WAR HEROES: CONSTRUCTING THE SOLDIER AND THE STATE IN MODERN CHINA, 1924-1945

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the

Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Yan Xu, M.A.

Graduate Program in History

The Ohio State University

2012

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Christopher A. Reed, Adviser

Professor Ying Zhang

Professor Patricia Sieber
Abstract

The frequency of wars in modern China between 1924 and 1945 was accompanied by the phenomenon that the soldier figure played an important ideological role in state rhetoric and social discussions. Different political, social and cultural forces, such as Jiang Jieshi (1887-1975)’s Nationalist government (1927-1949), the Whampoa Military Academy, urban intellectuals, activists, professionals, writers, students, and the Chinese Communists in the revolutionary base of Yan’an constructed the soldier figure to argue for their agendas and assert their political influence.

The multiple meanings assigned to the soldier figure by diverse forces as well as the intentions behind the meanings are the main theme uniting this dissertation. This theme serves as a useful window to explore the state-building processes in the GMD and CCP areas and the complex state-society relations that were engendered by these processes in modern China. By examining how different political, social and cultural forces resisted, collaborated with, complicated, questioned and confronted the heroic ideal of the soldier promoted by Jiang and the Nationalist government, this dissertation demonstrates that the cultural negotiations over how to create and support a strong army were central to the state-building processes in modern China, and a significant factor in determining different trajectories in state-society relations in the regions controlled by the GMD and the CCP.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to those who have inspired and motivated me: my family and my professors.
Acknowledgments

The completion of my dissertation and subsequent Ph.D. has involved a long journey. I could not have succeeded without the invaluable support of my professors, my family and my colleagues. Without them, especially the select few I am about to mention, I may not have gotten to where I am today.

To this select group I would like to give special thanks, beginning with Professor Christopher A. Reed. His intellectual support, encouragement, and enthusiasm made this dissertation possible. Ever since I joined the Department of History at The Ohio State University in 2005, Professor Reed has helped me build a solid foundation as a professional scholar. He has guided me on the fundamental skills demanded of a historian, such as how to read, write book reviews and historiography papers and how to cite sources. He has been very generous in sharing his vast knowledge on archival and database sources with me. He has always been thoughtful in writing support letters for my funding applications, and patient in correcting both my stylistic and historical errors. He is also straightforward in pointing out my strengths and weaknesses; it is his constructive advice that has strengthened my professional sense and my dedication as a scholar in history. His genuine caring and concern, encouragement, and faith in me during my studies at OSU enabled me to meet and surmount any challenge. I will forever be grateful for having had such a responsible and supportive adviser. In every aspect,
Professor Reed has exerted an immeasurably great and positive impact on my intellectual
development, career building and cultural adjustment, which I have and will continue to
benefit from the rest of my life.

Next, I would like to give a heartfelt, special thanks to Professor Patricia Sieber. Professor Sieber’s seminar on Chinese literature, which I took in Spring 2007, enlightened me on how to use literary works as primary sources to analyze historical issues. Professor Sieber served as a member of my doctorate candidacy examination committee in 2010. Her questions during my candidacy examination of how articulations of the cult of sentiment evolved in Chinese history served as a catalyst for my examining the role of sentiment in state building. Her dialogues with me on these questions after my candidacy examination helped me figure out a general idea for my dissertation argument. It was her questions, comments and dialogues that stimulated me to write a paper on the emotional bond between soldiers and peasants in the Chinese Communist revolutionary base of Yan’an. This paper, which was first written for Professor Reed’s seminar on modern Chinese history in Spring 2010, has become the foundation of Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

Professor Sieber has also provided substantial support for my professional activities at OSU. Her recommendation letters have helped me win several scholarships and grants which supported my language study in Japan and my dissertation research trips in China. When the Ohio China Fellows, an OSU student organization I founded in 2006, held a graduate student conference on Chinese studies in May 2007, Professor Sieber attended the conference and served as a keynote speaker and presentation
commentator. Her participation and support have greatly encouraged the academic pursuits of the graduate students in the China studies community of OSU including me. I am also forever indebted to Professor Sieber for giving me her sincere understanding and support when I worked on my candidacy examination and dissertation writing while taking care of my young baby. Her warm motivation will always encourage me to overcome any difficulty in my life.

My sincere gratitude is also extended to Professor Ying Zhang. Professor Zhang volunteered to read every chapter of my dissertation draft, although she had her own tight work schedule. After I submitted my chapter drafts to her, Professor Zhang always replied with detailed and useful comments in a very timely manner. She read the introduction chapter of my dissertation twice and held a two-hour dialogue with me on Skype, helping me better organize my introduction and articulate the thesis of the dissertation accurately. It is her hard effort of reviewing my introduction and chapter drafts that has enabled me to finish the dissertation by the deadline my committee members and I agreed on. Her motivation, patience, encouragement and enlightenment have helped me survive the intensive dissertation writing process. Thank you, Professor Zhang.

I am also grateful to the following esteemed professors: Professor Cynthia Brokaw, who served as a member of my candidacy examination committee and on my M.A. defense committee; Professor Judy Wu, who served as a member of my candidacy examination committee; Professor James Bartholomew, who attended my candidacy examination; and Professor Philip Brown, who served as a member of my M.A. defense
committee. The stimulating discussions at their history seminars have refreshed my understandings on a variety of topics and have increased my critical and analytical abilities.

Next I would like to thank my colleagues at the Department of History of OSU. My colleagues who attended Professor Reed’s modern Chinese history seminars with me were very kind in sharing their book reviews with the class and in commenting on my paper draft. Wenjuan Bi let me stay at her parents’ place while I collected primary sources for my research in Nanjing. Di Luo helped me submit the graduation form to the Graduate School of OSU when I was unable to do so myself. John Knight read the draft of Chapter 4 of this dissertation, checking my grammar and word choice. Throughout my doctoral program at OSU, I have built friendship not only with colleagues in the East Asian history field but also with colleagues in other fields, especially those who shared the same office with me. We laughed and played together, always encouraged each other and shared information on funding applications and the job market with each other. This joyful experience working with my colleagues at OSU will be a valuable and beautiful memory for my life.

This acknowledgement would not be complete without giving thanks to my parents. Without their spiritual and financial support, I could not have finished my college study at Nanjing University or have afforded to apply to the Ph.D. program at OSU. And without my parents’ selfless help in taking care of my young daughter over the last few months, I would not have had enough time and energy to prepare for my candidacy examination and finish my dissertation writing. They understand and support
my career pursuit in the United States, although they have to bear the pain of missing their daughter. It is my love and guilt for them that have driven me to overcome any difficulty and finish this dissertation.

With deep gratitude, I would like next to mention my husband Sean Chao. Ever since I met Sean in the Winter of 2007, he has read almost every piece of my writing. Despite his busy schedule and frequent travels, he still managed to review and comment on every chapter of my dissertation. His extensive knowledge in Chinese politics, history and culture has opened the window for me to see how Americans have viewed issues related to China. His wit has kept me smiling and his sarcasm has given me a different view of the world that has helped me keep things in perspective. His thoughts and ideas have also helped me better design my teaching strategies and materials for US college students in my classes. He went through every excruciating step and mood change with me and grew into a better person along with me. Through his love, support and unwavering belief in me, I have been able to complete this long dissertation journey. Through his eyes I have envisioned myself as a capable, intelligent woman who could do anything once I made up my mind.

I must mention my three-year-old daughter Evelyn in this acknowledgement. She has been the twinkle in my eyes since she was born in 2009. Whenever I feel tired and stressed, her big smiles and sweet words have given me a much-needed reprieve from work and school and encouraged me to finish my degree and pursue a better life for her. She is my angel. I love her very much. I hope that my perseverance in pursuing my Ph.D.
degree at OSU will encourage her to be strong and take me as a source of inspiration to tackle any challenge in her life as she grows up.

Last, but certainly not least, my dissertation could not have been completed without the aid of several grants and scholarships provided to me through the great generosity of several benefactors. With the support of the Estella Southard Fellowship from the Department of History at OSU, a Dissertation Grant from the Office of International Affairs of OSU, and an Honorable Mention for the Dr. Gordon P. K. Chu Memorial Scholarship from the College of Humanities of OSU, I was able to fund my travel to the Chinese libraries and archives. Five months spent in the Shanghai Municipal Library and the Nanjing Municipal Library, where the research for this dissertation was undertaken in 2011, were critical to my research. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of the Bradley Military History Fellowship from OSU’s Department of History in the autumn semester of 2012, which allowed me to complete writing my dissertation.
Vita

December 29, 1982 .......................................................... Born – China
2004.......................................................... B.A. History, Nanjing University
2008.......................................................... M.A. History, Ohio State University
2008 to present................................. Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of History, The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Field: History
Primary Field: Modern Chinese History
Secondary Field: Women’s History
Minor Field: Late Imperial and Modern Chinese Literature
Table of Contents

Abstract...........................................................................................................................................ii
Dedication..........................................................................................................................................iii
Acknowledgments...............................................................................................................................iv
Vita......................................................................................................................................................x
Table of Contents..............................................................................................................................xi
Introduction.......................................................................................................................................1

Chapter 1: Training Model Soldiers through Civic Education at the Whampoa Military Academy..............................................................39
  Introduction.................................................................................................................................39
  Regulating the Mind....................................................................................................................43
  Disciplining Personal Behavior and Emotional Expression.....................................................48
  Forging “Qin, Ai, Jing, Cheng (Intimacy, Fraternity, Dexterity, Sincerity)”...............................59
  Confronting the GMD’s Heroic-Soldier Ideal..............................................................................68
  Conclusion....................................................................................................................................80

Chapter 2: Enlisting Citizens in the Military Mobilization of the Nationalist State..................83
  Introduction.....................................................................................................................................83
  The Soldier as a Model Citizen.....................................................................................................84
  The Soldier as the Epitome of Morality.......................................................................................99
  The Contrast in Reality...............................................................................................................108
  Conclusion....................................................................................................................................113

Chapter 3: Wartime Soldier Support by Urban Intellectuals and Professionals.....................116
  Introduction......................................................................................................................................116
  The Other Side of the Heroic-Soldier Ideal................................................................................117
  Our Wounded Friends Need Our Education.............................................................................130
  Honorable Soldiers Need Vocational Rehabilitation.................................................................139
  Conclusion....................................................................................................................................147
Chapter 4: Creating Gendered Images of the Soldier Figure in Literary Works........151
Introduction.......................................................................................................................151
Grassroots Soldier Heroes in Bayuede xiangcun.........................................................152
War Trauma in Qiu Dongping’s Battlefield Reportage......................................................160
The Female Soldier Writer Xie Bingying........................................................................179
Conclusion.......................................................................................................................186

Chapter 5: The Construction of the Soldier Ideal by Educated Youths........189
Introduction.......................................................................................................................189
The Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army.................................190
The Self-Government Ideal in the Youth Army.............................................................204
Conclusion.......................................................................................................................212

Chapter 6: The Army-People (junmin) Bond: The Construction of the Soldier Figure in
Mass Culture in Wartime Yan’an..........................................................215
Introduction.......................................................................................................................215
Institutionalizing Army-People Bond—Political and Social Background......................217
Articulating Army-People Bond—the Yangge Movement...........................................227
Conclusion.......................................................................................................................241

Conclusion.......................................................................................................................245

Glossary..........................................................................................................................264

Bibliography..................................................................................................................268
Introduction

Topic Description

Throughout history and in the entirety of the world’s war cultures, people make sense of, glorify, or lament war by creating images of soldiers that range from the heroic to the pitiful; the creation of soldier imagery has said much about their own societies.¹ The scale of war in the twentieth century has proved spectacular not only in the West but also in China. During the period between 1924 and 1945, Chinese soldiers fought in the Northern Expedition (1926-1928) against local warlords, civil wars between the Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD) and the Communist Party (CCP), and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).² The frequency of wars was accompanied by the phenomenon that the soldier figure played an important ideological role in state rhetoric and social discussions. Different political, social and cultural forces participated in the construction of the soldier figure, and included Jiang Jieshi (1887-1975)’s Nationalist government based at Nanjing (1927-1949),³ the Whampoa Military Academy (Huangpu

² The Second Sino-Japanese War is used interchangeably with the Anti-Japanese War, or National Resistance, in this dissertation.
³ This dissertation refers to Jiang Jieshi as Chiang Kai-shek in citing some secondary scholarship.
junxiao) commanded by Jiang⁴ the urban publics including intellectuals, activists, professionals, writers and students,⁵ as well as the Chinese Communists in the revolutionary base of Yan’an. The political and military authorities as well as different groups of the urban publics all employed the soldier figure as a kind of reference point to argue for their agendas and assert their political influence.

This dissertation tells a story about this extensive imagery of the soldier figure in the war culture of modern China. The multiple meanings assigned to the soldier figure by diverse forces as well as the intentions behind the meanings are the main theme uniting this dissertation. This theme serves as a useful window to explore state-building processes in the GMD and CCP areas and the complex state-society relations that were engendered by these processes in China during the first half of the twentieth century. The vast body of imagery of the soldier figure produced by different political, social and cultural forces in modern China reveals a great deal about Chinese politics, culture and values in this period. By examining how different political, social and cultural forces resisted, collaborated, complicated, questioned and confronted the heroic ideal of the soldier promoted by Jiang and the Nationalist government, this dissertation demonstrates that the cultural negotiations over how to create and support a strong army were central to the state-building processes in modern China from 1924 to 1945, and a significant factor in determining different trajectories in state-society relations in the regions controlled by the GMD and the CCP.

⁴For the convenience of writing, the dissertation refers to the Whampoa Military Academy as the Whampoa Academy, the Academy, or simply Whampoa.
⁵The term “urban publics” is drawn from Peter Zarrow’s words that “[in Chiang Kai-shek’s Nanjing regime,] both liberal intellectuals and nationalist students represented urban public opinion.” See Peter Zarrow, China at War and Revolution, 1895-1949 (New York: Routledge, 2005), 264.
This dissertation deals with soldiers mainly as military academy cadets and as men who served in regular armies. Other categories of armed men, such as militiamen and irregulars are not covered in this dissertation. High-level military commanders, who also performed critical roles as political leaders in Republican China, such as Jiang Jieshi himself, are not the subject of this dissertation either. Instead, this dissertation defines the soldier as lower-level army officers and rank-and-file soldiers. This dissertation also limits itself to foot soldiers in combat troops, rather than airmen, seamen, or support personnel and other forces in the rear, partly for reasons of space and source availability and partly because much of war-related culture in China in the first half of the twentieth century still featured the infantry.

**Historical Background**

This dissertation treats the starting point of the Nationalist’s state-building process as the 1924 establishment of the Whampoa Military Academy. This event symbolized the foundation of China’s National Revolutionary Army (Guomin gemingjun), which was the military arm of the GMD state during its rule in mainland China between 1927 and

---

6In her study of warlord soldiers between 1911 and 1937, Diana Lary summarizes Chinese armed men into the following categories: major armies (multi-province warlord cliques, the GMD Central Army), local armies (single province or multi-county armies), petty armies (single county armies), militias (local defense forces at the county level; merchant-raised defense forces), bandit gangs (land-based bandit gangs; pirates), irregular units (temporary units raised from men normally under arms as bandits or secret society members), mass units (forces of armed peasants, sometimes members of secret societies, sometimes political activists), stragglers (individual soldiers detached from their original units), local bullies (village enforcers). See Diana Lary, *Warlord Soldiers: Chinese Common Soldiers 1911-1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3.
This dissertation ends with China’s military victory in the Anti-Japanese War in 1945. The construction of the soldier during the post-1945 civil wars between the CCP and the GMD remains a topic for future research. The state-building efforts and the state-society relations in China between 1924 and 1945 as revealed in the process of constructing the soldier figure were greatly shaped by political, social and cultural dynamics during this period. These dynamics explain why creating the image of the soldier figure enlisted wide participation from diverse forces and thus became part of the state-building processes in the GMD areas and the CCP areas. These historical dynamics also help explain why the state-society relations generated in the construction of the soldier figure presented different trajectories.

Politically and militarily, the GMD’s success in the military campaign of the Northern Expedition in 1928 allowed Jiang Jieshi to incorporate regional warlords and their bureaucracies into the GMD state in Nanjing. However, the political and military reunification under the GMD banner was only nominal. Although regional warlords declared their allegiance to the GMD government under Jiang, they continued to command their individual armies, over which Jiang exercised little control. As the historian Peter Zarrow comments, Jiang’s authority rested on uneasy coalitions of GMD supporters, regional warlords and local elites and often experienced challenges from

---

7 The National Revolutionary Army was shortened to the Revolutionary Army (Gemingjun) before 1928 and the National Army (Guojun) between 1928 and 1949. During the Anti-Japanese War, the armed forces of the CCP were nominally incorporated into the National Army while retaining separate commands, but they broke away shortly after the end of the war. After Chinese Nationalists retreated to Taiwan in 1949, the National Army was renamed the Republic of China Army Forces (Zhonghua minguo guojun).
repeated rebellions from warlord and communist rivalries.\textsuperscript{8} As he dealt with regional warlords and the Communists, Jiang was slow in increasing his own power. Nanjing’s rule was strong in only Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui in 1928; by 1931 it had been extended to Henan, Jiangxi, Hubei and Fujian; the expulsion of the Communists from the Jiangxi hinterland in 1934 allowed Jiang to expand into southern and western China.\textsuperscript{9} It was not until the mid-1930s that the Nationalists could claim a fair degree of control over most of China proper, “the economic heartland of the rice-producing center and the industrialized eastern cities.”\textsuperscript{10} Rivaled by the Communists and provincial warlords, Jiang and his GMD government found it necessary to legitimize their rule by strengthening ideological and cultural control. Constructing a heroic discourse of the soldier figure and extending this discourse to society was one important example in this process.

The GMD government, which ruled China from 1927 to 1949, was above all dependent on the support of the military. After years of war, Jiang’s Central Army eventually managed to defeat the separatist warlord armies by the late 1920s or early 1930s. Its success in these conflicts thereby placed the whole of China under Jiang’s centralized authority, albeit largely nominally rather than in actuality. After the Anti-Japanese War began in 1937, the Military Affairs Commission (Junshi weiyuan hui), chaired by Jiang, assumed control not only of the military, but also of all administrative

\textsuperscript{8}Zarrow, \textit{China in War and Revolution}, 249. Zarrow also listed several examples of rebellions against Jiang’s Nationalist government: Guangxi generals in 1929, Generals Feng Yuxiang (1882-1948) and Yan Xishan (1883-1960) in 1930, a growing Communist insurgency in Jiangxi in the early 1930s, Guangzhou supporters of the conservative GMD leader Hu Hanmin (1879-1936) in 1931, Fujian dissidents in 1933, and Guangdong and Guangxi forces again in 1936.

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid.
functions of government.\textsuperscript{11} As the historian Lloyd Eastman argued, the Nationalist government’s essential character—a dictatorial regime dependent upon military force—remained unchanged throughout the Nanjing Decade (1927-1937) and the war against the Japanese.\textsuperscript{12} For such a regime whose rule predominantly relied on military forces, military mobilization was crucial for justifying its legitimacy and maintaining the authority of its rule. The construction of the soldier figure thus became essential for the GMD government to achieve its nation-wide military mobilization.

The construction of the soldier figure preoccupied not only the GMD government but also other forces in the 1930s and the 1940s because of the growing politicization of literary production and intellectuals’ social activities. As literary scholar Leo Ou-fan Lee comments, by the 1930s “the artistic depth was accompanied by a sharpened consciousness of the deepening social and political crisis as the spectrum of Japanese invasion loomed large.”\textsuperscript{13} A realistic consciousness and politically motivated cultural production were manifested in several literary genres that experienced rapid development during this period, and included women’s autobiography and “countryside fiction” (\textit{xiangtu xiaoshuo}). According to Jing Wang, Chinese women’s autobiography during


\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 26.

this time “favored collective action over individualistic choice.”14 No matter what the real-life situation was, the majority of Chinese women’s writers “thoughtfully decided to write about their careers, their identities as writers, their roles in society, their obligations toward the country and the oppressed masses, relations with people that contribute to the building of their identity as modern, self-determined women.”15 In Countryside Fiction, a literary sub-genre emerging in the 1930s, the writer expressed deep-seated devotion to representing the hardship, suffering, and victimization of rural residents in the face of the socio-economic crisis and under the Japanese invasion. As Lee observes, literature featuring the countryside became “almost ipso facto literature of protest and dissent against a regime which did so little to ameliorate the people’s livelihood.”16 Literary intellectuals voiced their political concerns by describing the life experiences of different social groups including common soldiers.

The political consciousness of cultural intellectuals was greatly strengthened during the Anti-Japanese War as many of them joined in the nationwide movement to resist Japanese aggression. They organized visiting teams and literary reporter programs, reaching out to the common masses including ordinary soldiers on the battlefront. Their consciousness of political participation and social service was highlighted in slogans such as “Literature must join the army!” or “Propaganda first, art second!”17 The GMD government tried to penetrate into the literary field by drawing writers into official ranks.

14 Jing Wang, When “I” was Born: Women’s Autobiography in Modern China (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 5. Another study of women’s autobiography is Lingzhen Wang, Personal Matters: Women’s Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth-Century China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
15 Ibid., 189.
17 Ibid., 242.
Guo Moruo (1892-1978) was appointed in 1938 as head of the Third Section of the National Military Council’s newly created Political Department in charge of propaganda. As Lee comments, writers’ propaganda activities became “formally sanctioned by the government.” On one hand, the nationalistic appeal embraced by the intellectuals encouraged them to cooperate with the GMD’s resistance campaign and the undertaking of supporting the army. On the other hand, the intellectuals also aimed to assert their political influence in mobilizing the masses to support the army. The political consciousness shared by the intellectuals greatly shaped the way they constructed the soldier figure.

The literature in the early years of the Anti-Japanese War was characterized by “the stereotypes of guerrilla warfare and student romance and the ubiquitous note of patriotic propaganda.” The literary critic Hu Feng (1902-1985) pointed out the major weaknesses of war literature: (1) it gave merely neat propaganda formulas; (2) it tended to present all the trivial details without attaining any depth of vision, thus losing rather than gaining a sense of reality; (3) in some cases it gave fantastic twists to real stories. As the chief editor of the literary journal Qiyue (July), he encouraged battlefield reportage (zhandi baogao wenxue) contributors to correct these defects by adopting a personal and critical perspective. This literary style had a great impact on how the reportage writers depicted images of the soldier figure.

---

18Ibid.
19Chih-ting Hsia, A History of Modern Chinese Fiction (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 386.
21Charles A. Laughlin understands reportage to mean “any deliberately literary nonfiction text that narrates or describes a current event, person, or social phenomenon.” See Charles A. Laughlin.
The 1930s and the 1940s also witnessed the increasing domination of cultural production by the CCP. For the CCP’s cultural authorities, the intellectuals’ literary production served politics and revolution only. The League of Left-wing Writers, which was largely initiated by the CCP in 1930, called upon League members to “pay attention to the large number of subjects from the realities of Chinese social life” and “observe and describe from the proletarian standpoint and outlook.” However, without consulting with important writers in the League, the CCP’s propaganda chief Zhou Yang (1908-1989) dissolved the League in 1936 and proposed “national defense literature” (guofang wenxue) as the official slogan for cultural production. This slogan was made to serve the CCP’s 1935 Anti-Japanese National United Front (Kangri minzu tongyi zhanxian) policy of forcing the Nationalist government to come to some sort of coalition with the Communists and fight the Japanese. For Zhou, “the party policy of the United Front took precedence over everything else, including artistic creation.” The CCP continued its effort of cultural control throughout the Anti-Japanese War period and its dominance reached a peak after the 1942 Literary Rectification (Wenyi zhengfeng) Movement launched by Mao Zedong (1893-1976). The Rectification, which took place at the Communist base of Yan’an in Shaanxi province, represented a distinctive approach.
of the CCP to party discipline and state building by way of “systematic remolding of human minds.”

As the political scholar Lorena Bichler points out, the most important aspect of Mao’s “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art” delivered in May 1942 was that it “successfully combines the proclamation of elements of an aesthetic theory in connection with persecution and criminal proceedings against dissenters.”

The concepts and paradigms that were generated by the Literary Rectification Movement changed the life and fate of millions of Chinese people after 1949. After the thought reform, intellectuals at Yan’an largely became the Communists’ propaganda workers. Their construction of the soldier figure in the mass culture was intended to build the legitimacy of the CCP’s social policies.

Another important development during the 1930s and the 1940s was the emergence of the class of urban professionals. The historian Xiaoqun Xu reveals that urban professionals organized themselves into professional associations and employed their knowledge, skills and expertise to participate in state building. The professional associations in Shanghai designed for various economic, social, political, intellectual and cultural purposes “created a vibrant urban society with complex social dynamics evident in the city and beyond.”

---


professionals not only actively participated in offering service to the soldiers but also advocated mobilizing the masses into that kind of service. Examples of such urban professionals were Liu Liangmo (1909-1988), a sociologist and social activist who worked at the Soldier Service Branch (Junren fuwubu) of the Chinese Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in Shanghai; and Yu Zhaoming, an expert on vocational education affiliated with the Association of Vocational Coordination for the Honorable Veterans (Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui). They wrote theoretical books on how to serve, administer and educate soldiers, especially the wounded and disabled ones. They actively participated in the state-building project not only by supporting the army but also by asserting their political influence as social mobilizer and army educator. The construction of the soldier figure in their books was shaped by their agendas.

This dissertation ends with the year of 1945 when China won the Anti-Japanese War. The defeat of foreign enemies and the subsequent outbreak of the full-scale civil war between Chinese Nationalists and Communists intensified the tension between the GMD government and the society to a great extent. As Suzanne Pepper remarks, Jiang Jieshi’s insistence on waging a civil war against the Communists provoked the articulation of outrage by Chinese intellectuals. The student anti-war movement became one of the GMD government’s most constant irritations during the 1945-1949 period. The students’ primary demands were an immediate end to the civil war, an end to US backing for the GMD government in that war, and a shift in public expenditure from military to civilian needs. Although student protests often aroused nationwide attention

30Yu Zhaoming’s birth and death years are unclear.
and response, the GMD government refused to accept overt opposition to its civil war policy and became increasingly ruthless in their efforts to suppress the students.\(^{31}\) This dissertation hypothesizes that the social publics’ opposition to the full-scale civil war between Chinese Nationalists and Communists made their participation in the state-building project of creating and supporting a strong army more complicated. Thus, this dissertation leaves the post-1945 culture in regard to the construction of the soldier figure for further research.

**State Building in Modern China between 1924 and 1945**

Although the 1928 reunification of China under Jiang’s Nationalist government remained only nominal, it still allowed the government to carry forward the undertaking of state building. Previous studies on the GMD’s state-building in the Nanjing Decade and during the Anti-Japanese War either emphasize the failures of the government or stress its achievements. These two strategies overlook participation in state building by multiple social and cultural forces and the different trajectories of state-society relations generated in that process. For example, Eastman’s studies on the Nationalist government and armies argue that the inherent structural infirmities of a military-authoritarian regime lacking a base in society doomed the Nationalists to failure in their efforts to gain the loyalty of warlord troops, to tax rural society efficiently, to reform the military and to

establish a fair conscription system. Julia Strauss draws different conclusions in her study of state building in Republican China. Although the GMD’s “attempt to use the Examination Yuan to build broad civil service institutions was ineffective,” the workings of the Sino-Foreign Salt Inspectorate, the Ministry of Finance, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs all challenged the conventional reputation of the GMD government as “corrupt and ineffective.” Strauss argues for the GMD government’s capacity of “building strong and proactive institutions under exceptionally difficult circumstance,” and uses the words “surprisingly successful” to describe the GMD’s state building.

Although Eastman and Strauss offer different evaluations of the GMD’s state building, they both argue that the Second Sino-Japanese War witnessed the utter debilitation and disintegration of the GMD. They are not alone in these views. For Eastman, the weakening of Jiang’s army constituted the historical discontinuity before and after the war. As he comments, “during the war the Nationalists’ chief coercive organization, the army, ceased to be coherent and effective.” Strauss argues that the GMD experienced “an overall organizational paralysis and decay” during the war. In an earlier study, Arthur Young’s examination of China’s financial and economic development is based on the premise that, after 1937, the Sino-Japanese War and the

34 Ibid., 8.
35 Ibid., 184.
36 Ibid., 191.
38 Strauss, Strong Institutions in Weak Polities, 56.
commencement of World War II made any nation building effort impossible. More recently, David Strand also argues that the GMD’s state-building projects of urban planning and railway construction were disrupted by the Anti-Japanese war.

However, not all historians treat the Anti-Japanese War as a fatal interruption to the GMD’s state-building efforts. In his article on wartime political economy, Morris Bian suggests that the GMD “not only retained its capacity for institutional innovation but also greatly intensified state-building efforts.” Bian argues that the GMD “succeeded in creating institutions of central planning and assessment and thus increasing the rationalization of state institutions,” although it failed to achieve the hoped-for level of administrative efficiency. In his book on the state enterprise system, Bian also argues for the strengthening rather than weakening of the GMD’s state-building efforts during wartime. In their response to the necessity of institutional change caused by the war, Bian maintains, the GMD elite “transformed the existing mental models of institutional environments and developed new ones,” which allowed them to create a new state-owned enterprise system.

This present dissertation echoes Bian’s thesis of the intensification of the GMD’s wartime state-building efforts and contests the view of historical rupture caused by the

---

42 Ibid.
Anti-Japanese War advanced by Eastman, Strauss, Young, and Strand. It makes this argument by focusing on the GMD’s efforts in military training, conscription and mobilization both before and during the Anti-Japanese War. During the war, for example, the GMD government set up branch campuses of the Whampoa Military Academy building on its successes between 1924 and 1937 to penetrate its influence into regional warlord zones. It kept revising the compulsory conscription law first issued in 1933 to strengthen its control over national armies and militarize society. In the later years of the war, it also consolidated its earlier efforts to militarize society by calling on “educated youths” (zhishi qingnian)44 to join the army. These state-building agendas were designed to build a strong nation, strengthen the GMD state’s legitimacy and reinforce Jiang’s personal authority.

