's authors (17), which is put up in the ancestor hall's collection of honorary plaques – a 'religious' building thus safely dominated by a Communist linkage. Notably, though, Guo Moruo ended his poem with the assertion that in any case today are 'other times', by this relegating

(opened in 1957), showcasing PRC engineering capacities (with crucial Soviet help, though). An English translation of the poem with some comments can be found in Zhang / Vaughan (2002: 80–82).

24 Translation of the term is notoriously contested: the most often used is 'Doctrine of the Mean' (which leaves out the second term *yong*). For a discussion on the translation problem, see Plaks (1999). Traditionally, the authorship of the such-named treatise, especially revered since Song times, is ascribed to Zisi 子思, Confucius' grandson, but is said to reflect Confucius' teaching. The 'virtue of *zhongyong*' is praised by Confucius himself in *Lunyu* 6: 27.

25 The heftiest criticism by Mao were two late poems in 1973 in which he denounced Guo's former defence of Confucianism and, in turn, criticism of Qin Shihuang, the First Emperor whom Mao, in turn, appreciated. For an English translation of the two Mao poems, see Zhang / Vaugham (2002: 92–94).

Confucius to a past by now overcome.[26] Guo Moruo, then head of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and key figure in archaeology and heritage preservation as well as in art and literature, had visited Qufu in February 1959, i.e. during the times of the Great Leap Forward (started late 1957 and officially launched in 1958), and in a couple of poems he wrote on the occasion, praised the fact that even in Confucius' home coal and steel were produced by then: the holy place of once turned into a factory. And women as much as peasants – two groups of people not of particular importance to the 'sage' – are said to have been finally liberated in the meantime to enjoy the present age.[27] In this sense, Confucius' times were definitely over.

Since Confucius is said to have lived in a very poor home of which there is no more physical trace, it becomes obvious that the place called today his *guju* is, in fact, through and through a later creation, most of the present-day fabric of the Kong temple standing there, being of Ming times at the earliest. Only the 'well of Confucius' is claimed by the 'patriotic' booklet to be 'original' (15–16).[28] The narrative thus tries to tread the fine line between honouring Confucius, the local outstanding person, engendering pride for Qufu as being home of one of the world's most honoured thinkers, as is repeatedly stressed, and keeping a critical distance by downsizing him to normal human dimensions via historicising Confucius of whose life there is, as mentioned, not much historically reliable evidence beneath the thick layers of later ascriptions. In fact, the most honoured aspect is Confucius' being a

26 Zhang / Zhao (1999: 17). Guo's poem, titled 'you Kong miao' (Visiting the Confucius Temple), was written in 1959. However, Guo's stance on Confucius had shifted over time, as mentioned (cf. also Dessein 2019): in his younger years, Guo praised him as someone caring for 'the people' and held on to him even when most leftists criticised Confucius, especially with a view to Chiang Kai-shek who praised Confucius. When Mao, however, finally decided to focus the attack on Confucius and criticised Guo's 1940s work 'Ten critiques' (*Shi pipan shu* 十批判書) (Guo Moruo 1947) with his positive evaluation of Confucius and negative one of Qin Shihuang and the legalists, Guo, who compromised in 1972 with his new critical evaluation of Confucius, recanted also this earlier work of his. Cf. Wang (2018: 273–275) for Guo Moruo's 1974 recanting (i.e., in the context of the campaign against Lin Biao and Confucius).

27 This particular poem is titled 'Song Qufu' 颂曲阜 (Praise of Qufu). (The booklet of Zhang / Zhao: 1999, p. 108, titles it wrongly as 'Yong Qufu' 咏曲阜). The couple of Qufu-poems were printed together in Guo's poem collection *Changchun ji* of 1959, pp. 268–272.

28 For an indepth study of the development of the temple's material fabric through time, see Flath (2016). Flath does, however, not specifically address the well. One may also note that wells are a rather frequent element (like trees) to recall a person at 'patriotic education showcase bases' – cf., e.g., Mao's wells in Ruijin or Yan'an pointed out in chapter 3.3 of the present book, or the 'patriotic' well in Ranzhuang named in chapter 4.3.

devoted teacher – a trait even conceded by many of his Communist critics,[29] and some of the values he stood for. His continuing relevance in this regard is argued for by referring to Overseas Chinese and other East Asian nations who are still revering him, and the high interest Confucius generated also with Westerners past and present is used as an argument for the site's importance. Needless to say, all those groups are also potential tourists. Therefore, Qufu developed various activities to heighten the attraction of the site: staging rituals or performances of various kinds, at times linking Confucius to Huangdi 黄帝 (the mythical Yellow Emperor – cf. chapter 3.1 of the present book) and other legendary figures of antiquity.[30] And Confucius' 'birthday celebration' was revived on September 28 – thus paralleling Taiwan's celebrations. With all these activities, the impression often voiced by tourists, of Qufu being a rather dull place beyond the daytime visit of the heritage sites (125), was to be tackled. Further activities contemplated were the staging of calligraphy exhibitions, and the organisation of educational programmes to pick up on the *genius loci*.

As the intended young readers of the booklet are reminded, however, not only modern-day normal tourists flock to Qufu: even Asian Communist revolutionaries-turned-statesmen visited the site, underlining the larger relevance of Confucius also beyond China, and additionally sanctioning the place in a Communist internationalist perspective. Ho Chi-minh from North Vietnam visited Qufu in 1965, while Kim Il-sung from North Korea came in 1991. This suggests that beyond all ideological antagonism, Confucius who was revered in Vietnam as much as in Korea in the past, is nevertheless an enduring emblem of the cultural binding force between East Asians (centred in China). The CCP leaders themselves obviously also took an interest at different times for various reasons. General Zhu De notably chose Qufu for convening a military conference in 1950 to finally announce in front of the sacrificial building for Confucius in the Kong cemetery that China needed to mobilise soldiers to fight in Korea![31] Confucius thus was made to serve symbolically for the deep cultural links to a Korea by then divided into the friendly 'socialist brother' who asked for military help, and the enemy capitalist and US-backed South. North

29 As Louie (1980: 125–136) has pointed out, the educational ideas of Confucius were only wholesale attacked during the Anti-Confucius campaign of the early 1970s, while before and thereafter they were the most palatable side of his in Communist view.

30 Cf. Zhang / Zhao (1999: 116). Cf. also Flath (2016: 186) and Murray (2015: 163–164). For a discussion of the memorialisation of Huangdi and Confucius in modern times, see also Matten (2017).

31 One may note that this referenced the tradition of 'informing the ancestors', though Zhu De did not turn himself towards Confucius but to the audience. Similarly, when today 'sacrifices' are reenacted in Qufu, the addressees are de facto the audience, not 'the sage', to not appear as 'religious'.

Korean president Kim Il-sung's later Qufu visit (1991) thus was likely also to recall China's military help in the Korean War. From the side of the Chinese Communists, already in 1952, Mao himself (who was no frequent visitor of cultural heritage sites) visited the temple and the cemetery and 'informed himself' about the descendants (not mentioning to the intended 'patriotic' reader that the key 'descendant' had moved to Taiwan), although Mao remained critical of 'the sage'.[32] In the last years of the Cultural Revolution, which already from its beginnings had meant a substantial destruction for the site in Qufu in the context of the 'destroy the Four Olds' (*po si jiu* 破四旧) (i.e. ideas, culture, customs, habits) campaign, the 'Criticise Lin (Biao), criticise Confucius' (*pi Lin pi Kong* 批林批孔) campaign had Mao's personal backing. After the Cultural Revolution hiatus, though, various CCP leaders visited again, partly to check on the site's condition after restoration. One may note that this 1999 'patriotic' booklet for young readers names Mao's successor Hua Guofeng 华国锋, who visited in late 1981, i.e., after Deng Xiaoping had successfully sidelined him, as well as ill-fated prime minister and general secretary Zhao Ziyang 赵紫阳 (whose name was largely evaded after his demotion in the context of the 1989 Tiananmen protest movement and who was still in house arrest at the time of the 'patriotic' booklet's publication.) Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦, another sensitive name of a demoted former general secretary and Zhao Ziyang's predecessor, whose death had triggered the Tiananmen events in 1989, is named, too, as a visitor to Qufu who came in 1988 (138–141). (With such namings, the booklet obviously carefully tested the sayable at the time.) Less sensitively, foreign politicians are pointed out who were accompanied in official visits, including former French president François Mitterrand, which documents that the place was again revived as a symbol and showcase of 'Chineseness' also on a world stage (142). Most importantly, though, the site was now made to serve for celebrating a 'Chineseness' beyond mainland China's borders to appeal to Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese, and to domestic tourists flocking to the site in increasing numbers.[33]

Given this picture of the Qufu site as a 'patriotic' one of the late 1990s, when some caution still prevailed, in the Xi Jinping-era version of the 'patriotic narrative' in the 2019 *Fengbei* series on China's 'patriotic education showcase bases', one notes that almost all traces of any potential problematic sides of Confucius have

32 He maintained that Confucius was, in the end, an idealistic thinker who stood on the side of the aristocrats and slave-holders. Nevertheless, he appreciated certain elements in Confucian thought or reinterpreted them and often referenced Confucius' quotes with which every educated Chinese had grown up, after all.

33 For a tourism-centered view, based on interviews and with particular focus on the changes in the staged 'cult ceremonies', see Yan / Bramwell (2008).

disappeared, framing the triple Kong site more assertively as a heritage site embodying 'Chineseness' which was purportedly honoured 'through time'. Cultural Revolution-era crises (or any earlier criticisms) are not mentioned at all, while the intended modern readers are made to believe that things seen today at the site were well preserved all through. Interestingly, the institution of the official descendant line is mentioned, though it is made to appear as something relevant only up to Qing times, simply leaving out what happened thereafter (and that the last mainland-born official heir had moved to Taiwan to continue the line there) (Zheng / Bai 2019: 51). The 'positive' sides of Confucius' endeavour to promote care for the people with *ren* 仁 (humaneness), and at the same time stress order with *li* 礼 (here rather understood as ritual-moral order counterbalancing the codified law or *fa* 法), are highlighted, arguing that he thus proposed to not let completely go of criminal law, but to apply it in a 'measured' way, when education by morals could not achieve the desired results. This framing clearly conforms to present-day agendas to show the 'two hands of politics': paternalistic benevolence and discipline (64). Even the explanation of Confucius' 'economic theories', often declared as a key component incompatible with modern life with his critique of 'profit', reads like apologetics by 'new Confucians' (*xin rujia* 新儒家) in arguing that Confucius only wanted to make sure that the economy benefits the whole people, and (more openly in line with Marxist history concepts) his 'Golden Age' ideal of *datong* 大同 (great unity) is equated with the idealised 'primitive society' when all shared all (which supposedly would also be attained again in the future Communist society), while Confucius' second best variety of a *xiao kang* 小康 society (a catchword used increasingly since the Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 era in the 2000s to signal the mid-term aim to achieve a moderately prosperous society level for everyone in China) is equated with a society of private property (which has been officially sanctioned by the new property law of 2007), which is not ideal but a step in the right direction (before one reaches the ultimate Communist society) (62–63).

Only in the defence against Confucius' purported disregard for manual labour, which is refuted as a 'mistaken' understanding of Confucius' stance, the new description openly acknowledges that there have been criticisms raised against Confucius from the socialist side in the past (65).[34] Most important, however, is the stress

34 Incidentally, this occasional addressing of divergent readings in the 2019 *Fengbei* version which need to be proven 'wrong' is a feature we encountered also in the case of other 'patriotic' sites covered in the present book, likely reflecting that the young readers of today can be assumed to have had access to divergent interpretations more easily than in the late 1990s. Thus, the new official reading felt it necessary to refute them more openly in some cases, while other, presumably less well-known narrative problems, are simply glossed over to appear as a coherent narrative. The little 'hints' like

on his educational role, which also broadened education beyond the elite and purportedly assumed the basic educability of everyone.[35] That this idea could live on is also credited to the long line of his pupils, handing his teaching onward through time. That way, the Confucius in Xi Jinping-era view, and even more so the values associated with him, legitimising benign paternalism, are framed as of ongoing educational relevance, and thus as a model for citizen formation in China also today.

Case study: Zheng Chenggong

While Confucius embodies cultural-educational values, Zheng Chenggong or Koxinga, as he is known in the West,[36] is a model figure with military and cross-Strait connotations. He fought against the invading Qing in the mid-17th century and established himself in Taiwan after driving out the Dutch from there. For this, he has been hailed as a Chinese 'patriot' – regardless of his complicated background, being the son of a Chinese pirate and a Japanese mother and first growing up in Japan on the island of Hirado 平戸 (a fact used by the Japanese on Taiwan, in turn, during the Japanese colonialisation of the latter between 1895 and 1945 to argue for a close relationship between Taiwan and Japan).[37] Since grown-

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the naming of people fallen from grace we observed in some cases of the late 1990s' booklets, like, e.g., Zhao Ziyang in this case of Confucius' 'home', have gone, though.

35 One of the standard phrases always evoked is *you jiao wu lei* 有教无类 (lit.: having education, there is no differentiation). The precise meaning of the saying is, however, very contested, given the word *lei* which basically means 'category'. Often it is interpreted as Confucianism's 'anti-discrimination' stance, as long as someone has education; or that everyone can attain education (regardless of 'talent' or financial means). The 'Confucian education' ideal, for a long time criticised in modern China, has found its vocal apologetics as well in recent decades to counter 'Western education' ideals.

36 Koxinga or Coxinga was derived from his receiving the 'imperial surname' of the Ming dynasty, i.e., Zhu 朱, for his loyalty to the Ming against the Qing. He was thus called the 'lord of the imperial surname' (*guoxingye* 国姓爷) which, based on the local Hokkien pronunciation, became 'Koxinga' in Western sources. For an introduction to the man and the myth in English, see the by now 'classical' study by Croizier (1977).

37 One may also mention that Hirado's website until recently claimed Zheng Chenggong as a 'hero of Japan and Taiwan': https://www.hirado-net.com/teiseikou/en/about.php (defunct), leaving out the Chinese mainland altogether. (This may be also due to the fact that the Hirado temple for Zheng Chenggong is historically affiliated with the Taiwanese main temple in Tainan.) Incidentally, the *new* (and more touristic) Hirado website version shows interesting differences in framing Zheng Chenggong, when one changes the language options between Japanese (where he is notably called a 'Taiwanese hero' today), simplified Chinese (calling him an 'East-Asian hero'), and traditional Chinese (where he is called a 'hero born in Hirado'!) The English-language version obviously does not see him as relevant for non-East Asian tourists at all. (This observation is based on the Hirado

up Zheng Chenggong started out from the Chinese mainland towards Taiwan, having his main bases on Fujian's Xiamen 厦门 (Amoy) island and the nearby smaller Jinmen 金门 (Quemoy) islands (the latter being today a Taiwan-governed territory and thus a frontline)[38] to 'take back' Taiwan – which he took only after a long siege of the Dutch stronghold,[39] he is honoured at Xiamen today. On the small offshore island Gulangyu 鼓浪屿 which belongs to Xiamen, he is commemorated with a memorial museum which is also listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base': the **Zheng Chenggong jinianguan** 郑成功纪念馆 (Zheng Chenggong Memorial Hall) (Fujian Province) (list 1, 1997). Competing places to commemorate him, though, exist on the Chinese mainland, with his ancestral 'home' of Nan'an 南安, belonging to Xiamen's neighbouring prefecture Quanzhou 泉州 in Southern Fujian, joining Xiamen as a second 'memorial'. In Taiwan, where he died, he was, in turn, deified with several temples. The 'patriotic' mainland reading of him thus tries to bridge the Strait along more political and anti-imperialist lines without going too much into his religious role more important for the Taiwanese. The problem for representation is that for Xiamen's memorial, there is not much physical legacy one may refer to since he was born in Japan and died in Taiwan. Nan'an at least claims his final tomb, since after the Manchus defeated Zheng Chenggong's descendants and conquered Taiwan, the Kangxi emperor in the end decided to have Zheng's remains shifted back to the mainland to 'reunite' with his ancestors (though this was more in name than in reality).[40] Nan'an thus tries to get its share in commemorating

website and its several Zheng-related sites, starting from the main website 'www.hirado-net.com', as of 5 September 2025.) For a short Western-language treatment on Zheng Chenggong's 'Japanising', see Matten (2006). For a more recent reassessment of his contemporary memorialisation in Japan, Taiwan, and mainland China, see Vickers (2021). A general book-length overview of his various aspects between history and myth through time with a particular focus on Taiwan – from the Qing over the shifts during the Japanese colonial time to the modern political contestations – and including popular culture is provided by Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]). For a thorough scholarly Japanese study on Zheng Chenggong and his 'dynasty' on Taiwan, see Hayashida (2003).

38 One may note that Jinmen (in the West often spelled Quemoy), though not being able to opt out of the general Taiwanese veneration of Zheng Chenggong, is in fact hesitant to do so as Jinmen's memories of him are not very positive: to this day, he is criticised of having done damage to the strategically placed, but extremely windy island by deforesting it to build his ships. (Cf. Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 20) as well as personal observation during a visit to Jinmen in 2018). In a sense, Jinmen suffered already during the 17th century wars by being a frontline, as it did in modern times, again being highly militarised and enduring regular shelling from the PRC for many years.

39 For an English-language treatment of the historical events, see Andrade (2011). Zheng Chenggong was, in fact, the first to openly claim that Taiwan had 'always belonged' to China and should therefore be 'returned'.

40 De facto, his father Zheng Zhilong 郑芝龙 (and parts of the family with him), who had changed sides, going over to the Qing, had been executed when failing to bring Zheng Chenggong around as

Zheng Chenggong, which means there are two distinct memorials (if in the same province, i.e. Fujian) jointly vying for figuring as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. The main and official one is, however, the one of Xiamen which was tellingly installed (as was the one in Nan'an) to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Zheng Chenggong's 'taking back Taiwan' (from the Dutch) in 1962 (and thus not, as usual, connected to the birth or death of the commemorated historical figure).[41] Unsurprisingly, the 'patriotic education' rendering tends to downplay Zheng Chenggong's links to Japan (where he has a memorial, too, on Hirado island where he was born, being considered in Japan, in fact, a *Japanese* hero who was immortalised on stage, a few decades after his death, as Kokusenya 国性爺),[42] suggesting over his ancestral patriline that he 'belonged' to Nan'an and thus to mainland China.

The nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, which notably opts to join both memorials in Nan'an and Xiamen in a touristic and educational vein, accordingly stresses Zheng Chenggong's belonging to Fujian Province. Groups of pupils are shown visiting first the Nan'an memorial to learn this, and how the later 'hero' received education there as a young boy (after his father had him transferred from Japan to China), before making his 'career'. The locality of the Xiamen memorial on the small offshore island of Gulangyu, in turn, rather vaguely refers to the

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well (see below) and thus was not buried 'at home'; rather, the Qing had the Zheng family tombs in Fujian dug up at the time as a further punishment! There have been speculations in popular media that the executed Zheng Zhilong was buried in Zhejiang subsequently, while Zheng Chenggong and his descendants, when transferred back to Nan'an on Kangxi's orders, were buried in the tomb of their earlier ancestors. Thus, today, the tomb Zheng Chenggong is buried in is under the name of this former ancestor (not mentioning the digging up of the ancestral tomb by the Qing earlier). As a substitute for his father, a wooden representation of him was added to the grave. For the Qing, even though they transferred Zheng Chenggong's (and his succeeding son's) remains from Taiwan back to the mainland, they very obvioulsy could not acknowledge to have wronged his executed father by officially honouring Zheng Zhilong again. To this day, Zheng Zhilong remains a negative figure in Chinese narratives, while in the West there have been voices arguing for a more nuanced reassessment, namely by Blussé (1990). (See also below.)

41 One may note that materials in the 'patriotic education' context differ on whether to include the Nan'an memorial, or not. Given that the sites are both in the same province, the need to take a clear stance is less urgent.

42 The Japanese 18th century 'blockbuster' puppet play by famous playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon titled *Kokusenya kassen* 国性爺合戦 (likely a misspelling for 国姓爺合戦) (The Battles of Coxinga = Zheng Chenggong), presented him as a Japanese hero, setting him against the 'Tartars', i.e., focusing on his anti-Qing struggle with an unhistorical happy end added, while the Taiwan part was notably not of interest at the time. Cf. the by now 'classical' study of Keene (1951) on the play (with translation) and its background.

place where he trained troops for setting out to 'take back Taiwan'.[43] The place is, however, convenient in the sense that idyllic Gulangyu, chosen by several Western as well as Chinese well-known people for living there in the early 20th century, and since 2017 being even a UNESCO heritage site, is a main touristic spot of Xiamen, and thus people touring Gulangyu for other sites will also encounter this 'patriotic' memorial there. The exhibition mainly provides explanations and maps, and the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip thus shows how pupils receive lectures on him there. A huge outdoor statue of Zheng Chenggong looking afar towards Taiwan is set near-by at the shore and is, in fact, the most eye-catching 'attraction' connected to him to see (as also true of 2014 during my own visit).[44]

The more teaching-oriented *Zhonghua hun* video by Fujian educational TV is, in contrast to the *Ai wo Zhonghua* version, focused on the memorial in Xiamen only, the officially listed site in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system.[45] From the outset it addresses the intended viewing pupils by focusing on red-scarfed children (Young Pioneers) visiting the site. While the commentary describes the museum's exhibition which mainly consists of texts, maps, illustrations, and dedications by famous or politically important people, including, once more, Guo Moruo, less of material objects like cannons (as replicas) which are eagerly touched by the pupils, the narrative explanation they receive is given in original voice by a teacher-guide, including also the outdoor sites, and the pupils' questions are to show their stimulated interest. This resembles actual teaching experiences Chinese children are familiar with, rendering the video a feasible device for classroom use. At the end – like in classroom, the visiting pupils duly summarise what they 'learnt' in front of the camera: Zheng Chenggong was a patriot who 'took back Taiwan' for the motherland, subduing with his Xiamen-trained ship crews the foreign Dutch who were the strongest maritime power at the time (even though Zheng de facto did not prevail because of sea battles), and the present-day young generation should therefore learn from him to struggle for the reunification with Taiwan – to also finally meet Taiwanese pupils of their age to 'make friends'. This video thus can be shown in

43 The small island of Gulangyu controlled access to Xiamen harbour and was thus strategically important.

44 In the meantime, to enhance the inner-Fujian 'competition', an even larger Zheng Chenggong statue has been erected by Quanzhou municipality, his 'home town', to attract visitors there, too. Cf. Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 137).

45 One may note, that also the map collection on the 'first 100 patriotic education showcase bases' only figures the memorial in Xiamen. (*Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* 1999: 45). The fact, that Zheng Chenggong is included in this more 'picky' educational video collection, while Confucius was not, hints at the politically higher 'value' of the Taiwan issue, connected to the site, for 'patriotic education' goals.

class all over China to stand in for a live visiting experience, conveying the 'patriotic' importance of national 'unification' as a task for the young generation to strive for.

Compared to the above filmic versions, the 'patriotic education' booklet on the Xiamen site, also produced in the late 1990s, is notable also for the fact that through and beyond site-specific content, it provides some valuable glimpses into the whole 'patriotic' educational system which other booklets of the series only rarely offer. E.g., it addresses more in-depth several of the educational problems which arise in the context of the specific Zheng Chenggong narrative, the ideal of obedience and filial duty among them (which has been often stressed as a value, as we observed in several cases in previous chapters, at such 'patriotic education showcase bases'). Since Zheng Chenggong's father, Zheng Zhilong 郑芝龙, changed sides and went over to the Manchus (Qing), the son rebelled against him, but he did so out of loyalty to the ousted Ming court. Framed in more traditional terms, loyalty (*zhong* 忠) trumped filial duty (*xiao* 孝). As the booklet is careful to belabour, he, however, first remonstrated with his father repeatedly, as a good son (or 'loyal' minister) was supposed to do, and only when he went unheard decided to part ways with him (Wu / Chen / Zeng 1998: 7). Also, his other elder clan members who defected he would only punish as a last resort (and grieved, but did not waver, when his father and siblings were executed by the Qing for not being able to bring him around as well). A filial duty measure of sorts is also provided with the (old) story of his (Japanese) mother who is said to have killed herself after the Qing 'had her raped', when they conquered the Zhengs' home area. The son, when reconquering the place, is said to have taken a 'samurai sword' (thus de facto acknowledging his Japanese part of heritage) – to cut open her belly, take out her intestines and 'wash them clean', before burying her properly.[46] Another issue of relevance for the intended reading pupils pointed out is the type of Zheng Chenggong's 'studies': while he started with a conventional literary education, he also took up military training, and at the crucial juncture in his life is said to have decided to burn his scholar's clothes (another staple in the legends grown around Zheng Chenggong)[47] in front of the local Confucius Temple to take up the arms (8). This, in a way, also suggests to present-day pupils that beyond the study of books, military training is important

46 This story goes back to some accounts of the time, i.a. Huang Zongxi's 黄宗羲 17th century biography of Zheng Chenggong in his *Cixing shimo* 賜姓始末 ([An account of] the [imperially] bestowed surname from beginning to end) (Huang [n.d., early Qing], there p. 2a). (Cf. also Andrade 2011: 350, n. 38).

47 This story came up rather late. Still, Nan'an provided a stele 'for the spot' in 1961. Cf. Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 12).

(which is also integrated in school routine today) and needed for the defence of one's country.

The Xiamen memorial on Gulangyu, set up in 1962, as a 'personality-themed museum' (*renwu zhuanti bowuguan* 人物专题博物馆), enjoyed the patronage of Guo Moruo who not only wrote the name plaque of the memorial,[48] but also an honouring couplet for Zheng Chenggong as the hero who expelled the Dutch invaders (from Taiwan) (46).[49] Guo Moruo wrote the name plaque when touring the new memorial in person in November of 1962.[50] As a historian he is said to have been thrilled by the exhibition of some of the rare historical objects, namely recovered coins minted by Zheng Chenggong's regime on which he published subsequently in a scientific vein.[51] Beyond this, Guo Moruo also took up Zheng Chenggong as a literary topic simultaneously – something often overlooked: the only film script Guo Moruo ever wrote was on Zheng Chenggong, to be first published in 1963 – though no film was coming forth thereafter,[52] which suggests the topic was at the time not 'uncontested enough' to be put into production.[53]

48 Some of his calligraphy he wrote for the Xiamen memorial or left on spot at his personal visit in November 1962 are also reproduced in the collection of his calligraphy (*Guo Moruo shufaji* 1999: 113, 132).

49 One may note that Guo Moruo's family had originally migrated to Sichuan, where he was born, from Fujian. Thus, apart from his role as a leading figure in Marxist historiography and literature, Guo had also some personal links to Fujian. The couplet referred to a longer calligraphy Guo had sent to the Xiamen memorial in early 1962. For the latter, see his annalistic biography by Lin / Cai (2017), vol. 4, p. 1870: it was a poem he had written to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Zheng Chenggong's driving out the Dutch from Taiwan. Cf. Lin / Cai (2017), vol. 4, p. 1868.

50 Cf. Lin / Cai 2017: vol. 4, p. 1916.

51 In fact, Guo Moruo's Fujian tour in late 1962 also served him for visiting various sites connected to Zheng Chenggong beyond Xiamen.

52 Cf. Lin / Cai (2017), vol. 5: p. 1952. It first appeared in a film journal in two instalments. The script was published as a book only in 1979, i.e., after his death in 1978 (Guo Moruo 1979). (Incidentally, this historical film script is not addressed in Pu Wang's 2018 book on Guo Moruo.) It was not turned into a film at the time, but for the upcoming 340th anniversary of Zheng's victory over the Dutch, a Sino–Japanese film on 'hero Zheng Chenggong' (*Yingxiong Zheng Chenggong* 英雄郑成功) (2001), by well-known Chinese 'Fifth generation' director Wu Ziniu 吴子牛, was produced. The Japanese version appeared under the title *Kokusenya kassen* 国*姓*爺合戦 (The Battles of Coxinga = Zheng Chenggong), i.e., with the title of the mentioned famous 18th century Japanese puppet play on him (but correcting the play title's 'wrong' second character 性 to 姓). This film is, however, only loosely based on Zheng Chenggong's life. Notably, though, in spite of the telling and rather bombastic English subtitle 'The Sino–Dutch War 1661' (which by this dating also puts the accent on Zheng's setting sail in Fujian for the military confrontation in Taiwan which only ended in 1662 with Dutch defeat, reflecting also the more self-assertive Chinese stance in the early 2000s), the film focuses on the battle with the Dutch for Taiwan (which interests the PRC side most) only in the very last part. The bulk of the film is, in fact, dealing with Zheng Chenggong's anti-Qing

The Xiamen memorial's location was explicitly chosen for the reason that many tourists came by on their tours of Gulangyu island, inspite of the few tangible things remaining of Zheng Chenggong's times. Thus, it is rather the commemoration by later generations (and the site is therefore also fittingly called a 'memorial' one) which is connected to some near-by places where he trained his troops. Interestingly, though, the 'patriotic education' booklet on this memorial discloses in more detail how the exhibition was to deal with the dearth of tangible original materials (a problem which can also be found similarily in other individuals' 'memorials'): after an introductory hall with a large statue of Zheng Chenggong, an oil painting, the basic information on his life, and a replica of a cannon (in the videos often focused upon and touched by school children) cast by his eldest son who would succeed him on Taiwan,[54] the visitor is to encounter in a first hall Zheng Chenggong's family background and early years. As he was born on Hirado island in Japan, the 'birth stone', i.e. where he was born according to Japanese legend, is shown (49) – though Hirado in Japan, where Zheng Chenggong is, as mentioned, also commemorated, unsurprisingly claims the 'birth stone' is still on spot.[55] Furthermore, the exhibited rubbing of the 19th century stele erected on Hirado in his honour, is said to have been donated recently by 'Japanese friends'.[56] The second hall features stelae inscriptions, either for his fallen generals, or with mottos for military training, calling above all for courage, which, in turn, was something particularly picked up by leading propagandist in PRC literary affairs up to the early 1960s, Zhou Yang 周扬, at a visit, who wrote a poem on this (54). In this second hall, also the few minted coins that had been found by chance in the early 1960s and had roused Guo Moruo's interest (who

struggle (as in Chikamatsu's famous Japanese puppet play) and the relationship with his father, accentuating his 'patriotic fervour' (once again more along PRC lines of interest).

53 The film medium was, according to Lenin (1922) (and Lunacharsky, the commissar for education in the early Soviet Union), along whose lines also the Chinese Communists oriented themselves, a crucial propaganda medium. At a time when TV was not yet a leading medium, filmic productions and topics were therefore carefully chosen. It is therefore not without reason, that the volume on films during the Mao-era PRC is the shortest of the Chinese three volumes on the 'general history of Chinese film' also recently translated into English with PRC funding. (Ding / Jin 2022).

54 Notably, the original of this cannon which is said to be a fusion of Ming and Dutch techniques, is held not in Xiamen but in the Shaanxi provincial museum, i.e., in far-away Xi'an. After the Qing conquered Taiwan, this cannon thus found its way back to the mainland.

55 See 'Tei Seikō jitan seki' (n.d.) (in both the old and new Japanese-language versions of the website of Hirado).

56 The stele was erected on orders of Hayama Gaiken *葉山*鎧軒 (= Hayama Takayuki 高行) serving there as an official. See 'Tei Seikō jitan seki' (n.d.) on the former Japanese-language Hirado website https://www.hirado-net.com/teiseikou/access.php. (This information is no longer part of the site description on the new respective Japanese-language Hirado website.) For the role and status of rubbings in Chinese memory culture, see Wu (2012: 51–61).

also wrote a poem on them), are on display. The third hall focuses on Zheng Chenggong's failed anti-Qing attempt to conquer the old Ming capital Nanjing with again stelae inscriptions on fallen generals in that campaign (which are also a sign of admitting strategic errors of Zheng Chenggong since he did not take in advice easily – and thus caused the loss of troops and generals, especially in the disastrous Nanjing campaign), and written material on Zheng Chenggong's activities by his followers as well as his enemies for documenting this historically rather elusive figure.

The fourth hall, though, is the central one which focuses on his successful campaign to oust the Dutch from Taiwan. However, the hall is also charged with belabouring the point that Taiwan 'has always been Chinese' (which is to suggest that he did not 'conquer' Taiwan but 'took it back'). To that avail, even stone age tools (obviously with no relation to Zheng Chenggong himself) are integrated in the display which are to show that findings on both sides of the Strait are similar to counter any possible argument that Taiwan could be somehow viewed as different (a perceived urgent issue at the time of the booklet's writing, given the new *Renshi Taiwan* 认识台湾 or 'Knowing Taiwan' textbooks of 1997, published in Taiwan, suggesting that Taiwanese pupils should finally learn about Taiwan's peculiarity),[57] or had a history apart from the mainland. (Cf. also chapter 4.1 of the present book for the Fujian–Taiwan kinship museum). Thus, Zheng Chenggong's 'taking back' of Taiwan is integrated in a *longue durée* perspective on Taiwan–mainland relations, and with Zheng Chenggong's conditions for surrender of the Dutch, Zheng Chenggong's 'patriotic' argument that they had to 'return' the island to the 'original owner' is underlined. Since this line of argument was also acceptable to the Manchus later (who would subsequently subdue Zheng Chenggong's descendants to integrate Taiwan into their Qing empire),[58] a seamless continuity of legitimacy of rule is insinuated up to the last major Qing official in Taiwan: Liu Mingchuan 刘铭传. A further point the hall is to belabour is that Zheng Chenggong was in fact the 'first Asian' gaining victory over 'Western imperialists', and that his 'liberation' of Taiwan also met with approval by the Han Chinese as well as the aborigines 'exploited' by the evil Dutch before.[59] For the military side, models of ships (which are

57 Cf. the summary of the debate in Taiwan over this textbooks series by Chang (2011).

58 The Qing Kangxi emperor, however, at first had not been interested in Taiwan and had to be persuaded to undertake the effort, as historical scholarship has shown, sending general Shi Lang 施琅, who had been with Zheng Chenggong's father, switched to the Qing as well, and lobbied for attacking the Zheng dynasty on Taiwan. For this 'patriotic' deed of 'unification', Shi Lang has been praised in the PRC. Cf. also Jiang (2017 [2006]: 139–140).

59 Especially the last point is hard to sustain since the aborigines were, above all, wary of Han immigration.

apparently particularly popular with the school children shown around the memorial) and Ming-era weapons are exhibited for illustration. In terms of original materials, major highlights are by now a type of short gun found only in 1989 which was of Zheng's troops, and some cannons which were produced by his men in imitation of Western cannons. And finally, the surrender document of the Dutch, if not the original, is the crowning achievement, which is, in the pathetic words of the 'patriotic booklet', to 'make every Chinese raise eyebrows and breathe deeply with elated pride'. (57–62).

After this climax of the display, in its fifth hall, the memorial's exhibition shows the rule of the Zheng house over Taiwan in the years following Zheng Chenggong's death, shortly after his victory over the Dutch in 1662. Here, the problem of dearth of tangible materials is especially salient for the Xiamen memorial as the originals are mostly in Taiwan. Thus, a sixth hall is added, which in turn concentrates on Zheng Chenggong's personal items that have been found in his 'mainland tomb' in Nan'an where his remains were shifted to under the Kangxi emperor, when the Qing had safely ended the Zheng family rule over Taiwan, namely his clothes (which due to material conditions cannot be exhibited in the original, though). Some of his handwriting and the purported portrait of Zheng Chenggong on a scroll (anonymous, but likely of the late 17th century) is shown to get somewhat closer to elusive Zheng Chenggong, the man. His legacy on Taiwan is indirectly addressed with documents available that testify to his veneration there. And finally, the establishment of the two PRC memorials at the same time, i.e., in 1962 at the 300th anniversary of the Dutch surrender, in Xiamen and Nan'an, are pointed out as a proof of Zheng Chenggong's enduring 'patriotic' credentials and relevance, which is also sustained by the visits of important politicians who left inscriptions or other forms of praise, or of Overseas Chinese who therewith acknowledged the common 'Chineseness' over honouring this 'patriot' (63–65).

As mentioned, this 'patriotic education' booklet on the Xiamen memorial is somewhat special in the sense that it openly discusses the memorial's role in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system (and also some of the problems encountered). The siting of this memorial is not self-evident, given that the tiny Gulangyu island was only a training site for Zheng Chenggong's troops. The few outdoor relics of the time are thus integrated into the larger site which thus claims to combine the indoor exhibition, the few outdoor relics, and a collection of related documents and materials (while evading to mention explicitly that the nearby Taiwan-governed Jinmen islands, which would have been the historically likelier siting option in the area since Zheng Chenggong started from his base there towards Taiwan, are simply not available for PRC use). The Xiamen memorial, established

in 1962, is, however, set at the Taiwan–mainland front line this way. While the Cultural Revolution times are simply skipped, as so often in these 'patriotic' booklets, the post-Cultural Revolution development of the memorial documents its steady upgrade: in 1995 it was nominated a 'patriotic education base' on provincial level, and in 1996 it became also a 'patriotic education base for primary and secondary schools' (cf. also chapter 1, appendix 3 of the present book for such labels), the latter a label notably assigned not only by educational institutions, but also with the participation of the PLA, which, once more, shows the stakes the military has in Chinese children's education (66). (As one may add, in 2001, the law on national defence education would even codify this juncture of education and the military, signed by the outgoing general secretary Jiang Zemin, the key promoter of the whole 'patriotic education' campaign in the 1990s, and head of the central military commission.)[60]

The memorial, in turn, had to prepare for being finally integrated into the 'first 100' 'national-level patriotic education showcase bases' in 1997, also receiving video and TV coverage and propagation as has been discussed above. The steps undertaken for such a labelling upgrade included training 'patriotic education talent' with monthly study sessions for the staff on the key documents for 'patriotic education', choosing guides of an advanced educational level who would be also sent for further training to Xiamen University's history department. The memorial had also hired a tourism expert for making the site more attractive, considering also offering foreign language tours.[61] The staff was also to visit other memorials or museums to learn from 'best practice' examples elsewhere.[62] (66–67) Furthermore, materials and documents were collected and studied, sending staff also to various mainland locations where Zheng Chenggong had been active. And to enrich the exhibition with artwork, for the statues and oil paintings, Xiamen University's art professors were enlisted. When the memorial became upgraded to a 'showcase base' in 1997, it established fixed relations with various institutions for making sure that different target groups would be trained: mainly pupils, but also military recruits! This, again, shows how closely education and the military are connected in this whole 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, not the least in such a place

60 See *Law of the People's Republic of China on National Defense Education* (2001). The law has been repeatedly revised, most recently in 2024.

61 It is not clear whether this was ever realised, though. At the time of my visit, there were at least no signs to this avail.

62 As might be recalled from earlier chapters in the present book, several places offered such 'best practice' trainings for other memorials or museums in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, e.g., in Shanghai (cf. chapter 3.2 on Longhua) or in Guangdong (cf. chapter 4.3 on the Opium War Museum).

so close to the 'frontline' with Taiwan. The Xiamen site also added summer and winter camps to its offers, and tried to augment sustainability of ideological training with essay competitions etc. Visual material on the topic of Zheng Chenggong was shown on-site, reports on the memorial's activities prepared, study groups established, and even outgoing exhibitions organised. That way, even school children in outlying village schools would be reached with this 'patriotic education' (69–70). Since the buildings, publications etc. also required funds, the plans of the memorial were to integrate more modern technology to render the exhibition more interesting, and to invest into more war ship models (similar to the Liugongdao site for the First Sino–Japanese War addressed in chapter 4.3 of the present book) in an additional exhibition which apparently are much liked by the visitors, not the least the pupils, to draw more crowds. Additionally, a new archive building was planned, and the whole area was to become a more park-like environment to combine political education with aesthetics (and presumably nature) (71–72). This whole plan and description thus discloses in detail how a site planned and reported on its activities to conform to the criteria a 'patriotic education *showcase* base' had to meet on the ground.

The Xiamen Zheng Chenggong memorial is, however, notably also one of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' covered in the popular museum book series *Dai ni zoujin bowuguan* 带你走进博物馆 (taking you to the museum), addressed to youths, which we considered, e.g., with 'patriotically' listed provincial museums in chapter 2.2 of the present book already, given that these volumes are supposed to serve for education of the same target group as well (cf. also chapter 1 for the selection of materials used in the present book). As will be recalled, this museum book series, while not explicitly connected to the 'patriotic education showcase bases' project, is nevertheless indirectly contributing to it in the case of those museums that are simultaneously part of the latter system. The museum series explicitly addresses young readers and thus intersects with the 'patriotic education' target group, trying to motivate young people to visit museums, and in its general preface of 2004 by the then head of the State Bureau of Cultural Relics (*guojia wenwuju* 国家文物局)[63] – being under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture – makes clear that the series is, in fact, supposed to serve as a 'second classroom'.[64] The preface of the Zheng Chenggong memorial volume (Chen / Ye 2008) by the head of the Xiamen municipal cultural relics bureau even explicitly points out the book is to

63 One may note that the official English name was changed into 'National Cultural Heritage Administration' (NCHA) though the Chinese name did not change.

64 The Ministry of Culture has in the meantime merged with the National Tourism Administration into the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (since 2018).

convey 'patriotic education', portraying Zheng Chenggong as a 'national hero' who 'took back' Taiwan, to foster national unity sentiments. One of the authors of the volume, Chen Yang 陈洋, then head of the memorial, in fact participated in both publications: the booklet in the (first) '100 patriotic education showcase bases' series (1998) discussed above, as well as in the volume in the museum series ten years later (2008), thus connecting both and disclosing the evolution the 'patriotic' framing had undergone in the meantime.

In this newer museum volume of 2008, the young readers are not only introduced to some background information not available in the earlier '100 patriotic education showcase bases' booklet, but the new narrative also makes Zheng Chenggong and his father appear in a somewhat different light than in the late 1990s. In the new version, the intended young reader learns, e.g., that Zheng Zhilong, the father of Zheng Chenggong, had in fact been baptised by the Portuguese in Macau,[65] and also acted as an interpreter between the Dutch and the Chinese,[66] e.g., on the Pescadores (which are now part of Taiwan-governed territory) (Chen / Ye 2008: 9–10). This makes him appear as a somewhat more 'internationalised' and educated figure than the earlier image which rather one-dimensionally focused on his low education and opportunistic turncoat role. Zheng Chenggong, in turn, is notably presented here also less hagiographically. His irritable and impulsive temper frequently mentioned by Western sources of the time which were predictably not very positive on him, is referred to, if explained tellingly as his 'Japanese samurai heritage'! (12). But the 'traditional Chinese education' he received is also presented as one reason why he later opted for loyalty ('patriotism') in contrast to his father (who had not undergone a similar Chinese education) who changed sides (17, 22). (This, of course, is a limping argument since the noted Confucian scholar who taught Zheng Chenggong in Nanjing quickly changed sides too.) Further, the important aspect of maritime trade, namely with Japan and with the Dutch, which generated decisive income, not the least since most of the mainland was already taken by the Qing, is addressed as an important factor for the survival of Zheng Chenggong. And thus, the port of Xiamen served him well (47–54). However, since he felt the Dutch did not treat him fairly, he was, according to this narrative, virtually pushed by them into confrontation, which then culminated on Taiwan (54) – which leads the intended young reader to conclude

65 In Western sources of the time, he is thus often referred to as 'Nicolas' (or variant spellings). For a recent comparison of sources on him, see Wills (2016).

66 He did so by applying his Portuguese which the Dutch understood as it was a *lingua franca* of trade in the region. Cf. Andrade (2011: 26).

that the confrontation on Taiwan was in the end more about trade monopoly and political survival of Zheng Chenggong, than about 'patriotism'.[67]

Similar to the 'patriotic' booklet of 1998, also this volume in the museum series predictably argues for Taiwan being 'since ever' Chinese, bolstering the argument with stone age tools as well as with migration movements, while in terms of outright politics, the Pescadores (today governed by Taiwan), are pointed out as having been already governed by the (Mongol) Yuan dynasty (which is to sustain the argument of 'ancient' 'Chinese' rule over Taiwanese territory, if 'only' over the Pescadores) (63). The fact of foreign presence on Taiwan, namely of the Dutch, is explained in this context to the intended young readers by the weakness and chaos of the late Ming (66). Zheng Chenggong's successful first attack on the Dutch on Taiwan (i.e., soliciting the quick surrender of one of the two major forts) is assigned in this narrative to his surprise move when the Dutch were found unprepared (80, 85),[68] which makes it appear less imposing than in the older version. In this vein, also different from the 'patriotic' booklet of the late 1990s, here the fact of the long siege necessary to achieve the Dutch final surrender is described which also frustrated Zheng Chenggong (94), as well as the fact that the Dutch headquarters in Batavia was more concerned with rivalries with the Portuguese than with sustaining Taiwan (99). On the other hand, the intended young readers learn in this newer museum volume that the aborigines were not too friendly towards Zheng Chenggong in the beginning, which is said to have been due, however, to Dutch slander (105).

Notably, this 2008 book mentions also the criticism of a Chinese contemporary of Zheng Chenggong, who, while being anti-Qing as well, voiced his frustration over Zheng Chenggong whom he saw as simply having 'fled' to Taiwan, while leaving the mainland to the Qing! (109). Zheng Chenggong's harsh treatment of his underlings and difficult temper is also pointed out in the new narrative as a critical evaluation – most information, in fact, being taken over from Dutch contemporary sources which described this extensively (110–112). (This means that overall, the museum volume of 2008 is decidedly more nuanced in its appraisal of Zheng Chenggong than the 'patriotic education showcase bases' booklet of 1998 had been, in spite of the auctorial overlap of both productions.) After the Qing had conquered Taiwan in 1683 by the successful campaign of Shi Lang 施琅, a former general under the Zheng family who had also changed sides early on like Zheng Zhilong, Zheng Chenggong's father, the Qing Kangxi emperor finally ordered Zheng

67 Incidentally, this conclusion is also supported by several historical studies on him. For the whole Zheng family's role in maritime trade, see Hang (2015).

68 For a Western historian's more recent description of the conflict, see Andrade (2011).

Chenggong's remains to be transferred back to his home, declaring him posthumously (and after the Qing's victory over his successors) as someone who had acted out of loyalty, not labelling him any longer as a 'secessionist' (113). By this, obviously, he was also to be detached from Taiwan where he had in the meantime become deified (and thus the move to transfer his remains could also be interpreted as an act of precautionary 'containment' by the Qing).[69]

The 2008 volume in the 'museum series' also provides an alternative look into the history of the Zheng Chenggong memorial hall in Xiamen itself, placed on Gulangyu island in an extant Western-style building of 1928, fitting with Zheng Chenggong's strong links to Westerners (with whom his clan and he himself had traded over many years before his confrontation with the Dutch). After the memorial's inauguration in 1962 (and the Cultural Revolution hiatus),[70] an overhaul of the exhibition was undertaken in 1992 to be prepared for the integration in the 'patriotic education bases' system. After the major step of being listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base', in 2002, at the 340th anniversary of Zheng Chenggong's 'taking back' of Taiwan, a cross-Strait conference on him was held there. Meanwhile, the exhibition had changed from the earliest chronological to a topic-oriented approach which leads through the single halls (116–119). Via the description of the exhibition, the changes undertaken between the 1998 'patriotic' booklet and the 2008 'museum series' volume can be traced: the topics were shortened in the newer one to four which also rebalances the former de facto rather limited role of Taiwan – an issue which had come to the political forefront in the 2000s when the mainland-critical DPP (Democratic Progressive Party) governed Taiwan. For the first biographical section, a 'Japanese friend' had presented the memorial in the meantime with a statue of Zheng Chenggong as a child – with his Japanese mother (125), which was added to the exhibition to bind the 'Japanese factor' to the mainland (rather than leaving it to Taiwan where it was and is used in a very different way!).[71] The 'birth stone' is by now not claimed any longer for the memorial, but the presented one is identified as a stone 'besides the stele' at Hirado (126). The (anonymous) painted scroll assumed to portray Zheng Chenggong handed down in the

69 In fact, the treatment of the Zheng descendants who were moved away from their home base in Fujian, some even ending up in a Manchu banner to fight the Russians in northern Manchuria, spoke of the lingering fear and mistrust by the Qing. Cf. Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 13–14).

70 This critical phase is not addressed, but at the time Zheng Chenggong was a topic rather evaded, since everything concerning Taiwan was too sensitive a topic in the Cultural Revolution times. Cf. Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 135).

71 As mentioned, the 'Japan factor' in Zheng Chenggong was used during the Japanese colonial rule of Taiwan to argue for Taiwan and Japan belonging together. Today, mainland-critical Taiwanese use it as an argument to distance Taiwan from the mainland.

Zheng family is shown in the exhibition only in replica, while the original is, the newer narrative discloses, in Beijing's National Museum (129). (This, again, shows how museums have to struggle with the fact that the most interesting pieces are moved up the museum hierarchy – cf. similar cases mentioned in the present book in chapter 2.1 and 2.2.) The displayed Zheng-era short gun discovered in 1989 is disclosed as a replica, too, since the original is kept in this case at a museum where it was found (133). Notable is the exhibition of a rubbing of Zheng Chenggong's stele for his advisor whose sensible advice he had ignored during the attack on Nanjing and who lost his life in consequence in the campaign which ended in complete failure for Zheng Chenggong's side (134). It is one of those self-critical moments that make the 'hero' more realistic in the new exhibition and its narrative presentation in 2008, while the 'patriotic' booklet's description of the 1990s' exhibition version had not included Zheng's 'error', just stating he particularly honoured and mourned his fallen follower (Wu / Chen / Zeng 1998: 56). Trade and different kinds of coins used, minted in Japan or by Zheng's followers in China, are also something focused upon (which also document his more 'international' range of activities via trade). The topic of 'taking back' Taiwan from the Dutch is, in turn, more pronounced in the new exhibition of the 2000s than before. To underline Zheng Chenggong's alleged uphill battle which he nonetheless won in the end, a comparison of the then modern weapons available to the Dutch – numerically a tiny group in their attacked fortifications – versus the rattan shields and helmets of Zheng Chenggong's large army are on display (Chen / Ye 2008: 143–145).[72] The surrender treaty, which is notably less stressed in 'humiliating' details than in the earlier 'patriotic' booklet, is, however, boldly claimed as 'the first inter-*government* treaty' in the history of Taiwan (148) – which obviously legitimises Zheng's 'government' of Taiwan.[73] This further marks the difference between a more emotionally charged narrative of the 1990s' exhibition and a more legally oriented conception of the 2000s' narrative.

The last part of the new (2008) exhibition narrative focuses on the advantages of mainland technologies transferred by the Han immigrants to Taiwan (to counter the backward image *vs* the Dutch with Han Chinese teaching the 'backward' Taiwanese aborigines) which helped Taiwan's economy to develop (Chen / Ye 2008: 151).

72 Historians have called Zheng Chenggong's military disadvantage into question, pointing out the military strength, sufficient equipment, and good tactics of Zheng Chenggong. According to Andrade, the Dutch were only decidely superior in building effective fortresses – which helped them hold out that long under siege – and in sailing techniques. (Andrade 2011:13).

73 One may add that neither the Dutch nor the Zhengs de facto ever controlled more than parts of the island of Taiwan.

And one of the local Xiamen literati who helped sustain the Zheng family regime on Taiwan (calling itself Dongning 东宁 kingdom there) in the times after Zheng Chenggong's death is pointed out, whose warnings, though, were not heeded, ending in the conquest of Taiwan by the Qing amidst a succession struggle after the death of Zheng Chenggong's son (152–153). Thus, local Xiamen contributions for the development of Taiwan are shown as manifold, and Zheng Chenggong is to stand for the unity of Taiwan and the mainland in the end, if ironically only realised militarily by the Qing under the leadership of Shi Lang, another Fujianese who once had parted ways with Zheng Chenggong. (Shi Lang and his 'military Taiwan solution' was, in fact, hailed increasingly over the 2000s.)[74] One may note that in 2005, former general secretary Jiang Zemin and one of the key promoters of the 'patriotic education' programme (and its intimate connection to national defence issues), decided to leave as his legacy to the Chinese central military commission (which he had headed and handed over last of all his official assignments to his successor Hu Jintao only at that time) a gift of 50 statues of Zheng Chenggong 'taking back Taiwan', made from Fujian porcelain, by this insinuating that he handed over the task of 'reuniting with Taiwan' to the military, while Hong Kong and Macau had already safely 'returned to the motherland' in the late 1990s under his leadership. Notably, at the same time the 'anti-secession law' was promulgated to warn Taiwan, then ruled by the DPP which favours Taiwanese independence, to not take any more steps in this direction, and thus the PRC State Council members were also to receive further 30 such statues from Jiang Zemin to drive home the point also politically.[75]

In 2019, finally, the narrative in the *Fengbei* series of the Zheng Chenggong memorial, bringing it up to the Xi Jinping era, opts again for joining both sites at Xiamen and Nan'an, though the Xiamen one is the main concern. In terms of exhibition, the cannons, models of ships, documents, and the coins which had aroused Guo Moruo's interest are pointed out which are praised here notably as a major contribution to the history of minting in China. More politically, the intended readers learn here that beyond the single high-ranking visitors coming to the site, there was even a whole group visit to the Xiamen memorial in 1978 of the standing committee of the National People's Congress, which underlines the importance of national

74 For the description of a major TV series in 2006 on the topic, see Kaske (2008). Cheng (2016) has, however, shown that the historical Shi Lang in fact aimed at establishing himself as the dominant figure in maritime trade rather than caring for the 'unity of the nation', i.e., was himself much less 'patriotic' than contended.

75 Cf. 'Jiang Zemin dingzuo Zheng Chenggong cidiao zuowei liwu zengsong zhongyang junwei' (2005). See also Jiang Renjie (2017 [2006]: 137–138).

'unity' and shows the new narrative's particular political interest (Gu 2019: 65–66). As for the Nan'an memorial, it becomes evident that the present memorial is, in fact, no longer at the site of 1962, which had been the Zheng Chenggong 'ancestor temple'.[76] Rather, it was rebuilt after the Cultural Revolution with private (!) funding by a Hong Kong 'patriot' hailing from Quanzhou, Lü Zhenwan 吕振万, later joined by a second one, Yu Xinhe 余新河. (This, then explains why the Nan'an memorial as a by now officially privately established site could hardly be labelled in itself as a 'national patriotic education showcase base', although its name was written by Liao Chengzhi 廖承志, a key figure for Communist China's relations to the Overseas Chinese and in particular to Hong Kong where Liao, son of the famous assasssinated GMD figure Liao Zhongkai 廖仲恺 of Republican times, had personal connections.) (66).[77] Since Nan'an, part of Quanzhou municipality, is home to numerous one-time emigrants to Taiwan, the locality obviously had, however, the advantage of strong ties to Taiwan and was visited more often, offering also the 'tomb' of Zheng Chenggong in the vicinity, which might explain why this Xi Jinping-era 'patriotic' narrative of the site integrates Nan'an once again with the officially listed Xiamen site.

Case study: Lin Zexu

Whereas 17th century Zheng Chenggong serves as a model with a strong military flavour, Lin Zexu (1785–1850) of the mid-Qing, in turn, is presented in the 'patriotic education' context as the archetypically good official in the 'old' system: he, however, also earned credits for standing up against foreign encroachment, here not the Dutch but the British, in the context of the (First) Opium War (1839/40–1842) (see also chapter 4.3 of the present book on the Opium War Museum in Humen). Furthermore, he serves as a model for the struggle against drugs. His destruction of opium in 1839 is the first historical event cited on the Tiananmen Square Monument to the People's Heroes which honours the 'heroes' of China's pre-PRC revolutionary struggle, but also presents the key moments of modern Chinese history in official PRC reading on its base with bas-relief scenes. Mao had endorsed Lin Zexu

76 There is no mentioning of what happened during the Cultural Revolution, but the site was likely destroyed.

77 Liao Chengzhi was also a key figure for Sino–Japanese relations in PRC times, having been born in Japan. His mother, the painter He Xiangning 何香凝, had been raised in Hong Kong. She would become a major figure in the leftist GMD and remain on the mainland in 1949. As mentioned in chapter 3.2 of the present book, Liao Chengzhi who had joined the CCP, had been imprisoned by the GMD for years, including at Chongqing's Geleshan.

and the event of opium destruction as the first notable instant in the 'modern' (*jin-dai* 近代) history of China and her struggle against imperialism.[78] Thus, Lin Zexu has been cast into a key figure ushering in a new historical era for China. In Lin's native place Fuzhou in northern Fujian, a building dedicated to him in the last years of the Qing as a memorial shrine by his descendants, together with local luminaries, is listed as **Lin Zexu jinianguan** 林则徐纪念馆 (Lin Zexu Memorial Hall) (Fujian Province) (list 1, 1997).

In fact, Lin Zexu is one of the Chinese figures with the most wide-spread net of memorials after Sun Yat-sen (for the latter, see below chapter 5.2). Apart from his native Fuzhou, Lin Zexu is also the 'hero' in Guangdong during the Opium War (cf. chapter 4.3 on the Humen Opium War Museum), but when punished by the emperor for conjuring up war with Britain, demoting him and ordering him to serve in far away Ili / Yili 伊犁 in Xinjiang in China's Northwest at the border to Russia, he is also honoured with a memorial there for his work, namely connected to irrigation, since water works were one of his 'specialties'. Other places where he had served for some time during his busy time as an official also tried to join in when he was elevated to the status of a 'national hero'.

Finally, a statue for him in the Chinatown of New York, set up in the late 1990s, was officially financed by Fujianese immigrants as a figure to positively represent 'Chineseness' in a traditional Chinatown which had been more Taiwan-related in terms of post-1949 politics. (Not the least Chiang Kai-shek's widow Song Meiling 宋美龄 had an appartment in New York where she spent her old age, as some of her closest relatives, some of whom were also important GMD figures, had done as well.)[79] In this context one should point out that Taiwan's GMD and the local Chinese community had notably sponsored a statue of Confucius in 1976, officially over a private association, given that the US had started to shift the diplomatic focus under President Nixon from Taiwan to the PRC, as a 'gift' for the bicentennial of the US, to stress the 'great harmony' (*datong* 大同) ideal, as a later added

78 Mao referred to Lin Zexu several times, seeing him as the first who stood up against 'imperialism', thus marking the beginning of modern Chinese history. For an official collection of Mao's various assessments of historical figures, see Ma (2008). Much of these are taken from the selected themes in Mao's writings, published in 2003 by the Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi. Following Mao's historical vision, the monument for the 'people's heroes' on Tiananmen Square was designed with bas-relief scenes, starting with Lin Zexu's destroying opium in Humen. On the monument's art design, cf. Wu (2005: 24–34).

79 Song Meiling survived not only her husband Chiang Kai-shek who died in 1975, but also all her siblings, dying herself in New York in 2003. Brothers T. V. (Song Ziwen 宋子文) and T. L. (Song Ziliang 宋子良) as well as sister Song Ailing 宋霭龄 with husband H. H. Kung (Kong Xiangxi 孔祥熙) and family had lived out their lives in New York or close by, too, dying much earlier though. For the whole family and their complicated burial issues, see Müller (2022: 244–261).

inscription with Confucius' respective saying underlines.[80] Given additionally that the UN headquarters is physically not too far away, where the PRC had taken over the place for 'China' by then, Taiwan would not officially sponsor the statue of 1976, but left it on the surface to the local Chinese-Americans to 'thank' the US for accommodating them. The wave of new mainland-Chinese immigrants from the 1980s onward, however, led to a divide into two camps in New York's Chinatown, and thus Taiwan's earlier rather small-scale Confucius statue was contrasted with the more imposing mainland's Lin Zexu statue. While both represent historical Chinese 'model' personalities, the statues thus also tell a story of rivaly (and of different conceptions of Sino–American relations).[81] The placement of the Lin Zexu statue in New York also serves as a sign of (PRC-)Chinese assertiveness vis-à-vis the Westerners in recalling the Opium War, and the battle against drugs often seen as especially a problem of the modern West – a staple in 'new Confucian' superiority claims.[82] The UN with their seat nearby in the very New York city are also usually claimed in the PRC to have chosen their date for the international anti-drug day 'after Lin Zexu's destruction of opium in Humen' (which likely is to additionally explain why the statue of Lin Zexu was placed in that city's Chinatown, though this PRC claim about Lin Zexu's role for the dating, often raised in Chinese 'patriotic' materials – see below, is not corroborated by the UN's own archival sources!).[83]

Lin Zexu's Fuzhou home, where his original house (*guju*) is no longer extant,[84] because of which the ancestral shrine, built for him originally in 1905 in the vicinity of where he once lived, is made to serve as his 'memorial' (*jinianguan*), focuses on him as a child and pupil, and how he himself learnt to become what he would later

80 The sculptor was from Taiwan. The inscription dates from 1983, according to the website of New York's monuments, when marble from Taiwan was used for the new pedestal. See 'Confucius' (n.d.).

81 Cf. Chen (1997) and Weinberg (2017).

82 Cf., e.g., well-known philosopher Cheng Chung-ying, born on the mainland, educated in Taiwan, and long-term professor in Hawai'i, on a Confucian-style modernisation proposed as an antidote to 'typical social problems of drugs, juvenile delinquency and elder-care' (Cheng 1997: 229) supposedly created by Western-style modernisation.

83 Notably, when checking the UN archive for the discussions on the date, the 26 June date was proposed at the end of the decisive meeting in 1987 as one option alternative to 17 June, arguing for 26 June not with Lin Zexu but with the date of adoption of two crucial documents! See the report of the UN Secretary-General (1987) of 30 September to the United Nations General Assembly, 42nd session, agenda 104: 'International Campaign against Traffic in Drugs', there point 67. The 93rd plenary meeting on 7 December 1987 then chose 26 June. See UN General Assembly (1987). In fact, a search for Lin Zexu in the UN digital library did not render any results.

84 Notably, in the meantime the location of his putative home has been established and rebuilt, so today Fuzhou claims also a *guju* for him!

be. (See fig. 5.1.2). The locality thus attempts to share in the 'national hero's' later glory by pointing out how he was shaped there.

Fig. 5.1.2 Lin Zexu as a child helping with household chores (Fuzhou) (photograph by the author, 2017)

The nationally broadcasted 'patriotic' *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 5) of 1998 stresses particularly Lin Zexu's educative role for pupils who are shown touring the exhibition, being lectured there to learn about his role in the Opium War. Even internationally, he is claimed to be well-known, with the anti-drug day set according to his destruction of opium event (as mentioned, an unwarranted claim).[85] In the TV film clip, Lin Zexu is presented with his educational 'success' and subsequent career (as a model for a good Chinese citizen), while drug addiction leads to the opposite, underlined with shock photos (here in the late 1990s for the national TV audience illustrated with Chinese addicts, in contrast to later on-site leaflets of the Xi Jinping era which only show foreigners – see below). Beyond his opium destruction, the narrative, however, points out that Lin Zexu also looked after making people ready to defend themselves against aggressors. The TV film clip includes

85 This 'event', in fact, took weeks, ending in late June 1839.

camera shots from Guangdong's Humen ponds (cf. chapter 4.3 in the present book on the Opium War Museum) where Lin had the opium destroyed in 1839, and belabours the Opium War, pointedly underlining the beginning of the Opium War in 1840 with red script blinking (which to some degree de facto disassociates the war's outbreak – for which he was accused later – from his 'heroic' opium destruction of 1839). His later long journey to Xinjiang (when he was demoted by the court because of the war's outbreak to serve there) is visualised, and finally his tomb near Fuzhou brings the narrative back to the local context. One of his descendants, Ling Qing 凌青 (originally surnamed Lin, who changed his name when working underground for the Communists in the early 1940s), is interviewed, who was notably representative for the PRC to the UN in New York in the 1980s, to argue once more that June 26 was set as the international anti-drug day, linking this to Lin Zexu (which, to repeat, is an unsubstantiated claim).

The alternative filmic 'patriotic' production, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 1) produced by the Fujian audio-visual education entity, picks up, too, on the role of Lin Zexu's descendants, and first lets the director of the memorial didactically explain to the intended watching pupils that the place now serving as Lin Zexu's memorial was formerly his 'ancestor temple' (*ci* 祠) (of which the single hall names are even didactically blended in), built in 1905 by his descendants who received also some funds from the Qing at the time (which means it was de facto not only a family affair, but had also a national dimension in that it meant a posthumous rehabilitation of sorts by the court, if decades after his death). As a memorial, the place was, however, opened to the public only in 1982, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution. Camera shots of Lin Zexu's tomb (not on the grounds of the memorial but outside Fuzhou) then lead over to a more detailed presentation of the ancestral hall turned memorial, where he is represented with a statue, his descendants bowing to it. This way, the descendants, who in theory are there for a family affair, have become integrated into the national framework. Endorsements of Lin Zexu by Mao, 'updated' with then general secretary Jiang Zemin's praise, are to suggest to the intended watching pupils that Lin Zexu's status in Chinese national memorial culture was unbroken. The filmed filing descendants making offerings bear markers as to which generation they are representing, including the most important of the fifth generation, the already named PRC diplomat Ling Qing (see above). Another descendant of some influence, Lin Zidong 林子东, a local noted journalist of Fuzhou, states in front of the camera that her forefather was above all upset about the cession of Hong Kong to the British (as an outcome of the Opium War he supposedly triggered, though the cannons he had built should prove to the audience that he had, in fact, prepared for fighting), and that the at the time of the

video recent 'return' of Hong Kong (in 1997) was, in fact, due to Lin Zexu's pronounced 'patriotism' which inspired the next generations! In other words, he was not only not culpable for the cession of Hong Kong, but made sure that Hong Kong would never be given up by China in spite of the cession to finally 'return' to the 'motherland'. The hero thus is no longer just himself, but part of the Chinese nation with a legacy until today, a truly 'national hero'.

The presentation of the memorial exhibition in this educational video, while largely similar to the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip of the same time in its focus on Lin Zexu's broad education, intellectual curiosity (including learning from the West), and practical knowledge he would also contribute to far away Xinjiang, caring at the same time for Chinese traditional cultural techniques like poetry and calligraphy, is peculiar in this special stress on Hong Kong's 1997 'return to the motherland' as the fulfilment of the legacy of Lin Zexu to properly 'defend' China against foreign encroachment. The interspersed use of clips from the 1950s' Chinese film *Lin Zexu* which is still officially suggested to screen for pupils in history classes in spite of its very dated makeup close to theatrical form,[86] is a peculiar feature as well, showing the educational video's closeness to classroom perspectives. (The then just released commercial and internationally shown film *The Opium War* of 1997, directed by PRC cinema grandmaster Xie Jin 谢晋 and produced for the event of Hong Kong's 'return' – cf. also chapter 4.3 on the Opium War site in Humen – is instead not mentioned here.) Some watching pupils might know the older *Lin Zexu* film from their own history classes, which is also more straightforwardly anti-Western and in line with Chinese 'patriotic' agendas, addressing a Chinese public (while the new film by Xie Jin also had to consider the international film market for having a chance on a global scale). At the end of the educational video, the director of the Lin Zexu memorial summarises for the intended watching Chinese pupils in didactic fashion once more what should be learnt from this 'patriotic' site: that the main point is Lin Zexu's destruction of opium, and that in New York, there is a statue of him to show that all the world dearly remembers him, suggesting that China's 'national hero' Lin Zexu is, in fact, an internationally famous figure.

Comparing the above filmic versions with the booklet in the benchmark '100 patriotic education showcase bases' series on the first list sites, one notices that the narrative is rather short on the exhibition as such and mostly focuses on Lin Zexu's biography and how the locality formed him. Although he is evaluated as having failed in the end, his resolute standing regarding the foreign encroachment by his anti-opium measures is hailed as a model (Guan / Huang 1998: 1). In this 'patriotic'

86 The film is still suggested by the 2011 curriculum standards on History in compulsory education. See Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jiaoyubu (2012: 18).

publication for young Chinese citizens, special attention is given to his upbringing in Fuzhou, his studies against all odds, and his dedication to local problems before he went to other places in the Qing empire to serve. Legends and examples of filial duty are interspersed to bolster Lin's connection to his home. His incorruptibility is thus also explained as a family trait by his father already risking poverty because of honesty who also taught his son to go for values more than for anything else. His teacher, too, is presented as particularly virtuous, never bending to any corrupt powerful figure. (This, incidentally, is quite the contrary to the case of Zheng Chenggong discussed above who had to disassociate himself from much of his background for becoming a 'national hero'.) Thus, it is no wonder that Lin Zexu grew up at home and in school as an upright character. However, beyond Confucian virtues, he also studied practical knowledge, which served him well later when he had to deal with various problems during his subsequent official career (which encourages today's pupils to study diligently and broadly as well) (14). When being successful in the imperial exams, his (upward) marriage with the daughter of a noted Fujianese scholar-official further sustained his local links (and rewarded him for his talent and diligence). (In fact, his Fujianese networks would serve him also elsewhere later.) Lin Zexu is said to have also particularly cared for the legacy of local 'patriotic' models like Li Gang 李纲, chancellor of Song times who opposed the Jurchen Jin, whose tomb in Fuzhou he is said to have helped restore (26, 42).[87] By this, he supposedly underlined his appreciation of and will to resist 'foreign' pressure.

Nevertheless, the booklet is careful to point out to its intended young readers that Lin Zexu was no blind xenophobe, but someone dedicated to thorough study also in practical matters, and someone also keeping personal contacts with all sorts of people,[88] thus serving better as a model for the modern pupil to emulate. As an official, he is credited with stressing direct investigation in criminal cases instead of the usual procedure to only question witnesses in the office, or with making himself knowledgeable in technical details for irrigation and waterworks which were one of his main duties at various places where he served (which all makes him appear as someone with a rather rational 'modern' mindset). Given the frequent flooding caused, e.g., by the Huanghe (Yellow River), he is also said to have personally intervened on behalf of the destitute to make sure richer people would 'willingly

87 One may note that this has an ambivalent side to it from the Qing perspective, as the Jurchen Jin are considered their 'predecessors'. To honour resistance advocates could therefore involve a subversive note.

88 One may also add that several Westerners who knew him personally, left very positive descriptions of Lin, the man.

share' their food stock with them as a short-term relief measure (39), while trying to find sustainable solutions to regulate the river and water ways – an ancient element of legitimate rule in China, only framed in a more 'modern' imagery of efficiency and able governance.

Lin Zexu's relation to the Qing court is presented in this 'patriotic' reading as multi-facetted: while he was obstructed by various factions at court not supportive of his views, he is said to have often written directly to the emperor, even on things not under his aegis. That way, his de facto overstepping of his position is presented as caused by his 'greater' motivation for the country. Most crucially, this was the case with the famous opium debate where Lin Zexu managed to bring the Qing Daoguang emperor around to his hard line. Although he did this basically in the framework of the imperial and Confucian value system, the 'patriotic' booklet underlines the 'new' quality inherent, i.e., the 'anti-imperialist' credentials of Lin Zexu (59). To bolster his actions against possible criticism, his manifold attempts to stall a showdown with the British by carrot and stick are stressed, e.g., with intimidation (including executing Chinese opium dealers publicly in viewing distance of the foreign factories in Guangzhou to demonstrate that he meant business), or offers of better terms of regular trade if opium import was stopped. At the same time, he collected information on the foreigners and their ships and weapons, and had many technical but also legal works translated to get prepared for an eventual confrontation. Notably, his famous 1839 destruction of foreign confiscated opium is also shown as almost scientifically prepared to make sure the opium would be destroyed for good, obviously being aware that the Westerners were not convinced that the Chinese were 'able' and willing to carry through (and not cheat further down the line). Therefore, he turned the whole into a public event, inviting foreigners to attend, many of whom he knew were against opium as much as he himself, e.g., missionaries. The intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet is assured, however, that Lin Zexu was nonetheless willing to learn from the West, but did so in a very circumspect way, asking different people to simultaneously translate so he could countercheck, and he was also willing to accept corrections himself (91). In short, this way he is simultaneously saved from the accusation of having been the one to actively provoke the disastrous Opium War, and turned into serving as a model for how to study well, closer to the intended reading pupils' reality.

