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LEARNING BY WHAT EXAMPLE?

Educational Propaganda in Twenty-first-Century China

Stefan R. Landsberger

The moral education of the people has been viewed historically as a function of good government in China. Models have played an important role in this educational process, constantly making people aware of correct behavior and correct ideas. Since 1949, so-called propaganda art in the People's Republic of China has played a major supporting role in the many campaigns that have been designed to mobilize the people, with the propaganda poster being the favored vehicle to convey model behavior. In the twenty-first century, state-inspired education and the posters it produces are fighting an uphill battle to grasp the attention of the people. This illustrated article discusses the state of state-sponsored propaganda art and highlights the various social and artistic pressures that weigh on the propaganda poster in the era of reform. The author examines the changes in the government's communication strategy, and focuses on the changing way in which propaganda art has been used in the reform era, the technical innovations that have been applied, and the topics that have been selected by the government as subjects for propaganda campaigns. The patriotism of the late 1990s is a topic that receives special attention. Finally, hypotheses are presented about the possible alternative applications of the medium in the light of recently published propaganda posters.

The moral education of the people has been viewed historically as a function of good government in China. Through the ages, models have played an important role in this educational process, constantly making people aware of norms of correct behavior and acceptable conduct. Correct ideas (orthodoxy) were believed to follow automatically from this proper behavior (orthopraxy).¹ Model behavior is described in sources such as the *Xiaojing* (Classic of filial piety); relevant sections of the dynastic histories; *mengqiu*, written versions of popular legends; and in popular morality books (*shan shu*). Examples of

models of female behavior are evident in the *Lie nü zhuan* (Classic of exemplary women) and *Nü Jie* (Instructions for women), among other sources. Visualized models appear in the gallery of images and portraits of figures in the ritual center of the Confucian temple and in the memorial arches (*dafang*) that were erected for virtuous widows during the Qing dynasty.² In the system of regular lectures that was developed during the Ming dynasty to bring the official interpretation of Confucianism to the vast and mostly ignorant rural population, both positive and negative *local* models were presented that could be recognized easily by the assembled peasants.³

Since 1949, this educational process has continued in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The models held up by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) have not only had a major function in the political schooling of the people, they have also taught that by relying on human will, the concrete obstacles encountered in the physical world can swiftly be overcome.⁴ So-called propaganda art has played a major supporting role in the many campaigns that have been designed to mobilize the people, with the propaganda poster being the favored vehicle through which art has conveyed model behavior: "Propaganda posters, with their simple, lively forms and bright, powerful images, as well as their high volume printing and circulation throughout the whole nation, publicize the principles and policies of the party and government to the multitude of the masses. This unique form of art...enables the policies of the party and the government to open the door to the hearts of the people and inspire their utmost efforts."⁵

At the start of the twenty-first century, however, state-inspired education and the posters it produces are fighting an uphill battle to "open the door to the hearts of the people." In this article, we will discuss the state of this art of the state, highlighting the various social and artistic pressures that weigh upon the propaganda poster in the era of reform. We will do this by looking at the changes in the government's communication strategy, in which propaganda posters still play a role, albeit a less conspicuous one. We will also examine the changing ways in which propaganda art has been used in the reform era, the technical innovations that have been applied, and which topics the government has selected as subjects for propaganda campaigns. Finally, we will hypothesize about the possible alternative applications of the medium in the light of recently published propaganda posters.⁶

* * *

To begin with, conditions do not bode well for government-inspired education, in whatever form or through whatever medium it is transmitted. The central state and party apparatus has lost its monopoly over the dissemination and interpretation of information. The static produced by increasing numbers of non-political and polysemous media crowds out the authoritative voice that was once the CCP's own. The party's posters and other representations must now compete with a flood of other voices and images, not only those created by and for the market, but also those produced by and for the people themselves, as the flow of images and information on the Internet indicates. The images, slogans, and messages that the party continues to produce must compete more and more with the "ordinary" commercial advertising that has come to dominate all

media.⁷ As a result, party-sponsored proclamations are increasingly seen by many as irrelevant and they fall on unseeing eyes and deaf ears. With popular interest in politics at a low ebb, many resist or ignore the party's ideological nostrums in all forms. This does not necessarily mean that the people are no longer interested in self-cultivation or that they are looking for elements of a moral order that is less corrupt and less focused on consumption and materialism than that which is encountered in daily reality. But many Chinese, in particular those in the urban areas, appear to be more interested in wealth, consumption, and fun than in moral-political cultivation. The size of their paychecks and concerns about whether they will still be employed tomorrow crowd out many of the state's messages.

As other media flourish, propaganda posters have also lost a great deal of their credibility and appeal. This is evident in the decline in the number of titles of posters published yearly. The introduction of state-of-the-art printing techniques and the use of thick, glossy paper of good quality, or even plastic sheeting, have updated the look and the feel of the posters considerably, but all this seems to be not enough to win back the large numbers of people who used to find pleasure in the posters. A diversified market approach, which directs different types of propaganda contents at specific social instead of professional groups, has been designed, but the effort often fails to reach its targeted groups. Posters are now seen to be old-fashioned or too tainted by their earlier political usage, even though their subject matter has been brought in line with topics that are considered to be more in tune with the rapidly changing times, social circumstances, and popular taste.

Despite these difficult conditions, the central party and state apparatus is still committed to the use of posters, and, as a result, posters remain omnipresent in Chinese life. A walk through the poster gallery of the People's Republic yields a rich harvest of insights into the changing priorities and approaches of the party-state. Posters published in the last two decades of the twentieth century can be divided into four content groups: leadership portraits; models; illustrations of elements of the system of socialist spiritual civilization and school posters; and concrete social issues. We will analyse examples from all four groups to see how the party-state's priorities and approaches have been given visual form.

The Effects of Propaganda Posters

Have propaganda posters been effective in educating the Chinese people? Have they succeeded in bringing about correct behavior and thought? These crucial questions are difficult to answer, if only because — to my knowledge — no serious research has been done yet on the reception and/or effectiveness of the posters. In an attempt to shed some light on these questions, however, I present a few suggestions below, based on circumstantial evidence from various sources.

Most reports about the reception that posters published since the late 1940s have received stress the accepted line that people prefer the wholesome, modern, and educational contents of the posters, rather than other, more frivolous, or more traditional visual materials. In the early 1950s, in particular, this preference was expressed in reference to the New Year's pictures (*nianhua*) the people had had access to in the past. These reports, whether from the early days of the PRC or from

the mid-1980s, however, offer no assessment of the educational effects the posters may have had.

The numerous conversations I have had with Chinese from all walks of life over the past two decades present a picture that modifies the official interpretation of the effectiveness of posters. Many, if not most, of the people I consulted did not consider the posters to be art or even aesthetically pleasing. People would often remark that “nobody in China was interested in these things.”⁸ But this is difficult to believe, for three reasons. First, abundant pictorial evidence exists of dwellings — both urban and rural — in which propaganda posters are prominently displayed. This evidence spans some five decades. Second, many posters I have seen bear a handwritten inscription clearly indicating that these posters have been presented to others to mark a special occasion. Third, many people have offhandedly admitted to me — in a somewhat embarrassed manner — that they have internalized some behavioral aspects of the propaganda posters, most specifically the message presented by model hero Lei Feng (see below).

Many of the memoirs written by participants in, or observers of, the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) devote much attention to “big-character-posters” (*da-zibao*) and their effects on the movement.⁹ But these writings are all curiously silent about the “artistic” posters that were published in such abundance in that period.¹⁰ The only exceptions, to my knowledge, are Chen Xiaomei’s recollections of growing up in the Maoist era. “Posters...constructed and reconstructed who I was and what was socially expected of me,” she writes.¹¹

While acknowledging the contradictory elements of the preceding, we have to conclude that there is no clear evidence to demonstrate that propaganda posters have been either effective or ineffective in inculcating thought and behavior. It is very clear, however, that during the two decades of reform, the usefulness of the propaganda poster has diminished considerably.