In addition, this present dissertation provides a nuanced analysis of state-society relations in the 1930s and the 1940s, a topic which is not covered in Bian’s study. This analysis further illuminates the process and consequences of GMD’s state-building efforts. Many scholars have explored the development of local elite activism in modern China between 1924 and 1945, and they have focused attention on whether this development provides evidence of the existence of a civil society or a public sphere.45 As

44 The term “educated youth” (zhishi qingnian) mainly refers to high school and college students, young professionals and civil servants who received education higher than the high school level. They were exempted from performing military service according to the 1933 first compulsory conscription law issued by the GMD. The rule on their exemption was cancelled in the 1943 revised conscription law.
45 For the Western definition of civil society and public sphere and the debate of its existence in late Qing and Republican China, see Symposium: “Public Sphere”/“Civil Society” in China? Paradigmatic Issues in Chinese Studies, Modern China, Vol. 19, No. 2 (April 1993): 107-240; Prasenjit Duara, Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China (Chicago: University of
Bryna Goodman suggests, the debate over the existence of a civil society or public sphere in China “leaves us with a reverse image of an all-controlling state and a society that seems stuck in tradition.”46 Her study of native place associations has shown that these associations coexisted with the increasing state penetration during the Nanjing Decade. Although they were not autonomous, they still “managed to formulate a series of strategies for public activity, even to the extent of criticism of and opposition to the state.”47 Goodman thus transcends the binary opposition between state and society—a construct produced by Western historical experience.

The historian Xiaoqun Xu argues that the concept of civil society defined as societal autonomy vis-à-vis the state is too limiting to capture the complexity of state-society relations in Republican China. His study on Chinese professionals in the Republican state examines the concrete forms that various social groups adopted and the specific avenues that they pursued to interact with the state. Xu points that although professional associations were allowed to exist only if they conformed to the regulations by the GMD government, they were not paralyzed by formal conformity and often managed to get around the state’s efforts at control by negotiating the terms under which they would operate. Xu described the interaction between the state and professions as interdependence. “A legitimate government could grant the professional legitimacy,

---

47 Ibid., 165. Also see Bryna Goodman, Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853-1937 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
while the support of the professional would in turn help legitimate the state and contribute to its modernizing projects, including modern state building.”

Stimulated by these studies on the complexity of state-society relations in Republican China, the present dissertation does not focus on the question of whether civil society or public sphere existed in modern China. Instead, it treats state building as intertwined with nation building. According to the historian Prasenjit Duara, the Chinese pattern of state building was “closely interwoven with nation-building goals.” The GMD government’s efforts to build modern state structures and institutions were concurrent with its advocacy of its role as the legitimate regime for the realization of the modern nation in the face of continuing domestic and foreign threats. In addition, since Jiang Jieshi assumed control not only of the military but also of all administrative functions of government during the Anti-Japanese War, building the nation and the state became the same process of consolidating his own authority.

Thus, this dissertation also understands state building in modern China as a process that involved participation from multiple forces. To examine this process, it tries to analyze the interpretations of the soldier figure by different social and cultural forces, including the GMD, Whampoa Military Academy cadets, regional warlords, local community leaders, urban intellectuals, activists, professionals, writers, students and the CCP. Understanding state building as a process intertwined with nation building and as a

---

48 Xu, Chinese Professionals and the Republican State, 15.
process involving wide participation will help reveal multiple trajectories in state-society relations in modern China.

The GMD’s heroic rhetoric of the soldier figure served the GMD’s agenda of state penetration and Jiang’s purpose of consolidating his authority, both of which were pursued in the name of national salvation and recovery. The GMD’s state-building efforts, which included civil education (jingshen jiaoyu) at the Whampoa Military Academy,\textsuperscript{51} the first compulsory conscription law issued in 1933 and its later revisions during the Anti-Japanese War, the New Life Movement (Xinshenghuo yundong, 1934-1949) and the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army (Zhishi qingnian congjun yundong) in the last years of the Anti-Japanese War, all aimed to create a militarized, politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizenry. In the GMD’s political discourse, the soldier was expected to follow a code of ethics that was designed to cultivate the soldiers’ obedience to the political doctrine of the Three Principles of the People, their submission to the discipline and regulation over personal behavior and emotional expression, and their subordination to Jiang as the leader of a hierarchical system. The GMD’s political discourse of the soldier figure also constructed the soldier as a model citizen and national paragon to be emulated by the society. The soldier figure and the soldier’s sacrifice in war were thus surrounded by a glorious, heroic and romantic aura in the GMD’s political discourse.

\textsuperscript{51}I translate jingshen jiaoyu as “civic education” instead of “ideological education” and “ideological indoctrination.” This translation is intended to highlight that the Whampoa Military Academy aimed to train the cadets to be model citizen-soldiers who followed the code of ethics forged in Jiang’s speeches and lectures at Whampoa.
Other political and social forces layered on additional meanings of the soldier figure to fit their own goals and agendas. Their interpretations of the soldier figure also revealed different trajectories of their relations with the GMD government. Some Whampoa Academy cadets, regional warlords, common soldiers and local residents had different views of the soldier figure that collided with the GMD’s celebration of the highly disciplined soldier ideal and rhetoric elevation of the soldier’s status as a model citizen. Their views of the soldier figure revealed the tension that existed within the GMD army and between the GMD and the local society.

The relations between social elites and the state have been studied by several scholars. This dissertation, by showing the complex interpretations of the soldier figure by the urban publics and their relations with the state as revealed in these interpretations, helps explain the ambiguous alliance between social elites and the state. Susan Glosser argues in her study on the family reform that the rearrangement of family organization and gender roles in the Republican era resulted in an alliance between social reformers and the state. Glosser argues that “reformers and revolutionaries of all political stripes welcomed state intervention and willingly subordinated individual rights to the demands of the state in return for its promise to save China.”52 The alliance between social reformers and the state ultimately facilitated state dominance of society and impeded the potential for popular challenges to state authority. Feminists, intellectuals, politicians and entrepreneurs were all unable to counter the state’s demands.

Glosser observed that the welcoming of state intervention among elite publics characterized the political culture throughout the Republican period. However, this observation is questioned in Eugenia Lean’s work. In her study of the sentiment-centered and sensation-creating case of the 1935 killing of a warlord by the woman Shi Jianqiao, Lean employs as her theme the role of public passions in creating urban publics and in demarcating the boundaries among ethical, judicial, and political power in the building of modern China.\(^{53}\) Lean demonstrates that the sensationalism of the mass media in the 1930s might have helped to mobilize, or hail into being, multiple urban publics that expressed a powerful critique of an actively centralizing state, although this force remained vulnerable to manipulation by higher authorities. Instead of welcoming state intervention, intellectual commentators articulated critical views and asserted their own political agendas and institutional influence. In other words, for Lean, social reformers were not in an alliance with the state; they were critical of state intervention.

This dissertation argues that the various urban publics, including intellectuals, activists, professionals, writers and students, both allied with the state—intentionally or not—and were critical of state intervention. The urban publics’ relations with the state as revealed in their responses to the GMD’s heroic discourse of the soldier figure were more ambiguous. After the Anti-Japanese war broke out, urban intellectuals, activists and professionals actively participated in the war service, reporting the war, supporting the soldiers, and writing books to publicize their experiences in performing army service. Literary writers wrote fiction and battlefield reportage (zhandi baogao wenxue) to reveal

the brutality of the war and search for solutions for the national salvation. The students answered Jiang’s military mobilization by actively joining the Youth Army (Qingnianjun).\textsuperscript{54} Their activities all supported the national resistance and national campaigns launched by the GMD state of serving the soldiers and reforming the army. Since the process of nation-building became entwined with the process of state-building in China under Nationalist rule, their participation in supporting the army and national salvation represented their efforts in state building.

Although these urban publics did not resist or even welcomed the state’s effort at penetrating its influence into society and militarizing it, they still managed to maintain some level of independence by complicating or de-idealizing the political discourse of the soldier figure in many ways. The intellectuals and professionals echoed the GMD’s discourse about the soldier in the sense that they highlighted and praised the soldiers’ bravery in their war reports. Many educated youths, especially students, actively joined the army upon Jiang’s call in the last two years of the Anti-Japanese War. However, they challenged the state discourse by describing the soldiers as vulnerable, poorly educated, eager for emotional support and vocational training, motivated to fight by personal pursuits, or active in practicing self-government. In doing so, they not only criticized the maladministration of the GMD government in organizing soldier relief work and the corruption in the GMD army, but also asserted their political influence as social mobilizer, social critic, army educator, and democracy promoter.

\textsuperscript{54}The Youth Army is used in this dissertation as an abbreviation of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army (Zhishi qingnian yuanzhengjun).
Treating state building as a process involving participation from multiple forces will also show its gendered aspect. For instance, in this dissertation I demonstrate that the political culture surrounding the construction of the soldier figure as well as the impact of war on people were highly gendered. Many scholars have adopted gender as a category of analysis in their studies on state-building and state-society relations in Republican China. For example, Lean demonstrates that the assassinator Shi Jianqiao’s gender was crucial in engendering public sympathy that generated the new conceptualizations of publics. Shi’s filial heroism “effectively enacted the moral virtues of the new Chinese nation,” and her ardent broadcast through the mass media “mobilized, as well as symbolized, the collective sympathies of the authority of an emerging public.” At the same time, left-leaning writers and judicial reformists, who became uncomfortable with the threat posed to their rationality by the rising mass public, “denigrated the collective emotionalism as foolhardy and feminine.”

This dissertation argues that the political culture related to the construction of the soldier and the debates about how to build and support the army in the Republican era were gendered in several ways. The GMD state claimed in its first compulsory conscription law issued in 1933 that military service was the duty of only male citizens; in the middle of the Anti-Japanese War it stipulated that women too had military duty but were only allowed to perform non-combat tasks. Although female intellectuals and activists in the GMD areas did not challenge the GMD’s stipulation, they asserted their political influence by describing the soldiers as vulnerable and affectionate persons who

---

55 Lean, Public Passions, 13.
56 Ibid.
needed care from the larger social masses even including children. The writer Xie Bingying (1906-2000), who claimed herself to be a woman soldier, did not depict the soldier as vulnerable to war brutality as the male writers Xiao Jun (1907-1988) and Qiu Dongping (1910-1941) did. Instead, she portrayed herself as a brave rebel who opposed traditional gender roles and struggled for personal independence. In the CCP’s yangge movement, the way that peasants showed their concern for the soldiers was also gendered. In the yangge dramas celebrating the CCP’s value of army-people solidarity, the female peasants provided support to the soldiers by performing housework such as cooking. Gender serves as a useful analytical category in the context of creating soldier images because it shapes the political culture with respect to military service in GMD areas and the mass culture in regard to army-people relations in CCP areas.

**War and Soldiers in Modern Chinese Military History**

This dissertation aims not only to shed light on state building and state-society relations in the period between 1924 and 1945. It also attempts to open up an avenue to Chinese military history by revealing the impact of the war on the society and the popular conceptions of the soldier during the war. The existing literature has tended to neglect or underestimate the role of war in modern China. As David Graff and Robin Higham point out, the English-language literature on Chinese military history, ancient or modern, is extremely limited.\(^5\) Previous studies on soldiers and wars in modern China focus mainly on one or some of the following: officer training, army command, warlord politics, and

military actions, armaments, the careers of individual warlords, and the role of foreign advisers. These studies are written mainly from the political and military perspectives. The popular perceptions of the soldier and the construction of the soldiers by social and cultural forces such as intellectuals, professionals and young students still remain largely unexamined.

There are few books devoted to the study of ordinary soldiers in modern China. Scholarship on Chinese armies and soldiers were mainly dominated by biographies of leading warlords or studies of major warlord factions and their politics. China historians have tended to view the Warlord Period (1916-1928) as the symbol of “the worst aspects of China: lack of concern for the nation, lawlessness, social disorder, corruption, factionalism and lack of any moral concerns.” With this view of warlordism, historians

---


see soldiers as victims of the dark sides of warlordism and representatives of army corruption and social disorder. Diana Lary’s study of Chinese soldiers in warlord armies was the first to focus exclusively on ordinary soldiers between 1911 and 1937. Lary analyzes the background, experiences and lives of soldiers. She argues that the predatory behavior of soldiers grew out of the brutal conditions they faced in service of the warlord.61 Scholars on Jiang Jieshi’s Nationalist state mostly treat soldiers as faceless numbers in the Nationalist army who either fought bravely during the Anti-Japanese War or were the “seeds of destruction” of Nationalist China.62 However, these studies do not examine the ideological and cultural construction of the soldier by the government and other social and cultural forces.

One of the accomplishments of Chinese military history studies in the past two decades is the detailed examination of the effect of military affairs and wars not only on politics but also on broader aspects in modern Chinese society such as industry, culture and social mentalities. For example, in his study of warfare in 1924 between Fengtian and Zhili warlord factions, Arthur Waldron argued that the arms race between them drove China’s industrialization and commercialization.63 Eugene Levich presents the Guangxi warlords during the 1930s as neglected soldier-statesmen and veritable agents of reform,

61 Lary, Warlord Soldiers.
who achieved significant accomplishments in mass education, mobilization of women, road-building, military recruitment, and militia training.\textsuperscript{64} This dissertation will follow this recent scholarly trend by paying attention to the impact of the war on common people including soldiers. It approaches the impact of the war on multiple social and cultural forces from a cultural-political perspective. It is the only study so far that focuses on the multiple meanings of the soldier figure created by different social and cultural forces.

To achieve the analytical goal of using military history to illuminate the processes of state building and explore the dynamics in state-society relations during the period, this dissertation makes extensive use of literary sources on the soldier image to analyze the relations between the intellectuals and the state in modern China. The soldiers in fiction and battlefield reportage were not faceless numbers in history studies. They had personal emotions and needs; they talked and thought; and they experienced psychological transformation before, during and after the combat. The soldiers’ experiences of fighting the war and serving in the Nationalist army depicted in literary works reveal a great deal about the writers’ thinking about the national crisis and solutions as well as their searching for their roles in the relations with the state. The historian Timothy Brook suggests that for soldiers, “wartime suffering means combat injury and death in the first instance but also fear and anxiety, brutalization and

\textsuperscript{64}Eugene Levich, \textit{The Kwangsi Way in Kuomintang China, 1931-1939} (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1993).
dehumanization, and extraction from the routines that constitute normal life.\textsuperscript{65} Literary writings treat soldiers as ordinary human beings and thus provide a vivid description of their fear and anxiety, and therefore they are useful in studying the impact of the war on common people especially the soldiers. The literary creation of soldiers will also reveal the writers’ consciousness of how to build and support the armies, attitudes toward phenomena in the society and in the army, as well as the roles the writers identified for themselves. Therefore, literary sources can show both how intellectuals participated in state building and their relations with the government.

The process of state building involved multiple forces, as I have reiterated in this introduction. This dissertation makes particular efforts to explore these forces by bringing the activities and writings by many historical actors that were not touched by previous studies. Their thought about how to support and serve the soldiers shed light on the relations between urban professionals and the government. For example, the social activist Liu Liangmo and the vocational education expert Yu Zhaoming, as well as the associations they had affiliations with, the Branch of Soldier Service of Chinese YMCA at Shanghai and the Association of Vocational Coordination for the Honorable Veterans, were not mentioned in previous studies. When the soldier images described in Liu’s and Yu’s writings were understood in light of the heroic discourse of the soldier figure deliberately constructed by Jiang and the GMD state, such a comparison shows the relations of these professionals with the state. Another important example is the writings

of educated youths in the Youth Army, which have not been analyzed in Chinese military studies before. The students cooperated with the GMD government’s state-building efforts by joining the army upon Jiang’s call in 1944. However, the student soldiers’ experiences as described in their writings reveal that they stressed the principles of self-government and democracy in building the army.

State-Building Efforts of the Chinese Communists

This dissertation will also contribute to the scholarship on the Chinese Communist revolution by analyzing the role of social emotion in state building. Existing studies examine the CCP’s wartime success in military mobilization using a paradigm of double appeals—national resistance and socioeconomic and political reforms. This framework is based on the presumption of rationality in decision-making and behaviors on the part of the CCP and on the part of the peasants. The political role of emotion has recently attracted the attention of scholars on state building and the Chinese Communist revolution. Experts on the May Fourth movement and Communism discuss how various kinds of emotions directed toward different objects—such as love for China, hatred for the status quo, the anger with exploitation, dedication for revolutionary cause, passion for political ideology—accompanied and affected radical intellectuals’ political action. As

---


the historian Hung-Yok Ip comments, the choice of radical politics is always imbued with emotion. Ip’s study on Chinese intellectuals defines emotion as “a variety of feelings that accompany the individual’s intellectual activities, behaviors and actions.” Ip shows that Communist intellectuals embraced the ideological imperative of anti-elitism by humiliating themselves as being in need of advice from the masses, but ironically intellectuals also benefited from this self-humiliation: they ennobled themselves by expressing their willingness to sacrifice for and their loyalty to the revolution. Ip suggests that the CCP made use of revolutionary intellectuals’ self-construction as heroic and sophisticated figures to bolster its legitimacy.

Ip’s study mainly examines the self-construction of the Communist intellectuals. How the CCP mobilized emotion for its political goals still remains largely unaddressed. The historian Elizabeth Perry is one of the few scholars who brings the CCP’s mobilization of emotion into focus. Her article “Moving the Masses: Emotion Work in the Chinese Revolution” draws attention to the largely neglected feature of the revolutionary process: the mass mobilization of emotions. Perry argues that building upon pre-existing traditions of popular protest and political culture, the Communists systematized emotion work as part of a conscious strategy of psychological engineering. Chinese scholar Yu Liu picks up this theme in a recent article “Maoist Discourse and the Mobilization of Emotions in Revolutionary China.” Liu examines how

---

Maoist discourse engineered revolutionary emotions as a method of political mobilization. Liu identifies three themes of the Maoist discourse, each of which aimed at provoking one type of emotion: the theme of victimization, which mobilized indignation in struggle campaigns; the theme of redemption, which generated guilt in thought reform campaigns; and the theme of emancipation, which raised euphoria in social transformation campaigns. Liu also points out the techniques of producing these emotions, which were propagation, personalization, magnification and moralization.  

Lean’s study of the political, cultural and legislative developments surrounding the Shi Jianqiao assassination case also analyzes the function of popular sympathy in state building, although her study deals with the GMD state. Lean demonstrates that overwhelming public sympathy, which was engendered in and empowered by the mass media, may be mobilized into a force of multiple urban publics that could threaten moral authority of the cultural elite and influence the state’s tactics in legitimating its power. She suggests that multiple urban publics who publicized their passion in urban media could function as a potential of civil society in 1930s China by forcing the Nationalist government to respond to popular sympathy. In other words, public emotion that was engendered in urban media empowered multiple publics. Emotion was defined in her research first as sympathy that urban publics felt toward the woman who assassinated a warlord, and second as filial piety, individual-based social emotion between a

---

72 Lean, *Public Passions*. 

30
son/daughter and a parent, which was a politically, social and culturally sanctioned morality and emotion.

Stimulated by these studies, my research on the construction of the soldier figure in mass culture in wartime Yan’an will examine the emotional dimensions of mass mobilization as a key ingredient in the CCP’s success in building the state and forging social integration at its revolutionary base. By defining the soldier figure along the line of the emotional bond with the peasants, the CCP tried to build the bond between soldiers and peasants as a legitimate category of social relations and emotion. The CCP tried to build the group-based emotions between soldiers and peasants as a politically and culturally sanctioned social emotion. The CCP’s strategy of state building by mobilizing and engineering social emotions distinguished it from the GMD’s approach of elevating the soldier’s status as model citizens to be emulated by the public. The forging of this social emotion was an indispensable strategy for the CCP’s effort to justify its legitimacy and manage closer social integration in its wartime revolutionary base.

**Chapters and Sources**

This dissertation is organized into six thematic chapters. This organizational structure is based on the theme of the research—multiple meanings of the soldier figure assigned by diverse forces as well as their intentions behind these meanings. This structure will help reinforce my thesis that the soldier figure served as a medium of articulation in which different political, social and cultural forces in modern China argued
for their political influence and asserted their visions of state building and state-society relations.

The first two chapters examine the heroic discourse of the soldier figure constructed in Jiang Jieshi’s speeches on civic education at Whampoa (Chapter 1) in the first few years after the establishment of Whampoa in 1924, and in the GMD’s military laws and political propaganda in the 1930s and the 1940s (Chapter 2). These efforts by the GMD at state building all aimed to train the soldier into becoming the model of a politicized, disciplined, militarized and morally cultivated citizen who was obedient to Jiang’s leadership and submissive to the Three Principles of the People. Whampoa cadets who cultivated a code of ethics were constructed as model soldiers to be emulated by national armies. The GMD’s political discourse of the soldier figure glorified the heroic aspects surrounding the soldier figure, such as bravery, military discipline, emotional suppression, loyalties to orders and leaders (especially Jiang), and the sacrifice in combat. These two chapters conclude with a brief discussion of the meanings that Whampoa cadets, regional warlords, common soldiers and local baojia leaders gave to the soldier ideal advocated by Jiang and the GMD government. The different meanings given by these forces reveal the tensions that existed within the GMD army and between the GMD state and local society.

The discussion on the GMD’s state-building efforts draws sources primarily from Jiang’s speeches and lectures delivered to Whampoa cadets, the conscription laws, military edicts, documents by GMD political and military authorities, literacy textbooks for normal soldiers as well as the New Life Movement propaganda works. These sources
help explore the political discourse of the soldier figure, the intentions of Jiang and the Nationalist government in forging this discourse, and the techniques they employed in justifying this discourse. The memoirs of Whampoa graduates analyzed in Chapter 1 not only confirm Jiang’s intentions and techniques of politicizing and disciplining cadets; they also reveal that Jiang’s state-building goal of extending its soldier ideal to the army and society met resistance from Whampoa cadets, civilian society and regional warlords.

Chinese secondary scholarship on soldiers’ treatment, memoirs of Nationalist authorities, archives of the Nationalist government, and English secondary scholarship on the actual implementation of the compulsory conscription system will be analyzed in Chapter 2. These sources will show that despite the GMD’s efforts at elevating the soldier’s status as model citizen and epitome of morality in the 1930s and the 1940s, the social masses still associated being a soldier with misery and did not embrace the heroic aura surrounding the soldier figure. The GMD’s state-building effort of producing politicized, disciplined, militarized and morally cultivated citizenry by constructing the soldier as model citizen and epitome of morality was resisted by common masses and regional warlords and even confronted by some Whampoa cadets.

Chapter 3, 4 and 5 will examine the construction of the soldier figure by different urban publics including intellectuals and professionals, writers with direct army experiences, and young students during the Japanese occupation of the northeastern parts of China in the 1930s and during the Anti-Japanese War between 1937 and 1945. They all actively participated in state building and asserted their political influence in their participation. The ways they constructed the soldier figure were shaped by their agendas
and revealed the ambiguous alliance between them and the GMD government. Chapter 3 shows that after the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937, urban intellectuals and professionals supported the army and succored wounded and disabled soldiers. In their participation, they asserted their role as social mobilizer and army educator. They showed their respect for the soldiers’ bravery, but they also complicated the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal by stressing soldiers’ suffering, emotional need and poor education. Chapter 4 discusses Xiao Jun’s 1935 fictional *Bayuede xiangcun* (Village in August), and Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportage written in the first two years of the Anti-Japanese War. It shows how the writers Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping performed their roles as social critics by revealing the dark sides of the society and the army and envisioning the basis for national salvation and the creation of a strong army. The construction of the soldier figure was also gendered in the literary writings. Although Xiao and Qiu questioned the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal and highlighted the vulnerability of soldiers, the woman writer Xie Bingying portrayed a brave and strong image of herself as a woman soldier. Stressing her bravery fit Xie’s goals of breaking the confinement of traditional gender roles and struggling for independence life as well as asserting women’s political influence. Chapter 5 shows that educated youths, especially young students, actively participated in state building by joining the army in the later years of the Anti-Japanese War. They advocated the importance of practicing self-government and democracy as the way of building the army. Newspaper reports and literary writings in the genres of autobiography, fiction and reportage as well as the writings by the student soldiers constitute the largest body of primary sources in these three chapters.
Chapter 6 will show that, during the Anti-Japanese War, the CCP employed the state-building strategy of transforming the attitudes and emotions of the soldiers and intellectuals toward the peasants. They constructed the soldier figure within the framework of army-people solidarity, and the CCP’s cultural workers celebrated the emotional bond between soldiers and peasants in *yangge* dramas.\(^{73}\) The *yangge* is treated as a representative genre of Communist mass culture because it was officially developed into a mass movement in 1943. Chapter 6 is based on the following Chinese and English primary sources: party policies on how to direct and facilitate the cultural activities in Yan’an, party and army leaders’ conference talks and work reports which summarize the popularity of cultural activities among soldiers and peasants, biographies and memoirs of political, military and cultural figures who lived in Yan’an during the wartime, selections of literary and artistic productions, and Western observers’ first-hand account of the social lives in Yan’an. The insiders’ and outsiders’ views of the social life and popular culture in Yan’an will work together to decode the construction of the soldier figure. The *yangge* dramas that are closely examined in this chapter are drawn from the volume on the *yangge* which is part of Yan’an wenyi congshu (Series of Yan’an Literatures and Arts). This volume contains the largest selection of the *yangge* plays so far available. The 28 *yangge* plays selected in this volume are those that were frequently performed and enjoyed wide popularity in wartime Yan’an.

\(^{73}\)The *yangge* has been closely examined by David Holm’s study *Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China*. Holm shows how the *yangge* underwent dramatic political transformations in the hands of the Communist propagandists in their attempt to realize the Maoist goal of facing the masses. See David Holm, *Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). What is absent in Holm’s work is a systematic analysis of the *yangge* themes. This present dissertation will distill a crucial topic out of the wide array of plays discussed in Holm’s study—the image of soldier heroes and the army-people relationship.
The images of the soldier figure examined in this dissertation mainly come from the conscription laws, political propaganda, literacy textbooks for soldiers, Jiang’s lectures and speeches, guidance and theoretical works on soldier service written by urban professionals, memoirs, autobiographies, fictions and reportages written by army-affiliated writers, as well as the yangge dramas in Yan’an. Except the military edicts, political propaganda and Jiang’s speeches, this dissertation selects a few cultural genres and a few well-known literary texts to demonstrate the ubiquity of the meanings of the soldier figure to urban publics; it does not aim at a comprehensive coverage of the soldier figure created in any cultural genre in modern China. This dissertation aims for a deeper understanding of the complex images of the soldier figure by reading these primary sources of diverse forms against each other. This technique supports the analytical goal of exploring the state-building intentions of different forces in constructing soldier images.

Although different genres of historical and literary sources examined in this dissertation are useful in revealing the political culture around the construction of the soldier figure, some of the genres should be treated carefully. One such example is the memoirs of Whampoa graduates, which were written several decades after their graduation from Whampoa and selectively published in 2010. This present dissertation employs these memoirs not as the backbone of the sources to examine the construction of the soldier images at the Whampoa Military Academy. Instead, it uses these memoirs mainly to confirm soldier ideals advocated by Jiang Jieshi.

Another example of sources that need to be read carefully is autobiography, a historically situated practice of self-representation. Chapter Four of this dissertation
selects Xie Bingying’s autobiographies, such as *Yige nübingde zizhuan* (The autobiography of a female soldier, 1936), to discuss the construction of the soldier figure by a female writer and soldier. Jing Wang has remarked that autobiography was “dismissed as mere personal accounts unworthy of critical attention” and has been neglected as an independent category in Chinese literary criticism. Nonetheless, this dissertation contends that Xie’s autobiography is helpful in revealing the construction of the soldier figure because it “places the writer at the center and requires the readers to see her life and her person the way that she designs them.” This dissertation does not aim to seek historical facts about Xie’s army life from her autobiography, but tries to explore her personal and subjective world as a female soldier.

Since this dissertation chooses to stress thematic patterns across genres, it does not aim to thoroughly historicize the transformation of construction of the soldier figure through different periods. The framework that guides this dissertation is that resulting from the multiple meanings of the soldier figure in modern China rather than the historical transformation of the soldier figure. This framework attempts to demonstrate

---

74 Wang, *When “I” was Born*, 4.
75 Ibid., 8.
76 Another category of sources that are potentially useful for this dissertation are the handwritten diaries of Jiang Jieshi, presently housed at the Hoover Institution. The diaries of Jiang currently available cover the period from 1917 when Jiang was rising to power to 1945 when China won the Anti-Japanese War. This dissertation does not use these copies of Jiang’s diaries for several reasons. Substantial portions of these documents are water damaged, stuck together, or missing entirely, reflecting the fragility and poor condition of the originals. In addition, Jiang’s family members chose to keep some passages with Jiang’s personal commentary private. For these reasons as well as due to limited time and space, Jiang’s diaries were not consulted in researching this dissertation.
that the discourses of the soldier figure constructed by social and cultural forces coexisted but competed with the GMD’s political discourse.