In a more indirect way, the difficulties complicating Lin Zexu's stand on opium are also touched upon with the acknowledgement that after Lin's resolute measures in Guangdong, the British at first simply shifted their opium smuggling precisely to Fujian up the coast where he was not in charge (given also the general rule that officials were not supposed to serve 'at home'). On the other hand, a legal case between

British drunken sailors who killed a Chinese at the southern tip of the Kowloon peninsula (opposite Hong Kong island), which was under Lin's jurisdiction at the time, brought to the fore a further problem with the foreigners, namely the issue of extraterritoriality and consular jurisdiction, since the British declined to deliver the main delinquent to Lin for trial (and certain execution), but wanted to regulate the case themselves. Lin Zexu retaliated by pressuring the Portuguese, holding Macau on the opposite side of the Pearl River delta, to ban the British from there, which in hindsight was a further step in escalation that led to war with the British. The 'patriotic' booklet, however, keeps to a defensive agrumentational line on its 'hero' Lin Zexu, presenting him as a 'patriot' but at the same time as much more open-minded than the court in Beijing. He thus appears rather as a precursor of the Chinese self-strengthening movement of the late 19th century which, in turn, is seen ever more positively in the PRC since the era of Deng Xiaoping (as can be traced through the development of PRC history textbook descriptions of the self-strenghening movement). In fact, Lin's strategy of buying Western weapons, ships etc. and having them analysed and copied, chimes in well with the strategy in the Deng Xiaoping era to import Western technologies for building similar products in China thereafter. Lin Zexu's activities also helped bolster Chinese maritime defence – a basic deficiency in Qing military capacities of which the British were well aware (and a very salient topic in the PRC in recent years, epitomised in a particular focus on the navy since the Jiang Zemin era). This is to shield Lin Zexu from the blame he bore in the eyes of the court for conjuring up the Opium War in the first place, and the disastrous outcome for China subsequently. Predictably, the 'patriotic' booklet shifts the blame to the court itself and the competing officials locally who did not heed Lin Zexu's suggestions. The 'loss of Hong Kong' is also indirectly blamed by the 'patriotic' booklet (and in line with the textbook narratives pupils are familiar with from school) on the Daoguang emperor who believed in the Mongol official Qishan's 琦善 reports to not feel alarmed until it was too late. Lin Zexu, not giving in, though, mobilised the 'patriotic gentry and merchants' on his own to donate for resistance (104). That way, Lin Zexu is framed in Maoist terms *avant la lettre* as working together with the people against the corrupt bureaucracy.

When the emperor demoted Lin Zexu and sent him to far-away Ili (Yili) in Xinjiang as a punishment, he nonetheless accepted the task in a positive vein, the intended young reader is assured (foreshadowing what would later be called 'revolutionary optimism' in the case of Communist 'heroes'), and made himself useful also there, inspecting that area and introducing 'advanced' technologies which he was familiar with from his time in the South, e.g., mechanised weaving techniques to make better use of the locally grown Xinjiang cotton. At the same time, he warned

the court of Russian ambitions and was later credited as the first to have realised this potential threat (which again underlines his foresight since the Qing would 'lose territory' to Tsarist Russia soon after). In his final years, he briefly served in Yunnan, like Xinjiang an area with a substantial minority population, where he had to deal with Muslim Hui–Han tensions, though here, it is admitted, he was not really successful (113). When he returned home to Fuzhou on leave for health problems, he would, however, grapple once more with British presence. The 'patriotic' booklet on the Fuzhou memorial stresses in this local context how he tried to shield his home town from the British who requested to be allowed to settle down there, while the local responsible officials were irritated about his interference and rather tried to avoid another conflict. (Quite obviously, they saw Lin as a troublemaker who meddled in their affairs while home on sick leave.) When called by the court again, now to help supress the Taiping movement, he left home once more, this time for Guangxi, but died on the way. Given the fact that the Taiping are conventionally seen very positively in the PRC, his not yet acted-out role as a 'Taiping suppressor' likely helped him retain his 'national hero' image. (In fact, on the base of the monument on Tiananmen Square, depicting the 'key moments' in modern Chinese history, the next bas-relief scene after Lin Zexu's opium destruction is precisely the Taiping uprising in Guangxi's Jintian 金田!)

As to the Fuzhou memorial itself, it is, as mentioned, located in the ancestral temple for Lin Zexu built in 1905, i.e., fully 55 years after his death. The building had, in fact, not survived the Cultural Revolution unscarred: it thus was rebuilt in the 1980s (to then serve as Lin's memorial, by this turning an originally private site into a public institution). Given this history, it is not surprising that the memorial is rather short of original items. It presents, first of all, praises of Lin Zexu by CCP leaders, namely by Mao and Jiang Zemin, and the space in front of his statue is made to serve locally for various 'patriotic' events and ceremonies (120). Further activities like essay competitions (similar to Zheng Chenggong's memorial discussed above) are designed to make pupils engage more deeply with this historical model personality. In material terms, as 'historical relics', there are, however, three stelae in the courtyard, two of them of the Qing Xianfeng emperor who had succeeded the Daoguang emperor, with eulogies for Lin Zexu. The Xianfeng emperor had come to the throne just after Lin Zexu's death, and his eulogies meant an official, if gradual reappraisal of Lin Zexu. At closer scrutiny, they, however, also mention and thus memorialise the Qing court's earlier criticism that held Lin Zexu responsible for the First Opium War. The third stele, in turn, documents the Qing's willingness to grant favourable treatment to Lin Zexu's sons, rehabilitating Lin and compensating for the difficulties the family had endured due to Lin Zexu's death on

service (121). Thus, the stelae as the most important 'cultural relics' of the memorial, leave a slightly uneasy note since the black-and-white image needed for 'patriotic education' is counteracted by the assessment given by the court which includes also criticism. This, unsurprisingly, is explained as a move by the court to deflect the former Daoguang emperor's personal responsibility for the Opium War desaster unto Lin Zexu. However, a visitor might also ponder the question whether later anti-imperialist praise (which was heaped upon Lin Zexu already by the Guomindang in Republican times!)[89] of this 'hero' and the corresponding disdain for the 'appeasement faction' is not a gross oversimplification. In the end, hardly any historian doubts that the war between the British and the Qing at the time was an unequal battle, and thus attempts of 'appeasement' (or diplomacy)[90] might have been also an option of realism – even if that would not have solved the problem in the end. (This, certainly, does not hold true only for the First Opium War but might have been the case for the times of other similar 'heroes' as well, e.g., Yue Fei, the anti-Jin general of the Southern Song, as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter not picked up for the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, whose opponents at court were likely more realistic but went down in history as 'arch-traitors'.)

In any case, in the Lin Zexu memorial the stelae – if ever read in detail – have the potential to engender a more nuanced treatment of a historical figure than the 'patriotic education' is designed for. Further, the mentioned fact that Lin was supposed to suppress the nascent Taiping movement (and revolting secret societies) in Guangxi is also potentially engendering ambivalence, if one sees the Taiping as heroes as does Communist historiography. (Unsurprisingly, the assessment in the 'patriotic education' context evades commenting on this 'problem'.) The 'patriotic' booklet's final evaluation on Lin Zexu, in any case, summarises for the intended young reader that even if Lin lived in 'feudal' times, he was able to transcend it, be ahead of his time, and can serve also today as a model, not the least for being an incorrupt official – which goes well with PRC campaigns against corruption and is unmistakably 'positive' (126). In fact, present general secretary Xi Jinping, who served for some time in Fujian, took a special interest in Lin Zexu and stepped up his memorialisation also in Fuzhou.[91]

89 Cf. Lovell (2011: 320–326) on the GMD's upstepping of remembrance of the Opium War.

90 Platt (2018: 443–444) has drawn attention to the remarks by Wei Yuan 魏源, the noted scholar and Lin Zexu's friend who wrote his famous work on geography of the world 'beyond the seas', *Haiguo tuzhi* 海国图志, on the basis of materials provided by Lin Zexu: while praising his friend in many regards in these remarks at the time not published, he also criticised him for being too undiplomatic, driving on the escalation when chances of accord were there. To Wei Yuan, the war might have been avoided, had Lin Zexu reacted somewhat more flexibly.

91 Cf. 'Lin Zexu zhai yu ci' (2021).

That the Lin Zexu memorial also served in recent times in various educational policy campaigns is also corroborated by various leaflets, which I could collect on site in 2017, that show how this site is to serve for various target groups also including adults: it is designed not only for 'patriotic education' for the Chinese citizen at large, but also as a 'state defence education showcase base' (*guojia guofang jiaoyu shifan jidi* 国家国防教育示范基地), a 'state anti-drug education showcase base' (*guojia jindu jiaoyu shifan jidi* 国家禁毒教育示范基地), a 'national humanities and social sciences popularisation base' (*quanguo renwen shehui kexue puji jidi* 全国人文社会科学普及基地), and a 'national cultural system of incorrupt political culture education base' (*quanguo wenhua xitong lianzheng wenhua jiaoyu jidi* 全国文化系统廉政文化教育基地) (cf. also chapter 1, appendix 3, on more of such labels). Regarding defence, the interesting point is that to those undergoing 'defence education' there, the message is conveyed that Lin Zexu had also advocated preemptive attacks, if needed – a notable point given the usual stress on China's only wanting to 'defend' herself, and reflecting the more assertive tone with which the Chinese navy (but also the military in general) is presented in recent years.[92] However, beyond the maritime 'border' (adding a map detailing the intense coastal fortification in Guangdong undertaken in Lin's area of administration with 21 forts along the coast back then), Lin Zexu had also warned in Xinjiang against the Russians, which shows he was concerned also with national defence on land (and therewith also obviously is to alert those undergoing 'defence education' there in the Xi Jinping era to the potential Russian 'threat' to China, in spite of all simultaneous 'friendship' displays between Russian president Putin and Xi Jinping). Finally, Lin Zexu's main achievements are notably summarised in a 'three character' format (*Lin Zexu sanzijing* 林则徐三字经) so widely used in traditional education, for making them easier to memorise for this kind of 'defence education'.[93]

The leaflet regarding incorrupt political culture (a major issue in the Xi Jinping era), in turn, points out that the model official Lin Zexu came from a rather poor family, his mother having to help sustain the family with needle work, how he was inspired by incorruptible scholar-officials in his youth and then would actively work against cheating at the imperial exams when he was an examiner, that he left almost nothing to his sons (and thus had not accumulated personal riches), and that his

92 This chimes in with the increasing stress on maritime power, especially since the 2000s. Cf. Müller 2013, chapter 2, on the hype around the TV documentary series 'Rise of the Great Powers' (*Daguo jueqi* 大国崛起) (2006), arguing over world history for the key role of maritime power for nations to achieve 'great power status'. On the general policy shift in the Xi Jinping era towards an ever more assertive stance also militarily, see Zhao (2023).

93 Cf., e.g., also the case of Dujiangyan (chapter 2.3 in the present book) where this kind of device for easy memorisation was also used.

house in Fuzhou was in an underprivileged area with frequent flooding. In this case, an 'ode' (*song* 颂) to Lin Zexu and a song to sing in his praise is to drive home these points by use of these formats to cadres sent there for the 'study' of 'incorrupt political culture' to emulate this model.

The leaflet on the more specific anti-drug campaigning, finally, stresses Lin Zexu's actions against opium and his 'scientific' way of destroying it, showing with charts that also in the PRC drugs are still a large problem with a growing number of addicts, and the increase of synthetic drugs *vs* heroin addiction. To illustrate the damage done by drugs, 'before and after' shock photos are shown, which are, however, here not, as in the 1998 nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, of *Chinese* addicts, but taken from the *US* anti-drug campaign, and notably only presenting 'white' people![94] That way, while the PRC 'drug problem' is presented in a 'scientific' and rather aseptic way of charts, the most compelling visual material eliciting emotional reactions is reinforcing the perception of drugs being something 'Western', against which China should be aware as Lin Zexu once was in the case of 'British' opium.[95] While also alcohol is mentioned as a problem, it is interestingly not subsumed under the same 'drug' category, and the perils of drugs are exemplified with traffic accidents (which occur supposedly even more probably under drug consumption than with drunken drivers) which not only destroy the individual, but also cost the lives of others and are thus a societal problem as well. Therefore, anti-drug campaigning serves the whole nation. The political leaders in charge at the time of my visit (2017), Xi Jinping and then-prime minister Li Keqiang 李克强, were shown on the leaflet handing out the policy baselines, while posters were to motivate the people to join the fight against drugs. In fact, all these Lin Zexu educational leaflets are 'sanctioned' by citing Xi Jinping's positive evaluation of Lin Zexu, lauding his 'patriotism', his incorruptibility, but also his 'looking at the world with open eyes' (to counter any reading of him as a xenophobic, stubborn traditionalist).

The even more recent *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 of the site (Gu 2019) may stand for a summary of the Xi Jinping-era evaluation and framing of Lin Zexu as a model via his 'patriotic education showcase base' in Fuzhou. Lin's childhood is presented here to the intended reading pupils as one full of hard work, detailing how Lin Zexu went every day to bring the needle work of his mother and sisters to a shop before going to school, and brought the money back in the evening, since his father, a

94 One may note that one of the common arguments with defenders of Chinese 'tradition' is that 'the West' has a drug problem due to its deficient value system.

95 Needless to say, the extensive inner-Chinese opium growing until the mid-20th century is no topic.

teacher, was not rich enough to feed the whole numerous family. That way, the new framing puts Lin's difficulties and hands-on activities as a child more into the foreground. On the other hand, his family background also proved helpful for him, since his father was very open-minded and passed this on to his son. Lin Zexu, on his part, studied hard – which the intended reading pupils should emulate – and thus was successful in his exams (37–38). Listening to the friends of his father, he learnt of corruption among officials, and that critics would be easily punished by the evil officials (which connects well to the 'incorruptibility' campaign of Xi Jinping times). Realising his great potential, a local scholar offered him his daughter, whom he could finally marry when he passed the official examinations to achieve the *juren* 举人 degree. To honour her and her family, he would thus not take in concubines as long as his wife lived (foreshadowing the monogamous marriages of today) (39–41).

Since he did not succeed in the highest palace exam at first (i.e., experiencing also setbacks), he worked in Xiamen in the administration, dealing with foreign commercial ships (i.e., underwent job training while still aspiring for higher 'degrees' – again something a present-day pupil might consider as a model). There he encountered the problem of the smuggling of opium and of corruption on the ground himself. After he finally succeeded in the palace exam, he, however, did not lean back but went on learning, studying the Manchu language in the Hanlin academy (due to the ruling Manchu Qing), and specialising in water management (thus striving for a broad formation for himself). During this time in Beijing, he also maintained many social contacts as reflected in his diaries, especially with those who had taken the exam with him (showing him to the intended reading pupils as someone who also honoured friendship and socialised, not the least with his 'classmates') (42). Taking up various assignments, he would become examiner on lower-level exams himself and also censor for a time (when obviously his rivalry with the Mongol official Qishan, with whom he clashed later over opium policies and who is in PRC textbooks the usual 'villain', already started).[96] Given his strictness, Lin Zexu, however, made himself easily enemies, and thus his work was often frustrated (which should prepare the intended reading pupils for potential societal ostracism when following the 'just' cause) (43).

In legal cases, in turn, the narrative highlights the fact already mentioned that Lin Zexu set the standard for officials to go out to the places of crimes and personally inquire, instead of relying only on oral narratives, while accusations without basis were to be severly punished. (These issues, too, are something a modern-day reader

96 In PRC textbooks, Qishan is characterised as corrupt and a coward, always seeking to appease the British and constantly counteracting the 'hero' Lin Zexu.

would expect from the state to deliver: fair legal procedures.) When revolts occurred because officials had not given relief to people in distress, he would punish the officials, and thus the revolts died down (which suggests that fair rule also implies balanced judgement and care, to not drive people into desperation). Although he would force rich people to open their granaries to share with the hungry in times of need, he also saw to it that people learnt to act on their own instead of waiting for relief from above (a framing which rings familiar to the intended reading pupils having learnt about Maoist campaigns of 'do it yourself' – cf., e.g., chapter 3.3 of the present book on Yan'an) (44). Lin, however, was also 'traditional' in the sense that he honoured custom, and stayed home after the death of his mother for the obligatory three years of mourning, but when called to help with water works in between, he was flexible enough to first solve the problem and then go on mourning (45). When his father died, he went back to Fuzhou again for mourning (i.e., he fulfilled his filial duty scrupulously), but thereafter, he worked continuously wherever he was sent to serve. Opium became a major issue for him which, the intended reading pupil of the Xi Jinping era is told in a more scientific vein, had been an old drug in China for medical use to be swallowed. The problem arose when it was smoked, which the Dutch are said to have introduced over Taiwan (which also enforces the lesson of how 'patriotically' important it was that Zheng Chenggong – see above – 'took back' Taiwan from the Dutch). The British, however, started to grow opium in masses in India. The Qing emperors had forbidden the smoking opium, but those at the court who were in favour of legalisation were all corrupt, according to the narrative, while Lin supported the ban.

The 2019 narrative keeps to the familiar storyline, taught in history textbooks, that (Mongol official) Qishan stood for the other side, arguing that the foreigners might attack (which they did) (46–49). But, the new narrative points out, there were also others who supported Lin's line, including noted scholar Gong Zizhen 龚自珍. In short, he was not alone in his assessment among Chinese intellectuals. And Lin went ahead, building up also the defence structures in Guangdong (in case an armed conflict would emerge), while he morally appealed to Queen Victoria to stop the opium traffic, assuming it was illegal from the British side as well (a storyline presented also in history textbooks in China, although the 2019 narrative notably admits that Lin was not correctly informed about the situation in Britain at the time – once more proving the point encountered in various cases in the present book that the 2019 *Fengbei* narratives show more awareness of scholarly untenable assertions, trying to deflect them otherwise). With various measures, the intended reader is assured, Lin Zexu did try to avoid a clash, but finally had to take strong measures. The foreigners, in turn, are said to have been impressed by his method of destroying

the finally confiscated opium thoroughly. Above all, Mao also praised his deed in Humen as the start of the Chinese 'democratic revolution', which is the ultimate sanctioning of this 'hero' also for socialist China (53).

To profile Lin Zexu's model personality, the 2019 narrative puts a special focus on how he, when unjustly degraded and sent to Ili, would nonetheless not waver in his dedication to the *patria*, rendering his life in those troubled times of 'punishment' more approachable for the intended reading pupil: on his way to the far Northwest, he would, e.g., help solve problems with the Huanghe before moving on in the company of three sons and his wife. When his wife fell ill, he had to take farewell from her, additionally saddened, the intended reader is told, by the news about the Nanjing Treaty of 1842 which ended the First Opium War (and ceded Hong Kong island to the British 'forever'). But also then, he was not alone, his close collaborator in Guangdong being sent to Ili, too, and Lin would make himself useful also in Ili, developing a very friendly relationship with the Manchu governor there, though he, a Fujianese, is said to have suffered from the very different climate.

When the emperor wanted to deploy troops from Ili precisely to use for coastal defence – something Lin Zexu had worked for when in Guangdong in the South, he warned from his by now Northwestern perspective that this would endanger Ili and encourage Tsarist Russian to push her designs on that region ahead instead. This, the intended reading pupils are assured, was in hindsight a valid assumption, since the Russians, more than any other foreigners, would eat away 'China's territory' – a fact much stressed in Chinese history textbooks,[97] even though the removal of troops was successfully stopped at the time. (This is all to show to the intended readers that the whole Chinese border needs defence, and that also the Russians cannot be ignored, while the detailed treatment of Lin's service in Xinjiang, an area fraught with many problems in recent years in Beijing perspective, is notable in this Xi Jinping-era narrative.)

In Xinjiang, Lin, however, also cared for agriculture and water work (thus moving his Manchu colleague to recommend him once more to the emperor for reconsidering the 'punishment' of Lin), and in Southern Xinjiang, he would also care for assigning land slots, giving a fair share to the Uyghurs and thus trying to establish a

97 This was done by treaties, but the Qing had been ill-prepared for the negotations. Cf. Paine (1996). It is remarkable how strongly this issue of Tsarist Russia's 'aggression' against China is accentuated in Chinese schoolbooks. Cf. Müller (2013 [2008]: 12), Rysakova (2020: 163–164). Incidentally, all recently displayed Sino–Russian friendship notwithstanding, the standard Xi Jinping-era junior secondary History textbook asserts over the treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) to PRC pupils China's 'legal' rights to the whole Amur–Ussuri region *including* Sachalin, all present-day Russian territory. (Jiaoyubu 2016: 93).

more balanced relation between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese. (This, too, is high on the political agenda in recent years once more.) In 1845, he was finally 'pardoned' and reinstalled in his former rank (54–59). Today, in Ili, a memorial for Lin Zexu honours the 'benign (Han) official', which was, however, only set up in 1994 (150 years after he left the place), and his descendants, including the already named diplomat Ling Qing, came for a visit also to that memorial in China's border region in this present Kazakh autonomous prefecture of Xinjiang.

In sum, for the 2019 framing of Lin Zexu in the 'patriotic education' context, he was a model praised by all kinds of later generations and political groups: by those sustaining the Qing (since he worked for them after all), but also by the reformer group who stressed with Lin rather his openness for the West and readiness to learn from it (to apply this then for China's benefit). Mao praised him, but also the 'Reform and Opening' (*gaige kaifang* 改革开放) advocates of the Deng Xiaoping-era. Chinese Communist historian of Mao times, Fan Wenlan 范文澜, noted for his defining work on modern history in the PRC,[98] called him the first in modern Chinese history to 'open his eyes to the world' (which obviously is the source for this formulation so often encountered in descriptions of Lin Zexu). He thus collected knowledge on the West, but also Western evaluations of China, had many things translated etc. In Yangzhou on his way to Ili, he handed all the materials collected in Guangdong to his friend Wei Yuan 魏源 who would then write the famous *Haiguo tuzhi* 海国图志 (Illustrated gazeteer on the maritime countries) (which figures as the first major Chinese work on the West at the time). At Lin's time, the 2019 narrative stresses, it was still considered unorthodox to 'learn from' the West. While nothing is said about his role in Yunnan nor about his supposed suppression of the Taiping in this recent framing of Lin Zexu, the intended reading pupils are only told that when Lin Zexu met Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠, one of the major officials of the next generation, he alerted him to the fact that the greatest danger for China was, in fact, Russia – which means that he handed on this warning as a legacy. The British could only arrive over sea, the argument goes, but the Russians could do so over land (and this they would). In Lin Zexu's view (as formed during his Ili experience), the Qing focused too much on the coast and this was the chance for the Russians. Zuo Zongtang would thus heed his advice, and after the Russians used an occasion to occupy Ili in 1871, he finally succeeded in making them withdraw (which means that Zuo Zongtang's 'success' in the late 1870s should be understood

98 Fan Wenlan was for the historiography of modern China in the PRC what Guo Moruo was for the historiography of ancient China. For Fan's reading and its competitors, see Li (2010).

as due to Lin Zexu's foresight three decades earlier!) (60–62).[99] That way, Lin Zexu is a model easily connected to China's territorial 'defence', notably also vis-à-vis the neighbouring Russians who are characterised, one should once more underline, even in 2019 as rather a potential threat for the intended Chinese 'patriotic' reader, and Lin's model suggests to the next generation of Chinese 'citizens' how they should behave in an international competitive surrounding, being well prepared for all eventualities.

All these above cases of 'traditional' role models, be it Confucius, Zheng Cheng-gong, or Lin Zexu, show how values are selectively adapted from former times to argue for the linkage of the present with Chinese 'tradition' in a 'patriotic' perspective. Much is focused on education and character building, but also the will to be upright and stand up against foreign encroachment is decisive, that way arguing for the necessity to 'defend' one's *patria*. The selective reappraisal of the (Confucian) value of 'filial duty' is to lead the modern Chinese citizen to see the *patria* as what one has to be 'filial' to, above all. The Chinese pupil as much as the Chinese tourist should learn via these sites dedicated to outstanding individuals of former times, that such a behaviour has a long 'tradition' in China, and how these personalities, though grown up under a different societal system than the present one, came to embrace those values. The localised mode, however, also offers the possibility to add some local flavour to those 'heroes', tangible via 'their' sites which present and presence these historical agents of former times.

5.2 Non-Communist modern models

Beyond the (few) models taken from 'traditional China', also some non-Communist modern models were integrated into the 'patriotic education showcase bases' lists, be it 'precursors' or later 'sympathisers' of the Communist Revolution. Again, three examples will be discussed in this subchapter: Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925) who stood for the 'old-style' revolution, had cooperated with the Communists in his very last months of life, building up the First United Front in 1924, but dying already in early 1925. (His legacy was contested between the Left-wing and Right-wing GMD after his demise, while his last wife, Song Qingling, would opt for the Communists in the

99 The Russians had occupied the Ili area in the context of the Muslim Dungan rebellion. Zuo Zongtang managed to diplomatically arrange for a withdrawal of Russian troops and reestablish Chinese rule in Ili.

end). In the PRC's very first list of 'patriotic education showcases bases' (1997), Sun Yat-sen is even represented (rather exceptionally) by *two* sites, his 'home' and his mausoleum (Zhongshan ling 中山陵), but the 'former home' (*guju*) is the primary place to characterise Sun, the man and his personality, and the values he stood for, while the mausoleum represent him rather as the 'national' figure in official function. Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946), in turn, who was Western-educated (like Sun) and became a CCP sympathiser, also died still before the establishment of the PRC, but in his case after the Second Sino–Japanese War: he represents the shifts in education which form an important backdrop, evidentally, to a 'patriotic *education*' campaign. And finally, we will look at Chen Jiageng (Tan Kah Kee as he is internationally known, reflecting his name's Hokkien pronunciation, but here in the 'patriotic' context rather more apt to figure with his 'nationalised' Mandarin pronunciation) (1874–1961), who was an Overseas Chinese again active in education, though mainly by financing it (cf. also chapter 4.1 of the present book on the Overseas Chinese Museum established by him). He, who in the end sympathised with the Communists, embodies the 'good capitalist' who channelled his funds 'patriotically' into education at home (and among the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia to bind them to their 'home country'). He would become also the PRC's figure-head to entice Overseas Chinese to follow his lead and come 'back to their homeland' – or later to at least invest there, being the only one of the three role models discussed here who lived into PRC times.

Case study: Sun Yat-sen

The 'former home' (*guju*) of Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan 孙中山 as he is commonly called in China)[100] in the village of Cuiheng 翠亨 (now part of Zhongshan City named after him in Guangdong Province)[101] honours him in the PRC context as a 'forerunner' of the CCP: his 'old-style' revolution paved the way, according to this reading, for the Communist one. His so-called *guju* is, in fact, reconstructed, and the site is called **Sun Zhongshan guju *jinianguan*** 孙中山故居纪念馆 (*Memorial* of Sun Yat-sen's former home) (Guangdong Province) (list 1, 1997) likely for that reason. The present-day visitor (as I observed on-site in 2013) is, however, led to believe that the house itself is 'authentic' from the early 1890s onward and

100 Zhongshan is the Chinese reading of the name he used for covering his identity when in Japan: Nakayama 中山.

101 The city formerly called Xiangshan 香山, was renamed soon after Sun's death (1925) in honour of the 'great son' as Zhongshan.

preserved, while the nearby reconstructed 'typical' architecture of the time is openly acknowledged as a recreation. The obvious, though not openly explained, background to initial historical destruction the village experienced (which included Sun's home) is that after Sun's failed first uprising of 1895 in nearby Guangzhou against the Manchu-Qing, he had a price on his head as a revolutionary, and the usual practice of the Qing was to devastate the home of rebels as a punishment. Thus, his family in Cuiheng had had to leave their home in a hurry in 1895 when news came that Sun Yat-sen had made an uprising and failed, and they could only safely move back many years later after the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 (see chapter 4.2 for the Wuchang Uprising Memorial) and Sun's election to the position of provisional president of the new Republic (taking up office on 1 January 1912). Only then, i.e., in 1912, the Sun family's Cuiheng home could be properly restored and enlarged by Sun Yat-sen's elder brother Sun Mei 孙眉 in a Western-inspired style which is the one to be seen today.[102] (And the family would have to leave soon after again when in 1913 Sun's 'second revolution' against his increasingly dictatorial 'successor' as provisional president, Yuan Shikai 袁世凯, failed.) In terms of educational use, the visitor can also see from the plaques (as of 2013 at the time of my visit), that beyond serving as a 'patriotic education' site, the place was designated in 2010 as an 'anti-corruption' education base, too (*quanguo lianzheng jiaoyu jidi* – cf. chapter 1, appendix 3, for several labels) (similar to the above case of Lin Zexu's memorial).

Even more than Lin Zexu, Sun Yat-sen is likely the Chinese historical figure with most memorials scattered around the globe,[103] given his restless life as a revolutionary on the run ever since the failed Guangzhou uprising of 1895. He is commemorated today in Hong Kong and Macau, the former colonies where he repeatedly stayed already in his formative years, each with a memorial museum; in Japan, where he liked to take shelter when a revolutionary already, most notably with the Kōbe memorial; but also in Southeast Asia in Singapore; and in the US, namely on Hawai'i where he spent part of his youth, with a memorial park. Taiwan, of course, commemorates him, too, with a big 'memorial hall' set up by the GMD during Chiang Kai-shek's rule for their party's 'founding father',[104] though historically,

102 Cf. Müller (2022: 235).

103 Confucius, the internationally likely best-known historical Chinese, in comparison, has temples, not personal 'memorials'.

104 The hall was designed in the context of the anniversary of Sun's 100th birthday, in Taiwan celebrated in 1965 according to Chinese custom, while the PRC counted in 'Western' style and 'celebrated' it in 1966 – if hampered by the onset of the Cultural Revolution. (Cf. also Müller 2022: 224–225, 249). By then, the scenario that the mainland could ever be 'recovered' again by the GMD had become also clearly unrealistic. While the mainland had Cuiheng and, more importantly, also

Sun's physical contact with Taiwan had been marginal. In mainland China, Sun Yat-sen's 'former residence' (*guju*) in his home village Cuiheng is also not the single place for commemorating him. In Guangzhou and Shanghai, where he lived for some time later during the early Republic, memorial museums have been set up as well, i.e., he has a whole range of *guju* (former residences) in the wider sense. And his huge mausoleum in Nanjing is a top tourist site which has also been listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in itself, as mentioned. Statues of him have been put up on various occasions and at various places, the most famous of which were sponsored by his Japanese friend Umeya Shōkichi 梅屋庄吉, done in bronze.

In filmic presentation of the Cuiheng 'patriotic' site to the national TV audience, the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 7) presents Sun also by adding his original voice which was recorded from early Republican times, which presences him in a very concrete sense. His Cuiheng 'former home' is introduced, suggesting that the architecture of the house to be seen reflected Sun's own design (although the present house is, as mentioned, the one rebuilt and enlarged by his elder brother Sun Mei after the Xinhai revolution – something not elaborated on in the film clip.) The basic layout of the house supposedly reflected Sun Yat-sen's intention to serve man, not the gods, i.e., took distances from any 'traditional' and 'unscientific' *fengshui* 风水 (geomantic) belief usually connected to building houses. E.g., for practical reasons the house was facing another direction than the other houses in the village, while the usual ancestor niche is void (today). (As is obvious to the TV audience from the remaining shades in the wood, however, there had been ancestor tablets there previously!) Sun's initial local education (which took place in the rich Feng 冯 family ancestors hall in the village) is presented in the film clip as important for understanding his personality. Sun is characterised as a child who always put questions to the teacher, showing his inquisitive mind from childhood on (and his lack of fear to also challenge figures of authority). In front of the house, a rather recent statue (of 1987) of the old former Taiping soldier who supposedly told Sun and other village children stories about the heroic Taiping, which is part of the lore of Sun Yat-sen in Cuiheng,[105] is addressed, which complemented the traditional 'Confucian' teaching with orally transmitted experience of 'the people'. Sun is thus characterised as a broadly interested village boy, and the large tree under which the

Sun's tomb in Nanjing, Chiang Kai-shek wanted a physical 'link' to him for Taiwan, too. (The hall was finished still during Chiang's lifetime in the early 1970s and served for his own funeral ceremony.)

105 One may note that most of the information on Sun Yat-sen's early years is coming from his own accounts later, which have been repeatedly found to be not very reliable and rather interest-driven. (Cf. also Müller 2022: 215–222). The statue of the old Taiping soldier telling stories to Sun and the village children is, according to Lin (1999: 22), of 1987.

statue is situated is said to have been originally 'planted by him'.[106] (see fig. 5.2.1) Notably, the historical photos shown in this late 1990s film clip largely evade Sun's own family (which in PRC perspective is fraught with many problems politically),[107] just representing him and Song Qingling, his last and non-local wife, who would also remain in mainland China in 1949 (and is politically connoted 'positively', while not being connected to Cuiheng, though). The film clip, produced by Guangzhou TV, provides mostly spoken commentary, while showing tourists (but no pupils in this case) visiting the site, soliciting the Chinese TV viewer to come to the place as a tourist, too.

Fig. 5.2.1 Sun Yat-sen as a village boy learning from the old Taiping soldier about the uprising (Cuiheng) (photograph by the author, 2013)

106 One may note that this topos of trees which connect to a former figure is found repeatedly in such patriotic education sites, as we already observed in various cases. In this case, the original tree is said elsewhere to have been eradicated by a typhoon, and thus the memorial replanted the same type that Sun is said to have imported from Hawai'i.

107 Cf. Müller (2022: 215–236) for the complicated situation, mirrored in the burial issues of the single figures.

In comparison, the 'patriotic' educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 5), produced by Zhongshan city's municipal audio-visual education station, starts with referencing visually a well-known film on Sun Yat-sen (a 1986 biopic notably also recommended for classroom use in history education – which thus resembles the approach of the educational video on Lin Zexu above with its reference to the *Lin Zexu* film of the 1950s, showing awareness of the applicability of this production for school teaching).[108] Only then, the educational video provides an introduction to the official ideological significance of Sun Yat-sen in Communist reading by historian Zhang Lei 张磊, then head of the Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences (and author of various books on Sun as well as key author of the named biopic), as a 'didactic' preparation of what should be learnt from this 'patriotic education showcase base'.

Given this baseline, the video proceeds to present the *guju* with again mostly tourists visiting, notably many groups of foreigners among them, though visiting pupil groups appear later on as well. This way, Sun's world-wide appeal (and strong foreign connection) is profiled. The fact that Sun was mostly educated in Hawai'i in his young years when he moved there to join his elder brother Sun Mei is, however, not highlighted. In fact, a problem for the Cuiheng memorial is Sun Yat-sen's frequent absence from the place (and the fact, that the shabby house where he had been born in 1866 is in any case no longer extant, since Sun Mei already had built a larger one with the money he had earned abroad in the early 1890s, before his brother's failed uprising of 1895 caused the family to flee, and then again rebuilt and expanded the house, as said, when the family could return to Cuiheng after the Xinhai revolution, at least for some time). To provide for an illustration of Sun's poverty as a child, the present lavish building (of post-Xinhai revolution times) is not particularly useful, and thus a recreation of 'typical' housings nearby is to show to the visitor how 'rich', 'middle', and 'poor' living quarters looked like in the area at the time of Sun Yat-sen's childhood, which serve as a rather didactic and typifying outdoor exhibition. Even typical shops are recreated in a kind of open-air museum, including the recreation of a *doufu* shop where Sun Yat-sen is said in one of the well-known stories circulating about him as a child to have smashed a frying pan when bullied by the shop owner's brats, showing his readiness to rebel against injustice (and not unruliness, which would, needless to say, sit uneasily with

108 For more on this particular film of 1986, *Sun Zhongshan*, see entries on my website on *Representations of History in Chinese Film and Television*, Müller (2006). One may add here, that another fictional appearance of Sun on screen in 2003 became controversial, instead, when a final long speech by Sun on democracy caused the airing of the huge TV series *Zou xiang gonghe* (Toward the Republic) to be stopped. Cf. Müller (2007).

'patriotic' educational goals). (A broken frying pan is duly installed for visitors to see.) This educational video at least mentions the equally famous story about Sun and his friend Lu Haodong 陆皓东 breaking off two fingers of the statue of the deity revered in the village temple to 'teach the villagers' a lesson about superstition (which the latter unsurprisingly did not appreciate).[109] In fact, Sun is said to have lived at this 'former home' (if actually in the early 1890s' predecessor version of the present building, as mentioned) only for some time during three years (1892–1895, since he was often away from Cuiheng also after his stay in Hawai'i, namely in Hong Kong and Macau), before becoming a wholesale revolutionary, which would turn him into a fugitive all over the globe. (He would, in fact, only return to Cuiheng for a brief visit after the creation of the Republic in 1912, but never again lived there.) Also, his conncection to Japan where he lived for a substantial time, is only briefly hinted at in this educational video with photos (and nothing is mentioned about his repeated stays in Southeast Asia), thus keeping the focus on Sun, the Cuiheng figure, but the presentation covers at least briefly his later career. His local connections, including his first wife Lu Muzhen 卢慕贞, are, however, all written out of the picture in this late 1990s presentation. (Lu Muzhen could, in fact, be only mentioned and shown more recently, cf. Müller 2022: 230). After all, many personal connections of Sun were later no longer 'politically correct' in Communist view, and almost no one of his closer family (but for his last much younger wife Song Qingling and Sun's elderly sister) would remain on the Chinese mainland in 1949.[110] That way, the video tries to circumnavigate the 'problematic' aspects to focus on early Sun in Cuiheng.

When one turns to the booklet in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' series on first list sites for a more in-depth presentation in 'patriotic' terms for pupils, one notes that this booklet (Lin 1999) focuses, as with many other cases of *guju*, on the historical figure's relationship to his home, but that in his case, that relationship was fraught with many problems which had to be treated with caution. His traditional education in the village provided him with some grounding in classical studies, but in his own view, much more important were the stories supposedly told by an old Taiping soldier, praising the Taiping and their anti-Qing struggle, which Sun would later take up himself. The Taiping with their ideology which integrated Christian elements, were in sharp contrast to popular religiosity, which led to their smashing temples and ancestor halls, and their ideas about women's more active role in

109 Cf. Müller (2022: 216). Incidentally, the temple is no longer there because it was destroyed, as a local plaque discloses, 'in 1966', i.e., likely in the early Cultural Revolution's 'destroy the four olds' campaign.

110 For a short summary of the trajectory of the single figures, cf. Müller (2022: 215–236).

society, including the rejection of foot-binding – which also reflected the Hakka background, are said to have inspired Sun, as well as the Taiping ideas about social equality. (Over the Taiping, the Christian or Western elements are thus filtered in a 'Chinese' way, while the ethnic Hakka element is not highlighted in PRC accounts.)[111] On the other hand, Sun Yat-sen's sojourn at his brother Sun Mei's in Hawai'i who had migrated like so many of the area to strive for a better living abroad, brought him into contact with the larger world and an English-missionary education. Thus, when he returned to Cuiheng (forced by Sun Mei who feared him having become too Westernised during his studies in Hawai'i), he was no longer willing to accept local customs easily. Thus, he repeatedly clashed with the local population, most famously in his already mentioned act of 'vandalism' in the village temple in an attempt to teach the villagers about their 'superstition' (34–38) – something to be appreciated today by PRC pupils as intended readers of this 'patriotic' booklet, but not appreciated by the villagers back at the time, which caused his father to rather quickly send him off to Hong Kong. While Sun became a Christian there in a further act of 'defiance', his subsequent study of medicine made him at least tolerable to the villagers on his visits home since he could provide medical assistance (43–44, 61). However, since his relationship with his place of origin was conflictual, the Cuiheng *guju* may not easily, as in other showcase bases, tell a story along the lines of how the village 'made' the great man. The family, a staple in such connections to the locale usually focused upon, is, as mentioned, a further problem. The booklet at least ventures to name beyond Song Qingling, i.e., Sun's non-local last wife, his elder brother Sun Mei and the latter's son Sun Chang 孙昌 who both died in the early years of the Republic, and – if cautiously – Sun Yat-sen's only son Sun Ke 孙科 (Sun Fo) who was his 'heir' in traditional understanding, but the most problematic of the family figures since he would hold important political functions in the GMD later and thus was put on the Communist 'blacklist' in 1948 as a 'war criminal' during the later phase of the Civil War.[112] In spite of his personal strained relationship with Chiang Kai-shek, his father's de facto political successor, Sun Ke, who had at first evaded Taiwan after 1949, finally made up with him and ended his days there, but his two extramarital daughters had by the time of the 'patriotic' booklet's publication (1999) started to come over from the US to mainland China for visits (as also Sun Mei's descendants did). Caution,

111 This is typical of PRC textbook framings of the Taiping who are thrust into the role of a 'peasant' movement, while ethnicity is not highlighted. The Hakka identity of many leading figures in modern Chinese history and politics has not been deemed feasible to mention. (Cf. Erbaugh 1992). For Sun himself, cf. Müller (2022: 219–220).

112 See Müller (2022: 224).

however, made for a very selective presentation in the 'patriotic' narrative for the intended young PRC readers about the family. E.g., elder brother Sun Mei's final tomb in the area of Cuiheng was de facto not to be visited at that time: here, the problem is that the stele set up by the GMD in the 1930s for him, many years after Sun Mei's death in Macau in 1915, where he had been buried first, figured not only the GMD party symbol, but the inscription was by no one else than Wang Jingwei 汪精卫, the subsequent 'arch traitor' of the Second Sino–Japanese War time, who was the GMD chairman when Sun Mei's remains were transferred to Cuiheng in 1934 and the stele erected. (Cf. Müller 2022: 235). (Notably, the name of Wang Jingwei is simply left out in the 1999 'patriotic booklet' in the reproduction of the stele's text, cf. Lin 1999: 85–87!). Similarly, the tomb of Sun Mei's only son, Sun Chang, who tragically died in 1917 by friendly fire when helping his uncle Sun Yat-sen, posed the 'problem' that the inscription was by (Communist-blacklisted) Sun Ke, his cousin. (Cf. Müller 2022: 235, 231–232). How the Cuiheng *guju* memorial fared during the Cultural Revolution is another topic tactfully evaded in the 'patriotic' narrative. In fact, one may also note that the Cuiheng memorial was not frequently visited by Communist leaders or notables before the Cultural Revolution: only general Zhu De and key cultural Communist figure Guo Moruo obviously came to the place (in 1959 and 1962 respectively). Others came only after the Cultural Revolution, like general Ye Jianying 叶剑英 – who had served Sun in 1922,[113] general Wang Zhen 王震, Liao Chengzhi – who knew Sun personally well,[114] and general Yang Shangkun 杨尚昆, as well as Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhou Enlai's widow Deng Yingchao 邓颖超 and others.[115] Mao, for one, who had known Sun personally, too, and integrated Sun's last wife Song Qingling nominally into the PRC leadership, had never visited but at least publicly honoured Sun in 1956 on the 90th anniversary of Sun Yat-sen's birth (while notably remaining silent ten years later at the 100th anniversary in November 1966 during the early Cultural Revolution).[116] Even Song Qingling, his last wife, never came in person in PRC times to visit the site so strongly connected to Sun's family

113 This was during the critical situation caused by the split between the warlord Chen Jiongming 陈炯明 and Sun Yat-sen which forced Sun temporarily out of Guangzhou.

114 Liao's family, namely his parents Liao Zhongkai and He Xiangning, were close to Sun Yat-sen. His elder sister assisted during the controversial marriage ceremony of Sun Yat-sen and Song Qingling in Japan as a translator. (Cf. Müller 2022: 247).

115 For an overview of the high-profile visitors, see Lin (1999: 108–111). As overseas visitors, only Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk and Indian politician Dhankhar are named.

116 See Mao (1956). He finished his praise however with a qualification that Sun, too, had his 'shortcomings' (which he did not explicate at the occasion). Ten years later, Mao would not take part in the 100th anniversary celebrations, though, with the Cultural Revolution just having started.

background – while Sun's local first wife died in nearby Macau in 1952 (and his younger daughter in 1979 there as well, finally buried in Hong Kong).[117] This all underlines that the memorial had no easy trajectory and needed to avoid various pitfalls.

By naming the Cuiheng *guju* a 'former home *memorial*' for Sun Yat-sen, the site reflects the fact that in terms of material, there are only limited 'authentic' things to be shown, though the booklet goes at length to praise Sun Yat-sen's unconventional architectonic ideas supposedly realised there, not following 'superstition' (while admitting here to the reader that he gave in to 'his mother's requests' on the issue of an ancestors tablets' niche).[118] E.g., Sun is credited for having introduced 'scientific' ideas about ventilation, sun shades etc. to the area with this new conception of house building (Lin 1999: 55–60). To further augment Cuiheng's offer for 'patriotic education' beyond the memorial house itself, nearby, also other locals who would become revolutionaries were integrated and honoured with smaller exhibitions (most notably Sun's friend Lu Haodong who conspired with him but was caught in the first failed 1895 uprising and executed while Sun escaped),[119] thus stepping up Cuiheng's revolutionary credentials beyond Sun. Even several figures from the area who would become Communists, if later, are included, suggesting that Sun somehow inspired them to choose the way of revolution (and thus enrich the place's offer for visitors, while also enforcing Sun's connection to the CCP that way in hindsight).[120] Given that the Cuiheng memorial is today part of Zhongshan municipality, a very modernised area of China, and has strong overseas connections due to this very international figure Sun Yat-sen, the site tried early on to make use of this advantage and ventured into website presence at a time when this was still rather rare in China (4–5). On the other hand, since the key target group for 'patriotic education' is Chinese pupils, the memorial actively established

117 For the various factors involved in the burials and later reburials of Lu Muzhen and the younger daughter (while the elder daughter had died much earlier), cf. Müller (2022: 228–230).

118 One should, however, note that his mother was to never return to Cuiheng after the flight in 1895, since she died before the Xinhai Revolution, namely in Hong Kong in 1910, where she is also buried. Cf. Müller (2022: 232–233). (This, of course, does not preclude that she might have insisted on the ancestors' tablets niche back in the early 1890s version of the house before the flight.) Sun Mei, who rebuilt the Cuiheng house in 1912, as mentioned, is however also known for being more 'traditional' than his younger brother and thus likely (re)installed the ancestors' tablets niche of which the remaining shades in the wood could be spotted also in the TV film clip.

119 In 1912, when Sun Yat-sen came back to Cuiheng where Lu Haodong's family could only set up a substitute tomb (*yiguan zhong* 衣冠冢) since the Qing had not handed over his corpse after execution, he visited that tomb and the Lu family. (Lin 1999: 69–70).

120 Lin thus includes also Cuiheng CCP 'martyrs' of the Second Sino–Japanese War who had no apparent relation with Sun Yat-sen himself who was dead by then since long. (Lin 1999: 93–97).

stable contracts with several educational facilities and schools to serve as their training site: not only those nearby, but also some nation-wide, who would regularly organise outings to the site (2–3, 112). That way, the somewhat 'difficult' site tried to conform to the 'patriotic education' requirements of the 1990s, while also playing up its potential to attract Overseas Chinese.

Two decades later, the 'patriotic' *Fengbei* description of 2019, framing the site in the Xi Jinping-era context, clearly shows that the earlier 'problems' with the Sun Yat-sen site have eased considerably since the late 1990s, given the longer time gap after the immediate family members' deaths and the more 'positive' relations with Taiwan's GMD. The 2019 narrative states more openly that the site was, in fact, set up as a memorial in 1956 (i.e., at Sun's 90th anniversary, when Mao also publicly sanctioned Sun), and that Song Qingling at least sent her calligraphy for the plaque.[121] (Wen 2019: 2). The house is now claimed to show 'original interiors', some items even dating back to the shabby house Sun was once born in, namely with an oil lamp he supposedly brought back from Hawai'i in 1883. The desk where he is said to have written his famous 1894 letter to the high official Li Hongzhang 李鸿章 with suggestions of how to modernise China (which was never taken in, driving him, according to the established storyline, onto the revolutionary path)[122] is exhibited which would have been of the new early 1890s house built by Sun Mei, and there he supposedly also received local patients to be cured. The tree he planted with a seedling from Hawai'i is supposedly still there, too (and stands as a 'testimony' to presence Sun, the man, though the original tree was, in fact, uprooted during a typhoon and replaced). The locally oriented narrative describes, however, for the intended PRC readers of the Xi Jinping era how little Sun and his elder sister (the one who stayed on into PRC times locally and is thus the least problematic) collected fire wood in the surroundings, drew water, or swam, all things which are to play up the local contribution to Sun's formative years (before he moved to Hawai'i), and render Sun, the Cantonese village boy, more approachable for the target audience (3). The 2019 narrative on the Cuiheng site also puts more stress on the additional offers provided locally beyond Sun's 'former home', namely the 'typical' houses of the time, an exhibition of agricultural tools, but integrating as well the houses of his later executed friend Lu Haodong, and the one of Yang Yin 杨殷 (like Sun from Cuiheng but much younger, born in 1892, who would become a Communist later). By now, the site also exhibits intangible heritage recognised in the

121 She did not visit in person, as said, but sent her calligraphy, which is rare since she usually did not write much in Chinese but rather in English, a fact usually downplayed in mainland sources. Cf. Müller (2022: 253–254).

122 De facto, Sun was on the revolutionary path already before that letter.

meantime on a provincial or national level, thus underscoring the local Cantonese flavour the site offers to visiting pupils or tourists (4). Overall, the *Fengbei* narrative positions Sun in the official historical reading in the PRC as a revolutionary 'precursor'. Unsurprisingly, nothing of his Christian side is mentioned, rather framing him in his attack on 'superstition' as basically an atheist, concerned with the people's economic and psychic well-being! The intended reading pupil thus learns what reinforces the normative historical narrative in PRC reading via the place of Sun's 'home': that the Taiping were 'positive' and a (Chinese) role model for Sun, that Sun appreciated the French Revolution (as an 'international' model), and that he liked (the scientist) Darwin (all people and topics a modern Chinese citizen should appreciate, too). On the other hand, the intended reading pupil is assured that Sun also excelled in his studies (i.e., was diligent) so that even the British Hong Kong governor would praise him (5). That way, all the many difficulties in Sun's early career for a Communist retelling are simply evaded or ironed out. Interestingly, he is also presented as having had an 'awakening' moment as a young man when he (then back in China) was called in as a doctor to cure someone at a high official's house and saw on the way people destined for execution. He thus supposedly realised that while he tried as a doctor to cure single people, he was unable to cure the larger evils in society and state – a description strongly resembling the famous story of Lu Xun, the iconic writer in Communist view of the Republican era and well-known to every Chinese pupil, who wrote about his turn away from medical studies in Japan to literature as motivated by seeing a slide of a Chinese in Manchuria to be executed by the Japanese as a spy during the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) while other Chinese stood around, witnessing the scene in apparent apathy, which made him realise that it was more urgent to look after curing society than just individuals (6). The similar storyline for Sun thus might be designed to evoke this famous parallel. Sun's career as a revolutionary, mostly away from his home, is retold, thus making the Cuiheng memorial, connected only to his youth, largely disappear in the further standard narrative. As usual in PRC versions of Sun's trajectory, his rapprochement with the Soviet Union at the end of his life is focused upon. And his anti-imperialist credentials in this late phase, distancing him from his earlier strong attachment to Japan and the West, are pointed out as the endpoint of his trajectory, also underlined by his (de facto contested) 'last will',[123] as well as by his insistence on the 'unity of China' as something needed to be achieved (9–14).

123 The later GMD did not accept the (English-language) 'letter of farewell to the Soviet Union' where Sun declared his trust in the latter as his authentic 'will', as is was a last minute document, while the 'last will' recited officially thereafter in school, written down in Chinese by Wang Jingwei,

Finally, and very interestingly, the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative also points out Sun's specific connection to the 'tree planting day' (i.e., Arbor Day), a practice Chinese pupils as well as PRC citizens in general are encouraged to participate in, thus also advertising this activity over Sun. The tree seedling from Hawai'i he is said to have planted in Cuiheng in 1883 supposedly showed him already engaged in 'afforestation' early on, and all occasions where Sun talked about the need to plant more trees in China, are assembled to render the message more forceful. De facto, a 'tree planting day' would be introduced in China in 1916, notably by the very Beiyang government in Northern China still under Yuan Shikai against whose 'dictatorship' Sun struggled at that time! In 1916, the date was set at Qingming, the Tomb Sweeping Day in early April (thus reinforcing the connection of trees and tombs as was an established association). But after Sun's demise in 1925, the GMD shifted the date of this 'tree planting day' for political reasons to the day of his death on 12 March, therewith establishing the connection of Arbor Day (an international practice of varying dates) in China with Sun and his commemoration.[124] In 1979, the PRC revived this practice of 'tree planting' (which we encountered at several places with a symbolic content, not the least with tombs as a memorial feature, e.g., at Huangdiling or Yandiling in chapter 3.1, but also as a sign of hope for a better future like in the commemorative places for the Nanjing Massacre, the Geleshan prisons, or the Urumqi 'martyrs' in chapter 3.2, and more 'scientifically', to address the problem of desertification and erosion). Over the (equally revived) dating of 12 March in 1979, Sun thus remained connected to this practice familiar also to present-day pupils (14).

That way, Sun has been severed from the old GMD–CCP problem to represent a major figure on China's way to modernity, showing today's Chinese citizens less his 'ideological' side than rather Sun as a nationalist who cared also pragmatically for a better und sustainable future for China. By this framing, he remains a potent 'role model' for the present Chinese populace to emulate.

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referred rather to Sun's own written works during the preceding years to be followed, thus remaining ideologically in line.

124 In 1915, Ling Daoyang 凌道扬, an environmental specialist, had made the proposition to introduce such a tree planting day to the Beiyang government, suggesting Qingming as a date, which was also sanctioned by tradition, to marry this to modern Western examples of 'Arbor Days'. One should also note that the Beiyang government only governed the Northern and thus basically colder part of China. Given the different climates in China, the 'national tree planting day' during the Nanjing decade of GMD rule, shifting it to Sun's death date in March, supposedly also considered the South – though this meant for colder climate zones that the earth might be still frozen, and many planted trees did, in fact, not survive long after the ritualised planting event. The practice, in any case, served above all for inscribing the landscape with nationalism rather than serving reforestation as such. Cf. Pitts (2019).

Case study: Tao Xingzhi

Different from the political-revolutionary model Sun Yat-sen, Tao Xingzhi (1891–1946) is a model from the educational field: though he was no Communist Party member and Western-educated (which also reflects the fact that in late 19th and early 20th century China, the educational field was connected to Western, namely missionary, activities to a significant degree), he would over time become a sympathiser of the CCP cause (Bieler 2004: 285–287). In fact, there are different places in China honouring him today, which, in turn, reflects the (de facto only rather recent, i.e., since the 1980s) appreciation of Tao Xingzhi in the PRC, including beyond his native Anhui also Nanjing in Jiangsu (where his pet project, the Xiaozhuang 晓庄 teachers college, and his tomb, which presences him there, are set), and Shanghai where he was active for years. The house of his birth (i.e., his original *guju*) is no longer extant, and so his local memorialisation in his natal Anhui province which is listed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system as **Tao Xingzhi *jinianguan*** 陶行知纪念馆 (Tao Xingzhi *memorial hall*) (Anhui Province) (list 1, 1997) is set at the place where he himself went to school as a child. (Notably, this was a missionary school set up by the British China Inland Mission which counted his parents as converts, as Brown's study on Tao has already pointed out – something not clearly evident to the present-day tourist to the site, at least at my visit in 2016).[125] One should note, however, that in spite of the present 'patriotic reading' of Tao Xingzhi, and even though Tao had been already dead when the PRC was founded, he nevertheless was *denounced* in the early 1950s posthumously as a 'bourgeois reformist educator'.[126] Only since the 1980s (when education became a key concern, not the least after the perceived 'lost generation' of the Cultural Revolution era, and likely to counterbalance the historically strong Western as well as GMD part in the development of modern education in China),[127] his public evaluation in mainland China changed into outright 'hagiography'. (In fact, at the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1991, Tao Xingzhi was even honoured by commemorative postage stamps which is

125 Cf. Brown (1987: 124). Brown sets straight some of the post-1980 PRC 'hagiographic' narratives on his biography which, i.a., edited out the fact that his parents were Christians and that also he himself joined the church as a young man (Brown 1987: 125), if being mostly moved by social gospel ideas.

126 Cf. Bieler (2004: 287). This was in the context of a PRC campaign against the 19th century educator Wu Xun 武训 who had set up charity schools. See Brown (1987: 133) and Pepper (1996: 167–169).

127 Several noted Chinese figures in the early 20th century educational field were non-Communists or even outright connected to either Western or GMD backgrounds. Thus, there was a perceived need to find some educational figure closer to Communism.

curiously not mentioned in any of the 'patriotic' materials or the exhibition on site).[128] The posthumous criticism campaign of the early PRC times is, of course, not mentioned on spot in the exhibition in Anhui's Huangshan 黄山 city (as I observed in 2016), nor in any of the 'patriotic' materials, to cast no shadow on the localised 'role model' of 'patriotic' values in more recent understanding.

While the educational video collection *Zhonghua hun* on (selected) first list sites notably does not cover the memorial for Tao Xingzhi, the model educator, the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clips (disc 4) on the 'patriotic education showcase bases' presents his memorial in Huangshan city close to She 歙 County from where Tao Xingzhi hailed, though without disclosing that this was a former missionary school he went to. She County with its famous memorial archways, including those on 'chaste widows' exemplifying the 'Neo-Confucian' morality code, evokes with Chinese viewers rather the image of a very traditional, even 'arch-conservative' Chinese background.[129] Tao's studying in (Western missionary) schools, however, finally brought the supposedly through and through 'traditional' Tao Xingzhi to the US in spite of his family's purportedly limited ressources.[130] In the US, Tao would meet Sun Ke (Sun Fo, son of Sun Yat-sen and later *persona non grata* in the PRC, as mentioned above with Sun Yat-sen's *guju* in Cuiheng, whose photo could only be shown again in the PRC since the 1980s), first studying at Illinois University, and then at Columbia University.[131] At Columbia University, Tao met Hu Shi 胡适, the later noted liberal (who was to become an object of a whole denouncing campaign in the PRC in the 1950s, too, though Hu was in contrast to Tao still alive then and finally would end his days in Taiwan; incidentally, Hu's photo, like Sun Ke's, was possible to be displayed again only

128 For the stamp, see the collection *Zhongguo youpiao shi* (2004), vol. 9: 164. I am grateful to my student Olivia Wenzel for mentioning this.

129 The area is thus usually seen as *the* embodiment of 'Neo-Confucian' culture, and by the critics as symbol of extreme 'cultural conservatism' if not 'patriarchal feudalism' in late imperial China. Cf. also chapter 2.2 in the present book on the Anhui Museum.

130 Brown (1987: 124–125) notes that the parents' standing cannot have been so poor as usually claimed in PRC 'hagiographies' since they helped him and at least one sister finance their schooling. Tao enrolled in various missionary educational facilities before going to the US, most importantly in Nanjing's Jinling 金陵 University. There he became also interested in politics (during the Xinhai Revolution) as well as in Neo-Confucianism of the Wang Yangming 王阳明 variety, reflected in his newly chosen name 'Zhixing' (which he would turn around only later to Xingzhi) – see below.

131 A photo with Tao and Sun Fo (Sun Ke) shown at the memorial is interpreted there and in several materials as both being classmates at Illinois University. Sun Fo, though, studied in California and then briefly at Columbia in New York. The photo is thus more likely to have been taken in New York at Columbia.

since the 1980s in the PRC).[132] Focus of Tao Xingzhi's studies at Columbia (1915–1917) was teachers education (in the vein of 'progressivism' taught at Columbia's well-known Teachers College, most famously by John Dewey, though Tao apparently did not take courses with the latter but rather with the latter's colleague Paul Monroe).[133] Back in China, Tao started to put this into practice (in fact, first in collaboration with other Western-trained Chinese educators, which is however once more an issue not mentioned in the 'patriotic' context).

The TV film clip tries to rather provide a closer and more 'Chinese' understanding of Tao's educational endeavours, interviewing his much younger second wife who was still alive at the time the film clip was done in the late 1990s (though she was too young to have witnessed Tao's activities back in the 1920s). As a witness of Tao, the man, however (and as likely the one to feel the effects of the posthumous criticism campaign of Tao in the 1950s most), she rather stresses in the interview his model personality, ready to dedicate himself fully to education. Thus, in the suburbs of Nanjing, he had established his own Xiaozhuang teachers college (in 1927) where he tried to put his educational ideas into practice with the aim to carry education also to the countryside by training teachers for rural areas. The Anhui memorial's exhibition, where some of Tao's personal items are on display, including his doctoral robe of St. John's University in Shanghai (de facto an honorary doctorate he received from this protestant-missionary flagship institution), however, shows that he might have also opted for academic glory instead. But he rather chose popularisation of education as his life task. The main issue the TV film clip is concerned with is his 'little teachers' programme, i.e., soliciting pupils to teach their grandmothers at home what they had just learnt themselves (intending, above all, basic reading and writing). (This idea was de facto an extension of the reform education practice in the US to use children as assistant teachers to classmates who needed more help.)[134] In terms of the ideology which supposedly drove him, his change in name from Tao Zhixing to Tao Xingzhi, manifested in his exhibited seals, are to show that over time he came to understand the reversal of priority between

132 Both Sun Ke and Hu Shi, the latter incidentally someone counting as an Anhui person – if only of ancestry – like Tao Xingzhi, had been dead by the 1980s, but both Sun Ke and Hu Shi, though having had a difficult relationship with Chiang Kai-shek, had ended their days in Taiwan, Hu Shi dying there in 1962, and Sun Ke dying there in 1973.

133 Brown (1987: 126, 128) notes that Tao, who never took a course of Dewey's when at Columbia, in fact had no profound grounding in Dewey's ideas before serving as one of his translators during Dewey's visit to China (1919–1921). Notably, Monroe who had visited China several times and for whom Tao also translated, is largely absent from Chinese narratives which are all focused on the more famous Dewey.

134 Cf. Brown (1987: 128).

knowledge (*zhi* 知) and action (*xing* 行) (a relationship much discussed in Chinese intellectual history, with Ming-era 'Neo-Confucian' thinker Wang Yangming 王阳明 arguing for uniting knowledge with action – a position Sun Yat-sen as much as Tao Xingzhi had also grappled with to then argue for the primacy of (revolutionary) action to gain knowledge). Tao thus also stressed the combination of head and hand – also something much on the educational agenda in the early 20th century in China,[135] asking pupils to engage in agricultural activities after sitting in class which he employed first in Shanghai (after his Xiaozhuang teachers college had been closed down by the Nanjing government on suspicion of political subversiveness when students participated in demonstrations). Though Tao moved to the (final) wartime capital of 'Free China', Chongqing, during the Second Sino–Japanese War, he continued also there with these projects of new education, setting up the Yucai 育才 (lit.: educate talents) school near Chongqing for orphans and wartime disadvantaged children. Tao's second wife frames this once more for the national TV audience in her interview by pointing to Tao's model personality and personal thrift, with his bust in the background (notably with an anachronistic red scarf, sign of the Young Pioneers in the PRC, around his neck!). Tao's educational vision projected a broad formation of children, including also music, theatre plays etc. (an idea also present in reform pedagogy as taught at Columbia's Teacher College).[136] For his 'patriotic' credentials beyond education, in turn, the TV film clip points out that before and during the early phase of the Second Sino–Japanese War, he also toured the world to solicit support for the Chinese side. Even though he was never a Communist Party member, it is suggested by the Anhui memorial that he clearly had developed sympathies, citing the fact that when in England, he visited Marx' tomb thrice! While he was on tour abroad, several of his (National Salvation Federation) friends (the so-called 'seven gentlemen' or *junzi* 君子) were incarcerated by the GMD in 1936 whom he thus lobbied for to be freed,[137] enlisting Western intellectuals to appeal to Chiang Kai-shek. Finally, for Tao's legacy and personal values, his interviewed second wife assures the national TV audience that when he died in 1946, he

135 The Chinese anarchists were among the first to argue for this already since the late Qing years, following international key anarchist Peter Kropotkin's lead, and set up several practical examples. (Cf. Müller 2001).

136 Dewey, for one, advocated this. Cf. Brown (1987: 128).

137 The left-leaning National Salvation Federation had been founded by a large group of public figures in Shanghai, and Tao chaired it before he left China. The 'seven gentlemen' incarcerated included Li Gongpu 李公朴 (who would be assassinated in Kunming later in 1946 when he positioned himself once more against Chiang Kai-shek's regime – cf. chapter 3.2 of the present book on the Kunming 'martyrs').

left her nothing – in a material sense.[138] (This repeated stress on thrift and poverty could be also seen as a defensive measure to argue against Tao Xingzhi's early 'negative' PRC image of a 'bourgeois' figure – from which his second wife probably suffered.) The inscription on his tomb (in Nanjing) features his motto which also serves as his legacy: *Ai man tianxia* 爱满天下 (love fills the world). (One may note that, given that especially his early career had been closely related to missionary endeavours, this motto is not clearly 'patriotic' or 'leftist' and could be even read in a Christian sense. It thus defines him rather vaguely as 'philanthropic'.) To lead back to an unquestionable 'patriotic' reading, the TV film clip, produced by Anhui TV's societal education department, concludes by showing a primary school class reciting in chorus Tao's 'patriotic' 'motto' for children, which contains also a simple wordplay in Chinese and thus should be easy to memorise: 'I am a Chinese, I love the country of China, China is at present beset by disaster, in the future she will certainly become outstanding' (*Wo shi zhongguoren, wo ai zhonghuaguo, zhongguo xianzai budeliao, jianglai yiding liaobude* 我是中国人，我爱中华国，中国现在不得了，将来一定了不得).[139]

Compared to the national filmic representation, the site-specific booklet in the benchmark series of first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Jiang / Cheng 1998) stresses for the intended young reader more pointedly the local background of Tao, the man, who is said to have come from a humble background (in southern Anhui in a region known in China as an embodiment of neo-Confucian custom). (Cf. chapter 2.2 of the present book on the Anhui Museum.) As is at least openly addressed here to the reader, his access to education was over Christian missionary schools. The 'patriotic booklet' of the late 1990s, following the by then established 'hagiography' on Tao Xingzhi, however assures the reader that nonetheless Tao was asserting his Chineseness early on, writing on the wall of the (missionary-led) dormitory: I am a Chinese and want to serve China! (3) While first aiming at becoming a medical doctor, frequenting again a missionary institution in Hangzhou (where he is claimed to have felt discriminated against as a 'non-Christian'),[140] he still went on to study in Nanjing at the (again missionary-led) Jinling 金陵 University. The intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet also learns that Tao wrote contributions for the English-language (!) university journal, and finally

138 One should also add that Tao Xingzhi had several children from his first marriage who are glossed over in the 'patriotic' narratives.

139 According to Jiang / Cheng (1998: 59), this motto was handed out by him in October 1936.

140 Western studies on Tao have put a question mark behind this assertion that he never was a Christian, which is also unlikely, given that his parents were. In any case, he later was no longer practicing.

received a scholarship for studying in the US, first in Illinois, then in Columbia, where he also met Hu Shi, the soon-to-be-noted liberal, as mentioned. (To this point, he, however, rather appears to the reader as the 'bourgeois' figure related to the West and the missionaries which is the identity he needed to shed for becoming a role model for today's 'patriotic' Chinese citizens.) Even though he was offered a teaching position in the US, Tao is said to have rather opted for going back to China to provide schooling for more Chinese children (thus proving his deep sense of 'patriotism' not being corrupted by his stay in the West) (4–5). When Dewey famously toured China in 1919–1921, Tao was one of the Chinese former Columbia students who accompanied him (as translators) on his lectures on new pedagogy in China (and only then came into closer contact with Dewey personally). Teaching himself by then in Nanjing's teacher college, Tao advocated an education combining head and hand, and also the introduction of co-education in higher education (which was still contested in China at the time) (5–6). One of his primary aims was the popularisation of knowledge (which, in fact, had much in common with the YMCA-affiliated programmes of James Yen or Yan Yangchu 晏阳初 with whom he also worked together for some time on the latter's well-known mass education movement and later his rural reconstruction movement to spread basic literacy). Tao introduced a basic literacy programme as well, and is said to have written as a test a letter to his own mother, who had 'never been to school before',[141] in simple characters so that even she would be able to read it (8).

In 1926 (i.e., the year James Yen started his famed rural reconstruction experiment in his model area in Dingxian 定县, Hebei Province), Tao intensified his own activities for village education to not lead children away from the villages (as he himself once had been), but carry education into the villages, and to educate the pupils also in something 'useful' so that they might go on and produce also the food they eat.[142] Therefore, he set up his Xiaozhuang teachers college in the suburbs of Nanjing to first train teachers for this task (11), and after class, he would go to the fields to work with his own students there. Although he was no Communist, the booklet takes pains to point out he was not against it (13, 16), even at one point calling him a 'Communist fighter' (64), likely to recall Zhou Enlai's dictum (at Tao's death) that he was a 'non-Party Bolshevik' (see below), thus embracing him from the CCP side. While in terms of politics, Tao kept his distance from Chiang

141 One may note that she was a Christian, as mentioned, and had worked for the missionaries who led the school.

142 For a short comparison, pointing out the differences between James Yen and Tao Xingzhi, see Brown (1987: 134–135). While Yen tried to build upon the assumed existing wisdom of the peasants, Tao wanted to teach them to change their old ways to do things more 'scientifically'.

Kai-shek, he had some relations with the warlord Feng Yuxiang (who is rather positively seen in Communist historiography for being a Chiang critic as well) and with the GMD 'left' (16, 58). This, in turn, meant that his Xiaozhuang teachers college would be eventually closed as potentially subversive by the Nanjing government, not the least because it was also socially engaged beyond pure education according to his motto (de facto turning Dewey's around): 'life is education'.[143] (One may note that not only his, but several left-leaning schools were closed by the GMD during the Nanjing decade when the government tried to get better hold of education and streamline it ideologically.) Thus, Tao Xingzhi, having become politically suspect and blacklisted by the GMD, withdrew to Shanghai and finally, with the help of writer Lu Xun's old Japanese friends Uchiyama Kanzō 内山完造 and his wife, who ran a bookstore in Shanghai, to Japan for a while (17). In 1932, the GMD finally dropped his official warrant after international pressure – which again shows that Tao's international connections were playing an important role, and he made Shanghai his new base. There, Tao proposed his well-known 'little teachers' programme of turning pupils into teachers at home, e.g., for their mothers and grandmothers, so that they might hand on whatever they had learnt in school. For this, he devised basic literacy textbooks (20–24).

On more ideological fronts, the 'patriotic' booklet points out to the intended young readers that in 1933, Tao participated in a memorial meeting for Marx' 50th death anniversary (which is cited as a prove for his rapprochement with the Communists). Tao, the reader is told, was also involved in the 'National Salvation Federation' of the mid 1930s, together with Sun Yat-sen's last wife Song Qingling, Sun's assassinated likely successor Liao Zhongkai's widow He Xiangning 何香凝, and other 'GMD leftists' (25–26). In 1936, he travelled again to the West to participate, i.a., in various peace conferences (which should make clear to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet that he was not simply escaping from China when war drew near). As the narrative points out, on his five visits to London, he went to Marx' tomb thrice (which had been highlighted also in the TV film clip), on one occasion even writing a short poem praising Marx (which should dispel any possible doubts about his intellectual alignment) (30). When some of his friends in Shanghai were imprisoned (the 'seven *junzi*' in 1936) during his stay overseas, he solicited various internationally famous intellectuals like Dewey, Gandhi, Einstein, Romain Rolland and others to petition the GMD government to free them – which again is to show that he put his international contacts to 'patriotic' uses (31–32, 57–58). Upon his return to China in 1938 after touring the

143 Cf. Wang (2007: 138, note 1). Cf. also Keenan (1977: 106, 109).

world for propagating China's fight against Japan, during which he also lobbied against American scrap steel to be given to Japan (48–49), another proof of his 'patriotism', Chiang Kai-shek and his wife Song Meiling tried to draw him to their side by offering him official positions. Tao, though, would not be corrupted – the 'patriotic' booklet asserts – and insisted on rather promoting further his own educational programmes. Though suspected by the right-wing GMD to tolerate Communists, he could set up the new Yucai school in the vicinity of Chongqing, the wartime capital, in 1939. This school did not use the GMD textbooks, nor hang up the flag or Chiang Kai-shek's portrait as was the norm (which again is to prove that he was politically critical of Chiang Kai-shek) (34–37).

When the Second Sino–Japanese War was finally over, Tao hoped for peace and democracy and was among those of the 'third way' between the two parties, GMD and CCP,[144] but by welcoming Mao Zedong when the latter came for peace talks to Chongqing, he, however, also supposedly showed his de facto stronger sympathies for the CCP (39–40). (That way, the 'patriotic' reading tries to work against any impression that Tao might have been only a 'middle-of-the-roader'.) When the GMD-critical protests in Kunming in late 1945 were put down (see chapter 3.2 in the present book for the Kunming 'martyrs'), Tao joined those who condemned the bloody suppression. He was beaten up together with Guo Moruo, Li Gongpu, and Shi Fuliang 施复亮 (i.e., Shi Cuntong 施存统) by GMD right-wing thugs, supposedly for attending a memorial ceremony in Chongqing for the Kunming victims of December 1945 (41). (De facto, though, the beating incident occurred during the Political Consultative Conference in February 1946.) In April 1946, Tao returned to Nanjing (where the Chinese capital was moved back to from Chongqing, now that the war with the Japanese was over), and Shanghai. At that point, Tao is said to have called upon the US (with which he had a life-long connection) to stop sustaining Chiang Kai-shek (against the Communists, which again is to prove that he used his connections to the US in the politically 'correct' way). But due to overwork, Tao died of a sudden by a stroke in July 1946. His funeral would be attended also by many foreigners, including several from Southeast Asia, as well as from the US (43–46). (This implies once more that his connections with foreigners had, in fact, been close all through.) From the CCP's side, Zhou Enlai (who had the closest personal contact to Tao during the Chongqing times) as much as Mao himself and Zhu De endorsed him publicly at the time, and the Communists even held their own memorial ceremony for him in their 'red capital' Yan'an, thus embracing Tao, the well-known figure, immediately after his death.