Lacking Credibility

The decline in the relevance of propaganda art started in the early 1980s. Under Deng Xiaoping, the economic rehabilitation of China was taken up with a vengeance. In fact, economic development became one of the — if not *the* — most important legitimizing factors for continued CCP rule.

In the new market society, alternative modes of creation emerged, replacing the once dominant artistic style of socialist realism. The open door policy that Hua Guofeng initiated in 1977 enabled Chinese artists and designers to reacquaint themselves with the various artistic trends and developments that had swept the world during the decades that China had been sealed off from the outside world. The introduction of advertising in the print and broadcast media, and the screening of many foreign television programs, inspired artists and designers to borrow or emulate design and representational techniques from the West as well as from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan. As a result of the shift in both policy and artistic guidelines, the themes addressed in propaganda became less heroic and militant, and more impressionistic. Many of the slogans employed no longer called for mobilization but for economic reform, and they had a less strident and aggressive tone. Abstract images replaced realism and more subdued colors replaced the bold hues.

Despite the numerous attempts to modernize both form and contents, propaganda art lost further popular appeal with the emergence of an increasingly autonomous, unregulated, and independent art market. As a rich assortment of eye-catching and aesthetically pleasing and evocative images became widely available, the party's dull messages lost appeal.

Photography and Photomontage

In an attempt to give propaganda posters an aura of modernity, photography and photomontage were introduced in the late 1980s. Photomontage in China has never been as favored for propaganda purposes as it has been in the Soviet Union, where it has long been viewed as an innovative technique that provides a panoramic, realistic view of life. In the Soviet view, photography and photomontage created the impression of what actually “is,” instead of merely what “ought” to be.¹² In the Chinese view, photography, the basis for photomontage, was considered to be simply a craft, without any artistic potential. In this vein — and by applying socialist realist principles — photographs were used to record reality and “to convey the most romantic and glamorous views of the motherland; social, economic and political triumphs; the strength, courage, and resourcefulness of the people; and the wisdom of their leaders.”¹³ Only the airbrush was applied expertly in China, to remove those who had become politically undesirable from photographs or to bring the contents of images in line with the interpretation of official reality at any given moment.

The popularity of photomontage in the 1980s relates to developments external to the art world. As equipment became widely available, photography became a popular and accessible art form. At the beginning of the decade people had had to rent cameras; in later years many owned their own cameras. Photography became one of the many new status symbols and one of the essential activities in urban life in the reform era. Indeed, it is hard to think of an activity or an event that has not been turned into a photo opportunity by China's thousands of amateur photographers. Once photography entered the Chinese cultural mainstream, consumers demanded photographic images to replace the idealized and often simplistic realism that had prevailed earlier.

Computers

The manipulation of photographic images was greatly facilitated by the proliferation of personal computers. Electronic manipulation of (parts of) photographic images did away with old-fashioned methods of manual clipping and pasting, making possible more sophisticated results. The advertising industry led the way in applying advanced design techniques from Taiwan and Hong Kong. Japanese and American influences also made their way into China, either as the result of direct application or after assimilation (and possibly Sinitication) in either Hong Kong or Taiwan. Inevitably, these techniques affected the field of poster design.

Leader portraits produced in the 1990s illustrate the importance of including snatches of photographs of defining landmarks of China (and/or Hong Kong) as background. Such elements include the Great Wall, signifying timeless national

多干实事，
少说空话。

邓小平



Illustration 1. Designer unknown. *Duogan shishi, shao shuo konghua—Deng Xiaoping* (We should do more and engage less in empty talk — Deng Xiaoping). Guangxi meishu chubanshe, August 1992, print no. 880582.242.

unity; the rostrum of Tiananmen, representing the power of the state; and the “Pearl of the Orient” tower in Pudong, Shanghai, illustrating the success of the modernization process. The Hong Kong landmarks, which include the Bank of China, designed by I. M. Pei, as well as the Foreign Ministry Building, are more difficult to read as they seem to be multilayered in meaning: they can be interpreted as denoting that China has finally overcome Western imperialism, as proof of China’s resumption of sovereignty, or as an indication that Chinese architecture contributes significantly to Hong Kong’s world-famous skyline. What these images have in common with farm, factory, and battlefield images of an earlier time is that they stand as icons for the successful modernization of China in recent decades.

Leadership Portraits

In line with Deng’s dictum that leaders and their glorious deeds should remain in the background¹⁴ (with the obvious exception of glorious, departed leaders such as Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai), the leadership portrait all but disappeared from the early 1980s onward. Except for the appearance of Deng and Chen Yun in posters featuring older leaders such as Mao, Zhou, Liu Shaoqi, and Zhu De (an obvious attempt to demonstrate the legitimacy of the Deng-line), no posters produced after 1980 featured representatives of the leading group of the times.

With Deng’s semiretirement from public life after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, the propaganda department finally saw an opportunity to build up a cult around the “chief architect” of reform. With his health decreasing, it seems that Deng was less and less able to keep the Party propaganda machinery — and his successor Jiang Zemin — from using him as a propaganda object. One of the earliest examples in which Deng appeared as a propaganda object did not feature the image of the man himself, as would be expected, but was devoted to a number of his more famous utterances (“We should do more, and engage less in empty talk,” among others), against a backdrop of either a modern city skyline or flower arrangements reminiscent of the 1950s (illustration 1). The photomontage in these posters, dating from 1992, is rather crude. Differences in scale of the various pictorial elements, which have been manipulated and combined within the larger image, have not been adjusted, and the “cutting edge” of some elements has not been masked or blurred. One would anticipate that such artistic shortcomings would be eradicated as familiarity with the new techniques increased, but that does not seem to have been the case. Even the commemorative poster series produced in 1999 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the PRC is plagued by this problem. The “doves of peace,” which are sprinkled liberally over the poster with Deng look as if they’ve been cut out and clumsily pasted in by hand (illustration 2). Despite obvious efforts, at a time when the advertising industry has achieved advanced technical levels, the propaganda poster still lags far behind.

Nevertheless, the new photomontage techniques reveal some of the party’s priorities and a sense of hierarchy and place. The 1999 commemorative poster featuring Mao — the “founding father of the People’s Republic” — uses the Great Wall and the Tiananmen rostrum as background (illustration 3). The background of the



Illustration 2. Design Institute of Wuxi Light Industrial College. *Kaichuang xin shiqi—Qingzhu Zhonghua renmin gongheguo chengli wushi zhounian* (Usher in a new epoch—Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China). Jiangxi meishu chubanshe, 1999, ISBN 7-80580-537-7/J.500.



Illustration 3. Design Institute of Wuxi Light Industrial College. *Richu dongfanghong—Qingzhu Zhonghua renmin gongheguo chengli wushi zhounian* (The East is red at sunrise — Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China). Jiangxi meishu chubanshe, 1999, ISBN 7-80580-536-9/J.499.

poster with Deng, the architect of the “One Country, Two Systems” paradigm, shows images of the Hong Kong skyline. The poster devoted to Jiang Zemin shows the Pudong skyline, including the “Pearl of the Orient” television tower (illustration 4). It is still too early to say whether the Jiang/Shanghai combination is intended to illustrate the fact that Jiang Zemin is closely linked with the expected ascendancy of Shanghai over Hong Kong as the economic focal point of the region.

Models Old and New

After 1949, the CCP employed various behavioral models to steep the people in Marxism-Leninism and especially Mao Zedong Thought, to mobilize them for mass campaigns, and to propagandize and propagate the institutions, activities, and deeds of the party. To this end, exemplary party cadres, war heroes, and workers, among others, were used as models.

