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 lay-out 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

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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

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

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]

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

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. Basreliefs 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).

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). Qinglingshan 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

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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