144 Cf. Jeans (1992) on the political alternative 'roads not taken'.

Tao's memorial in his natal Anhui province's south, backbone of Neo-Confucian tradition, which is the 'patriotically' listed site and established only in the 1980s, shows that by then he had been fully 'absolved' from any 'bourgeois' elements that had tainted his image in the early PRC times. The memorial thus was honoured by visits of several PRC leaders, among them Li Peng 李鹏, prime minister during the 1989 Tiananmen protests (and together with Deng Xiaoping key responsible for the bloody suppression of the latter), who had been to Tao's Yucai school near Chongqing as a child himself (when raised by Zhou Enlai and his wife Deng Yingchao). But also Lu Dingyi 陆定一 of the Propaganda Department and the (in the end ill-fated) reformer Hu Yaobang (whose death triggered the Tiananmen Protests in 1989) had written endorsements of Tao Xingzhi in the 1980s (in their case for the 'competing' memorial sites in Nanjing and Shanghai respectively, though – see below).[145] Tao's fellow travellers of the 1930s and 1940s, Song Qingling and Guo Moruo, had honoured him already at his early death back in 1946 (67). That way, the 'patriotic' booklet tries to suggest a broad appraisal of Tao to its intended readers while glossing over his posthumous 'problems' in the 1950s, and not dating the visits of the CCP leaders nor of the endorsements, opting for remaining rather vague to not hamper the impression of an uncontested 'model' figure in PRC reading. While Tao had first chosen the name Zhixing for himself, connecting himself to the 'idealist' Neo-Confucian heritage in the line of Wang Yangming, going from knowledge (*zhi*) to action (*xing*) which he used in the US (which supposedly proves his early Western 'idealist' views to the intended young reader), he later reverted this to Xingzhi which is in the booklet explained as his 'progress' to 'materialism' (coming to knowledge through action), a name he used since the 1930s in China. His ideological 'evolution' is thus to be illustrated by the three exhibited seals he used, the third featuring a combination character of both which is, in good Marxist dialectic fashion, explained as the 'synthesis' of both former positions (i.e. thesis and antithesis): dialectical materialism! (86–87).

The above 'patriotic' reading of Tao Xingzhi of the late 1990s, when his positive evaluation was still rather recent, turns in the newer 2019 *Fengbei* narrative of the Xi Jinping era into a much less defensive and more assertive tone. Though focusing on the 'patriotically listed' Anhui memorial in Huangshan city, the new narrative opts for including the Nanjing and Shanghai memorial spaces as 'additions' (thus taking a broader, less local, approach, similar to what we observed in the above case of Zheng Chenggong, see chapter 5.1). All three memorials for Tao Xingzhi were

145 As the booklet claims, Hu Yaobang wrote the memorial's name (see Jiang / Cheng 1998: 65), which was, however, as the *Fengbei* description also discloses (see below), the one in Shanghai, not the one in Anhui!

built only in the 1980s (when Tao was newly appreciated as a figure and a model for education). The Anhui site at his former school (notably not clearly labelling it as missionary institution here once more) was opened in 1984 in a building which integrated some of the older building. As the intended reader of Xi Jinping times is told, Tao's motto of 'love fills the world' (*ai man tianxia*) is represented there in his own calligraphy, thus presencing him in this way, while Jiang Zemin provided the endorsement for the entrance hall in his handwriting. The hall also features a calligraphy of Song Qingling (who, as mentioned earlier, rarely wrote in Chinese, and was already dead at the memorial's opening, having died in 1981), but also one of Mao (which thus connects him to this unquestionable authority) and one of Guo Moruo (both equally dead at the time of the memorial's opening) (Ding / Pan 2019: 128–129). This shows on the one hand something we encountered already in several cases, namely that calligraphy is a key way of presencing and authorising historical figures, but also on the other hand, that the endorsements exhibited in this case were not necessarily provided for the memorial itself, given that it was established rather late, but were often simply quotes taken from the time of Tao's sudden death in 1946 when he received all those praises, and reproduced at the memorial to bolster the local figure (and bridge over the 'problematic' phase of criticism in between).

Tao's major contribution is acknowledged in this new Xi Jinping-era narrative framing to have been that he brought learning and society together and cared particularly for the countryside. The fact, that he also sent propagandising pupils' teams around during the Second Sino–Japanese War, which underlines his social activism, and that he also opposed the Civil War, are pointed out as positive contributions as well. One hall in the Anhui memorial's exhibition is dedicated to Tao's own calligraphies and works, presencing him this way. The Nanjing memorial, in turn, focuses on his early Xiaozhuang teachers college, and there he is also buried, presencing him physically at that site. Only in 1993, the Nanjing memorial was moved out of the campus of what is still a teachers' college today. Lu Dingyi (of the propaganda ministry and thus also crucial in the 'patriotic education' system) wrote the memorial hall's title in this Nanjing case. In Shanghai, in turn, Hu Yaobang was the one to write the memorial hall's title there in 1986, but that memorial site was moved as well, namely in 2002, to a memorial park specifically set up for Tao Xingzhi, which was even labelled by Shanghai as a municipal-level 'patriotic education base' (129–131). (This shows the fluidity of his memorialisation in physical terms, but also the steady progress in asserting Tao as a positive figure through the Reform and Opening period at these three places.) In the new 2019 narrative, Tao Xingzhi is even compared to Confucius (see above in chapter 5.1) as a great educator, but differed from (or 'updated') Confucius in that

he wanted to bring education actively to the normal people (*pingmin* 平民, i.e., did not only create an intellectual elite). For this approach, Zhou Enlai had termed him a 'non-Party Bolshevik' (in fact at Tao's demise in 1946), which was to assert that he had moved into the 'correct' direction in ideological terms before his untimely death. Tao, it is pointed out to the intended reader of the 2019 narrative, had paid attention to the fact that over 80% of the Chinese were peasants at his time, and thus, though he himself had knowledge of the wide world, he took it as his mission to help all of China to catch up. For this, he supposedly studied Marx and Lenin on his own (which again is to show his 'positive' evolution in ideological terms and should be also emulated by Chinese citizens today) (131).

Although the 2019 narrative mentions that Tao's father was a teacher and that his mother also worked, the fact that the parents had a connection to missionaries is only cautiously addressed, framing Tao rather in a decidedly 'traditional' way, being fascinated early on by Chinese calligraphies he encountered in his surrounding which triggered his wish to learn more (which additionally underlines why calligraphies play such an important role in the Anhui exhibition which has not much material on Tao to present otherwise). As the 2019 narrative assures the intended young readers, the British (at the school, i.e., the missionaries) were impressed by his talent and then took him in for free. But to counter the idea that he might have felt grateful to the foreigners, the story of how he wrote defiantly at the wall in the dormitory that he considered himself above all a Chinese, is retold and stressed. In Hangzhou where he wanted to study medicine, the further story that he was supposedly mobbed by Christian students for being 'non-Christian' and thus left, is also to heighten his 'patriotic' outlook for the intended young reader of Xi Jinping times. Tao is also presented in this new framing as someone interested in Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary ideas, and (picking up on Wang Yangming like the latter) wanted to combine knowledge with action. Considering education as central for moving forward, he went to the US (not mentioning clearly how he was financed, though) where he is claimed to have studied with people like Dewey (which he actually did not, as mentioned, but this is conforming to Dewey's great prestige in China, and one may also note that nothing is mentioned here about his fellow student Hu Shi, the noted Chinese liberal, either).[146] To show to the intended young reader of the 2019 narrative the strong 'patriotic' commitment of Tao (and to underline that he had not become too Westernised), it is highlighted that he supposedly wrote from the US to his sister back home how terribly he missed China, and that he was called by other Chinese in the US the 'most Chinese of them all',

146 For a broader treatment of Chinese receptions of Dewey, see Wang (2007).

lest modern-day reading pupils might get a wrong impression (insinuating that a Chinese, even if aspiring to study in the West, should never forget the *patria* there). After all, the endpoint of personal service is to be China. When Tao came back to China, the reader learns, he published educational journals, and cared for teachers training, which was also a precondition for 'people's education'. During the late 1920s, he increasingly stressed that education was also to serve for sustaining one's own livelihood (a very pertinent topic also for a present-day young reader), and that one needed to move to rural contexts, where the bulk of people lived at Tao's time (133). (Interestingly, though, nothing on his little teachers programme he subsequently aimed at is mentioned in this new narrative which to some degree might evoke rather Maoist associations out of step with present-day more technocratic views on education and literacy, while the stress on Tao's educational activities also sidelines all the other more missionary-related endeavours for literacy education going on in China at that time.)

For Tao's ideological alignment, his pet project in Xiaozhuang in Nanjing's suburbs, where Tao aimed at educating teachers for the countryside, advocating a combination of teaching by learning and doing, postulating that society is the 'real school' (i.e., 'life is education'),[147] is profiled most. There, the insinuation goes, he already started to move closer to Communism, becoming suspect to the GMD authorities in Nanjing. Ten outright Communists who were obviously active in his Xiaozhuang school were even killed, and Tao escaped to Japan. (That way, the *Fengbei* narrative thrusts Tao for the intended young reader in a much more unmitigated 'revolutionary' vein than the earlier narratives of the late 1990s had done.) His former 'teacher' Dewey (who, as mentioned, had not taught him at Columbia but whom he accompanied on the latter's tour through China), together with international noted figures like Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein, pleaded for him with Chiang Kai-shek, and thus Tao could move back to Shanghai, where he, however, started to agitate against Japan which he had just left, when the Japanese attacked Shanghai in 1932 (which is a further 'proof' of his 'patriotism', while that attack incidentally also destroyed several other experimental educational projects in Shanghai physically) (134).[148] In terms of education, Tao also experimented there with the combination of work and study (something once spearheaded by the Chinese anarchists who are, however, largely written out of Communist

147 For Tao's evolution of educational thought in the 1920s, see Keenan (1977: 81–110).

148 At the time when Tao Xingzhi was active in Shanghai, there had been in Shanghai the 'Labour University' as well as the educational activities of anarchist Kuang Husheng 匡互生. These projects also combined 'head and hand' and integrated agriculture. During the Japanese attack on Shanghai in 1932, the areas they were placed in were destroyed. (See Müller 2001: 545, 605).

historiography and thus not mentioned),[149] until the fall of Shanghai in autumn 1937 early in the Second Sino–Japanese War put a final stop to any such projects. During his time in urban Shanghai, the intended young reader of the 2019 narrative learns, Tao also came to realise the importance of workers' education – something close to the Communists' agenda (though this, again, had been spearheaded by the anarchists before) which had not figured prominently in the late 1990s' narratives. Tao's change of name from Zhixing to 'Xingzhi' is also something much stressed in the new 2019 narrative and taken as further proof of his ideological move toward 'materialism'. To fend off Japan, he would support a new United Front of the GMD and the CCP (which the Communists pushed for to stop the GMD further moving against them), and thus Tao toured the world for two years, lobbying under the Overseas Chinese for China, and among foreigners for not sustaining Japan further with selling goods for military use to them (while at home his political friends of the National Salvation Federation were rounded up by the GMD) (135). (That way, Tao is presented to the reader of the 2019 narrative not only as a 'patriot', but as one who was clearly tending to the Communist side early on, thus preparing for Zhou Enlai's dictum of the 'non-Party Bolshevik'.) Seeing education as a crucial means to fight Japan, on his way back, he is claimed to have agitated also in colonial Hong Kong for making educational offers to Chinese workers there (which once more stresses that he cared also for urban workers, not only for the countryside, and used every occasion to further education to also spread 'patriotic' consciousness with Chinese living beyond the mainland to help their *patria*).

When he finally arrived in the wartime capital Chongqing, he started his (Yucai) school for war orphans and disadvantaged children in the vicinity, which is another project particularly highlighted in the 2019 narrative (136). There, pupils were also trained in arts, music, literature etc. beyond the standard curriculum. Zhou Enlai, his wife Deng Yingchao and others of the 'Southern Bureau' of the CCP, located in the Chongqing area (cf. chapter 3.2 in the present book on Geleshan), are presented to the intended reader of the 2019 narrative as visitors (which should prove further that Tao was close to the Communists at that time already, while notably Li Peng whom Zhou and Deng had sent to the Yucai school is not mentioned in this Xi Jinping-era narrative!). As a 'proof' for Tao's 'positive' ideological development from the other side, the right-wing GMD is cited as having lobbied against the school. But Tao, by then being a 'materialist' (and thus in sympathy with the Communists), was able to go on with his project, the narrative stresses, not the least because of the active help of the CCP. His claimed intensified rapprochement with the Communists is further

149 Cf. Müller (2001) for various examples since the early years of the 20th century, following, among others, the lead of Kropotkin.

underlined by the cited fact that when the Second Sino–Japanese War was finally over, Tao would speak up against Civil War between the GMD and the CCP, and met with Mao when the latter came to Chongqing for negotations with Chiang Kai-shek (137). In early 1946 (not mentioning here the Kunming December 1 violence – see chapter 3.2), Tao is also presented to the reader of the 2019 narrative as having participated in the celebratory demonstration at the end of the Political Consultative Conference (which is correctly stated here, different from the late 1990s narratives, once more showing that by 2019, clearly untenable storylines were dropped in the *Fengbei* narratives) where the GMD sent thugs, ending in injury of Guo Moruo and Li Gongpu.

Furthermore, in early 1946 as well, the reader learns that Tao was about to start a 'society university' in Chongqing, which was another project supported by Communists like Zhou Enlai, Dong Biwu 董必武, and Wu Yuzhang 吴玉章 as a place for educating cadres in 'White' (i.e., GMD) areas! (This, of course, makes Tao look quasi-Communist at this time shortly before his death.) But also non-party figures like Li Gongpu and former warlord Feng Yuxiang are named to have supported the project. While 'progressive' students were recruited, an underground Party cell was quickly established, the reader of the 2019 narrative is told, thus drawing the project even closer to the Communist camp, and the teachers also included Communists (and sympathisers), namely (Marxist historian) Jian Bozan 翦伯赞, (noted Marxist literary theorist) Hu Feng 胡风,[150] and others, which all is to prove Tao's steady move towards the CCP shortly before his death. Tao would also go to Shanghai to garner more support against the Civil War and for 'democracy', telling the foreign journalists in Shanghai more assertively that the US should get out of China (as is stated here more forcefully, not only stopping to sustain Chiang Kai-shek, as the former storyline had it), enforcing this with a 'letter to the Americans' together with Guo Moruo. When the two GMD-critical intellectuals Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo were murdered in Kunming (see above chapter 3.2 in the present book for Kunming), Tao sensed that he was likely on the blacklist, too (138–139). However, due to overwork, a stroke cost him his life before anyone would move against him.

At his death, it was Zhou Enlai who delivered the major endorsement which embraced Tao from the Communist side, saying that Tao had followed the Party 'since ten years' and thus was a 'non-Party Bolshevik'. This explains also why the

150 One may note that the Marxist literary theorist Hu Feng, who repeatedly clashed with the official line, became a cause célèbre in the 1950s when he was made the target of a whole campaign to be a 'counter-revolutionary'. Like Tao Xingzhi, he has been only rehabilitated in the 1980s, and thus his political fortune bears some similiarites with Tao.

narrative framing put so much effort into presenting Tao as a de facto Communist since years, if no Party member. In sum, the *Fengbei* narrative clearly thrusts Tao into a figure of 'patriotism', exorcising his Western 'bourgeois' side so much criticised in the 1950s, while highlighting all possible links to the Communists, even claiming in the end, using Deng Xiaoping's preferred catchword, that he, though no Party member, de facto helped the establishment of a 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'! (140). That way, it is fitting that he was reappraised in the 1980s, and it becomes obvious how the historical figure Tao Xingzhi is tailored to serve as a model for a 'patriotic' and self-consciously 'Chinese' citizen education in the present-day PRC.

Case study: Chen Jiageng (Tan Kah Kee)

While Tao Xingzhi was a model educator himself, Chen Jiageng (or Tan Kah Kee, as he is internationally known, based on his Hokkien pronunciation) (1874–1961), in turn, stands for the realm of education in terms of building up and financing schools of different levels and orientations. Furthermore, Chen Jiageng was one of the best-known Overseas Chinese who in the end sided with the Communists, though not entering the Party.[151] As a philanthropic businessman active in Singapore and British Malaya, he represented the 'good capitalist' serving China by transferring money back, embodying also posthumously the ideal *qiao–xiang* 侨乡 (overseas to home county) ties according to the political agenda during the Deng Xiaoping era to attract investments (and take in the Overseas Chinese).

In terms of 'patriotic' credentials, Chen Jiageng had been outspoken against the Japanese, had also visited Yan'an during the Second Sino–Japanese War, and compared the latter favourably to Chongqing under Chiang Kai-shek. While many Overseas Chinese were critical of the Communists and rather allied with the GMD on Taiwan after 1949, he would also take the decisive step to move back to the mainland himself to end his days there.[152] His home (Jimei 集美, formerly a village

151 Another was Situ Meitang 司徒美堂, who had already helped Sun Yat-sen and the Xinhai revolution with his deep involvement in San Francisco Chinese secret societies and who also opted for the Communists against the GMD, moving after a life abroad back to the PRC where he died in 1955.

152 The early PRC tried to attract several Overseas Chinese to move back to the mainland, bolstering the new state's legitimacy. A substantial number followed the invitation in the 1950s, and they were often assigned to training grounds to adjust to the new political and ideological environment. In subsequent periods, they were often considered as ideologically unreliable, though. (Cf. Peterson 2012).

on the mainland opposite Xiamen island, today administratively part of Xiamen city, Fujian Province) was the place where he had invested his money for building up all sorts of schools already early in Republican times. At the same time, he had also cared for building up Chinese schools in Singapore, that way serving the Overseas Chinese community there to transmit a 'Chinese' education in the early 20th century. Since the 1980s, *qiao–xiang* ties were stressed more than ever in mainland China in the hope to attract Overseas Chinese capital to the PRC, and thus Chen's historical example was on the agenda anew (and like Tao Xingzhi, he was also becoming the subject of a PRC postage stamp, in his case already in 1984 at the occasion of his 110th birth anniversary). His 'patriotically' listed site is the **Chen Jiageng shengping shiji chenlieguan** 陈嘉庚生平事迹陈列馆 (Chen Jiageng's life and deeds exhibition hall) (Fujian Province) (list 1, 1997), and in Jimei, he would also be buried according to his own wish, after receiving a rare PRC state funeral after his demise in 1961 in Beijing, which underlined his importance for the state.[153]

Since the house he was born in is no longer there, and the one he had built himself in 1918 was destroyed by Japanese bombs during the Second Sino–Japanese War, today's *guju* (former home) is, in fact, of the mid-1950s to which the exhibition hall is attached, showing how the returned famous local figure lived during his later years (though he only lived in this *guju* from 1957 to 1960, in fact). And the tomb marks the end of his trajectory, again binding him to the locality and presencing him there, while his legacy is represented with a new park and a special local (Southern Min-style) building for 'returning' Overseas Chinese, built after his death. Thus, his personality and legacy is defining the whole area, together with the Jimei campus of the schools he created. (See fig. 5.2.2).

Today's visitor (as I observed during my visit in 2014) encounters the peculiar architectural style the whole place features, blending Western and Chinese elements (which reflects Chen Jiageng's experience in colonial Southeast Asia). Locally, it is proudly called in his honour 'Jiageng style'. While the focus is on Chen Jiageng, the man, he is also presented in a transregional perspective, pointing out that the many pupils who graduated from his various schools went out to everywhere in the world, and did so as 'Chinese' (not only as 'Fujianese'). His 'patriotic' credentials beyond the regional affiliation include his stress on Mandarin as the language of instruction (though he himself notably did not speak it), since he wanted to counter the endemic regionalist divisions among 'the Chinese', especially overseas; and his role

153 Nationally important figures were often buried in Beijing's prestigious Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery. The fact that he could be buried 'at home' according to his wish, as had been the standard in pre-PRC times, was also intended as a signal to the Overseas Chinese that the PRC would respect 'tradition', if they wished for it.

during the Second Sino–Japanese War when he organised help in various forms for China.

Fig. 5.2.2 Chen Jiageng's tomb (Jimei) (photograph by the author, 2014)

Also the difficulties he ran into in Southeast Asia with his business in the early 1930s are explained not only with the worldwide financial crisis of the Great Depression times, but also more 'patriotically' with the 'revenge' of the Japanese competitors there when he showed himself a 'Chinese patriot' after the Sino–Japanese brief military confrontation in Shandong, the so-called Jinan 济南 Incident of 1928, to oganise a boycott of Japanese goods among the Overseas Chinese.[154]

154 For the Jinan Incident and its propagandistic repercussions in a broader context, cf. Wei (2017), chapter 2.

Thus, his business supposedly went down at the time more because of Japanese interference than of anything else. Chen Jiageng's present rather lavish *guju* built for him by the Chinese government in the 1950s meets the expectation of PRC visitors to see a (presumably wealthy) Overseas Chinese lifestyle, while at least in 2014, at the time of my visit, there was no apparent need any longer to counter this impression with repeated assertions that Chen Jiageng nevertheless lived a very frugal life (a point very important to the narratives of the late 1990s when the site was listed, as we will see, which apparently were somewhat uneasy about this appearance – and also wanted to use Chen's model rather for engendering willingness to 'donate money').

In filmic 'patriotic' representation at the time of listing in the late 1990s, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 5) introduces the site over the great international respect Chen Jiageng supposedly enjoys, reflected in the dicision to name an asteroid (no. 2963, detected by Chinese astonomers in 1964 in the Chinese Purple Mountain Observatory in Nanjing once founded by the Jesuits) after him in 1990. (This international naming was de facto following the suggestion of the PRC to honour Chen's efforts for education – using the 'official' Mandarin pronunciation Chen Jiageng, thus 'nationalising' him in PRC terms, not the 'internationally' used Tan Kah Kee also commonly used in his 'second home', Singapore.)

From this 'global relevance', the TV presentation moves on to the local exhibition on him, attached to the *guju*. The display on his life presents old photos on his business activities in Southeast Asia, while the narrative assures the viewing audience that Chen Jiageng wanted to dedicate almost anything he earned there for education at his home *country* (*zuguo*) (thus, not only for his home *county* as conventional *qiao–xiang* ties imply). The national TV audience observes present-day Chinese pupils shown around to appreciate physical materials displayed like Chen's broken and worn-out armchair, or old photos or reproductions of newspaper clippings, but the presentation also integrates some short (and highly interesting) film clips of Chen Jiageng from the early years of the PRC. His various Jimei schools are briefly enumerated with shots of present-day pupils studying there, illustrating the enduring legacy of his endeavours. In his Southeast Asian schools, in turn, the narrative stresses, he wanted to make sure that the Overseas Chinese would not forget the land of their forefathers. He thus aimed at uniting the Overseas Chinese 'patriotically'. When he visited China (during the Second Sino–Japanese War), he would also go to (Communist) Yan'an, and after 1942, he would have to hide in Java from the Japanese who were after him. When he emerged again at war's end in 1945, there was a great ceremony in Chongqing (at the time still serving as China's

capital) to celebrate that he had survived, showing he was deeply beloved by his home country, too. In 1949, the Communists would invite him to join the Political Consultative Conference, and in PRC times, he would take over various official functions to address the Overseas Chinese. Locally in Fujian, he is presented as having made also many contributions there, advocating developmental policies during that time, including the building of a railway which would, in turn, strengthen Fujian's at the time still rather poor infrastructural integration into the rest of China. The 'hall for returnees' (in fact only built in 1962, shortly after Chen's death), in turn, should serve the Overseas Chinese 'coming back' to their home county for their temporary stay.

To illustrate to the national TV audience how the PRC cared for Chen Jiageng personally, Zhou Enlai is shown at his deathbed, and Zhu De and Zhou Enlai figure prominently on a photo taken at his 1961 state funeral (in Beijing). The end of the TV presentation summarises his 'patriotic' legacy with all the Jimei buildings connected to him, i.e., the schools of various types he had set up, and points out that also abroad in Singapore, a 'Chen Jiageng award' (i.e., 'Tan Kah Kee award') was created posthumously.[155] Thus, the film clip concludes, Chen clearly merited to have had an asteroid named after him, eternalising his legacy even in space.

In comparison to the above filmic presentation for a national TV audience, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 1), produced by Fujian educational TV, on this 'patriotic' education site for classroom use, is more restricted in its focus, mainly zooming in on the didactic exhibition on Chen Jiageng's life and deeds. For the historical part, a history professor of nearby Xiamen University, which was founded by Chen Jiageng, too, summarises Chen's 'patriotic' deeds during the war in textbook-like fashion.

The *guju*, though looking rather lavish, is, according to this filmic presentation, to show the nevertheless simple and frugal life this Overseas Chinese led for the sake of the country, putting his patched bed covers etc. on display to insinuate that even though the PRC government provided generous funding for enabling him to live a comfortable life in such a beautiful building, he never used much of it for himself, but rather donated the money. (This is obviously to counter the common impression of the PRC populace – especially during the Mao through Jiang Zemin eras – that Overseas Chinese live enviably luxurious lives, and to counter the established image of Chen, evoked by his always wearing a Western suit and necktie and

155 In fact, in Singapore, a 'Tan Kah Kee Foundation' was established, which at present awards 'young inventors'. The PRC, in turn, installed a 'Chen Jiageng Award', later called 'Chen Jiageng Science Award'.

spectacles, so different from the dress code of Maoist times.)[156] Groups of pupils are shown in this educational video who are guided by a representative of the Jimei schools, providing explanations (which serves also for classroom use of this video elsewhere in China to stand in for a real visit, similar to various cases of these educational videos on 'patriotic' sites we have addressed in the present book). Outdoor, in the park near Chen's statue, primary school children are shown collectively honouring 'grandpa Jiageng', singing the Young Pioneer's song 'we are the Communist successors', and 'lecturing' their fellow pupils about being frugal and rather save and donate their pocket money. The rector of the primary school explains to the camera that pupils live better lives today and thus are not easily interested in such educational goals, but that ever since the site introduced these ceremonies in conjunction with the 'young pioneers', with singing, dancing, and recitations, the 'effects were very positive', and the first graders already learnt the intended lessons of serving the country and putting their own material well-being in second line, to 'willingly donate' the pocket money they saved. Thus, the Jimei schools should be obviously promoted as 'best practice' examples also in 'patriotic education' for emulation by other schools!

Needless to say, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video puts a special stress on Chen Jiageng's many activities for education, showing several groups of pupils of varying age, visiting the exhibition on his life as well as the whole memorial park with architecture inspired by his love of a style mixing Western and Fujianese elements. The traditional wood carvings found in rich Fujianese homes with historical stories, drama scenes, or other popular or religious tales, inspired the Westernised-modernised versions in cement and with modern content in the outdoor park.[157] That way, the Fujianese traditional folk art of wood carvings is also adapted and made to serve a 'patriotic' end. The 'liberation monument', in turn, which Chen Jiageng sponsored, is presented as the final proof of his sustaining the CCP (if only since the 1940s), which takes stylistic inspiration from the Tiananmen Square 'Monument to the People's Heroes', with scenes from modern history as bas-reliefs at its base, while Chen Jiageng's participation in the founding ceremony of the PRC of 1 October 1949 on the Tiananmen rostrum is to show his close connection to the Party. Thus, in the end, his story leads back to the praise of the CCP on the one

156 One may note that only in public photos of the late 1950s, Chen Jiageng finally wore a Sun Yat-sen suit. (Cf. the photo sheets in Yong 2014). He otherwise almost universally appears in a (bourgeois) Western suit, often with a cane and a hat. In the interesting footage snippets of the 1950s cut into the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip mentioned above, one could also note how Chen slowly accustomed to PRC 'style'.

157 Needless to say, the very humid climate made for cement being a feasible material option for more durable outdoor constructions.

hand, and his tomb, presencing him on site, shows on the other hand his deep affection for his native soil and for Chinese culture, while integrating 'modern' elements. This example, set by him, is to inspire the next generations.

While the filmic versions provide for the respective audiences a visual tour at the time of the late 1990s, the 'patriotic education' booklet (Chen 1998), in turn, presents the intended young readers with more background for the site, its evolution, and for Chen Jiageng, the great local figure. The main focus of the narrative is in this case on Chen Jiageng's role in organising the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia to bind them closer to the Chinese mainland, mainly via educational facilities. The location now designated as a 'patriotic education showcase base' is, strictly speaking, only the exhibition hall on his life, but in an extended sense comprises various places in Jimei closely connected and termed together a 'memorial scenic spot' (as the respective 'patriotic' booklet is also titled), which thus covers the broader site. Since the Japanese had bombed the area during the Second Sino–Japanese War, not only his own one-time home, but also many of his schools were destroyed or damaged. Thus, his *guju* is, as mentioned, now understood as the new house built in the early PRC where he spent some of his final years, to which the exhibition is attached, while the (posthumously) added building to host Overseas Chinese visiting 'home' (*guilai* 归来), his imposing tomb garden, and the monument for the 'liberation of Jimei' which Chen Jiageng had sponsored, complete the 'memorial scenic spot'. The 'liberation monument', very obviously, inscribes the nation into this whole site memorialising the historical figure Chen Jiageng. And both the monument as well as the tomb are located in a park which allows the visitor to take a stroll and relax in a 'patriotic' surrounding in this 'scenic spot' at the seaside. The Overseas Chinese Museum which Chen Jiageng had lobbied for to be built and which would become a 'patriotic education showcase base' in its own right (see chapter 4.1 of the present book), is, in turn, on Xiamen island, opposite Jimei, as is Xiamen University, another major legacy of his in the whole area. That way, Jimei is, in fact, only part of his legacy, if the most important one.

Interestingly, though not mentioned in the 'patriotic' materials, the large tomb garden which he had prepared for himself, had been once criticised in the PRC as 'feudal' and a 'waste' by local Communist cadres, and thus could be built only against opposition. Even more striking is the fact that the pavilion nearby originally hosted 'sixteen stone statues of the top Party and military leaders of the PRC' (Yong 2014: 352). This is no longer to be seen, but is a curious imitation of Chinese temples with arhats lined up.

In terms of local affiliation, the 'patriotic' booklet stresses Chen Jiageng's deep affection for his home, Jimei, connecting it to the larger history of the area which

had not only seen Zheng Chenggong (see above, chapter 5.1) being active there earlier, but also the outflow of so many Chinese since the 19th century who were 'tricked or forced' by the Western colonialists to work overseas (which reflects the perceived need to explain to the young intended reader of the 'patriotic' booklet why a Chinese would opt for migration),[158] with the British on the small island of Gulangyu belonging to Xiamen (a treaty port with Westerners living there) being purportedly the key 'traffickers in people' (Chen 1998: 1–2). In this context, also Chen Jiageng's father is said to have moved to Singapore, then under British domination, to build up a living there (as, needless to say, many Chinese had done already in earlier times in various migration waves to Southeast Asia, long before the 'Western colonialists' arrived in Fujian).

Chen Jiageng, who at first stayed behind in Jimei with his mother and little brother when the father went off to Singapore, since families usually did not migrate *in toto*, thus grew up in Jimei and was educated in the traditional system. When old enough, he then went to join his father's rice business in Singapore until his father went into bankruptcy. Chen Jiageng would thus start his own business, first mainly pineapple canning, then rubber, shipping and more. Being an increasingly successful entrepreneur in Singapore (which would gain him the nickname 'Henry Ford of Malaya' in his later career),[159] he still cared for his home country and first backed Sun Yat-sen and other revolutionaries in their fight against the Qing.[160]

When the Republic was installed in China, he began channelling his funds into building up educational facilities in Jimei, as he had already started to do in Singapore.[161] In his home Jimei, he would build a whole series of schools over the years, from primary to various kinds of secondary schools, including ones for specialised areas like marine studies in this coastal location, but also training schools for future teachers or vocational specialisations, which were also useful for potentially working overseas thereafter, and finally also Xiamen University in 1921.

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158 The push factors of migration are, however, not addressed in this patriotic narrative, neither is the long history of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia. For the perceived need to highlight the 'forced' character of migration, see also chapter 4.1 in the present book on the Overseas Museum.

159 Cf. Yong (2014: 70). See also his short biography on the Singapore Tan Kah Kee Foundation website: 'Tan Kah Kee – A Biography' (n.d.).

160 One may note that he only joined the Tongmenghui in 1910. He, however, did not join the subsequent party emerging from it, the GMD. See Yong (2014: 154–158).

161 As his biography by the Singapore Tan Kah Kee Foundation notes, he already founded a first school in Singapore for Fujian (Hokkien) children in 1907, while in his home Jimei he became active only after the end of the Qing. See 'Tan Kah Kee – A Biography' (n.d.). Jimei sources, in turn, argue that he already started building schools there during Qing times.

In Singapore, in turn, with more and more Chinese migrants settling down there with families, he wanted to make sure that their children would also receive a 'Chinese education' and thus funded schooling also there (3).

When the Japanese, who were also economic competitors in Southeast Asia, stepped up their pressure on the Chinese mainland, Chen Jiageng, who had in the meantime become a leader of the Overseas Chinese in Singapore (and also in Southeast Asia more generally), tried to mobilise the Chinese community to sustain the land of their ancestors against the Japanese. This meant, the intended reading pupils learns, that he came under threat personally, and when the Japanese conquered Singapore, he had to flee and stay underground until WW II ended. These 'anti-Japanese' credentials were praised by all political sides, not the least because he had publicly denounced Wang Jingwei, the 'arch-traitor' every Chinese pupil is familiar with, when the latter signalled his willingness to cooperate with the Japanese. However, since Chen Jiageng had started to shift politically to the left, having visited on a good-will tour in 1940 both Chongqing and Yan'an in wartime, after which he spoke favourably of Yan'an, as mentioned, his GMD connections worsened. During the Chinese Civil War, he took sides with the Communists, participated in the founding ceremony of the PRC (which did not endear him to the British who by then had the say in Singapore once more), and thus he finally moved back to mainland China in 1950 for good – if without his large family.[162] Then, the reader learns, he set out to build up again the largely destroyed Jimei school campus, now with generous PRC government support, though his Hong Kong bank accounts proved helpful as well.

In 1960, when he was already ill and had to move away from Jimei for medical treatment, he left the *guju* now to be seen, i.e., the house rebuilt by the government for him in the mid-1950s, since the Japanese bombings had destroyed the house he had once built in 1918 for himself and his younger brother. The designation as his *guju* (in which, it will be recalled, he had only lived 1957 to 1960) was in fact only applied in 1980, i.e., after the Cultural Revolution, with the plaque written by Liao Chengzhi, a key responsible cadre for relations with the Overseas Chinese (see above, e.g., with the case of the Nan'an memorial for Zheng Chenggong) (7). For the exhibition, due to Fujian's humid climate, many objects Chen Jiageng used during the time he lived there, if fairly recent, had to be put under glass (and he himself is presenced by a wax figure in the *guju*). While the *guju* is to presence Chen Jiageng, the man, the adjacent exhibition on his life, being the main listed content in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context, serves for belabouring three major

162 Unsurprisingly, the patriotic education booklet does not mention these 'push effects' for Chen Jiageng's moving back to the mainland.

aspects of significance of this model personality: Chen's success as a businessman, his role for education, and of course his 'patriotism'. To extend the comprehensive site's use, after his death, the already named building for 'returning' or visiting Overseas Chinese was set up. On purpose, it was designed as a kind of ancestral hall. In terms of Maoist China, this would be considered a 'feudal' architecture, but it served to intensify the link with the Overseas Chinese over their ancestry, which creates a feeling of obligation towards the place of origin.

During the Deng Xiaoping era and in the vein of developing tourism of the 1980s, the park and a public bronze statue of Chen Jiageng by a noted sculptor was added (which had been shown in the filmic presentations), inscribed with the early praise by Mao (who thus legitimises him) of Chen Jiageng as 'banner of the Overseas Chinese, glory of the nation' – since Chen had come to Yan'an in wartime and spoke well about it. Thus, when Chen reemerged at war's end, Mao attempted to draw the outspoken anti-Japanese activist and major spokesman of the Overseas Chinese, who had had to hide in Southeast Asia, to the CCP side by this praise.[163] This key endorsement by Mao is presented here notably in the calligraphy of Deng Xiaoping (11), who was the main driving force in the 1980s for attracting Overseas Chinese (not the least for investment) to the mainland (assuring them something like the Cultural Revolution would never happen again). That way, Deng backed up the 'great man' by using Mao's authority.

The intended young reader of the 'patriotic booklet' also learns that the park this is situated in was already initiated by Chen Jiageng himself on the grounds of a small typical Fujianese Mazu temple the Japanese bombs had destroyed, turning the original tiny island into a peninsula and inscribing the nation (instead of Mazu) on it by sponsoring the monument for the 'liberation of Jimei' which is, in turn, sporting Mao's calligraphy as a further proof of Mao's endorsing Chen Jiageng (13), while Chen Jiageng himself wrote the inscription on the backside, giving his summary of Jimei's 'liberation', first from the Japanese in 1945, and then from the GMD after the Civil War (14). That way, Mao and Chen himself were also joined over calligraphy on the monument. This area is also the place Chen chose himself for his tomb (and notably only his, without any family members who were, in any case, also not joining him in the PRC), to which he was transferred after his state funeral in Beijing.[164]

163 Mao had written this when the big celebration in Chongqing was held for the fact that Chen Jiageng had survived the war. Mao's was one of several such praises hung up at the occasion (Yong 2014: 307).

164 The large family he had (seventeen children from four spouses, Yong 2014: 35–36) is usually not addressed in the PRC since they also preferred not to join him in moving back to the mainland.

Like other booklets in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' series, the one on Chen Jiageng dwells particularly on his youth to render him closer to the intended young readership. While Chen Jiageng's own later family with his several spouses and many children is largely evaded as a topic for PRC children raised under Deng Xiaoping's one-child policy and the monogamous family laws, Chen Jiageng's father's trajectory serves for them as a window to families of the coastal area in Fujian in the late 19th century. While his (first) wife remained home, the father stayed most of the time in Singapore and had another wife (who died early: cf. Yong 2014: 24) and a concubine there. Chen Jiageng, who went over to help in his father's business when old enough, only returned to Jimei for his mother's burial (she had died from an epidemic) and later also cared for the concubine of his father who is said to have driven his father's accumulating debts, together with an adopted son, in Singapore by gambling (17). (That way, the young reader should assume that concubinage and gambling are connected and show moral depravity from which Chen's father is, however, exempted, shifting the blame onto the concubine.) As the booklet stresses, according to 'local costume', i.e., British law in Singapore, a bankruptcy would end debts, but Chen Jiageng nevertheless felt obliged to make good for his father's losses as a good Chinese Confucian-educated filial son, and thus worked hard on his own to pay back everything for his father (18). His success was not only due to hard work but, as the booklet stresses, also to his adaptability to the current market needs and to his copying of smart practices he observed elsewhere (21), a strategy China tried to adopt also in the Deng Xiaoping era and advertised here over the historical example of Chen Jiageng.

Supposedly, it was the Chinese education he had received, though, which prepared him for his success as well as for his generosity and altruism, and thus he also wanted to provide education for the next young generation, even in periods when his business got into trouble. In fact, he also had to deal with competitors, some of whom he had even trained earlier himself, but he tried to outcompete them as well as the Westerners (which should be a source of particular pride). He also advocated the use of female labour and thus also opened up educational facilities for girls. By introducing foreign know-how and expertise which would then be substituted by local ones, he trained qualified personnel (who at times later became competitors), and with the money earned he financed his educational facilities in Jimei as well as in Singapore (30). This all shows how the narrative stays close to

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According to Yong (2014: 25), his relationship with his family had not been very emotional, and he basically lived on his own since 1937 when he increasingly turned to politics. He thus also chose his tomb site himself and remains buried there alone.

the 'Reform and Opening' period agenda to transmit it to the intended young readers via the historical example Chen Jiageng.

Although Chen Jiageng's business came under pressure increasingly since the late 1920s, not the least also due to the Great Depression, his role as a leader in the Overseas Chinese community in Southeast Asia was by then firmly established. Part of his problems are said to have been caused by his anti-Japanese activities which he made ever more vocal since the already mentioned 1928 Sino–Japanese Jinan Incident, the Japanese being also major economic competitors on the Southeast Asian market, though it is claimed that Chen had already encountered the negative Japanese influence during earlier times locally when still in Jimei (and its neighbouring treaty port Xiamen) (thus binding his anti-Japanese credentials also back to his home area). As the booklet insinuates, the Japanese were not only envious of his business success, but also felt provoked by his outspoken criticism of Japanese designs on mainland China (i.e., the conflict was not only economic rivalry but also caused by his 'patriotism'). When the Second Sino–Japanese War started in full in 1937, Chen Jiageng thus became very active, organised boycott movements of Japanese goods in Southeast Asia, (68) and collected money for sustaining the Chinese side in the war. In 1940, he made his good-will-tour to unoccupied parts of China in person, namely visiting Chongqing, the wartime capital of Chiang Kai-shek, but also Communist Yan'an where he, the businessman in a Western suit with necktie, was treated with great care, which paid off since he compared subsequently the latter favourably to corrupt Chongqing, as mentioned (85–88).[165] This predictably worsened his relationship with the GMD.

As far as his educational activities are concerned, given his financial difficulties in the 1930s which led to his bankruptcy in 1934 in Singapore, Xiamen University which he had founded in 1921, had to be handed over to the state by 1937 (which, in any case, was also conforming to the GMD policies which tried to bring all educational facilities under government control) (39). But his many schools had also served to fill the blank spots left by the Chinese governments before, caring also for girls' education as well as for specialised schooling in practical skills for which he also bought training equipment from abroad, e.g., to train pupils in making better use of the seashore resources in which Fujian abounded (47–49). However, the intended young readers can also glean from the narrative that Chen also gave money

165 Visits from abroad were an important part of public relations for both political parties, the GMD and the CCP, during wartime. While the GMD encouraged visits to Chongqing but not to Yan'an, the CCP took the occasion of any outside visitor very seriously and tried to showcase also Yan'an to them. In comparison, Yan'an almost always scored much better than Chongqing with those visiting both places.

for missionary school projects in Singapore (50), which shows that he was not only pursuing his own projects but also sustained educational efforts by others. However, given his accent on a 'Chinese' education, the issue of the language of instruction brought to the fore the fragmentation in the Overseas Chinese community in linguistic terms: while the biggest group in Singapore were Hokkien speakers (like Chen Jiageng himself), there were also many speakers of other varieties of Chinese, and teaching thus was in either those varieties, or in English. Thus, Chen Jiageng who, as mentioned, did not speak Mandarin (or any other variety of Chinese than Hokkien,[166] nor English in spite of having become a British subject in 1916!),[167] advocated to use Mandarin (at the time called in GMD fashion the 'national language' / *guoyu* 国语) to teach all Overseas Chinese children together, strengthening also their ties to China as such (and not only to their respective native region). The same practice he advocated for the Jimei and Xiamen educational facilities he built up (54–56).

That way, the 'patriotic' booklet tries to stress, he also hoped to counter the many educational facilities offered by the Western missionaries (often using Western languages for instruction) (60), which would, however, to his mind estrange the pupils from their Chinese background.[168] And the increasing Japanese pressure on China meant that to counter the Japanese effectively, the typical regional factionalism among the Overseas Chinese had to be overcome. Thus, he also founded various Chinese-language newspapers and journals to propagate his views and create more commonality among the Overseas Chinese (69). To bolster Chiang Kai-shek as the leader of China in the 1930s – whom Chen Jiageng de facto sustained until well into the Second Sino–Japanese War, he co-organised a donation campaign for airplanes to hand to Chiang at his 50th birthday (celebrated in 1936 according to Chinese reckoning of age), given the fact that what China needed most at the time was an effective air force, as earlier encounters with the quickly growing Japanese air force had made clear.[169]

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166 He thus did not speak any other Chinese language variety current in Singapore's mixed Chinese population, although he became a leader of the whole Chinese community. Cf. Yong (2014: 154). Later in the PRC, he always had to excuse himself for not speaking Mandarin, though he wrote Chinese, of course.

167 According to Yong (2014: 49), he needed to become a British subject for moving into the shipping business during WW I.

168 As mentioned above, he had, however, also donated funds to missionary-led schools in Singapore.

169 For more on the problems of the Chinese air force and its fight against the Japanese, cf. Müller (2022: 267–271, 283–285). According to Yong (2014: 201), the money collected in a pan-Malayan Chinese effort was enough for financing 13 (!) fighter aircraft, named Malaya no. 1 to no. 13.

When the Second Sino–Japanese War broke out in full in 1937, the Overseas Chinese rallied to the Chinese cause. According to the 'patriotic' booklet, the Overseas Chinese worldwide contributed a very substantial part of the military funds available to Chiang Kai-shek's government, with those from Southeast Asia contributing the bulk (which testifies to their strong 'patriotism') (78). Beyond money, though, also technicians, drivers, and general workforce for building the Burma Road, China's lifeline during the early years of the war when the eastern coast was occupied by the Japanese, moved there as volunteers from Singapore and Southeast Asia.[170] Thus, the manifold 'patriotic' contributions of the Southeast Asian Overseas Chinese are highlighted to the intended young readership of the 'patriotic' booklet (78–80). On the political side, Chen Jiageng was also ready to break with former fellow travellers since the times of the pre-Republican Tongmenghui of Sun Yat-sen which was, in fact, the only political organisation he officially ever entered. Namely, he broke with Wang Jingwei when the latter announced to start peace talks with Japan during the war, denouncing him as a 'traitor' (81), while he criticised Chiang Kai-shek at the same time for not having stopped Wang Jingwei in time before he could escape from Chongqing, which suggested that Chiang might not have been willing to really block him after all (which is, of course, a debatable assumption) (83–84).

When the Japanese occupied Singapore in 1942, the war had come to the Overseas Chinese there directly. While the 'patriotic' booklet claims that the colonial British did not fight strongly themselves against the Japanese and rather had the Chinese as their subjects do so (92),[171] the fall of Singapore meant for Chen Jiageng that he had to hide in Java. He would use the time there to write his autobiography – which in fact is the source of most information, representing Chen Jiageng's views, though it is stated that his recollections are sometimes 'not fully reliable' (97). (This is explained to the intended young reader as being due to his not having any documentation with him during his escape. Chen's book would appear in print in 1946, when the war was over.)

After the Second Sino–Japanese War, Chen Jiageng perceived it as his task to lobby with Chiang Kai-shek for the Overseas Chinese, pointing out that they also deserved remuneration for their services during wartime. On the other hand, in Southeast Asia, he sustained the independence movements there, namely of Indonesia against the Dutch colonisers who wanted to come back after the Japanese had

170 Cf. also Yong (2014: 221). He points out the appalling conditions these volunteers lived in during that time. One should add that Overseas Chinese also moved over from other parts of the world, e.g., from the US as aviators, to sustain the Chinese war effort.

171 This was, in fact, Chen Jiageng's point of view.

left, or in India against the British, (thus showing him not only as a Chinese 'patriot', but also as an 'anti-imperialist', though Malaya and Singapore are notably not mentioned in this context) (101). In Singapore, where Chen stayed again, he reminded the British of the need to honour those Chinese fallen in the local defence, and of the need to care more for the young generation since while English-language schools were soon reopened in Singapore, the same was not true for the Chinese-language schools (105). The Overseas Chinese, in turn, he wanted to reorganise to minimise the still strong regionalist identities and strengthen a common Chinese one. On the other hand, though, he was by then politically clearly gravitating towards the CCP in the Chinese Civil War – something not universally appreciated in the Overseas Chinese community. The 'patriotic' booklet goes at length to show to the intended young mainland reader that Chen denounced Chiang Kai-shek as being the one driving the Civil War, and the US as backing him, though adding the interesting point that Chen Jiageng also wanted to keep the Soviets out of the Chinese picture (107). Nonetheless, it seems, the GMD still had some grip on the native place organisations in Singapore and also on the province of Fujian from where Chen Jiageng hailed. In sum, Chen became a publicly debated and rather contested figure in these Civil War years. He continued to lobby for those Overseas Chinese who had helped build and manage the Burma Road during the Second Sino–Japanese War (until the Japanese closed it in 1942), who were still stranded somewhere in China and needed funds for 'returning home', meaning to Southeast Asia. But he also denounced the Dutch for instigating the Indonesians (who struggled for independence) to attack Overseas Chinese as scapegoats (which insinuates that the move 'back home' to Southeast Asia was not free of ambivalences for Overseas Chinese still stuck in mainland China either) (114–117). This is also a rare hint for the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet to the fact that the Overseas Chinese were not necessarily that welcome in Southeast Asia, though the bloody anti-Chinese pogroms there are never clearly addressed.

On the other hand, those of Chen's ideas on 'citizen formation' that the Communists were consonant with are pointed out as his key ideas: no Western dancing, no big spending on marriages and funerals,[172] no superstition, no big dinner parties, no old clothing habits (intending 'traditional Chinese' ones), no theatre plays advocating anything immoral, no *fengshui* (geomancy), no bad influences on children's minds, no unhygienic customs, no immoral activities like gambling or consuming of drugs or prostitution, no deferral of burying the dead (e.g. to wait for auspicious days and finding an auspicious site), no unsanitary living

172 This is obviously in contrast to what happened at his own funeral and burial.

habits, no ancient marriage customs like child bride adoptions, no lavish gift giving (121–122). This all went well with the CCP's own policies, and thus is to suggest that the rapprochement between Chen Jiageng and the CCP was rather natural.

From the CCP's side, the 'patriotic' booklet points out that Chen Jiageng was also someone appreciated and consulted by the Communist leaders, e.g. seeking his 'advice' on declaring their list of 'war criminals' which blacklisted many of the GMD notables, starting with Chiang Kai-shek with whom Chen Jiageng had been on better terms earlier (but also including Sun Yat-sen's only son Sun Ke, e.g. – see above for Sun Yat-sen's Cuiheng memorial), and it is said that he sustained this move of the Communist leadership fully while trying to publicly 'convince' those he had once been familiar with to change sides at the last moment (122–123). Another of his purported key contributions to Socialist China was the dissemination of hygiene awareness since many premature deaths among the Chinese were due to their lack of hygiene (125–126). He is thus presented as someone who made many reasonable suggestions which the PRC government also duly picked up (though one may safely assume this would have been the policy also without him). Given the fact that Xiamen (including Jimei today) is de facto a border region since 1949 (with the Jinmen islands, today under Taiwanese control, located in viewing distance), the GMD also had repeatedly sent planes over to bomb the Fujianese coastal area, and thus Chen Jiageng, the famous local figure, was also sent to see and testify to the destruction wrought by the Taiwanese GMD planes (127). Politically, he was made by the PRC into *the* voice of the Overseas Chinese whom the PRC tried to win over to her side, although in practical terms, his lack of Mandarin proficiency made it difficult to broadcast his speeches beyond the group of the Hokkien speaker community. While his decision to move back to the PRC for good was hailed in China (not mentioning the 'push factor' also involved, i.e., that he was not any longer welcome in Singapore because of his Communist sympathies, while his large family stayed behind),[173] Chen Jiageng petitioned the PRC government for building up a museum on the Overseas Chinese (see chapter 4.1 of the present book) to duly honour their contribution – and to unite the various regional factions into the overall term 'Overseas Chinese' (132). Politically, the 'patriotic' booklet's narrative suggests that although Chen possibly even supported very 'anti-capitalist' policies of

173 Interestingly, there is a photo of the time of transfer on p. 130 in the 'patriotic' booklet which shows his large family that he parted with. Yong (2014: 336–343) stresses that the British evaded making Chen a 'martyr' but were clearly suspecting him ever since he openly declared his allegiance to the Communist side, had travelled to mainland China and attended the opening ceremony of the PRC on the Tiananmen rostrum in 1949. No one of his family joined him, and he transferred his business to his sons. However, one may note that he renounced his British citizenship only as late as 1957 (Yong 2013: 345).

Mao and the latter's anti-rightist movement (of 1957), he was likely critical toward the 'Great Leap Forward' – notably a presentation fully in line with official historiography since the Deng Xiaoping era (134–138). His criticism at the Great Leap time was, however, as claimed, edited out by the publishers, which suggests that what appeared in print back then seemed to be of approval instead (thus 'backpedalling' from his published opinion at that time which supposedly supported that policy, to argue in the vein of post-Cultural Revolution historiography, that he had seen through the errors of the Great Leap but was prevented from making it public).

For his final years, the 'patriotic' booklet stresses that Chen, the model personality, wanted his money to be used mainly on education, like Tao Xingzhi not leaving much to his (in this case very numerous) family who should rather try and earn their living themselves (141). This, too, is fully in accord with the PRC's agenda that even though Deng Xiaoping famously said that some may 'get rich first', in the end loyalty to the nation should be paramount (and money thus invested accordingly). Notable, though, is Chen Jiageng's wish for himself that he may not be cremated at his death (which was the new 'materialist' and 'hygienic' policy, if going against the wide-spread custom of earth burial), and that he may, as tradition wants it, be buried in Jimei, i.e., 'at home' (141). In this very personal sense, then, Chen Jiageng kept to tradition. Given his special role for the PRC vis-à-vis the Overseas Chinese, Chen was not only receiving the rare honour of a PRC state funeral, but also was granted this wish. And he appears as a person praised by various CCP notables, from Mao to Jiang Zemin, the general secretary at the time the booklet was published, in seemingly unbroken line, ironing out all potential problems to construct a neat narrative for the intended young 'patriotic' reader.

Moving from the above framing of Chen Jiageng in the late 1990s to the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* narrative (Gu 2019) reflects how the 'patriotic' showcase base developed over time, and it reframes it to some degree in new ways. The listed site is now understood, like we noticed already in various cases, in a broader sense, by now covering beyond the life exhibition hall and *guju*, also the exhibition on the Jimei campus history, and as a new addition, a display about his younger brother's life (who worked in tandem with him to locally implement Chen Jiageng's wishes). This broadens the focus of the former 'one-man-show'. The 'hall for returnees', the park for them, the so-called turtle park (where Chen's tomb is), and the Jiageng public park are, of course, still part of the setting.

For the rather lavish *guju*, the intended reader learns not only that its predecessor was originally constructed in 1918, destroyed by Japanese bombs in 1938, and rebuilt in 1955, but that in 1980, it was restored 'as it was' (which suggests that there had been further alterations or destructions in between, likely during the Cultural

Revolution which is, however, not openly addressed). The exhibition on his life and deeds was, in any case, only opened in 1983 (i.e., after the Cultural Revolution) (12). The 'hall for the returnees' is said to have been built after Chen's own plans in Minnan architectural style, resembling an ancestor hall with rooms to stay, but newly inscribed by a statue of Chen Jiageng as the supposed key 'ancestor' to be acknowledged by any visiting Overseas Chinese, embellished by various endorsements of him (thus sanctioning him posthumously). These endorsements include a couplet of noted cultural figure Guo Moruo (whose family, incidentally, was from Fujian originally, before moving to Sichuan) who visited Jimei in 1962 (i.e., after Chen's death, when the 'hall of the returnees' was built, possibly in the context of Guo's visiting the Zheng Chenggong memorial not far away – see above chapter 5.1). Guo praised Chen Jiageng for being an Overseas Chinese who had the courage to 'come and see' to understand the real situation in the PRC (which, in turn, reflects the widespread reservations of the Overseas Chinese vis-à-vis the PRC at the time), and for establishing schools in Jimei. That way, Chen was transformed into an 'ancestor' of the 'good Overseas Chinese'.

The new exhibition on the life of Chen's younger brother (who already died in 1936) stresses the latter's role locally to care for Jimei when Chen Jiageng was away. He is also credited as the one to design the Jimei school hymn (a topic repeatedly coming up, as one may add, at several educational places, with hymns understood as standing for the 'spirit' of a school) (13).

The *Fengbei* narrative has also changed to some degree the viewpoint compared to the one of the late 1990s on Chen Jiageng's life: it asserts more directly that Chen's natal Jimei (administratively part of Quanzhou when he was born, while today part of Xiamen) in general had strong established bonds overseas since long, including Chen's family, at least ever since his grandfather's time (and thus no longer suggesting that it was only his father who was supposedly enticed, according to the late 1990s narrative, by the 'trafficking colonialists' to move to Southeast Asia).

While Chen Jiageng stayed behind with his mother in Jimei, the father's business overseas went up and down (14). In this new narrative, closer to the intended young readers' experiences in life, one learns that in his home area, Chen Jiageng went to a traditional private (clan) school at eight years of age where he, however, did not learn much and thus was only partly literate in the end (reflecting also the shortcomings of the 'old educational system'). The Sino–French War (1884–1885) (which affected Fujian directly), natural desasters, and an epidemic (which only half of his kin survived) made many leave (which thus acknowledges also the push factors for migration which were rather avoided in the late 1990s' narrative). At age 16, Chen

joined his father in Singapore and worked as an accountant in his father's rice business. There he learnt Western knowledge, but at the same time, the colonial oppression he experienced overseas turned him presumably into a 'patriot'. He then went back home to marry in Jimei and moved into fishing for a living (15), but also did not give up on his studies, hiring a private tutor, i.e., followed more intellectual pursuits on his own. (This drives home to the intended young reader the point of the quintessential role of a solid formation, and grounds his later activities for broad formation in his own hard way to gain it.) He then went again to Singapore and only came back when his mother had died to care for her tomb (as he was supposed to as the eldest son).

Beyond this 'filial' act, the *Fengbei* narrative is, however, particularly interested in detailing his business activities (and in teaching the intended young reader about the various difficulties arising in a capitalist environment). Chen's father had gone into business in Singapore with food canning, while starting a new family in Singapore (as is stated here, thus circumnavigating the question of multiple wives as well as concubinage). When his new 'spouse' supposedly spent all his money, he went broke. Thus, Chen Jiageng went into food canning himself, but during WW I he smartly realised also the chance to go into logistics. And he started to move into the rubber business as well (16). (At the time, rubber had been just introduced from Brazil to Southeast Asia.) His business thrived, and he would become one of the 'rubber kings' in Southeast Asia, peaking in business success in 1925 when he did business in various fields and with 30.000 workers internationally, most of them Chinese, though. (There is no mentioning in this 'patriotic' education context on that he was a British subject at the time, which eased his business substantially.) (17).

Although he was a successful entrepreneur, he was convinced that the key to 'save China' was education. That means that he was a sincere 'patriot' and educator, starting his first school in Jimei already in the late Qing (as is argued here, countering Singaporian claims), to then also set up one in Singapore for the Chinese there. When also another Fujianese in Singapore engaged in education, he would participate as well (showing he was not only caring for his own projects but for the greater cause of Chinese education) (18). They would use new teaching materials, and Chen took also practical care that the students had a dorm to live in. While the Xinhai Revolution of 1911 to end imperial rule excited him politically, on the economic and educational front, he realised when going into canning of oysters as a new field, that it was necessary to train students also in technical and industrial matters (which would also help him recruit qualified personnel for his business). Thus, he wanted education to be designed in a way to concretely serve the people's livelihood

(which distanced it from the Chinese received concept of education). To achieve this, one first needed capable teachers, but there were not yet many teacher colleges in China (19). The ones that were there were, he found out, all dominated by the rich, i.e., usually people from the outside, while those with less financial means could not get their children in. (This shows how the modern narrative tries to stay close to pupils' perspectives and the very salient problem of fairness in educational opportunities.) To find a place for his new school, he had to consider that in Jimei housing was cramped already, and around the settlement area, there were many tombs. This meant that (given the widespread 'superstition' about places of death) no one would want to live there in school. Thus, Chen Jiageng found a smart solution by buying a little pond, which he had filled in to finally have a ground to build his schools upon in 1913 (i.e., therewith he laid the foundation of the Jimei campus).

In Singapore, on the other hand, he meanwhile invested in the pineapple canning business. And with another Fujianese in Singapore, he also started a girls' school there (20). At that time, the language of instruction used was still Hokkien, and the focus was rather on moral education in a more traditional understanding of schooling, with the teachers even visiting the pupils' homes. To step up women's education, an educational offer for grown-up women to go to evening school was set up as well (which additionally served for drawing women into the workforce). However, Chen Jiageng is said to have soon realised that it was of key importance to change the language of instruction to Mandarin (*guoyu*) (to create a stronger link to a common 'Chineseness'), and thus he asked noted intellectual and 'educator of China', Cai Yuanpei,[174] to send teachers who could speak *guoyu* over to Singapore. And since Singapore had only primary-level schooling for Chinese to offer at the time, Chen Jiageng wanted to build up a junior secondary school there too (21), arguing that primary-level education was simply not enough. He thus contacted the well-known educator and intellectual Huang Yanpei 黄炎培 who was leading the most advanced educational circle in Jiangsu for help and advice, and that way, in Singapore, a secondary school could be finally established which was to serve Southeast Asian Overseas Chinese also beyond Singapore (22). This, the intended young reader of the 2019 'patriotic' narrative learns, was also a starting point for building up more and more schools for Overseas Chinese (and might connect in pupils' minds to the noted present-day well-performing students from Singapore in international comparison, e.g., in the PISA tests, thus prepared for by a former educationally disadvantaged boy from Jimei in mainland China).

174 Cf. the title of the most well-known English-language biography of Cai Yuanpei: Duiker (1977).

But Chen Jiageng did not forget Jimei all the while and sent his younger brother there who cared locally for the Jimei schools. Jiangsu teachers (which were considered the best in China at the time) were invited to come to Jimei since 1918, and the students had to pay either nothing, or only for food (which was in turn rather simple), thus making education there affordable. In 1919, Chen Jiageng switched with his brother (by then living in the new house they had built in Jimei) and wanted his Singaporian assets be transferred to Jimei (which should show his primary focus, after all, was on his home) (23). He amplified the educational offers in Jimei to include also training for fishing and seafaring so central to Fujian's coastal economy, and also for training in business and commerce (illustrating the breadth of his educational concept and thus also showing to a present-day reading pupil that vocational training, usually looked down upon, is needed, too). Chen Jiageng also made sure that other modern facilities like a hospital and a library were built, and a teacher college was started on campus as well. But for the primary school which was exclusively for locals, all other schools were designed to take in promising students from everywhere (to not repeat the situation which he had observed at other places where only the wealthy and the locals would get their children in) (24).

The crowning achievement in terms of education was for Chen, who had never been to any university himself, the founding of Xiamen University (1921). He chose the location of neighbouring Xiamen island since it was a transportation hub (and had become a British treaty port after the First Opium War). In fact, a place formerly used by Zheng Chenggong (see above, chapter 5.1) which the British had then turned into a race court and golf ground, was then picked for the university. At the time, the universities in China were mainly run by foreigners, and thus Chen Jiageng wanted to build up a 'Chinese' one which would be closer also to what the Chinese needed (which should also be of particular pride for the modern intended reader of the 2019 narrative) (25). Chen thus added an agricultural experimentation ground to the university and, different from Western-style universities, did not want to have an imposing façade, but rather stressed an airy healthy layout.

Thus, the insinuation goes, he saved money for the essentials, and (to show his 'patriotism' and 'anti-imperialism'), he would connect the building of the dorm also symbolically to the 'day of national humiliation' (i.e., the day of the '21 demands' of the Japanese handed to Yuan Shikai in 1915 in May).[175] As a later Overseas Chinese leader in Thailand who had been with Chen Jiageng at the time stated, Chen Jiageng came every day to personally check on how work progressed (and, if briefly, Xiamen University would have a moment of particular national significance

175 For the issues around the 'national humiliation day', cf. Callahan (2010), chapter 3.

when it assembled several famous Chinese intellectuals as professors who took refuge there when the warlords and the GMD moved against political 'dissidents') (26).[176]

Summarising Chen's educational goals for the intended young reader, those are characterised in this 2019 narrative as: girls should receive education too, poor students needed special attention, good teaching quality was needed and thus good teachers were needed, industrial and technical knowledge was important, and education should be broadly disseminated. These, then, should supposedly also be the eductional priorities of China today.

However, the young intended reader of the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative also learns that in spite of his high ideals and tireless efforts, Chen Jiageng also had to endure setbacks, e.g., during war or because of business failure, which is connected here to the worldwide financial crisis in 1929 (dropping the 'Japanese revenge' storyline) (27). Though Chen was pressured to consider stop funding the schools to save his business, he would refuse to give up his major aim (which thus was not business as such, but serving the Chinese nation through education, the reader should understand). In 1937, he rather handed the Xiamen University over to the state (without mentioning to the reader the general school policy of the GMD and further background to this decision, though). The Jimei campus, in turn, would be bombed by the Japanese and later by the GMD (when he aligned with the Communists), but in the 1950s, they were finally rebuilt and thus thrive until today (28).

In terms of Chen's 'patriotic' credentials in the more political sense, it is pointed out to the intended young reader that Chen Jiageng had not only joined Sun Yat-sen's Tongmenghui (the predecessor of the GMD) in 1910, but in 1937, he actively supported China in the Second Sino–Japanese War, with money as well as by his 1940 visit with a delegation to China, where he had gathered first-hand knowledge in Chongqing (including the nearby Hongyan village where the CCP representatives stayed – cf. chapter 3.2 for Geleshan) as well as in Yan'an (and then praised the Communists) (30–31).

At the time of the Chinese Civil War, Chen Jiageng would lobby for the Communists in Singapore, being supported by experienced publisher Hu Yuzhi 胡愈之 (by then a dedicated Communist)[177] and others, publishing a left-leaning newspaper

176 E.g., the noted writer Lin Yutang 林语堂, who hailed from Fujian, invited Lu Xun who was blacklisted (like he himself) by the warlord government in Beijing in 1926, to move with him to Xiamen University. A painting in the 'patriotically' listed exhibition on Chen Jiageng's life and deeds in Jimei shows the whole intellectual elite once present (if briefly) at Xiamen University as a source of local pride.

177 Hu Yuzhi had been close to the anarchists before, and he was an active esperantist. (Cf. Müller 2001). Hu Yuzhi had been, e.g., for some time the editor of one of the most longstanding Chinese

for Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia (the *Nan-Hua ribao* 南华日报). Zhou Enlai also sent noted Communist playwright Xia Yan 夏衍 to join him, and Hu Yuzhi's wife produced a publication addressing women (*Xin funü* 新妇女). This all shows how the Communists tried rather systematically to draw more Overseas Chinese to their side in the conflict and competition with the GMD. In early 1949, Mao thus invited Chen Jiageng to join the Political Consultative Conference, which Chen accepted and thus would stand on the Tiananmen rostrum on 1 October 1949, when the PRC was proclaimed (32). In 1950, he finalised his personal move for good to the PRC, proving himself a 'patriot'. In Singapore, in turn, when the latter became independent, the Overseas Chinese staying on there wanted to become citizens of that new state, and this, the narrative assures the intended young reader, he supported, too (and thus continued to care for the Overseas Chinese not following his lead to move to mainland China, reflecting the ambivalence in official view of the Overseas Chinese as bound to China, their 'original home', but also as bridges to the countries they live in and where they are supposed to serve too).[178] At his death in 1961, Chen Jiageng would, in any case, be highly praised as a 'patriot' (33), and thus he serves as a model for Chinese citizens to emulate, combining an international outlook, a profound 'patriotism', and a high sense of the necessity and broadness of 'education' for the coming generations in China.

The above three cases of modern non-Communist models in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system show how role models are chosen and framed in this transitional period. Sun Yat-sen is thrust in the ideological 'precursor' role, deeply concerned with the nation's future development in the modern world, while Tao Xingzhi reflects the moves in educational approach from traditional education and value systems as well as Western (missionary and capitalist) influence, to a concept of education of 'the people' to form new citizens 'for the nation'. Chen Jiageng, finally, bridges the topic of education and inclusive 'Chineseness', pointing to the overarching 'common' goal of educating talent and mobilising all kinds of resources for the Chinese *patria*. His vision of specialised educational facilities foreshadows the needs of what would be called in the 1990s *suzhi* 素质 (quality) education,[179] being aware of the international competitive environment in which China's citizens are set. By his funding of schools, he also serves as an example of

journals of the early 20th century: *Dongfang zazhi* 东方杂志 (Eastern Miscellany), and was an important figure in the field of publication.

178 The official narrative thus always stresses that the Overseas Chinese are also 'good citizens' serving the countries they live in (and thus should not be ostracised there).

179 Cf. Kipnis (2006).

how wealthy Chinese, overseas or not, should show themselves as 'patriots' by donating their money for the nation's greater good.

5.3 Communist models and CCP leaders

In this last, by far most numerous group of 'patriotic education showcase bases' profiling individual models, major 'heroes' and role models for Communist values are covered. Some of those died as 'martyrs' and thus resemble to some degree the mode discussed in chapter 3.2 of the present book with the 'martyrs' cemeteries' as 'places of mourning', if then restricted to one figure. The selected cases in this section, however, put the focus on the evocation of feelings of admiration to engender emulation. In the case of tomb sites, they are thus less perceived as places of mourning, but serve above all to hail the values the model figures embodied. This includes the notable case of two *foreign* physicians, Canadian Bethune and Indian Kotnis, who were integrated (with differing importance, though) in the *Chinese* 'patriotic education showcase bases' project as standing for the 'internationalism' of Communist values. Born outside of China, these two foreigners would dedicate themselves to serving the Chinese cause (working on the Communist side during the Second Sino–Japanese War). Their burial place was therefore turned into a site of commemoration and admiration of these role models of (pro-Chinese) internationalism, and in this sense, they were models for 'loving China' (though not their *patria* by birth, rather by choice) out of a shared sense of justice. Lei Feng, in turn, the quintessential Chinese Communist, is the most general model of 'doing good' in a life totally dedicated to the nation and 'the people' of China, though standing for the PLA at the time of his unfortunate and unspectacular early death on the job in 1962. He, too, is commemorated at his tomb, but later his *guju* was added as a further 'patriotic site' to the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system. The Lei Feng case also moves the models on in time therewith to PRC times. 'Ironman' Wang Jinxi (died 1970), in turn, represents the model worker of Maoist times. In his case, his 'memorial' is sited at his most famous place of action: Daqing (not being his *guju* or tomb). With Kong Fansen, the latest born of all our cases (who died 1994 by a car accident), a modern model cadre is addressed who also provides the link to minority politics over Tibet, a notoriously sensitive issue, where he served *after* the Cultural Revolution, thus bringing the cases up to the 1990s to suggest to the Chinese citizens that also at present, there are people embodying Communist 'patriotic' values.

Finally, three of the most outstanding CCP leaders in China covered by the 'first list' will be addressed with their respective *guju*: Mao himself, whose native place became a sort of 'red pilgrimage / tourism' site, drawing crowds of tourists, but also contrasts with the physically nearby sensitive place of his one-time deputy and later victim Liu Shaoqi, chief target of the Cultural Revolution, both locations often visited today together in one tour; and the last leader to be memorialised in the 'patriotic education bases' project for the time being: Deng Xiaoping (died 1997), politically linked to Liu Shaoqi in the 1960s more closely, but more fortunate in the end to finally emerge as China's strongman after Mao. In his case, the '*guju* memorial' at his native place can be observed almost as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in the making, since he died in early 1997, the year when the first list of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' would be promulgated under his protégé and successor Jiang Zemin, which already covered also Deng's *guju*.

Case study: Bethune and Kotnis

Back in the times of the Second Sino–Japanese War (1937–1945), Norman Bethune (1890–1939) and Dwarkanath Kotnis (1910–1942) were among those foreigners flocking to China to sustain the Chinese in their war effort, including medical staff.[180] Both Bethune and Kotnis were physicians: one Canadian, and the other Indian. Today, they are notably integrated as foreigners in China's '*patriotic* education showcase bases' programme, representing the nationally endorsed version of 'internationalism' with a Westerner and a fellow Asian. Mao had singled out Canadian Communist Norman Bethune, who died already in 1939 during his work in (Communist-held parts of) China, as a model of 'internationalism' in his well-known contribution after the latter's death which would be one of the three Mao articles mandatory to 'study' in Cultural Revolution times.[181] (Incidentally, Bethune was even honoured with a Chinese postage stamp already in 1960 in Maoist times.)