Pre-reform Models

In the period before the Cultural Revolution, and in its opening years, the best-known models were soldiers. In their diaries, or their purported last words, they all attributed their miraculous deeds to the revolution, the party, or Mao (illustration 5); in the process of performing these deeds, many died a martyr’s death. In doing so, they invoked the Chinese traditional moral value of “sacrificing one’s own interests for the sake of others” (*sheji weiren*).¹⁵ The more famous of these military martyrs are the following:



Illustration 4. Design Institute of Wuxi Light Industrial College. *Maixiang 21 shiji — Qingzhu Zhonghua renmin gongheguo chengli wushi zhounian* (Advance into the 21st century — Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China). Jiangxi meishu chubanshe, 1999, ISBN 7-80580-538-5/J.501.

§ **Dong Cunrui** (1929-1948). During a campaign in the civil war between Communist and Nationalist forces (1946-1949), the advance of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was blocked by one last enemy stronghold, a pillbox built on a bridge. Dong pressed a pack of explosives against the bridge with his hand and blew up the pillbox, sacrificing his life in the explosion. Dong was considered an emulatable example, from the early 1950s until well into the 1990s.¹⁶

§ **Wang Jie** (1942-1965), a PLA platoon leader, helped train militia members of the Zhanglou Commune in Beixian, Jiangsu Province, in the use of landmines. When an accidental explosion of dynamite occurred, Wang threw himself into the blast and was killed, saving the lives of twelve militiamen and the assembled innocent bystanders.¹⁷

§ **Ouyang Hai** (1940-1963). During training, a horse hauling a gun carriage was scared by an oncoming train and could not get off the track. Ouyang Hai used all his might to pull the horse off the track to avoid a collision, but was knocked over and killed in the process. Ouyang's life inspired the novel *The Song of Ouyang Hai*, by Jin Jingmai. High CCP leaders responded favorably to the publication of Jin's book in December 1965, including Guo Moruo, who wrote an article praising Ouyang as a hero of the socialist age. Jin's novel, however, indicated that Ouyang was inspired by Liu Shaoqi's *How to Be a Good Communist*.¹⁸ In order to avoid political problems, Jin was forced to completely rewrite sections of his work in 1967. After it was republished, many people despised the book. Nonetheless, by the 1980s, Ouyang was once more considered a model worth emulating.¹⁹

§ **Lei Feng** (1940-1962). The most famous of all models, however, was Lei Feng. In his diary, Lei formulated the concept of the "spirit of the screw" (*luosiding jingshen*), the defining quality that he and his fellow models embodied.²⁰ Lei, a soldier, compared a person's role in society to that of one screw in a large machine, and he expressed his burning desire to be such a "never-rusting screw." In other words, model behavior was interpreted as blindly following the instructions from the party and/or superiors and attachment to the larger group.²¹ Lei Feng's model status was based on his class background (poor peasant) and on the many good, but rather unspectacular deeds he performed: he sent his meager savings to the parents of a fellow soldier who had been hit by a flood; he served tea and food to both officers and recruits; he washed his buddies' feet after a

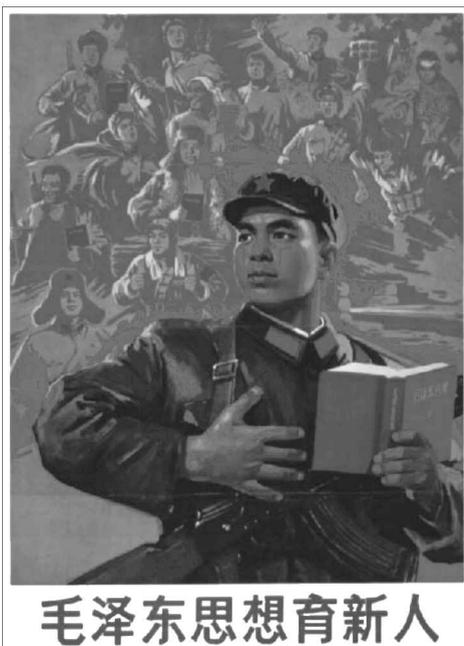


Illustration 5. 5251 unit collective work *Mao Zedong's thought gives birth to the New Man*. Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, May 1971, print no. 8094.109.

long march, and he even darned their socks while they were asleep. From 1963 onward, when the first campaign to learn from Lei Feng was started with Mao's support, Lei became a fixture in propaganda and education, a true icon of desired obedient behavior (illustration 6).

Unlike most of his fellow models, Lei did not die for the revolution. Rather, he was killed in an ordinary accident in August 1962. Many urban myths exist about the cause of his demise. One said that he was electrocuted while assisting in the raising of a power line in the countryside; another said that he hit an electricity pylon with his Army truck. However, in 1997, all these stories were proven to be wrong when Qiao Anshan, a 57-year-old retiree living in Liaoning Province, stepped forward to announce that he was the driver of the truck that knocked down the pole that fell on Lei Feng and killed him.²²

Reform Models

The first decade of the reform period saw the beginning of the depoliticization of society and called for new models that reflected the trend toward diversity and pluralism that became the main social undercurrent in China in the 1980s.²³ The new idealized icons strove to improve their country; they valued learning; they contributed greatly to the urgent task of building a socialist spiritual civilization; and they sacrificed their lives while combating negative social influences. Significantly, the new builders were no longer restricted to the ranks of workers, peasants, and soldiers; intellectuals were now conspicuously featured. These new heroes were relatively prominent in some aspect, yet less perfect and free from



Illustration 6. Wu Zhefu, Yang Yuhua. *Lei Feng shushu jiang geming gushi* (Uncle Lei Feng tells revolutionary stories). Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, February 1965, print no. 8085. 2607.



Illustration 7. Linqu district Propaganda Department, Hou Jide collective work. *Mama jiao wo xue Lei Feng* (Mama tells me to study Lei Feng). Guangdong renmin chubanshe, July 1982, print no. 8099.2366.

shortcomings and errors than earlier models.²⁴ Not all old forms and models disappeared, however. Indeed, some were adapted to the imperatives of the new era. School children continued to be told to learn from Lei Feng (illustration 7), but the “modernized models” seemed to be directed mostly toward



Illustration 8. Zhang Changqing. *Xiang Lei Feng shushu xuexi, zhengdang honghua shaonian* (Learn from Uncle Lei Feng, strive to become a red-flowered youth). Sichuan renmin chubanshe, May 1983, print no. 8118.1425.

adolescents and young adults, building on the basic concepts of Lei Feng's obedience and discipline previously absorbed in primary school (illustration 8). In a similar way, cadres were still called upon to emulate the behavior of the upright official Jiao Yulu.