The multiple meanings of the soldier figure constructed by the GMD and CCP governments in Nanjing and Yan’an as well as different groups of political, social and cultural forces, which co-existed and competed with each other, serve as the lens through which a deeper and more nuanced understanding of various trajectories of state-society relations in Republican China can be gained. The GMD’s state penetration compromised with instead of eliminating the growing political participation of multiple forces; at the same time, the CCP managed wider social mobilization and closer social integration by remolding the emotions of intellectuals, soldiers and peasants.
Chapter 1

Training Model Soldiers through Civic Education at the Whampoa Military Academy

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Whampoa Military Academy, a party institution established in 1924 and commanded by Jiang Jieshi to train model soldiers for what became the National Revolutionary Army. It explores how civic education at Whampoa constructed the soldier figure to meet the GMD’s state-building goals. This initiative taught the cadets a code of ethics that featured obedience to the Three Principles of the People, submission to discipline and regulation over their personal behavior and emotional expression, and subordination to the hierarchical bonding in the army with Jiang as its indisputable leader. This code of ethics was designed with the aim of forming the cadets into model soldiers. This chapter argues that training model soldiers for the national army through civic education advanced Jiang’s visions of politicizing, militarizing and disciplining the citizenry and of promoting his agenda of extending this citizen-soldier ideal to the national army. However, the model-soldier ideal constructed by Jiang met resistance from provincial warlords, the public and even from Whampoa cadets.
The Whampoa Military Academy (Huangpu junxiao)\(^1\) was founded by the GMD in 1924 with the assistance of the Soviet Union and was led by Jiang Jieshi as the commandant and Liao Zhongkai (1877-1925) as the party representative. The inauguration took place offshore from the Whampoa docks some fifteen miles downriver from Guangzhou. In the same year, the Training Regiment of Whampoa Military Academy (Huangpu junxiao jiaodaotuan), with the short name of Academy Army (xiaojun), was founded. In 1925, the GMD announced the organization of the National Revolutionary Army, with Whampoa’s training regiments joining it to form its first division.\(^2\) In response to the April 12 Incident of 1927 when Jiang and conservative factions within the GMD violently suppressed Chinese Communist Party and other leftwing organizations, in 1928 the Whampoa Military Academy was renamed the Central Army Officer Academy (Zhongyang lujun junguan xuehiao). The Academy relocated to Nanjing in 1929 and then to Chengdu after the Anti-Japanese War broke out in 1937. It returned to Nanjing in 1946, and three years later moved to Taiwan along with the Nationalist government.\(^3\) Between 1924 and 1949, the Academy recruited twenty-three regular classes, set up over ten branch campuses, launched numerous short-term

\(^1\)Whampoa recruited female cadets in 1926 for the first time in Chinese history. But the number of woman cadets was very small; for this reason, this chapter does not discuss the discourse covering female cadets. Chapter 4 will examine Whampoa’s expectations for female cadets and how the female cadet Xie Bingying represented her image in her autobiographies.


\(^3\)The Academy settled in Kaohsiung after it moved to Taiwan.
training programs for contemporary army officers, and cultivated over 40,000 military elites for the Nationalist army.⁴

The GMD established the Whampoa Military Academy in 1924 as the foundation of the National Revolutionary Army, which became the military arm of the GMD state during its rule in mainland China between 1927 and 1949. After being sent to Moscow by Sun Yat-sen to conduct a preliminary research on the Soviet military system for four months in 1924, Jiang Jieshi became the first commandant of Whampoa and remained in this position until 1947. Whampoa’s military curriculum was “set up under the guidance of the Soviet advisory group, utilizing the latest military theories and techniques, albeit with a distinct Soviet flavor.”⁵ What made Whampoa fundamentally different from other military schools was that from the very beginning, it accepted the Russian model of putting political control at the center by emphasizing political training and ideological education in order to train an officer corps loyal to the GMD. Topics covered in Whampoa’s political curriculum mainly included the Three Principles of the People (Sanmin zhuyi) and China’s revolutionary history. Because of Whampoa’s significant role in the establishment of the GMD’s military forces, this dissertation suggests a reperiodization of Jiang Jieshi’s GMD government by treating the 1924 establishment of Whampoa as its early state-building effort.

This chapter mainly examines Jiang’s speeches and lectures to Whampoa cadets in the early years after the establishment of Whampoa, as well as Jiang’s efforts to build

⁴Wen Wen, preface to Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanke xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges for military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 1.
branch campuses of Whampoa during the Anti-Japanese War. This time framework emphasizes the thesis that the GMD strengthened its state-building efforts after the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War. It also helps explain the multiple functions of Whampoa for Jiang and regional warlords. Therefore, it supports this dissertation’s treatment of state building not only as intertwined with nation building but also as the process for consolidating Jiang’s own authority. The memoirs of Whampoa graduates concerning their lives and training at Whampoa, which were written in the 1960s, confirm Jiang’s intentions behind his commandership and reveal complex tension between Jiang and regional warlords and among Whampoa cadets.

The Whampoa Academy serves as an ideal case study to explore the construction of the soldier figure in modern Chinese state building. Its intended special significance by the GMD leadership resulted in its having a substantial impact in Chinese military modernization. It produced many important commanders who fought in many of China’s conflicts in the first half of the 20th century, notably the Northern Expedition (1926-1928), Nationalist-Communist civil wars (1927-1937), and the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945). The Whampoa Military Academy was not simply a military institution with a singular mission to train military cadets who could become model soldiers and potential Nationalist army officers. It also had an inherently political color in its nature. Jiang, as the commandant of the Academy, valued its significance as a political tool not only to win the hearts and minds of national military officers but also to centralize China’s local military forces under his own command.
Regulating the Mind

From the late Qing onward, dominant perceptions of how to construct a state or conduct revolution viewed the military as “the midwife of a modern and cohesive China.” However, as the historian Colin Green comments, the warlord era in the late 1910s and early 1920s had “shattered the Chinese people’s faith in the military as a positive institution,” and soldiers were regarded “as little better than bandits.” Restoring the tarnished image of the military and soldiers was considered an utmost priority by the Nationalists who sought national unity and revival. In 1921, after his talks with the representative of the Comintern, Henk Sneevliet (1883-1942), Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) realized that it was not the ignorance of common soldiers but the lack of Nationalist awareness and political beliefs among military officers that doomed any effort toward a real revolutionary army to failure. Sun believed that the building of a party army should begin with training model soldiers and potential cadres for the revolutionary force. Under the policy of alliance with the Soviet Union and the CCP (lian E rong Gong), Sun intended to refer to the experiences of the Red Army of Soviet Union and build an army subject to strict political control by the party. In 1924, Sun decided to found the Whampoa Military Academy, seeking to establish a reliable and well-trained armed force to support his nationalist revolution.

---

In 1924, Sun elaborated the mission of the Academy and his expectations of the cadets in the “Diyiqi zhaosheng jianzhang” (General regulations on the first class enrollment):

The revolutionary army consists of soldiers who are dedicated to saving the nation and its people. The cadets in the Whampoa Military Academy would be the backbone of this army... So our students should not be afraid of death; instead, they should follow the path of revolutionary pioneers. Our first class of five hundred cadets is expected to be the foundation for an ideal revolutionary army. With this ideal army, our revolution can succeed and China can be saved.10

His comments on the mission of the cadets revealed that when the Academy was founded in 1924, it was to be devoted to training model soldiers for the national military forces to achieve national unification and salvation. This principle was also revealed in the first item in the “Lujun junguan xueyuan kaoxuan xuesheng jianzhang” (Memorandum on testing and selecting cadets for the army officer school) issued by the GMD on March 2, 1924:

Aiming to improve the national army, our Academy provides ambitious and enthusiastic young people in our nation an opportunity to study military arts. The teaching of the Three Principles of the People at our academy will cultivate strong political beliefs among the cadets and enable them to assume the offices of lower-level cadres in the army.11

The registration materials cited here showed that Whampoa—the institution established by the GMD to build a unified and powerful nation—aimed from the very beginning to produce well-trained, dedicated, and politically indoctrinated soldiers and to

extend these ideals to the national army and citizens. This point is reflected in Green’s argument, “far from training the cadets to be nothing more than obedient servants of the Guomindang, Whampoa was from the beginning intent on preparing them to assume what it believed to be the soldier’s proper role in a modern society—that of champion and moral exemplar for all citizens in the struggle to build a rich and powerful nation.”

The Academy was built to serve, in effect, as a laboratory or a crucible for casting a new discourse on the citizen ideal that stressed political indoctrination, military discipline and moral cultivation.

With the goal set to train model soldiers and potential cadres for the Nationalist army, the Academy implemented the strategy of civic education in the military training. In Green’s words, “Chiang set out to rehabilitate the military profession by means of a spiritual training program that emphasized a strict code of ethics.” The emphasis on civic education differentiated Whampoa from the curriculums of earlier military academies. The sense of ethics “distinguished the revolutionary soldiers from the warlord rabble in the eyes of a skeptical public and restored popular trust in the military.”

---

12 Green, “Turning Bad Iron into Polished Steel,” 155.
13 Ibid. As John K. Fairbank notes, “politically indoctrinated armies were a new thing in modern China.” See John K. Fairbank, The United States and China (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 292.
14 Nearly every province established military academies from the 1880s onward. For example, the Baoding Army Officer Academy (Baoding lujun junguan xuexiao) was a military academy based in Baoding, China. It was initiated by Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) in 1902 to train officers for his New Army (Xinjun)—the modernized Qing armies founded in 1895. It closed in 1923. The Yunnan Martial School (Yunnan jiangwutang) was founded in 1909 by the late Qing (1644-1911) government to train the New Army. After the 1911 Revolution, it became a military academy controlled by the Yunnan warlord Long Yun (1884-1962). After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, it became the Fifth Branch Campus of the Central Army Officer Academy in 1938. It closed in 1945.
15 Green, “Turning Bad Iron into Polished Steel,” 155.
The importance of civic education was repeatedly emphasized in the speeches and lectures by political authorities. Luo Derong (1903-1947), a graduate of the third class of the Academy who became a major general in the Nationalist army in 1945, wrote in the preface to his book *Xinbian junren jingshen jiaoyu* (New edition of civic education for soldiers) in 1932, “Do you deserve the title as a soldier only by wearing military uniform and carrying a weapon? Without a military spirit, you cannot be considered as a soldier, especially a revolutionary soldier.” Civic education was considered a training requirement in order to convert the previously undisciplined cadets into highly politicized and well-disciplined soldiers to serve as a model for the national army.

As the commandant of Whampoa, Jiang exerted strong influence over civic education by constantly lecturing and admonishing the academy cadets. Jiang justified the necessity of civic education by appropriating the concepts in traditional military works. He reinterpreted the principle of five components in warfare proposed in *Sunzi bingfa* (Master Sun’s art of war) written by Sun Wu during the Warring States Period (403-221 BCE), to assert the significance of political discipline and ideological indoctrination. The five components of war in *Sunzi bingfa* were namely *dao* (moral law, the masses’ absolute trust in the ruler), *tian* (heaven, good timing), *di* (earth, geographical advantages), *jiang* (the commander, key leadership qualities of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage and strictness), *fa* (method and discipline, organization and

---

management of personnel and supplies).\textsuperscript{17} Jiang equated the art of \textquotedblright dao\textquotedblright{} with the Three Principles of the People.\textsuperscript{18} In Jiang’s eyes, sharing the same political belief ensured the absolute submission of the soldiers to his leadership within the Academy and the army by extension. He strongly held to the notion that a model soldier for the national army should be reformed by arming his mind with the doctrine of the Three Principles of the People.

The memoirs of Whampoa graduates show that the Academy stressed the importance of ideological indoctrination and exerted its ideological control over the cadets by regulating the cadets’ personal life. Shen Zhenchuan,\textsuperscript{19} a graduate of the eighth class of the Academy (1930-1933), recalled in July 1964 that the Academy exerted its strict control over students’ speeches and behaviors, checking students’ letters and diaries, examining students’ extracurricular readings and eavesdropping on students’ dialogues. After the entry into the school, there were screening tests in the first three months and again after the first year. The standards for the tests were not military learning or physique; rather, they assessed whether there were any discernible associations with Communists and any mentality sympathetic or supportive of the Communist movement. Cadets who contacted relatives and friends in the Communist areas, who had correspondence with progressives, who showed discontent with the Nationalist officers,

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Sun Zi, \textit{Sunzi bingfa} (The art of war), trans. Lionel Giles (El Paso, Texas: El Paso Norte Press, 2005), 33.}
\footnote{Jiang Jieshi, “Sunzi bingfa yu gudai zuozhan yuanze yiji jinri zhanzheng yishuhuade yi yi zhi chanming” (An illustration of \textit{Sunzi bingfa}, traditional warfare strategies and the artistic principles of modern warfare) [1925], in \textit{Xi an zongtong Jianggong sixiang yanlun zongji} (Comprehensive collections of the thoughts and speeches by deceased President Jiang), Vol. 25, ed. Qin Xiaoyi (Taipei: Zhongyang dangshi weiyuanhui, 1984), 273.}
\footnote{Shen Zhenchuan’s birth and death years are unclear.}
\end{footnotes}
even those who covered their books with red paper, were all likely to fail the screening tests and receive punishments such as dismissal (tuixue), repeating the year’s work (liuji), writing letters of confession (huiguoshu) and physical confinement (jinbi). 20 The Whampoa graduate’s memoir confirms that the strong political belief in the Three Principles of the People was a key characteristic in Jiang’s citizenship ideal and that was made clear in the model soldiers’ training at Whampoa.

**Disciplining Personal Behavior and Emotional Expression**

Civic education at Whampoa tried not only to cultivate a strong political belief in the minds of the cadets but also to dominate the cadets’ understandings of their personal behavior 21 and physical sacrifice. In the speech “Keku nailao yu kangkai xisheng zhi biyao” (Necessity of diligence, endurance and heroic sacrifice) delivered to Whampoa cadets in 1924, Jiang claimed that, “After you enter the military academy, your bodies belong to the party state, and so do your lives.”22 The rules of Whampoa and the speeches by Jiang show that Jiang tried to exert control over the cadets’ personal behavior in daily routine.

---

20Shen Zhenchuan, “Wuhan fenxiao dibaqi xuesheng kangri shiwei shijian qianhou” (A demonstration against the Japanese by the cadets in the eighth class of the Wuhan Branch Campus of the Central Army Officer Academy) [1964], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanye xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 60.

21Personal behavior of Whampoa cadets mainly refers to the daily routine at Whampoa, such as eating and hygiene.

22Jiang Jieshi, “Keku nailao yu kangkai xisheng zhi biyao” (Necessity of diligence, endurance and heroic sacrifice) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji xuanji (Selections from the collection of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu (n. l.: Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu, 1938), 35.
The Whampoa Academy recruited 500 to 700 cadets for each class, and drew its student pool from a variety of sources that included students, workers and peasants, all of whom had widely differing educational backgrounds. According to the “Huangpu junxiao diyiqi xueyuan ruxue beijing qingkuang yilanbiao” (Survey table of the background of the cadets enrolled in the first class of the Whampoa Military Academy),\(^\text{23}\) the cadets pursued a variety of professions before they entered Whampoa. Many of the cadets had work experience before they joined Whampoa. For example, 39 of the 135 cadets in one of the six units in the first class had received military education, or had served as soldiers or lower-level officers in local warlord armies or militias. Others had extremely diverse civilian educations including law, drama, art and foreign language. Still others had equally varied previous professional experience such as sports instructors, elementary school teachers, editors, and civil servants.\(^\text{24}\)

To discipline these cadets with such diverse work experiences and educational backgrounds, between 1924 and 1927 Whampoa issued a series of statutes to regulate their personal behavior. Examples of such statutes were the “Gemingjun xingshi tiaoli” (Penal clause in the revolutionary army), the “Xiao zhixingguan qinwu guize” (Regulation on the service of the duty soldier), and the “Chishou lijie ling” (Order of following military rituals), and the “Chongshen jingli ling” (A second order on the salute), etc.\(^\text{25}\) All of these statutes were designed for an all-round regulation over different aspects

\(^\text{23}\)Chen Yuhuan, *Huangpu junxiao diyiqisheng yanjiu* (Studies on the cadets in the first class of the Whampoa Military Academy) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2007), 5-71.

\(^\text{24}\)Ibid., 141.

\(^\text{25}\)Cheng Ling and Liu Mengxin, “1924-1927 nian Huangpu junxiao jiaoyude xiandaixing tezheng” (The characteristics of modernity in the education at the Whampoa Military Academy between 1924
of the cadets’ everyday life, including eating, dress, hygiene and rituals. The cadets’ personal behavior in their daily routines was subject to the control of the Academy.

In his speech delivered to Whampoa cadets on May 24, 1924, “Zhuzhong weisheng yu jingshen dikang de daoli” (The significance of sanitation and spiritual resistance), Jiang justified the Academy’s regulation of the cadets’ personal behavior by claiming that in following the Academy’s rules on personal life, the cadets were protecting not only their own health but also that of their fellow soldiers at Whampoa. Maintaining a healthy body by following the Academy’s regulations was considered as important as taking the initiative in defending against the enemy. The cadets’ ability to perform their daily routines in compliance with these statutes was associated by Jiang with combat readiness. This association justified the Academy’s policy of controlling the cadets’ personal behavior in everyday life. Since the cadet’s body belonged to the party state after he entered into the Academy, he had to accept regulation of his personal behavior including eating, drinking and hygiene. In the same speech, Jiang said, “When you have meals, you should thoroughly clean the dishes and chew the food extremely well. You should also eat food materials coming from both northern and southern regions. When sleeping, you should buckle the button of the shirt when.”

---

26 Jiang Jieshi, “Zhuzhong weisheng yu jingshen dikang de daoli” (The significance of sanitation and spiritual resistance) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji xuanji (Selections from the collection of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu (n. l.: Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu, 1938), 42.

27 Jiang Jieshi, “Qingjie jiancha jiangping” (Speeches and comments on the examination of sanitation) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji diyi ji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 266.

28 Jiang, “Zhuzhong weisheng yu jingshen dikang de daoli” [1924], 43.
daily routine of sanitary tasks, and pointed out the individual companies which had dirty rooms. For Jiang, classroom teaching was not enough for successful training of a model soldier; the soldier should cultivate his military spirits bit by bit in everyday life.²⁹

The importance of Whampoa’s military discipline in controlling the cadets’ personal behavior and daily life was confirmed in the 1982 memoir of Wang Zhuocho (1911-2002), a graduate of the tenth class of Whampoa (1933-1936). He recalled that the training at Whampoa was very strict and there were uniform rules regulating clothing, dining, housing, transportation, and even the proper way of folding the laundry, organizing books, and walking.”³⁰ The Academy transformed the cadets into model soldiers by exerting strict regulation over every aspect of the cadets’ daily life. The regulation of daily routine strengthened the Academy’s surveillance of the cadets’ bodies and cultivated a strong sense of discipline into the minds of the cadets.³¹

To justify the Academy’s regulation of the cadets’ personal behavior, Jiang made an appeal out of compassion, stressing that the regulation of personal behavior was the manifestation of the Academy’s care for the cadets and would build positive bonds

²⁹Jiang Jieshi, “Junshi jiaoyu zhi yaozhi yu junji zhi genyuan” (The principles of military education and the sources of military discipline) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji diyij jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 407.
³⁰Wang Zhuocho, “Yi Nanjing zhongyang junxiao” (Remembering the Central Army Officer Academy at Nanjing) [1982], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuankan xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 4.
³¹The historian Seungsook Moon Sebesta, although she studies the militarized modernity in South Korea, demonstrates the significance of daily routine in strengthening the military discipline. Sebesta shows that “The routine aspects of the military subculture indicate that popular acceptance of military service as men’s national duty was not grounded in any genetic inclination of males to violence but stemmed rather from a cultural inclination to obedience that would permit a man’s integration into the highly hierarchical military system.” See Seungsook Moon Sebesta, Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 39.
amongst them. In the speech “Qingjie jiancha jiangping” (Speeches and comments on the examination of sanitation) delivered on May 16, 1924, Jiang spoke to the cadets: “Our officers pay greater attention to your hygiene than your parents did; and this will create an intimate environment within the Academy, which can make you happier even than when you were in your own families.”

Jiang encouraged the cadets to consider the regulation of body and life by the Academy as care they previously received from their parents. He claimed that the examination of personal hygiene would serve as a vehicle through which the closeness within the cadets could be promoted. The Academy’s efforts to manage the cadets’ daily life implied that it attempted to break the cadets’ lingering ties to parental authority and established the Academy and Jiang as the ultimate definer of normative cadet behavior. Being highly disciplined by the state was also a key characteristic in Jiang’s citizenship ideal as was so revealed in Whampoa’s training regimen.

Whampoa’s imperative to discipline the soldiers included not only cultivating the soldiers’ submission to the Academy’s regulation of daily life but also in unifying their understanding and treatment of their bodies. First, Jiang demanded that cadets should have the willpower and moral strength to exert self-control over their bodies. In 1925, when the Academy Army started the Eastern Expedition (dongzheng), the campaign against warlord Chen Jiongming (1878-1933) and his supporters, Jiang admonished his cadets that the revolutionary army should have “ten no-fears” (shi bupa). “The cadets should not be afraid of death, poverty, coldness, pain, heat, hunger, fatigue, distance,

---

32 Jiang, “Qingjie jiancha jiangping” [1924], 266.
weight or danger.”\(^{33}\) The Academy fashioned the soldier figure in terms of the willpower that directed the body to resist physical and environmental challenges and risks. Whampoa’s civic education which advocated the self-control of the soldiers’ bodies revealed Jiang’s highly disciplined citizen ideal.

Second, the Academy celebrated the cult of physical sacrifice among Whampoa cadets. In the speech “Geming junrende renge” (Moral qualities of a revolutionary army soldier) delivered in 1924, Jiang proclaimed: “Our soldiers’ only duty and aim is simply to die. If you cravenly cling to life and are scared of death (tansheng pasi), not only will you lose the qualification for a soldier; you will even lose your moral quality and therefore cannot be counted as a man.”\(^{34}\) Jiang’s speech shows that ever since the establishment of Whampoa in 1924, the courage and willingness to sacrifice the body became a defining virtue not just for a qualified soldier but for every person. The moral quality of a person had become inextricably linked to such traits. Jiang’s claim revealed that in training model soldiers at Whampoa, he was also envisioning a citizen ideal whose body and mind were disciplined by the state.

To promote the spirit of physical sacrifice among Whampoa cadets, Jiang tried to create a heroic outlook on life and death. Jiang said in a speech delivered in 1924, “In a desperate or hopeless situation, you can survive only if you struggle; and if you die, your

\(^{33}\)Jiang Jieshi, “Chongzheng dongjiang xunjie” (Lectures on the second military campaign at East River) [1925], in Huangpu xunlianji diviji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 450.

\(^{34}\)Jiang Jieshi, “Geming junrende renge” (Moral qualities of a revolutionary army soldier) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji diviji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 287.
death in the service of political doctrine will turn out to be an eternal life.”

Leng Xin (1900-1987), a cadet in the first class of the Academy in 1924, recalled that:

Jiang’s teachings always mentioned death, thus forcing our cadets to face it bravely and follow the model of the martyrs. Jiang exalted the meaning of death to a higher level by transforming the gloomy and dark sides of death into a glorious and solemn beauty.

In teaching the cadets the cult of physical sacrifice, Jiang advocated a heroic spirit among the soldiers. The soldier figure in Jiang’s speeches was depicted as that of a warrior; combat and death were idealized and romanticized. As Green suggests in his study of Whampoa, Jiang’s lecture texts often employed phrases “that were popularly associated with heroic tasks and the knight-errant (youxia) spirit.” The singing of certain songs promoted by Jiang was also “…rich with heroic imagery designed to arouse the cadets’ patriotism and their sense of duty.” For the cadets who were trained at Whampoa to become model soldiers and potential army officers for the national army, strengthening the body only found its ultimate meaning in its sacrifice. The heroic willingness to sacrifice one’s life had become a standard by which both the qualification of a soldier and the moral quality of a citizen were measured. In the discourse on the soldier figure constructed in Whampoa’s civic education, the soldier figure became a heroic combat warrior and the brutality of war and death was overshadowed by this romanticized aura.

35Jiang Jieshi, “Xiaozhang diwuci xunci” (The fifth admonition by the commandant) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji diviji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 32.
36Leng Xin, “Huangpu junxiao wushi zhounian jinian ganxiang” (Thoughts on the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Whampoa Military Academy [1974]), in Zhanshi lunji (Collections of the studies on the history of wars), ed. Wei Rulin (Taibei: Huagang chuban youxian gongsi, 1976), 58.
37Green, “Turning Bad Iron into Good Steel,”172.
38Ibid.
Since the heroic spirit to sacrifice one’s body was an ideal for a model soldier, even suicide on the battlefield was sanctioned by Jiang as a way for a soldier to assert and fulfill his heroism and duty. In the speech “Qiangde xingzhi yu zuoyong he junren naqiang zhi mudi” (The nature and functions of the rifle and the purpose of holding the rifle for a soldier) delivered to the Academy cadets on May 25, 1924, Jiang stated that the weapon’s bayonet had a dual purpose: to kill the enemy and as a means of suicide. According to Jiang, “If you are caught by the enemies, it is better to kill yourself than to surrender to the enemies and let them insult the noble bodies of revolutionary soldiers. This is because when you are humiliated by the enemy, so are your nation, your army colleagues and party comrades.” A soldier’s body became a symbolic essence of national sovereignty and honor. The physical sacrifice for the purpose of defending the honor of the nation and the party was a glorious death. Since Jiang treated the soldier as national paragon, Jiang’s expectation for model soldiers discussed in his speeches and lectures also revealed his vision of citizen ideals.

Suicide under desperate situations in combat was thus glorified as the ultimate way to prove a soldier’s heroism and the fulfilling of his duty. Conversely, suicide in a non-combat situation was condemned as a despicable crime. On September 18, 1925, a cadet named Liang Tianli (?-1925) killed himself after he was punished earlier by the Academy by being made to stand at attention (fazhan) for ten minutes. On the same day,

---

39 Jiang Jieshi, “Qiangde xingzhi yu zuoyong he junren naqiang zhi mudi” (The nature and functions of the rifle and the purpose of holding the rifle for a soldier) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji xuanji (Selections from the collection of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu (n. l.: Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu, 1938), 49-50.
40 Liang Tianli was a cadet in the third class of Whampoa Military Academy; his birth and death years are unclear.
Jiang delivered the speech “Zisha shi beiqiede fanzui xingwei” (Suicide is a coward crime) to comment on Liang’s suicide:

Liang’s suicide was purely due to poverty and hardship of his family. The economic oppression he suffered destroyed his confidence to survive as a man and finally led to his suicide. He was punished by being made to stand at attention for ten minutes yesterday because of his mistake. Six cadets in total were punished this way yesterday, but why was it that only he committed suicide? 41

Jiang’s commentary on Liang’s decision to end his life was that it was the unfortunate manifestation of one man’s weakness and vulnerability. 42 He eulogized suicides committed for the sake of national honor, but condemned suicide committed due to the cadet’s inability to handle personal distress. Jiang’s different attitudes toward the two kinds of suicide showed his efforts to assert his authority in regulating the soldiers by dominating their understanding of their bodies and lives. Put plainly, the soldier, to Jiang, was an instrument of war and as such there were both acceptable and unacceptable ways of disposing of that crucial resource. Both the model soldier and the ideal citizen should, in his view, be politicized and disciplined by being made submissive to the state’s domination of their political beliefs, in their daily actions as well as in their understanding and treatment of their bodies.

In making the ideal of a soldier figure into a combat warrior, Jiang was intent not only to control the soldier’s body but to also regulate his emotion. Jiang reminded Whampoa cadets in his speech “Benxiao jiaoyu de fangzhen zhi yan zhi biyao” (Necessity of being strict as an educational principle at this academy) delivered in 1924

41 Jiang Jieshi, “Zisha shi beiqiede fanzui xingwei” (Suicide is a coward crime) [1925], in Huangpu xunlianji diyi ji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy) (n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925]), 469.
42 Ibid.
that “your current status is not that of a gentle and fragile (wenzhi binbin) scholar (shusheng), but that of a ferocious warrior (jiujiu wufu).”

Jiang went on to say that cadets must be able to “bear cruel military training” in order to become such a warrior. This speech proposed two stereotypical male types of the effeminate scholar and the macho soldier, and argued that what differentiated these two groups of men was the toughness to endure strict training. The tenderness of such a gentle and refined scholar was described as a direct contrast to the toughness of a warrior soldier.

Jiang argued for emotional repression as an important quality for a model soldier by condemning crying as a trait of effeminacy. Echoing the view of leaders of other military cultures, crying was deemed a characteristic of incapability of self-control, which deprived a soldier of his manhood. Joshua Goldstein points out that the United States in particular at the time also held strong prejudice against crying within the military ranks. This prejudice was exemplified in observations of related incidents at the military academy of West Point, where a cadet who cried when severely harassed was labeled unsuitable officer material. It was even inferred that those who cried or could not control their emotions were associated with possible homosexuality. Jiang justified his regulation of the soldiers’ emotions by defining crying as a womanly behavior.

---

43 Jiang Jieshi, “Benxiao jiaoyude fangzhen zhi yan zhi biyao” (Necessity of being strict as an educational principle at this academy) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji xuanji (Selections from the collection of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu (n. l.: Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu, 1938), 76.
44 Ibid.
45 Joshua Goldstein, War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 266.
revolutionary party is heroic sacrifice; the soldiers should never emulate the mean behavior of crying commonly seen in women. In that speech, Jiang condemned the behavior of crying by citing the example of a cadet named Cheng Ruji, who was put in confinement (guan jinbi) as a punishment for his attempts to escape from the Academy:

Today Cheng Ruji was confined in a room. I felt that the air was not good inside the room, and I did not want him to get sick. So I thought that as long as he could repent and start anew (huiguozixin) soon, I would release him. However, this morning he cried loudly in the confinement room. This is extremely detestable. The only moments when a man should shed tears out of emotional pain should be when his nation and his family are destroyed, when his parents die, or when colleagues are killed by the enemy. Any other reason does not deserve crying. You only shed tears when you have absolutely extreme disaster; otherwise crying is the meanest and the most dishonorable behavior. Our revolutionary soldiers should be real men (dazhangfu).