Kotnis, in turn, was part of the Indian medical mission Jawaharlal Nehru of the Indian National Congress had agreed to send to China during the Second Sino–Japanese War. Kotnis, too, died during his work in (Communist-held parts of) China in 1942. Since he had married a Chinese nurse and had a son with her (notably called Yinhua 印华, i.e., India–China), he was posthumously singled out

180 See the tribute by a son of one member: Robert Mamlok (2018).

181 It has been noted that he is thus the only foreigner named in Mao's official works beyond the likes of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin (Lary 2015: 98).

for embodying Sino–Indian friendship.[182] (Kotnis would be finally also honoured on Chinese postage stamps, if only at the 40th anniversary of his death, i.e., in 1982.) Both, Bethune and Kotnis, were later buried in the same place in Tang 唐 county, Hebei Province, which had belonged to a guerrilla base (the Shanxi–Chahar–Hebei base, Jin–Cha–Ji 晋察冀 for short) of the Communists during the war. The **Bai Qiuen Ke Dihua jinianguan** 白求恩柯棣华纪念馆 (Bethune and Kotnis memorial hall) (Hebei) (list 1, 1997) in Tang county, established on the present site only after the Cultural Revolution, is the place addressed in the first '100' 'patriotic education showcase bases' list and the various concerning productions. The tombs of Bethune and Kotnis had been, however, moved in the 1950s already to Shijiazhuang's 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area' (as this region had been called by the Communists during the preceding Civil War) and thus became part, if as a distinguishable section, of that larger Chinese cemetery. Thus, the interesting point with the Bethune–Kotnis site is not only that it is foreigners who are commemorated in the Chinese 'patriotic education' context, but also that while their patriotically listed *memorial* is in Tang county, for commemoration activities, the more centrally placed Shijiazhuang 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area' – a patriotically listed site as of itself (on list 2, 2001) – which hosts their *tombs* that presence these model figures since long before the 'patriotic' labelling took place, serves as the more effective location. (This becomes also clear from the 'official' treatment of that Shijiazhuang cemetery in the collection of 'list 2' sites descriptions.)[183] In fact, the Shijiazhuang cemetery set up memorial exhibitions on them in an extra hall, too. Thus, they have their 'own' memorial site in Tang county (where they had been originally buried, in fact, with other Chinese 'martyrs' of the Jin–Cha–Ji base area in pre-PRC times), but factually were then 'integrated' in Shijiazhuang with the Chinese 'martyrs' under the label of 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area' in PRC times (see also below).

While in filmic treatment, the 'patriotic' educational *Zhonghua hun* video collection does not cover these two foreigners, the respective TV film clip of the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* series (disc 2) points out that the Tang county location of the Bethune–Kotnis memorial is connected to the (later so-called and by today moved) 'Bethune hospital', which Bethune had once pushed for to be founded. Notably, although this film clip on the Chinese 'patriotic education

182 Notably, this is still continued with Chinese politicians seeking out relatives of Kotnis when visiting India to which political relations are otherwise not very easy.

183 See Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe (eds.) (2002: 209–238).

showcase bases' has been produced in China, it also briefly shows Bethune's Canadian memorial at his hometown Gravenhurst (Ontario) which suggests to the Chinese TV audience that also the Canadians highly honour him (though his Communist identity de facto prevented him from becoming very popular in Canada).[184]

While his participation in the Spanish Civil War is not mentioned in the film clip, Bethune is rather presented to the Chinese TV audience as coming directly to China to fight the Japanese. Mao would send him to the front, where general Nie Rongzhen 聂荣臻 (together with an interpreter) welcomed him. Beyond iconic photographs, several old film clips of the time also show how Bethune did surgery and moved around with the troops. One may note that Bethune himself had a camera which he would bequeath to his Chinese comrades at his death. Visual material so important for propagating the Communist cause was thus possible to produce near the front, and this visual legacy played a crucial role in immortalising Bethune and his activities. He is described to the TV audience as someone totally dedicated to his work, donating his own blood if needed (something notably stressed as the 'blood of a foreigner' now running through the veins of 'patriotic' Chinese soldiers), and by this personal example Bethune convinced also the 'superstitious villagers' to donate blood for the wounded. He declined, as is pointed out in familiar fashion, every better treatment for himself, arguing he was but a Communist comrade. Although he unfortunately drew an infection during the treatment of a soldier's wounds, he however declined to stop working, and is even said to have tried to do a surgery without anaesthetics unto himself, but to no avail. In spite of his worsening illness, he would nevertheless rather go back to the front. When realising he was going to die of the sepsis he had drawn, he wrote (or rather dictated) a letter to general Nie Rongzhen (the leader of the Jin–Cha–Ji base area) which is shown in Chinese (which Bethune did not speak or write) with English names etc. interspersed. At the end, the film clip cites the praises Mao had heaped upon him posthumously in his famous essay 'In Memory of Norman Bethune'. In short, although the site is officially called 'memorial for Bethune and Kotnis', the most surprising thing about this filmic representation is that Kotnis is not even treated once in the whole film clip, produced in this case by Hebei TV's science education department.

The 'patriotic' booklet (Cao 1998) on the site is, at least, somewhat more even-handed on both foreigners, though Bethune is still dominating. Different from many other booklets in the series we have discussed so far, this one does not dwell on the memorial as such and its exhibition at all, but rather tells the life stories of both protagonists in a very traditional hagiographic manner. Only the illustration sheets give

184 Cf. Lary (2015: 97, 103).

some impression of the physical memorial itself, nominated in 1997 as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in Tang county, on one side featuring the hall for Bethune, on the other the one for Kotnis, exhibiting only a few personal medical utensils, but mostly photos and explanatory texts.

As becomes clear, even the memorial in Tang county had been already moved once, before being named a 'patriotic education showcase base',[185] the earlier version going back to 1971, i.e. during the Cultural Revolution when Mao's famous article on Bethune was part of the required reading for everyone in China – and one should add: after Canada had recognised the PRC in 1970![186] (This *de facto* paved the way for the US to change its China policy, and also for the PRC's taking over the 'China' seat in the UN in 1971.) Thus, at that time in 1971, only (white) Canadian Communist Bethune was memorialised at the site, and the memorial finally also established some relation with its 'sister memorial' for Bethune in Canada (which explains why the latter was treated also in the filmic version discussed above). The Indian Kotnis, in turn, was added only much later in the early 1980s. At that time, then-general secretary Hu Yaobang, the later ill-fated reformer, wrote the new site's name plaque (with *both* names in 1984 – see also below) (1). Regarding this different treatment of Bethune and Kotnis, one may recall that PRC–India relations had become ever more difficult, leading to military border confrontation in the 1960s, and would remain problematic also later. Sino–Indian relations were thus more sensitive than the Sino–Canadian ones. Though the memorial site is labelled together for 'Bethune and Kotnis' as one in the 'patriotic education' list, it is *de facto* neatly separated between the Canadian and the Indian side. While as usual, pupils and young cadets are the main target group of the 'patriotic education showcase base', it is, however, notable that beyond the already mentioned Hu Yaobang, no top politician apparently ever visited the site.[187]

With Bethune, the 'patriotic' booklet stresses his protestant and middle-class upbringing from which he later chose to distance himself, engaging in physical work to finance his living while studying medicine. The WW I experience, when he was wounded, is described as a turning point in his life. At the time, he purportedly realised that the normal people were only used by those in power. Contracting

185 This new site was, according to the Hebei volume in the *Fengbei* series on the 'patriotic education showcase bases' (see below), set up in 1982 (Liu 2019: 24). This means it was set up when Kotnis was added.

186 One may note that three years later, in 1973, at the first personal visit of a Canadian prime minister to the PRC, Pierre Trudeau, Bethune played an important part for suggesting a link between the two countries. On Trudeau's China policy, cf. Evans (2014: 16-32). On Canada's China policy during the war itself and Bethune's role at his lifetime, see Lary (2015).

187 Cf. the enumeration of visitors in Cao (1998: 2).

tuberculosis, he is said to have invented a new effective method of treatment by experimenting on himself, underlining his scientific mindset (7). Though his private life was not that successful, marrying and divorcing the same partner twice, science meant everything to him which he, though, wanted to make accessible to everyone in need, also free of charge. In 1935, he went on a trip to the Soviet Union which is said to have deeply impressed him, whereupon, as soon as back home, he entered the Communist Party of Canada (9). His internationalist spirit moved him to help as a surgeon in the Spanish Civil War to where he led a medical team, sustaining the Republican side.[188] (This dwelling on his role in Spain clearly sets the booklet's narrative apart form the China-centred filmic treatment discussed above.) In Spain, he already developed the idea of movable blood transfusion stations to make sure that surgeries were possible near the front with enough blood reserves for the wounded. While not detailing why he left Spain for Canada, the intended young reader learns that he was in the midst of campaigning for the Spanish Republican cause in the US when he heard of the outbreak of the Sino–Japanese War in 1937.

In a historical backreading, it is suggested to the intended young reader that Bethune already 'understood' at that time that Chiang Kai-shek was as 'fascist' as Mussolini or Hitler or the Japanese, and that thus the most urgent anti-fascist war was at that point to be fought in China, more precisely, on the Communist side there (13). The Canadian and US-American Communists thus sent him with another doctor (who later dropped out of the group)[189] and the nurse Jean Ewen (who could speak Chinese since she had worked with Catholic missionaries in China before) to China.[190] While Bethune insisted to be let through to Yan'an, the narrative goes, the GMD tried to obstruct his plans or win him over, but he finally prevailed, being convinced that the GMD 'did not really fight the Japanese'. The meeting with Mao in Yan'an is said to have deeply impressed him (14–19). He then worked in the guerrilla base behind the lines in Hebei which Nie Rongzhen was commanding. Although he always needed an interpreter for communication, he nevertheless quickly understood that circumstances meant continuous adaptation. His idea of establishing a fixed hospital, which was likely to fall into enemy hands at every

188 For the relationship between the international medical relief corps working in Spain and then in China, see the tribute by a son of one member, Mamlok (2018), part 1.

189 The US-American doctor, Charles H. Parsons, was noted as a drunkard. (Cf. Grypma 2011: 52).

190 Ewen accompanied Bethune to his meeting with Mao in Yan'an (see below), but would stay together with Bethune only three months, then moving away to work independently of him with the Communists. She has left an autobiographical account (*China Nurse*) which is rather critical and substantially differs from the PRC portrayal of Bethune, though she remained vague over the causes of her fall-out with him. For an assessment, based on Western-language materials, cf. Grypma (2011).

moment, was thus reconfigured as a mobile medical force (somewhat resembling Mao's arguing for guerrilla and mobile *vs* positional warfare) which set up temporary facilities, often in temples, and placed some wounded in private homes. On the other hand, he also trained personnel and wrote textbooks to multiply forces (22–34). His last days when he was himself fatally ill are described in almost film-like fashion with diaologues and the citing of parts of his testament (38–39). Though he was buried at first in a hurry in 1939, if honoured with large funeral ceremonies, including one in Yan'an, his tomb was formally erected only some months later in 1940 when the Tang county area was secured by the Communists (41). (The area would, however, later be overrun by the Japanese – cf. the 'tunnel warfare' case of nearby Ranzhuang discussed in chapter 4.3 in the present book – who vandalised the tomb.)[191] Mao, in turn, wrote his famous eulogy of Bethune ('In Memory of Norman Bethune') already in 1939 after the latter's death which was in hindsight the main contribution for eternalising him in China.

Kotnis, in turn, the 'second Bethune', is presented in the 'patriotic' booklet to the intended young reader as an early politicised youth, arguably because of the British imperialism he experienced in India (42–43). When Communist Red Army leader general Zhu De wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru in India, then leader of the Indian National Congress, to ask for help in the Sino–Japanese conflict (a request that made clever use of the occasion of Chiang Kai-shek's courting of Nehru during the war),[192] Kotnis joined the medical mission Nehru sent. In dramatising fashion, his desperate parents who had invested so much energy and money for his medical training and tried to block him from moving away from India to China, are described, but Kotnis is said to have convinced them of his righteous choice (45). The medical mission, led by Menhanlal Atal (another former Spanish Civil War participant like Bethune), arrived in 1938, though first staying in the GMD area which is said to have deeply disappointed them. Seeing GMD mismanagement and corruption that led to many evitable deaths among the wounded soldiers, they are said to have tried to get through to the Communist Eighth Route Army. Although Kotnis' father died and he should have gone home then, he nevertheless put

191 According to the collection on 'list 2' sites describing the Shijiazhuang cemetery, the Japanese had bombed the tomb area twice in 1941, which caused the locals to hide Bethune's statue (which likely had served as a landmark for the bombings). (Zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu xuanjiaoju / Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe (eds.) 2002: 236).

192 Cf. Samarani (2005). Nehru visited China in 1939 in person (though not allowed by Chiang to also visit Yan'an, whereto Mao had publicly invited him, thanking him – with a pointed insinuated reference to Chiang who had in the meantime 'lost' the Indian medical unit to the Communists – for the Indian medical aid unit which was working for the Communist Eighth Route Army), and Chiang visited India in 1942. For more in-depth treatment of Chiang and Nehru, cf. Yang (2015).

personal considerations aside and opted for staying in China to try and get over to the Communists, the intended young reader learns (45–51). In 1939, the Indian medical mission finally made it to Yan'an, meeting also Mao. Beyond medical assistance, they were however also required to participate in study sessions, i.e., ideological training (53). From India, they brought a modern x-ray machine to Yan'an, but since the Yan'an base was under economic pressure because of the blockade by the Japanese, instead of practicing medicine full-time, the Indian doctors were required to participate also in agricultural production to produce all that was needed in the base area to live more or less in autarchy. (Cf. chapter 3.3 in the present book on Yan'an.) This led to two of the medical team (M. Cholkar and Debesh Mukherjee) leaving as they are said to not have been able to stand the harsh life in the Yan'an base and fell ill (and might have found it pointless to stay on under the given circumstances) (55). Following up on Bethune's example, the others wanted to serve closer to the front (and apparently as medical doctors) which Mao then 'granted'. To link up with the Communist base area behind the lines (the Jin–Cha–Ji area) where Bethune had also served, travel was not easy.

The narrative details how Kotnis and Atal had to pull the broken-down car forward themselves, how they avoided being re-channelled by the GMD away from the Communist areas, and braved Japanese gunfire to finally arrive at the Eighth Route Army, where, however, Bethune had died in the meantime, and at whose official tomb erection ceremony they were present (57–62). Soon, Atal had had to leave for health reasons, too, and thus only Kotnis and Bejoy Kumar Basu, the fifth of the Indian team, remained to work as doctors. When Mao called them back to return to India over Yan'an in late 1940, Kotnis declined, and thus only Basu departed for Yan'an (63),[193] leaving Kotnis as the only one in the Jin–Cha–Ji base area. (Nothing is said about why and how Mao reacted to Kotnis' defying his orders.) While the narrative dwells on Kotnis' selflessness and humility to also take part in agricultural production or reorganise the sleeping facilities of the wounded, it seems that not all wounded were, in turn, convinced of the medical services he offered, and apparently asked for being treated rather with Chinese medicine (66). As an Indian (and thus fellow Asian), Kotnis is, however, also said to have introduced some simple methods of diagnosis different from the costly Western ones, e.g., for deciding whether someone had diabetes, he would let him urinate on the ground to see whether the ants would be attracted or not (71). During his service, Kotnis met and married a Chinese nurse with whom he also had a son (the one named Yinhua or India–China, on whose conspicuous death date of 1967 – the year

193 Basu was, in fact, the one remaining the longest in China since he went back to India only in 1943 when Kotnis had already died. (Cf. Samarani 2005: 10).

of a military Sino–Indian conflict and during the high-time of the Cultural Revolution – there is no further information provided for the intended young reader detailing the circumstances of his early death).[194] In 1942, Kotnis is said to have finally also joined the CCP (74). Since he suffered from epilepsy, he, however, died soon after in an epileptic seizure. Mao honoured him posthumously, if not as pointedly as Bethune, by stating that he had been someone helping the army and a friend to the Chinese (77).

The 'patriotic' booklet, which, as mentioned, is somewhat special in not dwelling on the site's local exhibition at all, is also unusual in its adding some primary source texts (a rather rare feature in these booklets), mostly by Bethune, including his testament, which disclose to the intended young reader that Bethune also had a camera with him (which was a highly valued technical item at the time), which he bequeathed to the noted (but later taboo) Communist war photographer Sha Fei 沙飞 (Situ Chuan 司徒传).[195] (87) Thus, the latter could use Bethune's technical equipment to record scenes in the Communist areas – something of considerable importance in the long run. Mao's famous text 'In Memory of Norman Bethune' is, needless to say, also reproduced, where he hailed 'internationalism' and warned against 'narrow nationalism' and '*narrow patriotism*' – which, in turn, is interesting to note in a booklet of the 'patriotic education' campaign. As mentioned in the introduction to the present book (see chapter 1), Jiang Zemin, the key promoter of the 'patriotic education' campaign, chose to distinguish (negative) 'narrow nationalism' from (positive) 'patriotism' (which has no further limiting qualification to keep it safe and clean, by this variegating Mao). Thus, Mao's double 'narrow' formulation has interestingly slipped in here.

As for Kotnis, the final and long evaluation of him given in the 'patriotic' booklet (91–101),[196] was written many years after his death, and is in no way on a par

194 The nurse was likely a Communist who should also keep an eye on him. She remarried thereafter but was assigned nonetheless the task of embodying Sino–Indian ties later. The official version of the death of Yinhua in 1967 at 25 years was later fixed as his having died from a treatment error in hospital.

195 As will become obvious below, the newer *Fengbei* narrative argues that Bethune left his camera not to Sha Fei, but to Wu Yinxian, another if slightly less famous Communist photographer (who shot famous photographs of Bethune working in the Jin–Cha–Ji area, as did Sha Fei). Notably, Sha Fei, in turn, had been written out of history for a long time because he was executed in 1950 after shooting a Japanese doctor treating him, likely in a fit of mental derangement. See his short biography, based mainly on Shen Kuiyi's research, on the 'Virtual Shanghai' website [Sha Fei Biography] (n.d.). He could be named again only since the 1980s. See also the instructive book chapter by Shana J. Brown (2012).

196 The author, Jiang Yizhen 江一真, participant of the Long March, was a leading figure in the sanitary field during the times of the Jin–Cha–Ji base area and thus knew Kotnis well. Jiang himself

with Bethune, since Kotnis, as mentioned, was only honoured again since the 1980s. As it seems, not only the post-1950s Sino–Indian difficult relations made for this,[197] but even in his life time, Kotnis apparently did not always follow Mao's directives, as seen above. As is also clear, the Indians' medical expertise was not honoured on the same level as Bethune's, making the Indian doctors also work in the fields or taking ideological training sessions. Thus, one gets the impression that the different treatment between the Westerner and the Indians had not only racist overtones,[198] but politically, the Canadian Communist appeared 'safer' than the leftist, though not outright Communist Indians, whom the Chinese Communists likely did not fully trust. (Apparently, only Kotnis became a declared Communist thereafter.) Furthermore, due to his early death, Bethune did not live to see the time when Yan'an stepped up ideological streamlining, namely with the Rectification Campaign (officially launched in early 1942), which Kotnis (and Basu) had to participate in.

Contrasting the above late 1990s' framings with the 2019 *Fengbei* narrative, updating the site description to the Xi Jinping era (Liu 2019), one notes that while there is much overlap and not many new things added on the site's development in the meantime, several aspects were increased, while others were dropped from the narrative. For the Tang county 'memorial' as such, the intended reader learns that Hu Yaobang, when general secretary, came in fact for a tree planting day in 1984 (and in that context wrote the plaque, which once more shows the close connection of commemoriation and trees).[199] (24) (There is no mention of the tombs of Bethune and Kotnis in Shijiazhuang, though, in this *Fengbei* description on their Tang county site, but they are briefly addressed in the *Fengbei* treatment of the Shijiazhuang cemetery, in turn, later in the same volume).[200] It is, however, mentioned that

would go through several ups and downs in his party career in PRC times and thus likely also used the reminiscences of Kotnis for his own reputation only secured after the Cultural Revolution. According to the Hebei volume in the *Fengbei* series (Liu 2019: 50), it was Jiang who introduced Kotnis into the CCP (and likely also to his Chinese wife).

197 Though India recognised the PRC already in 1950 and bilateral relations were relatively positive in the beginning, they worsened in the late 1950s over border issues and the Tibet problem to come to a low point with military clashes in the years thereafter.

198 As the Hebei volume in the *Fengbei* series – see below – states, Kotnis was often called 'black mum' – while Bethune was 'Dr. Bethune' (Liu 2019: 49).

199 In fact, Pitts noted that the Chinese programmes for planting trees 'distinguished themselves from global trends by also focusing on political and cultural goals' (Pitts 2022: 145), mainly connecting them to the nation via commemoration.

200 Liu (2019: 98–102). Notably, they were not the only foreigners in that 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area', but there was also a Korean 'internationalist' who died in military action in 1944. See Liu (2019: 100, 104–105). Incidentally, the memorial hall for the North-China 'martyrs' in Shijiazhuang was enlarged in 2011 to conform better to the recent 'red tourism' requirements, dividing it neatly into sections of those who died during the 'war for land revolution'

Kotnis had a Chinese wife, and that she visited India with their child, where she received presents from Nehru (25).

Still, the main figure in the *Fengbei* narrative is again clearly Bethune, whose formative years are particularly detailed for the intended young reader. His grandfather was a physician, one reads, and his great model, while his father was a pastor (which renders him less feasible for the intended storyline, focusing rather on the grandfather's influence on Bethune's humanitarianism and scientific quest.) His childhood is, in fact, retold in this new 2019 framing in a very child-like storytelling way. For emulating his grandfather, his father is said to have pointed out to his son that one needed to do dissection for understanding anatomy. Little Norman Bethune thus started on his own to dissect all kinds of animals, even their own dog! This is to underline that he was after science so much that he did not even spare his own pet. But he did not only become a physician himself, but over time also a good Communist. When money for studying medicine was lacking, he decided to become a wood cutter in the Canadian forests first, to earn the money needed. The other wood cutters would not take him seriously at first, but he proved them that he was willing to suffer, and thus finally became their friend (26–29). They confided in him all hardships they had had to endure in life, and thus he supposedly came to realise the unfairness in society and that capitalism also meant unemployment which drove many into poverty and isolation, breaking up families for lack of resources. While his 'turning point' during WW I is not highlighted in the 2019 framing as in the booklet of the late 1990s, the narrative simply jumps to 1935 when he would enter the Canadian Communist Party (interestingly also leaving out his visit to the Soviet Union as a background).

After serving as a volunteer in Spain in 1936, in 1938, he was sent by the US-American and Canadian Communists to China (30). Detailing his trip, the intended young reader learns that in 1938, Bethune had met Zhou Enlai in Wuhan (before Wuhan fell to the Japanese later that year), but had immediately expressed his wish to go straight to the front (on the Communist side). He was thus first sent to Yan'an, but on his way, he lived through attacks and bombardements of the Japanese, thus experiencing immediately the realities of war in China. Bethune was purportedly impressed by the efficiency of the Eighth Route Army that found him in all the mess, and that they were willing to sacrifice their lives while guarding the medicine he had brought along. When Mao received him in Yan'an in Fenghuashan (see chapter 3.3 in the present book for Yan'an), Bethune, the Westerner, would treat Mao respectfully as his superior, and thereafter showed himself much impressed by

(i.e., the times after the break-up of the First United Front in 1927), the 'anti-Japanese war' (i.e., the Second Sino–Japanese War), and the 'war of liberation' (i.e., the Civil War) (Liu 2019: 100–101).

Mao's personality. Himself making suggestions to Mao, Bethune, e.g., proposed to have a surgery station near the front. While the Eighth Route Army at first proposed to keep him in Yan'an, Mao granted his wish to go to the front, and thus Bethune was sent to the Jin–Cha–Ji base area, led by general Nie Rongzhen (31–33). Arriving there, Bethune realised that the wounded were at the time usually cared for in local people's houses. Bethune thus toured the houses to look after them. To underline his willingness to serve, he is cited with the words that he wanted to be used as a machine gun, not as a (decorative) Ming vase, thus declining all offers of any personal comfort, the reader is assured. He, however, also stressed critically that most deaths could be avoided with better hygiene, and thus cared for hygiene as much as for surgeries (which once more underlines that hygiene was a critical issue).

The war photographer Wu Yinxian 吴印咸, who is highlighted in the 2019 narrative (while the later controversial Sha Fei is omitted), made photos of him at the front, which eternalised his work. In a temple near the front, he would set up a surgery station, all improvised, with no doors (but traditional wall paintings). His image with an apron and spectacles doing surgeries on soldiers in the village temple became iconic (due to the photographs taken) (34–35). To underline to the intended young reader the dramatic circumstances, the narrative describes how bullets came in and narcotics were running out during surgery. Still, the heroic wounded would encourage Bethune to go on also without narcotics, saying that they 'could stand it'. Bethune would often work without interruption for days and was able to save almost all wounded he treated. He would only become upset when people acted carelessly, e.g., scolding a nurse who had put the wrong medicine in the wrong bottle, thus creating confusion. That way, he reprimanded people only for making them do their work responsibly – which is to signal to the young intended reader that criticism is there to 'help'. He wrote also textbooks to educate more Chinese staff (which is always positively pointed out in the sense of knowledge transfer), and thought about measures to stay flexible and mobile during battle. In work, he was always very precise (thus serving as a model to emulate), but was also creative to find ways of how to transport things best on horse, e.g., by experimenting (36–38). (One may think here of the Maoist calls for creativity to make do with what one had.).

Bethune thus invented a quick packing method for drugs and medical utensils to be ready to move in 15 minutes. When there were problems with blood transfusion, he simply donated some himself since he had blood type 0, i.e., could be used with everyone. But he also respected the heroism of those he treated, e.g., in the case of a wounded commander delivered to him with his intestines out, who had gone on directing the battle, pressing his intestines inside with one hand. (Incidentally, this

is an old trope appearing time and again with tales of 'heroes' during various battles, as we saw in some cases in chapter 4.3 of the present book.) Bethune would rather not eat and help such a Chinese hero immediately. He also later cared for him in particular since he admired his heroism (39–42). (As a reward, the wounded hero promised him to kill more Japanese in the future!)

But beyond the military, Bethune was always ready to help also normal people modestly, saying that the people should not thank him, but only the Eighth Route Army. This presumably payed off, since when he cured a small girl, her father thus decided in gratitude to join the Eighth Route Army! (42–43) The rationale was: if even foreigners dedicate themselves so much for the Eighth Route Army, how could we stand back? When he met commander Nie Rongzhen, Bethune was respectful (a point always stressed), and they would even become friends.[201] Bethune pushed for setting up a model hospital (which would be later named after him) in the Jin–Cha–Ji area, but for the time being, he went on to work in a makeshift way. In a narrative style recalling Soviet Stakhanovites, his 'record' is given as 115 surgeries in 69 hours without interruption. Between battles, though, he used the time not only to write medical textbooks, but also literature! (44) (I.e., he is presented to the intended young reader as not only a materialist scientist, but also as a cultured person, appearing that way 'more Chinese'.)

On more practical fronts, he, however, also wrote in English to international media about China, and thus supported China in this sense as well, and he helped frame the positive image of the CCP abroad in particular. Given that because of the Japanese blockade, there were only few medical drugs available, he thought of going to America to get more, but when the Japanese started an offensive, he rather postponed this plan and remained for the time being. Unfortunately, though, he then cut his finger during a surgery and drew an infection. When he realised that he would die soon, he wrote (or dictated) his farewell letter to Nie Rongzhen, leaving Nie and his wife his bed and shoes, some items for Communist general He Long (who once had been a key figure for the creation of the Red Army, according to the official narrative, with the 1927 Nanchang Uprising – see chapter 4.2 of the present book – and who was at the time active in the larger area where Bethune stayed), and stated that he was very happy in his last two years in China, not harbouring any regrets for this choice (while nothing is said here about his family in Canada!) (45–46). The hospital he had pushed for would be named in his honour, and in 1940, a commemoration for him was held in Tang county (without mentioning to the reader that the tomb was destroyed by the Japanese thereafter, though). Nie Rongzhen

201 Incidentally, Nie Rongzhen, being of a rather well-educated family, had been to Europe and the Soviet Union for study, and thus was experienced in dealing with foreigners.

(who would remain an important figure in the PLA and would not be harassed during the Cultural Revolution) would write a piece of remembrance on Bethune in 1979 (at the 40th anniversary of Bethune's death), and again ten years later in 1989 (shortly after the Tiananmen Protest Movement's bloody crushing which Nie supported).[202] Mao's praise of Bethune is, of course, the definite summing up of this figure's lasting legacy, a spirit thus still seen as relevant, but reframed in this 2019 description as: to give all for the Party and the people (in this sequence) (47). The 'internationalism' of Mao's framing of Bethune, is thus no longer the focus.

Kotnis, in turn, is treated in the *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 very briefly in comparison, thus somewhat backpedalling from the late 1990s' booklet's approach. The intended young reader only learns that in 1937, Kotnis followed the call in India to help China. The medical mission would finally manage to get beyond the GMD lines to Shanxi to meet with Zhu De (47). Kotnis intended to join the 'Bethune hospital', although he himself suffered from worms (taeniasis) – which does not reflect too well on his services, but he purportedly wanted to go to the front and emulate Bethune nonetheless, since the Chinese were now the ones 'fighting against fascism'.[203] Kotnis is described as someone who cared for the ill and wounded, so that the locals called him (tellingly) 'black mum'! During the drought of 1942 and given the Japanese economic blockade, hunger was rampant, but while suffering, he nonetheless is said to have refused to be treated better than others. (Notably, nothing is said here on his and his comrades – frustrating – Yan'an experience.) Instead, Kotnis is presented as desiring to join the CCP, humbly asking whether that was possible for a foreigner (48–49). His wish was generously granted, and thus, he entered the CCP in 1942. (Nothing, again, is mentioned here about the fact that he had become a Chinese citizen and had started a family in the meantime.)

After joining the Party, the narrative suggests to the intended young reader, he became even more diligent and wrote medical works, too, but unfortunately died soon after (still in 1942) of illness (i.e., of epilepsy). The young intended reader also learns that he was buried aside Bethune (in Tang county), and, notably, that there was even a campaign to 'learn from Kotnis' in the Jin–Cha–Ji border region – something that had not been addressed in the late 1990s description at all, suggesting that Kotnis' standing at the time of his death was considerably higher than later. Mao's endorsement that he was 'a friend', was, however, the ultimate official praise

202 In 1989, Nie Rongzhen was critical of the 'reformer' faction represented by Zhao Ziyang 赵紫阳 who was purged after the 1989 Tiananmen Movement and confined to his house for the rest of his life.

203 This is likely to explain why foreigners would be interested in the Chinese struggle.

he received (50). (Nothing is mentioned here, though, about his long neglect and the Sino–Indian relationship which in present times is again turning more difficult.)

Looking at the present site of the tombs (as I observed in 2015) which are, as mentioned, since the 1950s in the provincial capital Shijiazhuang, i.e., no longer at the peripheral Tang county 'memorial' site, but in the 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area', which was according to its local plaque established in 1954,[204] and itself inscribed on the second list of 'patriotic education showcase bases' (2001), one notes that also there another memorial hall for the two foreign medical doctors has been added. This is today named as for 'Bethune and the Indian Medical Mission' (i.e., is less pronounced on Kotnis as an individual).[205] In this larger 'martyrs' cemetery' in Shijiazhuang, the tomb areas of Bethune and the Indians are symmetrically arranged to either side of the main road, but clearly divided (as in Tang county), with each having a statue of Bethune or Kotnis respectively. Kotnis, though, is linked also in the cemetery with the whole Indian medical mission, which is likely also due to the fact that this 'Cemetery for the Martyrs of the North-China Military Area' claims a memorial tomb of Basu by now as well, the doctor who had followed Mao's call to return from the Jin–Cha–Ji base area, first to Yan'an where he stayed until 1943 (making him, in fact, the longest sojourner of the Indian five-men team in China, given Kotnis' death in 1942), then back to India where he lived until his death in 1986. (Before his demise, Basu is said to have expressed the wish that half of his ashes should be interred in China, according to the exhibition hall's explanation, which dates to 1987, in turn suggesting that this was set up when Basu's ashes were transferred to Shijiazhuang.)

Atal, the leader of the mission, has a memorial in the Shijiazhuang cemetery as well. He died (according to the exhibition hall's explanation) during a visit to China in 1957. While Cholkar does not feature prominently (and is in fact the hardest to grasp as a figure), the fifth of the medical unit, Mukherjee, in turn, is said to have tried to go again to China but was arrested in India at the time. Later, he would, however, become active in the Sino–Indian Friendship Association in India. That way, the Indian medical team members played a role in Sino–Indian relations also after their wartime stay. Behind the memorial tombs on the Canadian as well as the

204 One may recall that such 'martyrs' cemeteries' were set up all over China in the mid-1950s, following Soviet example.

205 As the Hebei volume in the *Fengbei* series claims in its description of the 'martyrs cemetery' in Shijiazhuang, this memorial hall was established in 1972, i.e., shortly after the one in Tang county (Liu 2019: 102). Though not explicitly mentioned, one may assume it was also at that time not including the Indian side but was just for Bethune.

Indian side,[206] there are reliefs with stories of their respective lives,[207] the praises they received, and some photos in a 'typical' Canadian (maple leafs) or Indian-style framing. In contrast, the Tang county memorial 'contains' the foreignness of Bethune and Kotnis by accentuating Chinese architectural forms. The Shijiazhuang martyrs' cemetery is likely the 'patriotic education' memorial space for both Bethune as well as Kotnis and the Indian medical mission in China visited more, including by foreigners, since the tombs presence them there. On the other hand, it contextualises the foreigners with the Chinese 'martyrs' (and high cadres or other model figures),[208] underlining that they all fought for the same cause. At the same time, by making visible also their Canadianness and Indianness, this site can also serve as a location where to celebrate Sino–Canadian or Sino–Indian relations, when needed. In fact, as the *Fengbei* narrative also clearly suggests, this is the primary site to be used in this regard (not the Tang county one).[209]

In sum, Bethune and Kotnis are to suggest to the Chinese citizen that even foreigners can serve as role models, provided they share the same (Communist) values. They stand for an 'internationalism' that puts itself, however, at the service of the *Chinese* nation. If even foreigners are ready to do so, risking their lives, this should be all the more the task for any 'patriotic' Chinese citizen, internalising the Communist values they stood for.

Case study: Lei Feng

While Bethune (and to a lesser degree Kotnis) are the outstanding foreign Communist models in the Chinese 'patriotic education' context, representing China's uphill battle against the Japanese as a contribution to the worldwide 'fight against fascism', with Lei Feng, we finally move into PRC times. Lei Feng is arguably the

206 For the Canadian side, it is sometimes understood that the Canadian nurse Jean Ewen who died in 1987 and was according to her wish buried in China in 1988, is placed together with Bethune. (See, e.g., Grypma 2011: 40). However, while the remains of Bethune and Kotnis had been already moved from Tang county to Shijiazhuang long before Jean Ewen's death, the name of 'Bethune tomb area' was kept in the rather peripheral Tang county cemetery for the martyrs of the Jin–Cha–Ji base area, and this is the place she was buried, i.e. at this 'old' location (which also received some other foreigners once serving in the Jin–Cha–Ji base area). She is thus de facto not placed together with Bethune.

207 Here, Bethune's stay in Spain is mentioned with photos and short texts on his 'anti-fascist' engagement.

208 As should be recalled, over time the PRC 'martyrs' cemeteries' were also accepting other important figures of the Party who had not died a 'martyr's death'.

209 Cf. Liu (2019: 101–102).

most well-known Communist hero and role model propagated in China. Interestingly, he has even more than one listed site in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' context: the one on the first list (1997) is the Lei Feng memorial hall (**Lei Feng jinianguan** 雷锋纪念馆) attached to his tomb in Fushun 抚顺 (Liaoning Province), but later his birth place in Hunan was listed as well (on list 4, 2009). He even had another revival at the beginning of Xi Jinping's term in 2012/13,[210] and in fact received a third nominated site in Liaoyang 辽阳 (Liaoning Province) (aside the official lists).[211] As mentioned in chapter 1 of the present book, he is also the endpoint among the selected 'revolutionary' 'patriotic education showcase bases', from the founding of the CCP onward, presented in the new (2019–2022) 'documentary' series in 40 instalment, released on the 'national defence and military affairs' video channel, with Xi Jinping shown visiting the Lei Feng sites (including the added Liaoyang one) and defining Lei Feng as the key model to learn from.[212]

Lei Feng has been called a 'military celebrity',[213] though the values he embodied were rather civilian. In his case, the Party can easily show itself as the all-defining entity. Lei Feng is said to have been orphaned early and thus was relying from childhood onward only on the Party. He exemplifies Mao's 'blank sheet' metaphor on which the Party could write whatever it saw fit. Lei Feng, who received some basic education, and in the end worked in the PLA where he died 1962 at only 22 years by an unspectacular accident on the job, displays virtually no personality of his own. He is just presented as having only the Party on his mind, helping kindly everyone in need, and in his spare-time reading Mao's works. His purported diary, widely disseminated in China since the 1960s, is to prove his single-minded ideological devotion and turned this youthful figure into the eternal revolutionary. No girl-friend (until rather recently),[214] or any personal ambitions taint this image of complete dedication to 'the cause'. Chinese citizens should learn from him in this

210 Cf. Steen (2014) and Jeffreys and Su (2016).

211 This site was nominated in 2014 and publicised by *Renmin ribao*. Cf. above, chapter 1. It is, however, *not* included in the 2019 *Fengbei* series which presents the officially listed 'patriotic education showcase bases', updating them to the Xi Jinping era.

212 See *Xin huo xiang chuan: Quanguo aiguozhu jiaoyu shifan jidi xunli* (2019–2022), instalment 40.

213 Cf. Edwards (2010) who sees him as a celebrity at the intersection of 'hero' and 'martyr' and as a 'superstar' among the PLA 'heroic and model servicemen' (Edwards 2010: 23).

214 In newer versions of his life, a female friend, if obviously only in platonic relation, has been claimed. In the late 1980s, a first readjustment of his image regarding his nascent interest in girls has been introduced. (See Geist 1990: 103). This goes in tandem with similar tendencies in film and TV to render the heroes more 'accessible', which, in turn, is often criticised by audiences socialised into the earlier 'puritanical' renderings. (Cf. Qian 2008 on the disputes around the rewriting of 'red classics' since the 1990s).

regard, and pick up on his boy-scout attitude to help, as well as on his attention to frugality, not squandering any goods since they belong to 'the masses'.

The preferred image connected to Lei Feng is the unassuming role of a simple and straight 'nail' (sometimes 'screw')[215] in the larger edifice of society. In other words: functioning well without raising any questions is what is desired. Lei Feng is also said to have advocated the qualities of a 'fool' who only thinks of the larger whole which in the eyes of many contemporaries was 'foolish'. The diary, suspected to have been made up by some propaganda officials of the PLA, [216] is the central way of 'learning from comrade Lei Feng', as Mao put it, and the ever same photos showing him helping the elderly or children, driving trucks, or studying Mao's writings, are household knowledge in China.[217] Campaigns to 'learn from comrade Lei Feng' sweep the country at regular intervals since Mao's call for the first such-named campaign in 1963, designating 5 March as 'Lei Feng Day'; and even foreigners are said to have been impressed by this 'perfect' role model, notably

215 One may note, that while Stalin famously talked of ordinary people as little 'screws' in his 'toast of 25 June 1945', ([Stalin] 1986: 59), though pointing out that a missing screw can make things fall apart, referring to the industrial machine as imaginaire, the image of the straight (and unassuming) 'nail' (*ding*) fits better with Chinese usage, given the sayings involving 'nails' in Chinese, which characterise them as something serving but not of much value in itself. (The best-known is that good iron will not be wasted on making nails.) The variation with 'screw' (*luosi ding*) (lit.: screw nail) is, however, also used at times for the Lei Feng 'spirit', giving it a more 'modern' touch or evoking Lei Feng's purported affinity to mechanics as many photos show him repairing motors etc.

216 It apparently did not bother the presumably propagandist authors that a 'diary' of someone not only detailing his good deeds but also what one should learn from them can hardly convince as an autobiographical format, although diaries were supposed to reflect ideological commitment and were not 'private' in a 'bourgeois' sense. (For PRC diary writing guidelines, cf. Windscript 2021). As King / Schoenhals (1989: 19) already pointed out, diaries of PRC times (and I would add, also before, cf., not the least, the case of Chiang Kai-shek who liked to use his diaries to 'convert' people and justify himself) were supposed to be at least potentially read by others (or shown to others for self-justification) and thus de facto 'public-private', though the Lei Feng diary is extreme in this sense. Lei Feng and Wang Jie 王杰, another young soldier-'martyr' who died in 1965 by bodily shielding his comrades from an accidental explosion, were proposed as key models after whom normal people were supposed to orient themselves, also in their keeping of diaries. In fact, Wang Jie purportedly modelled himself already on Lei Feng, as his later published diary states.

217 The photographers staged various photos with Lei Feng to visualise stories from the diary. Cf. Shi / Liu (2012: 132) who collaborated with one of the assigned Lei Feng photographers, Zhang Jun 张峻. This photo shooting was part of the larger campaign built around the Lei Feng example, supposedly being snapshots showing him doing things of which the diary told. (19 'staged photos' by Zhang Jun are provided in Shi / Liu 2012: 134–138.) However, one may add that also other famous photo icons in world history, supposedly casually shot, have been proven as staged. (See Paul 2008/2009 for the discussion of various historical photo icons, some of which were proven to have been shot at a reenactment.)

citing the US West Point Military Academy (a story, though being proven fake news, that would still be repeated in China).[218] In 2012, Lei Feng was again officially proposed as a model to revive.[219] But at this point, the main accent was on his philanthropy and volunteering spirit.[220]

Lei Feng, said to be from Mao's home province Hunan where there is a Lei Feng memorial as well ('patriotically' listed in 2009 on list 4, as mentioned), worked in the last phase of his short life in Manchuria, and thus the city of Fushun became closely associated with Lei Feng. Here a big memorial tells of his life and 'spirit', at the side of his tomb which presences him on spot. Therefore, the Fushun memorial is his key official representation and on the first list of 'patriotic education showcase bases'.

On site in Fushun, as I observed in 2013, Lei Feng is described as of a poor peasant's family and early orphaned, could go to school only 'after liberation' and then worked in an agricultural commune where he learnt to drive a tractor, then volunteered to leave his natal Hunan in South China for far-away 'cold' Manchuria to work in a steel plant (where he was several times praised as a 'model worker'), and finally joined the PLA: thus, he de facto exemplifies all three 'positive' groups of Communist society: peasant, worker, and soldier.[221] He also exemplifies the 'new man' educated by the Party and is said to have combined 'the best of traditional Chinese morality' with Communist ideology.[222] As a declared friend of children, he should appeal to younger audiences, whereas he is shown as 'filial' to the elderly, thus being the 'son of the masses', addressing older audiences as well. In a sense, everyone can find in him what s/he needs.

The memorial hall in Fushun mainly presents explanations, excerpts of his 'diary', lots of photos, and some personal items like his washing utensils and the truck he drove as well as the works of Mao he had read and written notes into. Since he

218 The Fushun exhibition shows a map of supposed Lei Feng study points all over the world. It is claimed that even a US Department of Defence officer has a Lei Feng portrait on his office wall, as well as the West Point Military Academy. However, the story of Lei Feng being taught to US cadets on West Point Academy has been revealed by the author of that rumour as a fake since he had picked up on an April Fool's joke in US media in the early 1980s (Ramzy 2015). And the photo of US cadets around a Lei Feng statue sometimes cited by defenders of the assumed foreign appeal of Lei was simply a photo taken at the memorial in Fushun and hung up at West Point after their China trip (Jochnowitz 2015).

219 Cf. Steen (2014) and Jeffreys / Su (2016).

220 Jeffreys and Su (2016: 41) call him a by now 'philanthropy poster-boy'. See also Palmer / Ning (2020).

221 See also He (1997: 50).

222 See Fang (1999: 306).

was very frugal, his personal items are by necessity limited and unspectacular.[223] (see fig. 5.3.1)

Fig. 5.3.1 Lei Feng's ordinary washing bowl, facecloth, and tooth brush in a glass case (Fushun) (photograph by the author, 2013)

Therefore, the thrust of the exhibition is on his mindset, ending on some 'modern Lei Fengs' to show his model found also followers.[224] Whereas the earlier approach of the memorial was to advocate the site and shepherd groups of visitors through the exhibition, the newer approach includes a 'going out' strategy, preparing wandering exhibitions to show also elsewhere in China.[225] Apart from the indoor exhibition, the site monumentalises the 'diary' by pages in marble along the path leading to his monument with the inscription of Mao to 'learn from comrade Lei Feng' (for which

223 One may note that in the 1980s, one exhibition on Lei Feng suggested he had a Swiss watch or a fancy leather jacket. This, however, became controversial, and thus the 'consumerist' Lei Feng disappeared again. (Cf. Geist 1990: 106).

224 At the time of my visit, especially Guo Mingyi 郭明义 was highlighted as a 'contemporary Lei Feng'. He is considered outstanding above all since he donated a lot of blood and always worked overtime. Furthermore, he stood for someone using modern social media to mobilise even more people 'to do good'. For the governing by this type of models and modelling, see Bakken (2000). For some 'Lei Fengs of the eighties', see Geist (1990) and Zhang (1999).

225 See Wang / Zhou / Xing (1998: 147).

his diary was an important part to serve for 'erasing selfishness'),[226] to the memorial hall, and finally at its side to the statue and the tomb. The layout is said to be inspired by the Chinese character 'ding' 丁 which is homophone with 'nail' 钉, the 'spirit' of which he is said to have propagated. The park provides also many further statues and reliefs showing Lei Feng, the friend of children and filial son of the masses. His main statue represents him, the Fushun PLA soldier, as 'armoured' with Mao's works ideologically, and with a gun militarily, briskly marching toward the future. (By way of comparison, the Lei Feng statue in front of the Hunan memorial where he grew up is only civil.)

By way of contrast, the 'Hunan Lei Feng memorial hall', listed in 2009 as a 'patriotic education showcase base' (on list 4), has a clear focus on Lei Feng's childhood, with his (recreated) former home (*guju*) (the original one being demolished in 1958) as the main 'authenticating' device. At my visit (in 2017), Lei Feng's ongoing relevance for education was not to be overlooked even at nearby bus stops with poster stories about 'present-day Lei Fengs', citing examples of good deeds by contemporary school children. At the outer wall of the Hunan memorial hall, Lei Feng was also visually transformed by a local school teacher and cartoonist into a cute cartoon figure, turning Lei Feng into everything imaginable, from a Western-style superhero, to the (Zen-Buddhist) boy on the ox,[227] or accompanying the Chinese traditional god of wealth, or bringing presents like a Santa Claus on a sleigh (in rather hot Hunan). In short, the Hunan memorial in Changsha,[228] incidentally opened as such during the high-time of the Cultural Revolution in 1968, and tellingly frequently reworked after it, namely in 1990, 1998, 2003, and 2018,[229] tries to market itself over Lei Feng's childhood (and his closeness to fellow Hunanese Mao Zedong who, after all, once studied to become a primary school

226 The specific way this diary is written was to erase 'selfishness' and therewith the 'private self' and thus foreshadowed Mao's 1967 call for 'fighting selfishness and denouncing revisionism'. (Cf. Windscript 2021: note 12). Notably, later 'excerpts' of the diary always edited out those parts not feasible at the given moment. Cf. Geist (1990: 104) for some examples of the late 1970s and the 1980s.

227 The Buddhist parable of the young oxherder and his ox, exemplifying a practitioner of meditation and his original mind, is popular all over East Asia and has been visually represented by the 'ten pictures of the oxherder'. The boy, having lost his ox, searches for it, finds it and brings it home (this being the most used image: the boy on the ox playing the flute), but then moves on to transcend the duality of the ox and himself, and finally turns to helping others to achieve the same.

228 The place used to be a small village but is now part of Changsha.

229 See the description of the 'Hunan Lei Feng memorial' in the *Fengbei* series (Peng 2019: 159–172) which also details Lei Feng's life up to the point when he left for the Northeast. The constant reworking of the memorial points not only to Lei Feng's ongoing relevance but also to the likely necessary 'reframing' of this Communist top model according to shifting agendas.

teacher in Changsha's teacher college nearby).[230] It is thus more restricted in its focus on young Lei Feng vis-à-vis Lei Feng's main memorial in Fushun, which was also 'patriotically' listed first.

In filmic representation, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 3), produced by Liaoning TV, presents the Fushun Lei Feng memorial, built in 1965, mainly by focusing on the exhibition with texts and photos and drawings. Only the machines and some personal items like his washing utensils are real objects displayed. Mao had praised Lei Feng already before the latter's death and invited him as a special honour to participate in the National Day festivities in Beijing, but Lei Feng unfortunately died before being able to attend. The TV film clip is very didactic for a production aiming at a national general public, showing subtitles to drive home the main points. Also, the praises of Mao, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin for Lei Feng are highlighted as script. The pupil groups honouring Lei Feng shown in the film clip notably include those of the Korean minority (living in the Eastern part of Manchuria), distinct in their Korean dress, to suggest to the national TV audience that Lei Feng is a 'hero' not only for the Han, but for everyone in China, including the minorities. There are also students from teachers' colleges and soldiers to be observed who honour this 'hero' as well, underlining the broad applicability of this model for Chinese citizens of all kinds.

The educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 8), in turn, produced by the Shenyang Teachers' College (which explains the frequent appearance of teacher college students honouring the hero in this video), particularly stresses Lei Feng's youth for the intended watching pupils. As a child, he endured virtually everything bad one could experience in the 'old society' according to Communist textbooks: harassment by landlords, the Japanese, and the GMD, involving physical abuse, hunger, exploitation, leading to Lei Feng's losing all of his family via illness, malnutrition, or suicide. It presents the Fushun memorial's monument (with bas-reliefs at its base like the one on Tiananmen Square, which once more shows that this Tiananmen monument serves widely as a model for designing monuments around China), featuring Mao's call to 'learn from comrade Lei Feng', and the memorial hall's name

230 This geographical closeness is stressed also in the new official description of the site in the *Fengbei* series, and Lei Feng's father is by now also claimed to have already participated in Mao's peasant movement! (Peng 2019: 163). Lei Feng's good deeds as a local child are detailed, bringing his example closer to the target group of 'patriotic education' in primary school. He is even cited with a 'poem' he wrote when making a school outing to the nearby sites where Mao had been in Changsha, and would visit Mao's birthplace Shaoshan in Hunan (see below for Mao's *guju*) before departing for Manchuria. (Peng 2019: 167–168, 171). The 'difficulties' in learning Mandarin as a Hunanese are said to be also a common 'problem' of Mao and Lei Feng, thus stepping up the purported connections of the two Hunan figures! (168).

in the calligraphy of Jiang Zemin. The commentary is very didactic in presentation, as if to be memorised. More than the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip addressing adults, the educational video directed at pupils stresses that Lei Feng was thrifty and eagerly studied Mao's writings. There is also the rather rare feature included that a former colleague is talking about the model figure, and how he was once taught by Lei Feng the way to behave: a simple man who is delivering the official position on the importance of *suzhi jiaoyu* (quality education, something much on the Chinese educational agenda in the 1990s when this video was produced).[231]

What is not made explicit in this video, though, is that this very colleague had 'come out' in 1997 with the story that it was him who drove the truck that knocked the fatal pole over Lei Feng's head, i.e. being the one tragically responsible for his hero friend's death! Together with the accent on the fact, that there was praise of Lei Feng already before his death, this is likely implicitly directed against the doubts that had been raised whether Lei Feng had been a real person at all, or only a propaganda fabrication, given the many ideologically tailored stories about him. A regretful companion's 'coming-out' should dispel any doubts about the hero's historicity. Lei Feng himself is presented in the educational video with his many good deeds and unassuming life-style, e.g., mending his (and others') clothes. He also purportedly wanted to donate everything he had earned to the newly set-up people's commune (in the context of the Great Leap Forward) nearby. It is also stressed in this educational video addressed to pupils how he helped the elderly, while he taught children in his free time also about the correct way to live. For his outstanding deeds, he was also rewarded by being nominated during life-time for participation in Fushun- and Liaoning-level official ceremonies (in spite of his youth since he, as will be recalled, died already at age 22). Before he could participate in the 1 October (National Day) ceremonies at Tiananmen as the crowning experience, he, however, was fatally struck by the pole on his head and died. His funeral is shown more extensively in this video, dislosing that Lei Feng was first placed in a collective 'martyrs' cemetery' (and only then moved to his present site). Once more, the written praises of Mao, Deng Xiaoping, and Jiang Zemin are shown to underline his official recognition. The educational video then moves on to a representative of the military who delivers a speech to pupils, stressing that they should learn from Lei Feng in study and life. That pupils take this to heart is to be proven by showing them finally swearing in front of his tomb to be loyal. Meanwhile, the 'Lei Feng song' (about dedicating oneself wholeheartedly to the Party, socialism, and the people) is sung in the background, and this and other 'Lei Feng songs' are one further

231 For more on this, see Kipnis (2006).

means (beyond films or TV series) by which Lei Feng is widely advertised (cf. also Steen 2014).

The 'patriotic' booklet in the benchmark series on first list sites of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Li 1998) is astonishingly long for the short life of Lei Feng, thus underlining the topic's importance by sheer length. Different from other memorials, it also features no concrete objects at all on its illustration sheets (while they do play a – if minor – role in the exhibition), but only focuses on memorial architecture, the tomb, and the 'meaning' of the Lei Feng model, recounting his life story, to then turn to the famous 'diary' and his published talks (which all make clear that the whole Lei Feng story is de facto largely based on the 'diary' where he himself presumably described all his good deeds – which made sure they would not be ignored – and his own past as well as all the praises and prizes he gained, and finally how he learnt from Mao to 'serve the people' and to emulate other heroes,[232] including Canadian Bethune whom we discussed above).[233] Notably, his repeated reference to the Party as not only his 'saviour', but even 'beloved' or 'benevolent mother', since he had lost all his natal family due to the already mentioned stereotyped reasons in the old, 'feudal' society, reinforces the crucial message of merging *filial duty* and Party obedience for Chinese youth. The Party is thus not only an organisation, but should be emotionally acknowledged as one's true *family*,[234] with clear hierarchical implications. The ensuing obligation also means that the individual has to repay for being raised, nurtured, and cared for by the Party, moving Lei Feng beyond a simple humanitarian 'do good' model. The use of the 'biological-familist' framing also extends to the nation preferably called the 'land of the ancestors' (*zuguo* 祖国), and the compatriots as those 'borne by the same womb' (*tongbao* 同胞).

Although the young Lei Feng comes across in the ubiquitous photographs as a young, smiling, ever helpful and somewhat naive youngster, Lei Feng occasionally also mentions in his 'diary' that he also learnt from Mao to 'hate' and treat 'the

232 The named models include beyond Bethune especially PLA heroes like Dong Cunrui (who died fighting the GMD in the Civil War), Huang Jiguang and Qiu Shaoyun (who died fighting in the Korean War), and An Yemin 安业民, a navy sailor who died in 1958 during the PRC's abortive attack on Jinmen in the Taiwan Strait. One may note that in 1963, when Lei Feng was dead, this row of figures, including Lei Feng himself, was then proposed as models for the PLA! Cf. 'An Yemin' (n.d.).

233 One may recall here that Mao's 'serve the people' and 'in memory of Norman Bethune' were two of the '3 texts' obligatory to 'study' in the Cultural Revolution. At that time, Lei Feng was, of course, already dead, but the naming of his 'study' of these texts in particular is telling about the reception history of his 'diary'.

234 Cf. also the recently oft-used term of *xing dang* 姓党, lit. taking the family name 'Party', propagated in the Xi Jinping era, which extends this hierarchical 'Party family' *imaginaire*.

enemy' 'without mercy', stroked his bayonetted gun, and is also cited in the booklet at one point as 'unmasking' a GMD spy (83, 90, 113–115).[235] The importance of this particular 'hero' is obviously connected to Lei Feng as an alround model for everyone, visibly revived by Jiang Zemin who visited the Fushun site in late 1990, very clearly under the strong impression of the recent events in China in 1989, i.e., the Tiananmen protests and their crushing, and the ongoing dissolution of the Communist bloc worldwide. (In fact, both Jiang himself in February 1990, and Li Peng, the 1989 'butcher of Beijing',[236] in March 1990, had provided endorsements for the Lei Feng memorial already before Jiang came in person that year.) (135, 144). The 'Lei Feng spirit' thus was made to serve as an antidote, with Jiang Zemin referring to Deng Xiaoping's dictum that the CCP had been negligent in the field of education which made youngsters go 'astray' (and rendered the events of 1989 possible). Thus, as a reaction, it was necessary to address China's youth again with more ideological education. In his 1990 speech at the Fushun memorial, Jiang thus vaguely named the 'difficult' international situation and the tendency of young people to be misled by consumerism, while for China 'stability' was the most important issue (137–138). Jiang thus was 'asked' to provide his calligraphy for the memorial hall's name, doing so at the (already prepared) table.[237] Jiang Zemin would also take photos with many Young Pioneers, thus appearing like Lei Feng with the red-scarfed children reproduced in a group statue at the entrance of the hall, that way 'emulating' him himself on spot (139). Thus, the key message of his visit was to use the Lei Feng model once more to educate the next generations to bring them away from the 'wrong' roads taken during the 1980s. The memorial thus duly organised after Jiang's visit many travelling exhibitions and started other activities like summer camps or fixed relationships with various entities, and published books to promote the 'Lei Feng spirit' (141–144). To show, that his model also inspired others, exhibitions on Hu Yuping 胡玉萍, a local 'patriotic mother' who sustained PLA soldiers – and purportedly admired Lei Feng, was set up in 1994 (possibly to also counter the 'Tiananmen mothers' demanding an investigation into the bloody

235 Obviously, there was some nervousness in the summer of 1962, i.e., shortly before Lei Feng's death in the same year, over a potential attack by Chiang Kai-shek, and soldiers were transferred to coastal Fujian, while Lei Feng was disappointed to not be included, but accepting humbly to stay behind and go on serving at his post (Li 1998: 65).

236 Cf. Brown (2019), who, however, points out that the ultimate responsibility for the crackdown lay with the Party elders, foremost, of course, with Deng Xiaoping.

237 An interesting small detail is that he asked while writing the name in which way the last character (*guan*) should be written (there is the variant character 舘 which, he was assured, was not the one used by Mao, the ultimate authority) (Li 1998: 138).

1989 crackdown that cost the lives of their children).[238] The Fushun Lei Feng memorial itself was overhauled in 1993, while the statue of Lei Feng had been redone in 1991 already, the present marmor statue replacing the earlier one made of reddish brown epoxy resin (133). And cited visitors' reactions were to 'prove' that this reworking had been effective (145–146).

The content of what constituted the 'Lei Feng spirit', however, shifted somewhat over time. Beyond altruism and complete obedience against any selfishness, it is interesting to see how the 'spirit of the nail' or the 'spirit of the screw' is applied: while in Stalin's famous quote it was de facto belittling the individual as just a screw in a machine (with screws being standardised and easily to be swapped one for another), with Lei Feng, the preciousness of screws was pointed out: without them, all would fall apart, and every screw served at its place (6, 73). On the other hand, the 'spirit of the nail' referred to the penetrating character of a nail to deeply penetrate Mao's teaching in 'study' by 'squeezing and drilling' (*jijin he zuanjin* 挤劲和钻劲) (which by the wording actually combines the roles of squeezing nails and drilling screws) (40–41, 101). But Lei Feng, it is argued, also motivated others, which is another important part of his 'spirit': not just being an outstanding person as such, but one mobilising 'the masses'. To reinforce the message, 'understandable' shortcomings which he tried to compensate,[239] and minor 'faults' are also described which he duly addressed when pointed out to him (including learning to always strictly keep discipline even in spare time), making him a key example of someone humble enough to continuously 'reform' himself and to readily 'clean' his mind as much as the machines (or toilets), taking in the opinion of others. Only indirectly, his life story also tells of the larger background, like the campaigns during the Great Leap Forward, e.g., for frugality and waste reuse, while the taboo topic of the Great Famine (1958–1962) is carefully evaded.[240] Instead, his 'diary' of that period focuses on everyday events of his good deeds, which were greatly advertised in the media since late 1960 so that obviously people wanted autographs from him like from a pop star (31, 38–39). He purportedly also received a lot of fan

238 Hu Yuping (1918–2005) entered the CCP in 1965 and was praised for her work to sustain the PLA. The stress on the 'patriotic good mum sustaining the army' (爱国拥军好妈妈) in the 1990s could be understood as a reaction to the 'Tiananmen mothers' to underline who were the real 'patriots' in official reading. 1994 meant, after all, 5 years after the Tiananmen movement, and thus a critical 'anniversary'.

239 These included, e.g., his physical shortness, explained as due to undernourishment as a child under the 'feudal' society, against which he struggled and thus succeeded to drive machines in standing (to see far enough), or to throw hand grenades far enough etc.; or his difficulties with learning to speak standard Chinese as a boy from Hunan.

240 For the Great Famine, cf. Dikötter (2010).

mail (60). Already in late 1961, the first 'Lei Feng exhibition' was set up, i.e., a year before his death, and he was invited to 'lecture' at many places. After his death, purportedly occurring on the notable date of 15 August (the Japanese declaration of unconditional surrender in 1945), his burial, however, was set for some reasons only in late October, and first obituaries took even more time to appear (which suggests that there was some uncertainty about how to deal with his death). When Mao's famous 'learn from comrade Lei Feng' finally appeared in *Renmin ribao* on 5 March 1963, the ultimate authority had set the tone, and thus, endorsements poured in, while memorial halls were set up for Lei Feng not only in Fushun, but thereafter also back in Changsha in Hunan, and in Anshan 鞍山 in Liaoning where he had worked in steel production (67–72). That way, his memorialisation had been officially kicked off by Mao.

Moving from the framing of Lei Feng in the late 1990s to the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* narrative (Li / Chen 2019) tells its intended readers also more about the setting up of the Fushun memorial and about the several transformations (the latest enumerated as of 2002) it underwent. The site, one learns, was set up in 1965 in a former park, where Lei Feng used to stroll around, at times with primary school kids, and near the place where he worked and where the people's commune he offered money to had been located. For the art work, artists from Shenyang's Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts had been recruited (82–83). Interestingly, the first overhaul (and enlargement) of the Fushun site took already place in 1969 in the midst of the Cultural Revolution, involving the outlook of Lei Feng's tomb, which would be redone once more after the Cultural Revolution in 1983 in marble. In 1969, a large bust was installed which has been removed later (without a reason given: the artist is not named in this case but only identified as a 'local artist', who possibly fell from favour), while in 1971 the present standing statue of Lei Feng by a named artist from the Shenyang Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts was put in place – though it is no longer of reddish epoxy resin by now, but in marmor, as mentioned) (84–85). The *Fengbei* narrative retells mostly Lei Feng's life trajectory in textbook-like fashion. It very much stresses his 'spirit of the screw',[241] to serve wherever he was sent (or actually applied for), receiving much praise from others, but asking humbly to be criticised for being able to constantly 'clean his mind' and 'progress' further (85–103). For this, passages of his purported diary which is apparently still the major 'source' treasured, are constantly interwoven. The times around 1960 (i.e., of the Great Famine) are told in a fashion making believe that his health problems at the

241 Here, the 'spirit' is always connected to the image of the screw, not the nail. Incidentally, CCP elder Dong Biwu had even made a poem on Lei Feng as a never rusting 'screw' (Li / Chen 2019: 102).

time were caused by his exhausting work, and by natural disasters he helped to address (95). To counterbalance a focus on the hero as a solo performer, his deeds are, however, in the new 2019 framing always bound back to his serving and leading others (98). Thus, while he was not a spectacular hero, but a very simple person, he is a model for all, having served in bureaucracy, agriculture, machinery, industrial production, and of course in the Army, to cover all possible functions.[242] The description of his funeral also discloses that he had been first buried (in a 'martyrs' cemetery') with a coffin (i.e., he was not cremated at the time and obviously only transferred later to the present tomb site, likely when the memorial was set up in 1965 in the former park) (103–104). Overall, though, the Lei Feng of the 2019 framing is clearly to go on serving as the general role model for any Chinese citizen to emulate, and is even particularly high on the agenda in the Xi Jinping era.

Case study: Wang Jinxi

While Lei Feng is a rather generic hero for everyone to identify with, in Daqing 大庆 (Heilongjiang Province), in turn, a model worker is in the focus: Wang Jinxi, memorialised in the **Tieren Wang Jinxi jinianguan** 铁人王进喜纪念馆 (Iron Man Wang Jinxi memorial hall) (list 1, 1997), which notably is neither presencing him with a tomb as in the Lei Feng Fushun memorial case, nor being the place he was born (his *guju*), but rather the place where he became famous, standing for China's domestic oil production and industry. Daqing and Wang Jinxi thus became almost synonyms, or rather, Wang Jinxi personified Daqing. Called China's 'iron man', he was hailed as a kind of Chinese Stakhanov,[243] and in the late 1950s and 1960s in Maoist fashion as someone who had no formal scientific-technical training but as a worker had learnt by himself to drill for oil.[244] Hailing from China's Northwestern Province of Gansu, where he already had worked at the Yumen 玉门 oil field – the

242 Incidentally, his biography also gives a good impression of all kinds of honorary badges, titles, and praises one could gain at the time.

243 Before he went to Daqing, he was already honoured as a model worker because of his record-beating work output at the Gansu Yumen oil field, similar to Soviet miner Stakhanov's alleged staggering record-beating coal production (which, incidentally, has been proven a fake). After the Sino–Soviet split in the early 1960s, Chinese references to the Stakhanov model plummeted, and 'Chinese' versions were proposed.

244 This ideal was particularly stressed when the Soviets, annoyed by Mao's policies, withdrew their technicians in 1960.

most important Chinese oil field before the one at Daqing was discovered,[245] he (and his drilling team) – as many others, too – went from Yumen to the harsh climate of Heilongjiang in northern Manchuria in China's Northeast to develop the Daqing oil field (then recently discovered by geological scientists beneath the Song–Liao 松辽 basin,[246] its exact location being kept secret during the early times).[247] In fact, the Daqing oil field would mean a substantial shift in the economy of China which had been an oil importing nation before, to become an oil exporting nation.[248] In Maoist propaganda, Daqing would become the industrial parallel to the mountainous commune of Dazhai 大寨 in Shanxi which stood for purported socialist marvels in agriculture (and had its 'iron girls' respectively).[249]

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245 For an insider view of the development of China's petroleum industry, see Mao (2019). This author, formerly in the PLA which repeatedly played an important role in staffing China's petroleum industry, was assigned in 1960 to Daqing and subsequently also to other petroleum sites and the ministry of petroleum industry, doing political work there. He calls himself 'Daqing's scribe': (Mao 2019: xi), and though transferred from Daqing in early 1964 to the ministry in Beijing, helped design an exhibition on Daqing there in the Museum of History at Tiananmen Square – Mao (2019: 120; 131–132) – which shaped the understanding of the 'Daqing experience', from which the whole nation should learn in the 'learn from Daqing' campaign starting in 1964. The exhibition became however controversial during the Cultural Revolution and was closed. Yumen, in turn, was the most important oil field at the founding of the PRC, although this still meant that at the time, China imported 90% of its oil from abroad (Mao 2019: 26). Yumen repeatedly also sent out the work force to help explore and exploit other sites in China beyond Daqing.

246 Also known as Northeast China Plain, the basin is named after the two rivers Sungari (Songhua) and Liao.

247 The name 'Daqing' (Great Celebration) was new and referred to the symbolic start of exploitation at the eve of China's 10th anniversary National Day, 1 October 1959. (For a brief early account see Chan 1974). Formerly, this town nearest to the oil field was called Datong 大同. Officially, the oil field was declared as a large 'agricultural land reclamation farm' to cover the find – and farming was done, but mainly because of the need to produce food locally, usually by the wives of the workers –, though at least Soviet experts had explored and visited the site and thus knew about its being an oil field since the late 1950s. (Cf. Mao 2019: 74, 78, 98). According to Mao (2019: 83, 86), the discovery was also at first kept secret for fear of failure as a former Sichuan oil field had soon dried up, and the inner-Chinese release of the news in 1960 was thus 'politically' timed (likely intending that at this time of the Great Famine this was to boost domestic morale). However, to the outer world, the PRC's industrial activities of the 1960s were in general cloaked in secrecy, especially when the deepening Sino–Soviet split heightened fears of war. (Cf. also Mao 2019: 103, 153, 170–171).

248 Cf. Mao (2019: 215).

249 Cf. Lu (2001). The 'in agriculture, learn from Dazhai' campaign was launched in 1964 after a remark of Mao in 1963. Both Wang Jinxi from Daqing and Chen Yonggui 陈永贵 from Dazhai were invited to Mao's 71st birthday celebration in 1964. Cf. Li, Hou (2018: 99) For Dazhai's 'iron girls' as models in the perspective of Chinese women's history, see Hershatter (2019: 247–248). Cf. also the remarks in chapter 2.3 of the present book on the case of the 'Red Flag Canal' built at the same time on the Henan side of the same Taihang mountains and the 'iron girls' there.

Wang Jinxi, without any engineering formation, was said to have developed the Daqing oil field with his men all by himself,[250] braving all hardships and the harsh climate. His most publicised feat was blocking a possible side blowout when drilling for oil, by jumping into the pool of mud to mix the cement powder and water with his own body (!), since a mixer was not available. The image of his standing in the muddy pool up to the breast, moving his arms around, was publicised all over China and became iconised.[251] Though in March 1966 the celebrating documentary on him, *Tieren Wang Jinxi* 铁人王进喜 (Iron man Wang Jinxi), produced in 1964, was released, and although he was invited to the National Day parade in Beijing on 1 October of the same year, the early Cultural Revolution did not leave him unscarred and he was criticised.[252] Being shielded by Zhou Enlai (who used Wang Jinxi in socialist diplomatic functions – see below – but also saw to it that the crucial domestic oil production was not affected), he was, however, quickly reinstated,[253] and in 1969 participated in the decisive Ninth Party Congress in Beijing which ended the most violent phase of the Cultural Revolution. After being invited once more to attend the 1 October National Day parade in 1970, he died of cancer only weeks later at 47 years and was buried in Babaoshan 八宝山, the top revolutionary cemetery in Beijing for cadres and politicians. As a model worker, he was the subject of various media productions also after his death, including the late Cultural Revolution film *Chuangye* 创业 ('Pioneers') of 1974 which led to political

250 The presentation of Mao (2019, especially chapters 11–16), Daqing's 'scribe', predictably differs with an accent on many other people responsible for Daqing's 'success story' – a 'success' he also qualifies in hindsight as to various problems connected to the 'Daqing model' which largely ignored the workers' real needs and wasted large amounts of oil because of an insufficiently scientific approach. Mao only rather briefly writes about Wang Jinxi, esp. Mao (2019: 91–93). He, however, suggests that he himself was involved in the promotion of Wang Jinxi at the time when there was the political request to discover and publicise 'exemplary people'. (Cf. Mao 2019: 101; see also 129).

251 The photo may have triggered associations of the 'swimming Mao' photos repeatedly appearing in the official press.

252 According to Mao (2019: 121), the influx of the many former Yumen workers created two factions in Daqing: these outsiders, and the workers of the original Song–Liao Petroleum Bureau who felt sidelined. The factions would openly collide during the Cultural Revolution. Again according to Mao (2019: 139), the Cultural Revolution in Daqing was much less 'civilised' than in Beijing where the author was located at the time.

253 According to Chan (1974: 11–19) who does not focus on Wang personally but writes close to time, at Daqing the early Cultural Revolution times were 'complicated', but finally the old cadres were reinstated and production resumed. See also Li, Hou (2018: 151–188) for a more general description. The closest insights, if scattered, are provided by Mao (2019) who at the time was no longer in Daqing himself but knew the former situation personally.

contestations until Mao expressedly approved of the film.[254] In 1989, an eight-part TV series on him, the 'iron man', was produced (which is, however, no longer available today),[255] and in 2009, another feature film, again called *Tieren* 铁人 (Iron man), came out at the occasion of the CCP's 60th anniversary. Wang Jinxi was also treated in TV and film thereafter, e.g., in 2013 in the beginning Xi Jinping era with the feature film *Tieren Wang Jinxi* 铁人王进喜 (Iron man Wang Jinxi), which suggests his continuous relevance for the CCP as a Communist model.

In filmic representation in the context of 'patriotic education' at the time when the site was nominated as a 'showcase base', the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 3) (1998) on the listed site shows his Heilongjiang memorial in Daqing, interspersing the memorial's photo-plus-text exhibition with Wang's original audio record and some filmed reports of his time of the (1966) documentary (still in black and white) as well as parts of the (coloured) TV series of 1989 on him.[256] Some exhibited personal relics of his early time in Yumen, Gansu, are shown to the TV audience, that also learns that in 1956, he joined the CCP, and soon applied to drill for oil in the area of what would be called in 1959 Daqing (lit.: great celebration) in China's Northeast. Since there were no facilities yet there at the new oil field, he supposedly told his men to create them (which is a main stay of his 'spirit': use what is there and if something lacks, create it yourself – reminiscent of Mao's Yan'an-era slogan of 'do it yourself', see chapter 3.3 of the present book). For water supply, the men thus would simply use the ice on the frozen ground during winter. Wang Jinxi is presented as someone who worked tirelessly, even when injured (which de facto involves the problematic issue of work safety), using crutches. Though not explicitly acknowledged, the shown scenes are clearly staged filmic scenes (likely of the TV series of 1989 no longer available), which are in turn based on famous photographs that were only enacted (which, like in the case of Lei Feng, underlines the crucial importance of iconic photographs for disseminating model personalities among the populace), namely with the pool of mud he jumped

254 Jiang Qing and her faction, the later so-called 'Gang of Four', opposed the release. Cf. Clark (1984: 180). For brief remarks on heroes like Wang Jinxi in documentary and film as part of political campaigning, see also Sun (2016: 110–112).