Illustration 9. Designer unknown. *Zhang Haidi*. No publisher, ca. May 1994. No print number.

learned foreign languages, including English, Japanese, and German. In short, Zhang displayed many of the qualities that were seen as desirable in the early 1980s: a burning desire to overcome obstacles of whatever kind, self-sacrifice, a hunger for knowledge.²⁵ But Zhang functioned as a model not only because of her intellectual accomplishments and her devotion to serving others, but also because she showed that “a cripple” could still function normally in Chinese society and even contribute to its modernization. Her example was obviously also intended to inspire those who had been crippled during China’s “punitive expedition” against Vietnam in 1979 or who had sustained work-related or other injuries. This sudden attention given to the disabled might even be linked to Deng Xiaoping’s own son Deng Pufang, who also gained national prominence in the 1980s. The younger Deng ended up in a wheelchair as a result of a fall (or a push) from a sixth-floor window when he was subjected to Red Guard interrogations during the Cultural Revolution.²⁶

Another remarkable model of the 1980s was Zhang Hua (1958-1982) (illustration 10). Zhang, a third-year student at the Fourth People’s Liberation Army Medical College, died in the process of rescuing an old peasant who had fallen into a manure pit. The fumes suffocated Zhang. Subsequently, he became the icon of an emulation movement that entreated youths to have high ideals, moral integrity, culture, and a sense of discipline. Once that movement was under way, however, people started to wonder whether Zhang’s sacrifice, though praiseworthy, was really valuable to society. This popular reaction provides us with one of the few indications of how such campaigns, and their visualization,

One of these new models was Zhang Haidi (Shandong Province, 1955) (illustration 9). She differed from earlier models, who were expected to be picture perfect, physically as well as morally. Zhang, also known as Ling Ling, was chosen as a model precisely because she was not perfect. A paraplegic at the age of five, following four operations for the removal of tumors in her spine, Zhang was reported to have attempted suicide by taking sleeping pills as a teenager when she learned that her illness was incurable. Previously, such an act would have been considered a betrayal of the revolution and seen as evidence of one’s discontent with socialism. She never went to school, but learned to read books on politics, literature, and medical science in diligent self-study. She also

were received. In many publications, numerous discussants contended that Zhang, who after all was studying to become a doctor, would have had the opportunity to make far greater contributions to society than the saved peasant had made in his whole life. In the end, however, when an official evaluation was published that stressed the value of Zhang's action, the critics were silenced.²⁷

This debate shows the declining power of the state to impose a specific meaning on a story as well as the disappearance of the assumption that members of the working class have the most to offer Chinese society. Unfortunately, the whole discussion centered on the *choice* of the model and the *contents* of the campaign. Not one

word of criticism was devoted to the way in which the “Learn from Zhang Hua” movement had been visualized in the accompanying propaganda posters. In other words, the designers of the visual materials detailing model behavior could draw no valuable lessons from this exchange to make future emulation campaigns more visually compelling.

Nevertheless, the flurry of media attention bestowed on both Zhang Hua and Zhang Haidi allowed numerous complaints to surface about the overemphasis on the activities of model heroes. People were starting to question the necessity and effects of model emulation.

After the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, propaganda posters featuring Lei Feng were re-introduced (illustration 11). Although Lei's obedience and his other admirable qualities were still stressed, the images of Lei now began to present him as a much more stern and forbidding figure. Despite his more aggressive posture, Lei's model behavior was seriously out of sync with the social realities of the early 1990s: mass unemployment, cutthroat competition, and increasing inequality. Indeed, in a society in which money, market, and mobility were increasingly valued, people could gain little by following the images of self-effacing self-sacrifice with which the party continued to bombard them.

Many sophisticated Chinese have long considered Lei Feng and his ilk as jokes, and they have mocked the emulation campaigns. This may explain why the *contents* of Lei's model behavior have undergone a number of official re-stylings over the years, while echoes of his self-sacrificing persona continue to resound.²⁸ He has appeared as a homeowner, as the possessor of a savings account, and in many other guises. Most recently, he was even touted as a possible patron saint of



Illustration 10. Designer unknown. *Zhang Hua*. No publisher, ca. May 1994, no print number.

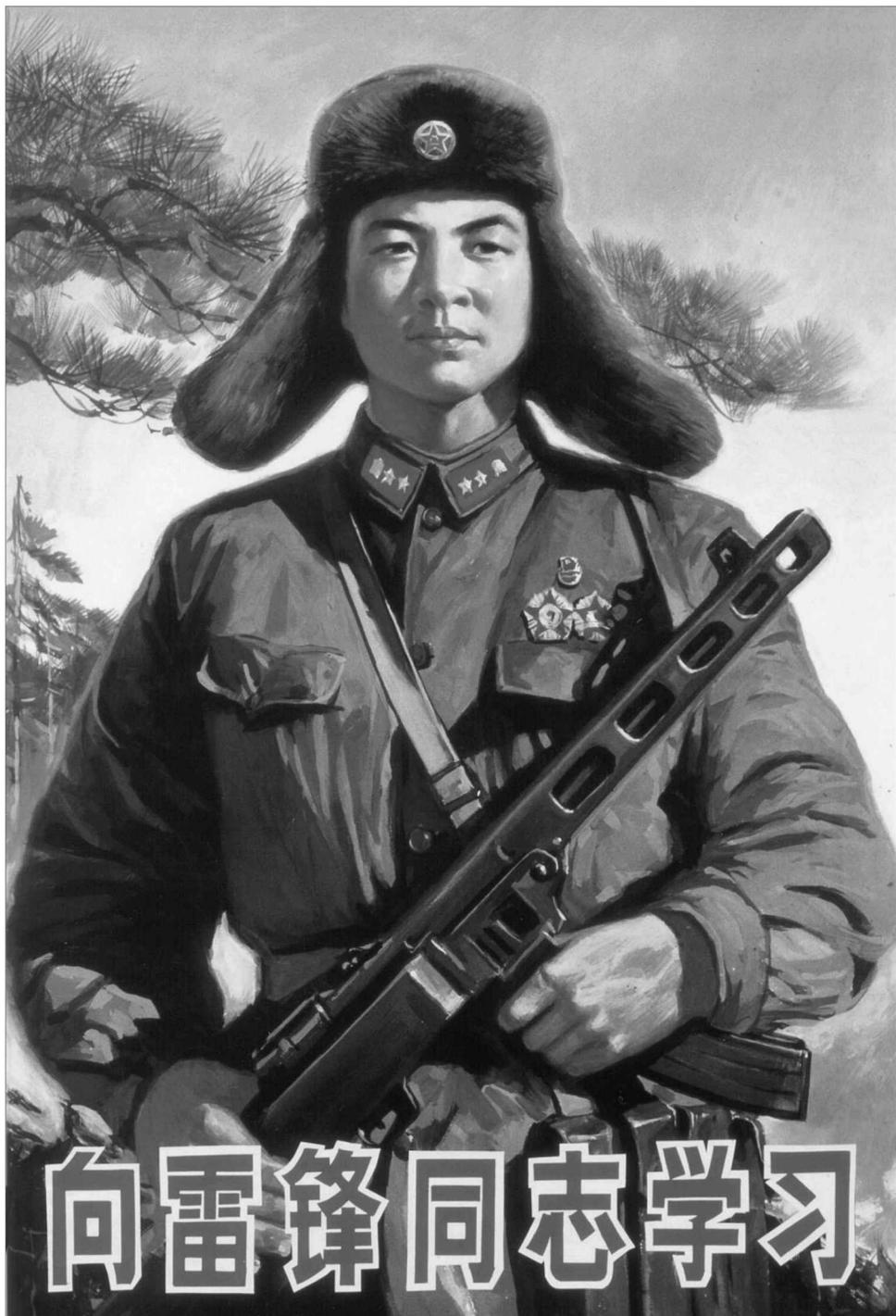


Illustration 11. Cheng Guoying. *Xiang Lei Feng tongzhi xuexi* (Study comrade Lei Feng). Sichuan shaonian ertong chubanshe, March 1990, ISBN 7-5365-0567-1.

private entrepreneurs.²⁹ Hailing a laid-off Heilongjiang worker who had opened a shop of his own, the *China Daily* said he possessed Lei's "lofty spirit," and continued, "As times change, the interpretation of the Lei Feng Spirit has also been continually enriched and has now far exceeded the narrow scope of altruism. It can always have new definitions suited to the demands of the times."³⁰

Viewpoints such as these suggest that we can expect many more reincarnations of Lei in the future. In early 2001, for example, *Jiefangjun ribao* (People's Liberation Army Daily) reported that "five hundred 'deeply poisoned' followers" of the Falun Gong "were taken from their nearby 're-education through labor' camp to visit the Lei Feng Memorial Hall" in Liaoning Province. According to the report, the visitors "spontaneously repeated and copied down inscriptions" from Lei's diary, while pondering such questions as "Why would Lei Feng want to do so many good deeds?"³¹

These updated definitions of the Lei Feng Spirit are beginning to be conveyed through a variety of media, not just the propaganda poster. Nowadays, Lei is even present in cyberspace: the Liaoning Memorial Hall maintains a website, as does the Hunan Lei Feng Memorial Hall.³² Yet few of these new possibilities seem to have had any influence on the situations in which Lei is represented artistically: he is still shown darning socks, offering tea to soldiers and officers, and guarding the frontier, as opposed to, for example, managing his shop.