The comments on the behavior of crying showed that Jiang was disciplining the soldiers’ emotional expression by limited it only to their nation, parents and colleagues. By requiring the soldiers not to cry for reasons irrelevant to their nation, parents and colleagues, Jiang advocated the moral virtues of patriotic sentiment, filial piety and comradeship as key qualities for a model soldier. In Nationalist discourse, the soldier figure was not only politicized and disciplined but also morally cultivated. Since Jiang considered the killing of army colleagues by the enemies as one of the few sanctioned reasons for a soldier to cry, the Academy advocated fraternity as a definer of the soldier in the emotional dimension.

---

\(^{46}\)Jiang, “Keku nailao yu kangkai xisheng zhi biyao” [1924], 39.
\(^{47}\)The years of Cheng Ruji’s birth and death are unclear.
\(^{48}\)Jiang, “Keku nailao yu kangkai xisheng zhi biyao” [1924], 39.
Forging “Qin, Ai, Jing, Cheng (Intimacy, Fraternity, Dexterity, Sincerity)”

Jiang Jieshi advocated loyalty to fraternity as an important quality that he believed made a model soldier at Whampoa. His advocacy was best reflected in the motto of the Academy, “Qin, Ai, Jing, Cheng (intimacy, fraternity, dexterity, sincerity).” This motto was designed to demand both mutual reliance among fellow soldiers and personal loyalty to Jiang. Jiang stressed the bond between himself and his cadets as the most important type. In the Nationalist discourse on the soldier figure, a model soldier was told to be absolutely loyal to Jiang. Jiang built emotional connections with them to win the soldiers’ loyalties.

Jiang started his political career serving as the commandant of Whampoa. He exerted tight control of the Academy, trying to use Whampoa graduates to control the army, and using the army to reinforce his political rule. To elicit loyalty from Whampoa graduates, Jiang rewarded them by placing them in important positions. By 1937, for example, thirteen cadets out of 706 from the first class of Whampoa had been appointed as commanders of the infantry corps, which accounted for 15% of the commanders in all the eighty-seven infantry corps of the Nationalist Revolutionary Army for that year. By 1938, a total of fifty-five cadets from the first class of the Academy had been appointed commanders of the infantry divisions, accounting for 24.3% of the commanders in all the 226 infantry divisions of the army for that year. As the historian William Kirby reveals, “When Jiang commanded the Whampoa Academy, its staff

---

49 The number of the cadets belonging to the first class of Whampoa is controversial. For this controversy, see Chen, Huangpu junxiao diyi qisheng yanjiu, 2-3. This dissertation adopts Chen’s conclusion of 706.

50 Chen, Huangpu junxiao diyi qisheng yanjiu, 224.
members and graduates who went on to achieve government or military posts counted among his most loyal supporters.”

The faculty and students of the Academy, who maintained strong bonds of loyalty to Jiang, were called the Whampoa Clique (Huangpu xi) who served among Jiang’s strongest group ties.

Not only did Jiang place Whampoa graduates in important political and military positions, he also frequently showed his personal care to individual cadets and built his image as a protector and supporter for his Whampoa students. According to the 1964 memoirs of Zhao Zhen, a graduate of the eighth class (1930-1933) of the Academy, after each class graduated, Jiang convened the cadets, calling their names one by one and selecting some of them for individual dialogues. According to another Whampoa graduate Xie Yingbai’s memoir written in August 1963, when Jiang found out that a student in the eighth class (1930-1933) named Mao Yuli came from his native place and was also a distant relative of his first wife, he immediately appointed him to join his own bodyguard serving in his official residence (gongguan) in Chongqing. Upon the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937, the Academy moved to Chengdu, 500

---

51 William Kirby, Germany and Republican China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 158.
52 Frederic Wakeman, Spymaster: Dai Li and the Chinese Secret Service (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 27.
53 Zhao Zhen’s birth and death years are unclear.
54 Zhao Zhen, “Huiyi Jiang Jieshi dui zhongyang junxiao xueshengde longluo shouduan” (Memories on the techniques employed by Jiang Jieshi to win over the cadets at the Central Army Officer Academy) [1964], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuankan xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 14.
55 Xie Yingbai’s birth and death years are unclear.
56 Mao Yuli’s birth and death years are unclear.
57 Xie Yingbai, “1929 zhi 1933 nian de Nanjing zhongyang junxiao” (The Central Army Officer Academy at Nanjing between 1929 and 1933) [1963], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuankan xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 12.
kilometers away from the wartime Nationalist capital of Chongqing. Nonetheless, Jiang still attended commencements after each class graduated. At every commencement ceremony, each graduate was given a sword. On one side of the sword hilt was written the words “From Commandant Jiang,” and the bottom of the blade was carved with the phrase “We win, or we perish” (chenggong chengren). The sword became a symbol of Whampoa graduates. Treating favorably the cadet who came from Jiang’s native place and giving a special sword carved with his name to each Whampoa graduate showed that Jiang played favoritism to those that had personal connections to him. Since Jiang trained Whampoa cadets to become model soldiers and army officers for the national army, Jiang hoped that the Whampoa cadets could help reinforce the loyalties of the national armies to him.

According to the memoirs of Zhao Zhen, Whampoa carried out the communal dining (gongcan) system in which student representatives and faculty above the rank of major met for dinner every Saturday. During the dinner, after the Academy dean gave a speech, the students took turns telling jokes and stories and singing operas. According to the Whampoa graduate Qi Xiangming’s memoir written in June 1963, on holidays, the Academy often invited Jiang and his wife to have dinner with Whampoa cadets. This communal dining system was designed not only to create the impression of internal

---

59 Ibid.
61 Qi Xiangming’s birth and death years are unclear. Qi studied at Whampoa in 1930.
62 Qi Xiangming, “Jiuyiba qianhoude zhongyang junxiao” (The Central Army Officer Academy around the period of the Mukden Incident on September 18, 1931) [1963], in Guomindang zhongyang tujun xueyuan yu junshi zhuanye xueyuan (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 18.
unity and close bonding horizontally among Whampoa cadets; Jiang’s interaction with the cadets’ everyday life also aimed to strengthen the cadets’ vertical loyalty to Jiang by evoking their emotional attachment.

The Academy not only cultivated the personal loyalty of the cadets to Jiang but also advocated close bonding among the cadets themselves. As Andrew Scobell comments in his study of Chinese military forces, “[In Whampoa] while the rhetoric was of selfless dedication to the Chinese people, in practice the stress was on proximate loyalties to military superiors and fellow cadets.”63 The cadets who were trained at Whampoa as model soldiers and potential army officers needed to possess a strong identity with the Academy and a close connection with their fellow cadets.

The bonding among the Academy cadets was institutionalized by the military edict Lianzuofa (Law of joint responsibility) implemented at Whampoa in 1925. This edict, which was later introduced to the Nationalist army, demanded punishment by death for those who retreated from battle without permission. It aimed to ensure the maintenance of military discipline by binding the destiny of soldiers together and making them willing to live and die together. The details of the law were as follows:

If the squad leader (banzhang) retreats with the whole squad, the squad leader shall be killed; if the platoon leader (paizhang) retreats with the whole platoon, the platoon leader shall be killed; if the company commander (lianzhang) retreats with the whole company, the company commander shall be killed; so it is with the battalion commander (yingzhang), the regiment commander (tuanzhang), the division commander (shizhang), and the army commander (junzhang). If the army commander does not retreat but the whole army retreats and the army commander dies as a consequence, the division commanders in this army shall be killed; if the division commander does not retreat but the

---

63 Andrew Scobell, China’s Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 62.
whole division retreats and the division commander dies as a consequence, the regiment commanders in this division shall be killed. The same applies to the battalion, the company, and the platoon. If the squad leader does not retreat but the whole squad retreats and the squad leader dies as a consequence, all the soldiers in the squad shall be killed. After the implementation of this Lianzuofa, everyone in the army should feel a knife hanging above his head (dao jiazai bozi shang) or a rope tied around his feet (sheng jizai jiaoshang).\footnote{Jiang Jieshi, “Gemingjun Lianzuofa” (Law of joint responsibility in the revolutionary army) [1925], in Huangpu xunlianji (Selections of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Deng Wenyi (Wuhan: Guofangbu xinwenju, 1938), 345-346.}

Implementing the military edict Lianzuofa revealed the GMD’s state-building agenda. The bonding among the soldiers that was legalized by this military edict meant both mutual dependence and mutual surveillance for survival. Thus, this edict was a technique that the GMD employed to complement its efforts to discipline the soldiers.

The military edict of Lianzuofa also reinforced the hierarchical relationship among the soldiers. According to the 1975 memoir of the Whampoa graduate Du Congrong (1902-1979), Jiang told his cadets: “The soldiers had to listen to the order of the higher commander for the action. Whoever retreats from the battlefield against the order shall be killed in compliance with Lianzuofa even though he survives from the combat against the enemy.”\footnote{Du Congrong, Huangpu junxiao zhi chuangjian ji dongzheng beifa zhi huiyi (Memories of the foundation of the Whampoa Military Academy and the Eastern and Northern Expeditions) (Taibei: Shunren caise yinzhi youxian gongsi, 1975), 43.} As Jiang said in his speech “Benxiao zhi shiming yu geming de renshe” (The mission of this academy and the revolutionary life) delivered on May 8, 1924, “The lives of all the cadets in Whampoa are ultimately one life.”\footnote{Jiang Jieshi, “Benxiao zhi shiming yu geming de renshe” (The mission of this academy and the revolutionary life) [1924], in Huangpu xunlianji xuanji (Selections from the collection of the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy), ed. Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu (n. l.: Guomin zhengfu junshi weiyuanhui zhengzhibu, 1938), 7.} The bonding which was based on mutual dependence and surveillance as well as hierarchical
relationship served as an institutionalized part of the Whampoa military culture through its military edict and the Academy’s motto.

To strengthen bonding among the cadets, Whampoa set up a series of rituals which required the participation of all the cadets. The most important and most frequently observed ritual was the Premier Sun Yat-sen Weekly Memorial Service (Zongli jinian zhou). The Nationalist Party Central Committee in Guangzhou first decreed this remembrance in 1926 for all party and government officials.\(^{67}\) The weekly assembly was fully instituted by the Nationalist regime in all government offices as well as in all the schools, colleges, and universities under its effective jurisdiction by 1927.\(^ {68}\) Every Monday morning the Academy was to come together to sing the party anthem, bow three times toward Sun’s portrait, recite his Last Testament (Zongli yixun), and observe three minutes of silence before the portrait.\(^ {69}\) The assembly was intended to “provide an occasion for the students to receive moral lessons, guidance on academy activities, analyses of political events, reports on current affairs by academy administrators, public figures, and party leaders, as well as lectures on academic subjects by prominent intellectuals.”\(^ {70}\) By requiring Whampoa and other government offices and social

---

69 “Zunxing zongli jinianzhou yishi,” in *Zhongyang lujun junguan xuexiao shigao* (History of the Central Army Officer Academy), No. 7, ed. Guomindang zhongyang lujun junguan xuexiao xiaowu (Nanjing: Guomindang zhongyang lujun junguan xuexiao xiaowu, 1936), 22.
70 Chan and Dirlik, *Schools into Fields and Factories*, 103.
institutions to observe this ritual, Jiang intended not only to produce army officers but also to promote disciplined citizenship ideal within the army.\(^{71}\)

In order to reinforce the cadets’ bond with the Academy, Whampoa not only required them to attend the weekly memorial service but also obliged them to observe holidays to commemorate watershed events that shaped the GMD’s history. The holidays that were observed at Whampoa included the Commemoration of Sun Yat-sen’s Death (\textit{Zongli shishi jinian ri}, March 12), the Commemoration of Huanghuagang Martyrs (\textit{Huanghuagang lieshi jinianri}, March 29), Labor Day (\textit{Laodongjie}, May 1), the Commemoration of National Shame (\textit{Guochi jinianri}, May 9), the Commemoration of the Shanghai Massacre (\textit{Shanghai can’an jinianri}, May 30), the Commemoration of the Foundation of the Academy (\textit{benxiao kaishi jinianri}, June 16), the Commemoration of Shaji Massacre (\textit{Shaji can’an jinianri}, June 23), the Commemoration of the Capture of Party Representative Liao Zhongkai (\textit{Liao [Zhongkai] dangdaibiao beibu jinianri}, August 20), the Anniversary of Premier Sun’s Birthday (\textit{Zongli danchen jinianri}, November 12).\(^{72}\) These holidays were all centered on the themes of Sun Yat-sen and the Nationalist revolution. The Academy conceived the remembrances and the observation of holidays as ceremonies to unite the mind of the cadets and build a shared identity among them with the Academy, the Nationalist army and the Republic of China government.

\(^{71}\)The Weekly Memorial Service did not go smoothly. The Nanjing government, for instance, was forced to amend the ceremony’s rules to cover such matters as punishments for absenteeism. See Nedostup, “Civic Faith and Hybrid Ritual in Nationalist China,” 45.

\(^{72}\)Li Ning, “Huangpu junxiao jinianri he liyi yu jidujiao guanxi chutan” (An initial study on the relations of the holidays and rituals observed at the Whampoa Military Academy with Christianity), in \textit{Huangpu junxiao yanjiu} (Studies on the Whampoa Military Academy), Vol. 3, ed. Shu Yang (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2008), 92.
The commemoration of rituals and holidays was an important technique that Whampoa utilized in promoting unity among the Academy cadets. Another technique it adopted for this purpose was the establishment of the Whampoa Alumni Association (Huangpu tongxuehui). The Association was founded on June 27, 1926 and organized by the political department of the Academy. Jiang served as the president of the Association. In a speech to the Academy cadets delivered in November 1926, Jiang claimed that “…to oppose the alumni association is to oppose Jiang himself.”

The ultimate goal of the Association was to follow the Last Testament of Premier Sun Yat-sen and pursue the nationalist revolution. The principle of the Association was “Using the Whampoa Academy as a network center to build emotional attachment among the graduates, to encourage and support each other, to unify the spirits and minds of them.”

According to the rule set by the Association in 1928:

Cadets and graduates from every class of the Academy all automatically become members of the Association. The Association is in charge of recording and checking the members’ performance, appointment, removal, promotion and transferal. No matter whether the cadets have graduated or not, they are all subject to the surveillance and direction by the Association and shall pay loyalty to the Nationalist Party and the commandant of the Academy, practice the Three Principles of the People, and shall not join any other political organization. Any cadet or graduate who breaks the rules is subject to severe punishment or will be considered as a rebel against the nation.

In 1930 the Association changed its name to the Investigation Office of Whampoa Academy Graduates (Huangpu junxiao biyesheng diaochake). In name, it was the headquarters where Whampoa graduates could build connections and bond. However, in practice, it took charge of all aspects related to the careers of Whampoa alumni including

---

74 Ibid.
75 Ibid., 193.
registration, investigation, promotion, appointment and punishment. The Association thus served as an agent for Whampoa to consolidate its discipline of the cadets even after they graduated.\textsuperscript{76}

The memoirs of Whampoa graduates show that strong unity among the cadets did develop in the Academy. Yang Xiaoyi (1905-1964), a graduate of the third class of the Academy, commented that, “The key standard for personnel promotion at the Academy was whether or not the persons were Jiang’s own men (\textit{dixi}).”\textsuperscript{77} According to the 1963 memoir of another Academy graduate Qi Xiangming, “[At Whampoa] only the Academy graduates played the managing roles (\textit{zhuren}); faculty and staff who had not studied at Whampoa were nothing but employees in the eyes of the cadets.”\textsuperscript{78} Based on Scobell’s research, “the 7,399 cadets in the five classes that graduated from the Whampoa Academy between 1924 and 1927 established strong bonds of personal loyalty to their classmates. Whampoa cadets were instilled with a strong sense of \textit{esprit de corps} that has been called the “Whampoa spirit” (\textit{Huangpu jingshen}).”\textsuperscript{79} The establishment of the Alumni Association in 1926 to promote unity among Whampoa graduates revealed Jiang’s intention of disciplining the soldiers and reinforcing his authority in the army in the long term.

\textsuperscript{76}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77}Liu Zongxiang, “Zhongyang junxiao dibai fenxiao jianji” (A brief narrative of the eighth branch campus of the Central Army Officer Academy) [1964], in \textit{Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanye xuexiao} (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 104.
\textsuperscript{78}Qi, “Jiuyiba qianhoude zhongyang junxiao” [1963], 16.
\textsuperscript{79}Scobell, \textit{China’s Use of Military Force}, 61.
Confronting the GMD’s Heroic-Soldier Ideal

The analysis above has shown that civic education at the Whampoa Academy constructed a discourse on the soldier figure that included a heavily defined code of military ethics. The key qualities that this code denoted were strong political indoctrination, absolute loyalty to Jiang, submission to military discipline and hierarchical bonding among the cadets. The Academy trained the cadets to become model soldiers by cultivating and reinforcing this code among them. Training model soldiers at Whampoa revealed Jiang’s intention creating politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizens in the nation. Since Whampoa was founded to train potential army officers for the national army and raise the professional standards of the larger army, Jiang expected Whampoa cadets to reform national armies by extending this code to them. However, the memoirs of Whampoa graduates suggest that in reality the soldier ideal deliberately constructed by Jiang often met resistance from Whampoa cadets and regional warlords.

Although the Academy advocated strict adherence to military discipline as a key quality of a model soldier, some Whampoa cadets believed that the Nationalist ideal of defending one’s hometown was more important than complying with the order. After the Mukden Incident on September 18, 1931 when Japan invaded Northeastern China, Jiang emphasized that, at a time of domestic turmoil and inadequate preparation, China must avoid an all-out war with Japan. However, Jiang’s “annei rangwai” (First settle the country internally, then resist the invader) policy was unpopular. As Hans van de Ven comments, “For any government to be shown to be weak cannot but damage its
reputation and the refusal to stand up to an aggressor provides easy openings for its critics."\textsuperscript{80}

Jiang’s policy was even questioned by the cadets he commanded at Whampoa who were supposed to be unconditionally loyal to him and his ideas. The ninth class of the Academy enlisted over 1,000 students, of whom two thirds came from northeastern provinces that were quickly occupied by the Japanese.\textsuperscript{81} Many Whampoa cadets requested to suspend their studies and go back to their hometowns to fight against the Japanese. These cadets shouted slogans such as, “It was soldiers’ humiliation not to recapture the lost territory,” and “We cannot forget to save the nation when pursuing our military studies; to save our nation is just the ultimate purpose to pursue our studies.”\textsuperscript{82}

According to the memoir of Whampoa graduate Xie Yingbai (1890-1969) written in August 1963, a cadet from Liaoning Province named Li Yihu\textsuperscript{83} insisted on returning to his hometown to resist the Japanese invasion no matter whether the Academy approved or not. He even claimed that if the Academy did not approve his request, he would kill himself with a knife. Zhang Zhizhong (1890-1969),\textsuperscript{84} who served as dean of the Academy from 1929 to 1937, did not punish him. Instead, Zhang praised him for his patriotic sentiments and allowed him and other ten students to return to Liaoning.\textsuperscript{85} Li Yihu’s request to fight against the Japanese was not in accordance with Jiang’s policy.

\textsuperscript{80}Hans van de Ven, \textit{War and Nationalism in China, 1925-1945} (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 151.
\textsuperscript{81}Xie, “1929 zhi 1933 niande Nanjing zhongyang junxiao” [1963], 8.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{83}Li Yihu’s birth and death years are unclear.
\textsuperscript{84}Zhang Zhizhong commanded the Fifth Army of the Nationalist military forces in the 1932 Battle at Shanghai against Japan. Later as the head of the Ninth Army Group of the Nationalist forces, Zhang supervised the defence of Shanghai against Japan in 1937.
\textsuperscript{85}Xie, “1929 zhi 1933 niande Nanjing zhongyang junxiao” [1963], 8.
His threat to kill himself if his request was rejected by the Academy was also in conflict with Jiang’s condemnation of suicide in non-combat situation. However, patriotic fervor encouraged him to voice discontent with Jiang’s policy and at the same time saved him from being punished by the Academy.

The confrontation of some Whampoa cadets to Jiang’s policy of temporary appeasement was also revealed in the study on student nationalism by Lincoln Li. Li notes that some Nationalist military officers attempted to rekindle an ethic of patriotism and national service within the increasingly bureaucratized and demoralized Nationalist party-state in the early 1930s. They were able to express the fiery anti-Japanese sentiments of their constituents at a time when Nanjing was still pursuing a policy of appeasing Japan.\(^86\)

Other memoirs also reveal that in the eyes of many Whampoa cadets, following military discipline should not be absolutized. Sometimes they resorted to violence in their demonstrations against the unfair aspects of the Academy’s administration. After each class graduated, the Academy would distribute funds for travel and clothes to each graduate. Whampoa authorities and fiscal departments often took the opportunity to skim off a profit for themselves. According to Whampoa graduate Cheng Tingrong’s memoir published in May 1963,\(^87\) the cadets’ dissatisfaction with the administrative corruption in the Academy eventually led to a riot among the graduates of the 17\(^{th}\) class. These graduates believed that the standards that Whampoa used to calculate traveling expenses

---
\(^87\)Chen Tingrong’s birth and death years are unclear.
were unfair. They requested that their traveling reimbursements be based on the actual routes and periods of travel.

After their request was denied by the director of the political department Xiao Zanyu (1905-1999), the students were so upset that they broke into the commissariat and accounting offices of Whampoa. They even broke into the houses of the directors of these offices because they were annoyed by what they regarded as the luxury inside the houses. After this riot, the Academy caught about 100 students. However, because of Jiang’s protective attitude toward his cadets, only 17 of them were sent to the prison, and 16 of those were released within one year. Cheng Tingrong’s memoirs do not make clear to what extent the cadets who participated in this riot were able eventually to force the Academy authorities to adjust their policies for distributing funding. But the riot did show that the cadets would not shy away from violence in their protests against the Academy’s authorities for something they viewed as unfair. Jiang’s efforts to discipline the soldiers were challenged even by his own cadets.

Although Jiang attempted to forge cadets’ emotional attachments to him at Whampoa, loyalty to Jiang was not the only emotional resource that guided socialization among them. Schoolmateship (tongxue qing), comradeship (zhanyou qing) and native-place sentiment (tongxiang qing) all served as the basis for bonding networks among Whampoa cadets. The cadets took advantage of connections in various forms to broaden their network and strengthen their groupings. Loyalty to Jiang did not entirely occupy the

---

88 Cheng Tingrong, “Chengdu zhongyang junxiao xuechao jishi” (The cadet uprising in the Chengdu Branch Campus of the Central Army Officer Academy) [1963], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanke xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 57.
emotions of the cadets; lateral bonding among the cadets based on various venues of private relations also contributed to the socialization of the cadets in the Academy environment.

The emotional bonding among the cadets through diverse networks sometimes encouraged them to confront the Academy authority to protect fellows in their groups. The Whampoa graduate Tan Dingyuan (?-2008) provided an example in his memoir written in November 1961. In the winter of 1935, says Tan, Jiang held a large-scale military drill near Nanjing. All the cadets in Nanjing participated in the drill and they were assigned to different army units. The engineering company of the 88th division failed to prepare all the required equipment and to build a military bridge in time; their mistakes led to the interruption of the drill. The commander of the sapper company was criticized and then committed suicide. At a meeting following the events, the dean Zhang Zhizhong spoke highly of the commander’s suicide and re-emphasized the importance of military discipline. However, other cadets from the commander’s native place showed dissatisfaction with Zhang’s attitude and expressed their sympathy toward that commander. They even brought the commander’s wife and two children to the meeting, letting the commander’s dependents express their grievance that was caused by the death of the commander. Eventually, Zhang announced at the meeting that the Academy would provide some funds to the commander’s dependents. The cadets who participated in the drill also made a donation to the commander’s family.89

89 Tan Dingyuan, “Zhongyang junxiao shierqi jianwen” (Experiences in the twelfth class of the Central Army Officer Academy) [1961], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanye
The cadets did not unconditionally embrace the soldier ideal constructed by Jiang. Instead, they sometimes protested against what they viewed as unacceptable administration at Whampoa. These events revealed that tensions did often exist between Jiang and the cadets. Jiang’s effort to construct a highly disciplined soldier figure through civic education often provoked confrontation even within Whampoa. Moreover, the designation of Whampoa cadets as model soldiers in the GMD’s political discourse was also often resisted by the society, particularly by provincial warlords. Jiang’s efforts to extend the politicized and disciplined soldier ideal to the national army in order to restore the tarnished image of the military and soldiers and raise the professional standards of the larger army was compromised.

Republican Chinese society did not wholly accept Whampoa cadets as model soldiers; nor did they retain belief in the army. Whampoa cadets did not always receive a positive reception from civilian society. The newspaper often reported events involving cadets fighting at theaters, train stations and restaurants. Ordinary people in Nanjing even referred to Whampoa cadets as “locusts” (huangchong). In 1934, Jiang selected 400 students from the Academy’s tenth class and sent them to mingle in a crowd of civilian students who were participating in a protest. Jiang’s intention was to let the cadets produce some chaos among the students in order to break up the student protest. After the protest, Jiang did not respond to the questioning and criticism from the public.

---

xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 22.

90 Tan, “Zhongyang junxiao shierqi jianwen” [1961], 25. The first character of the Chinese word huangchong is pronounced the same as the first character of the Chinese word Huangpu (the Chinese word of Whampoa).
The signal that the cadets received from this event, according to Tan Dingyuan’s memoir, was that as long as what the Academy cadets did was approved by Jiang, they would get favorable treatment even though their actions were criticized by the public. In brief, Jiang took advantage of the cadets’ loyalty to him so that they could be used to forward his personal short-term political goals. In doing so, Jiang failed to repair the tension between the soldiers and the civilians and regain the society’s faith in the military. The privilege Jiang gave to his loyal soldiers was also criticized by the Nationalist army officers. The historian Frederick Fu Liu, who served as a Nationalist army officer during the Anti-Japanese War, criticizes the undue influence of Whampoa Military Academy graduates in the political life of the Nationalist regime and the tendency to let personal associations take priority over political consideration. Liu attributes much of the difficulty encountered by the government of Jiang to these factors and to the obstacles created for effective civilian rule.

Not only did the cadets have conflicts with the civilian community, they were even considered big competitors and not welcomed by common soldiers in regional army units. The historian Eugene Levich’s study on Guangxi warlords in the 1930s reveals the hostility from the Guangxi forces to the cadets in Jiang’s Whampoa Academy. The major warlord in Guangxi, Li Zongren (1890-1969), claimed that Jiang’s partiality to graduates of the Whampoa Military Academy, and to the military units under Jiang’s direct command, undermined morale in the other GMD forces and undermined discipline in

---

91Ibid.
Jiang’s own forces.\textsuperscript{93} Li recalled that during the Northern Expedition he often heard complaints about Jiang’s partiality to Jiang’s own First Army from high-ranking officers of the Second, Third, Fourth, and Sixth Armies.

Levich cites several examples from Li Zongren’s 1958 memoir on his experience during the Northern Expedition to show Li’s dissatisfaction with the extension of special privileges to Whampoa graduates. For example, when sandals were issued to the armies, by Jiang’s order each man of the First Army got two pairs; this left each man in the other armies with an average of less than one pair. Whenever a middle- or lower-ranking officer of the First Army—who came from the Whampoa Academy—squandered pay by gambling or the like and confessed his mistake to Jiang, Jiang not only would not punish him; on the contrary, he allowed him to draw needed money from the Military Supply Department.\textsuperscript{94}

The hostile attitudes of common soldiers to Whampoa cadets also sometimes led to violence. One such example is provided in Tan Dingyuan’s memoir. After the Shanghai Incident broke out on August 13, 1937, there was a big loss in the number of lower-level army officers. The Academy dean Zhang Zhizhong asked the Academy to select brave cadets from the eleventh and twelfth classes to join the front battle. The death ratio of these cadets at the front was very high; but many of them were shot in the back by ordinary army soldiers. The reason for this phenomenon, according to a Whampoa graduate’s memoir, was that ordinary army soldiers expected to get promoted

\textsuperscript{94}Ibid.
after their commanders were killed by the enemy during battle. The seconding of Whampoa cadets into their army unit disturbed their promotion plans, causing resentment from ordinary army soldiers toward Whampoa cadets. This example shows that, in reality, Whampoa cadets who were assigned to local army units were not always as highly respected as the model soldiers Jiang hoped for. Instead, they were sometimes viewed by ordinary army soldiers as competitors and treated with hostility or even violence. The politicized and disciplined citizen-soldier ideal advocated in Jiang’s speeches at Whampoa was not embraced by all in the national army.

Another factor that caused tension between Whampoa cadets and ordinary soldiers was that Jiang did not have uniform or sole direction of the national armies, and thus central authority was rivaled by provincial army forces. As the historian Edward McCord comments, despite the victory of the Nationalist Party’s Northern Expedition and the reunification of China under a new Nationalist government in Nanjing in 1927, warlords were not simply eliminated. “Many were absorbed into the Nationalist Party army and, in exchange for their allegiance to the new government, allowed to retain a considerable degree of political autonomy in their garrison areas.” The state-building strategy employed by Jiang to expand his power deeply into the regional army forces involved opening temporary training classes or branch campuses affiliated with Whampoa Academy. In the eyes of the provincial warlords, however, Whampoa was not a national military reform vanguard to train model soldiers and potential officers; it was

---

95 Tan, “Zhongyang junxiao shi’erqi jianwen” [1961], 25.
Jiang’s personal political tool to control non-Central Army forces. The heroic aura surrounding the soldier figure constructed by Jiang was thus resisted by the warlords.

After the 1932 Shanghai Incident, the Academy at Nanjing became the target of bombing by the Japanese, which made it impossible to continue the regular operation of the Academy. Jiang decided to build a branch campus at Chengdu in Sichuan in 1935 and sent the Academy dean Li Minghao (1897-1980) to serve as the director of the Chengdu branch campus. Saving the Academy from the Japanese bombing was only one purpose of the move; Jiang also intended to expand the power of his Central Army into the armed forces of regional warlords. The Chengdu branch campus opened officer training classes which enrolled the surplus officers (bianyu junguan) from the armies of Sichuan warlords, Liu Xiang (1888-1938) and Liu Wenhui (1895-1976).