255 There is some information on this production (*Tieren (1989)*, [n.d.]) on the internet, however, it is no longer possible to either view it online or to buy the series on the market. The producers, when contacted, stated that they 'could not sell it' for some reason. (Presumably, there are ideological problems from today's point of view.)

256 Given the above overview on filmed representations of Wang Jinxi and their timing, I conclude that the coloured parts reproduced in the film clips of the late 1990s must have been taken from the TV series of 1989 in eight parts. As mentioned above, it is no longer possible to access this series directly, but this suggests that at least in the late 1990s, the TV series was still a reference without problems.

into to mix cement with his body. Wang Jinxi is, however, also presented to the TV audience as a simple poet to aestheticise the image of the worker. News clippings are shown detailing his deeds at the time, as is the first locomotive fuelled by Chinese self-produced oil (with Mao's portrait at the front which recalls the Sun Yat-sen train),[257] to underline that oil production was also a 'patriotic' deed. Photos of Wang Jinxi with Zhou Enlai and with Deng Xiaoping, and even with Mao, document the appreciation of China's top politicians he enjoyed (implicitly rejecting over Mao's documented handshaking any criticism that had been directed at Wang Jinxi in the early Cultural Revolution).

The national TV audience observes modern-day visitors to the memorial who include adults (cadres), but also school classes (Young Pioneers), and soldiers. Among the personal items in the exhibition, Wang's motorcycle is particularly pointed out which he is said to have bought with his own money and only to save time for work (since such a 'luxury' item easily lent itself to criticism in a Maoist context). Beyond drilling for oil, he is also presented as someone caring for schooling for the children of his workers (once more underlining the importance of education beyond showing a worker cadre considerate of his men's and their families' larger needs). Even when in hospital at the end of his life, he would eagerly try to save money, the national TV audience is assured, and before his death would hand over everything he had saved for the common good (instead of leaving it to his own family). The reason for his early death in 1970 is pointed out as cancer, likely to prevent any 'wrong' conclusions by the viewer, given the Cultural Revolution times. Jiang Zemin, general secretary at the time this TV film clip was produced, is finally shown as 'comforting' Wang's wife (on whose existence nothing had been mentioned in the narrative earlier), and at the end of this filmic presentation, produced by Daqing cable TV in 1998, the viewing audience observes cadres and students swearing loyalty in front of Wang's statue, underlining the memorial site's purported effective use for enhancing 'patriotism' with Chinese grown-ups as well as pupils.

In comparison to the above TV version for the national audience, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 1) produced at the same time, but directed at pupils, takes

257 Sun Yat-sen's remains were famously transported in 1929 to his mausoleum from Beijing to Nanjing with a train which had his portrait at the front. This copied the Soviet practice of Lenin trains (and later Stalin trains), i.e., trains having the respective portrait at the front. Heilongjiang is, after all, also crossed through by the railway lines once built by the Russians, and the railway remained the most crucial logistical means throughout the vast area of Northern Manchuria, with the city of Harbin serving as the major hub. (Daqing is now on the line between Harbin and Qiqihar.) The use of Mao's portrait on the locomotive dates back to the years of the Civil War, cf. also chapter 4.3 of the present book on the Liao–Shen Campaign of the Civil War.

a more didactic approach, first summarising in a few sentences Wang Jinxi's signifance. In quick succession, some key scenes of the same (1989) TV series as in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip are shown as a visual 'summary', while the whole video provides all through a spoken commentary in a very didactic fashion. It stresses Wang's poverty in youth when he had to beg for food (like with Lei Feng above, teaching the young in the PRC how horrible the times before 1949 had been, since this target group of pupils had no personal experience of them). When Wang started working at the Yumen oil field, the pupils learn, he had only rags for clothing (which are presented in the exhibition and detailed by the commentary), and a stone (presented as well) which served as his 'cushion'! Shackles and the whip of 'the capitalist' who exploited him are stereotyped didactic cues to underscore the brutal society he had to live in before 'liberation' in 1949. In similar fashion as with Lei Feng, the fact that in the new society such a poor worker would be respected and even invited to participate in important events like the National Day parade in Beijing, is underlined to prove that the poor of once had now become the 'masters' (*zhuren* 主人) of society. A glass with the wild herbs on which he frugally had lived during work is shown (which de facto implies the Great Famine without naming it – cf. also the case of the 'Red Flag Canal' discussed in chapter 2.3 in the present book with a similar exhibition of wild herbs serving as food), and the video dwells on his exhibited personal items: the crutches, his quilt, or his clothes which were all completly worn out. Wang, however, is said to have also written a diary (a very much encouraged practice at the time, cf. also Lei Feng above) which is cited as an authenticating device, but also for proving his ideological views.[258] As the intended watching pupils learn, Wang could even attend the National People's Congress in 1964, and in 1970 he, the simple worker, would finally hold an official speech in Yumen where his 'oil career' once started. But unfortunately, he died soon after in spite of all the good care provided. As to his legacy, the educational video points out that in 1971, i.e., shortly after his death, *Renmin ribao* featured the slogan 'in industry learn from Daqing' (which was, in fact, going back to a remark by Mao in 1963 which was turned into a nationwide campaign in 1964 already that had attracted hundreds of visitors daily to Daqing at the time, to be only revived in 1971).[259] As is also pointed out to the intended watching pupils, Wang Jinxi had stated that he

258 Diary writing was encouraged to also show ideological 'progress'. Needless to say, it presupposes literacy to some degree, the spread of which was on the political agenda since the early PRC, including among workers. For official guidebooks of how to write diaries in Mao times, see Windscript (2021). For some diary covers, see Moore (2019).

259 According to Mao (2019: 105), the figure of visitors between 1964 and 1966 before the Cultural Revolution already reached sometimes more than thousand visitors daily! They all came to see how to 'learn from Daqing', which necessitated accordingly facilities for eating and lodging on site.

was ready to 'sacrifice 20 years of his life' for oil production, with a handwritten sheet to this avail proving the point of his utmost 'patriotic' dedication. (In fact, as mentioned, he had died early.)

The video leads the intended watching pupils through the exhibition virtually (as a stand-in for a real visit), which consists mainly in photos and some objects, showing also guided visitors who apparently appreciate the display. More significantly, it, however, also introduces didactically how 'learning from iron man' changed its meaning through time. This serves to argue for the ongoing relevance of this model figure Wang Jinxi to prevent seeing him as a representative of a bygone age, while at the same time adverstising the changes in the new policies in education: in the 1970s, the narrative explains, 'learning from iron man' meant labouring for the nation (with muscles). In the 1980s, it became more 'sophisticated', with an accent on more modern learning, i.e., moving away from muscles to brain, to conform to the modern society's economic needs. Daqing, in turn, was by then producing a large amount of oil for the Chinese nation, and modern Daqing city, shown with its skyscrapers,[260] suggests that Wang Jinxi had laid the foundation for this later local prosperity. But the video, produced by Daqing educational TV in 1997, also stresses that beyond this, he also bequeathed more spiritual richness to not only Daqing locally, but to the Chinese nation at large, i.e., his legacy went far beyond petroleum and China's energy security and was adaptable also to changing needs. After all, his personality as a model for Chinese citizens to emulate is the most important point from a 'patriotic education' point of view.

Contrasting the above filmic representations of the Wang Jinxi memorial with the respective booklet (Liu 1998) in the benchmark '100' 'patriotic education showcase bases' series on the first list sites, usually put up in school libraries, one notes that this booklet is in a strikingly traditional 'propaganda style'. This can be explained by the fact that this booklet simply integrated various sections of a local Party publication on 'iron man Wang Jinxi' (122–123). It first dwells on Wang's difficult childhood in Gansu in the 'old society' with a father maltreated by the powerful in a way to lose his eyesight in prison, which turned the family into beggars, while warlord Ma Bufang 马步芳 (a staunch anti-communist Muslim general mostly active in the northwestern provinces of Qinghai and Gansu) exploited the populace in all ways. As the intended readers of the 'patriotic' booklet learn, young Wang Jinxi, who had herded sheep and then started to work in the Yumen oil field

260 For 'oil city' Daqing and the context of its development, see Li, Hou (2018). At first, there were only simple communal living quarters for the workers and their families near the oil drilling spots. (Cf. Chan 1974: 9–10). These were one-storey buildings mostly made of mud, hay, and pounded earth blocks in local fashion, the so-called *gandalei* 干打垒. Better housing was in bricks.

in slave-like conditions, only got to know a human life after 'liberation' – similar to the conventional Lei Feng story discussed earlier in this chapter. In 1956, he finally would join the CCP (5). Being now 'master of himself', he rose to the position of a drill team leader and became a model worker at the Yumen oil field with his team's outstanding record in 1958 (i.e., during the Great Leap Forward) (9). Conforming to the Great Leap rhetoric, he wanted to be 'faster' and save time in all ways, which would lead to even 'greater' output.[261] At the time of his highest honour for the time being, namely the invitation to Beijing as a delegate to the so-called conference of 'heroes' in industry, transportation, and further fields in the just finished Great Hall of the People in 1959,[262] he noticed that transportation in Beijing, after all New China's capital, still relied largely on coal since oil was lacking – a point also speakers from various fields in industry stressed during the conference (11–12). Shocked by these circumstances, he thus decided to do more for oil production to help the Chinese nation, since he did not believe in foreigners (namely Americans) who had purportedly stated that China was lacking in oil resources. (This oft-repeated claim is an on purpose out of context quote from geologist Frederick G. Clapp, a consultant of Standard Oil, who said so but then went on saying that there were nevertheless some areas worth exploring – cf. Li 2018: 6.)

In 1960, Wang Jinxi volunteered with his team to explore the Daqing oil field in northern Manchuria, braving the harsh cold climate and with almost no facilities available. The booklet dwells for the intended young readership on the colourful circumstances, sleeping on frozen cow urine, waking up being all white with frost etc. (Liu 1998: 17). As long as their own equipment had not been delivered, the men of Wang's team did not idly sit and wait but went on to help others, thus showing Wang as someone asking of himself as much as of others to always be hands on, even requesting bystanding cadres to join physical labour – a critical side remark on white-collar bureaucrats. When machines were not available, he just used manpower to transport heavy utensils according to his motto to always simply take up work (*gan* 干), whether circumstances were conducive or not, and if they were not, to simply create them. (This is once more reminiscent of Mao's respective dictum and the Nanniwan spirit of Yan'an times, see in the present book chapter 3.3) E.g., when no water was available for cooling the drilling machine, Wang Jinxi would dig a well with his team and have water transported by using their own washing bowls passed from hand to hand over a substantial distance to the oil

261 This refers to the Great Leap motto: greater, faster, better, cheaper or more economic.

262 The hall is one of the '10 great buildings' modelled on Soviet example which were built in record time during the Great Leap Forward to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the PRC.

drilling point to be able to finally draw his first Daqing oil.[263] (The spot highlighted today outside the memorial hall is that so-called 'first oil well').[264] This success proved, according to the Maoist-style narrative, that Wang's practical knowledge was way beyond the bookish knowledge of others who had gone to school and college (32–33). Though the booklet is evasive about that particular time of 1960–1962 (the Great Famine) when the Daqing oil field was started to be exploited, it stresses that Wang Jinxi was never giving in to any special treatment with food – another topos in such stories of model personalities (42). What becomes clear is that one of the items most 'problematic' in the exhibition is his motorcycle which he is said to have only used for working faster and helping others.[265] While he is acknowledged as sometimes being too harsh on himself (obviously a de facto praise) and on others, he is also described as a model for being open to criticism, excusing himself when he had failed, and eager to learn, always reading in his sparetime Mao's works and trying to learn the characters he had not yet memorised. (This, as one may note, is all very similar to descriptions of Lei Feng, cf. above.) Considerate as a good team leader, he, however, also thought of the needs of his comrades' families, be it the children's need for schooling, or the need of the old mothers' sustainance, e.g., in the case of a comrade's (lethal) work accident or similar cases. Still, in the Cultural Revolution, which is only very briefly mentioned, he was attacked, though people whom he had helped earlier are said to have duly intervened on his behalf (54–58). Without further details, his participation in the Ninth Party Congress in Beijing in 1969 which ended the most violent phase of the Cultural Revolution suggests to the intended reader that somehow problems had been quickly solved, but soon after in 1970 he already died.

The 'patriotic' booklet notably dwells on the personal items of Wang Jinxi shown in this otherwise largely text-and-photo exhibition of his memorial, which are to presence him, providing background narratives to the single objects, or rather taking them as cues to tell the respective stories: his hard hat, the break handle often shown in films on him to regulate the oil flow, his motorcycle (which caused, as mentioned, some criticism in the Cultural Revolution), his oil lamp (to read Mao's

263 This 'approach' was also imitated in 1970 when Wang's famous drilling team was moved from Daqing to the new oil field in Hubei, and again this was recorded visually. (Cf. Mao 2019: 169).

264 De facto, the first oil drawn from Daqing was by others in 1959 before Wang Jinxi's arrival (Li, Hou 2018: 26).

265 In fact, part of the tensions at Daqing during the Cultural Revolution was the fact that experienced workers were payed better, given also the crucial economic importance of oil supply and the harsh climate which needed material incentives to attract and keep a qualified work force. Such preferential treatment and non-ideological incentives came under attack in the Cultural Revolution. (Cf. Chan 1974: 14–17).

works at night), the drilling head used at his first oil well, his muddy jacket (used when mixing the muddy cement, his most iconised photo), his sheep skin coat, brought along from his native Gansu, which he would later donate to a freezing colleague, and his diary and notebooks showing how he tried to learn more Chinese characters as well as more ideological content (62–82). One may note that these items have a special value in such a case of a 'simple' worker where there is not much spectacular material to exhibit. (In fact, as we noted above, the Lei Feng memorial featured even less material objects.) These objects rather serve to evoke a 'resonance effect', as Greenblatt has termed it, with the viewer.[266] Via the photos and other visual media, these objects have become iconised 'things' people associate with 'iron man' Wang Jinxi (and thus expect to see in the exhibition). They thus serve as authenticating devices and are a sort of relics.

Significantly, Wang Jinxi is presented to the intended reading pupils as not only an exemplary worker and team leader, but also as a worker poet: a few poems he purportedly wrote in 1959 and 1960 are cited, although the fact that he is said to have had difficulties in writing simple characters raises the question as to how he could write some of those more complex characters. Likely, one expects a model worker to also produce poetry in the vein of Mao's call for 'literature of the masses' or even 'workers' literature'.[267] It also illustrates that the socialist 'new man' is understood as a 'holistic' person with also cultural interest. The 'patriotic' booklet furthermore describes the more 'political' sections of the exhibition, integrating, as ever, also the praises and visits by later CCP leaders, namely Jiang Zemin who was general secretary at the time of the booklet's creation, but also the 'new iron men' of China who picked up on Wang Jinxi's example (like with Lei Feng above and the 'new Lei Fengs'). Similar to the case of Sun Yat-sen's memorial in Cuiheng discussed earlier in the present chapter (5.2), also here an audio of Wang Jinxi brings the 'hero' closer to the audience and presences him (103–105). Outdoor of the memorial, where the 'first oil well' is to be visited, some of Wang Jinxi's admirers (including his one-time superior and later Minister of the Petroleum Industry Song Zhenming 宋振明)[268] had even parts of their ashes buried, thus emotionalising this 'technical' place which was to mean so much for China's energy security at the time (107–108). Notably, this 'first' drilling point, called by now 'Wang Jinxi

266 On the use in Chinese museums of the wonder *vs* resonance effect, based on Greenblatt 1991, see Varutti (2014: 64–67).

267 This goes back to Mao's famous Yan'an talks on literature and art in 1942, and workers' literature became officially promoted in PRC times.

268 Cf. Li (2018: xxii). Song Zhenming, later minister, had formerly worked at Yumen and Daqing in leading positions and knew Wang Jinxi well.

well',[269] is the only place in all of Daqing named for tourists in an encyclopaedia of 'national sightseeing spots'! (108) Other things advertised to tourists to see there include the reconstructed old *gandalei* 干打垒 barracks (adobe 'bricks', mixed with straw, the locally available building material, with little lumber needed), where visitors can get an impression of how simple and harsh life was at the time,[270] while today's Daqing is a modern city with skyscrapers. The Wang Jinxi memorial, as others we have discussed before, also serves as a place where ceremonies of all kinds are held, from children joining the Young Pioneers, to youth joining the Communist Youth League, to adults joining the CCP, or others entering school, factories, or the Army, to extend purportedly also to less self-evident uses like for normal people undergoing coming-of-age ceremonies there, or even bridal couples commemorating their marriage at the memorial of the petroleum worker and 'iron man' Wang Jinxi! (117). In short, this place is supposed to serve as a spot for life-cycle ceremonies. On the other hand, Wang Jinxi's example is said to be inspiring as a model to all sorts of people: not only officials, but also noted singers purportedly praised him after touring the exhibition, as did school children, Overseas Chinese, foreigners (mentioning a visitor from Sierra Leone), and, very notably, even *laojiao* 劳教 ([re-]education by labour)[271] prisoners who said they were deeply touched and converted by his impressive example to better themselves! (118–121). This is to prove the supposedly broad appeal (and use) of this 'iron man' model also long after his death – and the assumed efficiency of education by models of Communist values in general.

The Iron Man Wang Jinxi Memorial is, however, also included in the museum series *Dai ni zoujin bowuguan* (cf. chapter 1 of the present book) directed as a 'second class room' to Chinese youth as well, which we have integrated into our case studies repeatedly in the present book, where feasible. While the above 'patriotic' booklet in the official booklet series on first list sites picked up, as mentioned, local Party propaganda materials, this museum volume, in turn, was put together by the memorial itself on the occasion of Wang's 40th death anniversary, 2010, and is thus a more recent reflection of the memorial's exhibition and how it had evolved in the meantime since its nomination as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 1997,

269 As noted above, the 'first well' producing oil in Daqing was de facto drilled by another team than Wang Jinxi's.

270 For building these houses, 'the masses' were mobilised to construct their own houses in the vein of Maoist 'self-reliance'. Cf. Mao (2019: 94–95).

271 Strictly speaking, there were various categories established in the PRC's penal system, the *laojiao* detainees serving usually shorter terms and being managed by the police rather than by the formal judicial system. (The *laojiao* system has been abolished in 2013, while the larger *laogai* 劳改 or 'reform through labour' system with its large labour camps is still in place.)

presented from the prespective of the staff. Its narrative discloses that the history of the memorial itself started with an exhibition hall on Wang's life already five years after his death and still during the Cultural Revolution, opened in 1975 in the inner city of Daqing. (Tieren Wang Jinxi jinianguan 2010: 18). In 1989 at the 30th anniversary of the 1959 discovery of the Daqing oil field,[272] the exhibition hall on his life was made into the full-blown memorial which opened in 1991 to the public under the name 'Iron man, comrade Wang Jinxi memorial' (18–19). This was the memorial's version and location included in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' list (1997) and consequently treated by the above discussed filmic representations and the 'patriotic' booklet.

Thereafter, in 2003, the memorial was, however, shifted to the present location outside the city centre and notably dropped the 'comrade' in the name,[273] fully opened in this new version in 2006. (This is also the site I visited in 2018.) The new exhibition features more recreations, e.g., of the simple house Wang Jinxi had lived in when still in Yumen in Gansu (28). In 2005, Wang's younger brother dedicated as a further personal item the cap Wang had worn when 1959 in Beijing (for the people's heroes' conference) to the museum which now counts as a top-tier cultural relic! (31). (Since this was after the late 1990s videos and after the 'patriotic' booklet was written, it was not yet addressed as an item there. Incidentally, his hard hat and brake handle had been declared top-tier relics in the meantime as well.) As the new 2010 narrative of the memorial's own volume discloses, in June 1966, i.e., when the Cultural Revolution gained speed, Wang Jinxi, who had been praised by Mao, starting the campaign to learn from the Daqing example in 1964, even went with an oil delegation to Albania (thus taking part in China's foreign relations) (36).[274] While the museum volume mentions that he was criticised in the early Cultural Revolution, it is underlined that he was, in fact, ordered by Zhou Enlai to block attempts of 'making revolution' in Daqing as oil production should not be stopped at any cost. While he was locally attacked for this, in Beijing it was decided to put Daqing – in economic terms enormously important for China's oil production at the time – under military control, and he was thus freed (and the local 'revolution makers' restrained). In 1969, he was even received by Mao when in Beijing for the

272 Possibly, the TV series of 1989 mentioned above also had this anniversary in the background.

273 The 'comrade' appellation had plummeted in the meantime in use frequency.

274 One may note that this had not been mentioned by the late 1990s videos and the 'patriotic' booklet. Albania, formerly the PRC's 'true friend', had more rocky relations with the latter after Mao's switch to rebuilt ties to the US in his last years, and when the Communist system crumbled in 1991, Albania even pondered closer relations with Taiwan which might explain the evasive attitude of the late 1990s materials. Finally, though, Albania rearranged with the PRC. (Cf. Brady / Higashi 2019).

Ninth Party Congress, but in Daqing production nevertheless decreased, which worried the central leadership (and additionally showed that his 'reigning in of revolution' in 1966 had been 'correct') (37).

In the new memorial exhibition (of 2006), many of his iconic photos – before the Cultural Revolution crisis – were recreated as diorama scenes (which should bring the objects more alive). E.g., he was now shown on the famed motorcycle in snow and ice (61). Another item exhibited was the bag his wife filled with something to eat so that he never had to eat anything of others when touring the oil field – which indirectly refers to the Great Famine time (65). His house in Daqing was recreated in the memorial as well, showing to the visitor how he lived there with his mother, brother and sister, and his own family with 5 children – another aspect more prominent in the new exhibition version which was largely downplayed (or ignored) in the earlier exhibition: Wang not only as the model worker, but also as a family man (67). The accent on Wang as also a 'poet' becomes better understandable, too, since one of Wang Jinxi's assertive poems about oil workers was even cited by Mao when Mao met again with American leftist journalist Edgar Snow in 1964 (see also below), who had once introduced Mao to the West and beyond in the 1930s.[275] This is thus another topic newly added to suggest Wang Jinxi's importance even beyond the PRC and for China's international image (71). In the same vein, in 2007, the chairman of the Taiwanese New Party (an offspring of the GMD), Yok Mu-ming (Yu Muming 郁慕明), is reported to have visited the Wang Jinxi memorial, this very 'Maoist' place, and showed himself impressed, leaving a written praise! (77). Wang was thus made into someone contributing to the PRC's image at large. More domestically, beyond stressing that Wang Jinxi lived mostly for his work, he was by then thrust in the exhibition into someone who also very much cared for his mother – which is another feature conforming to more recent agendas of highlighting filial duty in an ageing Chinese society (something we repeatedly noted also in other case studies in the present book) (81–83). Wang's wife, in turn, is addressed as the one who had donated in 1991 his clothes to the memorial, before she died in 1993 (84). (The visit of Jiang Zemin to meet her for 'comfort', shown in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip discussed above, had, in fact, taken place in 1990 already.) While Wang Jinxi himself had met Mao twice in person, in 1964 and in 1969, both times in Beijing (94), some major political figures even came over to visit Daqing in person, including during Wang's lifetime Deng Xiaoping. Others visited only later in the 1990s and 2000s, like the general secretaries Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, as well as the premiers Li Peng and Wen Jiabao 温家宝, highlighting Wang Jinxi's enduring

275 For a thorough new study on Edgar Snow's classic *Red Star over China* and the early formation of foreign knowledge about Mao, see Ishikawa (2022).

legacy. In fact, at the turn of the 21st century, Wang Jinxi was still considered an important model to emulate, being even chosen by the official press in 2000 as one of the 'top ten figures in China's last 100 years', aside other figures addressed in the present book like Sun Yat-sen, Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping (see below), or Lei Feng, and over time, he had appeared a full six times on Chinese postage stamps (the 'name cards of the country'), which underlines his perceived ongoing relevance (99–101).

The 2019 *Fengbei* narrative on the Wang Jinxi memorial (Yao / Hao 2019), in turn, further updates the official framing of Wang Jinxi, now to the Xi Jinping era. The intended reader first of all learns that the name of the new (locally shifted) memorial of 2006 was written by then-premier Wen Jiabao. The layout of this new memorial was designed as the character *gong* 工 seen from above, and *ren* 人 from the side, thus representing *gongren* 工人, the worker (42). The main content of the memorial is to praise Wang's personality, i.e., his model character, and only secondarily the oil production in China (for which Daqing's importance has, in fact, decreased in the meantime). This means, the personality aspect has moved once more to the foreground *vs* the economic relevance in this new national reading. His 'patriotic, creative, inquisitive and dedicated' 'oil spirit' is hailed above all. The memorial's modernised exhibition is also advertised for the intended young reader of Xi Jinping times as providing tools and machines that visitors can touch or mount on to get a closer feeling (and to update the presentation for today's visitors looking for more hands-on experience) (43). Wang's personality is also presented more in-depth, adding that he was additionally chosen (in 2009) as one of '100 people' that 'moved China' since the establishment of New China (1949).[276] Although this seems at first glance less impressive than being one of the 'top ten of the last 100 years' as cited in the memorial's own 2010 volume discussed above, this also reflects the Xi Jinping era with its more 'presentist' thrust to focus on the achievements since 1949 (44). In the presentation of the site, the 'terrible' old society is therefore also not spelled out as before, rather stating summarily that life was not easy, but that by this he also learnt to perservere as a hard-working child labourer!

Focusing more on his life after 1949, he is characterised in this new 2019 framing as being active in labour competitions, i.e., putting the accent more on his readiness to toil and to compete, but mentioning also his famed 1205th drilling team, i.e., focusing not only on himself as a solo 'hero', but leading 'his men' since Yumen

276 In the exhibition, this is officially translated as '100 heroes and models who have inspired the nation since the founding of the New China'. Incidentally, these 100 include one foreigner: George Hatem, the American-Lebanese physician who went to China and stayed there until his death. (Cf. also chapter 2.2 on the Ningxia Museum).

days and then in Daqing (45). His activities without much machinery to transport the crucial drilling head are spelt out, and that he was injured but worked on. Rather detailed is also the famous story of his mixing the cement with his body, using the occasion to explain to the intended young reader what the problem of a side-blowout would have been (46–47). Although the story as told is not very scientific, the accent in the *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 is clearly also on science, not only on Maoist-style heroism. Wang is thus characterised here as learning to read and write, also for studying better how to scientifically (!) deal with oil drilling, thus experimenting also with adaptations of the drilling head to drill more vertically (48–50). This clearly reflects an awareness that the conventional Maoist storytelling is rather far from a modern pupil's mindset and the education in science in today's schools. On the ideological front, things changed less, however, and Wang Jinxi is still characterised as willingly toiling for the Party, and by indirect reference to the Great Famine (termed in the politically correct way the three years of 'natural disasters', also narrowing it down to 1959–1961), it is pointed out how he cared also for more convenience in daily life for his men, having a grocery shop move closer to the workers, and mobilising the families to grow crops themselves, in reference to the Nanniwan spirit (of Yan'an days). That way they supposedly had enough to eat, and Zhou Enlai would praise this combination of industry and agriculture also from the side of the PRC leadership (51). The story of the worker who had unfortunately died on the job by an accident, leaving behind an aged mother, is also cited to show that this moved Wang Jinxi to send money to her ever since, proving his responsibility as a leading cadre and his personal care for others in need, namely caring for the elderly (which once more touches upon the issue of filial duty so important for today's educational agenda) (52).

All in all, the 2019 framing points out that his spirit and thus legacy remains bound to his famous mottos, and it is finally defined and summarised for the young intended reader in a rather general and no longer clearly 'blue-collared' way as 'patriotism, creativity, investigation, dedication' (54).

Contrasting the above narrative framings with my own visit in 2018, the first thing one notes when approaching the site is that the memorial is full of all sorts of honouring plaques, pointing out that Wang Jinxi was seen as of ongoing relevance for a broad range of target groups also beyond the usual pupils, unsurprisingly also for industry and workers in his case. The exhibition version I observed on spot integrated his story with the larger topic of the history of oil in China since Han times (when it was first described), notably addressing also Taiwan where, according to the explanation, the first modern oil well was drilled in Miaoli 苗栗 in 1878 with US machines, while on the Chinese mainland it was Japanese technicians that

drilled the first one in Shaanxi Province in 1907. (These are all issues not important to the above narratives, including the official 2019 *Fengbei* description which suggests that the local perspective is not necessarily identical with the national framing.) The GMD, the visitor learns, finally would open up the Yumen oil field in the 1930s, where Wang Jinxi had initially worked. For Daqing, it had been geologist Li Siguang 李四光 to detect the oil field in the first place. That way, the narrative embedded Wang Jinxi, the model personality, also in the history of oil exploration in China. A high-point for Wang's appreciation by Mao himself was the latter's mentioning him (in 1964) to American leftist journalist Edgar Snow as China's 'answer' to the world (at a time when the PRC had bad relations with both the US and the Soviet Union). This showed that Wang Jinxi was used for playing a larger role than just the one for China's oil industry. While the exhibition showed many personal items of Wang, including the crutch he used when injured, and tools for drilling, the recreations of his housing or of the first oil well he drilled with his 1205th team were to represent the outdoor spaces in the museum space. Otherwise, art work is applied to hail the feat of China's oil exploration with a painted apotheosis of oil, and copies of enthusiastic media reactions to Daqing's oil production are to document the national impact and euphoria created. In 1971 (after Wang's death), *Renmin ribao*'s (renewed) 'in industry, learn from Daqing' concluded these medial repercussions. While the stress on Wang Jinxi also respecting science raised him above a blind Maoist enthusiast, the narrative in the memorial still pointed out in Stakhanovite fashion that in 1966, Wang purportedly surpassed with his team the drilling records of the US and the Soviet Union! This shows how different conceptions of his relevance create a certain tension in exhibition design. His contested motorcycle is presented as a national relic (with a diorama showing him using it in ice and snow), telling the viewer that he bought it back in Yumen and then brought it to Daqing for covering greater distances without other transport locally available.

Still, if one compares this to Lei Feng, who was also presented as someone loving motorised vehicles, it appears that such a 'soft spot' was also something to be 'excused' with a male hero.[277] Also strikingly similar to Lei Feng, Wang was shown in the exhibition as caring for kids in a group statue, while the trip to Albania (which was allied at the time with the PRC and was rich in oil while receiving economic aid from China) purportedly spurred him to vow (reminiscent of Great Leap fashion) that he would do everything to help China produce as much oil per capita as Albania (which combines his competitive spirit with international relations). His bust in front of a wall with bas-reliefs showing the modern city of Daqing as well as

277 One may add that also Lei Feng had taken photos of himself on a motorcycle at Tiananmen Square.

the oil well pumpjacks suggests to the visitor that Wang Jinxi, the oil worker, was the one who laid the foundation for today's prosperous city. As for Wang, the 'worker poet', the memorial, in turn, published and sold locally a collection of his 'poems and quotations', thus presenting him as also a (if 'self-made') cultured worker, serving better as a 'patriotic' model for today's literate populace than someone barely able to write. In short, the exhibition tried to integrate the more traditional 'Maoist worker model' with a more modern view of Wang Jinxi as someone studying und labouring for how to serve China on the production front. In the end, his total dedication has become the main point to emulate for the Chinese citizen of today, and in this regard, he is still a very useful model of Communist values.

Case study: Kong Fansen

With the **Kong Fansen jinianguan** 孔繁森纪念馆 (Kong Fansen memorial hall) (list 1, 1997) in Liaocheng (Shandong Province) we move to the most recent case of a 'model personality' treated in the present chapter, bringing the role models of 'patriotic' values up to the Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin eras. Kong Fansen, who died in 1994 by a car accident, and whose memorial was listed already in 1997 with the first batch of 'patriotic education showcase bases', i.e., barely three years after his death, hailed from the vicinity of Liaocheng, i.e., the memorial is not set at his *guju*, but embodies the Shandong wish to promote this local outstanding figure in Liaocheng, where he had also worked for some time. The place is also conveniently located, not far from the Great Canal, which means it can be easily accessed and visited by tourists, too. As a model, Kong Fansen, had distinguished himself above all in far-away Tibet, and with him, a model for cadres working in minority areas, as understood especially during the Deng Xiaoping era, is presented. The 'patriotic education showcase base' is thus to show how the model Han cadre cared for the Tibetans, how he taught them, and that they loved him consequently dearly (and thus also China as their presumed *patria*).

In terms of filmic representation of this site, the educational video *Zhonghua hun* did not cover it, but the respective TV film clip of the all-inclusive nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* series (disc 5) of 1998, produced by Shandong TV's societal education department, presents the site and contextualises Kong Fansen for the potential visitor or tourist with the noted cultural importance of Liaocheng as a Great Canal city. Being such a recent figure, Kong Fansen has ample documentation, including many photos, and even documentary film material of his work can be reused. At times, the TV audience even spots foreigners on the shown photos

with him, though these are not addressed in the explanation. More curious is the fact that there are also photos shown documenting how he behaved like a filial son who combed his mother's hair, and pathetically kneeled in front of her with his head on her lap to say goodbye before taking up work (for the second time) in Tibet, thus demonstrating the virtue of 'filial duty' so much on the agenda in recent times in China's ageing society (see also below) to the viewer. His care for Tibet, including providing for more education facilites there, is particularly highlighted, with everyone smiling on the photos to prove the happiness he brought to the Tibetans. Even to areas of Tibet hard to access he would go, documented by visual material, showing him climbing up the mountains with horses, walking in snow when the horses couldn't walk on with him, by this underlining the real hardship he took upon himself, while having only some cookies to eat, and only snow for 'drinking'. Because of the harsh climate, he also fell ill, and preparing for the end, he had already written a goodbye letter to his family, asking to take care of his old mother and of his children, requesting to bury him wherever his life would end. But when he recovered, the viewer is told, he would fearlessly go on in his work of helping the Tibetans. In 1994, though, he died by a car accident on the job. His diary entries (which once more underline the importance of 'diaries' for 'proving' one's thought) are to present him as a model personality to the national TV audience, noting down that a Communist's highest love has to be 'the people'. This he manifested also by his medical knowledge with which he helped the Tibetans. In a similar altruistic vein, he would declare that 'people's' elderly are just like one's own ones, and 'people's' children are just like one's own ones, too.[278] Thus, the viewer learns that he reared three Tibetan orphaned children (all duly documented with photos), treating them as his Tibetan 'family'. In terms of material objects, the exhibition of the memorial displays his clothes and hat (which are to presence him, reminiscent of the ancient *yiguan zhong* 衣冠冢 tradition of a 'clothes and cap' substitute tomb – cf., e.g., the Huangdiling case discussed in chapter 3.1 of the present book), and the purported only 8,6 Yuan he had with him when he died (which are to suggest his extreme frugality as a cadre to the national TV audience). After his death, Kong Fansen's example was also pointed out by then-general secretary Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng to be 'studied', but among the filmed visitors shown to the national TV audience there are mainly grown-ups, though notably no pupils.

The 'Comrade Kong Fansen Memorial' booklet (interestingly adding 'comrade' to the nominated site which did not include 'comrade' at the time of listing) (cf. above with Wang Jinxi where 'comrade' had been dropped!) in the benchmark '100

278 Incidentally, this also recalls the old Confucian utopia of *datong* 大同 (great unity) as spelt out in the *Liji* 礼记 or Book of Rites.

patriotic education showcase bases' series on first list sites (Liu / Chen 1998), is in a very traditional propaganda vein (like in the case of Wang Jinxi), but it is peculiar in its strong emotionality. Repeatedly, the description focuses on emotions: how Kong Fansen was full of filial love for his mother (while rather neglecting the needs of his wife and own children which is, however, praised as being 'unselfish' and thus 'positive'), having photos taken of how he wept in his mother's lap kneeling in front of her when having to go on duty to Tibet (which were shown, as mentioned above, in the TV film clip presentation). 'Hot tears' are shed by him when seeing people's poverty, namely in Tibet, and by those whom he helped because of his generosity, giving poor people his own jacket, meal or else. Aside being a paragon of virtue as a cadre, incorruptible and totally dedicated to the Party, he is repeatedly shown as caring for the poor elderly and taking in Tibetan orphans which is also to suggest that the Tibetans are 'part of the family'.[279] That way, the issue of 'filial duty' so much stressed in recent times in the quickly ageing Chinese society (and under the one-child policy introduced in the era of Deng Xiaoping), is underlined for the intended young reader. While his work in Tibet is the main issue for which he was praised nationally, a large part of the booklet, produced locally, is, however, dedicated to his natal Shandong where his memorial is also located: in Liaocheng, thus providing the locality a chance to take a share in the glory of its famous son.

Kong Fansen is said to have come from a poor peasant family in a village near Liaocheng. While standing out as a good student (always something stressed in these model cases for the intended reading pupils), he supposedly already volunteered as a child to help lonely old people (thus reenforcing the 'filial duty' issue). Different from the former cases of 'model' personalities we have looked at above, Kong Fansen, born in 1944, has virtually no 'pre-liberation' story, and thus the narrative on his youth is rather describing him as a ready-to-help person. The only 'pre-revolutionary' element in his childhood are the traditional stories his father is said to have told the children as a kind of after-work evening family lecture: Mencius' mother moving home thrice to find a good surrounding for her son to grow up and learn the right things to emulate, paragons of filial duty (from the 24 stories on filial piety),[280] and Song-era Yue Fei and his mother who famously tattooed his back with the patriotic phrase 'requite the country with perfect loyalty' (*jing zhong*

279 Though he is stated to have taken in three, on the photos (and later mentionings) only two appear. What happened to the third is not clear.

280 One may note that the '24 examples of filial piety' have been criticised in the 20th century as some stories are extreme in curbing children's self-esteem versus the older generation. The frequently found solution was to use the old form and replace the stories with new versions, where deemed necessary.

bao guo 精忠报国)[281] to encourage him versus the despicable adversary at court, chancellor Qin Hui 秦桧 (and acknowledging that his obligations to the country were beyond the filial duty he owed her). But also fairy tales were part of this home education, the reader is told, which suggests that Kong Fansen was growing up with Chinese 'popular tradition' (and thus understood 'the people' well) (2–4). While in school during the Great Leap Forward times, Kong Fansen also had to participate in agricultural work. Although the Great Famine is not explicitly mentioned, he proved himself unselfish already at that time in leaving his share to his hungry classmate in school, the intended young reader is told (7). Instead of becoming an engineer as he had dreamt of, he was recruited into the PLA and sent to work in an Army hospital, which he humbly accepted, the reader is assured, though at first mostly serving an ageing leading medical cadre and his wife at home where he learnt some medical skills that he cold use later when in Tibet. While serving the cadre couple, he also learnt from them that they would not accept better treatment with food (11), thus also learning how a good cadre should behave. This he would later also practice during his own cadre career (proving that models are effective means of education).[282]

The Cultural Revolution times are not clearly outlined up to 1975, though the final part of the booklet provides an annalistic biography which sketches out more of that time (143–155). In fact, he apparently joined the CCP in September 1966 (i.e., at the high-time of the Cultural Revolution), worked in a technical school with a factory attached, married and had children (a photo of his family of 1994 only months before his death is included in the illustration sheets of the booklet), and was in a leading position in his school's revolutionary committee, the intended young reader learns. In 1975, he went to work for a year in a village commune near Liaocheng where he helped organise the people to work practically against salinisation of the soil, while also teaching them ideology via revolutionary songs. Since the harvest was nevertheless deficient, he cared for help with food transfers, without, however, ever taking anything from the villagers himself, underlining his incorruptibility (12–14). Apparently, his work there was in the context of the still ongoing 'in agriculture, learn from Dazhai' campaign (43).

Earlier, in 1964–1967 (after having cared for the cadre couple), he had served regularly in the PLA where he learnt to steel himself by physical training, something which would help him later when in physically demanding Tibet (and which

281 In fact, the original version of that tattoo story had *jin zhong bao guo* 尽忠报国 (exhaust loyalty and requite the country). For the trajectory of this story and the change of the first character, cf. Du (2024).

282 Cf. Bakken (2000), characterising China as an 'exemplary society'.

should likely encourage the intended young reading pupils to take their own mandatory physical-military training seriously). From this time in the Army onward, even when serving thereafter as a civil cadre, he would feel particularly close to soldiers and would care for those of them not being able to return home for festivities while on duty. He himself would also rather help others than enjoy his vacation home, declining, once more, any preferential treatment, the intended young reader is assured (20–23). Even when his own home was particularly hit during a torrential rain, he would first check on the houses of others before caring about his own (23–26). On the other hand, he was also very much concerned with his native village near Liaocheng where he advocated the introduction of a Japanese type of apple tree (nicely called 'red Fuji'), given that the salinised soil hampered the traditional production of grain. This, the 'patriotic' booklet argues, showed his openness and 'scientific' handling of agricultural problems (while leaving out an explanation for the intended reading pupils of the reasons for the growing salinisation problem). Being 'filial' and helping all in need, not forgetting also those whom he had worked with earlier, Kong Fansen is said to have emulated Lei Feng, the ubiquitous model personality for Communist values (33).

Most stress, though, is put on Kong Fansen's care for his mother before leaving for the second (and last) time for Tibet,[283] whom he would comb (which was addressed also in the TV film clip, as mentioned, showing the photo of her in a wheelchair while he combs her hair which is included in the illustration sheets of the 'patriotic' booklet, too), washed her feet, fed her, and even washed the night soil pan. His wife, on whose shoulders all this would remain during his absence, though, is said to have 'understood' that he had to leave, since, the narrative tells the intended young reader, she loved him in an 'adult way' (36–39).

While Kong Fansen's first time in Tibet (1979–1981) is not detailed (apparently, he had had a riding accident there and was saved by the locals) (67), his second time (1988 until his death 1994, though with minor breaks) is the focus of the second part of the 'patriotic' booklet. In Tibet, the intended young reader learns, he is said to have realised the harshness of life in this height and with the cold climate. He braved the difficulties, tried to tackle the utter poverty, repeatedly claiming that the CCP was there to better the lives of the Tibetans who, in turn, would call him at times a 'living bodhisattva' in gratitude, which he then tried to 'readjust' from their ('ignorant') Buddhist framing to the rather mundane help of the Party who would be the one to be thanked. Still, at times he is characterised for the intended young readers also as showing respect for local customs and beliefs (in this also sustaining the

283 As the annalistic biography makes clear, he had lived away from home also 1981–1984, though less far.

somewhat more 'liberal' policies of the CCP towards minorities and religions in the Deng Xiaoping era). His basic work was, however, to care for education and economy, though he also put his medical knowledge to use and particularly cared for the elderly in Tibet.

His work supposedly endeared him to the population who thus also helped him when he had a first car accident in 1989 during his being driven around the vast territory on duty. He thus had to recover back home in Shandong (44–45). Even though his wife, too, was in hospital at the same time, the intended young reader learns that he would nevertheless leave earlier than envisioned to go back to his work in Lhasa where he served as vice mayor, after tearfully parting with his wife (47–50). Still, in Tibet he would also keep company with his fellow Shandongers (thus showing him as someone never forgetting his home region even though serving far away). When his wife and youngest daughter visited him in Tibet, he, however, had no time to show them around (for sightseeing) but only had them go with him on a tour to see elderly poor people whom they decided spontaneously to leave some of their clothes, the intended young reader is told. This, too, was documented by taking photos with his wife and daughter and the elderly Tibetans at the occasion to commemorate this moment (and good deed) (52–55).

Kong Fansen would, however, also care for sanitary conditions in Tibet, and was shocked to see the poverty and basic problems 'after 40 years of liberation', which is to explain his incentive to redress this (72). He would organise help, e.g., for earthquake victims, and he took in the already referred-to three orphaned children himself, donating blood for extra money to raise them (i.e., would not use common funds for this). Thus, the 'patriotic' booklet summarises pathetically, he 'gave his blood for the Tibetans' (76–77).

In 1993, though the background is not made clear (namely the Sino–Indian Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity Agreement to ease tensions in the region, signed in 1993), he also particularly cared for soldiers serving at the Sino–Indian border, and also for two soldiers who had been ordered to come over from the Xinjiang military area neighbouring Tibet (57–58).[284] Since he had been asked to serve in the demanding high-up border region ('Tibet's Tibet') as a cadre, he spent his last time in that sparsely populated Ngari prefecture, bordering on India and Nepal, and also bordering on the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Even though his time in Tibet had been almost up (which underlines that to serve in Tibet counted as a particularly hard job), he had decided to accept that call to Ngari in

284 Whereas in 1993, the aggreement between China and India on maintaining peace at the border was signed to ease tensions, in Xinjiang, on the other hand, tensions grew, exemplified by a first major bomb attack in Urumqi in 1992.

obedience to the Party in spite of still suffering from the 1989 car accident. Notably, the Ngari prefecture (where the holy Mount Kailash is located) is characterised as a place where the former Tibetan government exiled prisoners to, underlining the argument of the great challenge this assignment implied (82). Hardly any schools existed there, and in terms of industrial production, only some wool treatment had been experimented with (which had failed, though) (83). Snow storms and terrain which even his Toyota jeep could hardly master, illustrate the hardships, and for eating he only had some cookies, and snow for 'drinking' (which was the scene also accentuated in the filmic treatment of the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip discussed above) (87). Electricity had not yet arrived in this part of the PRC, and the first attempt at a power plant had failed. Thus, Kong Fansen tried to revive the power plant with organising funds. But he would also ask a locally respected *tulku* ('living buddha') about what he thought that one could do to develop the local economy, the latter notably suggesting to consider producing Tibetan medicine of which he was a practitioner, on an industrial scale. Kong Fansen supposedly took this up as an idea, that way also showing respect for local beliefs and practices (beyond the technical 'modernisation' attempts) (92–95). Kong Fansen's last trip, in turn, led him to Xinjiang – another minority border area, where obviously cadres met to exchange their experiences. On his way home to neighbouring Tibet, though, his driver unfortunately ran up against a rock, and Kong Fansen died in this car accident at only 50 years of age, the intended reading pupil learns (96–98).

Beyond the above life trajectory of Kong Fansen, the 'patriotic' booklet dedicates itself also to profile Kong Fansen as a model for incorruptibility for its intended young readers, which bespeaks the need of the time to show that cadres are models for the people, and that strict discipline in the Party was paramount to retain legitimacy. Thus, he is presented as never giving any preferential treatment to his family members or neighbours, disappointing many. Even when his staff tried to, he rejected every effort of pleasing him, let alone accepting any gifts. He would not even touch the offered cigarettes (a standard feature for male cadres) or remain for a meal with anyone (99–116). Thus, when he unfortunately died, he was mourned by many: part of his ashes was interred in the 'martyrs' cemetery' in Liaocheng, another in the 'martyrs' cemetery' in Lhasa (which shows that he 'belonged' to both Shandong and Tibet – and by extension to China at large) (117–119).

After his death, news reporters and TV teams took his case up, and books were quickly published, mainly driven by his home province Shandong, in part also Tibet, to tell of his exemplary life (153). From above, then-general secretary Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng praised him, and *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily) publicised him nationwide. His memorial hall in Liaocheng was quickly set up and opened

already months after his demise! It exhibited photos, some of his personal items (of the 1980s and 1990s!), and some documentary films. The exhibition provided a very emotional introduction with a focus on his burial and posthumous praise, to move on to his life in Shandong, then in Tibet, to finally display how the Tibetans in turn loved him.

His incorruptibility is a further profiled feature, and last not least the official praises by Party representatives define his merits for the Chinese citizen (122–123). (One may understand this practice as a kind of updated version of the old Chinese concept of final judgement on a person at the closing of the coffin, *gai guan lun ding* 蓋棺論定.) The name plaque of the brand-new Liaocheng memorial was written by Jiang Zemin, and the memorial obviously also served as a training ground for other memorials, since the director of the above-mentioned Wang Jinxi memorial also visited it to learn about the way Kong Fansen was presented (which shows that the memorials had connections between themselves and looked for 'best practice' examples). Even people from the 'religious sphere' are said to have been eager visitors (which hints at the engrained association of Tibet and religiosity). And a former colleague of Kong Fansen then living in the US is claimed to have come back just for seeing this exhibition, thus advertising the site for the intended young readers. While artists looked for inspiration to write songs, poems etc. on him, TV teams prepared for a TV series on Kong Fansen (whose life was also turned into a movie in 1996), and notably also prisoners serving their sentence (*fu xing de fanren* 服刑的犯人) (similar to the case of the Wang Jinxi memorial above) were said to have been led to the site to 'better' themselves on his model (126–128). (This, once more, shows that 'models' for the Chinese citizen are seen as particularly important for 'educating' prisoners – an idea incidentally already present with the GMD in Republican times as we observed also in chapter 3.2 of the present book.)

To bring Kong Fansen closer to the intended young reader of the 'patriotic' booklet, Kong Fansen's speeches in excerpts and some of his diary entries are reproduced as well (cf. also Wang Jinxi above), thus making him into another Lei Feng to some degree. The letters to his daughter (which supposedly should bring him closer to the intended young reader) are, however, full of admonitions and not very intimate (in fact, here emotions are strikingly absent), telling her instead how a good child should behave. His chronological biography makes clear, that he did not take his own family too much into consideration, so that when returning from Tibet to Beijing to report, he would not even wait for his elder daughter's imminent marriage but quickly departed again for Tibet (151). Thus, one might be sceptical that this overtly top-down 'paternalistic' approach will be popular with a young reader after all.

The *Fengbei* narrative (Zheng / Bai 2019), bringing this model personality's framing to Xi Jinping times, underlines, in turn, how quick the memorial had been set up: while Kong Fansen had died in late 1994, already in September of 1995 the memorial was opened, the name being inscribed by then-general secretary Jiang Zemin, who also wrote an endorsement clearly referencing and variegating Mao's famous praise of Lei Feng, writing 'learn from comrade Kong Fansen' (2). Interestingly, his life story is cast in the new 2019 description (and fittingly for the Xi Jinping era) rather into a Chinese version of the American dream, from a little peasant boy to an important cadre in the CCP, but one serving in the critical and demanding region of Tibet. Being incorrupt, full of love for the country, the collective, and socialism, and serving for 'ethnic unity', he is thrust into an ideal model not only for cadres to follow. That way, he had been also included in the meantime in 2009, like Wang Jinxi, among the '100 people' that 'moved China' since the establishment of New China, i.e., since 1949 (3–4). Like Lei Feng, he was recruited into the PLA in the early 1960s, and would come to understand that everyone had to serve at his place, as small as it may seem (and should accept this 'screw' role without regret, the intended reader is to conclude).

The 2019 narrative discloses that the old military commander and cadre whom Kong Fansen was to serve as a youngster, was, in fact, a veteran of the Korean War, and when Kong finally was trained by the PLA, he had to exercise much to throw hand grenades, being at first not very successful like Lei Feng, but willing to steel himself (5–6). (This, once more, enforces for the intended reading pupils the importance of basic military training which they have to undergo as well.) Beyond this, Kong Fansen's work and counselling in agriculture, care for the people's well-being, while teaching the villagers on ideological fronts with revolutionary songs as well, is to document his comprehensive approach when still in Shandong, joining concrete help with ideological training (7).

The main issue is, of course, also in this new framing of 2019 his service in Tibet, for which he is said to have volunteered. His riding accident when the Tibetans carried him to the hospital is picked up to argue for the intended reader that this caused Kong Fansen's gratitude towards the Tibetans for whom he wanted to serve ever since (9). That way, he was not 'governing' them, but 'serving' them as a moral obligation. Thus, after demonstrating in a traditional way his filial duty, kowtowing thrice in front of his mother in a more ritual than tearful way, as described in the less 'emotional' 2019 framing, he went once more to Tibet, caring for education, hygiene, and health there, treating the nomads with the medical knowledge he had learnt once when staying with the Korean War veteran. After an earthquake, he took in the already named three orphans, donating blood for raising money to feed them.

When there was a harsh winter in Ngari and many animals froze to death, he readily helped the populace with his own belongings, the intended reader is assured, but also organised relief. However, he tried to think of ways to strengthen the capacities of the Tibetans to cope with future problems themselves (evoking the Maoist 'do it yourself' motto) (11–14). When his wife came to visit him, it is stressed in the vein of the Xi Jinping-era anti-corruption agenda that he would not finance her trip, and he also gave nothing to his daughter who wanted to study (which should be a topic pertinent to the intended young readers), proving his impeccable record as a cadre (15).

To make up for his 'unfilial' leaving of his own mother, he would call himself the 'son of the people' (cf. Deng Xiaoping below who called himself 'son of China'), thus extending the concept of 'filial duty' to 'the people' at large. In particular, he would care for old Tibetan women as he would have done for his own mother (always having photographs taken to the avail). The old women, in turn, who embody the 'old-style' Tibetans, would call him a 'living bodhisattva', and thus he could educate them also ideologically to not thank Buddha or bodhisattvas, but via him the CCP, which the narrative thus also conveys to the intended reading pupils. Thus, these old people would come to understand that 'socialism is best', and that in the 'old society', no one would have looked after them in such a way! (16).

Although, like with Lei Feng, Kong Fansen's life seems unspectacular, the narrative suggests, he showed greatness in the small things of everyday life, and he, too, is credited with having written poems (which shows once more that literary activity is also part of what is expected from an outstanding personality, namely with poems that are considered the format expressing the innermost self best).

When his fatal car accident happened, the 2019 narrative points out, he not only had almost no money with him, but instead carried a plan of how to strengthen Ngari's economy! That way, at his death, not only the three Tibetan orphans wept for their benefactor, but also the Tibetans in that border region of the PRC readily acknowledged his many good deeds (17–18). In sum, the new 2019 narrative on Kong Fansen presents him less emotional than in the late 1990s, but in terms of content, the presentation largely keeps to the lines already set.

At my on-site visit (in 2017), Kong Fansen's Liaocheng memorial (similar to Wang Jinxi's memorial as noted above) featured a particularly impressive row of honorary plaques displayed in front (cf. chapter 1 of the present book, fig. 1.1), and the entrance hall showed a huge statue of him in front of the Tibetan mountains as a wall painting, with many wreaths put in front. (See fig. 5.3.2).

Fig. 5.3.2 Entrance hall of the Kong Fansen memorial: a statue of Kong Fansen in front of a Tibetan landscape painted on the wall, and many wreaths placed in front (Liaocheng) (photograph by the author, 2017)

Before entering the building itself, the visitor already encountered at the large entrance square of the memorial for Kong Fansen large mottos for which he is going to stand, namely prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity, friendship, which are, in fact, the 'core socialist values' as codified by the CCP in 2012.[285] That way, Kong Fansen, who had died many years before, was retroactively 'updated' according to a more recent ideological framing! The memorial's name written by Jiang Zemin notably included 'comrade' (though the memorial as listed in 1997 is without 'comrade').[286] Kong Fansen's life trajectory, in turn, was physically turned into a way to walk along,[287] and a red flame was to symbolise his ideological aspiration for the visitor.

285 These official English translations are provided on spot (though one might discuss some terms for their accuracy to represent the Chinese original).

286 That way, it was likely also easier for Jiang Zemin to propose to 'learn from *comrade* Kong Fansen', imitating Mao's call regarding learning from *comrade* Lei Feng.

287 One may recall that we encountered this device also in the case of the Anyang Yinxu museum (cf. chapter 2.1 in the present book) where the visitor is to walk along a timeline, though in that case backwards from the Xinhai Revolution up to the Shang.

In the entrance hall, among the wreaths of top politicians on the one side of his statue, and government and Party entities on the other, which all claimed they would like to 'learn from comrade Kong Fansen', the first one at the time of my visit (2017) was by Hu Jintao, former general secretary and key responsible for Tibet 1988–1992, i.e., during part of the second term Kong Fansen served there. The exhibition showed many photos, personal items, but also recreated rooms of his living, and cited his promise to dedicate himself to Tibet. Notably, he was said to have even educated the religious leaders there in 'patriotism' (while specific issues, let alone the Dalai Lama, were, of course, never addressed), and he appeared on photos, being interviewed by foreigners after the 'pacifying' of 'unrests' – a rare local mentioning of the fact that the situation in Tibet had not been so harmonious after all, which was no issue in the 'national' filmed or written narratives.[288] Being 'grateful' for the Tibetans' once carrying him to hospital (shown by a statue in the exhibition), he was rather presented as someone 'repaying' them by caring for them during particularly harsh winters, preventing hunger etc. (All such scenes were depicted at the wall, or shown by dioramas.) Stories like when he warmed the cold feet of elderly Tibetans in his lap were recreated as well in the exhibition. His medical coffer, and a scene showing him paternally teaching the Tibetan orphans, were to demonstrate his personal kindness. A box for savings with Mao's dictum that one needed to be frugal for making revolution (recalling the 'saving boxes' also mentioned by Lei Feng) also serve to prove his ideological correctness. After his death, his ashes were divided, as photos document, leaving some in the 'martyrs' cemetery' of Lhasa, but also having an honorary tomb in Ngari beyond his tomb in Shandong which received the other part of this ashes. The posthumous praises of the top CCP leaders endorsing him were on display as well, from Jiang Zemin over Li Peng and Li Ruihuan 李瑞环 (chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) to Qiao Shi 乔石 (chairman of the National People's Congress), all with calligraphies. A praise by Xi Jinping of 2010 had been duly added at the time of my visit, too. That way, Kong Fansen was highlighted as a modern example of a model CCP cadre who also served for 'ethnic unity' in a particularly sensitive border region, while the ethnic-religious tensions in that region, and the military ones at the frontiers are only carefully addressed in the exhibition for the on-site visitor.

288 Not the least in 1989, 30 years after the Dalai Lama fled to India, revolts in Tibet brewing since 1987 (when the Dalai Lama's proposal for more autonomy was rejected by the PRC government) climaxed, leading to the declaration of martial law. Kong Fansen had been tasked several times with showing foreign journalists around in Tibet, as several photos in the exhibition demonstrate.

In sum, this most recent 'role model' of Communist values shows that the presentation via extreme emotionalisation has given way to a more moralising and detached presentation, now focusing more on the incorruptibility of a cadre. Kong Fansen's appeal to children in an educational context is, however, hard to imagine, and it is even less likely that he will attract Chinese tourists. His place, even more than the one of Wang Jinxi, is thus one of guided visitors and cadres to be 'patriotically educated' there, and it is to assert the Chinese claims to the border regions, rather than advocating any 'minority perspective'.

Case study: Mao Zedong

While the above Communist models are mostly to represent particular groups of people, like Wang Jinxi as a worker, or Kong Fansen as a cadre, some key CCP leaders are singled out in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system as exemplary personalities. They should serve to help draw people into 'patriotic education' and prove that the top leaders lived out exemplary lives as well. By presenting their *guju*, their outstanding model personalities should also become more tangible and approachable for the normal Chinese citizen. The respective sites are thus presenting-presencing these CCP leaders. While there are several such leaders covered in the overall 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, pride of place goes evidently to Mao himself. Mao Zedong's home in Shaoshan 韶山 was the place whereto many Red Guards already flocked during the Cultural Revolution as a form of 'red pilgrimage' (like to Jinggangshan, see chapter 3.3 of the present book). Mao's Shaoshan home has been described repeatedly as a location for tourism and 'pilgrimage' in scholarship,[289] but less so as a part of 'patriotic education', functioning as a 'showcase base', which will be our focus here. The **Shaoshan Mao Zedong tongzhi jinianguan (guju)** 韶山毛泽东同志纪念馆(故居) (Shaoshan memorial hall (former home) of Comrade Mao Zedong) (Hunan Province) was, of course, immediately listed when the first batch of 'patriotic education showcase bases' was nominated in 1997.

At the time of my visit (in 2013), the exhibition focused on Mao, the man, and his family (though among his wives, not only the Hunanese Yang Kaihui 杨开慧, but also He Zizhen 贺子珍 whom he married in Jinggangshan – cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book – were mentioned on spot, not naming, though, his last wife Jiang Qing 江青, neither the technically first wife according to local custom whom Mao

289 To name but one example: Han (2001).

never accepted). Beyond the former home near the 'memorial hall', the site included also further nearby buildings, namely the Mao clan and lineage ancestor shrines, and also the out-of-town Dishuidong 滴水洞 villa Mao had built for himself in the early 1960s, supposedly earthquake-proof, and complete with anti-radiation air shelter (added 1970).[290] The place is in a valley with not only a water reservoir to swim in, and a pleasant surrounding – but also well-covered and not easy to be spied on, since rather hidden from air view. Mao himself only shortly lived there in the summer of 1966, letting the Cultural Revolution gain speed – see below.[291] Of that time in 1966, Mao's table for table tennis is displayed there (which may evoke in this more 'political' place the association of the ping-pong diplomacy of some years later to start warming ties with the US). In sum, this villa, has a clearly stately aura, contrasting with the simple local Hunanese 'former home' in Shaoshan village itself. The exhibition at Mao's former school or at his home, in turn, evaded everything 'negative' that Mao recalled about his youth, namely physical abuse, rather arguing positively that Mao 'never forgot' his former classmates, neighbours etc. The room in his home where he 'launched the peasant movement' in 1925, and the table where he 'wrote his investigation of the peasants in 1927' (all reconstructed) were shown to the visitor to render these 'Shaoshan moments' in Mao's life connected to the revolution more tangible. Given Mao's stated conflictual relationship with his father, one notes that the photos on display only show the mother, and Mao's own first 'family' with Yang Kaihui and the two sons, Mao Anying 毛岸英 and Mao Anqing 毛岸青 (who, however, did not grow up in Shaoshan). Agricultural tools, in turn, were to evoke Mao's own normal village peasant life as a child. Outside, a broad square had been set up which featured a large statue of Mao (of 1993, at the 100th anniversary of his birth – see below), and the main ancestor hall included the (clearly new) 'spirit tablets' of the Mao clan, though this building had also served for an evening school for peasants in the mid-1920s and as a place for Mao Anying to stay when visiting in 1950 in the first months of the PRC on behalf of his father to 'look after Shaoshan' (see below).

290 This was likely in the context of the fear of a possible nuclear confrontation. In 1969, the border conflict with the Soviet Union was driving the fear of China's having both superpowers of the time as enemies, motivating the turn to ease tensions with the US. One may note that also Lin Biao, Mao's 'crown prince' until 1971, had a similarly secret villa built for himself with high security standards and anti-radiation shelter, in his case at West Lake near Hangzhou. It features an impressive underground construction with complete facilities, bespeaking the leadership's very real fear of war around 1970.

291 Interestingly, the later ill-fated reformer Hu Yaobang was the first to use it, even before Mao himself, in 1963, as is disclosed on spot. Cf. also Suettinger (2024: 149) who notes that he was sent there to rest a few days because of health problems while serving as the local Party secretary.

That way, the local and personal was merged with the ideological and national in display to present the local model figure of national dimension for 'patriotic' visitors today.

In filmic representation of this 'patriotic' first list site of 1997, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 6), produced by Hunan TV's societal education centre in 1998, first of all praises the beautiful mountains around Shaoshan as a background to understand Mao, the great man coming from this locality, and it shows Westerners visiting with curiosity the former home (*guju*) of Mao, the Shaoshan figure of world fame. The audience is told that the exhibition space had been established in 1964 (in Mao's lifetime), but in 1983, i.e., after Mao's death (and after the CCP's official decision on his evaluation in the Resolution on Party History of 1981),[292] it was opened for tourists in general in the form of a 'memorial', named by Deng Xiaoping, his successor, 'Mao Zedong tongzhi jinianguan' (Comrade Mao Zedong Memorial Hall) (which conforms to many other cases of 'comrades' and does notably not apply his 'chairman' or *zhuxi* 主席 title so commonly used in his lifetime). Beyond the tourists, including foreigners, also Chinese military marching in for 'study' is shown to suggest the broader educational use of this site for Chinese citizens beyond mere tourism. The commentator tells the TV audience that in his youth, Mao was inspired by late Qing reformer Zheng Guanying 郑观应 (1842–1922) to seek a way for the Chinese nation to survive (which thrusts Mao into a more 'nationalist' figure), and thus he decided that he should go on studying at any cost. When Mao 'parted' from home (intending his leave in 1910 for study), he left to his father a well-known poem to declare his determination for doing so (while his father had been against it, but nothing is said in this film clip for 'patriotic' education about the bad father–son relationship Mao himself claimed to have held, nor that this poem was de facto a minor variation on a famous Japanese poem – see below, nor that Mao de facto did come back during vacations also for some time afterwards). Particular stress is put instead on Mao's family members who would be 'martyred' for the Communist cause later. These family 'martyrs' who are to underline that also Mao had to sacrifice very personally, are represented by statues in the exhibition: his two younger brothers Mao Zemin 毛泽民 (executed by warlord Sheng Shicai 盛世才 in 1943 – see chapter 3.2 of the present book for the Urumqi 'martyrs' cemetery') and Mao Zetan 毛泽覃 (killed in action 1935), his (adopted) sister Mao Zejian 毛泽建 (executed by the GMD in 1929), his (second) wife Yang Kaihui (executed by the

292 Cf. 'Guanyu jianguo yilai dang de ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi' (1981) or the English translation by the Wilson Center: 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China' (n.d.).

GMD in 1930), and his son Mao Anying (killed in the Korean War in 1950 – cf. chapter 4.1 on the Korean War Memorial in the present book), as well as his nephew Mao Chuxiong 毛楚雄 (the only son of Mao Zetan, who would be killed by the GMD in 1946).

Beyond Mao's own family, the film clip stresses also the many local people from Shaoshan who would lose their lives for the revolution, too. Given this background, Mao's positive revolutionary connection to Shaoshan is pointed out to the Chinese TV audience for the time after he had 'left' his home (in 1910). When he briefly returned to Shaoshan in 1921, he was already a Communist. And when Mao returned home once more in 1925 and again in 1927, the general Mao clan ancestral hall, which is also part of today's 'patriotic' site, was made to serve for revolutionary peasant activities. Beyond Mao's revolutionary zeal, the film clip puts also a stress on the topic of frugality and incorruptibility, showing how simply Mao lived, to be proven by old pyjamas and broken slippers on display (see also below). The potential viewing tourist is also alerted in the TV film clip to the fact that in 1990, several of Mao's personal items from his Beijing home in Zhongnanhai 中南海 were transferred back to Shaoshan, and that a recreation of Mao's living quarters in Zhongnanhai can be seen as a further attraction. A Swiss Omega wrist watch which the noted intellectual Guo Moruo had given as a present to Mao during the 1945 Chongqing negotiations between the GMD and the CCP to prevent Civil War, is a further object focused upon, by this linking Guo Moruo and Mao closely as 'friends' (and explaining how Mao, the frugal, came to have such a foreign luxury item that he supposedly honoured 'out of frienship'). Even when living far away, Mao is said to have never stopped caring for his natal Shaoshan and its people, though. (Notably, nothing is said on Mao's later personal life in this TV film clip, including his later wives, in this Hunan / Shaoshan-centred narrative, though one may safely assume that Chinese viewers are in the know about it.) Nonetheless, the national TV audience is assured, he would never grant any privileges to his Shaoshan relatives: to prove the point, one of Mao's relatives is shown as still living a simple peasant's life in Shaoshan, caring for his crops. Finally, for the site's present use, soldiers and children are presented, swearing loyalty in front of Mao's statue which had been revealed (for the 100th anniversary of Mao's birth in 1993) by Jiang Zemin, the then-general secretary. As the commentary points out, Shaoshan also added further facilities to the memorial hall in the meantime, like a Mao Zedong library etc., to broaden the location's use and appeal in the modern era.

In contrast to the above national TV film clip, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 8) (calling the site Mao's '*guju* and *jinianguan*'), directed at pupils and produced by Hunan's audio-visual education entity in 1999, features a slightly

different take on Mao's Shaoshan family relations: introducing Mao's mother (who was not dealt with in the 'patriotic' *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip), she is said to have been the one to educate Mao on moral and emotional fronts to care for others! This likely is to suggest to the intended viewing pupils that Mao's relationship to his family was important and benign (circumnavigating the problems in his relationship with his father by focusing on the mother). It also shows the nearest-by place where he went to school (again circumventing Mao's not too happy memories of schooling there). The narrative explains to the intended watching pupils that young Mao loved to read classical novels like the *Xiyouji* 西游记 (Journey to the West) or *Shuihuzhuan* 水浒传 (Water Margin), and particularly liked stories about popular rebellions. When he had to quit school, he would learn in the fields on his own, but in the evening made also accounts for his father. Although his father did not want him to go on studying, he was determined to go for more education, referring also here to late Qing reformer Zheng Guanying as well as the saying circulating widely among reform-oriented people at his time, that it is the responsibility of every individual to care for the nation,[293] and thus one should not just stay home and care about one's own family. In 1910, Mao thus left Shaoshan for further study and at the time read reformer Liang Qichao's 梁启超 formerly published journal *Xinmin congbao* 新民丛报 (New Citizen) avidly. In 1921, when Mao came back to Shaoshan (after the death of both parents), he had already become a Communist and is said to have 'revolutionised' his family at this stay. He had also found a partner in the meantime in his (technically second) wife Yang Kaihui (also in this video evading to name the first local wife whom Mao later said to have never really taken in as such).[294] The family members of Mao who would subsequently die as 'martyrs' of 'the cause' are also introduced in this educational video with their statues. In 1925 at his next stay at home, Mao recruited several locals to form a Shaoshan branch of the CCP, the viewing pupils learn. A first

293 This saying, here quoted as *guojia xingwang, pifu you ze* 国家兴亡，匹夫有责 (rise and fall of the nation-state is the responsibility of everyone), is based on 17th century scholar Gu Yanwu's 顾炎武 *Rizhilu* 日知录 (Records of daily (gains in) knowledge), though coined more tersly by Liang Qichao. However, Gu Yanwu's longer saying explicitly differentiated between *guo* (understood as a *dynasty* which may change) and *tianxia* 天下 (all under heaven which is what the individual is called upon to protect), and Liang Qichao's shortened phrasing kept the broad *tianxia* (leaving aside the *guo*): 天下兴亡，匹夫有责 *tianxia xingwang, pifu you ze*. The replacement of *tianxia* by *guojia* (nation-state) as the object of the individual's responsibility is therefore a quite telling 'nationalist' move here.

294 Formally, Mao had been married in the traditional way in around 1908 but never cared about this wife who also died soon thereafter (cf. *Mao Zedong nianpu* 1993, vol 1: 6, based on Mao's account to Edgar Snow). In this sense, Yang Kaihui was Mao's first 'real' wife, but technically she was the second wife. See also the genealogy of Mao in Pantsov / Levine (2012: 589).

evening school for peasants was set up in the general Mao clan ancestor hall, where Yang Kaihui also taught. (Incidentally, like in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip, as a sound track, the piano concert *Dongfang hong* 东方红 or 'the East is red' can be heard meanwhile, so closely identified with Mao, the 'red sun' to be, to also trigger an audio association in the audience.)

For the 'patriotically' listed site, the educational video explains to the intended watching pupils that the Shaoshan 'memorial hall' (*jinianguan*) was, in fact, first called 'Mao Zedong tongzhi *jiuju chenlieguan*' 毛泽东旧居陈列馆 (*Exhibition hall* of Comrade Mao Zedong's *old* residence) (see also below). Only later (after Mao's death), Deng Xiaoping would rename it as the 'memorial hall' it is ever since: 'Mao Zedong tongzhi *jinianguan*'. This 'memorial hall' was built, the watching pupils are told, in 'Suzhou style', and more details about Mao's life also after his time at Shaoshan are provided in this educational video. His displayed broken slippers of 1966 are explained as the ones he wore when back in Shaoshan (de facto in the out-of-town Dishuidong villa) for the last time. In the early 1990s (i.e., when his personal belongings were moved to Shaoshan from Beijing), an exhibition on his personal items, all simple and worn out, was shown in Shaoshan. However, in the more consumer-friendly atmosphere of the 1990s, it was notably stressed in this context that Mao did not reject new clothing as such, but that he did so only out of consideration of the poverty of China at the time and because he wanted to keep his simple Shaoshan peasant life-style. This prepares the intended viewing pupils for the (more lavish) villa at Dishuidong where Mao stayed at his last (secret) visit to Shaoshan (in 1966) which is briefly shown in the educational video, while a stelae forest with Mao's poems is a more recent addition to the Shaoshan site to show the man's larger legacy (and his cultured side). A memorial park which contained, e.g., a rebuilt Nanhu 南湖 boat scene (where the first CCP Party Congress was secretly concluded after the police had searched the Shanghai location of the First Party Congress – see chapter 3.3 of the present book), or the scene of crossing the Luding 泸定 bridge in Sichuan (as a purported dramatic moment during the Long March), and the iconic pagoda of Yan'an had been added outdoor as well, thus didactically recalling important phases in Mao's life beyond Shaoshan to stand for his trajectory at large. A ceremony for swearing loyalty to the Party in front of Mao's statue concludes also this educational video to document the Shaoshan site's recent use for the intended viewing pupils to serve by then for the formation of ideologically firm Chinese citizens.