The stress on Lei Feng and his qualities does not mean to imply that China lacks models who embody desirable behavior in the rapidly changing social environment. A notable example of a typical model from the 1990s is the plumber-electrician Xu Hu. (It may be a coincidence, but Xu and Jiang Zemin both hail from Shanghai.) Xu's claim to fame basically derives from his diligent and hard work in unblocking toilets — the bane of Shanghai life — not only during his work hours, but also during his time off. This is very much in line with the official acknowledgment that there is still a need for "ordinary workers who like and respect their jobs and who are hard-working and competent," although these "new times" of modernization and reform also call for "brilliant company directors, managers, specialists and intellectuals." Xu's service to the people was publicized in a rather low-key emulation campaign, which made him a local and national model in 1996-1997.³³

Socialist Spiritual Civilization

Although the state has shifted away from explicit political education during the past two decades, it has designed, true to its time-honored role of teacher, a learning process aimed at raising the ideological quality of the people. The most important element in this effort is the building of a socialist spiritual civilization that matches the improved material conditions. Deng first raised this concept in 1980³⁴ and it later became one of the main planks of Jiang Zemin's political program.

From the outset, socialist spiritual civilization sought to preempt the formation of an autonomous popular culture, which party ideologists believed could only be of a vulgar, superstitious, pornographic, and unhealthy nature. Socialist spiritual civilization was to reflect the creation of a superior moral and material civilization. At the same time, it would raise the people's political consciousness



Illustration 12. Yan Jie, Kang Zhuang. *Confucius, Ming ren ming yan* (Famous people, famous words). Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1993-1996, print no. 7477.19.

and morality by fostering revolutionary ideals and discipline, all revamped for the “New Age” that came about as a result of the modernization process.³⁵ It would also function as a brake on the severe social dislocation arising from modernization.³⁶ As before, the core of this new cultural system would consist of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought. Deng Xiaoping Theory was added to this ideological complex in September 1997.³⁷

In an attempt to give people something to believe in that could prove to be more compelling than the threadbare official ideology, CCP leaders since 1992 have increasingly stressed patriotism (*aiguo zhuyi*), “loving the state.”³⁸ The patriotism the leaders had in mind “portrays the Communist state as the embodiment of the nation’s will, ...trying to create a sense of nationhood among all its citizens.” Or, to quote a *People’s Daily* commentary of 1 October 1996, “Patriotism requires us to love the socialist system and the road chosen by all nationalities in China under the leadership of the Communist Party.”³⁹ As a result, the political element of patriotism has by and large replaced the political and class struggle content that dominated government propaganda in the prereform era. When looking at these shifts on the basis of the classic categorization of propaganda drawn up by Jacques Ellul, it is obvious that the earlier posters aimed at agitation, in order to break down “psychological barriers of habit, belief and judgment,” while later propaganda posters have been

devoted to themes that attempt to lead to integration in the form of long-term “self-reproducing propaganda that seeks to obtain stable behavior in terms of the permanent social setting.”⁴⁰ Love for the Mother Country in these images is increasingly predicated on the claims of success in the modernization process. These results, it is stressed time and again, have made the world stand in awe of China.

In an important reversal of past practice, when all of China’s long history was derided as either feudal or backward, many important icons, events, and personages of the past and present have been brought into play to promote patriotism. These include the legendary Yellow Emperor, the foundation figure of all Chinese; the Great Wall; well-known intellectuals past and present who have contributed to Chinese civilization (Confucius and Mencius, for example, have been given equal billing with Karl Marx and Frederick Engels) (illustration 12). They also feature the fighting monks of Shaolin monastery, best known from the *gongfu* movies that used to originate in Hong Kong, but are produced now in increasing numbers on the mainland. Another set of topics revolves around the CCP itself and is devoted to glorious episodes of recent history, such as the Long March.

Amazing China

One of the most interesting examples of propaganda posters that reassert China’s greatness is the so-called *Amazing* series, published in 1996. Designed and produced in accordance with the CCP propaganda department’s *Outline to Implement Patriotic Education*, the poster series is intended for use in primary and middle schools.⁴¹ A close look at the set reveals some of the important educational issues at stake.

The first poster, *China Is Amazing*, sets the stage (illustration 13) with its dedication to the country and some of its important historical highlights, including the Great Wall. The prominent inclusion of one of the eight bronze astronomical instruments that are on display on the top of the Ancient Observatory (*guguan xiangtai*) in Beijing is especially noteworthy. These instruments were designed and constructed by Jesuit priests in the seventeenth century, and the presence of one of them in this poster may be interpreted as proof of China’s willingness to learn from others, while at the same time trying to Sinicize such foreign elements. The emblem of the national flag (five yellow stars against a red background) dominates the poster, which is liberally sprinkled with “doves of peace.”

The second poster, *Chinese Are Amazing*, mixes prereform and contemporary imagery (illustration 14). The former “masters of the nation,” the worker-peasant-soldier (*gongnongbing*), are represented in the foreground. Behind them are representatives of the “new” classes that have taken on a meaningful role in contemporary society. The representatives include a successful (female) sports hero who has defended China’s honor in an international sports meets, thus illustrating the new strength and vigor of a nation once labeled “the sick man of the East”;⁴² a bespectacled intellectual in his trademark white lab coat; and a walkie-talkie- (or cell-phone-) toting technocrat/entrepreneur. In the