After a six-month training period, these cadets were assigned to units that comprised the Sichuan armies to serve as lower-level officers (usually below the rank of battalion commander). The classes kept enrolling lower-level officers from the Sichuan army who had not received military education. Officially, these classes were intended to unify national military education and to help the Sichuan armies train their middle- and lower-level army officers in the use of new-style weapons; both excuses made it hard for the Sichuan warlords to refuse.

However, the true purpose of these classes may have been to break up the Sichuan warlord armies by building a foundation for pro-Jiang sentiment amongst the rank-and-file military officers in those armies. Therefore, the Sichuan armies and this Chengdu officer training class program often had conflicts. According to the memoir of Qian
Daquan (1908-?) compiled in 1963,\(^\text{97}\) when the cadets in the Chengdu army officer training class heard that Liu Xiang intended to dismiss the class, they protested against this decision by threatening to attack Liu’s official residence.\(^\text{98}\)

The establishment of the Luoyang branch campus in the summer of 1933 is another example that shows Jiang’s intention not only to train model soldiers but also to cultivate his trusted fellows among non-central armies. The Luoyang branch campus recruited platoon and company leaders from non-central armies into a ten-month military officer training class. They were sent back to their army units after the training. However, according to the Whampoa graduate Zheng Dianqi (1907-?)’s memoir written in October 1963, some regional warlords, such as Yan Xishan (1883-1960) in Shanxi, Han Fuqu (1890-1938) in Shandong and Liu Xiang (1888-1938) in Sichuan simply refused to accept the cadets who were sent to their armies. Other warlords adopted discriminatory attitudes toward their old subordinates who came back after their training at the branch campus of Whampoa, and tried to elbow them out. Many cadets were not given important positions after they returned to their original army units; therefore they were not able to bring the pro-Jiang sentiments into the regional armies as Jiang expected.\(^\text{99}\) Jiang’s agenda to discipline the soldiers by constructing a close hierarchical bonding among the army with him as the leader was hindered by these rivalries.

\(^{97}\) Qian Daquan is a cadet from the eleventh class of Whampoa. He graduated from Whampoa in 1937.

\(^{98}\) Qian Daquan, “Zhongyang junxiao xiqian jishi” (Narratives on the relocation of the Central Army Officer Academy to the west) [1963], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanke xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 38-39.

\(^{99}\) Zheng Dianqi, “Luoyang fenxiaoyu junguan xunlianban” (The Luoyang branch campus and the military officer training class) [1963], in Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuanke xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), ed. Wen Wen (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010), 74.
The hostile and prejudicial attitudes of regional armies toward Whampoa graduates were factors that hindered Jiang’s state-building efforts to use the Whampoa Academy as a vanguard to raise the professional standard of national armies. Chang Rui-te provides more reasons that show that the role of the Whampoa Academy in promoting the combat capacity of the national army should not be overestimated. For example, he explains that the Academy could not expand the school quickly enough to meet the demand for junior officers due to the demands of the ongoing anti-Communist campaigns.\textsuperscript{100} With the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War in 1937, “the high number of casualties and the rapid expansion of the army essentially prevented Academy graduates from exerting any decisive influence on the quality of Jiang’s troops.”\textsuperscript{101} The demands for new officers grew so quickly in the first years of the war that the threshold entry requirements were lowered to bring in more candidates.\textsuperscript{102} Jiang’s state-building agenda through training model soldiers at Whampoa who were expected to follow the code of ethics was resisted by Whampoa cadets themselves and also undermined by provincial warlords. These reasons outlined by Chang confirm that the brutal reality of the Anti-Japanese War and the worsening situation at the front in the first years of the war also impeded Jiang’s state-building agenda of military reform.

\textsuperscript{100} Chang, “The National Army from Whampoa to 1949,” 197. 
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the Nationalist discourse on the soldier figure that was constructed using civic education at the Whampoa Military Academy in the early years after Whampoa’s establishment in 1924. The examination of Jiang’s speeches delivered at Whampoa in 1924 shows that ever since Whampoa’s establishment, Jiang tried to teach a code of ethics to Whampoa cadets and train them to be model soldiers and potential army officers for the national army. The code was designed to cultivate the soldiers’ obedience to the political doctrine of the Three Principles of the People, their submission to the discipline and regulation of personal behavior and emotional expression, and their subordination to the hierarchical bonding in the army with Jiang as the leader. This code allowed the Nationalist state to convert a soldier into the image of a heroic warrior who considered death in combat a glorious honor and was tough enough to restrain his emotional expression.

The building of Whampoa with financial support from the Soviet Union and its civic education system revealed the GMD’s state-building agendas to use Whampoa as a political tool. Jiang tried to train politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated model soldiers at Whampoa; in doing so, Jiang was also envisioning a politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizenship ideal. After Whampoa cadets graduated and became officers in the national army, Jiang expected them not only to raise the professional standards of the national army but also to extend such ideals to the larger army. In this way, Jiang could strengthen his authority by creating a highly politicized and well-disciplined national army.
The memoirs of Whampoa graduates written in the 1960s reveal that Jiang’s intentions were not fully achieved since the discourse of the soldier figure constructed by Jiang was confronted or resisted by some Whampoa cadets and provincial warlords. The cadets employed a nationalistic appeal to confront Jiang’s policy of temporarily appeasing Japan. The cadets also shaped their identity and emotion not entirely through loyalty to Jiang; they also developed private social networks that were based on various emotional connections. Jiang advocated fraternity among the cadets to strengthen his authority and the influence of his Whampoa clique in the army and government, but the cadets also took advantage of the appeal of lateral emotional bonding to protest against what they viewed as unacceptable practices by the Academy’s administration. Nominally, Whampoa cadets were trained to become model soldiers for the national army, but they were not always respected or favored by ordinary soldiers and provincial warlords; in fact, they often received prejudiced, hostile or even violent treatment from them.

The building of Whampoa after 1924 was only Jiang’s initial state-building effort to expand the state institution and create a politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizenry. The different treatments of the political discourse of the soldier figure constructed by the GMD and particularly by Jiang revealed the existence of tensions among the GMD state and Whampoa cadets, provincial warlords and civilian society. In the 1930s, as the threats from the Chinese Communists and the Japanese increased, Jiang consolidated his state-building project by continuing to expand state institutions and penetrate the state’s influence into local societies. Jiang’s efforts resulted in the issuing of the first compulsory conscription law in the mid-1930s. In promulgating this law, Jiang
tried to extend the disciplined, politicized and morally cultivated citizenship ideal that he originally envisioned in the training of his model soldiers from Whampoa to the rest of society. We will turn to this topic in the next chapter of this dissertation.
Chapter 2

Enlisting Citizens in the Military Mobilization of the Nationalist State

Introduction

Chapter 1 discussed the GMD, especially Jiang Jieshi, constructing a heroic-soldier ideal to work on its state-building agenda. Creating a politicized and disciplined army and building a unified and a strong nation, this agenda required the GMD government to maintain military mobilization and ensure sustained human capital sourcing for its army. To this end, in 1933 the GMD government issued what became the first compulsory conscription law of modern China. This chapter approaches the project of constructing the soldier figure using military laws, soldier education materials and political propaganda from the 1930s and the 1940s. The compulsory conscription laws, army textbooks and the New Life Movement propaganda to be discussed in this chapter, coupled with the civic education at Whampoa discussed in the previous chapter, together represented aspects of the GMD’s state-building programs. Together, these programs revealed the Nationalist Party’s vision of a militarized, politicized, disciplined, and morally cultivated citizenry.

This chapter demonstrates that the GMD tried not only to militarize society but also to extend the politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizenship ideal that Jiang envisioned at Whampoa. The soldier was glorified in Nationalist military law
and in political propaganda as a national hero and paragon. He was postulated as a model citizen and the epitome of morality, one who should be emulated by society. The goals of the GMD state behind such rhetoric were two-fold. First, it aimed to achieve military mobilization by fostering the military spirit and encouraging society to follow the conscription law and perform obligatory military service. Second, it intended to strengthen its state-building project by creating a national identity among the people as militarized, politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizens. However, the real-life conditions of the recruited conscripts did not effectively attract society to the army. The public still viewed the soldier’s life as miserable. Negative attitudes prevailed toward the conscription system. The GMD’s state-building and military mobilization goals of elevating the soldiers’ status through its rhetoric met resistance from society, just as they had from warlords and even Whampoa cadets.

The Soldier as a Model Citizen

By the time the Nanjing Nationalist state was founded in 1927, the majority of the GMD’s military forces were composed of generally long-serving regulars recruited for pay (mubing).\(^1\) They had been born to poor families and came from the warlord armies. In her discussion of Chinese common soldiers from the period of 1911 to 1937, Diana Lary remarks that soldiers enlisted with whatever unit recruited or would take them. “Most were straightforward mercenaries, some found themselves fighting for a cause, a

principle added to their wages.” According to a 1932 survey of a Taiyuan army unit of 946 soldiers carried out by the sociologist Tao Menghe (1887-1960), 73% of them claimed that their family situation was poor, 24% of them claimed that their family income tightly made ends meet, and only 3% of them claimed that their families managed to save a small portion of their earnings. 3

Armies in the warlord period (1916-1928) prior to the establishment of Jiang’s Nationalist state were not controlled by a unified bureaucracy. As Hans van de Ven notes, “Systems of recruitment were neither national nor bureaucratized. Nor were the armies themselves well integrated.” 4 However, this situation began to change during the period that encompassed the Nanjing Decade (1927-1937) and through the eight years of the Anti-Japanese War. The GMD government issued the compulsory conscription law in 1933, put it into implementation in 1936, and made several revisions during the Anti-Japanese War.

The advocacy of compulsory conscription in modern China was rooted in the historical background of the last years of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), when the military took on new importance in China. As Colin Green suggests, many politically engaged Chinese intellectuals such as Gu Hongming (1857-1928) and Liang Qichao (1873-1929)—who were driven by fear that China was on the verge of becoming a “lost country” (wangguo) like Poland or Vietnam—took up the cause of militarism, arguing

---

that to survive in a hostile world the Chinese people would have to overcome their spiritual malaise and lack of martial vigor.\(^5\)

The efforts of political and military authorities to implement the compulsory conscription system started as early as the birth of the Republican era in 1911. As Lary shows, Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), who was elected Provisional President of the Republic of China on February 14, 1912, floated a compulsory conscription scheme and issued formal plans to that effect in 1915. That particular effort did not sustain itself as it was scrapped with Yuan’s death a year later.\(^6\) Xu Chonghao (1882-1959), a member of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance (Tongmenghui) who had participated in the 1911 Xinhai Revolution, published in 1929 the Zhengbing zhi yange ji shixingfa (The transformation of the military recruiting system and its implementation), advocating the implementation of the conscription system. Xu believed that every citizen should possess military knowledge in order to strengthen the nation’s ability to resist foreign threats. Comparing the conscription system with the mercenary system employed by warlord armies, Xu argued in strong favor of the conscription system by remarking on its advantages:

Given the spacious size of China, the conscription system would allow China to enlarge the military forces while saving expenditures. Under the conscription system, all able-bodied men (zhuangding) take turns in serving the army and retire from the army after a certain period. With a set number of conscripts each year, the military expenditure could be prepared in advance in the state’s budget. However, under the mercenary system, soldiers are recruited only for pay and might serve in the army for all his life. If the state needs to enlarge the army, it has to increase the expenditure for the new recruits. In the emergence of a national crisis, the state was usually in need of a number of soldiers who had


\(^6\)Lary, Warlord Soldiers, 16.
military knowledge, but the mercenary system might make the state unable to afford recruiting enough soldiers.

The conscription system would also allow the army to better maintain military discipline. The soldiers recruited for pay are mostly jobless vagrants (wuye youmin), or even robbers and bandits (daozei tufei) with complicated backgrounds. Men with some knowledge and coming from decent families all consider military service to be shameful. Those soldiers recruited only for pay are reluctant to follow military discipline. They often resort to aggression and violence and do all kinds of evil things by taking advantage of their weapons. However, under the conscription system, the conscripts consist of people who have basic knowledge and come from descent families. They have self-respect and do not dare resist the law and military discipline. 7

Xu’s understanding of the conscription system was more a criticism of the mercenary system employed by the warlord armies. He did not associate military service with the national duty as a citizen; nor did he provide a thorough legal framework on the implementation of the system. However, as a military general, Xu did propose recruiting all able-bodied men as the one way to reform the army and build a strong nation.

Van de Ven reveals in his study on war and nationalism that He Yingqin (1890-1987), who served as chief of staff for military affairs from 1930 to 1944, proposed a system of national military service in his 1928 draft “Proposal to Change National Military Service.” The reasons He gave in favor of a national military service system were similar to Xu Chonghao’s claims. He particularly pointed out that national military service was a characteristic of both economically advanced countries in the West like Germany as well as of revolutionary countries like France. Following the Japanese model,

7 Xu Chonghao, Zhengbing zhi yange ji shixingfa (The transformation of the military recruiting system and its implementation) (Nanjing: Minzhi shuju, 1929), 2-6.
He outlined the structure of the national military service as the combination of a standing army and ready reserves.\textsuperscript{8}

The Nationalist state reintroduced the traditional local control system of mutual surveillance (baojia) between 1932 and 1934, and it served as the basis for He’s outline for the national military service system. This system entailed the registration of all households, and its structure was as follows: “Groups of ten or so households were formed in a unit termed a jia. Ten or so jia became a unit known as bao. Several bao were grouped together in ‘associated bao’ (lianbao) at the district level. The baojia required households after registration to sign mutual responsibility.”\textsuperscript{9} Theoretically, jiazhang, who headed one jia, and baozhang, who headed one bao, each were elected by popular vote from jia and bao residents, but “many bao and jia leaders were de facto appointed to their positions by higher authorities.”\textsuperscript{10} As the historian Jae Ho Chung comments, the leaders of the baojia organizations “acted more as government functionaries than civic-minded elected officials responsive to popular demands.”\textsuperscript{11} The baojia organizations also had military functions, which were to register and administer military training of able-bodied men who were potential conscripts, and to organize local militia groups to cooperate with the government in preventing popular insurgent activities.\textsuperscript{12} The baojia system did not promote the self-government at the local level.

\textsuperscript{8}Hans van de Ven, War and Nationalism in China, 1925-1945 (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 143.
\textsuperscript{9}Ibid., 144.
\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.
Indeed, it was a result of the GMD’s project of expanding the state institutions and projecting the state’s influence into local society. Instead, Jiang Jieshi hoped that this system could militarize the grassroots organizations.\textsuperscript{13} As noted by van de Ven, the \textit{baojia} was intended by the GMD authorities to serve as the basis for a compulsory military service system.\textsuperscript{14}

The introduction of \textit{baojia} organizations enabled the Nationalist state to introduce European-style conscription by the early 1930s.\textsuperscript{15} Its efforts resulted in the formulation of the first Compulsory Conscription Law (\textit{Yiwu zhengbingfa}), which was issued on June 17, 1933 and was to be implemented on March 1, 1936. Based on this law, the compulsory conscription system was initiated not to replace but rather to complement the pre-existing mercenary system. The first item of the law wrote that “to perform military service was the national duty of the males in the Republic of China.”\textsuperscript{16} All males between eighteen and forty-five were subject to the draft. All males after their eighteenth birthdays were obliged to enroll in citizen-soldiers (\textit{guominbing}) units. Citizen-soldiers were trained at the district level on basic military skills, including weapon use, fortification construction, execution of basic orders as well as reconnaissance and liaison. The training for citizen-soldiers also included civic education delivered in the form of lectures on the Three Principles of the People, New Life Movement, and National Economic Construction.\textsuperscript{17}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{13}James Zheng Gao, \textit{Historical Dictionary of Modern China (1800-1949)} (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 20.
\textsuperscript{14}Van de Ven, “New States of War: Communist and Nationalist Warfare and State Building (1928-1934),” 357.
\textsuperscript{15}Graff and Higham, “Introduction,” 10.
\textsuperscript{16}Zhongyang xunliantuan bingyi ganbu xunlianban, ed., \textit{Bingyi fagui huibian, yiwu} (Compilation of laws and regulations on conscription, drafting affairs) (n. l.: n. p., 1942), 55.
\textsuperscript{17}Van de Ven, \textit{War and Nationalism in China}, 145.
\end{flushright}
Able-bodied men between the ages of twenty and twenty-five were to be recruited into the army to perform active duty (xianyi) for three years. Soldiers who retired from active duty were then expected to serve the military as reservists (zaixiang junren) until they reached the age of forty-five. During the agricultural off-season, citizen-soldiers and reservists were expected to attend military training, drills and reviews at local levels on a regular basis, perform policing services in case of temporary emergencies, and they were subject to reactivation during times of war. Military service required for national citizens was also explicitly gendered. According to this law, it was only men’s national duty as citizens to join the army and defend the country; women did not have any duty of military service.

The 1933 compulsory conscription law represented the GMD’s state-building efforts to reform the military and to discipline and militarize society. As van de Ven comments, the purpose of the military service law was to raise awareness of the nation as well as to nurture heroic and martial attitudes. By demanding military service as the legal duty for national citizens, the GMD was creating a militarized ideal of citizenship. Legalizing military service as a national duty for citizens was intended to build the concept of citizenship among the publics during the period of political tutelage (1928-1947, xunzheng). The vision that the Nationalist state attempted to forge among the

---

18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 146.
20 According to Sun Yat-sen’s plans, the GMD was to rebuild China in three steps: military rule (junzheng), political tutelage (xunzheng), and constitutional rule (xianzheng). After the National Revolutionary Army ended its northern campaigns in 1928, China came under the political tutelage of the GMD. The principal aim of this period was to enable the party, which considered itself to be the elite of the Chinese nation, “to instruct the people in the pursuit of constructive work of a revolutionary nature.” The organization of a new government in 1947, according to the Constitution
public was to make military service a prerequisite for a man to become a full-fledged citizen.

The link between military service and citizenship status was reinforced in the Nationalist legal document *Zhonghua minguo xianfa cao'an shiyi* (Illustration on the Republic of China Constitution draft) published in 1936. It stated:

Since the nation cannot survive in the world without military forces, to perform military duty is the natural obligation for the people. Although every nation state employs different military systems, the general principle is the same—which is that citizens (*guomin*) have the duty to serve the military. Modern warfare is a national cause that requires military training of national citizens in peacetime to handle emergency situations.\(^{21}\)

According to this legal document, since the military constituted the essence of a nation’s security and power, serving in the military thus became a national obligation for every male citizen. Therefore, performing military service was considered by the GMD as the vehicle by which all men could develop a unified national identity regardless of class, age, profession, family and education background. They would be shaped into the ideal image of military-ready and disciplined citizens.

The Nationalist state’s intention in creating this idealized breed of citizenry among the public by implementing the conscription system was clearly indicated in the “Zhengbing ling” (Conscription order) issued on March 1, 1936, the same day as the official beginning of the compulsory conscription law. This conscription order wrote:

---

\(^{21}\) Jin Mingsheng, *Zhonghua minguo xianfa cao’an shiyi* (Illustration on the Republic of China Constitution draft) (Shanghai: Shijie shuju, 1936), 42.
The fundamental way to build the power of the nation is to enlarge and strengthen its military force. The mercenary system separated soldiers from the general masses and consequently prevented national consciousness from developing…Thus [the Nationalist state] encouraged people in the whole nation to wake up and perform military duty in compliance with the conscription law in order to recover our nation.\textsuperscript{22}

The first compulsory conscription law and its related legal and political edicts stressed the crucial role of the military in nation-state building and conceptually associated military service with citizen status. Having legalized military service as a national duty of citizens, the GMD state intended to bring together the males of vastly different backgrounds in a national bond.

In August 1936—a mere five months after the implementation of the first compulsory law—the Nationalist state made several notable revisions. It introduced the concepts of exemption from military service (\textit{mianyi}), deferment of military service (\textit{huanyi}), and prohibition of military service (\textit{jinyi}). Men who were to be exempted from military service included the disabled, those who suffered from incurable diseases, and those who were assigned by the government with special appointments. Men who were forbidden from performing military service were those who were sentenced to life imprisonment and who were permanently deprived of political rights.\textsuperscript{23} Men who were exempted from active duty were those who did not meet physical standards, who were only sons in their families, as well as students in senior or higher-level schools. Men who could defer active duty were civil servants, those who could not fully recover from any

\textsuperscript{22} Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, ed., \textit{Bingyi xuanchuan ji youdai zhengshu faling huibian} (Compilation of conscription propaganda as well as laws and regulations on favorably treating soldiers’ dependents) (Chongqing: Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, 1943), 39.

\textsuperscript{23} Zhongyang xunliantuan bingyi ganbu xunlianban, ed., \textit{Bingyi fagui huibian, yiwu}, 57.
disease within months, school teachers, those who were not clear of suspicion for criminal offenses, as well as those from a family where half of the sons were already active soldiers.\textsuperscript{24}

When the Nationalist state issued the first compulsory conscription law in 1933, it did not include the rules on mianyi, huanyi and jinyi. The GMD intended to build a unified national identity as disciplined and militarized modern citizens through society. Adding these rules immediately after the implementation of the law presented two possible meanings. First, the GMD’s effort to build militarized national citizens that crossed the boundaries of class, profession, family and educational background had to compromise with reality and the needs of the GMD state’s other state-building projects. Giving families’ only sons an exemption from active duty suggested that the GMD’s state-building agenda was shaped by the deep-seated traditional ideal of filial piety for male descendants. Students in senior or higher-level schools were also exempted from military duty. As the historian Jay Taylor comments, Jiang believed that “The only 40,000 college graduates in all of China and other educated youth coming on stream were needed to keep the economy and the government functioning.”\textsuperscript{25}

Second, the rule forbidding recruitment of those sentenced to life imprisonment or deprived of political rights revealed that the GMD had a clear conception of the ideal archetype of what they construed as a disciplined citizen soldier. This rule supported the GMD’s advocacy of military service as a prerequisite for a man to achieve full-fledged

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., 68.
citizenship. It also allowed the GMD to affirm society’s perception that military service was a privilege reserved exclusively for disciplined citizens.

During the Anti-Japanese War, the Nationalist state continued its efforts to improve the compulsory conscription system and to exalt the status of the soldier. Another revision that the Nationalist state made in 1939 to the first compulsory conscription law stipulated that soldier recruitment should follow the Principle of the Three Equals (sanping yuanze)—namely, impartiality (pingyun), equality (pingjun) and fairness (pingdeng).26 According to this Principle, bao and jia heads were to take charge of selecting new conscripts and the responsibility for military service was to rest equitably upon all areas and economic classes of the nation. Local governments were assigned the quota of new recruits in proportion to the number of able-bodied men; more soldiers were recruited in neighborhoods with more able-bodied men. And then the conscripts were to be selected by drawing lots by baojia heads on a fair basis.27 By explaining in detail the responsibilities of bao and jia leaders and the process of recruiting conscripts, the GMD sought to improve the newly established institution—the compulsory conscription law.

The GMD’s efforts to improve the conscription law continued throughout the Anti-Japanese War. In 1943, the Nationalist state revised the law yet again.28 According to the second “Zhengbing ling” issued on November 3, military forces were decreed to be

26 Wang and Gong, Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi, 317.
27 Ibid.
28 Another big change that the 1943 revised conscription law made to the 1933 law was the deletion of the rule that students and graduates of high schools and above levels were exempted from performing military service. The impact of this change on the discourse of the soldier figure will be discussed in Chapter Five on the Youth Army.
the only way to achieve the survival of the nation. It stated, “Without the military force
the nation could not survive, and without the implementation of the compulsory
conscription system the military force could not be reinforced.” The 1933 conscription
law outlined the recruitment system to be a combination of the compulsory conscription
and mercenary methods, while the 1943 revised law established compulsory conscription
as the only military system. The revised 1943 conscription law also reinforced the
conception of linking military service with citizen status that was already cultivated in the
1933 version. Compared to the 1933 law, the 1943 revision added the word “sacred”
(*shensheng*) to emphasize that every citizen in the Republic of China had the obligation
to perform military study in accordance with law. Adding this word revealed that the
Nationalist state attempted to exalt the social status of citizens who followed the
conscription law and performed military service. The citizen-soldier thus became the
model citizen and a national hero to be emulated and respected by society. The 1943
revised conscription law provided that women too had the obligation to serve the army,
but they were only expected to perform non-combat tasks such as providing assistance
and care to male soldiers. The military still remained fundamentally gender-segregated
because women were excluded from ground combat.

The purpose of the 1933 conscription law was primarily to introduce to society
the association between the statuses of citizen and soldier by claiming that performing
military service was the duty of every citizen. Its content was chiefly to provide an

---

30Ibid., 8.
explanation of structures, terms, and concepts in the conscription system such as categories of military service, age requirements, drawing and management of new conscripts. In other words, the law was an initial step in establishing the soldier as a citizen who followed state law and fulfilled his obligation of national duty. However, it sought little regulation over the political, economic and cultural rights or the duties a soldier should have as a citizen.

During the Anti-Japanese War, the Nationalist state established a series of edicts regarding the rights of soldiers as national citizens. The “Kangzhan jianguo gangling” (Guidelines for resisting the Japanese and building the state) issued by the GMD on April 1938, which was a comprehensive guide to the state’s political, economic, military and diplomatic policies, stipulated that one of the wartime military policies was “To comfort the injured army officers and soldiers, to arrange a place for the disabled soldiers and to favorably treat the dependents of the soldiers in order to bolster the military morale and promote national mobilization.” 31 The GMD tried to build the conception that the soldier—as a model citizen and national hero—not only had the duty of performing military service but also enjoyed the individual right to receive benefits from the state.

Soldiers’ rights legalized through the GMD’s military edicts during the Anti-Japanese War covered many aspects of their personal life. For example, according to the “Zhanshi shibing yu jiashu tongxin banfa” (Rules on the correspondence between soldiers and their dependents) issued on May 17, 1939 by the Military Affairs Commission, political workers and copy clerks (wenshu) in every army unit were

31Shi Mei et al., eds., Kangzhan jianguo gangling wenda (Questions and answers on the guidelines for resisting the Japanese and building the state) (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1938), 3.
expected to take responsibility for helping soldiers in the unit write letters once a month. Neighborhood leaders were also to mobilize teachers, students, intellectuals and civil servants to pay regular visits to army barracks and write letters for soldiers. The 1943 revision of the first conscription law expanded rights to active duty soldiers and their families. For example, if activated soldiers had debt which was left unpaid prior to enlistment, they could delay paying it off after they had completed active duty. Their spouse and direct family members would enjoy favorable treatment of receiving relief from the local government. After the soldiers retired from the military, they were given favorable consideration when applying for positions in government agencies, social organizations, schools and factories. The 1943-revised conscription law also had specific rules on the policies of military promotion, honor conferment and punitive measures. Reservists had the right to keep their original job positions and salary if they were activated.33

The military edicts that the Nationalist government issued during the Anti-Japanese War intended not only to uphold the rights of soldiers but also to project the state’s influence into every aspect of the soldiers’ personal lives. For example, although the Nationalist state supported the soldiers’ desires to write letters to their families, it also had specific regulations concerning the letters’ content. Wartime correspondence between soldiers and their dependents was limited to discussing the following material: reporting on safety, happiness, health, promotion, and the honor of the soldiers or their comrades as

33 Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, ed., Bingyi xuanchuan ji youdai zhengshu faling huibian, 8.
well as of those coming from the same native place or lineage; stories of heroic successes in killing and capturing enemies; of loving the nation; of the desire to protect the masses; of being supported and welcomed by civilians; making personal greetings to family members and discussing family affairs. Soldiers were forbidden to mention certain information, especially the action, direction and goals of their units, military secrets, and anything that might weaken military morale. The frequency of correspondence was limited to once every month except under special circumstances.\textsuperscript{34} When the copy clerks helped the soldiers write family letters, they were encouraged to arouse patriotic sentiments among them and strengthen their belief in winning the war.\textsuperscript{35} The rules of the soldiers’ personal correspondence with their families revealed the Nationalist state’s intention of projecting its authority into the soldiers’ personal affairs.

The 1943 revised conscription law not only provided the soldiers’ rights but also made clear their duties. First, when the soldiers enlisted and were assigned to units, they were made to swear an oath of loyalty to the Nationalist government. Second, they were taught to guard military and state secrets. Third, they were not allowed to participate in any public gathering or meeting unless expressly permitted by authorities. Fourth, they were required to attain approval by authorities in order to get married.\textsuperscript{36} The codification of soldiers’ rights and duties in military laws finally formally legalized and institutionalized the link between the soldier and citizen status.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{35}Zhongyang xunliantuan bingyi ganbu xunlianban, ed., \textit{Bingyi fagui huibian, yiwu}, 289.
\textsuperscript{36}Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, ed., \textit{Bingyi xuanchuan ji youdai zhengshu faling huijian}, 8.
The institutionalization of the link between the soldier and citizen status resulted from the GMD’s continuous state-building efforts during the Anti-Japanese War. The wartime revisions made to the 1933 conscription law provided a series of rights to the soldiers and also made clear the duties that the soldier had to fulfill as citizens. Soldiers were legally recognized modern citizens who had both rights from the nation and duties for the nation. However, the significance of the rights that the GMD’s military laws and edicts gave to the soldiers should not be overvalued. In the first place, the GMD state gave the soldiers the rights that benefited their life and family with the intention of bolstering military morale and ensuring continuous sources of new conscripts. These rights were viewed primarily as a means of promoting the state-making interests of the GMD state. In the second place, since the majority of soldiers in the GMD army were illiterate as the next section will show, there is also the question of just how aware soldiers, especially illiterate soldiers, could have been well aware of their “rights.”