Beyond the above filmic representations of the Shaoshan site for the general TV public and for the pupils in class, the 'patriotic' booklet, directed at young readers and of the same time of the late 1990s, is (predictably) the longest of all in the

whole series of the (first list) '100 patriotic education showcase bases', as Mao has always received pride of place, filling over 200 pages (Tian et al. 1998). As the afterword makes clear, its parts had been assigned to different authors: one writing the general outline of Mao's life, another writing most of the rest, while Tian Yuliang 田余粮 as the main editor composed the more specific part on the local exhibition contents (213). In fact, one notices that the information at times overlaps, though sometimes one author discloses things another did not when addressing the same topic. Fittingly for the 'patriotic' booklet series, Mao is claimed as China's 'greatest patriot', but the narrative framing of Mao focuses, above all, on his local relation to Shaoshan, thus mainly addressing his youth and the few later visits to his place of birth. As mentioned, the listing of the place is not under the *guju* category, but it is labelled as a 'memorial hall' (*jinianguan*) which was first built in 1964 aside the former house (*jiuju* 旧居 or *guju* 故居, depending on the time – see below) (though, as pointed out above, at the time it was understandably not yet called a 'memorial' in Mao's lifetime but an 'exhibition hall', erected at a time when the personality cult around Mao neared its climax). His former house is however part of the 'patriotically' listed site, as are some other places in physical vicinity connected to Mao: the central and general Mao clan ancestor hall where, e.g., he had set up a peasant evening school briefly, or the village school he himself first studied in.[295]

Notably, while his former house is today called his *guju*, it had been labelled for several years during Mao's lifetime in the 1960s and 1970s his *jiuju* 旧居. This alternative term of 'old home' carries a less respectable connotation, since *jiu* is basically something to be replaced by *xin* 新 (new). Interestingly, it had been no one else than Liu Shaoqi who is said to have 'advised' during a 1961 visit to Shaoshan the use of *jiuju* when he saw the label of *guju* at the house itself (arguing it was not fitting for someone alive) (188). Given that before the time of Liu's visit, Mao had already been back to Shaoshan himself, namely in June 1959 in the midst of the Great Leap Forward campaign, after three decades of absence, and thus had personally checked on the site before – in fact, even taking a photo in front of his former home which clearly displayed the naming 'Mao Zedong tongzhi *guju*', by this de facto sanctioning the usage –,[296] Liu's boldness to suggest 'correcting' the naming of his (by then) political rival's home is rather striking. (It might be recalled that Mao had to step back for some time into the second line officially, due to the disastrous consequences of the Great Leap Forward, his pet project. Liu Shaoqi, in turn, who had already taken over the official role of chairman of the PRC, was

295 The single 'sub-sites' and their spatial arrangement can be conveniently gleaned from *Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* (1999: 62).

296 The photo appears, e.g., in *Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* (1999: 62).

moving to the frontline and was at the height of his influence in the early 1960s.) Although Liu's own home – see below – was termed a *jiuju* too, this 'correction' could signal that Liu tried to 'level' Mao down to the 'usual'. Another politically important visitor, Deng Xiaoping, came in 1973 during his short half-rehabilitation in that phase of the Cultural Revolution and is commemorated in the Shaoshan context as having stressed that the place should show 'history' (189), i.e., should not alter the past according to current politics (another astonishingly critical remark for the time). This in part had to do with the fact that Deng Xiaoping had had close connections earlier to Mao's youngest brother, Mao Zetan, who died in 1935 as a 'martyr' of the cause,[297] whose home this in the end was too (see also below)! And Deng was of course aware that the site, a top 'red pilgrimage' site during the Cultural Revolution and beyond, was targeting and 'educating' masses of visitors daily. The provided narrative thus was of social relevance – which hints at the sensitivity of how to present this Mao site, and how to present the various phases of Party history there at a given time.

The 'patriotic' booklet leads the intended young reader of the late 1990s (and thereafter, i.e., in any case growing up after Mao's death) more closely into the youth of Mao, following the official Mao biography as set in the 1990s.[298] It also makes clear that while Mao was born in 1893 in Shaoshan, he de facto first lived in the neighbouring county Xiangxiang 湘乡 with his maternal relatives who very obviously also played an important role during his childhood and youth repeatedly, providing him with the very first education, too. Only in 1902 did he come back to Shaoshan. As is well known, Mao later complained about physical abuse by his father (and some teachers at the village schools he then went to, frequently changing between them) and rebelled. Most of the information on his young years are, one should point out, based on his own accounts he gave in the 1930s in Northern Shaanxi to American leftist journalist Edgar Snow who made this known in his bestseller *Red Star over China*, which defined the image of Mao, the man, in the West and beyond.[299] Mao's memories of Shaoshan are thus not always the warmest, though he obviously was attached to his mother. When his teachers, if still

297 For Deng's and Mao Zetan's relationship in a hindsight perspective, their common 'problems' in the Central Soviet of Ruijin (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book), supporting Mao Zedong when the latter was criticised, were decisive. Mao, in turn, would remember this support and cooperation with his youngest brother later (Pantsov / Levine 2015: 91–95). Mao Zetan had not been allowed to join the Long March and died when fighting in the rear in 1935.

298 For the biography, apparently the main information was drawn from the official chronological biography: *Mao Zedong nianpu 1893–1949* (1993).

299 For a detailed evalution of the image of Mao that emerged via Snow, see Ishikawa (2022).

alive, were interviewed later in the times of the PRC,[300] they (and some interviewed former classmates) unsurprisingly all testified to Mao's extraordinary diligence and talent as a young pupil – less to his rebellious spirit. Apart from some spurious stories about his early 'revolutionary' and 'class-conscious' behaviour, he obviously was trained in calligraphy and ancient history (including warfare tactics), which remained two of his favourite topics, beyond the usual Confucian morality lessons. During the last years of the Qing, he followed his teachers' evaluations and admired 19th century leading Han officials like Zuo Zongtang or Zeng Guofan 曾国藩 who were actually opposed to the Taiping Movement he would later highly acclaim. For more ancient times, the young readers are told that Mao particularly liked the classical historical accounts of the *Zuozhuan* 左转 (the Zuo tradition) and the *Shiji* 史记 (Records of the scribe), as well as the later Ming-era synopsis of history by Wang Shizhen 王世貞, but also Song-era Zhu Xi's 朱熹 history work *Tongjian gangmu* 通鉴纲目 (Outline and details of the comprehensive mirror (in aid of government)), and Gu Yanwu's 顾炎武 *Rizhilu* 日知录 (Records of daily (gains in) knowledge) which broadly discussed all sorts of topics that this versatile 17th century thinker studied. Therewith, a way of reading history and a set of values are suggested to modern pupils as well. At the time of the final years of the Qing, the contemporary reformists Kang Youwei 康有为 and Liang Qichao 梁启超 were on Mao's hero list then, too, the intended young reader learns (21).

Apart from intellectual study, Mao, however, also advocated bodily activities, himself being fond of swimming. To him, both mind and body should be educated and strengthened, which also turned into his later credo for educational policies (though this educational approach had not been invented by the Chinese Communists).[301] Still, this is far from the former educational pattern which regarded intellectual activities as decidedly superior to physical ones. Physical strength, Mao concluded, was also needed when fighting against odds. Furthermore, the booklet claims that Mao was also strongly influenced by the rebellious history of his home province Hunan, be it secret society-led upheavals, or normal people who, if not choosing suicide when hunger stroke, turned violent as he once witnessed in his youth himself (13–14). Thus, Mao appears as someone predisposed to rather rebel than to acquiesce to adverse circumstances.

300 In 1960, a specific round of interviews with 'old Shaoshan-ites' was conducted and published.

301 The most active ideological proponents of the need to combine head and hand in Chinese education had been first the anarchists, following up on Kropotkin. (See Müller 2001.) The GMD would institutionalise this accent on sports and physical education in a rather militarist way, following up on the Japanese example since Meiji times. The PRC kept this, following up on Soviet examples. Up to this day, the military training component in Chinese education is a notable feature.

While his father hoped to see his son work in the fields, which he did for three years (with the vegetable garden Mao is said to have cared for still shown near his former home),[302] and then to learn accounting, when the father became a wealthier peasant over time, Mao tried to get further chances to study, by then in a more modern style, and pressured his father to fund him. In spite of Mao's negative description of his father later, the latter (and his maternal relatives) obviously funded him through much of his further education nonetheless. With an oft-cited poem (in fact a slight variation on a Japanese famous poem, which is however wrongly attributed by the 'patriotic' booklet),[303] Mao took leave from his father and Shaoshan in 1910 to first go to the neighbouring county Xiangxiang and his maternal relatives there again, promising to return only when having successfully accomplished his studies (26–27). This is the moment usually described as his 'leaving home'. His hero list during that period of more Western-style education became accordingly more Western-style, too: Napoleon, Washington, Lincoln, but also Peter the Great (28). At that time, he also befriended Xiao Yu 萧瑜 (Yu Siao) – who would write in the late 1950s critically from abroad about Mao, the former friend of his youth,[304] who had by then turned into a hailed Communist figure of world fame – and his younger brother Emi Siao (Xiao San 萧三) who would continue to support the Communist Mao and wrote on Mao's youth very differently, serving as the official version on the topic during the early PRC.[305]

302 Obviously, this 'break' in his school formation at an age many youths would be supposed to start working also coincided with the end of the imperial examination system (1905) which also called into question the further feasibility of his traditional-style education available near his home.

303 While the booklet (Tian et al. 1998: 26) claims the original to be of Saigô Takamori 西鄉隆盛, i.e., one of the 'heroes' of the Meiji 'Restoration' (or rather renewal, *ishin* 維新), it was de facto a widely known poem by pro-imperial Buddhist monk Gesshô 月性 of late Edo times, like Saigô Takamori a 'man of high purpose' (*shishi* 志士). For an English translation of Gesshô's poem, see Fraleigh (2009: 132).

304 Xiao Yu's (Siao 1959) *Mao Tse-tung and I Were Beggars* had been written, as the preface makes clear, on the suggestion of the well-known Chinese liberal author Lin Yutang 林语堂 who influenced the image of China in the West via his English-language works from the 1930s to the 1950s and was dismayed by the Communist rule of China. At the time of the book's publication, Xiao Yu had moved to Montevideo. While the book is critical of Communism and several of Mao's character traits and deeds, it stops short of an outright 'reckoning' with Mao, his former friend. One may also point out that Xiao Yu's brother (Xiao San) who opted for the Communists, lived in the PRC at that time.

305 Emi Siao (Xiao San) published his almost hagiographic biography of young Mao in Chinese in 1949 just at the start of the PRC (*Mao Zedong tongzhi de qingshaonian shidai* 毛澤東同志的青少年時代). This was soon translated into various languages as a sort of official version. One may conclude that Xiao Yu's critical publication was also a reaction to his younger brother's (Communist) narrative. Xiao Yu was closer in age to Mao and his main friend in the 1910s, but in the 1920s parted ways with him.

After his leave in 1910, Mao returned to Shaoshan only sporadically.[306] During the Xinhai revolution he briefly joined the Army (34), but then went on to study with the Xiao (Siao) brothers in Changsha, capital of Hunan province, to become a primary school teacher, a job he would only briefly take up later in 1919 to teach his favourite subject of history (49). Meanwhile he had become active in politically interested circles and left Hunan for the first time to go to Bejing in 1918, where he briefly worked in the library of Beijing University to finance himself, not being able to join the work-study programme in France, though several of his friends went, namely his fellow Hunanese Cai Hesen 蔡和森 who would become an important figure on Mao's way to Marxism.[307] Passing through Shanghai, Mao returned to Hunan thereafter and wrote for radical publications which brought him to the negative attention of the warlord Zhang Jingyao 张敬尧 having the say in Hunan at the time, which necessitated a second move to Beijing in late 1919, to only come back to Hunan in 1920 after the warlord had been pressured out of Hunan (56–58). By that time, his mother had died without her eldest son, Mao Zedong, arranging for her funeral (though writing a eulogy for her),[308] and his father died soon after in early 1920, once more without the eldest son being there in Shaoshan.[309] At the time, Mao was in the midst of his turn toward Marxism and Communism to which his Hunan friends by then studying in France strongly contributed, namely Cai Hesen. Mao and his youngest brother, Mao Zetan, lived in Changsha at the time, while the house in Shaoshan and the parents' burials had been cared for by his middle brother Mao Zemin and the latter's (first) wife (62). Mao, the booklet explains, answered the plight of his brother Mao Zemin for help by briefly returning to Shaoshan in early 1921, where he then simply suggested to leave the women (i.e., Mao Zemin's wife and baby,[310] and the adopted sister of Mao) behind in Shaoshan, and thus all three Mao brothers left the Shaoshan house for living in Changsha (with the adopted sister Mao Zejian, in fact by birth a cousin, later moving there, too) (66).

306 According to the booklet, in the years of his studies in Hunan, he returned during holidays, though (87).

307 For the work-study programme, set up by Chinese anarchists, see Baley (1988), Levine (1993), and Müller (2001).

308 Interestingly, the booklet suggests Mao did not come back when informed of his beloved mother's death. The *Mao Zedong nianpu* (1993, vol. 1: 45-46), however, claims he did after her death in October and cites the eulogy he in any case wrote.

309 The chronological biography affirms his non-return for the case of his less beloved father who died in January 1920, i.e., just about three months after the mother (*Mao Zedong nianpu* 1993, vol. 1: 52). In any case, the parents' common burial was not officiated by Mao.

310 The named daughter Mao Yuanzhi 毛远志 is elsewhere claimed to have been born in 1923 only, while in 1921 it was the son Mao Huachu 毛华初 who was born. The children obviously remained with their mother in Shaoshan until the bloody end of the United Front in 1927.

Only in 1925, Mao, by now a Hunan Communist married to Yang Kaihui since winter 1920/1921,[311] and his brothers would return to the home in Shaoshan again where Mao started his investigation into the peasant situation to start a peasant movement there. At this time, the First United Front between the GMD and the CCP was underway, and Mao wanted to mobilise the peasants against the land owners (67). For this, peasant education in evening schools was set up in various Mao ancestor halls in the Shaoshan area which are to this day shown as cultural heritage of the revolution (rather than just as ancestor halls of the Mao clan) and are technically considered part of the 'patriotically' listed 'showcase base'.[312] The strategy of using popular theatre plays to reach the mostly illiterate peasant audience to 'rouse their class consciousness' was tested in Shaoshan, too, and the booklet claims that this was an important contribution of Shaoshan to the Communist cause since Mao managed to secretly recruit several people into the CCP via his family ties and local networks in the area during this stay (70). In fact, it is repeatedly stressed that several of the Shaoshan locals were 'martyred' for the Communist cause, thus proving Shaoshan's particular contribution to the Communist revolution (which Mao also acknowledged later in PRC times in a poem).

Mao's activities at the time are said to have profited also the Shaoshan poor, since they were successfully agitated to 'fight back' any unjust treatment by the landlords. However, the local warlord at the time, Zhao Hengti 赵恒惕, did not appreciate the trouble created, and Mao thus had a narrow escape, the intended young reader learns (73). (Incidentally, Liu Shaoqi, in turn, would be landed in prison by Zhao Hengti later that year – see below.) Still, the progressing Northern Expedition of the United Front times to unify China which took off from Guangdong Province in the South in 1926, soon reached Guangdong's neighbouring province Hunan, and thus the already mobilised peasants started to attack the landlords also physically, parading them with high hats around as would become a staple also in later campaigns of the Communists up to the Cultural Revolution.[313] Since criticism of the radical 'peasant movement' in Hunan was mounting, Mao undertook an 'investigation' in early 1927 to once again return to Shaoshan and its neighbouring counties. Obviously, he not only 'investigated' at that time, but even pushed for more radicalism, openly advocating the physical

311 The date of marriage is not perfectly clear: Yang Kaihui later dated it only roughly. Cf. *Mao Zedong nianpu* (1993, vol. 1: 76).

312 Apart from the main centrally placed general Mao clan ancestor hall, there were several minor halls for the single lineages.

313 Cf. Perry (2002) on such continuities in Communist 'emotional work' for mobilising 'the masses'.

liquidation of 'evil' landlords (75), and gave his famous speech on 'revolution is not a dinner party', calling for armament of the peasants. At that time, he also lived for the first time in Dishuidong near Shaoshan, where he would later have himself a villa built, while using his former home for meetings (76). After this stay in early 1927, the First United Front would soon end in bloody disaster for the Communists, and Mao would only return to his native Shaoshan again over three decades later in PRC times in 1959, then as China's paramount leader.

In a physical sense, the 'memorial hall', which is the place listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base' (but with the 'former home' added in brackets), has been built, as mentioned, in 1964, aside Mao's former home. At that time of mounting Mao adoration, his 'thought' was to be represented by architectonically giving it a 'village-style' appearance outside, with a 'city-style' internally (81).[314] Guo Moruo, Mao's 'intellectual friend' and head of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, was the one to be assigned to write the name which at the time was 'Mao Zedong tongzhi *jiu*ju chenlieguan' 毛泽东同志旧居陈列馆 (Exhibition hall of Comrade Mao Zedong's *old* residence) which on one hand signalled the temporary sanctioned term of *jiuju* (cf. Liu Shaoqi's 1961 comment against *guju*), but on the other also that the former home was actually perceived as the authenticating centre. Only in 1982 after Mao's death, the exhibition hall was renamed as a 'memorial hall', with the plaque now written by the new strongman, Deng Xiaoping, and the 'former home' (once again termed *guju*) subsumed and administered by it (82). Subsequently, as mentioned, a great number of Mao's personal items of his Beijing Zhongnanhai home were also transferred to Shaoshan which, in turn, also fit well with the new appraisal of Mao as founding father of the PRC, but also as someone with problematic aspects, as the 1981 Party resolution on its history had laid out with the 70% good, 30% bad formula (copied from the Soviet Union's evaluation of Stalin). The move of his paraphernalia to Shaoshan thus showed a Mao localised and cut down again to human size after the apotheosis of the 1960s and 1970s. In 1991, the next upcoming leader, Jiang Zemin, visited Shaoshan and returned for the centenary of Mao's birth in 1993, leaving as his imprint, in turn, the large bronze statue of Mao to inscribe himself into this key place.

Like the 'memorial hall', the *guju*, as the former home was called again after Mao's death, had its new name plaque written by Deng Xiaoping as well, who thus visually dominated this site of his 'predecessor' with his handwriting. Originally, only one side of the building where Mao had lived in his youth was, in fact, of the Mao family, while another family owned the other side, though Mao's father, when

314 This was to refer to his famous tactic of 'using the countryside to encircle the cities'.

becoming wealthier, added more rooms to the Mao family wing. After Mao had moved his younger brothers out there in 1921, neighbours would finally move in, until the GMD confiscated the house in 1929 when Mao was already a blacklisted revolutionary.[315] This means that most of the Mao family's original furniture etc. was forever lost, though some pieces are said to have been preserved (i.e., used in the meantime) by some locals and were 'handed back' after 1949 (when Mao had become the paramount leader) (86). The rest was substituted by 'originally-like' ones. Authentification was provided by Mao's 1959 visit when he inspected 'every room of the *guju*' (87). (When he returned for the last time to Shaoshan in 1966, he, however, came clandestinely and lived in out-of-town Dishuidong, not entering his *guju* – or rather by then his *jiuju* – again.)

Apart from the 'former home', also Mao's nearby first Shaoshan school is part of the 'patriotic' site today, as mentioned. The pond behind where he liked to swim is also included. Although Mao had not the best memories of his early schooling, given the frequent beatings, the exhibition placed there and described to the intended young readers of the booklet in the late 1990s did not dwell on this aspect but was rather designed to present Mao as a family man, i.e. with his own children, although they hardly ever stayed in the *guju* nor went to school in Shaoshan, nor was Mao 'successful' as a family man in any meaningful sense (89).[316] The various Mao clan ancestor halls (the general Mao clan hall as well as those of the single lineages), in turn, are also considered part of the 'patriotic' site, especially the general clan ancestor hall physically close to Mao's former home. In this clan ancestor hall, Mao's eldest son by Yang Kaihui, Mao Anying, would also briefly stay when he visited Shaoshan in 1950 (before he went to Korea where he died in the Korean War) (91). Although ancestor halls were per se not appreciated by the Communists, the sites survived due to their having served as locations for the peasant movement, and thus were put under protection during the Cultural Revolution. In the 1990s, in turn, when 'filial behaviour' was once again officially appreciated in a neo-traditionalist vein, even Mao was notably (if uneasily) reframed as a 'filial' son (in spite of his purported hefty clashes with his father) (91–92). The specific ancestor hall of Mao's personal lineage (which he had also used for the peasant movement), somewhat more distant from the 'former home', is included today as well in the listed 'patriotic' site. Notably, when Mao visited Shaoshan in 1959, the intended young reader of

315 The details are not exactly clear since apparently Mao Zemin's first family still lived there up to 1927. Possibly, the neighbours moving in mainly referred to the period of 1927 to 1929 then.

316 Mao neither took particular care of his younger siblings (none of them lived into the PRC) nor of his wives or his children, only partly to be explained by the revolutionary circumstances. Only his youngest daughter Li Na 李讷 (born in 1940 by his last wife Jiang Qing), grew up with him.

the booklet learns that he was 'sad' to see his own family ancestors' tablets all burnt in the consequence of the Communist anti-superstition campaigns of the 1950s. According to him then, these were not representing superstition, but rather signs of remembrance – leaving an ambivalent impression to the intended young reader of the booklet (93). After all, it was also him who had advocated to do away with superstition around the siting of tombs when lecturing the peasants in Shaoshan in another lineage ancestor hall belonging to the larger Mao clan back in 1927! (95). That way, apparently, his definition of superstition depended on the time and at whom it was directed, the reader concludes.

During the Cultural Revolution in 1967, when otherwise statues were smashed around the country in the 'destroy the Four Olds' campaign (which in theory asked for replacing the 'four olds' with 'for news'), Hunan erected a new stone statue for young Mao at Shaoshan which was by then graced with a railway station (to facilitate travels to this key ideological 'red pilgrimage' destination), significantly not showing Mao as a peasant, but in a scholar's robe as was the use in propaganda posters of the Cultural Revolution, representing young Mao.[317] At the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1993, then-general secretary Jiang Zemin, in turn, revealed a new bronze statue of Mao opposite the *guju* to inscribe himself in this key place. (One may recall that also Sun Yat-sen once had bronze statues dedicated to him posthumously by his Japanese friend Umeya Shōkichi 梅屋庄吉 which stands in various copies at 'Sun-connected' sites – see above, chapter 5.2. In fact, Mao, too, by now wore a Zhongshan or Sun Yat-sen suit, the new posthumous statue presenting him also as the mature official and static figure of authority, no longer as a young dynamic man and revolutionary as during his lifetime.) Jiang Zemin left his calligraphy on this new statue's pedestal, too, to reclaim Mao by then for himself (98–99).

As for the contents of the exhibition on Mao in Shaoshan, at first at the opening of the exhibition in 1964, the focus was on Mao's younger years up to 1927, i.e., the phases somehow connected to Shaoshan prior to PRC times. Only after Mao's death and the verdict on him in the 1981 Resolution on Party History did the contents change into a more general assessment of Mao's role in Chinese history. The basic thrust shifted at that point from phases to topics (101). That way, also the workers' movement which had no apparent connection to rural Shaoshan, featured (103). A special focus was, however, retained on Shaoshan and Mao's family background there, as well as on Shaoshan's particular role in the revolution. Another focus of

317 For this ubiquitous image of Cultural Revolution times, showing Mao in a scholar's robe 'going to Anyuan', cf. 'Chairman Mao goes to Anyuan' (1968). Cf. also Perry (2012: 49–51) on Mao's first visit to Anyuan in 1921 and his change of clothing from gown to trousers.

the new exhibition design were his personal items, namely those shifted over from Zhongnanhai in the early 1990s. These covered not only the already named Swiss wrist watch given to him by Guo Moruo (in 1945), but also the armchair on which Mao sat when US president Nixon and Japanese prime minister Tanaka visited him in Beijing to reopen bilateral relations (108). The armchair, now exhibited in Shaoshan, thus stands for crucial turning points in China's foreign relations (see below) (109). The exhibition hall in Shaoshan purportedly attracted also foreign heads of state early on during Mao's lifetime, namely Vietnamese Communist Ho Chi-minh (in 1961), and Cambodian Prince Sihanouk (1963) (110, 207, 209), both having a good relationship with China during the 1960s, underlining the foreign affairs relevance of Shaoshan's exhibition also from that side, to be only enforced posthumously by the newer added Zhongnanhai items.

A whole chapter of the booklet is, in fact, dedicated to the most important objects presencing Mao in the exhibition, which are individually characterised and also stand in for larger topics. Headed by the named Swiss wrist watch the internationally experienced Guo Moruo had given to Mao as a gift, which also served to underline their personal friendship (which meant much for Guo, whom we have encountered in the present book repeatedly, not the least during the Cultural Revolution which he survived personally unscarred, even though his family members were less fortunate), Mao's cherishing of this item is to prove his appreciation of Guo, whom he respected as a writer, a calligrapher, but also as a historian (115).

A further key object on display is the already mentioned armchair Mao sat on when Nixon and Tanaka visited him in 1972 to establish bilateral relations (118). It was the same armchair he also sat on when receiving the Zambian head of state in early 1974, at which occasion he pronounced his own 'three-worlds theory', challenging the internationally established one of Cold War times by claiming that the US and the Soviet Union should both be considered together as superpowers to make up the first; developed regions like Europe, Japan, and Canada the second; and all other countries the third (including China which was to lead the third in his mind) (122). The armchair thus serves simultaneously as a physical and tangible authenticator of key moments in Chinese international politics. Interestingly, this type of armchairs, used in China at the time, were Soviet-style which were too high and big for average Chinese users (though Mao himself was tall), which meant they might either sit back, or touch the ground with their feet, simply being uncomfortable (and to some extent also not favourable for photographing when Mao, already ill in 1972, would appear as half reclined). Mao thus criticised such armchairs and decided to have better fitting ones made (a slight snide remark against the Soviet style and pro 'made in China') (122–123). A further highlighted object on display is

a briefcase presented to Mao by Cambodian Prince Sihanouk who, though officially pursuing political neutrality for Cambodia, built strong ties with the PRC since the latter's founding. When Sihanouk was ousted in 1970 and the Soviet Union did not support him, he stayed in Beijing where he organised a government in exile until he could return to Cambodia in 1975 (123–130). That way, also this briefcase is to stand for China's foreign policy, in this case suggesting China's 'benign role' for Cambodia.[318] Another object on display is a Soviet car Mao used when coming to Hunan in the 1950s and 1960s. With this car he had also come to Dishuidong in 1966 when secretly visiting Shaoshan in the unfolding Cultural Revolution.

Other personal items of Mao on display include books he read in his young years, which he kept also later (and which define his personality for the Chinese visitor in a more approachable way than high politics). These notably include Zeng Guofan's family letters. Although Zeng Guofan, a Hunanese like Mao, was the key figure to suppress the Taipings whom Mao adored, his family letters were full of moral advice which Mao had appreciated in his younger years, e.g., that one should always do things wholeheartedly and systematically. In fact, only in his later years would Mao bring himself to finally condemn Zeng Guofan (who incidentally became a newly appreciated figure in the 1990s, which might be an additional reason to display Zeng's family letters connected to Mao in the 1990s), as an evil representative of the landlord class (136–142). [319] Another, more curious object associated with Mao's intellectual studies were his one-armed frames of glasses which connected to his habit of reading in bed, laying on the side. However, on photographs Mao never wore glasses (which would imply a book worm he did not want to be considered as) (143). That way, the visitor of the exhibition also encounters Mao, the man, with his somewhat quirky sides. Further, for demonstrating his frugality, the oft-repaired pyjamas he liked to wear as well as his broken favourite leather slippers are on display. The latter, as is disclosed in the booklet, he had newly bought for his first trip to Moscow (thus connecting them to another crucial foreign policy event more than just to his simple lifestyle) (145–151). Another curious point stressed materially in this context is Mao's dislike of touching money.[320] On the other hand, it is suggested that daily spendings were recorded also in China's 'first family' in detail, with his last wife Jiang Qing

318 Needless to say, the 'patriotic' booklet does not mention anything about the Maoist Khmer Rouge who took over in Cambodia in 1975 and used Sihanouk only as a figurehead, and their horrible regime thereafter.

319 For Mao's evaluations of historical figures, see Ma (2008). For the 1990s' fad for Zeng Guofan, see Guo / He (1999).

320 Uusually, one would rather associate such avoidance with Buddhist monks, but it is of course meant as a sign of distance from capitalist money-adoration.

spending on culture and art and her hobby photography, while Mao 'kept her short on clothing' (160).

Apart from Mao's personal objects, the Shaoshan exhibition of the 1990s contextualised him also with local custom. E.g., the Mao clan regulations were exhibited as well which showed the clan's value system derived from Confucian tradition into which Mao had been socialised as a youngster. (This, in a sense, neatly fit with the exhibited Zeng Guofan family letters, reflecting via Mao the de facto more recent ideological agenda to redeploy Confucian values selectively for Chinese citizen formation.) Another contextualisation was via his family, namely his early Hunanese wife Yang Kaihui who was educated and even wrote poems herself, the intended young reader of the booklet learns. The two had married in the winter of 1920/1921 on their own, but Mao never saw her again after the failed Autumn Harvest Uprising in 1927 when he had to flee, going to Jinggangshan, where he married his next wife He Zizhen soon after (cf. chapter 3.3 of the present book), while Yang Kaihui and their children were finally caught by the GMD, and she would be executed (in 1930) (168–174). Their common eldest son, Mao Anying, born in 1922 (and not in Shaoshan), is also represented in the exhibition, interestingly in his case with an object the Shaoshan memorial had to transfer from far-away Yan'an in China's Northwest: a hoe. While Mao Anying and his younger brother Mao Anqing were set free after the execution of their mother Yang Kaihui and were finally channelled by the Communists to the Soviet Union, where Mao Anying became member of the CPSU in 1943 and even participated in the Soviet war effort, he was sent back by Stalin to China after WW II's end (175–176). Thus, in 1946, young Mao Anying (born, as mentioned, in 1922) saw his father Mao Zedong after nearly 20 years again, by now the leader of the Communists in Yan'an who started to 'educate' his grown-up son to not think he was anything special and bring him closer to the *Chinese* Communist way of life after the many years in the Soviet Union where he had been to university. Thus, Mao Anying was sent to work in the fields for which the hoe (though not connected to Shaoshan) stands in the exhibition (176). (Cf. also chapter 3.3 of the present book on the case of Yan'an where Mao father and son 'talked' to each other.) Only in 1950, Mao Anying would briefly visit Shaoshan on his father's behalf, and soon participate in the Korean War (as a translator) and die (see chapter 4.1 of the present book on the Korean War Memorial).

A further 'martyr' of Mao's family, for whom material objects are on display in Shaoshan, was his nephew Mao Chuxiong (1927–1946, who was not born in Shaoshan either and only lived there later).[321] For him, his early school essays are on

321 Mao Chuxiong was born shortly after the end of the First United Front. He would only move to Shaoshan when the Second United Front was in place.

display which are to prove his revolutionary zeal already in youth (178–182). During the early Civil War, young Mao Chuxiong, who had joined the military struggle, would be killed by the GMD. On the other side, a sword used in Shaoshan to kill a 'counter-revolutionary' in 1927, on display in the exhibition as well, shows that violence was also part of the 'revolutionary' side (not the least after Mao pushed for more radicalism at his last pre-PRC stay in Shaoshan in early 1927), and thus steps up Shaoshan's revolutionary 'credentials' for the visitor, proving the local determination to fight for 'the cause' and 'take revenge' on those opposing it.

In terms of the site's use, Mao's 'former home', the *guju*, which had been restored immediately after the founding of the PRC and was first opened to the public already in 1951 (on which Mao checked in 1959), was accompanied in 1964 by the 'memorial hall' (with its former name 'exhibition hall'). During the Cultural Revolution setting in soon after, the daily visitor masses to Shaoshan peaked in the context of the revolutionary 'pilgrimages'. Thereafter (and thus after Mao's death in 1976), the intended young reader of the booklet learns, there was a down-turn of visitor numbers in the 1980s. But in the 1990s, Mao's centenary anniversary (1993) meant another hype (186). The 'patriotic' booklet points out to the intended young readers some of the more famous visitors through time, to suggest the broad appeal of the site (and possibly solicit a visit): in the early years (before the Cultural Revolution hype), high profile visitors included Chinese opera star Mei Lanfang 梅兰芳 who came in 1956, as well as Mao's close ally, general Zhu De, who came in 1959 (187–188). When the leading CCP figure Dong Biwu and general Nie Rongzhen came in 1959, too, they praised Shaoshan as rating even above Confucius' home in Qufu (see above in chapter 5.1) and Sun Yat-sen's (see above in chapter 5.2) in Cuiheng, thus clearly reflecting the growing personality cult around Mao at this time of the Great Leap Forward (209). But also the Panchen Lama and Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai, representing Tibet after the Dalai Lama had fled to India in 1959, came in 1960 to pay tribute to the PRC's paramount leader![322] In 1961, Liu Shaoqi visited (as mentioned), and in 1964, Zhou Enlai came, showing around 'foreign guests' (188–189). But also pro-PRC visitors from Macau and Hong Kong flocked to Shaoshan: in 1965, rich Macau figure (and politician) Ma Man Kei (Ma Wanqi 马万祺) visited the site, and in 1966, a Hong Kong film team came as well (191). This shows that the place served in many functions already in the 1950s and early 1960s.

322 After the Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959, the Panchen Lama who remained and Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai who was a recognised *tulku* (living Buddha) stood for the further 'cooperation' of Tibetans and the Beijing government. Their visit of Mao's birthplace briefly after the momentous events in Tibet has to be seen in this context.

During the Cultural Revolution, in 1973, when Deng Xiaoping came during his brief political half-rehabilitation, this was in fact just after he had sent off Canadian prime minister Trudeau (at whose visit Bethune, Mao's key example of Communist 'internationalism', had been hailed as a common bond between the two countries of different ideological camps – see above) (196). As mentioned, Deng had also more personal reasons to visit Shaoshan, having been close to Mao Zetan, the youngest brother of Mao Zedong. De facto, both Deng and Mao Zetan had been attacked by inner-CCP rivals in 1933 (purportedly by the 'Soviet returnee Wang Ming' as key culprit),[323] and thus Mao Zetan could not join the Long March (cf. Ruijin, chapter 3.3 in the present book on the scars that the Ruijin times left on several CCP cadres' memories). He therefore had to stay behind and died fighting the GMD troops. Deng thus did not only perceive the 'former home' in Shaoshan as the one of Mao Zedong, but also as the one of his brothers (197). Another well-known visitor during Mao's lifetime who also considered the larger Mao family was Guo Moruo, the 'friend' of Mao, who visited Shaoshan for the first time in 1963 (203). He and his (last) wife would even visit the tomb of Mao's parents (which underlines the personal closeness between Guo and Mao)! (204). In 1964, though from afar, Guo wrote also a poem as well as the plaques *Mao Zedong tongzhi jiuju* and *Mao Zedong tongzhi jiuju chenlieguan* (which suggests that he had been asked for taking over this sensitive task to thus sustain the diction of the time with *jiuju* instead of *guju*). In 1966, Guo Moruo would return to Shaoshan once more, accompanying a Somalian guest, which demonstrates that the place was by then considered already a sight-seeing spot of sorts (205). Guo, ever the sycophant, even went so far as to state at his visit in 1966 that he had proposed to provide a definite interpretation of Mao's poems, but that Mao had objected to this, interestingly with the argument that since there are no definite interpretations of Tang poems, there could be none of his poems either! (205). Shaoshan was, however, supposed to serve as an inspiration to leave poems commemorating the experience, which many of the Communist leaders who visited did during Mao's lifetime, but after Mao's death the visiting luminaries apparently did not, obviously perceiving the place by then as less of a poetic inspiration (cf. 209–211). Those coming (or returning) after the Cultural Revolution included veteran top politicians like Bo Yibo 薄一波 in 1986, ten years after Mao's death, Yang Shangkun 杨尚昆 in 1988 (supposedly even for a third time after the 1950s, who would also open the Liu Shaoqi memorial at the time – see below), Jiang Zemin in 1991 (and 1993), Hu Jintao in 1993, Li Ruihan in

323 This is in fact an assertion following Mao's later rewriting of Party history, laying the blame of his misfortune in Ruijin on Wang Ming who was not present but de facto supported Mao at that time. Wang Ming, however, clashed with Mao later. Cf. Ishikawa (2022: 89–95, 124).

1994 (he, too, coming after the 1960s again) etc., which shows that the site was visited once more by top politicians after a hiatus of some years following Mao's death when his evaluation still had to be fixed (189–191). While Deng Xiaoping apparently did not visit Shaoshan again, Jiang Zemin notably cited during his 1991 visit the evaluation of Mao once provided by no one else than Liu Shaoqi who was by then rehabilitated, that way pointedly joining the two who in fact had grown up geographically so close (see below) and whose relationship would change so dramatically. The first Taiwanese (of Shaoshan origin), in turn, could also finally arrive by 1988, years after Mao's death (and when travels to the mainland became possible from Taiwan's side). And in late 1989 (!), a Taiwanese documentary on the mainland's geography and people was produced which notably included some filming in Shaoshan (192). But there was purportedly also high interest of 'normal' foreigners in the place where Mao hailed from. In 1967 during the early Cultural Revolution, an 'old New Zealander' is mentioned as a visitor (intending Rewi Alley, a 'friend of China' who de facto lived in the PRC),[324] but usually foreign tourists rather came to Shaoshan after Mao's death, including the (Australian) Mao biographer Ross Terrill (194–195).[325] That way, Shaoshan had become also more of a tourist destination for foreigners, while it was to remain an above all ideological site for the Chinese citizens.

Moving from the late 1990s to the site's framing in the Xi Jinping era, the *Fengbei* narrative of 2019 (Peng 2019) defines the 'memorial hall' which was set up (as an exhibition hall) in 1964, at the 15th anniversary of the declaration of the PRC (1 October 1949), to the intended reader as combining Hunan architectural style and Suzhou garden style. After the state of the late 1990s, as reflected in the above 'patriotic' materials, the site had been overhauled in 2013 at the 120th anniversary of Mao's birth. By now, it is to show Mao as part of the Party leaders, i.e., not as a solo performer any longer. His *guju*, the intended reader is told, had been confiscated by the GMD in 1929, but was repaired in 1950 (3). After the site's nomination as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 1997, a special exhibition was added in 2008 with more of Mao's personal items, which at this point included also his collection of vinyl records and the artwork he kept (which thrusts him more into a cultured historical figure who also appreciated music and art and that way depoliticises him to some degree) (4). Such an addition was deemed more effective and closer-to-life for educating the next generations without any personal memory of Mao. At the same time in 2008, a large square was added (for the 115th anniversary of his birth), and a noted calligrapher wrote 'China produced a Mao

324 For a very critical appraisal of Rewi by a fellow New Zealand scholar, see Brady (2002).
325 Terrill's *Mao: A Biography*, appeared in first edition in 1980.

Zedong' – a catchphrase adorning, i.a., a biopic on Mao of 1993 (5).[326] This new square was likely to serve for the usual ceremonial functions of 'patriotic education' sites. The out-of-town villa at Dishuidong, in turn, where he stayed for just 11 days in the fateful summer of 1966, is also introduced to the intended reader as part of the 'patriotic' site, where Mao thought to possibly stay in retirement (6).

When introducing the school he went to, the 2019 presentation focuses on the story of his leading the classmates to a swim instead of learning and waiting for the teacher to return. Notably, he is presented as stunning the teacher, who would not punish him, since he would recognise him as intellectually superior after testing him! Also the father, whom Mao dreaded so much, is not pointed out here as brutal, editing out all problematic memories of the 'hero' of his natal place.

The ancestor halls, in turn, while originally religiously inscribed buildings, are pointed out in the new narrative to the intended reader as above all serving Mao as organising spaces for the peasant movement (which was, as will be recalled, also the argument with which they were preserved during the Cultural Revolution). Notable in this new narrative framing is the repeated mentioning of his first chosen wife Yang Kaihui who helped him ideologically to teach the peasants in the main ancestor hall (7). In terms of that buildings' 'fate', the reader learns that the family ancestors' hall would be turned into a library during wartime, and in 1949 into a culture hall (and that way, in fact, the building as such 'survived', being stripped of its cultic functions). Only at the hightime of the Cultural Revolution in 1968, it was turned back into the Mao family ancestors' hall (but to commemorate the use for the peasant movement there). At that place, Mao is said to have also rebuked the usual gender hierarchy in having women take the places of honour – a new addition in this 2019 framing of Shaoshan, turning the key place of the patriline into one of hailing women's rights! (8). As to another place for 'traditional rites', the parents' tomb, who had died quickly one after the other, the 2019 narrative points out that it was a rather unassuming site, since Mao did not want to set up a large tomb. Only after Mao's death would it be built in a better way, in 1989 notably adding (in a more 'filial' way) on spot the eulogy Mao wrote for his mother (at whose death he was away, while he never seems to have mourned his father) (9).

The *Fengbei* description of 2019 then details the five times Mao returned to Shaoshan after 'leaving' his home (in 1910), setting this into the larger picture of revolutionary developments. When he came back in 1921, both parents had passed away, and brother Mao Zemin with his (first) wife Wang Shulan 王淑兰 cared for all, since he as the eldest had been away. Mao proposed to his brother to give up all and

326 This title adorned various productions on Mao, including the movie produced for his 100th birthday in 1993. It is also the title for the 'patriotic' booklet (Tian et al. 1998).

join him (10), and thus the siblings went to Changsha together, while Wang Shulan (and the baby) stayed behind, the intended young reader is told.[327]

The next time when Mao returned to Shaoshan was in 1925 when Mao came with Yang Kaihui (and the two little sons, Mao Anying and Mao Anqing) (11). At that time he stayed longer, organising a first local Party branch, swearing in the very first members in his own bedroom. As the intended young reader of the 2019 narrative learns, the Party organisation was at that time clandestine, while the open organisation was a society to 'wash off the shame', i.e., with an anti-imperialist stance, given the May Thirtieth Movement in 1925 (12). Mao would also lead a boycott movement against foreign products at the time. As a troublemaker, he had to hide, though, finally moving to Guangzhou, while the local Party organisation grew substantially in Shaoshan. Subsequently, the society to 'wash off the shame' would openly transform into a peasant association (13), starting to fight the landlords, and welcoming the Northern Expedition in 1927 (though many of the local Party members would be 'martyred', including the first five he had sworn in himself). At Mao's stay in Shaoshan in early 1927, he undertook the survey on the local peasants, and also tried to convince the villagers that no religiosity would help (thus driving his first 'anti-superstition' campaign), but that one had to fight oneself for a better future (14–15).

But thereafter, it took until 1959, that Mao would come back again in person to Shaoshan, now as the paramount leader of the whole of China. Still, the 2019 description points out, he had never lost his local flavor, including his life-style and dialect, and cared for this home. When in China's Northwest, he told American leftist journalist Edgar Snow about his youth, and at the beginning of the PRC, he sent his elder son (Anying) to Hunan to first of all sweep 'mum's tomb' (i.e., of Yang Kaihui, whose tomb was not at Shaoshan but at her natal area to the Northeast of Changsha), and look after his maternal grandmother, i.e., the mother of the 'martyred' Yang Kaihui (before going to Shaoshan) (16). In a very traditional vein, Mao supposedly suggested to his son that he should get 'down from the horse' and walk the last part of the way to show respect to the villagers of Shaoshan, his 'home' by ancestry. In 1959, when Mao himself visited Shaoshan in person (evidently not by walking), he also went to see the tomb of his parents, the intended young reader is told, but only put some twigs in the ground and bowed thrice, refusing to have the tomb set up in a more lavish style (and perform any customary rites). He purportedly commented that 'we Communists are all materialists', but that one still should not forget one's parents (17). (This shows that commemoration – and more recently

327 Incidentally, brother Mao Zemin would have more children with Wang Shulan, but abandon her and marry his second wife in 1926.

also filial duty – are to be promoted, but traditional 'feudal' burial practices are to be discouraged.)

At the time of this 1959 visit, Mao also told the story about how he caused his brothers to 'give up' their home in Shaoshan, and looking at old photos, he purportedly became emotional, especially when seeing a family photo of himself, his brothers, and the mother, of whom he was the only one still alive (18). Visiting his former school, he had a Young Pioneer of the local primary school put on the red scarf of the pioneers to himself (and did not mention anything about his own schooling), and he talked about his former wife Yang Kaihui, who once taught the villagers in the main ancestor hall (and is thus in the narrative focus instead of Mao's later wives). Mao is described as also chatting with peasants during that visit and going for a swim. Thereafter, he immortalised this 1959 visit with a poem: *dao Shaoshan* 到韶山 ('visiting Shaoshan').[328] The last time he came to Shaoshan, though, was under cover and in 1966 at Dishuidong. He had pointed out the site at his 1959 visit, and in the meantime, a villa had been built. As the 2019 description underlines, he felt emotionally attached and loathed to leave the place for good (from where he was to move up to Beijing to push the Cultural Revolution into full speed) (19–21). That way, the *Fengbei* narrative focuses on Mao's Shaoshan relations, leaving a more general assessment of the historical figure of Mao, in turn, open.

In sum, the representation of Mao's 'former home' in the 'patriotic education' context shifted over time to concentrate on Mao as a model in a more abstract sense to counter his former personality cult: he is framed as an orientation in ideology and (to some degree) personal behaviour, while the various twists in his biography and his difficulties with the local society and his past there are simply edited out.

Case study: Liu Shaoqi

Not very far from Mao Zedong's memorial-cum-*guju* is the one of Liu Shaoqi, **Liu Shaoqi tongzhi jinianguan** 刘少奇同志纪念馆 (Comrade Liu Shaoqi memorial hall) (Hunan Province) (list 1, 1997) which is a very sensitive place, given Liu's death in prison during the Cultural Revolution. Since there is only a relatively minor physical distance of ca. 30 km between the two memorials, both are often visited today in one tour, thus ironically joining the key figure of the Cultural Revolution

328 An annotated English translation of the poem can be found in Zhang / Vaughan (2002: 103–104).

and its most profiled victim over the leisure activity of tourism. Liu Shaoqi's memorial, which de facto is placed at and around his *guju* (if not including the *guju* in the site name as in Mao's case), is showing a more well-to-do background than the one of Mao. The thorny issue of the relationship between the two men, becoming increasingly difficult when Mao was criticised for the Great Leap Forward disaster and soon had to step back temporarily into the second line while Liu, meanwhile the official 'chairman' of the PRC, acted together with Deng Xiaoping, rolling back Mao's preceding economic policies in the early 1960s, is tacitly left aside, as is Mao's revenge on Liu during the Cultural Revolution. At least elder Chinese visitors are, of course, nonetheless aware of the problem. Liu would be rehabilitated when Deng Xiaoping had become the paramount leader, and thus the site could be opened to the public (again) thereafter.

The visitor (as I observed on-site in 2013) encounters the home of the clearly rather well-off rural Liu family, featuring not only farming tools, but also a weaving frame for producing cloth, and facilities for brewing liquor. On spot, relating the local to the ideological, it is pointed out that several members of Liu Shaoqi's family would (and could) join him in Yan'an later (i.e., he cared for his family, indirectly suggesting to the visitor a more harmonious and responsible relationship than in the case of Mao). His own (technically second)[329] wife He Baozhen 何宝珍, in turn, whom Liu had met during his work in the labour movement at Anyuan 安源 in western Jiangxi, bordering Hunan, had been executed as a Communist by the GMD in Nanjing's Yuhuatai 雨花台 (cf. chapter 3.2 in the present book) in 1934. In the Cultural Revolution (when Liu was married to his last wife Wang Guangmei 王光美), it is claimed on spot that he was persecuted 'by the Gang of Four', evading to name Mao as behind it. Overall, one may summarise, Liu's life is presented in a very carefully sanitised version on-site for the present-day visitor. Outdoor, a huge bronze statue of Liu commemorates him (parallel to Mao's later 1993 statue in Shaoshan, but wearing an open coat which reveals the Zhongshan suit – in the West typically known as the 'Mao suit' – that Mao also wears in his statue, underneath!).[330] That way, it is suggested that although he wore a 'coat' over it, Liu Shaoqi was still essentially similar to Mao.

329 Liu's first wife Ms Zhou was, as usual, a traditionally arranged marriage, while his first 'real' wife was the technically second, He Baozhen, a revolutionary whom he met via Mao and Yang Kaihui, then a young couple.

330 This suggests that Jiang Zemin, who ordered the Shaoshan statue of Mao in 1993, likely responded to the 1988 statue of Liu Shaoqi made in the era of Deng Xiaoping, officially ordered by the trade unions – see below.

Back in the late 1990s, when the place was listed as a first list 'showcase base', the 'patriotic' *Ai wo Zhonghua* film clip (disc 6) of this originally widely broadcasted TV series to entice 'patriotic' tourism, introduced the site in a standard fashion of these film clips via its natural surrounding and from a bird's eye view. For the baseline, the male narrator reads out the official (post-rehabilitation) evaluation of Liu Shaoqi to the national TV audience in a strong voice, characterising Liu pronouncedly as an outstanding theoretician and Marxist, and only then as the PRC's former chairman. For Liu's youth (and different from the case of Mao above), his (progressive) father is also briefly addressed, while his mother is particularly singled out as the one who encouraged him to study as a child. For six years, he thus went to a private village school (*sishu* 私塾) for education, the TV audience learns. Among his numerous siblings, Liu Shaoqi was the youngest. An elder brother of his joined the *xinjun* 新军 (New Army) and participated in the 1911 Xinhai revolution (cf. chapter 4.2 of the present book on the Wuchang Uprising Memorial) since he held 'progressive views' already, by this suggesting that Liu's family already prepared him to some degree for his later career. Liu Shaoqi's 'memorial hall' (which by naming also implies the wish of commemoration more than of only authentication by a *guju*) was opened as such only as late as 1988 at the 90th anniversary of Liu's birth – a fact which reflects the sensitivity of the place (and glosses over the fact that the place could be visited already earlier when he was acting head of state and not yet a declared political target – see below). As a young man, the TV audience learns, Liu Shaoqi had been to the Soviet Union (illustrated by photos). Already in 1922, however, he came back again to China and organised the strike of the miners in Anyuan.[331] Thereafter, Liu worked for the Party in various places during the 'White Terror', i.e., after the bloody end of the First United Front in 1927, including in Shenyang in Manchuria. At the Zunyi Conference of 1935 during the Long March (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), he sustained Mao and would also support him subsequently against his inner-Party rival Wang Ming, a help Mao also explicitly acknowledged later. A particularly important ideological contribution by Liu Shaoqi was, according to the TV film clip's narrative, his *Lun gongchandangyuan de xiuyang* 论共产党员的修养 (On the self-cultivation of Communist Party members)[332] – a pamphlet that would come under fire of the leftists much

331 See Perry (2012) on Anyuan and its role in China's revolution.

332 The official English translation title was notably later set as 'How to be a good Communist'. The critical term is *xiuyang* 修养 which is used by Liu instead of the more typical 'Confucian' term for the ideal of self-cultivation, *xiu shen* 修身– something discussed already in pre-imperial times between various schools of thought (cf. Weingarten 2015 on the *xiu shen* term's early usage) but later 'dominated' by the Confucian framing. Liu Shaoqi's choice of *xiuyang*, instead, which is close

later. He is also presented as instrumental for having Mao's thought inscribed in 1945 in the Party constitution (i.e., it is accentuated in the TV film clip for the national audience how Liu always supported Mao and contributed to ideology as well). He, however, would also argue for economical development (more in line with policies of Deng Xiaoping later, thus bridging the two). His Soviet truck with which he came back in 1961 to Hunan, when being formally China's top politician, is shown, and a guide explains how he 'correctly summarised' 'the problems' (which are not detailed, de facto intending the Great Famine – see below) after his Hunan visit. On an international scale, he is also presented as a foreign policy actor, flying in diplomatic mission to countries like the Soviet Union, or Southeast Asia when acting chairman of the PRC. The airplane he used at the time is shown to the TV audience as well. More locally, the 'patriotically' listed site also features the traditional Chinese multi-storey building Huaminglou 花明楼, towering over the area after which the latter was named, thus integrating more of 'Chinese tradition' visually in the vein of the 1990s' accent on cultural elements in modern Chinese self-identification. The large bronze statue of Liu Shaoqi, installed in front of his 'memorial' in 1988, finally leads back to the man who is defining the whole place. Most striking in this film clip, produced by Changsha TV, is, however, that there is no mention at all of Liu's dramatic fate during the Cultural Revolution or of the worsening relationship between Liu and Mao!

This is different in the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 7), which is titled '*guju* and memorial hall' (thus paralleling it with Mao's site in Shaoshan, though the official listing is only as a 'memorial hall'), introducing Liu's 'former home'. As visual cues, the bed where he was born in, and his mother's photo (while here the father is not addressed at all), many tourists, and his huge bronze statue are provided. The site, (re)opened in 1988, is characterised as in 'Jiangnan style', with garden and pavilions attached. In this video for pupils as the intended audience, the music and the narrator's voice are markedly soft, evading any unease. In the exhibition, images show Liu Shaoqi notably in a scholar's garb (which throws him into an intellectual figure and also parallels him with Mao in the sense that young Mao was often depicted this way – see above). The sensitive name of fellow Hunanese Li Lisan 李立三 with whom Liu Shaoqi had worked together, namely in organising strikes like the one in Anyuan in 1922, is displayed, too,[333] as is Liu's role during

in meaning though not literally addressing the 'self', might also reflect the wish to integrate and translate *vospitaniye* in Soviet usage. (Cf. also chapter 6 of the present book.)

333 As will be recalled, Li Lisan and his 'leftist' line with a focus on cities and the proletariat after the bloody end of the First United Front was criticised later and he had to move to the Soviet Union

the Second Sino–Japanese War. That way, Liu Shaoqi is shown as an active revolutionary in his own right, and he is presented as an also outstanding ideological contributor (which broadens the usual Mao-centred ideological framing of the CCP) with even three important works: *Lun gongchandangyuan de xiuyang* (that had been named also in the *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV presentation), but also *Lun dangnei douzheng* 论党内斗争 (On inner-Party struggle), and *Lun dang* 论党 (On the Party). That way, the pupils are confronted with more of his ideological input than the TV audience. On more local fronts, his visit back home to Huaminglou for inspection in 1961 is profiled (i.e., during the Great Famine which is however not directly mentioned in the educational video, like in the TV film clip).

Finally, his talent as a leader is described, namely, that he was always 'close to the people', to then move into the critical phase of the Cultural Revolution (which had been left out in the TV presentation). As is explained to the intended watching pupils in this context, he was attacked 'by Lin Biao and Jiang Qing' (not naming Mao nor the 'Gang of Four' – which in any case is a later term). He thus died alone, the pupils learn, severely ill, in a bare room (with a photo of the site shown). Before his demise, he is said to have asked for his ashes to be scattered into the sea (like Friedrich Engels), and at his death, he was secretly cremated. But in 1980, Deng Xiaoping, who had suffered in the Cultural Revolution as the 'second Liu', if less severely, changed the course of things and finally held an official mourning for Liu Shaoqi. Thus, his name was restored and he was fully rehabilitated posthumously.

At his (re)opened former residence-cum-memorial in Hunan, as a side exhibition, his reconstructed Zhongnanhai living quarters (once more parallel to those of Mao in Shaoshan, thus putting him on the same level as the PRC's second chairman) are then introduced to the intended watching pupils (touring the site virtually). That way, they can see that the beds of Liu and his (last) wife Wang Guangmei (who is finally named here) had no legs but were directly put on the floor (though the reasons – see below – are not spelt out in the video). Much of Liu's original furniture was, however, lost because of the Cultural Revolution.

But the *guju* serves to show also more about Liu Shaoqi's natal family and youth (thus leading back to the local perspective). The narrative explains to the intended watching pupils how Liu studied and was eager to learn new contents. This led him in 1921 to Moscow to the University of the Toilers of the East, where he became one of the important members of the newly established CCP in the Soviet Union. When he would come back to his native place in 1961 many years later (skipping that he had been back in the 1920s already), he was troubled to learn that his people

for years. He was attacked and died under unclear conditions in the early Cultural Revolution, officially by suicide.

did not live well (intending the Great Famine, which is once more not named, but at least hinted at) and tried to fix policies.

In the end, the educational video, produced by the Hunan provincial audio-visual education entity in 1999, shows the general secretary acting at the time, Jiang Zemin, who visited Liu's birthplace in 1991 (coming over from Mao's home Shaoshan) to link the site up to the political present, insinuating to the intended watching pupils that those problems are fortunately since long overcome, and supposedly also the the two leading figures, Mao and Liu, can in hindsight be joined posthumously once again, to serve the present.

In contrast to the two filmic treatments of Liu's 'memorial', one for the national TV audience, one for classroom use, the simultaneously produced 'patriotic' booklet in the benchmark series on first list 'patriotic education showcase bases' (Tan et al. 1998), which is to provide a more in-depth treatment of the site, stands out in opting for a much less cautious and more outspoken approach. It is notably set under the general title of an utterance of Liu when he was accused in the Cultural Revolution: 'History is written by the people', intending that the ('leftist') ideological rewriting of history would pass by and 'the people' would judge in the end.

While the filmic treatments discussed above did not or only vaguely refer to the Great Famine mainly induced by Mao's pet project of the Great Leap Forward, the 'patriotic' booklet stands for a very different take. This is striking since up to this day the Great Famine is a taboo topic in Chinese history textbooks, circumscribed as 'three years of economic difficulties', referring to natural catastrophes.

The authors of the 'patriotic' booklet are, however, bold enough to tell the intended young readers about the only relative role of drought, while the main reason for disaster is disclosed as man-made. This is done by referring to the 70% *vs* 30% formula once used in the Soviet Union to posthumously evaluate Stalin (70% good) and then used in 1981 in the Resolution on Party History in China for evaluating Mao (similarly as 70% good). Here it is used to describe the man-made part of the catastrophe as 70%, laying this in the mouth of peasants telling Liu in 1961 the local experience (which also profiles the place as an 'awakening bell' alerting Liu and the leadership to the fact that the real situation on the ground was far from what they were officially told in far-away Beijing). (Notably, Liu Shaoqi used this 70/30 evaluation during the 1962 Seven Thousand People Conference in Beijing which meant a reckoning with Mao's Great Leap and was likely a key moment for the downturn in the relationship between the two men.)

The 'patriotic' booklet repeatedly comes back to the fact of hunger of which Liu learnt during his 1961 visit firsthand which would then lead to his advocating changes in economic policies. Though the exhibited photographs taken at the time

do not present people clearly undernourished or with dropsy (which shows that one was well aware that only 'unproblematic' images should be displayed), the narrative underlines how people suffered, suggesting that the authors also use the occasion of the booklet to articulate the local trauma.

The contribution of the Huaminglou area, to which Liu's native village Tanzichong 炭子冲 belonged, is therewith characterised as opening Liu's eyes via his fellow villagers' testimonies about the horrendeous realities, while local cadres tried to conceal the extent of the problems for fear of punishment. That way, the villagers could claim to have decisively contributed to initiate the radical readjustment of nation-wide economic policies that Liu and others (especially Deng Xiaoping) would undertake in the following months, which, however, also meant a further estrangement between Liu and Mao, leading to his final personal downfall.

In terms of the 'former homes' of the two men, Liu's shows in comparison with Mao's not only a more well-off family background, but Liu's relations with his natal family were also different. His father, though a peasant, had received some education already – different from Mao's. Liu Shaoqi, born in 1898, i.e., a few years later than Mao, and being the youngest of several children while Mao was the eldest (surviving) child, thus had an easier access to education than Mao, and after a local *sishu* formation which he is said to have disliked, though not with the same intensity of negative experience which Mao remembered, rather borrowed books privately to read for himself. In 1913, i.e., after the Xinhai revolution and inspired by his elder siblings, he went to a 'modern' higher primary school in his county, the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet learn (Tan et al. 1998: 1–2).

Already in 1915, Liu Shaoqi became politically active, though, leading local student demonstrations against the '21 demands' of the Japanese (that were to guarantee the Japanese far-reaching privileges in China) which Chinese president Yuan Shikai largely accepted. After graduation from the higher primary school, he went to a secondary school in Hunan's capital Changsha and in 1919 to Beijing when the May Fourth Movement was in swing. In Baoding in Hebei, he briefly attended a preparatory school for 'work and study' in France, but then went to Shanghai to learn Russian in 1920 in preparation for going to the Soviet Union. During these times, he had become involved in socialist circles.

In spring 1921, he enrolled in the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow which means that he could not be present at the meeting in Shanghai in July 1921 when the CCP was founded (according to the official narrative), while Mao was there (cf. also chapter 3.3 in the present book). Liu, in fact, entered the CCP in Moscow where the students were supposed to not only learn but also work in production (4–6). Thus, he later claimed he knew something about workers

and machines (while Mao had no such personal experiences and would focus more on the peasants in the long run).[334]

After Liu returned to China in 1922, the intended young reader learns, he thus was sent by the fledgling CCP to work in the labour movement where he organised strikes and also the most famous one of his career, the one of the miners in Anyuan in 1922, together with Li Lisan, which made Anyuan known at that time as 'China's little Moscow'.[335] (7–10) Notably, since the 'patriotic' booklet was written in 1998 when Liu Shaoqi's last wife Wang Guangmei was still alive (and supporting the 'memorial'), his former wives would not be named, though on a photo, at least one appeared: He Baozhen, who, like Mao's early wife Yang Kaihui, would be executed by the GMD and thus counts as a 'martyr' (11). Given Liu's role in strikes, he (and Li Lisan who had been to France before) would become a major labour activist of the CCP. After the bloody end of the First United Front in 1927, Liu was mostly sent to 'white' (i.e., GMD-governed) territory for underground work. During the crisis in the CCP in the early 1930s and during the Long March, Liu Shaoqi, it is stressed, always supported Mao. But he was also involved in ideological work among students to push for a Second United Front vis-à-vis the Japanese threat (14–15). Furthermore, he wrote contributions under pseudonym to dispel doubts about the Communists and their aims in public media, thus serving at many fronts. During the first years of the Second Sino–Japanese War, he lived only occasionally in Yan'an, as he was mainly responsible for work behind the lines in Northern and Central China at that time. In this capacity he was also involved in the conflicts which led to the Wannan (South Anhui) Incident in 1941 between the GMD and the CCP,[336] which ended the Second United Front in practice (and landed Communist general Ye Ting in prison – see chapter 3.2 of the present book) (25). Thereupon, Liu Shaoqi moved back to Yan'an where he acted as Mao's deputy, the intended young reader is told, when the latter went to the Chongqing negotiations after the war's end in 1945 to forestall another Civil War between the GMD and the CCP (27). While the Civil War went on nonetheless, Liu, together with Zhu De and Dong Biwu, left Yan'an to build up a base in Hebei, i.e., Xibaipo (see chapter 3.3 of the present book), preparing the ground for the other leaders who would then join them, including Mao, coming from Yan'an and northern Shaanxi from where the GMD drove them out. During that phase, land reform was high on the agenda to

334 Given that the CCP saw it at first as the main target to engage in the labour movement, Mao, too, tried to approach the proletariat in the beginning, but later changed the course to focus more on the peasants.

335 Cf. Perry (2012: 10).

336 Cf. Benton on this 'Incident' in his book on the New Fourth Army (1999).

win the support of the local peasants in Xibaipo and beyond. Citing the leftist American author William Hinton's book (of 1966) on *fanshen* 翻身 (lit.: turn over, the slogan of emancipating the peasants) in the narrative of the 'patriotic' booklet,[337] land reform is astonishingly put for the intended young reader on a par with Lincoln's movement for the abolishment of slavery! (29–31). However, the brutality which accompanied the reassignment of land in practice was also staggering (though, needless to say, this is not addressed by the 'patriotic' booklet, rather suggesting a 'legal' approach over the key document prescribing land policies).

At the establishment of the PRC, the intended young reader learns, Liu Shaoqi was deputy chairman and also travelled abroad, including conducting talks in Moscow where he had once been a student. There he helped prepare the basis for the Sino–Soviet friendship on an official level, while Stalin, in turn, acknowledged the CCP to have 'matured' into a 'grown-up' party (35). That way, Liu appears as an experienced positive key figure for China's foreign policy during that time, successfully sustaining the PRC's close ties with the Soviet Union, whereas the personal relationship between Mao and Stalin is known as having gone less smoothly.

In autumn 1959 (i.e., after the ominous Lushan conference and general Peng Dehuai's criticism of the Great Leap Forward campaign's economic consequences), Liu Shaoqi started to discuss with the people 'on the ground' of how to redirect economic policies (39). In 1961, at the height of the Great Famine, Liu went on his mentioned trip (de facto sent by Mao who would not confront himself with the local conditions) including his Hunan home where he conducted in-depth investigations for six weeks together with his last wife Wang Guangmei. The booklet argues that the trip was instrumental to show Liu Shaoqi that many of the beautified reports the leadership received in Beijing were far from reality. He had never been back home after 1925 and is said to have been shocked by what he saw. Propagandistic broadcasts of marvellous production numbers by model communes were not real, he was to realise, but people feared to speak up (42–45). Main grievances were the cantines, loss of privately assigned land, and lack of material incentives which led to a steep decline in production and food and thus to widespread hunger, which made people even eat up the seeds of future cultivation and all their animals, which meant in turn that the animals did also no longer provide the needed fertiliser etc. in a vicious circle. The problems generated by the wrong (Maoist) policies are described in a very detailed fashion, including the deforestation (for collecting fire wood needed for the required backyard steel furnaces during the Great Leap times) and its dramatic consequences. Whoever spoke up against these policies was punished and

337 William Hinton: *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village*, New York: Monthly Review Press 1966.

branded as a rightist, or physically abused, the intended young readers of the booklet, born many years after this all happened, learn (though the narrative stops short of addressing the death toll) (47). Liu Shaoqi repeatedly assured the peasants at the time that he would redress their complaints, while the criticism is all given as 'peasants' words': do away with the cantines, do away with commands from above, provide material incentives, and reintroduce private land assignment etc. – all things which Liu is said to have only 'picked up' from the masses, promising to roll back some of the radical policies of the late 1950s (48–49).

While local cadres were at times fearful this might undermine their position, Liu Shaoqi is characterised as also patiently doing ideological work with them to bring them around (instead of punishing them) (49–51). When getting back to his former house which he had seen the last time in 1925, he met his former aquaintances, some of whom were ill with dropsy. When he complained that he was not correctly informed, they assured him they did write to him, but obviously the letters had been withheld by some people in between – which of course also takes away some responsibility in the eyes of the reading pupils from him personally (or the other leaders in Beijing) for not acting in time (51–52). To highlight how Liu carefully tried to understand the true state of affairs in terms of the claimed effect of climatic factors for generating the extreme famine, Liu's using his familiarity with the place from his own youth is pointed out. From the villagers' description of details, he understood that the drought claimed by the local cadres had, in fact, not been very serious, given that the nearby pond had not even dried up while he had experienced lesser droughts as a child when it did so. This meant, he concluded, that only a minor part of the problem was climatic, while the main factor was man-made (53). Thus, politics had to be urgently changed.

Liu travelled around in the vicinity and found everywhere more or less the same desolate situation: people ill or having lost their relatives, eating the bark of trees or wild grass, almost no animals left, while cadres were abusing people and trying to hide the problems. Liu, however, assured them that cadres should learn and not be afraid of making errors since they can be corrected by study (57). But on the ground, it was not only food that was lacking: cooking utensils or bowls were in demand, too, since no foundry or ceramic fabric was working any longer (and the Great Leap Forward campaign had used up the metal). Under these circumstances, he also requested that his own home should not be used any longer for display (which it was since 1959 – when he had become the second chairman of the PRC), but rather given to several families for living (57–58). Moving around in the area, he heard everywhere of people having died of hunger, or being ill but still having to work for getting any food. He thus came to understand that the main responsibility for the

disaster was in (ill informed) Beijing, but that also locally errors had been made (59–61). A major concern of the 'patriotic' booklet is to show that Liu Shaoqi really cared and was someone close to the masses, sharing their sorrows. During wartime, it is stated, he had also experienced hunger himself and thus understood what it meant. He would thus also educate his own children to be economic, and would deny his family good food during the times of the Great Famine, while growing crops in Beijing's Zhongnanhai himself (76–79, 104–105). That the problems were not only local ones in Hunan, he came to understand when touring also other places in China he had known earlier. Thus, the booklet highlights also his experience in far-away Manchuria (where he had worked earlier) on his visit there, subsequent to the one to Hunan, where he was to check on deforestation (another consequence of the problematic Maoist policies) (63–67). The topic is likely introduced in the narrative since the exhibition displays his rain coat and rain equipment of that endeavour. That way, it supposedly became clear to Liu Shaoqi, that the problems he had encountered, in Hunan as much as in Manchuria, were not only local disasters, but affected all of China.

Beyond characterising Liu Shaoqi as someone caring for the people, the 'patriotic' booklet, however, portrays him as also a Marxist theoretician in his own right. Given that all kinds of people flocked to Yan'an during the Second Sino–Japanese War, Liu designed his educational work on the self-cultivation of Communist Party members (*Lun gongchandangyuan de xiuyang*) in 1939, which, in fact, were assembled lectures he gave at the time, to be later checked through and accepted by Mao personally (70). In 1991, Jiang Zemin would state that this work was still valuable for modern-day cadres (which likely also was the reason why this work had been mentioned in the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV presentation of the site) (71). The mentioning of this work, however, also indirectly hints at the criticism raised during the Cultural Revolution regarding this particular work with the rather traditional Confucian term *xiuyang* ('self-cultivation'),[338] pointing out in defence of that work that it had been explicitly accepted by Mao himself who even chose it for the 1942 Rectification Campaign in Yan'an as one of 22 must-read documents! (73). The other two of his three main theoretical writings on the Party had been also approved by Mao, as is pointed out, his 'on the Party' (*Lun dang*) of 1945 being, it is claimed in the booklet, a succinct summary of Mao Zedong thought (74). Thus, any criticism of his ideological contributions would be in reality anti Mao, too!

338 As noted above, the term, strictly speaking, is not including the 'self' as is the more typical Confucian term *xiu shen*. The translation 'self-cultivation' was, however, applied also in the official English translations of Liu's works by Beijing's Foreign Languages Press ([Liu] 1984).

As a major PRC leader, Liu Shaoqi was at first responsible for the (violent) land reform in 1950–1952, and then for the socialist restructuring of the economy 1953–1956 (82). In 1959 (in the midst of the Great Leap Forward), he succeeded Mao in becoming the new official chairman of the PRC, marking his way up. The economy, though, took a downturn and went ever deeper into disaster. He therefore felt responsible also personally, the narrative suggests to the intended young reader, and went on his 1961 investigation tours, then 'readjusting' politics. Given the economic recovery over the few next years (which proved him and Deng Xiaoping right), in 1964 he was reelected as the PRC chairman (83–85). In spite of being the official head of state and having put much effort into designing the constitution of the PRC in the 1950s, this constitution would not rescue him, though, when 'Jiang Qing and Lin Biao' (as the booklet terms it) attacked him in 1966 (87). The narrative points out to the intended young reader that Liu Shaoqi had not provoked anyone, remaining modest, e.g., declining to accept any special form of being addressed in spite of his high position (i.e., not letting himself be called 'chairman Liu'), leaving it to only Mao, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De to have the privilege of specific titles, everyone else just being a 'comrade', and therefore he is also addressed at the memorial as 'comrade Liu Shaoqi' throughout (89). That way, it should be clear that Liu Shaoqi did not invite the criticism heaped upon him during the Cultural Revolution and never challenged Mao. In other words, he was completely innocent.

In foreign affairs (which would become a further field of criticisms), the booklet points out, he also only played his due role during that period of serving as the nominal leader: he visited the Soviet Union, and in 1963, he went to Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam,[339] at times with his wife Wang Guangmei as China's 'first couple'.[340] When visiting Cambodia, he was also accompanied by Chen Yi, then minister of foreign affairs, and his wife (who would be attacked during the Cultural Revolution as well, if less strongly, partly using these foreign trips as an accuse). The gifts of Cambodian prince Sihanouk Liu Shaoqi had received during the visit were confiscated later during the Cultural Revolution, and would be handed back to his wife Wang Guangmei only after the rehabilitation of Liu Shaoqi. (Wang Guangmei had by then been also released from prison herself.) She handed them over to the 'memorial' (which also explains why the background to these items is

339 One may note that the list is only selective, leaving out, e.g., his trip to Afghanistan.

340 This new international presentation of the PRC, including 'wife diplomacy' (while Mao's wife Jiang Qing never assumed that role), was making a stir in China when a documentary film in colour on the trip to Indonesia, where Wang Guangmei as 'chairman' Liu's wife appeared wearing a *qipao*, high heels and a necklace, was released. The very documentary was later used to attack 'bandit' Liu Shaoqi, the 'capitalist roader', and his wife Wang Guangmei during the Cultural Revolution. (See Qian 2024: 199–205).

detailed in the narrative, while absolving Liu of any potential 'guilt' to prove all accusations of the Cultural Revolution as unfounded and malign) (89–92).