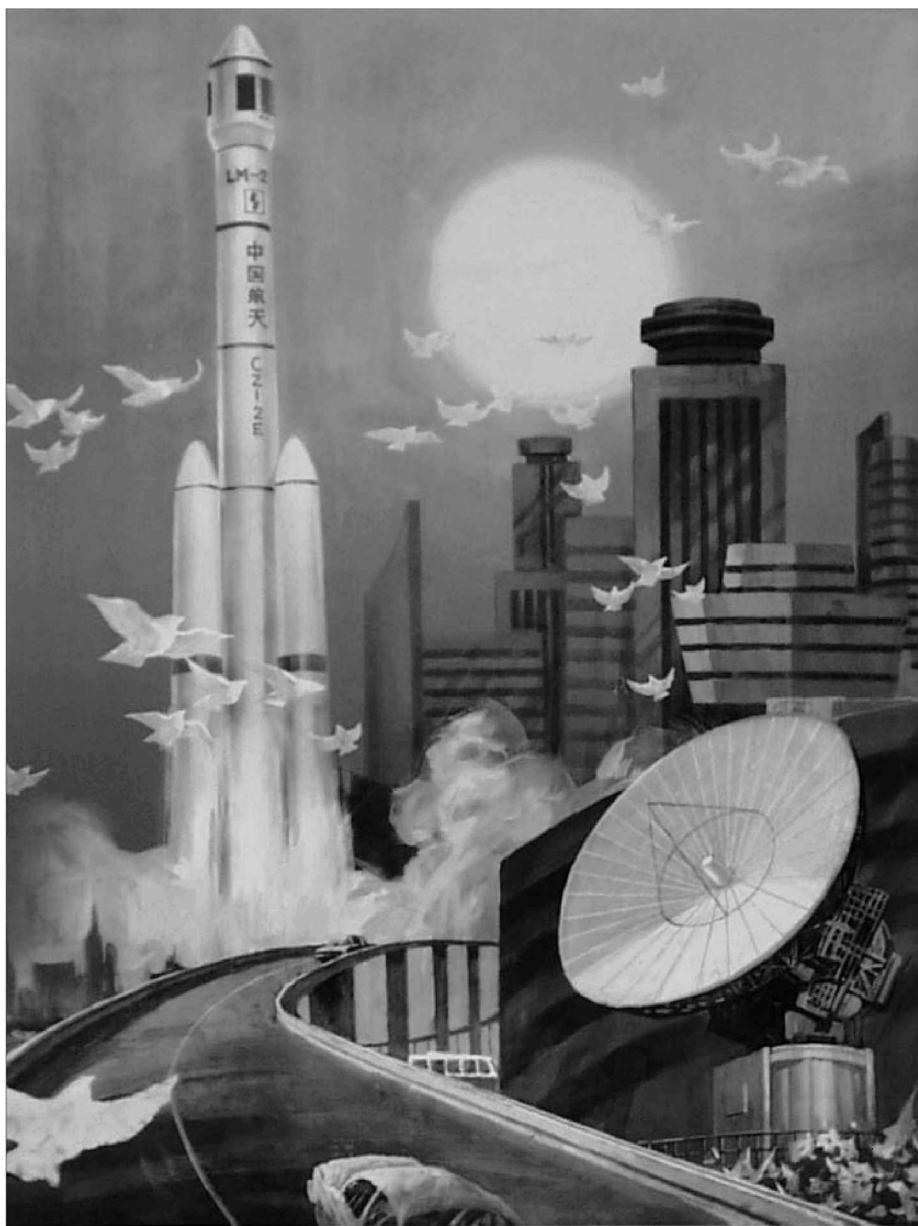
Illustration 13. Yin Hong, Da Ke. *Zhongguo liaobuqi* (China is amazing), first sheet of “Four ‘amazing’ educational propaganda posters.” Hubei meishu chubanshe, September 1996, set no. 85394.1623.

Illustration 14. Yin Hong, Da Ke. *Zhongguo ren liaobuqi* (Chinese are amazing), second sheet of “Four ‘amazing’ educational propaganda posters sheets.” Hubei meishu chubanshe, September 1996, set no. 85394.1623.

background, the rostrum of Tiananmen, which has functioned as the national emblem since the 1950s and has come to signify state power in the 1980s, is visible.

The third and least suggestive poster of the set, *China’s Reform and Opening Up Are Amazing*, is an echo of the many posters that appeared in the early 1980s devoted to the concrete results of modernization (illustration 15). Icons of progress, technological innovation, and development dominate the image: spacecraft that have been clearly modeled on the NASA launch modules; satellite dishes; high-rise buildings; and freeways crowded with cars. Such images of the future may suggest an ecological nightmare to Western eyes, but these visions of the future have been staples of visual shorthand for many years in propaganda posters. Apparently to illustrate China’s peaceful posture, the “doves of peace” are omnipresent. Icons of state power are noticeably absent.

The fourth poster, *I Want to Be an Amazing Chinese*, ties these themes together in the past, present, and future (illustration 16). Two Youth League members, a boy and a girl, dominate the image, and clearly stand for the present. Saluting the Chinese flag, which is fluttering over the scene, they are obviously engaged in a “raising and lowering the flag” ceremony, an activity that was included in the curricula of primary and lower secondary schools by the State Education Commission in 1992 as part of an educational program aimed at



中国的改革开放了不起

在中国共产党的领导下，改革开放使我国经济和社会发展大踏步前进。实践证明，只有坚持走改革开放之路，我们的国家才能繁荣富强。

“四个了不起”教育宣传画之三（根据中央宣传部编《王震同志题词》有关文件精神，经中宣部审核）

Illustration 15. Liu Xiji. *Zhongguo de gaige kaifang liaobuqi* (China's reform and opening up are amazing), third sheet of "Four 'amazing' educational propaganda posters sheets." Hubei meishu chubanshe, September 1996, set no. 85394.1623.



14.4.16 1.4.16.16

我要做了不起的中国人

我们要继承和发扬中华民族的优良传统,为国家的富强和民族的振兴而发愤学习,掌握过硬本领,培养高尚的品德和强健的身体,成为德智体全面发展的社会主义现代化事业的接班人。

“四个”了不起“教育宣传画(1)之四(根据中国少年儿童出版社出版《四个了不起》一书及精神编印,供中小学使用)。
湖北美术出版社出版 湖北美术学院设计 湖北美术学院印刷
85394.1623

Illustration 16. Liu Xiji. *Wo yao zuo liaobuqide Zhongguo ren* (I want to be an amazing Chinese), fourth sheet of “Four ‘amazing’ educational propaganda posters sheets.” Hubei meishu chubanshe, September 1996, set no. 85394.1623.

increasing feelings of pride for the nation.⁴³ In the upper right-hand corner, the icon of the Great Wall represents the past, as well as the eternal essence of China. The infrastructural works in the lower left-hand corner stand for the future and indicate the great things to come. The “doves of peace,” illustrated in close-up, convey the essentially nonaggressive nature of the Chinese people.

School Posters

Propaganda posters such as the ones in the *Amazing* series, conveying patriotism and other elements of socialist spiritual civilization, are increasingly targeted at children and adolescents. These groups are not only considered more impressionable, and more receptive to the messages the posters contain, but are also seen to be less inclined to reject them as “mere propaganda.” Such posters, usually produced in sets, have been designed specifically for use in classrooms or have been directly aimed at young people outside of school. In recent posters, the influence of the many Japanese cartoon shows that are screened on Chinese television is obvious: youngsters are depicted with the typically Westernized round eyes and spiky hairdos made popular in the *manga* comic books

that are so popular in Japan (illustration 17). The major themes that emerge in these materials are derived in part from the “five loves” (*wu ai*, i.e., love the nation, the people, labor, science, and socialism) that have been part of moral education since 1989.⁴⁴

§ *Love the nation, the collective, and labor.* Loving the nation usually involves visual images of the flag of the PRC and/or the Constitution. Loving the nation also entails maintaining unity and friendship within the multiethnic composition of the population. Loving the collective is often visualized in the form of cleaning up or is tied in with activities aimed at protecting the



Illustration 17. Zhao Zhenwan. *Zhongxuesheng shouze* (Rules for secondary school pupils). Mingtian chubanshe, April 2000 (2), print no. 75332.879.

environment. Images of street sweeping, window cleaning, and tree-planting ceremonies are often used to illustrate this sentiment.

§ *Honor teachers and other authority figures, including the police.* Calls to honor teachers, authority figures, and the elderly in general are standard elements in the various educational series and evoke a strong Boy/Girl Scout ethos. Pensioners are usually shown being assisted by youngsters while shopping or crossing the street. An interesting subset is the attention paid to (obedience to) the police. This often comes in the form of children reporting (petty) crime or returning found goods.

§ *Ardently love education and/or science.* These posters no longer feature the old Maoist call to *Haobao xuexi, tiantian xiangshang* (Study hard, make progress every day) that used to define prowess at school. Instead, love for education usually shows a boy and a girl in a classroom situation. Love of science often situates a boy and a girl in front of high-rise buildings, freeways, rocket launchings, and “Star Wars” imagery. Sometimes, the image of Albert Einstein is visible in the background, as an icon of intellectual excellence. Recently, the ardent love for science and education theme has also been invoked as an antidote for the possible attraction that the forbidden teachings of the Falun Gong and other banned organizations may hold for youngsters.

Many of these posters try to reflect the rapidly changing times by providing images of modernity, such as cameras or personal computers (illustration 18). Some are devoted to actual current events, such as the reversion



Illustration 18. Huang Hong'en. *Xinxin liugei ziji* (Have confidence in yourself). Haichao sheying yishu chubanshe, no date (ca.1998), set no. 80562.346.