The Soldier as the Epitome of Morality

In the almost fifteen years of civil wars following the Qing Dynasty’s collapse in 1911, being a soldier increasingly had become associated with warlord-army excess. The historian Arthur Waldron notes that the general repugnance generated by warlord depredations eroded public enthusiasm for the martial spirit being advocated by the intellectual elite.37 The Nationalist state viewed the military as the most effective institution for not only instilling a martial ethos but also promoting moral qualities in the

larger society. In Nationalist discourse on the topic of the soldier, the military had a responsibility to train citizen-soldiers into moral models. For the Nationalist authorities, the goal of military education was to cultivate the personality and morality of ordinary soldiers so that they could restore the lost trust in the military among the public. After the soldiers were recruited, the Nationalist government took every chance to cultivate the cadets’ moral virtues. The senior-level Nationalist political and military authority Zhu Peide (1887-1937) commented in 1934 that “in every aspect of military training, moral cultivation was the priority.” For the Nationalists, a soldier should not only be a model citizen and national hero who performed military service but also serve as the epitome of morality.

Literacy education was one of the techniques that the GMD adopted to cultivate moral virtues of the soldiers. The Nationalist state decided to operate literacy programs for soldiers in military units mainly because the majority of the soldiers comprising the Nationalist Army were young and poorly educated. According to a 1929 survey of a brigade in the Third Reorganized Military Zone (bianqian qu), 90% of its soldiers were

---

39 Zhu Peide served as the General Inspector (zongjian) at the General Inspector Branch (zongjian bu) of the Nationalist army during the war.
40 Zhu Peide, Junguan de xinshenghuo (New life of military officers) (Nanjing: Zhengzhong shuju, 1934), 11.
41 The National Revolutionary Army Reorganized Meeting (Guomin gemingjun bianqian huiyi) was held on January 1, 1929. It set up eight reorganized military zones (bianqianqu) within the nation: Central Reorganized Military Zone (led by Jiang Jieshi), Navy Zone (led by Jiang), No. 1 Zone (led by Jiang), No. 2 Zone (led by Feng Yuxiang), No. 3 Zone (led by Yan Xishan), No. 4 Zone (led by Li Zongren), No. 5 Zone (led by Northeastern warlords), and No. 6 Zone (led by warlords in Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou and Xikang).
younger than 30, and 73% were between the ages of twenty and twenty-five.\textsuperscript{42} A 1932 survey showed that the average age of soldiers in a unit of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Route Army was 24.\textsuperscript{43} And although the Nationalist state had rules on age when recruiting new soldiers, it did not have specific requirements regarding their educational levels (with the exception of the navy and air forces).\textsuperscript{44}

In general, the educational background of Nationalist soldiers was very low. In the first years of the Nanjing Decade, the overwhelming impression given of soldiers’ educational backgrounds was that the majority of them were illiterate. In 1929, the sociologist Tao Menghe surveyed a unit of 946 soldiers in the Third Reorganized Military Zone located in Shanxi, and found that only 13% of them were able to write letters by themselves and the rest were unable to write and/or read.\textsuperscript{45} During the Anti-Japanese War, the educational levels of newly recruited soldiers were still very low. After the Guinan Battle that went on in Nanning, Guangxi in late 1939, a military general tested a group of new conscripts that were drafted from Guizhou. This test found that 97% were illiterate and that the remaining 3% were not well-educated enough even to serve as copy clerks.

\textsuperscript{42}Wang and Gong, \textit{Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi}, 399.
\textsuperscript{43}Ibid. The 19\textsuperscript{th} Route Army was a Nationalist army led by General Cai Tingkai (1892-1968). It gained a good reputation among Chinese for fighting the Japanese in Shanghai in the 1932 Battle of Shanghai.
\textsuperscript{44}According to the “Haijun lianbing zhaomujianzhang” (General regulations on recruiting navy forces) issued in October 1929, the new recruits in the navy force must have basic literacy education (\textit{chushi wenzi}). See Zhongguo di’er lishi dang’an guan, ed., \textit{Zhonghua minguoshi dang’an ziliao huibian} (Compilations of archives and materials during the Republic of China period), Vol. 5, No. 1 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1994), 266.
\textsuperscript{45}Wang and Gong, \textit{Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi}, 400.
Because of the poor educational background of the young soldiers, the Nationalist army units needed not only to carry out military training for the soldiers but also to conduct citizenship education (guomin jiaoyu) for them. Citizenship education included teaching basic knowledge such as Arabic numerals, measurement units, literacy, and moral virtues. Textbooks were designed not only to teach the soldiers language and Chinese characters but also further to indoctrinate them on the moral spirit of the citizen soldier that the state expected them to master. Thus, the literacy textbooks edited by the GMD’s Military Affairs Commission serve as an excellent window for examining the meaning of the soldier that the Nationalist state tried to create.

One of the few available literacy textbooks for soldiers was the 1935 version of *Shiping shizi keben, disance* (Literacy textbooks for soldiers, level three). Lessons in these literacy textbooks were very short, but as a whole present a significant snapshot of the interpretation of the soldier figure by the Nationalist state. The first part of this textbook introduced emblems and symbols of the Nationalist state, including the flags of the Nationalist Party, state and army, the Nationalist Party anthem, the Three Principles of the People, and the National Day (October Tenth). The second part sought to cultivate moral virtues in soldiers. These moral virtues included courage, diligence, frugality, solidarity, no fear of death, loving their families and extending love further to their hometowns, provinces and the nation. The third part introduced some basic rules and skills that a soldier as a citizen should know in order to execute military discipline.

---

46 This literacy textbook for soldiers is the only one that is currently kept in the Shanghai Municipal Library.
48 Ibid., 6-8, 18.
and deal with the civilian community. For example, the lessons taught the soldiers how to
draft important routine documents such as a Request for Leave (qingjia tiao), a house
rental contract, a receipt, a loan note, an invoice, and a lender’s note as well as a primer
on how to keep financial accounts.\footnote{Ibid., 21-25.}

A review of the literacy textbook for soldiers shows that the GMD state aimed to
make the soldiers into politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated modern citizens. As
citizens, the soldiers were expected to develop a nationalistic consciousness and basic
knowledge about the nation; they should follow military and civilian regulations; they
should also have not only the qualities that were usually considered important for a
combatant at the front, such as no fear of death, but also qualities that were not
exclusively associated with a warrior. Indeed, given the realities of limited resources, the
GMD state considered diligence and frugality just as important as military qualities such
as courage and fearlessness. As Lloyd Eastman notes in a study of Nationalist rule, at the
start of the Anti-Japanese War, about 300,000 troops had received German-type training,
but only 80,000 of these were fully equipped with German weapons. The remainder of
the approximately 1.7 million men in the Nationalist army were, by European and
Nationalist army as revealed in Eastman’s study helped explain why values like frugality
and diligence were considered by the GMD state to be important qualities for the soldier.
The GMD state taught these moral virtues to the soldiers and tried to make them into the
exemplification of morality to be emulated by other citizens. Cultivating these moral virtues in the soldiers revealed that the GMD state desired the citizen not only to be disciplined and politicized but also morally cultivated.

The rhetoric that the soldier was not only a disciplined and politicized model citizen but also the incarnation of moral virtue appeared in slogans in other aspects of military education as well. The *Zhanshi lujun jiaoyuling cao’an* (Draft of education decree in the wartime period) that was issued as the textbook for military units and academies by the Branch of Military Training (Junxun bu) in September 1944 listed ten slogans for soldiers. These slogans were:

1. To carry forward the Three Principles of the People and defend the nation
2. To support the Nationalist government and obey the authorities
3. To respect officers and protect the masses
4. To be dedicated to military duty and execute the order
5. To adhere to the discipline and be brave and firm
6. To foster the sense of solidarity and cooperation
7. To build senses of responsibility, honor and shame and uphold martial virtues
8. To work diligently and practice thrift and simplicity (*jiandan*)
9. To follow etiquette and keep upright demeanor
10. To cultivate moral character and adhere to the faith

The literacy lessons in 1935 military textbooks and these ten slogans revealed that during both the Encirclement Campaigns (1931-1934) launched by the GMD government with the goal of destroying the developing CCP army and the Anti-Japanese War, the GMD state tried to cultivate many moral qualities into the soldiers and to transform the citizen soldier into the embodiment of morality.

---

51Junshi weiyuanhui junxunbu, *Zhanshi lujun jiaoyuling cao’an* (The draft of education decree in wartime period) (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui junxunbu, 1944), 1.
The GMD’s discourse presenting the soldier as a moral model of the national citizen was furthered through its political propaganda from the New Life Movement (xinshenghuo yundong). This movement, which was set up by Jiang Jieshi and his wife Song Meiling (1898-2003) in 1934, attempted to rejuvenate the Chinese nation and foster moral regeneration under the threats of foreign aggression and Communism ideology. Jiang used the Confucian notion of self-cultivation to justify his efforts to regulate the behaviors of citizens and to inculcate the idea that national salvation lay in dictating behavioral norms for individual Chinese. As van de Ven reveals, the movement tried to make Chinese life more military, more productive, and more aesthetically pleasing (the “Three Transformations”—junshi hua, shengchan hua, meishu hua).52

The New Life Movement attempted to inculcate the public with a basic set of Confucian values and celebrated these so-called native virtues as the principles of national citizens. According to the pamphlet Junguande xinshenghuo (New life of army officers) written by the Nationalist military authority Zhu Peide, the main intention of launching the New Life Movement was to renew four categories of traditional virtues of propriety (lì), righteousness (yì), honesty (lian), and shame (chì), and to make every aspect of social life comply with these virtues. He viewed the advocating and observing of these virtues as the key to recovering the nation’s spirit.53

For Nationalist authorities like Zhu, soldiers were the group “who were most suitable to serve as the practitioners of the virtues advocated in the New Life

52 Van de Ven, War and Nationalism, 164.
53 Zhu, Junguande xinshenghuo, 1.
Movement.”54 In Nationalist propaganda, a soldier was the epitome of morality and should play a model role in implementing the New Life Movement. To justify this propaganda, the Nationalists stressed that the virtues celebrated in the New Life Movement applied perfectly to the military. When the previously mentioned military education textbook Zhanshi lujun jiaoyuling cao’an spoke of martial virtues, it wrote that the senses of propriety, righteousness, honesty and shame were the only spirits that the soldiers must possess.55

To justify the applicability of these virtues in the military, in their propaganda on the New Life Movement the Nationalist authorities reinterpreted traditional virtues with new meanings. According to the “Xinshenghuode xinyiyi zhaiyao” (Abstract of new meanings of the new life), a digest of a broadcast speech on February 18, 1939 to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the New Life Movement, propriety meant decent behavior in peacetime and strict discipline in wartime; righteousness meant justifiable action in peacetime and heroic sacrifice in wartime; honesty meant clear judgment in peacetime and frugality in wartime; shame meant law-abiding consciousness in peacetime and brave fighting in wartime.56 This abstract of peacetime-wartime corollaries clearly illustrated that the virtues of propriety, righteousness, honesty and shame, which were advocated in the New Life Movement, as applied to the military. For example, following the conscription law, seeing off an army marching to the front, along with comforting and serving the injured soldiers, were all evidence of practicing propriety.

54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., 2.
56 Ibid.
Fighting bravely against the enemies in the battlefield or volunteering to join the army were both evidence of practicing righteousness.\textsuperscript{57} Cherishing government and army resources without any waste was evidence of practicing honesty.\textsuperscript{58} By arguing that the virtues advocated in the New Life Movement applied to the military, the GMD state expected the soldier to perform a model role in cultivating moral virtues.

The Nationalist state’s expectation for the soldier to be a model citizen and an epitome of morality applied equally to reservists who were not activated or had already retired from active duty. According to the “Lujun zhaoji zanxing guize” (Temporary rules on convening reservists) issued by the Military Affairs Commission on November 2, 1936:

Reservists should pursue their original professions at their neighborhood in peacetime, strictly observe discipline, take physical exercise, love the nation, and serve as the advocator for the common masses. Under the threat of natural disaster or banditry, reservists should be braver and make greater efforts than the common people to defend public interests.\textsuperscript{59}

By demanding that reservists be braver and make greater efforts to defend public interests, the GMD was sending to society the signal that the soldier, no matter whether he was activated or not, must be a model citizen and set a moral example for the civilians to emulate.

The GMD state’s literacy and other military textbooks, political propaganda and military edicts all showed that it argued for a morally cultivated citizen ideal and constructed the soldier as the archetype for such citizens. As one of the conscription

\textsuperscript{57} Ye Shoukang et al., \textit{Junren shouce} (Handbooks for soldiers) (Jinhua: Zhejiang junxun tushu chubanshe, 1939), 33.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Zhongyang xunliantuan bingyi ganbu xunlianban, ed., \textit{Bingyi fagui huibian, \textit{yiwu}, 124.
slogans went, “A good citizen is the foundation of a good soldier, and a good soldier is the model of a good citizen” (liangmin shi liangbing de jichu, liangbing shi liangmin de mofan). This slogan strengthened the association of the soldier with citizenship status and depicted the soldier as a model citizen. The soldiers were to play a model role for society by developing political consciousness of nationalistic sentiment, fostering loyalty to the Nationalist state, abiding by discipline and regulations, but also in cultivating moral virtues that were advocated by the GMD’s propaganda.

The Contrast in Reality

The GMD’s military laws, edicts, educational materials and political propaganda as a whole revealed that the GMD advocated a militarized, politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizen ideal. It also showed that the GMD state tried to elevate the rhetorical status of the soldier as a model citizen who was not only a national hero performing sacred military duties but also an epitome of moral virtues. The soldier thus became a national paragon that the whole of society was to respect and imitate. Exalting the soldiers’ rhetorical status to such a high level served the GMD’s state-building agendas of creating a national citizenry that matched its ideals and achieving nation-wide military mobilization.

However, an examination of soldiers’ real life conditions and the implementation of the conscription system on local levels will show that the soldiers did not truly benefit from the rhetorical exaltation of their status; nor did society treat the soldier as a model

---

Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, ed., Bingyi xuanchuan ji youdai zhengshu faling huibian, 57.
citizen. For that reason, men did not enthusiastically join the army in compliance with the conscription law. In the end, the heroic soldier ideal promoted by the GMD state to achieve military mobilization met resistance from the society.

The rough real-life conditions of soldiering also made it hard for society to respect and emulate soldiers as the GMD state had hoped it would. The soldiers in the Nanjing Decade and during the Anti-Japanese War were still indisputably of a lower social status and their lives had not really improved despite the multiple government policies specifically tackling the subject of soldiers’ rights. The conscripts were still paid poorly and fed badly, contrasting greatly with the imagery developed by GMD’s rhetoric. There was also a sharp disconnect between the propaganda and the reality of the soldier’s status as model citizen, national hero, and epitome of morality.

When the Nanjing regime was first founded, the salaries of ordinary soldiers were decent enough to support a family. Around the year of 1927, a Staff Sergeant (shangshi)’s monthly salary was 20 yuan, a Sergeant (zhongshi)’s 16 yuan, a Corporal (xiashi)’s 14 yuan, a Private First Class E-3 (shangdengbing)’s 12 yuan, a Private E-2 (yidengbing)’s 10 yuan, and a Private E-1 (erdengbing)’s 10 yuan. Based on the 1958 memoirs of the Nationalist leader Li Zongren, “According to the living standards at that time, a soldier spent about 2 yuan on food every month, so an ordinary soldier’s monthly salary was enough to support a household of two persons.”

---

61 Wang and Gong, Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi, 335. Corporal, Sergeant and Staff Sergeant were military titles of non-commissioned officers. Private E-1, Private E-2 and Private First Class E-3 constituted the three titles in Enlisted Personnel.
After 1932, however, the basic living conditions of soldiers consistently deteriorated. According to the “Kunnan shiqi lujun gebudui zanxing jiyu guize” (Temporary rules on army pay during the difficult period) issued by the Nationalist government in June 1932, the soldiers should have been paid guonanxiang (“national-calamity-pay”) which deducted 25% from the original salary.\(^{63}\) Drawing from a 1935 table on the national-calamity-pay at a cavalry division, after deduction a Staff Sergeant was paid 11 yuan, a Sergeant 8 yuan, a Corporal 7 yuan, a Private E-3 5 yuan, a Private E-2 4 yuan, and a Private E-1 3 yuan. After the monthly expenditure on food was deducted from the salary, there was little left.\(^{64}\) Based on a survey of the living conditions of soldiers in a Jiangxi unit done in the middle 1930s, every soldier needed to spend almost 4 yuan per month in total to feed himself.\(^{65}\) With the national-calamity-pay deduction, the lowest-level soldiers holding pay grades of E-1 to E-3 could hardly support themselves, let alone their families. Minister of War Chen Cheng (1898-1965) argued in 1939 that “Inflation makes it difficult for a soldier to afford food expenditures, let alone other life needs. Furthermore, it is now impossible for troops that have been called up to assist their families.”\(^{66}\) The poor pay of the soldiers and their inability to support their families and even themselves prevented the public from viewing the soldier as their model. Thus, the GMD’s military mobilization of constructing the soldier as national paragon to be copied by the masses did not generate much appeal.


\(^{64}\) Wang and Gong, ed., Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi, 320.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 336.

\(^{66}\) Van de Ven, War and Nationalism in China, 257.
Not only were soldiers poorly paid, they were also badly fed and habitually suffered from poor health. In the Eighth National Political Council Conference (Guomin canzhenghui), held in September 1944, 122 council members presented the “Taolun gaishan guanbing ji gongjiao renyuan daiyu banfa’an” (Proposal of improving the treatment of army officers, soldiers, civil servants and school teachers). The proposal pointed out that “in recent years with prices increasing dramatically, the soldiers at the front received very low pay and looked famished; many of them were even starved to death.” Out of the 14 million the Nationalists recorded as having been conscripted, about 11 million either deserted or perished. The loss of new recruits was largely due to lack of medical care, cruel treatment from the conscription guards, as well as high disease and death rate. Eastman states, “Fearful that the conscripts would try to escape, the guards treated them like prisoners; frequently they roped the recruits together, linking them like pearls on a string.” The poor treatment of the soldiers made it unlikely that society would wish to emulate the soldier, the national model in state and party rhetoric, and become disciplined, military-ready, politicized, and morally cultivated citizen.

Since in the view of much of society, being a soldier would not bring much life improvement or substantial benefits, the conscription system met resistance from local society. The principles of equality and fairness that theoretically guided the process of

---

67The National Political Council Conference (Guomin canzhenghui) was a political agent under the Nationalist rule, which existed between July 1938 and March 1948.
68Wang and Gong, ed., Zhongguo jindai junren daiyu shi, 320.
69R. J. Rummel, Death by Government (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 130. During the periods of the Nanjing Decade and the Second Sino-Japanese War, the soldiers who received relatively good treatment were those in the youth army, which consisted of students and civil servants. The construction of the soldier figure by the students is discussed in Chapter Five.
70Eastman, Seeds of Destruction, 151.
drafting new recruits as the conscription laws required were not fully implemented in reality. Eastman reveals several reasons why the conscription system did not work out at the local level as well as the GMD state expected. The lottery system for selecting conscripts was seldom employed and it even frequently provoked riots in local neighborhoods where it was used. Many well-off families got their sons into universities so that they would be exempted from the draft. The Nationalist government exercised little control over the baojia heads upon whom it depended ultimately to carry out the work of selecting and organizing the draftees. Local authorities changed the population registers, increased or decreased recorded ages, all so that members of their families and their friends’ families could avoid the draft.71 The persons who were actually in charge of the conscription process at the local level sometimes were not even baojia heads. In some counties, local power-holders such as the tuhao lieshen (local bullies and evil gentry) and secret societies controlled all aspects of government. “When the baojia heads received a draft call, they would have to convene a meeting of the local power-holders to decide who would, and who would not, be drafted.”72

Hans van de Ven also reveals that not only peasants resisted conscription; urban and rural gentry and landlord families, whom baojia heads could not control, also exploited their skills, connection, and money to prevent their own children from being drafted. Van de Ven notes, “Large-scale recruitment, sanctioned or not and even if partially fictitious, generated social upheaval, led to widespread evasion, created

71 Ibid., 147-148.
72 Ibid.
opportunities for malfeasance, and fueled banditry.” Confusion in the implementation of the conscription system confirmed that the GMD’s elevation of soldiers’ status in rhetoric received resistance from the larger society.

Conclusion

This chapter mainy focuses on the GMD state’s discourse on the soldier figure as forged in its propaganda on the compulsory conscription system, which was initiated in 1933 and improved in the mid-1930s and during the Anti-Japanese War. It investigates the Nationalist state’s efforts in constructing the soldier as a model citizen who not only performed a sacred military duty in compliance with the conscription law but also cultivated moral virtues as advocated by military education and political propaganda. In this discourse, the soldier took on the mantle of a national hero and paragon that was to be respected and emulated by all of society. This discourse served the GMD’s military mobilization goal and its state-building agenda of creating a militarized, politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizenry.

To achieve the goals of state building and military mobilization, the GMD expanded state institutions, trying to penetrate its regulation deeper into local society. It reintroduced a traditional local control system of mutual surveillance—the baojia system—between 1932 and 1934. The baojia organizations in turn prepared the GMD to implement the conscription system in the nationwide. The first compulsory conscription law issued in 1933 (and implemented in 1936) and its later revisions legalized the citizen

---

Van de Ven, War And Nationalism in China, 254.
status of the soldier and revealed the GMD’s militarized, politicized and disciplined citizen ideal. By making clear the soldier’s rights and duties as a citizen in military law, the GMD state tried to create disciplined citizens first in the army. By asserting military service to be a sacred duty, the GMD state thereby elevated the status of citizen-soldiers as model citizens and national heroes. Cultivating citizen-soldiers’ nationalistic sentiment and moral virtues via literacy textbooks and other military training materials meant that the GMD state expected citizen soldiers to be politicalized and morally cultivated. The GMD state expected soldiers to be models cultivating the moral virtues it advocated in the New Life Movement starting in 1934. Forging this rhetoric on the soldier figure helped the GMD state propagate the military-ready, disciplined and morally cultivated citizen ideal to the society.

Much to the GMD government’s dismay, the elevation of the rhetorical status of soldiers as national hero and paragon did not lead the greater society to emulate them and actively perform military service. The Nationalist state’s delicate efforts in elevating the soldier’s status were not translated into fundamental improvement of soldiers’ living standards. And because of financial shortages, bureaucratic corruption, and poor management, most common soldiers were not able to achieve economic independence for their families or themselves as was expected by both the state and by society. The view that being a soldier equated to a miserable life was widely held in society, which made the implementation of the conscription system unworkable in reality. The gap between the rhetorical elevation of the soldiers’ status with their real life conditions as well as the actual implementation of the conscription system showed that the GMD’s heroic soldier
discourse was resisted by the society, which in turn hindered the GMD’s state-building agenda.
Chapter 3

Wartime Soldier Support by Urban Intellectuals and Professionals

Introduction

Civic education at the Whampoa Military Academy as discussed in Chapter 1, combined with the military laws and political propaganda discussed in Chapter 2, reveal that the GMD constructed a heroic discourse of celebrating the soldier’s status as a model disciplined, politicized and morally cultivated citizen to be respected and emulated by society. This discourse became a central component for the GMD’s state-building and military mobilization agenda. However, the GMD’s attempts to extend this discourse to the national army and society were impeded by resistance from some Whampoa cadets, provincial warlords, local society and by its inability to improve the treatment of soldiers.

This chapter will examine how urban intellectuals and professionals participated in state building by undertaking soldier support activities during the Anti-Japanese War. It will focus on how the depictions of soldiers through war reportage and documents created by these urban intellectuals and professionals revealed their relations with the state. This chapter will demonstrate that these urban forces collaborated with, but in doing so, also complicated the GMD’s heroic rhetoric of the soldier figure. In this manner, these urban intellectuals and professionals advocated for their political influence as
propaganda workers, social mobilizers and army educators, and voiced their criticism of the GMD government.

The Other Side of the Heroic-Soldier Ideal

After the Anti-Japanese War broke out in July 1937, many urban intellectuals such as writers, newspaper editors, rank-and-file college students, and urban professionals provided service for the army either by visiting the front line or by working at local hospitals. Some of them, such as Hu Lanqi (1901-1994) and Xie Bingying (1906-2000), organized the War Service Corps (zhandi fuwutuan) and went to the battlefield to report their war experiences and provide assistance to the soldiers. As early as the outbreak of the war in 1937, the GMD state tried to penetrate its influence among urban intellectuals by drawing writers into official ranks. Many of these intellectuals who performed their war service were affiliated with the Nationalist government. For example, Guo Moruo (1892-1978) was appointed in 1938 as head of the Third Section of the National Military Council’s newly created Political Department in charge of propaganda.¹ As Leo Ou-fan Lee points out, the writers’ propaganda activities became “formally sanctioned by the government.”² The actions of urban intellectuals through war service represented their active participation in the GMD’s state-building agendas of army support and national salvation.

²Ibid.
The urban intellectuals who organized the War Service Corps identified multiple roles for those involved. Hu Lanqi, who organized the Shanghai Professional Women War Area Service Corps (Shanghai laodong funü zhandi fuwutuan) on October 5, 1937, explained the four main goals of the corps in a 1939 work report: to promote national resistance and mobilize the masses, to detect traitors, to comfort and encourage soldiers, treat and cure the wounded soldiers, and help maintain military discipline, and to investigate the work conditions of civil servants at the local level.\(^3\) The journalist Liu Naifu (1909-1939) summarized in October 1937 the two main tasks of cultural intellectuals during the war. The first was to serve the army by going to the front lines in person, and the second was to mobilize and organize the people by working with urban institutions and the countryside.\(^4\) The work reports of the War Service Corps organized by these intellectuals and their writings on war service revealed that they performed many roles of war service such as propaganda work, social mobilization, and war reportage.

Upon visiting the front lines, many notable intellectuals such as Xie Bingying (female writer and soldier), Fan Changjiang (1909-1970, journalist and social activist), Li Mingjian (1916-1979, artist and social activist), Wu Dakun (1916-2007, economist and the secretary in charge of the propaganda branch of the United Association of Various Circles for National Salvation ([Quanguo gejie jiuguo lianhehui]),\(^5\) as well as many

\(^3\)Hu Lanqi, Zhandi ernian (Two years at the front line) (Ji’an: Laodong funü zhandi fuwutuan, 1939), 1.

\(^4\)Liu Naifu, Zhandi fuwu gongzuo yu jingyan (Experiences in performing war area service work) (Hankou: Shenghuo shudian, 1938), 2.

\(^5\)The United Association of Various Circles for National Salvation was a social organization founded by patriotic intellectuals in Shanghai on May 31, 1936. Its members also included pro-democracy
young college students all wrote reports on their war experience and published them in various wartime newspapers like Tianjin’s Dagongbao (L’Impartial)\(^6\) and Jiuwang ribao (Salvation daily).\(^7\) Their writings met the need of “the young readers of literature and the reading publics who loved to read newspapers and magazines.”\(^8\) “Because of their concerns for the war progress, these readers all wanted to see the record and representation of the Anti-Japanese War in the literary works with little loss of immediacy.”\(^9\) Their writings were later collected in a series of reportages (\textit{baogao wenzxue congkan}) such as Zhandoude suhui (Quick sketches of the combat) and Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), both dating from 1943. These writings provided a window to interpret how the soldier was affected by the social forces of urban intellectuals.

The misery of the soldiers was the direct impression given in the writings by the intellectuals who wrote about their experiences on the frontlines. The intellectuals often

\(^6\)Tianjin’s Dagongbao was the oldest active Chinese language newspaper in China. It was founded on June 17, 1902 by the Catholic Manchu publisher Ying Lianzhi (1867-1926) in Tianjin in order to realize a modern and democratic nation. It had a reformist agenda, namely “to increase the level of education of the people in order to change the evil customs of our country.” It regularly published a baihua column and saw itself as “a forum to discuss methods of popular enlightenment.” See Elisabeth Kaske, \textit{The Politics of Language in Chinese Education, 1895-1919} (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008), 142. With “no party affiliation, no political endorsement, no self-promotion, no ignorance” as its motto, the newspaper’s popularity quickly rose because of its sharp political commentary, especially of the Japanese as the Anti-Japanese War began. As the war continued, the journalists fled to other cities, such as Shanghai, Hankou, Chongqing, Guilin and Hong Kong, to continue publishing.

\(^7\)Jiuwang ribao was the newspaper of the Literature and Art Circles National Salvation Association and was published by the CCP. See Stranahan, \textit{Underground}, 220.


\(^9\)Ibid.
provided detailed descriptions of not only their broken bodies and painful expressions but also the poor treatment these wounded soldiers received from the army. Fan Changjiang, in his (1938) reportage “Yi ye zhanchang” (Memories of the wild battlefield), wrote:

The wounded soldiers gathered themselves into groups of eight or ten. The soldiers with light injuries were walking with many smudges of blood on their bodies. Those with only one leg left hobbled along the road with the aid of a stick. And those who were so injured and unable to move just lay down on the ground and groaned painfully. As these wounded were treated so poorly by the government after fierce combat, it was understandable that they could not bear it….  

These wounded soldiers did not have blankets to keep them warm, and their food often had flies inside. For the soldier whose abdomen was injured, the belt was blended with blood and mud into something that you did not have the heart to see. The lower part of the soldiers’ bodies was bloodless and powerless, leaning against the wall. The autumn wind mercilessly blew across their faces. It seemed that only the benevolent sunlight could offer them some warmth and comfort, but this comfort was far from satisfying for these soldiers.  