In reality, the booklet points out, Liu Shaoqi was always a caring and benign person. In October 1959, when he was present at the Conference of the People's Heroes (cf. ironman Wang Jinxi above) in Beijing, he is said to have even personally remembered a worker carrying human fertiliser, thus underlining for the intended young readers of the 'patriotic' booklet his intense and meticulous care for 'the people' (93). (Incidentally, the man would be persecuted during the Cultural Revolution because of this contact with Liu Shaoqi!) (95). But Liu is also described to the intended young reader as someone caring much about the industrial development all over the country in the early 1960s, while purportedly always giving a hand to people in need he encountered (95–97). Furthermore, in 1961 during his tours through the country, he not only went to Hunan and Manchuria, but also to minority areas, namely to those of the Evenki in Inner Mongolia with whom he is said to have created a warm relationship, which is described in rather idyllic terms (99–101). On the other hand, in 1963, he sent his wife Wang Guangmei to work at the very bottom of society to keep in touch with 'the masses' (101).[341]

While the 'patriotic' booklet is, as demonstrated above, astonishingly outspoken on the Great Famine as a backdrop to Liu's change in economic policies (and ultimately his fall-out with Mao and downfall), which could be read also as using the occasion to voice the local trauma of that time, it is much more vague about his rather complicated family life: when his children are addressed one by one, it is not mentioned who the mother was respectively, and two of his children (of his divorced fourth wife who would turn on him during the Cultural Revolution) are not mentioned at all. The three eldest, born by his (technically second) wife He Baozhen, a Communist 'martyr' executed in 1934, as mentioned, were already grown up at the founding of the PRC and had been to the Soviet Union (107–109). Similar to Mao's children by Yang Kaihui, they had been with their mother and thus were 'lost' at first when the mother was executed. The booklet also tells the young readers of the fate of these three grown-up children during the Cultural Revolution and how they suffered unjustly even though one of the sons, a physicist, helped China develop the atomic bomb! He ended his life by suicide, while his brother also died after years of imprisonment. Only the daughter of that marriage survived. While the third (childless) marriage, the fourth (with the two children attacking their father later), and the fifth (very brief and childless) are skipped, the last and longest with Wang Guangmei whom he married in 1948 and their four

341 Cf. Perry (2021: 95).

children is the focus. In contrast to the eldest children (i.e., those by He Baozhen) who were sent to the Soviet Union, two of the daughters by Wang Guangmei would eventually go to the US in the 1980s, long after their father's (and Mao's) death, the third one to Germany for study – a telling shift in orientation (109–110). (Only the son of this last marriage, Liu Yuan 刘源, did not study abroad but joined politics in the 1980s and then the military.)

The sensitive issue of Liu Shaoqi's fate during the Cultural Revolution is addressed in the 'patriotic' booklet without directly mentioning the role of Mao, putting all the blame for his merciless treatment on Jiang Qing, Mao's unpopular last wife. The charges raised against Liu are briefly mentioned and how he ended his days all alone, being separated from Wang Guangmei and his children, how he was quickly cremated like someone with a contagious disease, with Liu Yuan, his youngest son (of Wang Guangmei) signing the formal 'cremation application' (113). Meanwhile, according to the booklet's narrative, the people then living in Liu's 'former home' after Liu's 1961 visit to Huaminglou when he had asked for turning his home over to people needing one, could at least prevent the building's distruction, declaring it their home, though it obviously did not 'survive' intact nevertheless, since the booklet states elsewhere that this natal place of a chief target of the Cultural Revolution had been severely damaged (124). After Deng Xiaoping, who had worked closely in the early 1960s with Liu Shaoqi to reorient economic policies and who also came under attack during the Cultural Revolution (see also below), held the official mourning for Liu Shaoqi when he was fully rehabilitated, Wang Guangmei, by then released from prison herself, finally received his ashes.[342] Liu was, however, not buried 'at home' (nor in Beijing's Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery), but, according to his own wish, his ashes were scattered into the sea, which he had once requested, referring to Friedrich Engels who had done likewise, that way also linking himself to a key theoretician of Marxism (115).

Notably, though, the 'patriotic' booklet also cares to point out to the intended young reader that in spite of the attacks and vilification Liu Shaoqi endured during the Cultural Revolution, leading to his dramatic end, there had been also people sustaining him and his family during these times of trial, namely Song Qingling, Sun Yat-sen's last wife, who herself had no easy standing at the time, though she was protected by a list of people 'not to be touched', set up by Zhou Enlai, which

342 As Qian (2024: 228–229) has noted, the emotional scenes included in an officially approved 1980 funeral film on Liu, showing Wang Guangmei's grief when visiting the place of Liu's death, receiving the box of ashes, and scattering them into the sea, were proving to be unsettling rather than help 'close the case'. It is thus small wonder that the late 1990s' filmic treatments of Liu's birthplace discussed above did not refer to that filmic material.

Mao had accepted.[343] Song Qingling had been working with Liu Shaoqi for many years as a deputy of the chairman, and she also wrote to Wang Guangmei (notably in English, Song Qingling's preferred written medium, while Wang Guangmei, being from an intellectual family and having studied at the Catholic Furen 辅仁 University in Beijing during Republican times, had worked as an English translator earlier) (117).[344]

Also more locally at Huaminglou, the people tried to do what they could, the intended young reader learns, when Liu Shaoqi was officially condemned and excluded 'forever' from the Party in 1968. As the booklet argues, they kept the plaque of the 'former residence' (called *jiuju* at the time) and also his portrait by affixing it to the back of a Mao portrait nobody would dare to touch (see also below) (117). But only after the rehabilitation of Liu Shaoqi in 1980 (in the era of Deng Xiaoping), a 'memorial' could be thought of, and in commemoration, Liu's native place set up an honorary archway, declaring the place by then proudly as Liu Shaoqi's home (119). Via this archway, the visitor would enter the area, then moving to a square with Liu's bronze statue, when the 'memorial hall' (*jinianguan*) was finally opened in 1988, and the site featured the naming '*comrade* Liu Shaoqi memorial hall' by then, stressing the 'comrade' vis-à-vis his former expulsion 'forever' from the Party (120).

Indoor, the intended reader of the booklet learns, the memorial exhibition was set up according to 5 topics: the phase before 1949, the building up of New China, Liu's input for building up the Party, his role as head of state, and (notably) the Cultural Revolution (121–122). This shows a strong accent on the PRC times. A special stress was understandably put on his visit home in 1961. Additionally, similar to Mao's memorial in Shaoshan, Liu's reconstructed Zhongnanhai living quarters were shown, but also a reconstruction of his previous cave in Yan'an – the ultimate authentication of a Communist revolutionary. To augment the 'patriotic' value, which is a challenge at this delicate site, also materials on other revolutionaries and cadres of the area and on people who visited the memorial are integrated. Former mayor of Beijing and also a key person attacked during the Cultural Revolution, Peng Zhen

343 Song Qingling thus could bring out her 'collected works' in 1966 (which she sent Liu and Wang Guangmei), and in November of the year, the 100th anniversary of Sun Yat-sen was an occasion for her to defend Sun posthumously, though Mao did not participate this time, but Zhou Enlai did. Though she herself remained unscathed, the harassment to death of a relative as well as the digging up of the tomb of her parents in Shanghai was a major shock. Cf. also Müller (2022: 249–250, 258).

344 Wang Guangmei, born into a prominent family in Beijing and thus with a rather different background than Liu Shaoqi's, was fluent in English, at times serving as a translator. (Cf. Perry 2021: 93). For Song Qingling and language use, cf. Müller (2022: 253–254).

彭真, who however survived it, wrote the plaque for a 'remembrance pavilion' newly erected for Liu, and a movie on Liu Shaoqi was also shown at the memorial (123). Liu's 'former home', of which the central hall had been shared formerly by the Liu family with their neighbours, had, in fact, first been opened for visitors already in 1959, but given the damage during the Cultural Revolution, had to be restored (124–125). The room with the bed he used as a child and where he slept when visiting home in 1961 again, is said to have been reconstructed 'as it was', while in the room where he received the peasants at that time to hear about the Great Famine (and the unlikely heavy drought, leading to the 70% man-made / 30% natural disaster evaluation) is evidenced also with photos of the time. Also his study room, as well as the village school nearby and the pond where he, too, swam (cf. Mao) are shown to visitors of Liu's 'memorial' ever since it was opened in 1988 (125–126).

Liu's 'memorial hall' soon started to receive also high-profile visitors. In 1991, Jiang Zemin came over from Shaoshan, as mentioned, which also shows that at the highest level, Liu's importance was by then acknowledged as only second to Mao (127–128). Jiang Zemin was also impressed by the reconstruction of Liu's living quarters in Zhongnanhai with his bed on the floor without legs which is explained in the booklet by way of his needing sleeping pills and thus fearing to feel dizzy during the night,[345] falling down from bed otherwise! Jiang Zemin also carefully studied the description of Liu's fate during the Cultural Revolution but apparently had nothing to correct. He, however, left an inscription recommending the *xiuyang* ('self-cultivation') of Party members (which underlines Liu's ideological 'guidance' in this respect as well as Jiang Zemin's reappraisal of Confucian-tinged morality lessons) (131–132). Also other Party leaders visited, usually coming over from Shaoshan as well, and the place would be also used to swear in new members of the Party, the Communist Youth League, as well as of the military, which means Liu was fully integrated in the 'patriotic' 'pantheon' again. Most of the visitors, however, were youths visiting 'for education' (134–136). Wang Guangmei, Liu's last wife, also came to the memorial repeatedly. She had been to Huaminglou for the first time in 1961 when she came with Liu and saw the undernourished village people. (As she did not speak Hunanese, she likely could not directly converse with them.)[346] Thereafter, she could only come after Liu's rehabilitation and thus visited in 1983 at the 85th anniversary of his birth (before the place was opened as his 'memorial'). In 1988 at the 90th anniversary of his birth, the bronze statue had been

345 Cf. Perry (2021: 95) who states Liu had fallen repeatedly during the night.

346 Cf. Perry (2021: 94–95) who comments on Wang's difficulty with topolects since she had been raised speaking Mandarin.

erected, and she personally joined the celebration of the opening of the whole site as Liu's 'memorial' for the public. In 1993 at the 95th anniversary of his birth, she came again, as well as in 1997 to celebrate his 100th in the 'Hunanese style' of reckoning, i.e., 'for males' counting the birth year in (and being the year the place was labelled a 'patriotic education showcase base') (138–139). At that occasion, also CCTV was there which prepared a documentary on Liu's life. As the 'patriotic' booklet notes, this visit of hers had been carefully prepared for by the locals. It would be televised, including her visiting the tomb of Liu's mother (which she had already visited once with Liu, back in 1961, and revisited in 1983, while adding this time a visit of the tomb of his father as well who was not buried together with the mother). Wang Guangmei also met again with the people she had met in 1961 to inquire about their lives in the meantime (140–142). In short, this visit of Wang Guangmei was a highly profiled one in the Chinese media, putting Liu Shaoqi back on the national screens while fixing his position in the 'patriotic' commemoration as well.

But beyond the family and Chinese politicians, also foreigners visited Liu's site, as the 'patriotic' booklet points out for the intended young reader: for the pre-Cultural Revolution period, in 1960, i.e., shortly after the place was opened, a group of youth delegates from 'Asia, Africa, and Latin America' are named who were shown around this home of the then chairman of the PRC (and thus officially the country's main representative of international importance). After the Cultural Revolution, a Japanese group of scholars of contemporary Chinese history came in 1988 (i.e., immediately when the 'memorial' was officially opened), but also a Sudanese military attaché was shown around in 1991, as well as a delegation of the China–Singapore friendship association in 1994, suggesting Liu had been redeployed also in international relations to some degree by then (143). But also visitors of other parts of China flocked to the site, who were notably said to have stated their gratefulness to Liu Shaoqi and his change in policies in the early 1960s (which indirectly reflects also back on the villagers' alerting him of the truth): otherwise they, too, would have died of hunger at the time – which once more underlines the booklet's agenda to teach the following generations about the horrendous Great Famine of which they are not to learn in official history classes! (144).

When Liu's 'former home' had been first opened for visitors in 1959, it was defined a 'cultural protection unit' (in accordance with Soviet terminology) (145). Still, it could evidently not be 'protected' by law through the times, namely during the Cultural Revolution (which also means that not only the building had to be repaired, but also that items to exhibit had to be searched for thereafter). In terms of holdings that the 'memorial' could finally put on display, important relics include

the collected 'works of Song Qingling' she had given in 1966 to Liu and Wang Guangmei (see above), with her personal dedication, which meant a rare moral support at that critical moment. Also the mentioned Liu portrait that a local cadre had saved by fixing it to the back of a Mao portrait is exhibited as a relic in the memorial hall (148–151). More personally, Liu's own commemoration of his second eldest brother at the latter's death in 1949 as his early 'leader' on the way to revolution is on display as well. That brother had been the one joining the Xinhai revolution, introducing Liu to 'progressive' thought. This personal tribute would come into the possession of the 'memorial' which, after all, was also that brother's home, via Wang Guangmei, who was at the time of the brother's death already Liu Shaoqi's wife. Another personal item is a foreign cigarette holder which Liu had received once from Mao as symbolising their 'deep friendship' at the time, once more recalling that their relationship had been also a positive and even intimate one over much of the time (151–153). In short, these relics are to reflect positively on Liu Shaoqi's relations to others.

A particular stress is, however, put on the exhibited copy of the first Constitution of the PRC (1954) which Liu had helped to draft and with which he tried in vain to argue his own case in the Cultural Revolution. When the two elder ones of his children with Wang Guangmei who were trying to join the Red Guards at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, wanted to participate not only in the 'destroy the Four Olds' activities but also in the 'searching of people's homes' for plundering (and beating) those who owned valuables, he is said to have intervened, arguing that such behaviour would 'not conform to the Constitution' (which implies a 'rule by law' point of view in sync with CCP policies after the Cultural Revolution) (153). Another important item on display is a copy of Liu's own text on the 'self-cultivation of Communist Party members' (*Lun gongchandangyuan de xiuyang*) which was notably kept in Yan'an before, where it had been used during the Rectification Campaign of 1942 by Mao, i.e., is not just any copy of this text but one proving that Mao himself had personally approved it (155). Further relics included his already mentioned rain outfit when he visited (after the Hunan visit in 1961) Manchuria's forests to inform himself about deforestation there (driven by the Great Leap Forward policies of backyard steel furnaces). And his participant badge of the 1952 assembly in the Soviet Union during his state visit there also serves to document the 'friendship' between the Soviet Union and the young PRC at that time and his instrumental role therein (157–159).

In short, this 'patriotic' booklet of 1998 on Liu Shaoqi's home as part of the project to present every single of the '100' (first list) 'patriotic education showcase bases' to young Chinese citizens would at the same time also use the occasion and

commemorate the '100th' anniversary of Liu's birth. The booklet was written by various authors who are detailed in their respective contributions (160), and thus occasional overlaps and inconsistencies ensued – as is also the case in various others of these booklets, but this booklet is peculiar in that it made clear in the 'patriotic education' context to the intended young target group more openly than the filmic representations discussed above, that the CCP also committed grave errors in history, and with regard to the Great Famine even horrendously so. Likely, such a narrative could be only provided in the written medium at the time, and tied to the sensitive case of a Party leader who was to become a political victim himself.

Moving from the late 1990s' view closer to the present, the *Fengbei* narrative (Peng 2019), updating the description to the Xi Jinping era, is striking in that it remains almost silent once again about Liu's later fate after his 1961 visit to Huaminglou, and it keeps silent also once again on the Great Famine. That way, the recent generation is no longer to learn about any past CCP 'errors'.

As for the history of the 'memorial', the intended reader of the Xi Jinping era is only told that the one to open the site in 1988 (at Liu's 90th anniversary of birth) was the chairman of the PRC at the time, Yang Shangkun 杨尚昆, and (by this updating the late 1990s' narratives) that in 2008, the exhibition was overhauled. After the 2008 overhaul, the 'memorial' in Liu's home village would include more sites beyond his former home, the square with his statue, and the exhibition hall, namely his former village school and a small pond (where he swam), but also a local folklore culture village for tourists. In the modern-day touristic context, the whole is by now called the Huaminglou 'scenic area'. His 'former home' was, it is argued, a 'normal peasant house', which was a protected unit since 1959 (when he became officially chairman of the PRC). Like the plaque of the 'memorial hall' (*jinianguan*), the plaque of the *guju* seen today, 'Liu Shaoqi tongzhi *guju*', had been written by Deng Xiaoping, but in this case already in 1982 (soon after Liu Shaoqi was rehabilitated in 1980 and before the 'memorial' was set up in 1988). But over the main hall of the house, there is the additional plaque 'Liu Shaoqi tongzhi *jiuju*', and this issue of naming is addressed here in more detail for the modern-day reader, which is a rare point in this 2019 narrative which invites readers to at least double-think in this book on 'Hunan patriotic education showcase bases' (which covers also the Shaoshan site of Mao discussed above). That particular *jiuju* plaque was the older one of Liu's lifetime and had been kept locally (during the Cultural Revolution) by turning it around to serve as a cutting board in the kitchen, covered with another board to conceal the script. Connecting this expressedly with Mao's Shaoshan case, it is argued here that Liu Shaoqi (or rather his entourage, according to the narrative) suggested during Liu's own 1961 visit to Shaoshan that Mao was well and alive, so

why use *guju*? Thus, Liu had advocated in 1961 the change into *jiuju* at Shaoshan, and asked Mao's 'friend' Guo Moruo to rewrite the plaque that way (see above)! Similarly, thereafter, his own home, originally in 1959 called *guju* as well, was also rewritten into *jiuju*, but in this case not with a new calligraphy, but by just changing the one character, leaving the rest in place (which can be spotted by the visitor approaching the main hall and identified as a 'correction' on the plaque). In 1966 (at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution), the whole place – as the narrative simply states to the readers of Xi Jinping times – 'had to close'. But in 1982, Deng Xiaoping rewrote the home's plaque, then once more with its original *guju*, in his own hand-writing. To remind visitors of this story, both plaques, the 'corrected' *jiuju* one and Deng's new *guju* version, are now exhibited on-site (24–26). At the new entrance of the village, in turn, well-known modern calligrapher Shen Peng 沈鹏 (1931–2023) was asked to write the place name over the archway through which the visitor approaches the whole area today, calling it (in parallel to the case of Deng Xiaoping – see below) 'Liu Shaoqi *guli*' 刘少奇故里 (home village of Liu Shaoqi) for the modern tourist.

The square, layed out in 1988 (cf. Mao's square in Shaoshan), features the bronze statue of Liu, which was sponsored by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the intended young reader learns, which underlines Liu's role in the Communist labour movement (27). A further pavilion named after his most well-known (and contentious) pamphlet on the 'self-cultivation of a Communist Party member', had been added outdoor as well, the 'self-cultivation pavilion', again in the hand-writing of a noted modern calligrapher, Li Duo 李铎 (1930–2020). By this, Liu is reframed as to some degree also 'Confucian' over the term *xiuyang* ('self-cultivation') (which reflects the new appraisal of Confucian elements for Chinese citizen formation in modern-day China, combining them with Communism). In fact, the indoor exhibition highlights the manuscript of this fateful pamphlet, notably in the meantime together not only with the positive comments of Mao, but also with those of Deng Xiaoping, and Jiang Zemin, thus integrating this work into China's ideological development more generally, and sanctioning it politically as still relevant (28).

The park around Liu's home is to show to tourists today a combination of culture and ecology at the site (which one may associate with Liu's criticism of Great Leap measures in consequence of his 1961 trip through China, though this is never spelt out) and was opened by Wang Guangmei in 2003, together with their son Liu Yuan, thus updating the site *vs* the late 1990s' descriptions also on that front. For the traditional Huaminglou tower itself, lay Buddhist key figure Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 (whom we have encountered with his calligraphy or poetry at various 'red' places, e.g., at

the Red Flag Canal, chapter 2.3; or Shanghai's Longhua 'Martyrs' Cemetery', chapter 3.2) wrote its (new) plaque in his calligraphy, inscribing himself, too, in this place honouring Liu Shaoqi (29). Another striking feature, played out over calligraphy, is the reframing of Liu Shaoqi by assembling the character *de* 德 (virtue) as written by various politically important leaders (clipped out of somewhere, though): Mao, Liu himself, Deng, and Jiang Zemin, which is a telling move to recast the top leaders of the PRC over calligraphy in a Confucian framework, using the memorial space for the most profiled Party victim of Cultural Revolution times! On the other hand, the new folklore exhibition which highlights the locality and local custom in the folklore village has its name written by Wang Guangying 王光英 (1919–2018), brother of Wang Guangmei and a noted 'red capitalist' and politician (who, needless to say, was persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, too, given his family relation) (30). That way, various stakeholders connected themselves over handwriting with this place.

Overall, the visitor of Liu's home is to get the impression, according to the new 2019 narrative framing, that compared to Mao, Liu had an apparently less conflictual relationship with his Chinese upbringing, both at home and in school. This subject, which was less pronounced in the late 1990s' presentations discussed above, is in the 2019 version in the focus: Liu's schooling, and the relations in his natal family, namely the relationship with his mother (in a filial duty vein), since the father died already in 1911. While the mother, herself not alphabetised, hoped he would become a medical doctor or schoolteacher, Liu (similar to Mao), instead, wanted to pursue his studies further. (Since he was only one among many children, this was not easy to achieve, but as the narrative continues to stress, tongue in cheek for the intended reading pupils, he as the youngest one knew how to bring the mother always around.) His way up from the first primary school in the modern sense in the vicinity up to secondary school in Changsha is detailed, typically stressing that he was a diligent and top-scoring pupil (31–35). Through education, he came to realise China's plight and learned about the larger world.

While Mao is said to have had a preference for the subject of history (see above), Liu is said to have liked and excelled in all kinds of subjects (as one might expect also from present-day pupils) (33–34). In 1961, when Liu returned home for the first and last time after the PRC's foundation (and thus later than Mao who had returned, as mentioned, in 1959), he proved himself also 'filial', visiting the tomb of his mother (there is no mention of the father, likely since he had died so much earlier),[347] whom he had last seen in 1925, and who had died in 1931. The mother,

347 As mentioned above, it was Wang Guangmei who would visit the tomb of Liu's father, too, long after Liu's own death.

as is accentuated in this *Fengbei* narrative, was someone in the end sustaining her son, though coming from the 'old society'. She had even given in to his wish to receive family money for studying abroad, which turned out to be the Soviet Union (35–37). After Liu had returned to China and organised the strike in Anyuan (for which he became famous later, annoying Mao),[348] the mother heard for the first time from his brothers the shocking news that he had turned a revolutionary, and when he was imprisoned by the Hunan warlord Zhao Hengti in late 1925 (whose clutches Mao had escaped – see above), and was 'on pressure' released in 1926, she would even come to visit her son, hoping he would give up his radicalism (which he of course did not) (38–39). That way, the *Fengbei* narrative ends on the dramatic note that because of the country's and its people's wellbeing, he could not be always 'filial', his mother dying without him, and he would even hear of her death only later. That way, the classic drama of loyalty (to the country) *vs* filial duty is played out in this local perspective, ending on an emotional note (and leaving out what happened to Liu Shaoqi later). In sum, the grave problems around Liu's life trajectory and his end are simply skipped in the new narrative, focusing on his early years and on his 'role model' function for a present-day Chinese citizen, honouring both education and 'filial duty', but above all the service to the nation.

Case study: Deng Xiaoping

Compared to the two cases of Mao's and Liu's former homes, the one of Deng Xiaoping, which is the last case we look into here and the most recent CCP leader considered in the 'showcase bases' system, has to grapple with the fact that the local great son never returned at all, once that he had left as a youngster. The **Deng Xiaoping guju** 邓小平故居 (Deng Xiaoping's former home) (note: without 'comrade')[349] in Guang'an (Sichuan Province) (list 1, 1997) therefore tries to show him as a local, while Deng himself, though never having had any apparent problem with his place of origin, took his distances. The place thus attempts to market itself as the place where Deng's personality was formed. From there, he would go out to the world by joining the work-study programme for Chinese in France as a young man

348 Cf. Perry (2012: e.g. p. 211).

349 Notably, the official 'patriotic' materials differ in naming the site: while the common form is 'Deng Xiaoping guju', the collection of maps names it 'Deng Xiaoping *tongzhi jiuju*'. (*Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* 1998: 71). Jiang Zemin, in turn, would label it in 1998 'Deng Xiaoping *tongzhi guju*' (see below).

to never return, even when physically not too far from there.[350] This also means that Deng had not even come back for the burials of his parents (in an 'unfilial' way, according to traditional standards, like many other revolutionaries, who acted likewise out of their commitment to 'the cause' which did not allow for personal considerations.)

Similar to Liu Shaoqi's case, the visitor (as I observed in 2014) enters a whole area called today after the local great son, here the 'Deng Xiaoping guli' 邓小平故里 (home village of Deng Xiaoping). This integrates, e.g., also the imperial honorary archway once built for Deng's famous ancestor Deng Shimin 邓时敏 who served as an official at the Qing court, beyond the Deng family's estate as such, including also the tomb of Deng's father who would die in 1936, long after his son had started his revolutionary career. In contrast to the cases of Mao or Liu Shaoqi, Deng's major bronze statue, installed on site, does not show him in a standing position of authority, but casually seated as if to convey a more approachable image of the paramount leader of the 1980s.

In the large house of the Dengs, in turn, the visitor (at least as I observed in 2014) encounters comic-like illustrated stories of Deng as a 'filial son' (strikingly so, since he apparently did not fulfil his 'filial' duties to his parents, although he took in the last wife and thus widow of his father after the founding of the PRC to stay with him in Beijing and also later during the difficult times of the Cultural Revolution). In terms of economy, the Deng family household was apparently rather well-off, produced also bean curd and sold noodles, beyond growing crops and raising silk worms. In the park next to the house, the visitor encounters a great number of large stones with inscribed endorsements, showing that several prominent individuals, but also companies, wanted to be present at this site nominated as a 'patriotic education showcase base' at the time of Deng's death. Jiang Zemin, for one, wrote the name of Deng's *guju* with 'comrade' included, though the official listing has it without 'comrade'. All in all, the site is an interesting case of a 'showcase base' designed in the making of the 'patriotic education' campaign, and the most recent of the 'first list' sites, with the 'hero' still alive during the planning (and the preceding lower-level nomination), while the listing as a 'national patriotic education showcase base' occurred shortly after he had died in February 1997.

In filmic representation of the late 1990s, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip (disc 7), produced by Sichuan TV's societal education department in 1998, i.e., a year after Deng Xiaoping's death, introduces his *guju* typically with an air view, showing the courtyard from above, which is in a usual

350 Deng visited Sichuan also later but did never use the occasion to go back to his home.

country style (as a U-shaped three-part building or *sanheyuan* 三合院). The plaque at the entry hall clearly reads: 'Deng Xiaoping *tongzhi jiuju*', that way adding not only 'comrade', but also using *jiuju* instead of *guju* (which could be read as having been written when Deng was still alive, if the above cited feeling of the early 1960s in the case of Mao and Liu Shaoqi that *guju* was not appropriate for someone alive is to hold, and this name is, in fact, also sometimes used for labelling the site in 'patriotic' materials like the map collection – *Baige aiguozhuyi jiaoyu shifan jidi dituji* 1999: 71).

Taking the TV audience on a visual tour through the house, the film clip explains that to one side of the main hall for the ancestors, placed in the middle, there was the bedroom of Deng's grandmother. The bedroom of Deng's father and his wife, in turn, figures richly decorated furniture. Another room was assigned to Deng's two younger brothers, while a room with milling utensils shows where Deng Xiaoping once took part in manual work, together with his elder sister. The main focus, however, is the room where Deng was born in 1904 – as we saw, a staple in such *guju* (which in this case makes also clear that he was not born in the bedroom of his father and wife, since, in fact, his mother was not the main wife at the time of Deng's birth – but would become so later when the first wife died).[351] Immediately thereafter, the camera turns to the tomb of Deng's birth mother,[352] stressing that he loved her (but did not bury her in 1926). (In fact, he had broken by then with his family.)[353] Her gentle ways, it is argued, left their mark on his personality (similar to the narrative framing of Mao and Liu and their mothers), and she cared for him dearly when he frequented a local *sishu*. His father, it is argued, was a man 'with old and new thoughts' (and thus in between the father figures as described for Mao and Liu), and notable links to the Gelaohui 哥老会 (Elder Brother Society), a secret society very active in the area. The father became involved in the railway protection

351 The first wife of Deng's father (a born Zhang 张) was childless, and thus the father took in Deng's mother-to-be (a born Dan 淡) who therefore also had her own bedroom (where Deng Xiaoping was born). When the first wife died soon thereafter, Deng's mother became the main wife and bore further children.

352 The attentive viewer might spot four graves which besides Deng's mother (born Dan) and his grandmother (born Dai 戴) also included the later third wife of his father (born Xiao 萧) and one more (possibly the first wife, born Zhang). The last wife of his father, Xia Bogen 夏伯根, was the one whom Deng Xiaoping would take in later in PRC times and who thus did not stay on in the village.

353 Cf. Pantsov / Levine (2015: 30–31). One of the issues was his betrothal to a local girl he did not intend to marry. Deng broke off the relationship with his parents in 1923 when in France and becoming a Communist. At that time, he also declared he would never return. Pantsov / Levine (2015: 54–55), however, suggest he later linked up with his father for financial reasons again when back in China, only to use and betray him again.

movement of Sichuan (1911) and in the Xinhai revolution, and thus was obviously politically active. The 'patriotic site' of Deng's *guju* also includes a nearby pond where Deng Xiaoping swam as a child, and (like Mao) he would love swimming all his life. Subsequently, he went to a modern school a bit farther away. While his mother was worried that he would not eat enough, Deng, however, returned the food she gave him every day, being very economical (as we saw, a recurring topic in these outstanding personalities' biographical accounts). He then went to a higher primary school still farther away, but always walked on foot. When he went on to a secondary school in the nearest city, Guang'an 广安, which was a former *keju* 科举 place (i.e., where the local-level imperial exams had been held), he could not commute any longer and had to live in the dormitory, from that point onward already being largely absent from his home village. Near the place of the school was a river, the Qujiang 渠江, which joins the Jialing 嘉陵 river to then flow to Chongqing to merge into the Yangzi. From the Qu and Jialing rivers, the TV audience is pathetically told, Deng would finally leave his home area in 1919 as a youngster to first go to Chongqing, since his father had suggested he should move there (where, in fact, the father often stayed – cf. below), when a new preparatory school for students going to France was set up. From Chongqing, Deng Xiaoping would then move to France as a work-study programme participant. Thus, Deng left on a Yangzi steamer to never return to his home where he had spent his formative years of childhood.

In contrast to the national TV film clip, which uses the official name of the site as listed in 1997, the educational *Zhonghua hun* video (disc 6), produced by Sichuan Province's audio-visual education entity in 1998 as well, one year after Deng's demise, calls the place 'Deng Xiaoping *tongzhi guju*' (thus following Jiang Zemin's way of writing the plaque, while the officially listed site is without 'tongzhi', as mentioned). This video, too, sets in with views of the courtyard and building, which already Deng Xiaoping's greatgrandfather had started to build.

While the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* TV film clip discussed above had not shown any ancestral tablets or else in the centrally placed main hall, this educational video notably shows also the religious elements in the house (with Daoist deities). Visitors can be observed looking at all the rooms, including the one he was born in, introduced one by one, which makes also obvious to the intended watching pupils that beyond those also introduced in the TV film clip, there was one for Deng's sisters (*jiemei* 姐妹) as well (which, in turn, discloses that there had been also *younger* sisters in the family, of whom he, however, only knew the one born by his own mother, while others would be born later by another mother when he had already left).

This video also shows to the intended watching pupils a photo exhibition held in the rooms of the house at the time of filming, divided according to eight topics, with only one dealing with the time before 1949 (and thus also covering Deng's real relationship with the locality). For highlighting the local formation of Deng, a special focus in this educational video is on Deng's schooling: first, he went to the usual local traditional *sishu*, then to the (modern-style) higher primary and to secondary school (which are quickly presented). In 1919, finally, he would go to the preparatory school for work-study participants in Chongqing, here profiled as having been set up by noted Sichuan educator and intellectual (and later Communist) Wu Yuzhang 吴玉章.[354] Deng would never return home, but preferred to call himself instead 'a son of the Chinese people' (which would redirect his 'filial' duties toward the Chinese people at large).

For his later career and political crises (the first during the Ruijin Soviet in the early 1930s – see chapter 3.3 of the present book, connected also to the aborted preceding Baise Uprising – see chapter 4.2 in the present book, and then twice during the Cultural Revolution), it is mentioned only in the commentary (without images) that Deng would receive hard tests, being unjustly criticised. With a visual overlay of water splashing over the *guju*, it is suggested that the site had also suffered like its 'master'. The *guju* had been appropriated for a cantine during the Great Leap Forward, used as a child care centre, etc., and was finally physically attacked during the Cultural Revolution by Red Guards (when Deng was criticised from the start as only 'second to Liu Shaoqi'). Later, the city of Guang'an, however, restored the place and had the people living there at the time move out. Some original furniture could be found again, the viewing pupils are assured, and by the time of filming, the site appeared as set in a green and pleasant surrounding.

Apart from normal visitors, though, also military is presented marching in to receive 'education' there, as visiting pupils do as well (once more suggesting visually that the military and the pupils are linked over education). The pupils duly state to the camera (and thus to their fellow pupils watching) that what they learnt from the site was that they should build up the country well. Similarly, a representative of the military is presented giving a 'standard speech' to reinforce the key 'patriotic' lesson for the intended watching pupils. Swearing-in ceremonies, held at the site as at

354 The booklet (see below), which usually is to be expected to provide more information for the young readers, does not relate the school to the well-known Sichuanese revolutionary Wu Yuzhang. Wu had, in fact, been sympathising with anarchism at that time (see Müller 2001: 328–329), but then became a Communist. That way, the educational video provides more information than the booklet does to the intended target group. (Wu Yuzhang was attacked in the Cultural Revolution and died already in December 1966.)

other 'showcase bases', are to prove that this education in 'patriotism' has been successful. Deng's son Deng Pufang 邓朴方 (not named, but easily recognisable by his wheel chair he is in since his Cultural Revolution ordeal) is also shown visiting and shaking hands, suggesting the Dengs and their 'ancestral home' are once again in close harmony, that way backing up the place also from the family side. In 1998 at Deng Xiaoping's first death anniversary, a great gathering was held at this *guju* to honour the departed great leader. At that occasion, then-general secretary Jiang Zemin wrote the plaque above a big head of Deng with the name of the (already listed) site: 'Deng Xiaoping *tongzhi guju'* (although the site was listed, as mentioned, without *tongzhi*). And thus, this educational video calls the site respectively, following Jiang Zemin's diction.

The 'patriotic' booklet (Kang / Zhang 1998) on this 'patriotic education showcase base' of Deng Xiaoping's home, in turn, is notable in so far as it lays open in its afterword how the authors defined their own role in this case of a site connected to a leader that had just passed away (in February 1997). Referring to Jiang Zemin's call for 'patriotic education' to be something going from kindergarten through university (cf. chapter 1 of the present book), focusing notably on modern and contemporary history and on an education in 'national conditions' (*guoqing* 国情), the authors state that they opted for using local geography, architectural styles, environment, administration of the site, its cultural relics, and the network of people connecting to it as their approach to profile Deng's 'former home' (given that Deng's relationship to his home ended so early which meant that to write a booklet on this site was no easy task). By focusing on Deng's childhood, his learning experience, and small stories circulating locally about young Deng, the authors hoped to capture the interest of the intended young readership (who knew Deng as an old man only). This should lead them to both 'love their fatherland and love their native place (*jiaxiang* 家乡)' (95). That way, the local would also receive its due share (which Guang'an city, to which the place administratively belongs, had to struggle for.)

Accordingly, the booklet focuses on those topics that connect to Deng, born in 1904, as a child and youth, since different from Mao or Liu Shaoqi he not only never returned, but also left very early, i.e., in 1919 at the age of merely 15 years. To demonstrate the site's impact on Deng is therefore a challenge, given that there is also not much material of the time since the house had undergone changes after he had left, and in PRC times was inhabitated by other people (and damaged during the Cultural Revolution). Because of Deng's changing political fortunes, things (and people) connected to him underwent corresponding ups and downs, and this means that, e.g., the furniture could only be gathered in the 1980s after a substantial gap in time. In other words: what could be exhibited, was obviously not 'in place' since

the time he left, nor were his own family members there, be it those of his natal family who knew the place,[355] be it his last wife and children who had never lived there. Furthermore, Deng himself had never authenticated the items shown. That way, reconstruction was very difficult in practice, and thus the booklet tries to at least make things plausible, or relies on some comments or villagers' recollections to imagine how the site might have looked like at the time of Deng's youth.

The present *guju* features, as mentioned, a plaque written by Jiang Zemin in 1998 (just before the booklet was published), at the first anniversary of Deng's death in a great ceremony. (This is also the occasion shown in the filmic treatments discussed above). The main hall of the house is obviously reconstructed, although it is interesting to note that while the educational video showed a family altar in the middle (which incidentally was also not to be seen at the time of my visit in 2014), the booklet evades this potentially delicate religious topic (Deng's mother and grandmother were known as religious) and only shows the side walls in its illustration part! The painting and calligraphy scrolls featuring there, in turn, are obviously of the respective exhibitions held there and thus very recent (and not an 'original' interior decoration of the Dengs). A major focus in material terms is on the bed Deng is said to have been born in which had been assigned to a local cadre when the house was given to various families in PRC times, who 'carefully kept it' and then 'handed it back' when Deng was finally China's paramount leader – and the *guju* was started to be prepared for locally (55).

The biographical part of the booklet makes evident to the intended young reader that Deng was from a rather wealthy family with some distinguished forefathers. (Notably and typically, the issue of a likely Hakka identity of the Dengs is not raised.)[356] The family line had settled down in the area during the early Ming and produced several *jinshi* 進士 degree scholars, while it was less successful in Qing

355 Deng's siblings had to leave the place at the latest in 1951. Cf. also Pantsov / Levine (2015: 150), based on Deng's daughter's biography of her father.

356 New Zealand-born 'friend of China' Rewi Alley, in fact, briefly addressed the issue of Deng's likely Hakka ancestry in his short article (Alley 1980: 8) on Guang'an after his visit to Deng's birthplace and consultation of the area's annals which note two waves of immigration, one in the early Ming, including among the Hakka families the Dengs, and one in the early Qing. Deng's Hakka ancestry has been also pointed out in Erbaugh's influential article on the 'secret history of the Hakkas' which shows the considerable proportion of important PRC figures very likely having Hakka ancestry, which is, however, treated as a topic not officially welcome to address. (Erbaugh 1992: 939). (One may note, that beyond the issue of potentially dividing effects of ethnic profiling, being Hakka was also considered a societal stigma, the Hakka being considered the 'gypsies' of China by the local majority population which led to local violence repeatedly.) While Pantsov / Levine (2015) (and Chinese sources) do not address the issue, Dillon (2015: 6–7) mentions (without references) that Deng was likely of Hakka origin which in many ways also fits the family's lifestyle.

times but for the outstanding ancestor Deng Shimin who received the honorary archway or *paifang* 牌坊 and a stele in the 18th century from the court, and thus the village was called Paifang Village (6–7). Apart from growing crops, the family also produced silk. Deng's father had received some education and would also teach in a local school himself. The father, the intended young reader learns, was only 18 years of age when Deng Xiaoping was born as the second child after an elder sister.[357] A member of the Gelaohui and critical of the Manchus (9), the father took part in the railway protection movement of Sichuan, as mentioned (to defend the local share-holders against the Qing's plans of nationalisation and selling the rights to foreigners, in 1911), was against Christianity, and pro revolution. Because of his revolutionary inclinations, Deng's father came into trouble and finally had to hide in Chongqing, the intended young reader learns, only occasionally returning home, while the latter was run by Deng's grandmother and mother. Deng's relationship with his father was overall much less conflictual in his youth than in the case of Mao. His father, in fact, actively encouraged him to go for education and finally to do so overseas. This means the father was leading Deng's way to both, education as well as revolution. However, the father's frequent absence also meant that Deng mostly grew up with his grandmother and mother (who would both die in 1926 when he was already away and had broken with his family that had wanted him to marry at home, while the father would remarry twice, have further children, and in 1936 would die a violent death, being killed by bandits, again without the eldest son, Deng Xiaoping, present) (10–11, 85). Today, the tombs of Deng's mother and grandmother (shown in the TV film clip) are also elsewhere than the 'tomb' of the father which is marked on the *guju*'s grounds for today's visitors.[358] But Deng's absence at all those burials also shows once more that 'filial duty' demands and a revolutionary career did not easily fit.

Deng's mother, two years the father's senior, had four (in fact five) children in all,[359] and had to manage the household together with her mother-in-law largely

357 The first wife had not borne children, and thus Deng's father took in Madame Dan additionally (who would, as mentioned, become his second 'wife' only when the first wife had died, and bore Deng Xiaoping as her second child). Cf. also the geneaology of Deng in Pantsov/Levine (2015: 13, 443–444). Alley (1980: 8) already mentioned that Deng was son to the 'second wife'.

358 Given the two downfalls of Deng during the Cultural Revolution, it is highly unlikely that the tomb of his father was spared destruction. It is, however, marked without comment at the site today.

359 One may note that different from the suggestions in the two filmic treatments and the booklet, Madame Dan also had born a fifth child, though only four of her children survived infancy. Incidentally, Deng's second younger brother Deng Xianzhi 邓先治 would be harassed to death in the Cultural Revolution (Kang / Zhang 1998: 85). For a genealogy of Deng in English, see Pantsov / Levine (2015: 443–444).

alone, the father not only being often absent, but also occasionally 'spending' large amounts of the family's money away from home (17). Thus, Deng is said to have been largely influenced in his childhood by his mother, seeing her also hold up the whole household. He thus wanted to help her, the narrative suggests, as a 'filial' son, and his dedication to his mother is described in detail, evoking an image of an idyllic childhood in a beautiful natural environment.

His school education is also not characterised as traumatic as, e.g., Mao later said to remember in his own case. Notably, although Deng was not particularly noted for his calligraphy which one nevertheless encounters repeatedly over China at those places where he deemed it feasible to inscribe himself, his eagerness to write well with the brush is detailed when he had his first (traditional-style) education in the nearby *sishu* (14). Apart from his claimed good results in education, he was of course also exemplary in morals, helping other classmates who had problems, be it intellectually or personally (again *topoi* recurring, as we saw, in many of these 'role model' biographies). In 1910, when he was six years old, his father sent him to a new-style school where the father also taught himself and where a teacher also told the pupils about 'unorthodox' topics like rebellions in history, the Opium Wars, the Boxers, and the Qing's incompetency to deal with the foreign threat. Thus, he was roused by this early revolutionary teacher, while his mother contrasted the intellectual stimulus with exceeding motherly care, by food and all forms of protection (15–16). He, in turn, would help at home with grinding grain or caring for the silk puppies.

Since not much is known about Deng as a child, some stories locally told about his deeds are integrated in the narrative, though the authors of the 'patriotic' booklet try to signal to their readership that they do not intend to exaggerate his outstanding personality (given that Deng had expressed himself critically about the hyperbolic descriptions of Mao and the whole personality cult around him). On the other hand, Deng Xiaoping is also characterised as someone thinking independently, not believing any popular stories about unlucky things or religious creeds, i.e., being against superstition (which might explain why the religious part of the main hall of his 'former home' was not shown in the illustration section of the 'patriotic' booklet) (20–21).

In 1915, Deng went to a higher primary school a bit farther away where he is also said to have 'saved' a classmate who purportedly literally believed in the (in)famous '24 stories of filial piety' and thought he might cure his ill mother by cutting off his own flesh like in one of those stories, convincing him of the nonsense and unscientificity of such methods, suggesting he should rather go for a doctor to treat his mother (23–24). After graduation and a brief stay at the secondary school

of Guang'an (where Deng also encountered French Jesuits, which is not mentioned in the 'patriotic' booklet, though),[360] the May Fourth Movement in 1919 led to turmoil, and thus classes were shelved because of the strikes. Thus, Deng went home, but his father suggested he should go to Chongqing instead where a preparatory school for work-and-study in France had opened (27). At that point, 15-year-old Deng left his natal region forever, studied in Chongqing briefly, and then went to France in 1920 at the age of 16 (and later to the Soviet Union).

The biographical part of the booklet on Deng's childhood and adolescence is enriched by the description of the environment in which Deng grew up to suggest how this influenced the great son of the locality. The area, being well-known for its many Buddhist stone carvings and inscriptions, would however also feel the negative impact of Deng's changing political fortunes after he had left home. E.g., the village name would change repeatedly over PRC times. Since the name 'Paifang' was too traditional and thus 'feudal', this name would be dropped during the Great Leap Forward in the late 1950s for 'Great Brigade' (*weida dadui* 伟大大队). At that time, also most of the forests were cut down to provide firewood for the backyard steel furnaces, leading to respective negative results for the local ecology. The following Great Famine meant also for this locality a horrendous disaster (which this 'patriotic booklet', while being less pronounced than the one on Liu Shaoqi's home in Hunan discussed above, not expressly pointing out the man-made background to the intended young reader, still describes rather openly as '90% of the village's population having been ill with dropsy' and 'over 50 people' of the tiny village 'having starved to death'). When Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping readjusted the economic policies (in the early 1960s), the village also changed its name back to the former 'Paifang', to only drop this again in the Cultural Revolution (when the physical archway or *paifang* – as well as many Buddhist sculptures and stone inscriptions of the area – were also demolished in the 'destroy the Four Olds' campaign). At that time, the village was renamed as 'Anti-Revisionist Great Brigade' (*fanxiu dadui* 反修大队). In the early 1970s, the area lived once more through a period of enforced deforestation and low wages, which led to another time of famine for the locals, which is said to have only ended when Deng was safely back as leader in the late 1970s (31). (This is notable since according to Rewi Alley, the already mentioned 'friend of China' from New Zealand who had made the PRC his home and visited the place in 1980, the area's soil was as such very fertile and productive,[361] which leads to the conclusion that this famine of the early 1970s had been, in fact, caused once more by politics, not nature.) In any case, in post-Cultural Revolution

360 See Pantsov / Levine (2015: 18).
361 Cf. Alley's 1980 account (Alley 1980: 7–8, 10–11), who stated this.

times, one point high on the agenda locally was reforestation, and several activities were undertaken to plant trees again, which included tropical plants imported from the south (32–33). That way, the ecological situation of the area was stabilised, and famines would not occur again.

Of Deng Xiaoping's own children (and wives), none had been to Paifang Village (as it would be named again) before the 1980s.[362] His youngest daughter Maomao 毛毛 (i.e., Deng Rong 邓榕) who would write a multi-volume biography of her father (after biographies had appeared in the West by Western journalists who had visited the site before her, namely Uli Franz and Harrison Salisbury (see below), whose narratives she wanted to counter with an 'authoritative' Chinese version), finally came in October 1989 (31, 91). (Not the least after the Tiananmen Massacre of June 1989 on orders of Deng, her Chinese biography of her father of which the first volume was soon translated into various languages,[363] tried to polish his reputation.) Deng's eldest son Deng Pufang, invalid since the Cultural Revolution (after a 'struggle session'), came to Paifang as well, namely in 1995, when he visited the tombs of Deng Xiaoping's mother and grandmother (that had been shown in the TV film clip) at the nearby mountain which are claimed to have been kept intact (while the one of the father likely was not) (37–38, 81).[364]

As for the house itself, by now a three-part U-shaped building of which the third part, however, was only built *after* Deng Xiaoping had left home forever (44), the 'patriotic' booklet characterises it room for room for the intended young readers as a 'normal people's home' (although it clearly suggests a certain wealth). The ancestor altar in the main hall is at least mentioned in the text (if not shown in the illustration part, leaving the educational video as the only visual acknowledgement in the 'patriotic education' materials). The shed as part of the building is said to have contained pigs and cattle at the time Deng Xiaoping lived there. The Dengs obviously

362 Notably, the booklet (Kang / Zhang 1998) is cautious in speaking about Deng's several wives, though the children are all by his last wife who was still alive when the booklet was written. As mentioned in the discussion of the Baise Uprising (see chapter 4.2 of the present book), his first wife died in Shanghai after giving birth, the baby also not surviving long. His second wife divorced him when he came into political trouble in Ruijin, remarried and went to the Soviet Union where she died during the German attack on Moscow in 1941. (Cf. Kang / Zhang 1998: 86–87). It may be noted that Deng's youngest son received a university education in the US in the 1980s (Kang / Zhang 1998: 90) – as did two of the daughters of Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei, as mentioned above.

363 She put out several volumes in Chinese, assigned to different phases of his life, which in the PRC have become a kind of 'standard version' on Deng. Obviously, her writing is with a vested interest, and she respects all official political evaluations. She is born in 1950, i.e., in PRC times when the family's links to the 'former residence' in Paifang Village were actively severed.

364 This comment on the tombs of the mother and grandmother may be indirectly read as acknowledging that the father's tomb, instead, was not 'intact'.

also produced wine with their grain for selling or for exchanging food (which sounds, once more, somewhat 'rich' for a 'normal peasant' household; in fact, Deng was attacked during the Cultural Revolution also for his 'rich landowner' background) (45). Silk worms were raised, too, from which the mother would make cloth. Also the living rooms of the later-born half-sisters of Deng (when he had already left for good) are mentioned. In 1951, all family members had, however, to leave the compound, and thus the building was used in different ways, while the surrounding trees were cut down during the Great Leap Forward as firewood (46). The place could be treated as a 'former home' of Deng Xiaoping only since the 1980s when he was China's undisputed leader, moving out the last inhabitants (in 1980 still numbering 53!)[365] in 1987, and trying to collect Deng's former furniture (47, 91). (However, it seems Deng himself was not too supportive of the establishment of his own 'former home', given the immense attention Mao's Shaoshan 'former home' had drawn.)[366] The official acknowledgement as a heritage site and 'former home', notably called *jiuju* (which also recalls Liu Shaoqi's usage – see above) at the time, was only proclaimed in 1992 (when Deng had officially resigned from all his posts) (47). In 1993, there was the first official political heavy weight coming to the place: Qiao Shi 乔石, then chairman of the National People's Congress (91). In 1995 the site became for the first time a 'patriotic education base' of Sichuan province, and in 1997, following Deng's death in February of the year, a 'showcase base' on national level. With the plaque written by Jiang Zemin in 1998 at the first anniversary of Deng's death, it also visibly made the transition from a *jiuju* to a *guju* (and added the 'comrade') (47).

The indoor exhibition, the intended young reader of the booklet learns, features photographs about Deng's life, and some rooms put the 'cultural relics' on display. The latter include the bed Deng was born in which is said to have been part of his mother's dowry, and the desk, chair and lamp he is said to have used while doing his homework as a child (48, 54, 56). Notably, the narrative suggests that it was (once more) foreigners who pointed out that Deng's former home would be of interest. The first to check out the site has been apparently New Zealand-born 'friend

365 Cf. Rewi Alley who found in early 1980 at the time of his visit 53 people living in the former Deng compound, including a maternal uncle (of the Dan family) and his wife, while three rooms were given to a 'cultural centre' which showed photos of Deng, had a reading room, and featured the 'old-fashioned carved bed'. (See Alley 1980: 11). According to Uli Franz who visited in 1986, an uncle and his wife still lived there together with 11 other families. Cf. Franz (1987: 16–17).

366 Apart from the fact that Deng pursued a style differing from Mao's personality cult, one may also recall that he and his family had been labelled during criticism sessions as 'rich landowners'. And the fact, that he had never returned, also made it difficult to argue why the place should come into the spotlight by now.

of China' Rewi Alley, whom we encountered also in connection to his visit at Shaoshan, who wrote in English directed at an international audience and was taken from Beijing, where he lived, to Deng's 'former home' in early 1980 when Deng was already the undisputed leader of China. (He published his very positive impression of the locality at the time.)[367] Uli Franz, a German leftist journalist who lived for some time in China and prepared to write a biography of Deng on his own (published in 1987 in German and soon translated into English),[368] followed in 1986; and then American Harrison Salisbury (and his wife) in 1988, another Western journalistic biographer who had conducted a host of interviews in China over the 1980s (characterising Mao and Deng as China's 'new emperors' in his book of 1992 on both leaders together – after he had published on his personal experience during the Tiananmen Massacre of 1989, an experience that also predictably influenced his take on Deng) (58, 90–91).[369] These foreign visitors had come to the 'former home' in the 1980s to see where the new leader of China came from.

While foreign interest in Deng's background grew, on the Chinese side activities intensified, too. Scholars and artists were to contribute with paintings and calligraphies (likely including the ones shown in the illustration part of the 1998 'patriotic' booklet in the main hall). Normal people are said to have sent money for setting up a proper *guju* (to typically suggest that this was only picking up on 'people's wishes'). At Deng's death in 1997, busts and statues were offered, as well as other artwork. The schools in the area started to use the site for 'patriotic education', and swearing-in ceremonies took place there for the Party, the Communist Youth League, and the military. Already in 1995, when Deng was still alive, teachers-to-be as well as soldiers came to visit this site labelled at the time on provincial level (59–62). At the first anniversary of his death in 1998, in turn, pupils of his former secondary school in Guang'an came to swear to always fight for Communism there, while primary students staged a 'patriotic' play. Red-scarfed children, i.e., the Young Pioneers, thus were all over the place (that one could also spot in the filmic representations done at the time).

Deng, as mentioned, never cared to return to Paifang Village which puzzled the locals,[370] and even in death he would not have his tomb there but have his ashes

367 Alley wrote a short article on the place in the Hong Kong journal *Eastern Horizon*, 1980/8 (Alley 1980).

368 Uli Franz published *Deng Xiaoping, Chinas Erneuerer: eine Biographie* in 1987.

369 Harrison Salisbury published *The New Emperors. China in the Era of Mao and Deng* in 1992. One may note this was after June 1989 which Salisbury witnessed in person in Beijing and on which he published an influential account, the *Tiananmen Diary*.

370 Pantsov / Levine (2015: 150) however point out he did care to some extent about his near relatives by moving them either close to himself or in any case out of Paifang. One needs to bear in mind,

scattered into the sea (similar to Liu Shaoqi's) (64). Thus, the 'patriotic' booklet tries to argue that at least in heart he remained connected to his home, speaking the local tongue and eating the local dishes (cf. Mao who is characterised in the Shaoshan booklet similarly), always also inquiring how things evolved in his home region. E.g., it is stated for the intended young reader that he was shocked to hear in 1977 when he had finally secured his leading position that there were still people begging for food in Guang'an! (65). When he came to Sichuan Province, he however never made the trip back to Paifang Village, though sending some calligraphies occasionally. In 1979, he even criticised the activities to set up his 'former home' with public funds – likely the background to the point repeatedly stressed that in his lifetime many private people sent money for making it happen. The urge of the locals to relate to him is also used as an additional explanation why the 'former home' was set up afterall (66, 68). In other words: Deng himself did not support it actively.

His demise was the major event that could be used by the locality without interference by the great local son himself: the media were invited, and large events in commemoration were held (70). At Qingming 清明 (Tomb Sweeping Day) of 1997, the occasion was used to hold poetry and calligraphy events, and the first anniversary of his death would prompt Jiang Zemin to visit the place (who, as mentioned, wrote the plaque 'Deng Xiaoping tongzhi guju') (72). The site, by then labelled on the highest level, had virtually brought the 'first list' of 'patriotic education showcase bases' of 1997 to date.

Moving ahead in time over two decades by looking into the current narrative version as provided in the *Fengbei* series of 2019 (Yang 2019), updating the narrative to the Xi Jinping era, one notes that the focus on Deng as a child, and on the history of the reconstructed 'former home', has broadened, like in Liu Shaoqi's case, by turning the whole place into a larger 'scenic area' in the 2000s. The use of the place is, according to this new summary, to serve more generally by now the triple education into 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', 'patriotism', and the 'revolutionary tradition' (2–3).

In 2001, the place was thus turned into a 'red tourism' site and a 'memorial location for the revolution' (*geming jiniandi* 革命纪念地) as well. In the exhibition, this new narrative especially highlights the photos of Deng's post-Paifang times, though, namely those during his stay in France (where he became a Communist), but also those of him with heads of state or other important figures in PRC times, like US president Carter or French president Mitterrand. That way, he rather appears as the Communist politician, not as the local boy. Various Chinese politicians also cared

however, that this comes largely from his daughter's accounts (who never lived in Paifang) with a vested interest in the family, while fellow villagers did not necessarily hold the same point of view.

for the establishment of the 'former home' later, the intended reader is told, and also his family would visit. The main motto of the exhibition was fittingly not focused any longer on the local Deng, but on Deng as 'a son of the Chinese people', and that exhibition even received a prize in 2005 (5).

A 'hall of commemoration' was added in 2013 to the site, and – similar to the *guju* of Mao and Liu Shaoqi – also here an exhibition on his living quarters in Beijing, showing also his hobbies, including playing bridge, soccer, or swimming, was set up (6). (Needless to say, nothing is said about his role in 1989.) His major bronze statue, showing him sitting on a chair, was, in turn, inaugurated in 2004 by then-general secretary Hu Jintao.

Integrated into the larger 'scenic area' site is by now also the *sishu* where he learnt the basics according to the old system, which was placed in the home of the famous 18th century ancestor Deng Shimin who had even become a Hanlin scholar, the intended young reader of the new narrative is to learn (7). The present 'scenic area' comprises, however, also the place where the silk production was located, which was 'heritagised' in itself in 2002 (8). And it comprises a stele and the *paifang* which Deng Shimin had received in the mid-18th century, which had been destroyed in the Cultural Revolution, to be rebuilt in 2002. Its carvings show, the reader is told, various drama and folk stories (10).

The tomb of the father, in turn, is addressed who is characterised in the new narrative as educated in modern style already himself and as revolutionary-minded (while leaving aside the more problematic secret society connection), thus pointing the way to revolution for his son (while not mentioning the 'traditional' tomb of the mother), not detailing the violent death of the father, however (11). In terms of his family, after 1949, Deng had at least taken in his (widowed) stepmother who lived with him first in Chongqing, and then would follow him also later during the critical Cultural Revolution times, while his uncle and family could live in the natal house and would also receive a bit of money every month from him when he was finally in power.

But, the *Fengbei* narrative underlines, Deng was against setting up his 'former home' as a *guju*, and while he is said to have invited people of Guang'an to see him in Beijing, he did, however, never visit his home again, even when not far away in Chengdu, thus taking some more distance in narrative framing from the specific site than the local late 1990s productions in this 2019 *Fengbei* version on 'patriotic education showcase bases' of Sichuan Province (13). This was likely also to show in the vein of Xi Jinping-era anti-corruption campaigning that Deng would never be influenced by any parochial considerations or granting any preferential treatment to people from his locality. That way, the new Xi Jinping-era framing shows Deng in a

more detached way as a 'role model' for moving on from a 'narrow' care for his family and locality to rather become a 'son of the Chinese people' at large.
Taken together, the above Communist 'role models' are to show tangibly via the sites presenting them and presencing them, how 'patriotic' values are intrinsically connected to Communism, and how they were lived out in practice by these individuals, dedicating themselves to 'the cause' to solicit emulation from the present Chinese citizen. They also show that this way may require sacrifices, but that in the end, dedication will be rewarded. Everyone, regardless of the position and function in society, is called upon to contribute his or her share. That way, not only the Party leaders are shining examples, but also workers (Wang Jinxi), cadres (Kong Fansen), soldiers (Lei Feng), and even foreigners (Bethune and Kotnis).

Final remarks

All in all, the above cases where individuals are to embody 'patriotic values', show these figures as bound to a locality which not only presents their outstanding personality in some way, but also presences them. This is often at the place they hail from, usually their 'former homes' (*guju*) like in the cases of Confucius (who is at the same time 'present' with his tomb), Sun Yat-sen, Chen Jiageng (who is also 'present' at the same time with his tomb), Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, and Deng Xiaoping; or in the vicinity like in the cases of Lin Zexu, Tao Xingzhi, Lei Feng's Hunan memorial, or Kong Fansen. Sometimes it is the place of burial like in the cases of Bethune and Kotnis or of the main Lei Feng site in Fushun; or at a locality that is closely associated with them like in the cases of Zheng Chenggong and, above all, Wang Jinxi. As models, they sometimes serve specific groups for emulation, e.g., cadres, workers, or the military, beyond the narrower educational realm of teachers and pupils.

While the 'traditional' role models and the 'non-Communist' models stand for a broader approach to the definition of 'patriotism', the main models for the Chinese citizen today to emulate are the Communist ones. All the models show that the ideal 'patriot' is free of any selfish thoughts, going to the utmost for serving China (even proven by foreigners like Bethune and Kotnis), not giving up even when encountering difficulties by those whom the model figure is going to serve (like Lin Zexu), honouring 'filial duty' (as long as it does not contradict service to the nation), striving for education, etc. The 'showcase bases' also laid open how they are used for citizen formation, starting from the youngest, to tell them how the respective great personality came to be, and that the following generations are to honour their

'patriotic' (and 'revolutionary') 'ancestors' by swearing loyalty on spot, participating in collective activities of tomb sweeping, summer camps etc., or donating their pocket money. That way, 'patriotism' is not only declared, but also performed, for which the 'patriotic education showcase bases' provide the physical space and an inducive aura.

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6 Concluding remarks

Abstract These final remarks review the different modes of citizen formation as reflected in the Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, played out between nationalism, local identities, and tourism. Issues like the potential effectiveness of this particular way of citizen formation, considering the different types of sites, the role of emotion and knowledge, and the variety of agents involved that imply a possibility of divergent readings, lead to the question, how the Chinese endeavour relates to a larger context. Paying special attention to the historical relationship to the Soviet-Russian model, the question arises whether there is anything specifically 'Chinese' about this whole system.

Reviewing the different modes the 'patriotic education showcase bases' presented in the chapters of this book came with, set in between agendas of nationalism, local identity profiling, and tourist concerns, one might ponder the question: what do such sites add to the larger PRC (People's Republic of China) 'patriotic education' campaign that render them so attractive to continuously expand their number? More specifically: why is this tool of citizen formation considered a particularly effective means? In which ways has the purpose of the 'patriotic education showcase bases' as outlined in chapter 1 been realised in different types of sites? What role do knowledge and emotions play in this educational endeavour bound to physical sites? Which agents are involved in it? Might there be divergent readings emerging between different agents? And how does the whole endeavour appear in comparative perspective, mainly considering its historical relationship to the Soviet model? Is there, finally, anything distinctly 'Chinese' about it?

Effectiveness

The general 'patriotic education' effort has been called the most long-standing campaign the PRC ever set up, which is also mostly evaluated as an effective one.[1]

1 See, e.g., Zhao (2004). Vickers (2009), looking into political education textbooks of the junior and senior secondary level, suggests this as well. And He (2015) does so, based on personal attacks meted out by Chinese studying overseas against presumed unpatriotic 'compatriots'.

Some doubts concerning effectiveness have been raised, too.[2] Either way, it is not easy to verify this by using usual survey techniques in the PRC. As has been observed with publicly vocal Chinese 'nationalists' who have been found in private to easily switch positions,[3] stated and held beliefs are not necessarily the same, especially when surveys are done in a public setting and when it is obvious to all, that certain answers are 'expected' – and thus more likely to be officially given. Some studies on schools and textbook reception in the humanities found Chinese pupils to be sceptical towards their textbooks or simply bored by them.[4] This, however, was largely connected to the exam-centred teaching style, less to a general disbelief, let alone an informed difference of opinion in terms of content which can also hardly be expected of pupils.

A qualitative study by a scholar conducted in the Philippines with semi-structured interviews of Chinese grown-up citizens who received 'patriotic education' from the 1990s onward in school, mostly subsequently working in the Philippines and thus fairly free to state their minds, found the campaign to have been effective in the long run. Going beyond a simple yes or no response to the question of effectiveness, the study looked into different areas, finding that effectiveness scored the highest in the affective domain, which was sustained by visual and other medial representations (Dela Cruz Manalo 2020).

That study focused on the general campaign and its school context, not explicitly touching on visits to 'patriotic education bases' as part of outdoor education which are more tangible than textbook narratives, but it suggests an important point, namely, that the appeal to emotions by material and visual means as much as the repeated mutual reinforcement by various medial representations provides the key to 'convince' audiences of presented narratives in the long run. In this sense, the visit of sites as an 'authenticating' experience, either set in a guided school outing or in a touristic leisure context, is more likely to be effective than simple textbook narratives, provided the on-site presentation is integrated with those narratives (and certainly not challenging them), and the concerted action called for by the broader 'patriotic education' campaign as outlined in chapter 1 of life-long citizen formation via

2 For a short summary of views resulting from studies in the 2000s on the effectiveness of formal and informal citizen education's influence on students, see Xu (2022: 384–385). As argued in chapter 1 of the present book, the term 'citizen education' is to my mind more apt than 'citizen*ship* education' for the Chinese case.

3 Cf., e.g., Lovell (2011: 353–359) who notes in the conclusion of her book on the Opium War such cases of on the surface inconsistencies among the so-called 'angry youth' (*fenqing* 愤青), supposedly aroused by intense nationalist feelings against 'the West'.

4 Cf., e.g., the observations by anthropologist Kipnis (2011) during fieldwork in Zouping (in Shandong), or of anthropologist Hansen (2015) during fieldwork in a rural boarding school in Zhejiang.

multiple channels helps to diffuse the intended message by such a mutual reinforcement. The fact that the listed 'bases' were the only of the 'patriotic education' tools that continued to grow in number, even – after a hiatus – in the era of Xi Jinping 习近平, also clearly bespeaks the perceived usefulness and effectiveness of this particular tool.

Site types

At a closer look as presented in the above chapters, the 'patriotic education showcase bases' are, however, a very heterogenous group. Some only function in the context of organised outdoor education and are not very attractive just by themselves for tourists to spend their leisure time there, especially when there is not much to be experienced on the ground. One method to cope with this is to tell the visitors stories on-site to link the tangible and local with imagination (or with contents formerly learnt from textbooks or other media), and at times to include songs (where feasible) which appeal to emotions, and link the individual to the group in a performative mode over singing together.[5] Especially the telling of stories of 'martyrdom' is deemed effective. These stories are sometimes told in outright theatre-like dramaturgy to move students to tears. In the previous chapters, we could observe this as played out in the filmic 'patriotic' renderings of some sites (which also substantiates the added value of integrating filmic material as done in the present book), e.g., in the case of the staged 'grandpa with grandchildren' (representing primary and junior secondary level children respectively) at Yan'an 延安 (chapter 3.3) in the educational 'patriotic' video for classroom use, to recall Mao Zedong 毛泽东 and his eldest son Mao Anying 毛岸英 at the spot where 'they

5 This practice of singing 'patriotic' songs together is also widely applied in the closely related defence education to build up a team spirit. Cf. the interviewees in Genevaz (2019: 464) who had undergone university-level defence education and stated that they learnt and sang the songs not only during their obligatory university defence education, but also already in school. In the 'patriotic education showcase bases' discussed in the present book, one may recall also the songs sung in the filmic representations to emotionalise the topic, e.g., in front of the tombs of the Kunming 'December First martyrs' by Lianda alumni and also to the camera by Nobel laureate Yang Zhenning (chapter 3.2), or by the interviewed widow of Lin Jilu, one of the Urumqi 'martyrs' (chapter 3.2), or in Yan'an as an educational tool (chapter 3.3), as is in the case of the Wuhan labour strike by school classes singing the songs of the time (chapter 4.2), or by a former member of the Hainan 'Red Detachment of Women' (chapter 4.2), or by villagers commemorating the 'tunnel warfare' (chapter 4.3), or by school children at Chen Jiageng's 'base' (chapter 5.2), or as an audio background to the presentation of Lei Feng's 'base' in Fushun (chapter 5.3). Songs are also repeatedly referred to in written form, as we observed at various 'bases'.

talked between father and son' (a scene the intended watching pupils can easily associate with), then pointing out dramatically that the son would soon die (in the Korean War), the camera zooming in on the staged listening 'family's' commotion to invite the watching audience to share it.

But more often, the setting is in front of tombs authenticating the respective historical figure in 'martyrs' cemeteries',[6] which are usually not an attractive destination in themselves Chinese tourists would visit. In China, visiting tombs of others or of whole cemeteries as tourist destinations (like, e.g., Père Lachaise in Paris to just name one prominent Western example) is highly unusual: normally, one only visits tombs of relatives, and even those only on certain dates. For the use of 'martyrs' cemeteries' or tombs as sites to inculcate an obligation of the young generations to the purported 'revolutionary ancestors', usually via pupils laying down wreaths or white paper flowers and 'sweeping' the tombs, we have discussed various example in the preceding chapters. That way, they are to perform 'patriotism' instead of only hearing or reading about it. Over the visit to and care for the tombs, a fictive 'kinship' is created between the dead and the young Chinese citizens who are supposedly the 'heirs' of these dead. The most extreme case that we observed, given that claim of obligation to the '(revolutionary) ancestors', was the 'Urumqi Martyrs' Cemetery' (chapter 3.2) in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region where the 'martyrs' are CCP (Chinese Communist Party) Han cadres (including Mao's brother Mao Zemin 毛泽民) from far away without much connection to the local population. Beyond the prescribed visits by the assigned schools or other entities, namely at the newly revived Tomb Sweeping Day (a Han custom), not many visitors are to be found, even if the TV film clips which covered every single site of the 'patriotic education showcase bases', including the Urumqi site, as well as the educational video collection for classroom use tried to suggest otherwise. Such places which are not connected well to the local community remain artificial and imposed, and the forced character of attendance of those shown is hard to conceal even in the 'patriotic' filmic presentations. The 'martyrs' cemeteries' as part of the 'patriotic education' system (incidentally something already on the mind of the GMD / Guomindang 国民党 or Nationalist Party government in Republican times), however, serve for ceremonies to inculcate reverence and a sense of obligation into pupils or cadets.

6 A good example was the educational video in the *Zhonghua hun* collection on the Shenyang Martyrs' Cemetery mentioned in chapter 4.1, discussing the memorialisation of the Korean War, a second list site, where a young girl reads out in dramatic fashion an emotional text to the attending classmates in front of tombs of 'martyrs' of the Korean War, the video also showing the commotion of the classmates as a 'proof' of effectiveness, inviting the video-watching pupils to share this emotion.

This sustains once more the argument that in China (and East Asia in general), 'patriotism' functions as an extension of 'filial duty',[7] even the more so in recent times in the PRC where the one-child policy and an aging society have led to a new 'appraisal' by the grown-ups of this Chinese 'traditional beautiful virtue' (*chuantong meide* 传统美德). 'Filial duty', as we observed in many cases, has been increasingly addressed over time at various sites as a small-scale (if sometimes framed as 'narrow') version of 'patriotism', and the frequent use of biological metaphors, appealing to 'ancestry', 'same blood', 'born from the same womb' (*tongbao* 同胞, the literal meaning of what is usually simply translated as 'com*patriots*'), or the most recent 'red genes' etc.,[8] is a hallmark of official discourse. With this comes a 'naturalisation' of inherent hierarchy to counter any ideas of 'Western equality' (which presumably led to the 'turmoil' of 1989 which, as we saw, is lingering always in the background of the 'patriotic education' campaign, though rarely addressed openly). Rather, the purported 'specific Chinese revolutionary tradition' is to claim both of the *a priori* opposed concepts of 'revolution' and 'tradition' to be united, de facto taming 'revolution' by 'tradition' for defending the *status quo* – a marker of post-Cultural Revolution discourse which therefore tends to share in the 'cult of heritage', using the 'spoils of history' (Lowenthal 1996), rather than banking on (unruly) revolutionary iconoclasm. The next generations are to be inculcated with this 'tradition' which is supposedly conforming to China's 'national conditions' (*guoqing* 国情) – a term much cherished by former general secretary Jiang Zemin 江泽民, the key promoter of the 'patriotic education' campaign (cf. chapter 1). That way, a shared national identity of what it means to be a *Chinese* 'patriot' is to be created.

While some sites, like the 'martyrs' cemeteries' addressed above, are hardly attractive out of themselves, other sites, to the contrary, rather live off their inherent touristic potential which is only to be rechannelled into 'patriotic' messages for serving *also* as a 'patriotic education showcase base'. Dunhuang's 敦煌 Mogao 莫高 caves (chapter 2.3) were a case in point which do not need any additional advertisement for sure. Rather, the 'patriotic education showcase base' label is, as has become clear, rather uneasily affixed to this world-famous site, bending its offer to serve national(ist) agendas. Similarly, the Dujiangyan 都江堰 irrigation system (chapter 2.3), an ancient landscape transformation and UNESCO site like Dunhuang, or the even older Yinxu 殷墟 excavations (chapter 2.1), or Confucius' home in Qufu 曲阜 (chapter 5.1), show that in all these (and more) cases, the 'patriotic' credentials are forced upon these pre-modern top tourist UNESCO sites to show

7 Kwak / Matsuda: 'Patriotism in East Asian context', p. 2. (Cf. also chapter 1 of the present book.)
8 As noted in chapter 1 of the present book, there is also the term 'cultural genes' to biologise 'Chineseness' more generally. Cf. 'Zhonggong Zhongyang guowuyuan' (2019), section 12.

that even though they are 'world' heritage, they are as much to be perceived as decidedly 'Chinese', especially by the Chinese citizens as the target group of 'patriotic education'. (As we observed in chapter 1, not every 'world heritage' site was, however, conducive to a 'patriotic' reframing, namely sites in 'minority' areas, e.g., in Tibet.) Where feasible (cf. the cases of Yinxu in chapter 2.1, and Dunhuang in chapter 2.3), stories of foreign exploitation of Chinese historical heritage are to add also indignation to the 'patriotic' framing for the domestic target group, thus emotionalising the topic which for the rest is to engender cultural pride.