Illustration 19. Yin Hong, Da Ke. *Ai renmin* (Love the people). Guangxi meishu chubanshe, June 1997 (3), print no. 880582.413.



Illustration 20. Huang Hong'en. *Xiaoxin xiangei fumu* (Be filial to your parents). Haichao sheying yishu chubanshe, no date (ca. 1998), set no. 80562.346.

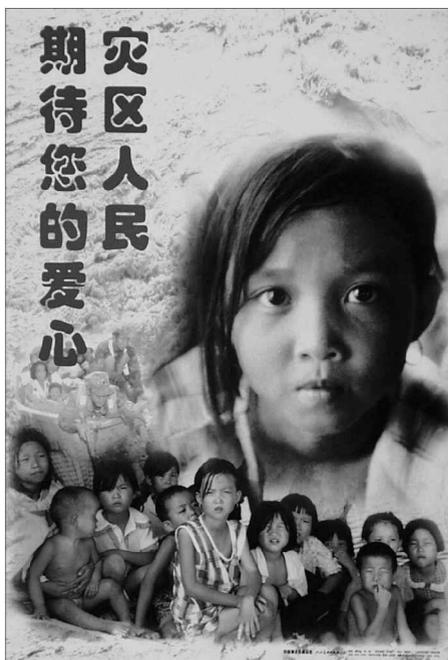


Illustration 21. Li Wanbing, Li Gang. *Zaiqu renmin qidai ninde aixin* (The people of the disaster areas expect your sympathy). Renmin meishu chubanshe, August 1998, print no. 8102.11635.

of Hong Kong in 1997, or the need to financially support victims of the recurring floods (shown by a girl emptying her piggy bank, illustration 19). One element shared by most of these materials is the Westernized depiction of many of the subjects (illustration 20).

Concrete Social Issues

Some of the newer posters address concrete social problems. These posters seem to be far more effective than the leader portraits or the posters devoted to spiritual civilization, if only because they address concrete issues that many people have to grapple with every day. In the 1990s, severe floods became a recurring phenomenon in China, resulting in great losses of human life, livestock, crops, and possessions. The severity of the situation was acknowledged by the government, as can be seen by the inclusion of flood images in the educational poster mentioned above (illustration 19). In 1998, two posters, both using photomontage, explicitly addressed the flooding problem. One highlighted the brave fight of the People's Armed Police units against the torrential waters. The other called on the people to donate funds for the flood victims (illustration 21). The use of (natural) disasters as subject matter for propaganda is unprecedented in China and seems to echo the "Benetton-ization" of human suffering widely seen in Western countries in the 1990s. At the same time, these posters display some of the breakthroughs in design techniques that have occurred over the past decade. This applies in particular to the sophisticated use of different fonts for the slogans.



Illustration 22. Chen Tiejiao. *Weile dajiede jiankang — qing jieyan* (For everybody's health — Please stop smoking). *Renmin weisheng chubanshe*, March 1988, print no. 14048.5769.

The production of posters devoted to social issues, both positive and negative, points to an attempt to transform the propaganda poster into a medium that provides a more integrational public information-type service. Note that in these instances, the party-state no longer functions necessarily as the main originator of such materials. Some of the posters intended to explain the various regulations and methods involved in the Fifth National Census (1 November 2000), for example, were sponsored by a Chinese insurance company and were published under the auspices of the State Council and other organizations. Likewise, people are confronted in the streets with political advertising that is sponsored by commercial interests.⁴⁵ Such “public information service” posters can be used to address certain undesirable or negative social phenomena that have sprung up as a result of the modernization process, by providing the people with the necessary normative information that will enable them to guard against these phenomena. However, no posters have yet been produced, for example, to warn the people from the countryside that moving to the large cities or to the thriving Special Economic Zones will not necessarily lead to employment. Warnings against the risks of smoking, the use of controlled substances (opium, heroin, etc.), membership in criminal organizations, sexually transmitted diseases, prostitution and pimping, etc., are still rare, while in the print media, these topics have all been dealt with much more explicitly (illustration 22).

Conclusion

Although published for a variety of occasions and under different circumstances, the posters presented here share some striking similarities. Whether they are designed as leader portraits or to promote patriotism, they are all plagued by a lack of conviction and strength in the messages they intend to present. All suffer from a blandness in execution, in particular when compared with the materials published in the prereform period. One of the main reasons, of course, is that these materials are indeed designed to build on preexisting convictions or to gently nudge people into the desired direction of thought and behavior. They are definitely not designed to rouse the target group(s) into action.

Another explanation may be found in the quality of the artwork. Nowadays, the art or image-producing sector that is not dominated by the party-state exerts a great attraction on people who before would have jumped at the opportunity to design compelling visual propaganda. But artists and designers are no longer held in the highest esteem as the party's ultimate "spin doctors," a role they played during the heyday of poster production.⁴⁶ In other words, artists and designers have lost considerable occupational status; the occupational prestige a "cultural self-employed worker" now enjoys is ranked between that of a "car driver in the party or a government body" and "political cadre in a business unit or institution" (position 43 out of a total of 69 occupations).⁴⁷ However, when advertising agencies offer not only fatter pay checks but also more artistic freedom to their employees, it stands to reason that truly gifted designers, photographers, photomontage specialists, and artists, no longer feel a desire to work for the party. Other talented artists may decide to become active in independent art production for the same reasons. As a result, the propaganda agencies are left with artistic talent that can be considered capable, but second-string.

Despite the fact that propaganda posters continue to be part of the government's communication strategy, their educational function seems to have been taken over by other media. Although the party continues to use propaganda posters for many purposes and in many settings, their future usage increasingly seems to lie in a "public information service" type of messages. Television, on the other hand, has become *the* medium for presenting propaganda and giving attitudinal indications. However, when it comes to deciding what is aired (and not aired) on TV, the CCP is no longer able to act in loco parentis, as it did until the late 1980s.⁴⁸ This is the logical result of the decision to make the media responsible for their own operating costs, and it has led, among other consequences, to a steady decline of "educational" and political content in favor of entertainment, both imported and domestically produced.⁴⁹ The commercialization of the media has given rise to what may be termed "partymercials": highly sophisticated, extremely well-made forms of institutional advertising that reflect the general development of commercial culture. Preliminary and cursory analysis indicates that the content of these political messages tends to support more general propaganda themes, such as those stressing the central, and historically inevitable, role of the party in China's development or ethnic unity. Broadcasters are required to air these "partymercials" in prime time: at least 3 percent of the time

slots reserved for “ordinary” (commercial) advertising is reserved for political messages.⁵⁰ In subtle ways, the Chinese are thus confronted with a type of propaganda that is very difficult to identify as such at first sight. At the same time, propagandists are faced with the same problem that vexes advertising executives all over the world: how can viewers be persuaded from “zapping” the TV when the commercial break starts or from “tuning out” when confronted with what obviously is propaganda?