Such detailed description focusing on the soldier’s body was a theme that often appeared in the writings of the intellectuals. For example, Xie Bingying wrote “Zhanshide shou” (The hand of a soldier) in 1941 to provide a vivid description of a dead soldier’s hand:

I found a soldier’s hand covered with blood. Removed from the body, it was lying lonely on the ground. Only the thumb protruded out; the left fingers all slightly bent inward. The hand’s skin was very rough. The color of the blood already became dark. Maybe because the hand was cut off not long ago, the carpus still had some bloodstain.  

The detailed description of the soldier’s damaged body had three meanings. First, it complicated the tough and heroic warrior ideal constructed by Jiang Jieshi and his GMD government. The shock that this description gave to the readers was that although the

---

10 Fan Changjiang, “Yi ye zhanchang” (Memories of the wild battlefield), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n.d. [1938]), 40.
11 Ibid., 42.
12 Xie Bingying, Xie Bingying daibiaozuo (Representative works by Xie Bingying) (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2009), 207.
soldiers fought bravely, they were still ordinary human beings whose fragile bodies were at the mercy of the ravages of war. Second, depicting the soldiers’ damaged body also expressed the intellectuals’ respect for their bravery. Xie Bingying preserved the hand inside a glass bottle filled with embalming fluid, cherishing it as a symbol of this soldier’s sacrifice for the resistance war. She wrote: “Do you know how precious this hand is? Its owner has killed countless enemies and performed immortal feats.”\textsuperscript{13} In her eyes, this hand was a metaphor for the bravery of the soldier. Third, the intellectuals interpreted the damaged body part not only as a metaphor of the soldiers’ bravery but also as a silent defiance against the poor treatment of the soldiers by the government. In “Yi ye zhanchang,” Fan Changjiang remarked, “A dead body had a pair of leathery hands with clenched fists. The fists denoted the soldier’s regret of his death before all enemies were killed; they also symbolized that the soldier was so sad and angry with the corruption of the relief agencies.”\textsuperscript{14} Xie and Fan recognized the bravery of soldiers and gave them their upmost respect, but they also expressed their disappointment with the state’s soldier relief work.

The criticism of the inability of the GMD government and the army to provide timely relief for soldiers was explicit in some writings of the intellectuals. Fan wrote: “At the front line, there was no rear service and logistical agencies organized by the army. The treatment and transportation of wounded soldiers relied on the voluntary work of

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Fan, “Yi ye zhanchang,” 42.
doctors and nurses from local hospitals as well as of local masses.”

Other reportages revealed that wounded soldiers could not be transferred to hospitals in a timely manner. This pressing issue was characterized by Li Mingjian, who joined the war area service corps organized by Guo Moruo in 1937. In [1938] “Zhandi jianying” (The sketch of the battlefield), she wrote:

The number of the wounded soldiers kept increasing. The soldiers, who had lost either a hand or a leg in the combat, were waiting for the rescuers’ vehicles to send them to the hospital. They were cried sadly: “Comrades, come on, please help me. I still need to fight against the enemy.”

In the reportage “Qianxian liang zhoyue” (Two days and nights at the front) of 1938 Wu Dakun described how shocked he was when he observed the wounded soldiers:

“Comrades, please do a good deed.” A sad voice attracted my attention. It was a soldier whose two legs were both broken. He was using his hands to crawl on the ground, with blood and mud all over his body. It was apparent that he was begging for help. I was so shocked. We really needed more bearers to send these wounded soldiers to hospital.

The detailed depiction of the soldiers’ injured bodies, demoralized demeanor and pitiable helplessness highlighted the soldiers’ bravery and implied the intellectuals’ respect and sympathy toward them. The intellectuals’ intention of highlighting the soldiers’ bravery, however, was not to encourage social masses to emulate the soldier and become militarized citizens as the GMD had hoped. Instead, the soldiers’ bravery, highlighted in their writings, served as a contrast with the misery the soldiers had to bear after they were injured during combat. This contrast allowed intellectuals to criticize the

15 Fan Changjiang, “Lugouqiao pan” (Along the Lugou Bridge), in Fan Changjiang xinwen wenji (Collections of Fan Changjiang’s news reports), ed. Shen Pu (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 2001), 618.
16 Li Mingjian, “Zhandi jianying” (The sketch on the battlefield), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 63.
17 Wu Dakun, “Qianxian liang zhoyue” (Two days and nights at the front line), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 69.
government’s maladministration in soldier relief. It also constituted a shocking picture which stimulated great sympathy for soldiers among the readers. Moreover, this contrast was a strategy which allowed the intellectuals to assert the importance of mobilizing a larger society to actively participate in national affairs and public service in regard to soldiers.

From the writings of the intellectuals who visited the front, it was noted that the combination of physical injuries and poor treatment from the GMD led many soldiers to lose hope. The writer Shen Qiyu (1903-1970), who participated in the War Service Corps of Sichuan Native Place Association (Sichuan tongxianghui zhandi fuwutuan), wrote in his 1938 reportage “Qianxian guilai ji” (Return from the front line) that “a lot of wounded soldiers did not have any medicine and could not be transported to the hospital because of lack of vehicles. Their psychological condition was unstable, so we need to give them more comfort.”18 Another writer who participated in the war area service corps, Yang Fenjun,19 wrote in the “Zai yedi yiyuan” (At the hospital in the front line) of 1938, describing the painful expression of the wounded soldiers: “They desperately said to the doctor ‘please give me some medicine. I have extreme pain.’”20

By depicting the injured body and mental desperation of the soldiers, the intellectuals highlighted the contrast with the tough and heroic images of soldiers created in Whampoa’s slogan “Ten No-Fears.” The soldiers were described as ordinary human beings who were weak and fragile in war and could hardly bear the pain. Fan Changjiang

18Shen Qiyu, “Qianxian guilai ji” (Return from the front line), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 24.
19Yang Fenjun’s birth and death years are unknown.
20Yang Fenjun, “Zai yedi yiyuan” (At the hospital in the front line), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 88.
wrote in “Yi ye zhanchang” that the great pain in the body led to the violent action by the soldiers. “Because our car could only give a few people a ride, many wounded soldiers were so upset that they beat our car using sticks and guns.” 21 Fan further commented that the wounded soldiers’ action of beating the car with sticks was “their defiance against the authorities who had the responsibility to provide for them.” 22 In Fan’s writing, the soldiers were not the epitome of morality as exalted in the GMD’s rhetoric; instead, they performed violent misbehavior when they did not receive adequate relief. Fan, however, did not condemn the misbehavior of the soldiers; instead, using a sympathetic tone, he imputed their misbehavior to the government’s inefficient relief work administration emphasizing the government’s inability to mobilize the public to perform soldier support.

Torn bodies, psychological anguish, and uncontrollable tempers became the initial impression that intellectuals had of the soldiers when they visited the front. They also described the soldiers as heroic fighters and as having an optimistic attitude. As written in the “Yi ye zhanchang” of 1938, Fan Changjiang recollected the words told to him by a wounded soldier: “The enemies’ artillerymen attacked our village using hundreds of shells. With a fighting will as strong as a mountain, soldiers who were still alive quickly filled up the positions of their dead comrades.” 23 In Li Mingjian’s reportage “Zhandi jianying,” also of 1938, a platoon leader was seriously injured but still kept a clear mind. He told Li that if he were not seriously injured, he would definitely fight until death.” 24 In Wu Dakun’s “Qianxian liang zhouye,” a battalion vice-commander with the surname Li

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 42.
told Wu that although only four soldiers of his unit survived, they still managed to not only uphold the position but also seize the machine gun from the enemy.”

In social activist Liu Liangmo (1909-1988)’s reportage “Zai zhandi yiyuanli” (At the hospital in the front line), one story told by the wounded soldiers depicted an injured company commander—whose belly was split open and intestines were falling out—still continuing to fight. His death the next day at the hospital moved other soldiers to tears. Xie Bingying’s reportage “Zhanshide xue ranhongle womende shou” (The soldier’s blood tinted our hands red) recorded a story of another company commander with the surname Song. “Song’s right hand was broken by the machine gun, but he did not show any painful expression at all and he still talked with us about the brave fighting spiritedly.”

The intellectuals’ writings described the soldiers’ bravery by stressing not only their fearlessness but also their utter contempt for the enemy by showing how the soldiers considered the enemies decadent and unwilling to fight. In “Qianxian liang zhouye,” a regimental commander told Wu Dakun that “the enemy only relied on the artillery. But none of us was afraid. It seemed that the enemies could hardly hold on and that nobody was willing to keep fighting.” In doing so, these intellectuals echoed the heroic discourse of the soldier figure advocated by Jiang and the GMD government.

By contrasting the miserable treatment of the wounded soldiers with their heroic combat stories, the intellectuals asserted the necessity and urgency of mobilizing social masses to participate in the national affair of war service. These intellectuals often

---

26 Liu Liangmo, “Zai zhandi yiyuan li” (At the hospital in the front line), in Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield), ed. Tian Han (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 84.
27 Xie, Xie Bingying daibiaozuo [1941], 181.
28 Wu, “Qianxian liang zhouye,” 77.
expressed their respect for the wounded soldiers and professed their guilt for not having achieved sufficient social mobilization for the war service. Fan Changjiang’s commentary in “Yi ye zhanchang” reflected this mindset:

We are very guilty. These wounded soldiers fought against the enemies so bravely for the nation. They made us proud of them. However, after they were injured, we were unable to relieve their pain by well organizing relief work and immediately sending them to the safe rear. Our government and nationals were really sorry for these brave warriors.29

Similar comments were echoed in Wu Dakun’s “Qianxian liang zhouye”:

In the battle of defending Shanghai, our soldiers really did their best for their duty, even though they did not have enough weapons, gas masks and raincoats. On the side of our masses, there were so few bearers in the front line, and the seriously injured soldiers had to bear great pain and crawl on the ground. It was just so unacceptable. I plan to work harder on the social mobilization after I return to the rear.30

In these writings, the wounded soldiers “symbolized the Chinese people’s great spirit of self-sacrifice.”31 This description showed how the intellectuals collaborated with the GMD state in an attempt to elevate the soldiers’ rhetoric status. However, the urban intellectuals expressed their respect for the soldiers not for the purpose of strengthening the militarization of society, but with the intent to argue that these brave soldiers who were injured in defending the nation deserved respect from all in society.

The intellectuals complicated the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal not only by depicting their fragile bodies at the mercy of the brutality of war but also by showing that the soldier was not devoid of emotional expression. This image was described in “Zai shangbing yiyuan” (At the hospital for wounded soldiers), written by a young female

---

29 Fan, “Yi ye zhanchang,” 40 and 42.
30 Wu, “Qianxian liang zhouye,” 77.
31 Xie, Xie Bingying daibiaozuo, 182.
college student from Shanghai using the penname Huizhu and published in the newspaper *Fenghuo* (Flames of war)\(^{32}\) in November 1937. After Shanghai was attacked by the Japanese in 1937, Huizhu worked at a Red Cross hospital for wounded soldiers as a nurse. This reportage was a record of her daily experience serving the wounded soldiers at a hospital. The literary critic Tian Zhongji (1907-2002)\(^{33}\) commented in his book on the history of wartime Chinese literature that this reportage “provided a vivid description of the tragic and intense atmosphere at the wounded soldiers’ hospital and the innocent, simple-hearted and kind personality of the wounded soldiers.”\(^{34}\)

In this reportage, the young student Huizhu compared the wounded soldiers to “brave and innocent children who publicly released their emotions, exciting, joyful, sad, anxious, and pessimistic.”\(^ {35}\) When they recalled the memories of the combat, they were so excited that their face turned red.\(^ {36}\) When they were given newspapers to read, their face showed joyful expression.\(^ {37}\) When they requested the writer to teach them sing songs, their simple face showed flames of hope. When the writer accepted their request, they smiled like children. When the writer sang that wounded soldiers got injured when protecting the masses, they were quietly listening with tears in their eyes.\(^ {38}\)

Although Huizhu recognized the soldiers’ brave spirit, she also described that it was hard for the soldiers to bear the pain caused by their injuries. The soldier shouted

---

\(^{32}\) *Fenghuo* was a journal founded by Mao Dun (1896-1981) in 1937 with the initial name as *Nahan* (Crying out). Its chief editor was Baijin (1904-2005).

\(^{33}\) Tian Zhongji used the penname Lan Hai during the war.

\(^{34}\) Lan, *Zhongguo kangzhan wenyi shi*, 146.

\(^{35}\) Huizhu, “Zai shangbing yiyuan” (At the hospital for wounded soldiers), in *Zhandoude suhui* (Quick sketches of the combat), ed. Yi Qun (Chongqing: Zuojia shuwu, 1943), 31.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., 32.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 33.
irritably: “I am so full of pain that I want to die. Why don’t you give me medicine? Tell the doctor to come here!”39 When one doctor was cleaning the injury of a wounded soldier, the soldier screamed and sweat covered his head; the doctor comforted him as if he were a child.40 Some wounded soldiers became so irritable and pessimistic that they refused to cooperate in treatment.41 Some seriously injured soldiers even wanted to kill themselves, and doctors had to calm them down as if they were talking to kids. When their attempt to commit suicide was stopped, they cried like kids.42 By revealing that the soldiers never suppressed their emotion and they even often cried, Huizhu showed the other side of the tough soldier ideal created by Jiang. By comparing the soldiers to innocent and emotionally-charged children, Huizhu argued that the brave soldier was not to be emulated but to be cared for by the greater society.

Women activists in the New Life Movement Committee on Women Guidance (Xinshenghuo yundong funü zhidaowei yuanhui) also described the wounded soldiers as people who had self-doubt and thus needed to be cared for. Their work report wrote, “Some of the wounded soldiers were frustrated with their miserable life experiences, and others complained about the government and loathed the national resistance.”43 The women activists maintained that the social masses, regardless of the sex, age and profession limits, should do whatever they could to show respect and comfort for the wounded soldiers and correct the self-doubt in the soldiers’ minds. Women and children

39Ibid., 34.
40Ibid., 35.
41Ibid.
42Ibid.
43Xinshenghuo yundong funü zhidaohui, Rongyu junren fuwu gongzuo jishi (Records of the work of serving honorable soldiers) (Chongqing: n. p., 1944), 39.
could perform consolation and fund raising tasks. Women could mend and wash clothes for the wounded soldiers; children could bring candy and fruit to them; the barber could cut hair for them. These women activists reported that the wounded soldiers were so stimulated and moved by the enthusiasm of the children that they shed tears and requested to return to the battlefield to kill the enemies.\(^{44}\)

The writings analyzed above emerged from the hands of urban intellectuals who worked in the cultural realm as writers, journalists, economists, social activists or college students. After the war broke out, they provided service either by reporting from the front line or by working at hospitals. They recorded what they saw, heard and experienced and their writings reflect the personal experiences they went through. In their comments, they not only expressed their high respect for wounded soldiers but also showed the readers the importance of mobilizing more masses to serve the wounded soldiers. In performing army service, they identified themselves not only as a war recorder and narrator but also as a social critic. They viewed their task as not only to serve the wounded soldiers but also to educate the masses on the significance of participation in the social and political affairs.

With these purposes in mind, the intellectuals propagated the brave spirits of soldiers by narrating their heroic stories in combat, revealing their contempt for the enemy, and demonstrating the great respect they had for their bravery. In this sense, the intellectuals’ writings mirrored the goals of the GMD in advocating the heroic soldier image. However, the intellectuals and the GMD had different goals in celebrating the

\(^{44}\)Ibid., 49.
soldiers’ heroism. The GMD intended to build a militarized and disciplined citizenry who viewed the soldier as a model, while the intellectuals advocated their political influence as social mobilizers. To justify their position, the intellectuals complicated the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal by revealing the other side of the soldier; the brave and heroic exterior was presented with many characteristics of “normal” human beings: fragility, an uncontrollable temper, hostility in response to injury, and childlike emotionality.

**Our Wounded Friends Need Our Education**

Together with urban intellectuals, urban professionals also participated in war service during the Anti-Japanese War. The urban professionals who worked on military welfare advocated larger social participation in serving the soldiers and asserted their political role as social mobilizers and army educators. The social activist Liu Liangmo advocated the principle that urban professionals should perform these dual roles. After graduating from Shanghai Hujiang University with a major in sociology in 1932, Liu worked at the Soldier Service Branch (*junren fuwubu*) of the Chinese Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in Shanghai. The Chinese YMCA, which was founded in 1885 in Tongzhou, Hebei, was guided by the religious beliefs, financial and personnel support, and operational structure of the American YMCA.45 During the Anti-Japanese

---

45 Ibid.
War, it was the Soldier Service Branch that had the largest and longest operations of all the Chinese YMCA’s sub-branches.46

Between 1936 and 1939, Liu led a Branch choir and actively organized conferences for the social masses to sing patriotic songs in Shanghai and Zhejiang. Liu argued that the undertaking of soldier service should be based on the participation of the social masses, calling upon all the national masses to serve the soldiers. He believed that the efforts of social communities and individuals to serve the soldiers should be coordinated. He held a forum on how to serve the soldiers every Saturday in Changsha, gathering all professionals and communities who provided service to wounded soldiers together to exchange work experience.47 Liu considered the role of urban professionals who performed soldier service as “the bridge between the military and the civilian.”48 He aimed not only to mobilize the masses to serve the soldiers, but also to educate the soldiers to love the masses in return. He designed a flag of two hands closely clasping each other, one symbolizing the soldier and the other the civilian. He interpreted the meaning of the flag as “the military and the civilian going forward hand in hand.”49 In Liu’s eyes, the task of the soldier service was to create a military-civilian relationship based on mutual respect and support. Liu’s arguments showed that he asserted his identities as both a social mobilizer and as an army educator.

47 Liu Liangmo, Zhanshide junren fuwu (Soldier service in the wartime) (Hankou: Xinzhi shudian, 1938), 31.
48 Ibid., 6.
49 Ibid., 32.
The Soldier Service Branch of the Chinese YMCA was a voluntary organization as it maintained some level of independence from the state’s regulation. Although it received some financial support from the GMD government, most of the funding required for regular operations was from donations collected from patriotic enthusiasts at home and abroad.\footnote{Ibid., 38.} In peacetime, the service provided by the Branch included Bible study, literacy and intellectual education. Its main purposes were to provide the necessary equipment for the masses to do physical exercise and to guide them to following appropriate entertainment and relaxation styles of life. During the Anti-Japanese War, however, the Branch focused its work on providing service to the soldiers especially those wounded in battle.\footnote{Liang Xiaochu, Zhonghua jidujiao qingnianhui zhanqu fuwu quanguo weiyuanhui baogaoshu (Reports of the national committee for war area service led by the Chinese YMCA) (n. l.: Zhonghua jidujiao qingnianhui, 1943), 9-14.}

The assistance that the Branch provided for wounded soldiers was categorized into two types based on availability of equipment. When equipment resources were available, the Branch established soldier clubs, receptions and medicine-changing stations along railroads and road lines. There, professionals working at the Branch offered as many comforts as possible to soldiers: they showed films and slides, performed drama and taught songs, built shower and dining rooms, wrote letters, cut hair, and provided basic medicine and lights.\footnote{Zhao Yamin, “Pianduan de huiyi: cong Shandong dao Yunnan” (Fragmented memories: from Shandong to Yunnan), in Kangri jiuyang shiride lishi huigu (The historical review on the years during the Anti-Japanese War), ed. Quanguo jidu qingnianhui junren fuwubu tonggong (Ha’erbin: Shuangchengshi yinchuachang, 1994), 56.} When equipment resources were scarce, the Branch improvised with activities such as teaching martial arts and gymnastics, chatting,
organizing women to wash and mend clothes, teaching patriotic songs to sing along to, and holding exhibitions to show calligraphy work, paintings, war trophies, pictures and bloodstained clothes from wounded soldiers. The Branch also worked on mobilizing and organizing the social masses by collecting donations and comfort materials, holding public speeches and recruiting war service work staff.

The services that the Branch provided to the wounded soldiers touched a variety of aspects in their daily life. To the urban professionals working in this Branch, they believed that the soldiers’ education should not be limited to ideological doctrines, but from a breadth of subjects including martial arts, gymnastics, singing, arts, calligraphy, nationalistic knowledge, and a sense of cooperating with the masses, etc. Since many of these categories related to the soldiers’ daily life, it was necessary for the Branch to make further and continuous contact with them. The personnel had taken it upon themselves to not only take care of the physical health of the wounded soldiers, but also provide them with mental comfort and education. This naturally demanded close ties between the military and the civilians. To meet this intimate agenda and style, urban professionals working at the Branch constructed the image of the soldier as an affectionate but lonely human being. Such imagery of the soldier was depicted in Liu Liangmo’s 1938 pamphlet Zhanshide junren fuwu (Soldier service in the wartime), which provided theoretical guidance on soldier service.

---

53 Ouyang Bo, “Chongchu Changsha dahuo, benxiang qiantangjiang bian” (Rushing out of the fire in Changsha, marching to the Qianjiang riverside,” in Kangri jiuhwang shiride lishi huigu (The historical review on the years during the Anti-Japanese war), ed. Quanguo jidujiao qingnianhui junren fuwubu tonggong (Ha’erbin: Shuangcheng shi yinchuachang, 1994), 142.
54 Liang, Zhonghua jidujiao qingnianhui zhanqu fuwu quanguo weiyuanhui baogaoshu, 9.
To promote close ties between the military and the civilian, Liu proposed a discourse that depicted the soldier figure as an affectionate human being who needed emotional support from the civilians and also highly valued sincere friendship with them. He cited his stories in which he became good friends with many soldiers when teaching them to sing songs, many of whom he still maintained contact with. He used his own work experience to show that the key in the undertaking of soldier service was to build sincere friendships and provide them with sympathy and consolation. He described the soldier as “an innocent and artless child” (tianzhen lanman de haizi) and as “the most lonely person who was desperate for the friendship, sympathy and comfort from the masses.” To justify his advocacy for the civilians to build friendship with the soldiers, Liu pointed out that the wounded soldiers highly respected the well-educated youth who enthusiastically provided service to them. Liu wrote, “The 15,000 wounded soldiers in Changsha not only did not harass the civilians but also generously donated money for the refugees.” The image of the soldier in Liu’s writing was not only presented as the most loveable but also characterized as the most reasonable and humane. In this sense, Liu embraced similar ideals as the GMD government in treating the soldiers as the embodiment of moral virtues.

Liu gave several intimate stories of the relationship between the wounded soldiers and urban professionals to demonstrate that the soldiers were affectionate and friendly people that needed the friendship of greater society. An illustrative example was of

---

55 Liu Liangmo, Zhanshide junren fuwu (Soldier service in the wartime) (Hankou: Xinzhi shudian, 1938), 8.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., 8
58 Ibid., 42.
wounded soldiers buying tea and ham and patiently waiting in front of a hospital just to deliver these gifts to those professionals who had served them. Another example was when urban professionals were greeted in the morning at the hospital by the wounded soldiers, offering to help carry their supplies. During these events, it was common for the wounded soldiers to salute the social workers, showing their respect for the help. These actions led many of the female workers—who were initially afraid of the soldiers and reluctant to serve them—to become more open and willing to think that the soldiers could be loveable. In describing that soldiers’ moral qualities made the civilians change their attitudes toward them, Liu collaborated with the GMD government’s rhetoric of treating soldiers as the epitome of morality. Highlighting the soldiers’ morality of highly valuing their friendship with the civilians served Liu’s agenda of mobilizing the society to participate in soldier service.

Although Liu collaborated with the GMD government in depicting soldiers’ moral qualities, he also complicated the GMD government’s rhetoric of the soldier figure by describing soldiers as common people who were poorly educated and did not fully embrace the nationalistic significance of the resistance war. Liu argued that the soldiers were “armed physically but not mentally” (tounao hai meiyou wuzhuang qilai). In Liu’s eyes, the historical transformation of the soldier’s role from a political tool employed by warlords into a warrior who fought for the national salvation required the assistance from the urban professionals in “enriching the soldiers’ knowledge and arming their mind”

59 Ibid., 10.  
60 Ibid., 12.
By stressing the soldiers’ need for nationalist knowledge, Liu claimed the role of urban professionals was not only as social mobilizers but also as army educators.

Liu advocated that in order to help the soldier “grow into a national warrior in the new era,” urban professionals should explain to them the nationalist significance of fighting against the Japanese and teaching them to love the civilian masses. The social workers should tell the soldiers to talk gently, to clean the civilians’ houses after staying there, to give money to the civilians after buying items from them, to return items they borrowed from the civilians, to pay the civilians after breaking their belongings, and to help out the old, the weak, women and children. Doing this allowed the soldiers to earn support from the civilian masses. The social workers should also promote the idea that China would definitely win the war and that fighting against the Japanese would save their own lives as well as save the entire nation. The soldiers should also know that they would not win the war without the support from the civilians. With such ideological encouragement, recovered wounded soldiers were expected to return to the front line and continue fighting.

For Liu, the most effective way to serve and educate the wounded soldiers was to establish the Club for Wounded Soldiers (Shangbing julebu) where urban professionals could use various methods of entertaining to transform the minds of the soldiers. To justify this idea, Liu described the soldiers as being tired and scared of war. These

---

61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., 15.
64 Ibid., 19.
wounded soldiers “practiced military exercise from day to night and their lives were exhausted and very busy.” Liu wrote that the soldiers’ injuries during combat made them overwhelmed by the frustration of having been defeated by the enemy and thus unable to see the larger picture of the war, the international situation and the domestic chaos in Japan; the soldiers’ only feeling was being fearful of the war. In this manner, the urban professionals should entertain the soldiers in order to assure and encourage them. The foundation of the club would allow the urban professionals to employ a variety of entertaining techniques such as singing, drama and drawing to educate them with political knowledge. The purpose of the club was not just to entertain the soldiers; it was also to indoctrinate them into believing that China would certainly win the war, that the soldiers should love and cooperate with the masses, and that the wounded soldiers should return to the battlefield after their recovery. Liu argued that the strategy of education through entertainment was quite popular among the wounded soldiers. By describing the significance of this strategy, Liu tried to assert the political authority of urban professionals in educating soldiers.

Liu’s strategy of using entertainment to educate wounded soldiers was also to criticize the high-handed measure adopted by many government bureaucrats for the treatment of wounded soldiers. These government authorities believed that shooting some ill-behaved wounded soldiers could prevent more chaos from happening. Liu, however, believed that the coercive measure would only cause more trouble. To him, the proper

---

65 Ibid., 11.
66 Ibid., 34.
67 Ibid., 44.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid., 36.
way to administer the wounded soldiers was to establish a club for them and to educate them with great sympathy. “If all the hospitals in the city had clubs for wounded soldiers, the city would be in peace.”\textsuperscript{70} After analyzing the benefits of the club for wounded soldiers, Liu encouraged urban professionals to take initiative in contacting the hospital and government authorities, explaining the meaning of the club to them and persuading them into supporting the establishment of the club.\textsuperscript{71} By demonstrating the benefits of using entertainment to educate soldiers, Liu was criticizing the government for its authority in administering the soldiers.

The urban professionals at the YMCA, such as Liu, echoed the GMD government’s discourse of the soldier figure by recognizing their moral qualities such as being sincere to friends and valuing friendship. The description of a soldier’ moral qualities fit the organization’s work style of maintaining constant contact with the soldiers. It also serve Liu’s goal of mobilizing more people to support the army and serve soldiers. However, Liu also complicated the GMD government’s heroic discourse by stressing the poor education of soldiers and their education needs from local civilians. This description allowed Liu to justify the necessity of their political participation not only as social mobilizers but also as army educators. Treating the soldiers as affectionate human beings who had emotional needs, Liu developed the strategy of educating them by incorporating methods of entertainment. He argued that soldier support performed by the professionals at the Chinese YMCA was more effective than the work performed by government agencies. In doing so, he voiced criticism of the GMD government’s

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., 45.  
\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., 46.
maladministration of soldiers and proposed the alternate authority of urban professionals at the Chinese YMCA as educators of the military.

**Honorable Soldiers Need Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Soldier Service Branch of the Chinese YMCA, as analyzed above, defined the tasks of army education as being: strengthening their courage, powering their belief in China’s victory, and encouraging them to cooperate with the masses. However, they were not the only group of urban professionals who asserted their role as army educators; vocational training specialists also claimed their role in impacting the education of the military. They believed that training professional skills were beneficial to the soldiers’ long-term career development and as such was an essential educational regimen for soldiers, especially the wounded.

The vocational training specialists promoted to the GMD government the importance of providing vocational training for wounded soldiers by stressing that it was not feasible for every wounded soldier to return to the army and resume fighting. The GMD government’s expected wounded soldiers, who had garnered substantial fighting experience, to return to the battlefield and improve the combat capability of the army. Jiang Jieshi’s son Jiang Jingguo (1910-1988) published a speech to wounded soldiers in celebration of the new year of 1941 in the magazine *Shangbing zhi you* (Friends of the wounded soldiers).72 In this speech, Jiang made the statement that “A soldier who has recovered from the injury is as competent as ten new conscripts. This is how valuable our

---

72 The semimonthly magazine *Shangbing zhi you* (Friends of the wounded soldiers) was edited and published by the Jiangxi Honorable Soldiers Administration Center (Jiangxi rongyu junren guanlichu).
wounded soldiers are.”73 This statement showed that Jiang expected wounded soldiers to return to battlefield after recovery.