Other 'patriotic education showcase bases', still, are fully bound up with ideology, namely the Party places (chapter 3.3), or the sites of Communist models and CCP leaders (chapter 5.3). Given the strong accent on revolutionary history in school, and the plethora of films and TV series on these topics, together with the general fad for biographical history as noticeable in every Chinese book store, the more famous places among them often draw Chinese tourist crowds more easily to satisfy curiosity: how do the places one read and heard about so often really look like? How and where did famous people, including the top Party leaders, grow up? Needless to say, for individual tourists, the offer beyond 'patriotic' content is crucial for deciding to visit a site in their leisure time. Accessibility and possible integration in a trip with other nearby attractions (of potentially other character) are further incentives. Party places, e.g., try to offer as additional attractions a quick 'experience' of the Long March, or of life in caves in Yan'an (chapter 3.3), or of the 'typical' food of Mao's birthplace Shaoshan 韶山 (chapter 5.3). Places in nature like Jinggangshan 井冈山 (chapter 3.3) try to heighten interest by packaging the tour together with additional 'green' sites, thus offering to relax in nature after receiving ideological training. But the Party places also need to carefully design the narrative on Party history which had changed so often in the past and still does so, reflecting the political shifts through time. They, however, also serve for diversifying the image of the Party, conforming to the political line of the post-Mao era, presenting the Party as a 'collective' body with several important figures and events.

The pitfalls of the task have become especially clear in the case of Ruijin 瑞金 (chapter 3.3), Mao's place of difficulties which he shunned thereafter and which had also bruised many other leading figures, leaving a trauma with its extremely bloody inner-Party witch hunts (which were notably disclosed in 'patriotic' materials for Chinese youth in the late 1990s, but quietly edited out in Xi Jinping-era ones). Ruijin was, however, the one-time Chinese 'Moscow' in the early 1930s and central Soviet base area where the institutional foundations of the future PRC were laid, and thus tried to fight for its standing in Party history after long-term sidelining. The case of the Nanchang 南昌 Uprising memorial (chapter 4.2), too,

brought to the fore other leaders than Mao, banking on that uprising's being declared in retrospect as the moment of 'birth' of the Red Army, today's PLA (People's Liberation Army), which plays such an important role in the overall 'patriotic education bases' endeavour, as we have observed repeatedly;[9] and the nominated Deng Xiaoping 邓小平-connected places (his home – chapter 5.3 – as well as the Baise 百色 Uprising site – chapter 4.2) also rewrote Party history away from Maocentrism, while Liu Shaoqi's 刘少奇 home (chapter 5.3) belabours the rehabilitation of this once important leader (and key Cultural Revolution victim), notably even leaking information about the taboo topic of the Great Famine (1958–1962) to argue for Liu's and Deng's reversal in the early 1960s of Maoist economic policies of the times of the Great Leap Forward (started late 1957 and officially launched 1958). Such sites clearly reflect the rewriting of Party history under Deng Xiaoping (and subsequently Jiang Zemin), while the Xi Jinping-era framings opt once more for glossing over the dark spots in the Party's past to rather present to the intended reader of today a 'happy history' of the CCP's rule.

The battle sites (chapter 4.3), in turn, are targeting, above all, a male clientele, and, of course, the military, beyond the guided visiting pupils. The problem for these sites is that not much can be exhibited, given the evasiveness of the topic. Thus, additional features are often introduced to enrich the visit and provide some 'experience', like panorama halls with visual and sound effects, weaponry, films (often linking up with well-known movies on the battles), or, like with tunnel warfare, visits of tunnels to enable a sensory impression. Dioramas play an important role for visualisation, too. And in the case of Taierzhuang 台儿庄, which contemporaneously has its Great Canal cultural heritage in a more touristic fashion as a local selling point, the whole (reconstructed) old city is turned into an outdoor exhibition space, placing sculptures in the streets, and putting up old photos on buildings to visualise street scenes during the fighting in the Second Sino–Japanese War, while only some old buildings with bullet holes remain. This is to add to and 'authenticate' the indoor exhibition of the 'patriotic education showcase base' on the Taierzhuang Battle of 1938.

Some 'red' sites, in turn, try to evoke a more 'nostalgic' feeling for Maoist times, referring to nationally well-known old films like in the case of the Henan Red Flag Canal (chapter 2.3) or the Hainan Red Detachment of Women site (chapter 4.2) which elder people might appreciate, while the younger might be attracted by this kind of Maoist retro chic. Iconic photos are a further device to trigger the visual memory of Chinese citizens of a certain age, as in Daqing 大庆 in Heilongjiang

9 Cf. also Hughes (2017), pointing out the reverse role of the 'patriotic education' component for the PLA, and for 'national defence education' of Chinese citizens in general.

Province, where the memorial for 'iron man' Wang Jinxi 王进喜 (chapter 5.3) works with photos everyone knew at the time of the model oil worker, as does the Fushun 抚顺 Lei Feng 雷锋 memorial (chapter 5.3) dedicated to the quintessential PRC all-round model for every citizen to emulate. These visual sources tap into the public's received knowledge which they, in turn, expect to find reinforced at these sites (see also below). This display strategy could be seen also – in a material form – at the second millennium BC excavation site of Yinxu (chapter 2.1) where the iconic huge rectangular bronze vessel, the Houmuwu ding 后母戊鼎 of Shang times, was put up in a replica (the original having moved up the museum hierarchy, now held in the National Museum in Beijing) to meet expectations of visitors to 'see' it there, since everyone learnt about this famous object in school. Not finding it where it had been discovered disappointed many pupils, and thus the replica was duly installed to satisfy demand. (As we observed in this case of Yinxu, simultaneously being a 'world heritage' site, the exhibition style had, however, to be weighed carefully against the UNESCO requirements to avoid any impression of some sort of 'Disneyfication', and thus the visual 'patriotic' framing of the site listed as a 'patriotic education showcase base' in 1997 had to be toned down over time to allow for a UNESCO listing in 2006, producing also new narratives for an international public, while written materials aimed at the domestic audience retained older framings – conforming to Chinese textbook narratives, e.g., with the notorious issue of 'slave-holder society' in the Marxist paradigm.)

The least attractive among the 'patriotic education showcase bases' for leisure tourists are those with a very recent content like the one on Kong Fansen 孔繁森 (chapter 5.3) as a 'modern', i.e., contemporary 'hero': his role for taking in Tibet by figuring as the model cadre who 'cared' for the Tibetans (and for the soldiers guarding the Chinese frontier!) is obvious, but he is too recent and unspectacular for a normal Chinese tourist to solicit interest in spite of the 'exotic' flavour his workplace could provide. As we observed, the descriptions of his 'model deeds' are going into the absurd to counter this problem of banality.[10] His site in Liaocheng 聊城 (near where he was born) in Shandong Province is serving for guided outings of local school children, but also for cadres etc., while normal tourists are rare, although the siting is urban, convenient to reach, and could be linked with Liaocheng's more touristic 'Grand Canal' heritage as well. Beyond ideology, sustained by an impressive array of labelling plaques put up at the entrance (cf.

10 This, of course, was not only the case with Kong Fansen, but the description of various 'model deeds' of heroes that we observed in 'patriotic' materials of other sites also aimed at impressing the intended young reader with weird, at times even unsavoury, details to appeal to imagination and solicit interest.

chapter 1, fig. 1.1, showing a part of them), the site lacks any convincing offer, and the basic idea to show that 'role models' are still around in the present, has apparently not captured the normal public.[11]

In their early phase at least, 'patriotic education showcase bases' also provided a stress on the role of education as such, by this celebrating also Confucius (chapter 5.1) as an educator, and some 20th century 'non-Communists' (if turning sympathetic to the Communists in lifetime) who contributed to modern Chinese education as a 'patriotic' deed, as we observed with the sites for Tao Xingzhi 陶行知 and Chen Jiageng 陈嘉庚 (Tan Kah Kee) (both chapter 5.2 and on the first list of 1997). While Republican-era Tao Xingzhi had, in fact, been criticised posthumously in the early PRC for his 'bourgeois reformist' role in education, to be reappreciated and 'heroised' only since the 1980s, the case of Chen Jiageng, the famous Overseas Chinese leader in Southeast Asia and untiring promoter of education who opted for living out his life in the early PRC, is also not devoid of irony. As we noted, his intention (namely with his Overseas Chinese Museum, chapter 4.1, the first of its kind but 'patriotically' listed only in 2001) to set up an educational facility for the local PRC populace to learn about the world abroad, was simply turned around posthumously to make him and his educational endeavours serve the PRC's nationalist agenda, rather attempting to teach also the Overseas Chinese who might come and visit, to be 'patriotic' Chinese (as understood by the CCP). Though this might not be appreciated by the Overseas Chinese themselves, it is to suggest to the mainland Chinese citizen visiting, that the Overseas Chinese should be taught to see it that way.

Various sites in the overall 'patriotic education showcase bases' system are, in fact, mainly concerned with 'Chineseness' at large and thus aim at 'Chinese' visitors also from beyond mainland China, not only the Overseas Chinese, but very importantly also those from Taiwan, as well as those from Hong Kong or Macau, the two former colonies that were 'returning' to the 'motherland' in 1997 and 1999 respectively, i.e. at the time the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system came into effect. Having been educated under 'colonial conditions', these 'newcomers' to the PRC needed to be brought closer into the fold of 'Chinese citizens', and 'citizen formation' for these former colonial subjects should also provide the blueprint for the aimed-at 'reunification' with the Taiwanese. The 'patriotic education showcase bases' aimed at this 'Chineseness' at large include namely sites on pre-modern topics, like the 'mausolea' of Huangdi 黄帝 and Yandi 炎帝 (chapter 3.1) as the

11 As we also noticed with the Hunan memorial for Lei Feng (chapter 5.3), e.g., there were therefore attempts of various sorts to 'prove' to the public that emulation of this kind of 'models' is still practiced today.

mythical ancestors of all 'Chinese', or the home of Confucius as a historical figure defining 'Chineseness' in cultural terms (chapter 5.1); but also excavation sites like the Palaeolithic 'Peking Man' site, the Neolithic Hemudu 河姆渡, or the Shang-era Yinxu (all chapter 2.1) are to teach visitors where 'the Chinese' (always explicitly including Overseas Chinese and Taiwanese in the rhetoric) came from, broadening the conception of 'China' since ancient times to take in also the South (which is extended back to the Neolithic with Hemudu). On the other hand, and politically more straightforwardly, museums like the 'China Fujian–Taiwan Kinship Museum' (the notable case of a completely new site designed from the outset in the 'patriotic education showcase base' system, listed in 2005 and only *then* opening its doors the following year – chapter 4.1), or the memorial for 17th century figure Zheng Chenggong 郑成功 (chapter 5.1), as well as Chen Jiageng's Overseas Chinese Museum (chapter 4.1), are to celebrate that 'unity' of 'the Chinese', be it with the Taiwanese or the Overseas Chinese. The minority regional museums, in turn, as, e.g., the discussed cases of the Ningxia and Inner Mongolia regional museums (both chapter 2.2) showed, integrate also the minorities in this overall setup of inclusive 'Chineseness'. Thus, the regional (and provincial – cf. the discussed case of Anhui in chapter 2.2) museums are supposed to serve for feeding regional identity into the national overarching one – something the Soviet model (see below) already proposed.

Implicit in the celebration of 'Chineseness' is often, especially in more modern times, an enemy against whom this is profiled. This may be Western imperialists, like the Dutch in the 17th century in the case of Zheng Chenggong's memorial (chapter 5.1), or the British in the 19th century in the cases of the Opium War (chapter 4.3) and Lin Zexu 林则徐 (chapter 5.1) sites, or the US in the 20th century in the Korean War memorial (chapter 4.1). But the other major foreign enemy focused upon is Japan, from the early modern 'Japanese pirates' or *wokou* 倭寇, like in the Great Wall Shanhaiguan 山海关 'patriotic' site (chapter 2.3), over the 19th century First Sino–Japanese War site on Liugongdao 刘公岛 (chapter 4.3), to the 19th and 20th century atrocity sites of Lüshun 旅顺 and Nanjing, and the bacteriological warfare Unit 731 in Northern Manchuria (all chapter 3.2), to sites celebrating Chinese 'victorious' anti-Japanese resistance during the Second Sino–Japanese War like at Taierzhuang in battle by the (GMD) military, or with Ranzhuang's 冉庄 'tunnel warfare' by 'the people', if led by a Communist (both chapter 4.3). Internal enemies, in turn, are secondary. This role in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system is historically usually assigned to the GMD (or the Republican-era warlords, and in some cases to the Qing for late imperial times) when the site content concerns the persecution of revolutionaries in prisons and 'concentration camps',

while 'martyrs' cemeteries' commemorate the (Communist) dead (chapter 3.2). A further variety of anti-internal enemy sites are those dedicated to revolutionary active resistance to the political foe via uprisings, strikes, and guerrilla warfare (chapter 4.2). And finally, sites dedicated to commemoration how the CCP and the GMD fought each other outright for supremacy and rule, i.e., the listed Civil War sites (chapter 4.3), throw the GMD into the major historical internal enemy role to legitimate the 'patriotic' outcome of the CCP's rule over the mainland in hindsight. Otherwise, given the political objective of 'reunification', the GMD in Taiwan is also offered a hand over the Strait, not the least in consideration of the centrifugal tendencies in Taiwan ever more apparent since the 1990s also in Taiwanese history education,[12] precisely at the time when the mainland's 'patriotic education' campaign thrived and the 'showcase bases' were set up, and most eye-catchingly when the GMD in Taiwan lost the democratic elections for presidency (in itself a thorn in the CCP's side) in 2000 to the independence-inclined DPP (Democratic Progressive Party). The mainland's inclusion of sites for the 'father of the Chinese Republic' Sun Yat-sen (cf. chapter 5.2 for his place of origin), or for the 1911 Wuchang Uprising starting the Republican revolution to overthrow the Qing (chapter 4.2) as a 'common' point of reference (before the GMD–CCP antagonism arose historically), or for the 1938 Taierzhuang Battle 'victory' (chapter 4.3) (fought for by GMD troops) during the Second Sino–Japanese War to acknowledge the 'common' fight against the Japanese, was a way to express this cross-Strait mainland offer to the GMD (and to potential Taiwanese tourists) in the system of the PRC's 'patriotic education showcase bases' on the basis of Chinese nationalism.

Internationalism is, however, not totally absent from the nationalist 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, though only on a side note: the listing of the memorial for the two foreign doctors, Canadian Norman Bethune and Indian Dwarkanath Kotnis (chapter 5.3), who worked and died in China during the time of the Second Sino–Japanese War, is to show to the domestic pupil (and tourist) above all that there were even foreigners sustaining the CCP, and their service and role model is acknowledged (though in the case of Kotnis, the ups and downs of Sino–Indian relations meant that he had been written out of the picture for a long time before his more recent reappraisal). But this does not feed into a call for Chinese

12 One may recall the stir created in Taiwan by the *Renshi Taiwan* 认识台湾 (Knowing Taiwan) textbooks (a set of three: history, geography, society) in 1997 (cf. Chang 2011) which suggested a distinct Taiwanese identity and also greatly alarmed the PRC, while the first democratic presidential election in 1996 in Taiwan had already provoked mainland military threats. In the mainland's perspective, at the time when Hong Kong's 'coming home' was celebrated in 1997 (and Macau was on track for following in 1999), Taiwan was quickly moving in the opposite direction.

pupils to involve themselves similarly in 'internationalism' abroad: the end point of service is and remains their *patria* China. This also pertains to the way of memorialisation of the Korean War (chapter 4.1), as we observed, being a rare case in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system of a site dedicated to the PRC's being militarily (and civilly) active beyond its borders,[13] if officially only by 'volunteers' to 'help' the North Koreans.

Knowledge and emotions

In educational terms, the aim of 'knowledge' transmission – one of the two key tasks of education according to Chinese curricula, the other being 'emotional education' – is mostly represented in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system by museums and excavation sites. However, 'knowledge' education is not perceived as something 'neutral' or 'non-partisan', but has to be connected to emotions to serve for engendering 'patriotism'.

This, in fact, reflects also the Soviet conception of education (see below) with its accent on education as an endeavour of socialist moral upbringing (*vospitaniye*) rather than just knowledge transmission,[14] which used various measures to 'edify' students by touching their 'hearts'. The Stalinist conception of 'patriotic education' promoted history education precisely for rousing students' passion to fight for the good and to 'hate' 'the enemy',[15] quite contrary to historiographical ideals since Tacitus of *sine ira et studio*, and clearly not subscribing to Goethe's oft-cited view

13 The Southeast Asian military endeavours of the PRC are not represented in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system, although they have left their mark on popular culture. Namely, the song *Xueran de fengcai* 血染的风采 ('bloodstained glory') (1986) on the fallen PLA soldiers during the Sino–Vietnamese clashes ever since the brief Sino–Vietnamese War (1979) which had been China's 'answer' to Vietnam's invasion into Cambodia to oust the Maoist Pol Pot regime there (1978), became popular and was covered, among others, by Xi Jinping's wife Peng Liyuan 彭丽媛, a PLA singer. Ironically, the Tiananmen protesters of 1989 used this song for themselves – before the very PLA suppressed them. And thus, the song was sung in Hong Kong at every 'June Fourth' vigil – as long as the latter was allowed. Cf. Baar (2018) (although the article contains some inaccuracies, but it provides also the song text with English translation added). The Sino–Vietnamese conflict was – different from the PRC's border clashes with India or the Soviet Union – not only about the border as such, but about regional influence.

14 See Avis, George (1987).

15 Cf. Sanina (2017: 69). See also International Relations scholars Hagström / Gustafsson (2019) who stress that such narratives are there and applied to draw conclusions, suggesting a future course of action.

that 'patriotism ruins history'.[16] In the PRC, this Stalinist conception was taken over, but could be also easily married to older Chinese conceptions of education as a way of character formation (*xiu shen* 修身) rather than just a training of the intellect (and possibly of skills), and by this tapping also into pre-modern Chinese conceptions of the role historical example should play in this kind of education. Historiography is, above all, supposed to provide moral guidance to 'mirror' the present in it (see also below), rather than chronicle the past as 'a foreign country' (Lowenthal 1985). That way, clear-cut black and white moral categories are more feasible than the blurred grey tones of history, and thus pre-modern and Stalinist conceptions of historiography and education could be combined in the Chinese setting, now rechannelled into a Communist framework of citizen formation.

The crucial role of emotions for soliciting 'patriotism' explains why, e.g., places of atrocities or persecution are seen as particularly effective in instilling 'patriotic' feelings. A case in point for emotional 'guidance' by display are the atrocity sites connected to the Japanese (chapter 3.2) where visualisation of atrocities is so strongly accentuated by different means, that visitors exposed to this presentation will hardly emotionally digest the brief official 'diplomatically correct' coda of the exhibition with a call for peace and 'friendship with Japan' nonetheless.[17] The victims themselves are, in turn, clearly not the major point of interest in this 'patriotic' framing, as we observed. At all kinds of such 'dark' sites, the display rather holds up easily assignable (and nationalised) narratives of victimisation and culpability, even doing so in cases where they are historically false or only half-true. Here one may not only think of the Lüshun Massacre site presentation leaving out critical background (chapter 3.2), but also of the more extreme example of the Geleshan prisons (chapter 3.2) and the (wrong) insinuation that the US were behind the GMD's torturing of Communists there, which, however, is following the fictive popular portrayal in literature, film, and on stage to this avail, produced at a high-time of PRC anti-Americanism. Thus, the material site is not used to 'correct' the fictional, but rather adapted in presentation to *conform* to it, better historical knowledge notwithstanding – given also the fact that in this case the misleading 'Sino–American concentration camp' labelling has been codified on a high political level, namely by the State Council, which renders it difficult to backpedal.[18] This,

16 'Der Patriotismus verdirbt die Geschichte.' (Goethe in 1817, talking with Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer.) See Deibel / Gundelfinger (1907): 199.

17 Cf. Du / Littlejohn / Lennon (2013), based on interviews of visitors of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall who stated that they found this hard to accept.

18 As mentioned in chapter 3.2, the assumption of Chinese-born American journalist Eberlein (2011) that the 'real' story was only disclosed to her by the nationally famous director of the museum, Li Hua 厉华, during an interview, ignores that the facts had been already acknowledged in the

once more, proves that mutually re-enforcing narratives are seen as key for convincing audiences of a prescribed storyline, regardless of historical reliability.

In fact, in several cases, as we noted, insinuations go deliberately counter history when, e.g., mythical Huangdi's 'mausoleum' (chapter 3.1) is treated as a real tomb, or visitors of the Party place Xibaipo 西柏坡 (chapter 3.3) are mostly left in the dark about the fact that the whole place is a reconstruction, as is that which the visitor encounters at Jinggangshan, Ruijin, and other places 'holy' to the revolution (chapter 3.3). Such measures serve for the impression normal visitors without specific historical knowledge come away with, not being aware of the facts, while curators or anyone else will not be easily pinpointed as having misled the visitors, as on the surface there is often the possibility to hint at some tucked-away statement where the facts are acknowledged. It is the overall impression for Chinese citizens, that counts.

This is similar to my earlier findings with Chinese historical documentaries which are on the surface 'market' productions and claim to only 'document', but de facto deliver official narratives on history in a just more appealing and supposedly 'credible' format (Müller 2013). In the case of the 'patriotic education showcase bases', it is the physical place that serves as the 'authenticator'. In fact, discussions on how to design 'patriotic education' more 'effectively' show that 'indirect means' are seen as superior since the more conventional open top-down methods are more likely to be rejected by the Chinese citizens (cf. Cai 2018 who argues that this should be learnt 'from the British' to again insinuate that this is not Chinese or Communist but a sophisticated 'Western' form one should 'take over': a by now familiar rhetorical strategy).

Agents

For evaluating this in practice, the question arises as to who the agents are that are involved in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system? What interests do they follow respectively? Obviously, there are national actors with a national(ist) agenda, there is the provincial level, considering also regional development, and there are

late 1990s, even in the 'patriotic booklet' of the site written by (or under the direction of) Li Hua, if one reads it carefully. However, as we noted, in the 'patriotic' educational video on the Geleshan site done at the same time, the very Li Hua rather repeated the (wrong) official version in front of the camera for Chinese pupils. Very clearly, it depended on the medium and target group, where what could be said, and the binding force of the State Council's 1988 labelling has to be counted in, as detailed in chapter 3.2.

local agents. Then there are the visitors, a very varied group: from individual tourists over organised tourist groups to school classes (at times including those for impaired children),[19] military cadets, cadres, or working units (and occasionally also prisoners led there to be 're-educated' and 'reform' themselves). In sum: what are visitors to get out of the sites?

The national agenda is clearly spelled out in the materials we have used (and described in more detail in chapter 1): the official lists of sites, ever expanding over time, the nationally broadcasted *Ai wo Zhonghua* 爱我中华 (Love our China) TV film clips on every listed site during the eras of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao 胡锦涛, and – where extant – additionally the alternative collection of educational videos on some first list sites, selected by the Ministry of Education and produced by the national entity for audio-visual education, *Zhonghua hun* 中华魂 (Soul of China), for classroom use; the official 'patriotic' booklets of the Zhongguo dabaike quanshu 中国大百科全书 (China Encyclopaedia Press) benchmark series on the single sites of the first list, usually put on the shelves of school libraries (reprinted over the 2000s and partly in 2012 with a new layout); the further officially commissioned printed collections grouped after the respective lists, some clearly geared towards individual tourists by providing maps; and the most recent official *Fengbei* 丰碑 (Monuments) series of 2019 in 22 volumes, grouping the nationally listed sites (up to the 2017 list) per province, updating the whole 'patriotic education showcase bases' endeavour, started in the era of Jiang Zemin, over the era of Hu Jintao, to the era of Xi Jinping, with new narratives. By choosing this historicising approach, we could follow the evolution of the single sites, but also of the sites' 'framing' (Goffman) through time which reflected the changes of requirements (and uses) as well. While many sites existed as such already before the 'patriotic education' campaign, might have been on the 'cultural heritage' listings already before, and might have undergone the usual process of 'upgrading' in the 'patriotic education' context (for a typical example, see chapter 1, appendix 2), entailing the need to adapt themselves to the more specific requirements of the 'patriotic education *showcase* bases' system since 1997, we also looked at examples of sites which were established only relatively late. These are, e.g., those connected to people 're-evaluated' or rehabilitated in post-Mao China, not the least Deng Xiaoping himself. The more recent cases included, as mentioned, even an example of a site completely newly designed and on purpose for the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system itself, only opened (in 2006) *after* being listed (in 2005), tellingly dedicated to the Fujian–Taiwan connection – chapter 4.1), which thus showed a 'model' site for how

19 Cf. the example of Kunming's 'Tombs of the four December 1 'martyrs' and December 1 memorial hall' in chapter 3.2.

a ‘patriotic education showcase base’ should ideally look like – and what it should be used for. In other words, it showed the system in the making. By using all those materials systematically for the single cases, considering also the school history textbook narratives Chinese visitors have been socialised into, the national agenda’s general evolution could be followed in its local dimension and held against personal on-site observations at a given moment.

The regional or local agendas, in turn, are by nature pluriform: the single sites are required to show how they feed into the national ‘patriotic education’ goal, but they also try to market their place and attract visitors, ideally also domestic tourists. For the provincial or regional (minorities) museums (see chapter 2.2), e.g., this means to tread a fine line, since the peculiar provincial or minority features are the interesting point for a tourist visitor, but should not eclipse the national for serving ‘patriotic education’. For the stable offer, the sites drew up contracts with entities which they serve for outings, sometimes with specifically tailored proposals: for schools of various levels, for the military, or for work places. Though most entities served are nearby, especially in the case of primary or secondary schools, some are also further away and thus reach out beyond the local, namely in the case of some universities that would send their students over for ‘patriotic education’, promising also a ‘trip’ away from home, but also guaranteeing that sites are not bound up too much with the local community only. Also, as we observed, some contracted military entities were from further away. With working places, the connection is usually over the specific site content, aiming, e.g., at workers, journalists, or bank employees. Cadres are a group which are explicitly and repeatedly addressed for receiving ‘education’, namely to train them in ‘anti-corruption’ and to enrich their ideological background to turn them into a stable and ‘convinced’ backbone of PRC society. Signs of such contractual relationships are displayed at the sites with plaques (cf. chapter 1), and some of the official booklets on single sites even addressed these arrangements explicitly, as we have seen, to document their conforming to the ‘patriotic education showcase bases’ requirements. In this context, the sites often developed a ‘going-out’ strategy as well, either sending staff to schools to teach the pupils in their classroom, or designing travelling exhibitions shown around the country. That way, pupils as well as grown-up Chinese citizens not able to travel to the site could be reached, too.

Beyond the ‘stable’ offer and contract relations, the sites, however, also need to attract normal tourists and Chinese citizens which they do to various degrees (and depending on what they can offer, given the site content). Local materials sometimes try to infiltrate some ‘local’ readings to supplement the national perspective for heightening the site’s attractiveness (and uniqueness). Thus, during

my on-site observations, locally available materials have been taken in, too, to evaluate how the sites try to perform their double task to serve local as well as national agendas.

The least easy to grasp actors are the visitors themselves: the obvious ones are those coming via the mentioned contracts to 'receive education', which included, as the TV film clips (and in some cases the sites' official booklets) had disclosed, beyond the usual pupils, military cadets, cadres, or work entities, also occasionally prisoners to 'reform' themselves by visiting such 'patriotic' sites.[20] Many visitors are led there to perform ceremonies, for which all 'showcase bases' provide ample space on purpose, typically being sworn in to join the Young Pioneers, the Communist Youth League, the Army or the paramilitary,[21] or the CCP itself, but sometimes even for more general coming-of-age ceremonies, thus integrating the 'patriotic education showcase bases' system in the Chinese citizens' life-cycle. Since 2016, there are also ceremonies held for medium-level to higher officials to take an oath on the Constitution.

The festive calendar of when to perform activities has been also expanded in the meantime: in the 'PRC law on Patriotic Education' (2023) that went into effect on 1 January 2024, traditional lunar calendar Chinese festivals like the Spring Festival, the Lantern Festival, Tomb Sweeping Day (Qingming 清明), the Dragon Boat Festival, and the Mid-Autumn Festival, have joined the 'international' ones like (solar) New Year (1 January), International Women's Day (8 March), Labour Day (1 May), Youth Day (in China: 4 May), Children's Day (in China: 1 June), and the newly (i.e. in 2018) installed 'Chinese Peasants' Harvest Festival' ('in autumn'). Furthermore, the Day of Victory in the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance (3 September), Martyrs' Day (30 September), and the National Memorial Day for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre (13 December) installed in 2014 are prescribed.[22] The use of the sites for ceremonies thus integrates them into performative agendas. Therewith, they become a historical backdrop for engendering future patriots as much as continuing to educate the adult citizen by 'citizen formation'.

Beyond such 'visitors on duty', tourists are a pickier variety.[23] While the group tourists depend on the tour package offered, which can also join various sites together like theme tours on the Long March (e.g., in 'red tourism'), or as suggested

20 Such groups would not mingle with the normal tourists, of course. The TV films are therefore an important document for this, as are the occasional written statements in the published 'patriotic' materials.

21 The paramilitary consists of citizens receiving military training outside the formal army.

22 See *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo aiguozhuyi jiaoyu fa* (2023), articles 28 and 29.

23 See, e.g., Urry / Larsen (2011) for a discussion of tourist perspectives on places people travel to.

in newer approaches of a so-called '1+x' model, to join the 'red theme' with one other factor like shopping or nature,[24] individual tourists would only visit if there was an offer interesting enough to warrant spending leisure time there. Sites need to take this into account and thus try to variegate their offers, which some of them also contemplated openly in the official 'patriotic' booklet series on the first list sites, as we saw. That way, they also try to make 'their' site distinct and unique which otherwise, with politics overtaking everything else, could be easily levelled, rendering it unattractive in touristic terms, though providing 'politically correct' messages.[25] The sites also consult among each other to learn of 'best practice' examples elsewhere.[26] Unsurprisingly, those sites that are attractive on their own in purely touristic terms need less of an additional effort, while other sites will be largely deserted for much of the year beyond the 'standard' contract visitors.

The Chinese concerted action in the context of the larger 'patriotic education' campaign, thoroughly planned and assigned to all administrative levels and entities as something to report on (cf. the implementation outlines or 'action plans' referred to in chapter 1), therefore also tries to pick up expectations the potential Chinese visitors would bring along from their former exposure to narratives in school, but also to those of other (official) media. This became very obvious in the examples of topics well-known from PRC-era fictional renderings. This could be via the genre of novels like 'Defence of Yan'an' (*Baowei Yan'an* 保卫延安 of the 1950s) for the Party place Yan'an (chapter 3.3 – given that this 'holy place of the revolution' had to be surrendered temporarily to the GMD in 1947), and most importantly 'Red Crag' (*Hongyan* 红岩 of 1961) in the case of the Geleshan 歌乐山 prisons (chapter 3.2), engendering also other fictional renderings like theatre plays or films, dramatically highlighting the Communist 'martyrs' in Southwest China at the eve of the PRC's founding. A further medium via which Chinese visitors had been familiarised with certain topics in the official reading, framing their perception of sites and referred to in the 'patriotic' materials or on-site, was PRC-era films. E.g., we noted the one on 19th century 'national hero' *Lin Zexu* (chapter 5.1) of the 1950s still recommended for history classes, and the more internationally launched

24 Cf. Zhao (2021: 234). The 'cradle of the revolution' Jinggangshan (chapter 3.3), for one, proposed a combination of 'red' and 'green', as we noted.

25 Red tourism research has shown that often local and national perspectives collide, with the locality interested more in economic aspects while the national perspective is fixed on 'political correctness'. Cf. Zhao (2021: 232).

26 E.g., we noted that the Longhua (see chapter 3.2) or Geleshan (see chapter 3.3) sites tried to pose as 'best practice' examples also for others, detailing their measures of education for various target groups. The Nanjing Massacre Memorial, in turn, served as a standard for atrocity sites (see chapter 3.2).

1997 movie on the 'Opium War' (*Yapian zhanzheng* 鸦片战争 – chapter 4.3) at the occasion of the Hong Kong hand-over. Visitors to the respective 'showcase bases' in Fujian and Guangdong were to match those with the physical places. 'The Naval Battle of 1894' (*Jiawu fengyun* 甲午风云) on the First Sino–Japanese War (a film of 1962) was another example of a film still recommended for history classes, framing that topic for visitors of the respective 'showcase base' on Liugongdao (chapter 4.3). The various fictional renderings of the 'Red Detachment of Women' (*Hongse niangzi jun* 红色娘子军), this early 1930s Hainan guerrilla formation, best known in China in the filmed ballet version (of 1970), but also applied for PRC foreign relations on stage, notably during US president Nixon's historic visit in 1972, was, in turn, a clear point of reference for the respective Hainan 'patriotic education showcase base' (chapter 4.2). For the commemoration of the Second Sino–Japanese War, the 1986 film 'Bloody Battle of Taierzhuang' (*Xuezhan Taierzhuang* 血战台儿庄 – chapter 4.3) on this 1938 'victory' over the Japanese, served, as we observed, also for cross-Strait relations to the GMD on Taiwan, soliciting potential tourists also from there to visit this 'patriotic' place, while other sites connected to the Second Sino–Japanese War rather referred back to well-known Maoist framings for the domestic public, like the film on 'Tunnel Warfare' (*Didaozhan* 地道战, 1965) in Ranzhuang (chapter 4.3) which hailed the 'people's war' (under Communist guidance) against the Japanese. Newer films treating the subsequent Civil War battles between the CCP and the GMD in Manchuria, Central, and North China (chapter 4.3), namely the 'Decisive Campaigns' (*Dajuezhan* 大决战) trilogy of 1991/1992 repeatedly referred to in the respective 'showcase bases' of the three military campaigns of 1948/1949, in turn, were to document for the PRC citizen that the CCP's rule was ultimately justified by victory in the Civil War. This film trilogy's historical 'argument' was particularly important at the moment of the CCP's legitimacy crisis after the bloody crushing of the Tiananmen protests in 1989 domestically, and internationally after the crumbling of the Communist Bloc in Europe, culminating in the momentous dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. That way, the Chinese film trilogy of 1991/1992 was to convey to the PRC citizen that the CCP, in contrast, would not waver and stay in power, and this storyline was to be transmitted also at the respective 'patriotic education showcase bases'. To illustrate and bolster the legitimacy of 'new China' also beyond military victory in the Civil War, documentary films on PRC-era topics, in turn, served, focusing on 'socialist achievements', like the 1970 propagandistic documentary film on the Red Flag Canal (*Hongqiqu* 红旗渠 – chapter 2.3) built since 1960, which was, as we observed, very pronouncedly integrated into the respective 'patriotic education showcase base's' display. The documentary film was to appeal to the domestic

visitors' visual memory of this widely publicised case of PRC engineering achievements (evidently not mentioning the Great Famine background). That documentary film had been also used for the international public after the PRC had joined the United Nations (taking over the seat from Taiwan in 1971), when Deng Xiaoping (at his brief temporary political come-back during the Cultural Revolution) chose it as the first of ten films to screen and advertise the PRC in 1974 when travelling to New York to address the UN General Assembly. (As we noted in chapter 2.3, this international screening had the further subtext of countering the foreign documentary treatment of leftist Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni in his 1972 film *Chung Kuo – Cina*, attacked with a campaign in the PRC meanwhile, with an at the time 'politically correct' 'Chinese' version). The equally Mao-era documentary film on oil worker and 'ironman' Wang Jinxi (*Tieren Wang Jinxi* 铁人王进喜) (released 1966), in turn, served to showcase a Chinese Communist model worker and functions as a background for domestic visitors of Wang's respective 'showcase base' in Daqing (chapter 5.3), who are familiar with his most iconic images from the documentary. Beyond such above-named artistic treatments in novels, theatre plays and ballets, or films, a further medial form widely circulating among the normal Chinese citizens is the little comic-style picture books (*lianhuanhua* 连环画) on various topics, which we occasionally noted as well. And the visual memory of Chinese citizens also built on news and iconised photographs, which were referred to, as we observed, in several 'showcase bases', e.g., in those of Lei Feng (chapter 5.3), but also in the case of Bethune (chapter 5.2), or of places like Yan'an (chapter 3.3) where many iconic photos had been produced (to be sometimes cropped later when people fell out of favour). In any case, a successful on-site matching of expectations domestic tourists will bring with them, created by earlier exposure to such other widely disseminated medial forms, heightens the possibility that people get hooked and will be moved to visit the sites in their spare time.

Divergent readings

The differences between the agents and their agendas, however, also open up possibilities for divergent readings. Some materials precisely use the locality to offer small windows of such alternative readings, even if the larger historiographical framework of Chinese history, namely in the case of pre-modern history as mainly and authoritatively defined in Marxist terms by Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978)

(whose brush we also encountered repeatedly as a once major figure in the PRC's heritage system), remained intact.[27] Furthermore, for more recent periods, historical photos shown locally may provide unexpected cues to the attentive on-site visitor (which – as we observed – had been skipped for sensitive cases by the nationally broadcasted TV presentation more careful as to what and whom to show to the national audience). Or museum holdings may materially point to aspects not fully in line with official narrative priorities (which were then left out in the national 'patriotic' TV representations as well, e.g., in the case of the Anhui museum and its holdings of Western-style paintings of Pan Yuliang 潘玉良 – chapter 2.2, a woman artist with a penchant for depicting female nudes who never returned from France after she had left in the 1930s). In this – and other – cases, the alternative book series of museums (which was launched later in the Hu Jintao era: *Dai ni zoujin bowuguan* 带你走进博物馆 or 'taking you to the museum' – cf. also chapter 1) addressed to Chinese youths as a 'second classroom' that we have occasionally integrated in the discussion of single sites that were museums, tried to play up the local holdings instead as an attraction.

As for PRC times, a notable case of a bold de facto challenge of the official historiography has been Liu Shaoqi's birthplace (chapter 5.3) that disclosed in its respective 'patriotic booklet' the man-made Great Famine to the intended young Chinese reader by reflecting on the local, countering the official storyline of 'natural disaster' (and thus undermining the official taboo in a 'patriotic education' publication already in the late 1990s!). That way, even if national readings of history may not be explicitly challenged, some local agents contributing to the 'patriotic education showcase bases' (being assigned to produce the 'patriotic' materials) can give it a spin, like in this case of Liu Shaoqi's birthplace that uses the rehabilitated most famous victim of the Cultural Revolution to also vindicate the people of his home area who not only suffered from his fate at that time, but already earlier during the Great Famine (as so many people did elsewhere). Deng Xiaoping's birthplace, too, tried to vindicate the local people who suffered and were affected by the 'great son's' changing political fortunes, even though Deng himself (different from Liu Shaoqi) never returned or openly cared for the place. As so often in China, via a historical case, perceived former injustice is indirectly tried to redress. This is far from 'objective historiography', of course, but it is precisely in the changes of narratives over time (and space) where the developments of policy agendas (and occasional deviations from it) are reflected. Here one may think once more of the Xi

27 Cf. especially chapter 2 on Guo Moruo's influence on Communist historiography, namely of ancient China, but also his role in Maoist times as a key figure in the Chinese cultural heritage system and in CASS (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences).

Jinping-era 'new' narratives which aim at 'telling China's *story* well' (note: story / *gushi* 故事, not history / *lishi* 历史!). In fact, the 'story' needs to be told 'well' and 'compelling' for being effective, and it needs uniformity (which explains why 'dark spots', especially in more recent history, are by now rather glossed over, with the eye witnesses who could testify to the contrary also dying out). But local agents at times try to infiltrate some divergence into the narrative to vindicate local agendas under the national radar.

Comparative aspects

Finally, how do these 'patriotic education showcase bases' appear in comparative perspective? How do they relate to the Soviet example? And is there anything specifically 'Chinese' about them?

Soviet patriotic education

The Soviets had a pronounced education in patriotism, for which the crucial event would become the 'victory in the Great *Patriotic* War' in 1945 (cf. also chapter 1). However, already before, the outlines of a 'patriotic education' which at the beginning of the Soviet Union was still in rivalry with Communist 'internationalism', had been drawn. Although Lenin was (as mentioned in chapter 1) de facto rather hesitant to promote 'patriotism' (and is tellingly often quoted in China out of context to insinuate the contrary!), his wife and in her own right an important figure in early Soviet education, Nadezhda Krupskaya, suggested to take up elements of the Western scout movement, which included 'patriotism', with the aim to provide a character education (*vospitaniye*) that would produce the 'new Soviet person', ready to serve Soviet society.[28] Since the mid-1920s, i.e. after Lenin's death (1924), 'revolutionary patriotism' was safely on the agenda, and in the early 1930s, Stalin combined it with the necessity to defend the fatherland for protecting socialism. That way, patriotism was by then clearly linked to the military. In short, patriotism was there to protect the purportedly superior Soviet societal system, and the times of Stalin were characterised by the conjecture of 'enemies' (inside and outside) to be fought against. As Russian scholar Anna Sanina sums up: 'The

28 Cf. Riordan (1987). This article also provides the text of the promise given by the Soviet Young Pioneers in an appendix, p. 155.

military-patriotic element became the quintessence of the Soviet system of patriotic education, intended to promote combat and labor traditions, inculcate respect and love for the armed forces, develop a sense of civic and military duty, promote the mastery of military skills and knowledge, and prepare the younger generation for military service.' (Sanina 2017: 34).

This sounds very familiar, given the observations in the present book on the Chinese case as found at several 'patriotic education showcase bases'. The military component necessitated to create a sense of being potentially attacked, i.e., it presupposed the existence of 'the enemy' (which typically, here as there, is left unspecified as to who that would be, leaving open the possibility to turn on various 'enemies' inside or outside, historical or present). And after WW (World War) II, the Soviet system of 'patriotic education' in a multi-ethnic (in Soviet parlance: multi-national) country, another parallel to China, was very meticulously worked out to start from young children all through to adulthood, and to include various organisations and media. Also, the tools applied resemble each other, including visits to heroes' ('martyrs') tombs, ceremonies of *rites de passage* (i.e., in the Soviet Union joining the Soviet Octobrists for age 7–9 and the Pioneers for age 9–14 thereafter, respectively in the PRC joining the Chinese Young Pioneers for age 6–14; then the Komsomol for age 14–28 in the Soviet Union, respectively in the PRC the Chinese Communist Youth League for age 14–28; joining the respective army; or the respective Communist Party), essay writing, interviewing of veterans, singing of patriotic songs, or watching patriotic films. However, the Chinese went beyond the former Soviet practice which started in terms of age only with primary school, while Jiang Zemin called for starting from kindergarten already (which in turn is now taken over in Russia's present 'patriotic education', while in China the Xi Jinping-era efforts even aim at yet earlier beginnings).[29] One may recall here that Jiang Zemin, the key promoter of the intensified Chinese 'patriotic education' wave after the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, had undergone vocational training in the Soviet Union in the 1950s and thus had experienced the Soviet system himself there.[30] In fact, even the Soviet slogan of 'love for socialism, love for the Soviet government, love for the Communist Party' (Sanina 2017: 35) reverberates in the PRC's official similar 'three loves'. In both the Soviet Union and the PRC, the key element in

29 The new Xi Jinping-era 'implementation outline' for patriotic education even calls for starting right away from babies, as mentioned in chapter 1! Cf. 'Zhonggong Zhongyang guowuyuan' (2019), section 5. The 'how' is, however, not specified.

30 Notably, the book-length (and rather biased) biography in English of Jiang Zemin, published when the latter had just stepped down, as 'the man who changed China' by journalist cum businessman Kuhn (2004) who says about himself that he acted as an 'advisor' for the Chinese government, has almost nothing to say on this crucial time at all.

'patriotic education' was defined as 'emotion-based' learning.[31] Thus, 'patriotism' was to be nurtured above all by emotions which were to be roused by all possible means to learn 'whom to hate and whom to love'. This sense of 'the enemy' also furthered the supposition that 'patriotism' was something to be introduced in all kinds of school subjects, from math to music. And the major goal was to inculcate a vision of life where the collective good is paramount.[32] To enhance this, here we there, stories of heroism and heroes were disseminated,[33] even at times taking some mutually over,[34] including also child heroes, and hailed figures were presented as outstanding already in youngest age, thus bringing the model closer to the children for emulation.[35]

In the reverse direction, the turn towards the 'national conditions' (*guoqing*) under Jiang Zemin, highlighting (selected) 'Chinese values' rather than the Maoist 'revolutionary values', was taken over by Russia in its recent reorientation towards a 'traditional Russian spiritual and moral values' system, combined with the need to stress the superiority of one's own system (vis-à-vis 'the West').[36] Similar also to the PRC, present-day Russia has 'defence bases' as well where to learn about this issue, though it is not that systematic a system as in the PRC, which has, as shown in chapter 1, an elaborate net of labelled sites for various target groups and administrative levels for various specific issues (defence, but also anti-corruption etc. – cf. chapter 1, appendix 3). And the Chinese case with its inclusion of ancient Chinese cultural sites, if less numerous than the dominating revolutionary ones, also taps into a much broader 'national identity' reservoir (given also the perceived peculiar need to address the Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese to bind them to the mainland) to enhance pride in China's past, even reaching back into 'prehistory', and covering all provinces and regions of the modern PRC in terms of space (cf. chapter 1, appendix 1). According to Jiang Zemin's vision, the 'patriotic education showcase

31 See Sanina (2017: 66–70).

32 For a listing of what the Soviets expected of their citizens, cf. Muckle (1987: 2–3).

33 Merridale (2003: 23) has also aptly remarked that Stalin (like the Chinese Communists) sensed that for his semi-literate people morality tales about heroes were more easily accessible and popular than Marxist theories. This legacy of moralising biographical history writing, she states, also carried through to the Putin era.

34 As we noted, heroes taken over were mostly Soviet heroes also praised in the PRC, but sometimes a Chinese hero was praised also reversely in the Soviet Union. (Cf. chapter 4.3 on the Liao–Shen Campaign in Manchuria 1948 and Soviet author Konstantin Simonov's praise in 1950 of Bu Fenggang's 卜凤刚 heroism.)

35 E.g., Lenin's childhood stories were widely disseminated in the Soviet Union already. (Cf. Sanina 2017: 75). And as we saw above in chapter 5 for Chinese model figures, many heroes and Party leaders are shown as outstanding at a very young age already.

36 Cf. Sanina (2017: 106, 117).

bases' were also to connect to various other tools and the media to make 'patriotism' the 'main theme' or 'main melody' (*zhuxuanlü* 主旋律) (a term first used in visual media for 'main melody dramas') in all facets of life – ideally at least.

Soviet museums

Beyond the general system of 'patriotic education', the fact that many of the 'showcase bases' are museums or memorial halls, also requires a look into the influence of the Soviet model on this element of the PRC system, which is, e.g., tangible in the museum hierarchy and conception. Recent English-language scholarly treatments of Chinese museums (e.g., Denton 2014, Varutti 2014, Lu 2014, Ho 2018) usually only mention this in passing, rather focusing on an inner-Chinese perspective of museum development from Republican times. While this inner-Chinese precedent is certainly playing an important role as well, PRC museums were called upon to actively 'revolutionise' also this sector and thus looked to the Soviet Union in the 1950s for guidance expressly to distance themselves from the pre-revolutionary museums which were seen as bourgeois, capitalist, and elitist. Interestingly, this went as far as taking in Soviet advice on how to present *Chinese* history. E.g., the Soviets advised the Chinese on how to change the presentation of the emperors Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 (3rd century BC) and Tang Taizong 唐太宗 (7th century AD), or of the Boxers around 1900 (in the suppression of which the Tsarist Russian Empire had been involved), while also asking for adding Lenin's positive reaction in 1912 to the Chinese Republican revolution of 1911 in the display on the latter! [37] Beyond smaller exchanges between the Soviets and the Chinese, in 1955, a delegation from the PRC was sent to the Soviet Union to study the Soviet museum system (which was to the Chinese delegation's surprise dominated by female experts),[38] and in 1957 a Soviet delegation came to China, whereas exhibitions of one country in the other were also held in between.

As the key journal to discuss museum work in the early PRC, *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物参考资料 (Reference material for cultural relics), pointed out in 1957, reflecting on 40 years of revolutionary museums in the Soviet Union, two key elements stood out there in terms of museum types: first, the whole network the

37 See Han (1957: 16).

38 The Chinese museum staff, especially on the leaders' level, were usually male. See Wang Yeqiu 王冶秋, a leading PRC museum figure who visited the Soviet Union already in 1950, who told his Chinese readers of the impressive fact that 70–80% of Soviet museum directors were female. Wang (1950: 74).

Soviets had established all over the Soviet Union of 'topographical' (*dizhi* 地志), i.e. regional-local museums (*krayevedcheskiy muzey*) which reflected the triad of 'nature, history, and socialist construction' of a given area to engender 'ardent love of one's native soil, ardent love of the fatherland, and active participation in socialist construction' among the Soviet public (which clearly bound 'love of one's native soil' to the one of the fatherland, while conceiving a museum as not only directed towards the past but also towards the future: this whole slogan was also taken over in the PRC); and, if secondarily, the memorial museums (*memorial'nyy muzey*, *jinianxing bowuguan* 纪念性博物馆) which were to record outstanding events or people. The first type (i.e., the regional-local museum), which recalls in its Chinese translation the Chinese historiographical tradition of local gazetteers (*difang zhi* 地方志) that also described various aspects of a region, was systematically introduced in 1956 to China's various provinces and autonomous regions. The second type (i.e., the memorial museum) was started with the former sites of the Chinese revolution, notably not (yet) from the Shanghai 'founding' place of 1921 (see chapter 3.3) but from the Guangzhou Peasant Movement Training Institute (1924–1926) over Ruijin and Zunyi 遵义 to Yan'an (cf. the 'Party places' in chapter 3.3), which recorded 'events', while other sites were to record outstanding individuals like Republican-era writer Lu Xun 鲁迅 (often labelled the 'Chinese Gorky').[39] As for the first and main type, the regional-local museums, which were to represent the regions of one's country, be it the Soviet Union or the PRC, the museums concentrated at first on the nature and resources in a more material and materialistic vein, to be only enriched with art and culture (as additions by human labour) to show the particularities of a province or region. As a Soviet expert explained in 1956 in a summary for the Chinese who published it in translation, the regional museums should, however, cover all of the above-mentioned triad, pointing out more specifically how the ideal setup looked like: first, the natural surrounding with local geology, flora, and fauna, for which an exhibition method integrating the various interdependent parts of the ecosystem was best to provide a lifelike feel of the surrounding. This should avoid having, e.g., only exemplars of single animals exhibited out of context. Processed products made of natural resources, in turn, would not be placed there but go to the exhibition part on economy (as a subcategory of 'history', being products of human labour). Beyond the display on regional nature and resources, the second major item would be local history, which should follow historical materialism to conform to the museums' double function as a place of research but also of education for the populace.

39 See Bo (1957) about what China should learn from Soviet museums.

Therefore, Soviet museums had fixed relations with schools (which the Chinese would take over, as we saw). This history part (which included economic, social, and cultural aspects) should, however, not end up showing local history as isolated, but stress its being part of national history. That way, the museums would fulfil their duty to lead to 'patriotism' (evidently intending love for the nation, not only the region as the above motto of 'love of one's native soil' and 'love of one's fatherland' suggested – a tension the Chinese counterparts also grappled with, as we noted). But, the Soviet expert stressed, local museums would have to use local artefacts as materials (that way giving the local also its due), not only putting up textbook-like narratives, photos, and tables (which was a challenge, as we saw, for some types of PRC 'patriotic education' bases on elusive topics, lacking in local tangible artefacts to display). And thirdly, the museums should reflect the socialist construction and life at a given locality (which thus explicitly included the present and plans for future development for exhibition in a museum which by this showed its 'socialist' character different from 'capitalist' museums supposedly focused on storing and exhibiting the past only).[40] In fact, these Soviet models guided the first boom in PRC museum openings that has been noted for the time of the Great Leap Forward, especially in the years 1958 and 1959.[41] This boom was also driven by the wish to catch up with the Soviets who boasted of a much larger number of museums on their territory, the majority being local-regional museums of which most were created only after the October Revolution and thus were from the outset in a 'socialist' design, also connecting to Soviet 'nationality politics'.[42]

As we saw with the provincial or regional museums in China (chapter 2.2), much of this Soviet legacy is still virulent, e.g., with the triad of nature, pre-revolutionary history and culture, and the local participation in the revolution and beyond (which is to stand for the 'socialist construction' in the Soviet-style triad mentioned above). Also, the way exhibitions are arranged, with ideology guiding, but with due attention to artefacts to show the history told also 'materially',[43] is close to Soviet advice of the 1950s.[44] Over time, in the PRC, the local actors, however, stepped up culture

40 See the advices given by Leidaya (1956).

41 Cf. the quantitative table in Lu (2014: 118).

42 A broader outline of all types of museums in the Soviet Union had been already presented in China in 1950. See the translated article by Vasil'yevna (1950). In 1956, the above referred-to Soviet museum expert told the Chinese that the Soviet Union counted over 1.000 museums, most of them being created in Soviet times with only some going back to Tsarist times. Cf. Leidaya (1956).

43 This uses artefacts as 'witnesses' of something or someone like a scientific document. Cf. Varutti (2014: 61).

44 A rather detailed report was the named one of Leidaya (1956). But also Chinese visiting the Soviet Union came back with many concrete examples how, e.g., personal items of revolutionary

in an effort to attract tourists to the provinces, banking on more 'traditional' selling points of the locality (de facto often not coextensive with provincial boundaries) to create a 'provincial identity' distinct enough to warrant a visit, while translocal museums at the same time also de-localised their exhibited artefacts (chapter 2.2), showing them rather as 'top pieces'. *In situ* sites like the excavation sites or landscape transformations (chapter 2.1 and 2.3), or sites that focus on the locality (chapter 3) or on the connection of a physical site to a 'hero' (chapter 5),[45] in turn, need less of a narrative contextualisation for the visitor.

Most contextualisation is needed in the case of the 'elusive' sites (chapter 4) where representation and narration are key. There, in fact, the problems the Soviet advisor had outlined above, abound. And in terms of citizen education, the Soviet museums provided also the model for laying out museums in a way to have space enough to allow for ceremonies, pledging loyalty to the Communist Party and love of the socialist fatherland. While historical settings were deemed particularly impressive for school children, Chinese museum representatives visiting the Soviet Union also highly evaluated the presence of 'old Bolsheviks' to tell of their experience on the spot as particularly effective and emotionally gripping, which the Chinese readers of their report on Soviet museums were recommended to learn from to render education also in China more forceful in this regard.[46] (As we observed in several cases, the filmic representations of the sites thus integrated occasionally such interviews with witnesses for more recent topics – like in Urumqi's cemetery for the 'martyrs' of 1943, or Kunming's memorial for the 1 December 1946 'martyrs' – both chapter 3.2, or the memorial for Tao Xingzhi – chapter 5.2, or of descendants – like in the case of Lin Zexu – chapter 5.1., even though in this case they could hardly tell about a forefather after several generations. Also, the Huai–Hai Campaign memorial – chapter 4.3 – employed eye-witnesses telling of their experiences at the time.) This device serves to render the site content

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leaders were exhibited there, or how, very importantly, documentary films were integrated in a multimedia approach to educate the public (which shows that this feature which we repeatedly noted was also something with a Soviet precedent). Cf. Yang Boda's long article in three instalments in *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 1954.

45 For the latter, often termed *guju* (former residence) as we saw, in the Soviet Union the so-called 'house museums' (*dom-muzey*) are a likely reference. See, for an overview on Soviet museums, provided by Soviet authors, including such house museums, the special issue of the UNESCO journal *Museum*: *Museums in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* (1963). These museums were for key figures like Lenin, but also often for writers, or other outstanding figures like famous aviator Valery Chkalov (1904–1938) who was the first to fly the polar route from Europe to North America and was honoured as a Soviet hero and 'patriot'. His memorial house-museum was incidentally also introduced in 1958 to Chinese readers in translation from Russian: see Bayev (1958).

46 See Luosu (1958).

more approachable on an emotional level (as is, needless to say, also true elsewhere around the globe where eye-witnesses or videos of them are applied in modern museums on more recent topics).

Soviet tourism

As to 'patriotism' and tourism in comparative perspective, there are similarities but also differences between the Soviet Union and the PRC. In Stalin's times, the Soviets focused more on vacation as either medical treatment (which, incidentally, several CCP figures received in the Soviet Union as well), or as strengthening the body by physical activity. (For China, one may think here of the Beidaihe 北戴河 seaside vacations in PRC times as a collective enterprise by the high CCP cadres, but this was not a broader practice for the normal Chinese citizen in Mao times yet). But the Soviets also knew organised 'patriotic travels' for the populace,[47] not the least for the young, e.g., over the Communist youth organisation Komsomol that designed organised tourism as a good chance for 'patriotic education', or trips that – like with the Long March in China – would follow, e.g., the trail of victories of the Red Army in WW II.[48] Interestingly, also the outstanding role of memorials which had been built in the Soviet Union immediately after the war in increasing numbers, and the already mentioned role of memorial museums in the museum landscape are similar to China, serving as tourist destinations as well.[49] Summer camps were also offered in the Soviet case (and are so again today)[50] – as is by several of the Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases', too, but a similar systematic structure like the Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases' covering all of China and integrating them in a mutually reinforcing system of school history textbook narratives, films, songs, recommended readings, and tourism was not developed to the same degree in the Soviet Union. In fact, as mentioned, the present-day 'patriotic education' in Russia seems to take much inspiration from the Chinese model reversely by now. And in terms of tourism, 'red tourism' tours in Russia are not primarily offered to Russians nostalgic about the Soviet Union, but packages are offered above all for attracting *Chinese* tourists to Communist sites in Russia to do their 'Grand Tour'

47 See Koenker (2013: 57, 258–259).
48 Cf. Gorsuch (2011: 35, n53).
49 See Gorsuch (2011: 35 n55). Soviet-era monuments have become a contested issue in the post-Soviet era, though, of how to relate them to a new national identity. See Forest / Johnson (2002) for a case study on Moscow monuments.
50 Cf. Hemment, Julie (2015).

there, notably, however, as a cooperation project between Russia and China set up in 2014 which was dominated by the Chinese side,[51] making sure that the Chinese agenda (and historical reading) is reflected in the programme offered to Chinese citizens.[52]

A look to the US

Beyond the Soviet Union as a key inspiration for the form of 'patriotic education' in the PRC, the latter could also build upon Republican-era forms enhanced by the GMD, namely with the flag (and image of the leader) in the classroom, the singing of the national anthem, or recitation of other required educative texts,[53] and visits of 'martyrs' tombs' (if not as a fixed item of outdoor education yet), of themselves practices inspired by foreign examples back then, namely by the US, but also Europe (and sometimes mediated over Japan).

In present-day China where the system of 'patriotic education' has been stepped up after the 1989 Tiananmen crisis, there is of course also an awareness of on-going practices elsewhere in the world of more enduring relevance. Most importantly, this intends the US case: the daily morning ritual with the 'pledge of allegiance' and the flag in the classroom as means to educate dedicated patriotic American citizens, still widely practiced,[54] have been noted. The reciting of the pledge to the flag and the American Republic, standing for a common reference for the otherwise extremely heterogenous US population with varied immigration histories, is, however, in present times not mandatory for pupils to participate in, given the repeated tensions and debates about possible infringement on individual rights, and studies show that participation, in fact, varies.[55] In the American case, it has been found that it is especially poorer Americans (usually without much knowledge about or experience of other countries) that profess a strong patriotism, which seems to be largely bound up with beliefs in the promises of human dignity, equal opportunities, inclusiveness

51 Cf. Zhao (2021: 235, 241).

52 One may recall that the fact that the Communist Party in Russia is today an opposition party, if the biggest one, necessitates for the CCP to deflect the official, but somewhat divergent readings of history offered by Putin's United Russia Party, e.g., on the figure of Lenin who has been criticised by Putin for damaging Russian national interests. (For an example of how the CCP uses the Russian Communists to subtly challenge the United Russia Party and its interpretation of history in the context of restoring the largest Russian cemetery in China in Lüshun, see Müller 2022: 171–172.)

53 Cf. Harrison (2000); Culp (2007); Zarrow (2015).

54 For a brief historical summary of the American case, see Curren / Dorn (2018), chapters 1 to 3.

55 See Martin et al. (2017).

of the social contract, and America as 'God's country'. Compared to large European countries and Japan, this factually underprivileged group of Americans scored the highest in terms of (stated) patriotic conviction.[56] Patriotism also plays a notable part in domestic tourism in the US, not the least related to the country's natural landscape,[57] but also to historically important places.[58] Thus, patriotism is at times also connected to physical places. However, nothing comparable to the systematic network of patriotic education sites like in China is to be found. I.e., the scope and breadth of the PRC campaign is outstanding, and its systematic integration of sites, too.

Chinese cultural specificities?

This leads to the final question whether there are any specific factors that distinguish the Chinese 'patriotic education showcase bases' system also in a cultural sense?[59] In comparison to Soviet (or US) 'patriotic education', one notes not only the broader and more systematic approach in the PRC case, but also some characteristics derived from Chinese tradition. These include the eye-catching role of calligraphy at the single 'patriotic education showcase bases', and the legacy of traditional historiography and education more broadly.[60]

Calligraphy

Calligraphy and inscriptions as visual, if indirect, markers of alignment and appropriation of a site, were a feature that we encountered repeatedly at the 'patriotic education showcase bases' discussed in this book. As has become apparent all over the cases addressed in the preceding chapters, inscriptions play a vital role. They

56 Cf. Duina, Francesco (2020). For the Japanese case, pointing to the reservations of pupils as well as teachers in spite of attempts under former Prime Minister Abe to push for more patriotism in school, see Fukuoka / Takita-Ishii (2022).
57 For a more historical take, see Shaffer (2001).
58 Cf. the case study on Washington, D.C. by Huang / Santos (2011).
59 For heritage sites in China, it has been claimed that interaction with the Chinese audience is peculiar over the 'cultural moments' Chinese citizens experience there, e.g., over a 'poetic sense' landscapes may evoke, which are not appreciated by foreign visitors (Zhang 2020). This, however, is only partly relevant for the 'patriotic education showcase bases' as they do not only cover sites of cultural identification or culture–nature 'harmony'.
60 Obviously, these distinguishing features also spread historically to other regions in East Asia and thus are no longer 'exclusively Chinese' in this sense.

may be by noted professional calligraphers in some more recent cases, thus connecting to solicited artwork at a given site (and advertised accordingly), but usually (and conforming better to the tradition that calligraphy should not be something 'marketable'), they are by non-professionals. These may be noted public figures, e.g., Zhao Puchu 赵朴初, the key (lay) leader of PRC Buddhism, whose brush appeared not only at sites of 'Chineseness' like the 'mausoleum' of Huangdi, but also at several 'red sites', like the Red Flag Canal (chapter 2.3), the Shanghai Longhua 'Martyrs' Cemetery' (chapter 3.2), or Liu Shaoqi's home (chapter 5.3) as we saw, but in many cases, the brush is imbued with outright political weight.[61] Former general secretary Jiang Zemin was a key figure to leave his calligraphy at 'patriotic education showcase bases' all over the country, but also other leaders are present in this way and thus inscribed themselves in the respective sites.

Per se, for people of importance, leaving endorsements and calligraphies to inscribe a place is an age-old practice in China which implies patronage. It can, however, also be a form of outright political appropriation as we saw with the contestations about Guo Moruo's 'tomb stele' for the Chinese mythical 'ancestor' Huangdi (written on orders of Mao, in spite of Guo's having voiced his disbelief in Huangdi's historicity) (cf. chapter 3.1), which de facto served for replacing Chiang Kai-shek's calligraphy (who had aimed at the same political appropriation effect earlier) at this key site of 'Chineseness'.[62]

But some of once important or even leading figures (including those of the CCP) who left their calligraphies at some places, later became politically incorrect or fell from grace (e.g., former Party secretary Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 whose calligraphy we noted, i.a., at the 'mausoleum' of Yandi, the other mythical 'ancestor' of 'the Chinese' – cf. chapter 3.1; at the Wuhan February Seventh Memorial, or the Red Detachment of Women – cf. chapter 4.2; at the Opium War Museum – cf. chapter 4.3; or at the Bethune / Kotnis memorial – cf. chapter 5.3).[63] Locally, if calligraphies were kept nonetheless, this implied a silent statement of alignment with that former 'patron'. And in cases calligraphies had been on purpose destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, e.g., those of Republican-era GMD figures (or even older imperial ones), they would be remade in several cases thereafter, if not necessarily telling audiences explicitly who that (GMD) person was (like in the case of the inscription

61 For the use of calligraphy in politics, cf. Kraus (1991).

62 As will be recalled from chapter 3.1, Guo Moruo was asked by Mao to do this who did not want to do it himself, neither of them believing Huangdi to be historical, having a 'tomb'.

63 One may also recall here the case of Liu Shaoqi's changing the naming of Mao's home in the early 1960s (when at the peak of his power) from a *guju* to a *jiuju*, though he smartly left the calligraphic rendering itself to Mao's friend Guo Moruo (cf. chapter 5.3).

of 'Mr.' Jiang Dingwen 蒋鼎文 at Huangdi's 'mausoleum', i.e., by the former GMD general holding the area during the Second Sino–Japanese War – cf. chapter 3.1). On the other hand, actively eliciting an endorsement or inscription for a 'patriotic education base' in the present, e.g., from a Taiwanese representative, expresses cross-Strait relations over a 'shared' historical site (like the inscription Chiang Kai-shek's chief ideologue Chen Lifu 陈立夫 sent for Yandi's 'mausoleum'; the one of former Taiwan premier and leading GMD figure Lien Chan (Lian Zhan 连战) for the Taierzhuang Battle memorial; or Sun Yat-sen's grandson's writing one on spot at the Wuchang Uprising memorial) (see chapter 3.1, chapter 4.3, and chapter 4.2 respectively). That way, personalities perform 'Chinese patriotism' at large over writing at or for such a site.

Apart from the age-old topic of patronage and politics, the calligraphy issue, however, also reflects, if indirectly, the changes the Chinese leadership and their education has undergone: Mao himself was a calligrapher and poet who also liked to exchange both, be it with other Communists of his generation, be it with non-Communists he respected as skilled on that front,[64] bespeaking the education his generation had received. Even Deng Xiaoping, though no noted calligrapher (and much less a poet) but from a well-to-do family, had learnt the art in his youth and left his inscriptions for sites here and there, where he deemed it advisable. His handwriting thus became known throughout the country and easily identifiable, if clearly second to Mao's dominating brush.[65] The younger Jiang Zemin, coming from a family of the affluent Jiangnan area, had also received his education before PRC times, including training in the arts, though studying engineering and later also staying in the Soviet Union for some time. He thus exemplifies the generation bridging the two educational frameworks, the Republican one and the socialist one. Jiang, however, if often derided as amateurish for his performance, was an always ready provider of calligraphies, had a penchant for Chinese 'traditional culture', while also publicly singing both Soviet songs as well as Peking Opera tunes. Notably, he was a leader who also spoke foreign languages. This breadth of education, however one assesses Jiang's performance, increasingly thinned out with the following leading generations that had received their education in the Mao era. While Hu Jintao (born 1942) at least sometimes took to the brush, the younger Xi Jinping

64 One may only refer here to the case of Yu Youren 于右任, an important GMD figure who ended his days on Taiwan, who was highly and broadly respected as a calligrapher also by his political enemies.

65 As we noted, also other major Party figures of that generation or the slightly younger ones born in the first years of the Republic left their mark with calligraphies at several sites, even if they had only a rather basic formal education like Hu Yaobang.

(born 1953) has not been noted for doing so, leave alone composing poetry. In this sense it is ironic that the education under Mao did not provide the students with those 'Chinese' skills Mao himself loved to practice, having learnt them under the 'old system'. It is thus no wonder that 'traditional culture', though rhetorically invoked, has been increasingly side-lined in practice over the years of development of Chinese 'patriotic education', narrowing 'patriotic education' content down to Communist credentials in Xi Jinping's times.

The legacy of Chinese historiography and education

Another factor that recalls Chinese cultural tradition is the (if twisted) legacy of historiographical writing and its relation to edification. The moral framing of the provided narratives, though bent to marry the Communist worldview, and the continuous stress on 'filial *duty*' (which in this context is the more apt translation of *xiao* 孝 than the more conventional translation as 'filial *piety*') as an educational goal to underpin obedience, and even internalisation of hierarchical claims desired from the Chinese citizens from childhood onward, especially stressed for the so-called 'me generation', [66] strongly build upon the past as a legitimating factor. Needless to say, 'the past' is selectively appropriated, as are 'the values' supposedly defining 'the Chinese', as we have seen played out in the cases in the preceding chapters. To use the past for edifying the present generation via historiography is certainly not something unique to the Chinese case. But the ways how narratives are framed in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' tapped, as we noted in many case studies, repeatedly into Chinese 'traditional' historiographical patterns. They clearly do not aim at any *sine ira et studio* ideal to understand more about the past as the past, or to reflect on the foundations from which the present grew in some 'objective' way, to then ponder what 'lessons' could be drawn and applied for the present. Rather, these 'patriotic' narratives are to provide from the outset a reading of the past that serves present political agendas, though the modern addition is to engender active involvement of every socialist citizen to be educated to not only sustain the status quo, but to be ready to carry on the socialist system into the future at whatever cost. Exemplary history as a type of historical narration (cf. Rüsen 1990), already much favoured in traditional Chinese historiography, is thus the preferred device, and human agency is key. Otherwise, if only impersonal structures,

66 Cf. Rosen (2009) and Hansen / Svarverud (2010).

e.g., would be central, or even simply fate, rendering human agency marginal, historiography would not lead to active involvement.

By proposing individual examples of embodied values at physical places, the Chinese learner or tourist citizen is called upon to actively emulate them, most importantly the 'heroes' and 'martyrs' who stood for the chosen values uncompromisingly. As sociologist Bakken (2000) has aptly called it, China is designed to be an 'exemplary society'. 'Patriotic education' thus is to serve for a citizen formation that centres on the needs that are formulated in a prescribed reading of what 'exemplary' means in practice, legitimated via historical 'examples', but clearly directed at the future, and, needless to say, not starting from the needs of the individual to be educated. Supposedly, individuality is only achieved by fitting in well into the prescribed role, and by living out the values attached to this. Thus, as we repeatedly noted in the preceding chapters, stories of exemplary figures are often already in themselves modelled upon others and thus appear very stereotyped even in Communist cases, be it in content and imagery, be it in the highly repetitive language used, thus openly acknowledging their 'intertextuality' (Kristeva), which makes for an engraining effect.

The 'showcase bases' are rendering this visual and tangible for the visitors, be they pupils or tourists. Furthermore, the 'showcase bases' serve also as spaces for performing and experiencing 'patriotism', binding the individual Chinese citizen to the nation at several stages in life, as the ceremonies of pledging to join the Young Pioneers, the Communist Youth League, the Army, or the Party, typically conducted at the 'showcase bases', showed, thus pushing the citizen from learning to action. This is what a simple classroom lecture could hardly achieve.

Does this mean that China is successfully educating generations of fervent nationalists in practice by integrating and relying on the tool of 'patriotic education showcase bases' and their distinct modes? After all, the basic simple question remains: *cui bono*? 'Patriotic education' is per definition to serve the *patria*. But also Chinese citizens can well ask: *who*, in the end, is the *patria*?[67] And what is education for, after all? There might be more answers to these questions given by the Chinese citizens themselves than the officially championed one.

67 Historian Fitzgerald (2022) has recently given a very straight-forward answer: 'China has become the CCP'. Seen from the official viewpoint of 'patriotic education', this is certainly the aim, but considering the observations made on the different agents involved in practice in the 'patriotic education showcase bases' and their uses for citizen formation, this answer is at least not an uncontested one.

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The ‘patriotic education campaign’ is the most long-standing of all campaigns in the history of the People’s Republic of China and is notable for the breadth of tools it applies. Among these, the system of so-called ‘patriotic education bases’, the number of which has increased massively, stands out in particular. These sites dot the whole country and are aimed at Chinese citizens of all ages.

This book is based on printed and visual materials collected over many years across China, and combines them with personal on-site observations. It explores systematically how narratives and framings have evolved over time, and where the interplay of narrative, visual, and material elements opens up possibilities for divergent readings.