Notes

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2. Rodney L. Taylor, *The Way of Heaven: An Introduction to the Confucian Religious Life* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 11. Susan Mann, “Widows in the Kinship, Class, and Community Structures of Qing Dynasty China,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 46, no. 1 (February 1987): 37, 40-41.
3. Hsiao Kung-chuan, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1967), 195.
4. Alan P. L. Liu, *Communications and National Integration in Communist China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 32, 55.
5. “Editor’s Words,” *Shinian xuanchuanhua xuan* (Ten years of propaganda posters) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1960), quoted in Kuiyi Shen, “Publishing Posters before the Cultural Revolution,” *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 12, no. 2 (fall 2000): 177-202. The quote is on 177.
6. All posters discussed here are part of the Stefan R. Landsberger Collection, located in the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. A large part of the collection can be accessed at <http://www.iisg.nl/~landsberger>.
7. Ge Zhenggang, director of the Shanghai People’s Fine Arts Publishing House, expressed this view in an interview with the author, 15 January 1998.
8. Stefan R. Landsberger, “Confessions of a Poster Collector,” in *Reminiscences and Ruminations, China Information Anniversary Supplement* 9, no. 1 (summer 1994): 38.
9. Such memoirs include Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Wenbua dageming shinian shi* (The history of the ten years of the Cultural Revolution) (Taipei: Yuanliu Publishing, 1990); Ken Ling, *The Revenge of Heaven* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972); Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, *Son of the Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983); Anita Chan, *Children of Mao: Personality Development and Political Activism in the Red Guard Generation* (London: Macmillan, 1985); Gao Yuan, *Born Red: A Chronicle of the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); Feng Jicai, *Ten Years of Madness: Oral Histories of China’s Cultural Revolution* (San Francisco: China Books and Periodicals, 1996).
10. Author interviews with independent art consultant Yang Peiming (Shanghai, 17 January and 3 December 1998) and Qian Daxin and Ha Qiongwen, veteran artists formerly attached to the Shanghai People’s Fine Arts Publishing House (Shanghai, 15 January 1998).

11. Chen Xiaomei, "Growing up with Posters in the Maoist Era," in *Picturing Power in the People's Republic of China: Posters of the Cultural Revolution*, ed. Harriet Evans and Stephanie Donald (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 101-122. The quote is on 105.
12. See Victoria E. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 39-40, and the various illustrations contained in the book.
13. Joan Lebold Cohen, *The New Chinese Painting 1949-1986* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1987), 51.
14. Liu Jianming, *Deng Xiaoping xuanchuan sixiang yanjiu* [On Deng Xiaoping's ideas of propaganda] (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990), 60-65.
15. Lü Xiuyuan, "A Step towards Understanding Popular Violence in China's Cultural Revolution," *Pacific Affairs* 67, no. 4 (winter 1994-1995), 551-52.
16. Yu Liang (designer), *Dong Cunrui*, published by Jiefangjun wenyi chubanshe (Beijing). From a series of posters of military martyrs, published in the period 1992-1997. Note that posters no longer have a print number, but an ISBN: 10-5033-2.
17. Chiang Chen-ch'ang, "The New Lei Feng of the 1980s," *Issues and Studies*, no. 11 (May 1984), 29.
18. Liu Shaoqi, "How to Be a Good Communist," in *Three Essays on Party-Building* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980), 1-98
19. Li Kwok-sing, ed., *A Glossary of Political Terms of the People's Republic of China*, trans. Mary Lok (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1995), 301-302.
20. The "screw" concept was not Lei's own invention. It derived from the Stalinist dictum that "Soviet man should consider himself a mere 'cog' in the gigantic wheel of the Soviet State." Mikhail Heller, *Cogs in the Wheel: The Formation of Soviet Man* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 6.
21. Børge Bakken, *The Exemplary Society: Human Improvement, Social Control and the Dangers of Modernity in China* (Oslo: University of Oslo, 1994), 152.
22. Qiao recalled that he and Lei Feng were cleaning a truck at Fushun Army base. When Lei asked the driver to back up to a hosepipe, Qiao explains that "a rear wheel struck a pole from which barbed wire hung but I didn't realize this and hit the accelerator hard, pushing over the pole and killing Lei Feng." Qiao continues, "When I held him on the ground, I saw blood gushing out of his mouth. He was sent to hospital.... He was my best brother, my best companion, but I was the one who drove that truck." We know all these facts in excruciating detail because Qiao Anshan, showing remorse by following in the footsteps of Lei Feng, succeeded in marketing himself as a tireless propagandist for Lei: he published his memoirs, which were, in turn, used as the basis for the 1997 motion picture *The Day I Left Lei Feng*. See Mia Turner, "After He Killed Lei Feng," *Time* 149, no. 23 (9 June 1997). URL: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/1997/int/970609/acin.feng.html>, accessed on 11 June 2001.
23. Thomas B. Gold, "Urban Private Business and Social Change," *Chinese Society on the Eve of Tiananmen: The Impact of Reform*, ed. Deborah Davis and Ezra F. Vogel (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 176.
24. Chiang, "The New Lei Fengs," 37. Xing Fangqun stresses that models should have some shortcomings and warns of the danger of using "absolute models." See Xing Fangqun, "Guanyu xuanchuan xianjin renwu he xianjin dianxingde jidian yijian" (Some viewpoints concerning the propagation of advanced personages and models), in *Zhongguo xinwen nianjian 1984* (Yearbook of Chinese news, 1984), ed. Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan xinwen yanjiusuo (Beijing: Renmin ribao chubanshe, 1984), 127.
25. Chiang, "The New Lei Fengs," 35-39.

26. As the chair of the Kanghua Foundation for the Disabled, Deng Xiaoping's son was later accused of shady business practices and embezzlement; he was forced to step down in the late 1980s. See Gao Xin and He Pin, *Gaogan dang'an: Zhonggong quangui guanxi shidian* (Dossiers of high cadres: A factual dictionary of the relations of influential officials of the Chinese Communist Party) (Taipei: Xin Xinwen Zhoukan, 1993), 427-29.
27. Chiang, "The New Lei Fengs," 29-34.
28. Michel Bonnin, "When the Saints Come Marching Back," *China Perspectives*, no. 5 (May/June 1996): 18.
29. Something similar happened when portraits of Mao Zedong — not exactly an admirer of private enterprise — were hung behind the shop counters of private entrepreneurs to bring good luck to their businesses. John Gittings, *Real China: From Cannibalism to Karaoke* (London and New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 159.
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31. Erik Eckholm, "Beijing Journal: A Maoist Hero's Ghost Tilts with Falun Gong," *The New York Times on the Web*, 30 May 2001 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/30/world/30BEIJ.html>, accessed 31 May 2001).
32. Accessible at <http://www.leifeng.org> and <http://www.leifeng.com>, respectively.
33. Bonnin, "When the Saints Come Marching Back," 13-14, 18.
34. *China News Analysis* 1234, 8 October 1982, 4.
35. Chang Ching-li, "Promotion of Socialist Spiritual Civilization on the Chinese Mainland," *Issues and Studies* 19, no. 8 (August 1983): 25; Deng Xiaoping, "Build a Socialist Society with Both High Material and High Cultural and Ideological Standards," in *Fundamental Issues in Present-Day China* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1987), 11.
36. Ann Anagnost, "Socialist Ethics and the Legal System," in Wasserstrom and Perry, *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, 182.
37. In 1999, the Huaxia Bank Peking Management Office published a poster to promote Deng Xiaoping Theory: *Gaoju Deng Xiaoping lilun weida qizhi ba jianshe you Zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi shiye quanmian tuixiang ershiyi shiji* (Hold high the great banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory to completely advance the cause of building socialism with Chinese characteristics into the twenty-first century). No information is available on where the poster was published.
38. Suizheng Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (1998): 290-91.
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41. As quoted on the set, published by Hubei meishu chubanshe in September 1996. Set no. 85394.1623.
42. Susan Brownell, "The Body and the Beautiful in Chinese Nationalism: Sports-women and Fashion Models in the Reform Era," special issue, "The Body in Contemporary China," *China Information* 13, nos. 2/3 (autumn/winter 1998/1999): 39-40.
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- nianjian 1993 (China educational yearbook, 1993) (Beijing: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1994), 791-99.
44. State Education Commission, *Basic Education in China* (Beijing: People's Education Press, 1989), 38.
 45. Various examples of such advertising can be found at "China's Public Advertising Culture: Spiritual Civilization, Local Development, Privatization and Public Service," the website of the Transnational China project of Rice University (<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~tchina/chinapolads.html>).
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