Urban professionals working on vocational education did not dissent from the GMD government’s view. The education professional Chen Junming,74 who worked at an administration bureau for wounded soldiers in Hengyang, Hunan, admitted that the soldiers who returned to combat after recovery could immediately serve as a cadre to lead new conscripts.75 However, Chen pointed out that it was difficult for wounded soldiers, especially army officers, to return to the battlefield and keep fighting, because their original military branch usually refused to have them back. During the intervening period when soldiers or officers were hospitalized, their original army units had already found someone else to fill the position. The replacement had become familiar enough with the military and the army found it inconvenient to force them to leave. Furthermore, the Nationalist army ordered that all wounded army officers who chose to return to the front line be promoted. Therefore, having a wounded army officer return to his original army unit increased the unit’s expenditure. Chen also pointed out that although the majority of wounded soldiers wished that they could be assigned to their original army units, it was uncertain whether their wishes were granted. As a result, many wounded soldiers refused to return to the front line.76

73 Jiang Jingguo, “Gao fushang jiangshi shu—wei qingzhu sanshinian yuandan er zuo” (To the wounded soldiers—a speech written for the celebration of the new year of 1941), Shangbing zhi you (Friends of the wounded soldiers), Vol. 9 (January 1, 1941): 9.
74 Chen Junming’s birth and death years are unknown.
76 Ibid., 31.
Chen did not oppose the GMD government’s expectation for wounded soldiers to return to the battlefield and keep fighting. Chen, however, detailed his stance to demonstrate such an expectation was not practical. Therefore, Chen pointed out that providing vocational training and teaching wounded soldiers the skills required for civilian professions was important to the army. The person who first proposed the idea of vocational rehabilitation for wounded and disabled soldiers was the social activist Duan Shengwu (1897-1944). Born in Hebei, Duan joined the army in 1911 and served as a division commander in warlord Sun Chuanfang (1885-1935)’s army during the early years of the Republican era. After Sun was defeated in the Northern Expedition campaign, Duan left the army and worked as a social activist. He mobilized the refugees in Hebei to migrate to the northern places like Baotou and to farm the land. He encouraged the building of a new community called Hebei New Village (Hebei xincun), and for those who migrated to establish associations in an attempt to create self-governance.  

In 1938, the Political Branch (Zhengzhibu) was founded within the Logistics Department of the Military Affairs Committee in Wuhan, with Duan appointed director. Duan commented: “The treatment of the wounded and disabled soldiers is crucial for maintaining the army morale and stabilizing the society. I feel very satisfied to have the chance of serving them.” He used the name “honorable soldiers” (rongyu junren) to refer those who were wounded and disabled during the war. Duan established a committee in charge of educating honorable soldiers and invited influential social figures

---

78 Fu Sinian, “Duan Shengwu xiansheng zhu” (Biography of Mr. Duan Shengwu), Wenshi zazhi (Journal of literature and history), Vol. 5, No. 7 (1945): 47.
to design the education plan. He argued that the government should cooperate with urban professionals in providing education and training for these honorable soldiers.

The efforts to provide vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers initially advocated by social activists like Duan were soon institutionalized by the GMD government. The Association of Vocational Coordination for Honorable Soldiers (Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui) was established on May 12, 1940 at Chongqing. It was a professional association affiliated with the GMD government devoted to promoting the career development of honorable soldiers. Jiang Jieshi served as the honorary president of the Association, H. H. Kung and Madame Jiang served as honorary vice-president, and Minister of National Defense He Yingqin served as the president. Although high-level GMD authorities were the leaders of this Association, it was not an institution totally controlled by the government. The Association membership involved a combination of government-affiliated agencies and social forces. Half of the members came from government-sponsored administrative and educational agencies dealing with honorable soldiers, and the other half originated in academic communities and social activists. This membership composition allowed the Association not only to manage necessary support from government authorities, but also to mobilize larger social forces to research and work on vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers. Although the Association included active members from government agencies, government subsidies constituted only a small part of its funding; most of the finances required for regular operation came

---

79 Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui, eds., Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui diyi niandu gongzuo baogao (Reports on the first-year work of the Vocational Coordination Association for the Disabled Veterans) (Chongqing: Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui, 1941), 4.
80 Ibid., 7.
from membership dues and from donations. Social forces who worked on vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers did not resist the GMD’s efforts to champion their work within a national campaign coordinated by a government-sponsored association. However, the membership composition and the funding sources allowed the Association to maintain some independence without challenging the GMD government’s authority.

The Association established vocational rehabilitation institutes in Chongqing in October 1940 to teach honorable soldiers career skills. The institute opened a variety of classes including official document writing (wenshu), handicrafts, escorting goods, guarding storehouses, receptionist and registrar services, spinning and weaving, carving, political work, accounting, printing, making various good (i.e. umbrellas, towels, cigarettes, shoes, soap bars and canework). These classes aimed to provide professionals training so that honorable soldiers had necessary skills to pursue a variety of careers after the war. Within seven years, the institute had opened forty-nine classes in which over a thousand honorable soldiers participated.

The representative professional who studied principles and techniques of vocational education for honorable soldiers was Yu Zhaoming. He studied vocational education and psychology in the US in the 1930s and ran the Yunnan Office of the Society for Chinese Vocational Education (Zhonghua zhiye jiaoyushe) during the Anti-Japanese War. Upon the request from the Ministry of Society (Shehuiju) of the GMD

---

81 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Yu Zhaoming’s birth and death years are unknown.
government,⁸⁵ he wrote the book *Rongyu junren zhi zhiye zaizao* (The vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers) in 1942.⁸⁶

Yu’s primary goal in the book was to develop vocational rehabilitation work for honorable soldiers by constructing a large-scale movement where all social members could participate. He viewed the undertaking of vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers as a duty for all members of society rather than explicitly the government.⁸⁷ According to Yu, the GMD government should not only provide financial, administrative and legal support for the vocational rehabilitation programs but also closely collaborate with social communities such as schools, factories and farms in the countryside.⁸⁸ Yu urged the GMD government to support and cooperate with social forces in practicing this undertaking instead of simply focusing on regulating the action of social forces.

In order to justify the importance of vocational rehabilitation as a necessity requiring soldier cooperation, Yu argued that the soldier was the embodiment of many moral virtues, echoing the GMD government’s rhetoric of the soldier figure. Yu stressed that the soldiers—most of whom came from peasant families—possessed moral qualities that were essential for civilian professions, such as conscientiousness, obedience, timekeeping, endurance, familiarity and preference with group life.⁸⁹ These moral virtues

---

⁸⁵ The Ministry of Society (Shehuiju) of the GMD government was established in 1938 and subject to the leadership of the GMD Central Committee. It was mainly responsible for the social welfare. Its first minister was Gu Zhenggang (1901-1993).
⁸⁷ Ibid., 17.
⁸⁸ Ibid., 5.
⁸⁹ Ibid.
would help honorable soldiers manage a smooth transition to the civilian world after they received vocational training.

Although urban professionals echoed the GMD government’s rhetoric of elevating the soldier’s status as being the epitome of morality, they also pointed out that soldiers were poorly educated and lacked the knowledge and skills required for career-building. To advance this idea, Yu conducted a survey in 1941 on the educational and work background of 5,869 honorable soldiers. According to the survey, sixty to seventy percent of soldiers had never received any vocational training nor acquired any non-military work experience. 0.051% graduated from colleges, 0.818% graduated from high schools, 2.13% graduated from middle schools, 41.54% graduated from public elementary schools, 4.379% graduated from private elementary schools (sishu), and 51.082% were illiterate. In another survey done in the last year of the Anti-Japanese War, Yu compared the educational background between honorable soldiers and workers and merchants (gongshang renyuan). It showed that 28% of workers and merchants were graduates of elementary schools and 23% were graduates of middle schools. In contrast, 30% of the disabled soldiers were graduates of elementary schools, but less than 1% of them were graduates of middle schools. The lowest educational level of workers and merchants was two years of study at elementary schools, but over a half of honorable soldiers were illiterate. In order to assert the role of professionals as army educator, Yu

---

90 Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui, eds., Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui diyi niandu gongzuo baogao, 15.
91 Yu Zhaoming, Rongyu junren jiuye fudao (Assisting honorable soldiers in getting employed) (Nanjing: Zhengzhong shuju, 1947), 49.
complicated the GMD’s rhetoric of heroic soldier ideal by stressing the poor education of the soldiers

Although urban professionals did not oppose the emphasis of the soldier figure as being the epitome of morality, they did point out that the depiction of honorable soldiers as being a moral model was ambiguous. If the wounded and disabled soldiers did not receive vocational education from the professionals, they might become a potential source of social disorder. In a report written in 1939 by the professional Chen Junming, it wrote:

The wounded soldiers had strong regionalism notions. They organized themselves based on their native places and established a mysterious and firm network barrier. Sometimes they had serious and even violent arguments with each other over trivial business, but sometimes they gave each other support and care. Therefore, the professionals who served them needed to give them proper guidance.92

Honorable soldiers were sometimes reported as jobless vagrants who seriously threatened social stability. A rehabilitation house (jiaoyangyuan) in Nanxi County, Sichuan, wrote a report to the provincial government on June 19, 1943, saying that:

The wounded and disabled soldiers created social trouble when we banned smoking tobacco and taking drugs. Yesterday afternoon, they gathered together to attack the county government and beat the police in the street. Their violent misbehavior caused a strike among merchants and students.93

In the eyes of urban professionals, honorable soldiers were not always a moral model for society; they were instead potential source of social chaos. Therefore, providing honorable soldiers with vocational rehabilitation and enabling them to support themselves independently and produce for the nation was necessary in order to maintain the social

92Chen, Yige jinjide huyu, 34.
93Sichuansheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, Sichuansheng zhi, minzheng zhi (Civil administration in local chronicles of Sichuan province) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1996), 216.
order.\textsuperscript{94} By stressing the ambiguity of the soldier’s role as moral model, Yu demonstrated the necessity of the role of urban professionals as army educators.

Another way Yu complicated the GMD’s rhetoric of the soldier figure as the epitome of morality was to argue that the soldier should expel any sense of superiority over civilians. According to Yu, the soldier should try to adjust himself to the civilian community by accepting the re-education from urban professionals so that the soldier could independently support himself. Yu argued that honorable soldiers should love the masses as their brothers and develop harmonious relationship with them (\textit{dacheng yipian}) by working and living together. In Yu’s eyes, there was not a sharp distinction between honorable soldiers and civilian masses; everyone was a citizen who worked for the nation.\textsuperscript{95} By advocating this stance, Yu tried to enlist soldiers’ cooperation in receiving vocational training from the urban professionals.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has examined soldier support activities performed by urban intellectuals and professionals, and focuses on how these social forces constructed the discourse of the soldier figure to meet their work agendas. It does not aim to evaluate the effectiveness of army service and social mobilization performed by these urban publics. Instead, this chapter attempts to demonstrate that these urban intellectuals and professionals asserted their political influence as social mobilizers and army educators by

\textsuperscript{94}Yu, \textit{Rongyu junren zhi zhiye zaizao}, 13.
\textsuperscript{95}Ibid.
both echoing and complicating the GMD government’s heroic rhetoric of the soldier figure.

In many respects urban intellectuals and professionals incorporated rhetoric similar to that of the GMD government. The service they performed supported the GMD army’s resistance against the Japanese and the GMD government’s wartime state-building agenda of supporting the army. Some of the intellectuals and professionals had government-affiliated positions, such as Duan Shengwu. The educational specialist Yu Zhaoming was invited by the GMD government to write the book on vocational education for honorable soldiers. Associations of urban professionals, such as the Soldier Service branch of the YMCA and the Vocational Coordination Association for the Disabled Veterans, received financial support from the government as well. These urban intellectuals and professionals wrote articles and books to encourage larger social masses to participate in the army service work, which also provided the theoretical guidance and experience for the GMD government’s work of wounded solider relief and administration. The urban intellectuals celebrated the bravery of the soldiers and expressed their respect for them; they also acknowledged the moral qualities possessed by the soldiers. Their celebration matched the GMD’s rhetoric elevation of the soldiers’ status as a model citizen and national hero.

Although urban intellectuals echoed the GMD government’s discourse of the soldier figure in many ways, they also complicated this discourse in order to maneuver some autonomous space by voicing criticism of the government and asserting their role as they army educator. The intellectuals—who identified themselves as war reporters,
propaganda workers and social mobilizers—created a heroic image of the soldier different from the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal. Soldiers in their depictions fought bravely as heroes but their bodies were at the mercy of the ravages of war. They often lost their temper and were prone to violent misbehavior; they did not restrain their emotion as Jiang expected in his speeches at Whampoa; they were affectionate and sometimes emotionally charged. The urban professionals—who identified themselves as both social mobilizers and army educators—drew from their work experience at the Soldier Service Branch of the Chinese YMCA and stressed that the soldiers, especially wounded soldiers, had urgent needs for emotional support. They were poorly educated and needed to be taught the nationalist rhetoric and the importance of cooperating with the social masses. For the professionals working on vocational rehabilitation programs for wounded and disabled soldiers, honorable soldiers’ role as a moral model was ambiguous; as they could be a source of potential social chaos if they did not receive vocational training from the professionals. Soldiers also lacked necessary skills that would enable them to manage a smooth transition to the civilian world. Therefore, honorable soldiers should not have any sense of superiority over civilians; instead, they should accept the vocational training by urban professionals.

The discourses of the soldier figure constructed by these intellectuals and professionals were shaped depending on the political roles they identified for themselves, be it as war reporters, propaganda workers, social mobilizers and army educators. They echoed and complicated the GMD government’s rhetoric of the soldier figure, which revealed that their alliance with the GMD government was ambiguous. The next chapter
will discuss how another force of urban publics—male and female literary writers with direct army experiences—de-idealized or collaborated with the heroic soldier ideal created by Jiang and his GMD government.
Chapter 4
Creating Gendered Images of the Soldier Figure in Literary Works

Introduction

The previous chapter has shown that urban intellectuals and professionals had complicated the tough and heroic image of the soldier figure originally created in Whampoa’s civic education. This chapter adopts a literary perspective and examines how a particular group of cultural forces—writers, with direct army or combat experiences—shaped their own image of soldier heroes in literature. In particular, this chapter provides a close reading of three types of literary works. The first is Bayuede xiangcun (Village in August), a work of fiction published in 1935 by Xiao Jun (1907-1988), who was a Manchurian refugee writer in Shanghai who experienced the war personally while in the warlord’s army. The second is from a former Nationalist army soldier-turned-writer Qiu Dongping, who wrote battlefield reportages (zhandi baogao wenxue) that were published in the Shanghai journal Qiyue (July) in the early years of the Anti-Japanese War. The third is the autobiographies of Xie Bingying, a woman writer and soldier who had studied at Whampoa. The gendered images of soldier heroes in these literary works, shaped by the writers’ personal backgrounds, either questioned or collaborated with the GMD’s political discourse of soldier heroics. In doing so, these literary images managed to assert their own goals, which were to promote the influence of literary intellectuals as
social critics, to achieve personal independence, and to advocate for women’s political participation.

**Grassroots Soldier Heroes in Bayuede xiangcun**

Xiao Jun, a soldier-turned writer, was born in 1903 in Liaoning, Manchuria. Beginning in his childhood, Xiao had developed a reputation as having a heroic personality and determined spirit, which together drove him to pursue the military and later to use the pen to attack social crises and foreign aggression. He had experienced severe trauma as early as seven months old, as marked by his mother’s suicide due to persistent physical abuse by his father. The severe discipline used by his father cultivated Xiao’s tough personality. When he recalled his childhood years, he commented, “A soul of revenge was growing from weak to tougher, from faint to brighter. It had been cultivated in my blood, building up little by little.”\(^1\) At ten, he suddenly realized that “I understood that since I was a child without my mother, I should be stronger and earn everything by fighting instead of begging for sympathy.”\(^2\) As he wrote in his memoir, he continued to dwell upon this topic: “The belief that fighting for everything had developed in my young head. I would conquer everything using my life as the last bullet and never submit.”\(^3\) Xiao’s toughness was also shaped by folk tales of martial arts such as *Yangjia*

---


\(^2\)Ibid.

With this childhood experience, Xiao Jun sprouted the ideal of individual heroism which stimulated the idea of joining the army as he grew up.

In 1925, at the age of 18, Xiao Jun joined a unit of warlord Zhang Zuolin (1875-1928)’s Northeast Army in Jilin and was promoted to clerical assistant soon after. Xiao quickly realized during this period that the heroic army life which he used to admire was, in reality, full of brutality and darkness. He detested the strict hierarchy and ugly violence committed by his unit, and eventually he traveled to Shenyang to attend the Northeast Army Military Academy (Dongbei lujun jiangwu tang) in 1928. At this military academy controlled by the warlord army, he was shocked when he witnessed other cadets kicking the head of a dead soldier like a ball. His first publication, the short essay “Nuo” (Cowardice), repudiated this ugly and inhuman side of the warlord army, but his criticism offended the academy. In 1930, as he was about to graduate, he was abruptly dismissed in part because of his published critique and also because he protected his fellow classmates from violence by one of the military instructors. It was then that he joined another army unit in Shenyang and served as a military instructor. After the Mukden Incident in 1931, Xiao Jun requested permission to launch a guerrilla war against the Japanese. His request was rejected, and he resorted to writing as a way to participate in the resistance war against the Japanese.

---

4 *Yangjia jiang* is a collection of folk tales, plays and novels detailing the exploits of a clan of generals (with the family name Yang) over four generations during the Northern Song Dynasty of China (960-1127). The stories recount the unflinching loyalty of the members of the Yang clan, and of how they defended the Song Dynasty's borders from foreign invaders.

5 Xiao's essay “Nuo” was published the literary supplement of *Shengjing shibao* (Shengjing times) in May 1929.
Xiao Jun’s 1935 fictional work *Bayuede xiangcun* was an extension of his fighting spirit into the literary field. This fictional piece detailed combat stories about a small guerrilla unit consisting of only nine soldiers who organized a Communist-led self-defense corps in a Manchurian village. The narrative concentrates on the lives of the soldiers and on their skirmishes against the Japanese. The story was a combination of actual combat experiences in a local guerrilla unit, taken from Xiao’s personal army experiences and from his own artistic creation. According to Xiao, the motivation to write this story was “…to pursue national independence and people’s liberation.” This fiction de-idealized the heroic discourse of the soldier figure as constructed by Jiang Jieshi and the GMD government in many ways. The fighting heroes in this fiction came from the social grassroots and were guerrilla soldiers under the CCP banner; they were also chivalrous, fearless and motivated to fight for personal pursuits. Edgar Snow wrote in his introduction to Xiao’s novel: “Here is no black-and-white tale of villainy and bestiality on one side and saintly perfection on the other, but a realistic report written by a soldier, filled with enthusiasm for the whole story of…ordinary mortals.”

In this work of fiction, national heroes who bravely defended the land were not the highly disciplined, politicized and morally cultivated soldiers that the GMD government and the Whampoa Military Academy tried to produce. Instead, the images of war heroes in this fiction were of common people from the lower social strata of society

---

7 Ibid.
who not only never received formal military education but also were ideologically incongruent to Nationalist mentality. The characters depicted included those that had formally been a shoe-mender (fengxie jiang), a bandit, a warlord soldier, and a student prior to joining the guerrilla unit. They did not have full names and their names were simply based on their nicknames, their gender, or the order of birth from within their family, such as Third Zhao (Zhao San), Erliban (Two Miles and A Half), Green Hill Li (Li Qingshan), Old Woman Wang (Wang Po), Metal Eagle (Tie Ying), Little Red Face (Xiao Honglian), Third Brother Li (Li Sandi), Tall Liu (Liu Dagezi), Old Lump Tang (Tang Lao Geda), Seventh Sister Li (Li Qisao), Lark Bird (Bailing Niao), and Freckled Face (Mazi Lian).

These guerrilla soldiers fought not because they were cultivated with nationalistic sentiment or contained a strong belief in the Three Principles of the People. Rather, they joined the war for their own unique personal motivations. The soldier Little Red Face fought so that one day he could freely plow the farmland with a tobacco pipe and kill everyone that had bullied him and forcibly occupied his land.9 He also hoped that his wife would not starve and his children could study at a school instead of collecting coal cinders near the railways.10 For other soldiers, the admiration from other men and their lovers motivated them to fight. For instance, when a factory worker who admired Old Lump Tang’s weapon gave Tang a salute, Tang proudly felt that he was “pursuing a glorious undertaking.”11 Tang often showed off to his lover Seventh Sister Li—who he

---

9Xiao Jun, Bayuede xiangcun (Village in August) (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 2010), 6.
10Ibid.
11Ibid., 26.
tried his best to protect—by boasting that he possessed a gun and was a member of the revolutionary army.  

The soldiers’ fighting motivations were also gendered. Although male guerrilla soldiers fought the war to protect their families and lovers, Seventh Sister Li felt as if she had no recourse but to join the guerrilla unit after her baby was killed and she was raped by the Japanese. After her lover Tang was shot by the Japanese, she strengthened her resolve even further, determined to enact revenge for him by continuing to fight. Xiao’s stress on the personal suffering of the guerrilla soldiers was an attack on the darkness of rural Chinese society and the Japanese invasion.

The guerrilla soldiers in the fictional work did not interact with each other by following the principle of fraternity advocated in the motto of the Whampoa Military Academy—“Qin, Ai, Jing, Cheng (intimacy, fraternity, dexterity, sincerity).” Instead, their relations were largely dependent on their own personal whims and interests as the guerrilla soldiers complimented their favorite comrades and often argued with those that they disliked. Their relations were not based on a rigid hierarchy but on a fairly casual relationship structure. The soldier Xiao Ming said: “None of us is an officer. We are brothers instead. We have to bear any difficulty and hardship in order to revenge for our dead brothers.” When these guerrilla soldiers were marching, they chatted with each other on a variety of topics including women, commanders, and battlefield stories. When they argued, they talked using dirty and vulgar words without getting upset. The unit

---

12 Ibid., 76.  
13 Ibid., 7.  
14 Ibid., 10.
leader did not criticize their arguments; instead, he believed that small arguments among soldiers would help them forget the fatigue, fear and nervousness endured during combat.\textsuperscript{15}

Although these peasants-turned-guerrilla soldiers were never formally trained and disciplined by a military education, they were eager to prove that they were brave, hard-nosed and held no fear or sympathy from killing the enemy.\textsuperscript{16} The peasant-born Metal Eagle, leader of the guerrilla unit, had been a bandit before he joined. Metal Eagle was stern to his subordinators and never showed leniency when he fought. His nickname was purposely used to symbolize his ferocity and agility.\textsuperscript{17} Soldier Xiao Ming, who began as a student, also believed that “a revolutionary army soldier is absolutely not allowed to vacillate or feel depressed.”\textsuperscript{18} These peasants never attended a military academy nor received any discipline or education from the state; however, they still developed the consciousness to fight bravely.

These grassroots-based soldiers had the consciousness of fighting bravely while relying on each other for survival. Tall Liu wanted to be accompanied by other soldiers so that he could push himself to be brave in order not to lose face in front of others.\textsuperscript{19} His logic of mutual reliance was different from the principle of Lianzuofa as advocated by the Nationalist army. Lianzuofa forced soldiers to fight bravely by requiring them to supervise each other and ensure that none would flee from the battle. This writing presents a differing opinion; that the quality of bravery to the point of fearlessness was

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., 23. \\
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., 25. \\
\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 92. \\
\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 35.
not built through military discipline. It espouses the idea that a soldier did not have to receive any military and political discipline to be a fearless hero. These guerrilla soldiers refused to retreat, not because they were hardened by the discipline of military training, but out of fear of being shamed in the eyes of others. This work of fiction presents an image of war heroes not as the idealized citizen-soldier of the Nationalists but as common villagers that gave a concerted effort in fighting the enemy.

Continuing with the intention of projecting an image of national heroes as ordinary human beings, Xiao described how guerrilla soldiers also had natural sexual desires as they were conscious of their sexual attractiveness to women. When Tall Liu discussed the concubine of a company commander, Third Brother Li said: “If you had longer neck and thigh, smaller head and better-looking face, you would be handsome enough to make her run away with you.”

When describing Old Lump Tang’s lover Seventh Sister Li to Metal Eagle, a soldier focused on her sexual body: “She is hot with big breasts and thick lips.” Tall Liu stared at the face of a nearby female soldier when writing down a commander’s order, feeling that her voice mattered even more than the order itself. When Metal Eagle heard from other soldiers that Seventh Sister Li would not even talk to a man she disliked, he felt that his body was “hit by an instinctive force and enveloped by jealousy.” These peasant soldiers’ expressions of their sexual desires de-idealized Jiang’s heroic ideal of soldiers. Jiang tried to discipline the soldiers’ emotional expression and limited it only for the nation, their parents and army comrades.

20Ibid., 15.
21Ibid., 47.
22Ibid., 36.
23Ibid., 47.
24Ibid.
Jiang’s ideal of a model soldier was an asexual hero; however, the heroes in Xiao Jun’s fiction were ordinary villagers who harbored sexual instincts and did not restrain from expressing them openly.

By creating the image of national heroes as common peasants, Xiao expressed his concerns not only about the misery of the social masses but also about the promise of Chinese nationalist resistance. As Lu Xun wrote in the preface to this work of fiction,

It is serious and tense. The emotions of the author, the lost skies, earth, the suffering people, and even the deserted grass, gaoliang (sorghum), frogs, crickets and mosquitos—all are muddled together, spreading in gory-red color before the very eyes of the reader, revealing a part and whole of China, contemporary and future of China, a dead-end road and an open road for China.25

The guerrilla soldiers in this writing drew their fighting motivation from their instinctive yearning for a peaceful and prosperous family life, as well as their willingness to protect their lovers and commit revenge for those lost. They did not concern themselves with nationalistic ideology or devotion to the Three Principles of the People. Furthermore, they were part of the forces that were led not by the Nationalists but by their Communist antithesis. They also did not hide their sexual desires. Although they were not as disciplined and politicized as the GMD state expected from its citizen soldiers, they were still portrayed by Xiao Jun as war heroes that bravely defended their village. As a contemporary literary critic commented, this fiction revealed the social basis and major force of the Chinese revolution.26 For Xiao, it was soldiers formed from these social

25Lu Xun, Lu Xun quanji (Collected works of Lu Xun), Vol. 6 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2005), 296.
26He Mu, “Bayuede xiangcun” (Village in August), Shishi xinbao (New newspapers of current affairs) (February 25, 1938). This source is reprinted from Zhang, “Ping Bayuede xiangcun,” 429.
grassroots that constituted the vanguard of Chinese national resistance and the hope of Chinese recovery.

As Leo Ou-fan Lee comments, “The authenticity of feeling—the emotions of Xiao Jun from his immediate experiences—accounted for the fiction’s instant popularity.” The vivid descriptions of suffering villager soldiers and their subsequent strong fighting motivations in order to protect or instill revenge in the name of their families was shaped by Xiao’s philosophy of individual heroism, molded from his direct observations of the misery displayed by common soldiers in the warlord army. As a fiction writer, Xiao actively participated in the national resistance campaign as a social critic by revealing the brutality of the enemy and, by extension, the entire war. He also pointed out that grassroots efforts in rural China were a potential social force for national salvation. If widely mobilized and well organized, this force would contribute heavily to national resistance. Utilizing literary writing to reveal the war brutality and common peoples’ misery, Xiao de-idealized the Nationalist discourse of a politicized and disciplined soldier figure in many ways. His realistic critiques applied to his fictional works allowed him to assert the role of literary writers as social critic.

**War Trauma in Qiu Dongping’s Battlefield Reportage**

Xiao Jun’s 1935 work Bayuede xiangcun depicted the image of peasant-turned guerrilla soldiers who fought in rural China. Images of other types of soldiers also appeared in the literary genre of battlefield reportages. The outbreak of the full-scale war

---

against Japan catapulted battlefield reportage, a literary genre often used by Chinese writers to describe war progress and soldiers’ combat experience, into an unprecedented position of prominence. According to commentary by the literary critic Yi Qun (1911-1966), during the war, all literary journals devoted 70 to 80 percent of their space to reportage, and 80 to 90 percent of authors, including friction writers, poets, essayists, and literary critics, wrote at least a few reportage pieces.\(^{28}\)

Many reportage works on combat stories, including Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportages, were published in the first major wartime literary journal called *Qiyue*.\(^{29}\) Hu Feng (1902-1985) founded this weekly journal in Shanghai on September 11, 1937 in response to the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War.\(^{30}\) The limited financial resources, which mainly came from donations from Hu Feng’s friends, resulted in its small circulation.\(^{31}\) However, a strong desire for independence motivated this small journal from the beginning of its existence. As the literature scholar Yunzhong Shu comments, *Qiyue* differed significantly, in subject matter and perspective, from “official journals,” which were “associated in spirit with the government propaganda apparatus” and “intended to sing praises of the Chinese nation for its heroism.”\(^{32}\)

---

\(^{28}\)Yi Qun, “Kangzhan yilai de Zhongguo baogao wenxue” (Chinese reportage literature since the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War), in *Zhongguo kangri zhanzheng shiqi dahoufang wenxue shuxi* (A compendium of literary works published in the interior during China’s Anti-Japanese War), Vol. 3, ed. Lin Mohan et al. (Chongqing: Chongqing renmin chubanshe, 1989), 1377-1378.


\(^{30}\)The journal was named after the month of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident on July 7, 1937, which was widely considered as the marker for the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

\(^{31}\)Shu, *Buglers on the Home Front*, 43.

\(^{32}\)Ibid., 44.
Revealing the reality of wartime society in a critical tone was the primary function of works published in the journal. The focus for selecting works, according to its chief editor Hu Feng, was whether or not the author could “seize the essential elements and avoid wordy, flat or exaggerated description, possess a critical spirit and bravely expose dark or dirty phenomenon, and discard conceptual, abstract discourse in their use of language.” In another instruction on the reportage writing given by Hu Feng in December 1937, “Lun zhandouqi de yige zhandou de wenyi xingshi” (On a combative literary genre in wartime), Hu pointed out two weaknesses in the wartime reportage genre—flat description and excessive sentimentalism. Hu argued that to remedy these shortcomings, writers should express their emotions through concrete details selected from real life experiences and depict national heroes as complicated human beings with both strengths and weaknesses. The independent nature of Qiyue and its spirit of social criticism allowed its contributors, including Qiu Dongping, to de-idealize the tough and well-disciplined soldier ideal and to remove the glorious aura of bravery, sacrifice and military discipline advocated in the Nationalist discourse.

The journal editor Hu Feng’s directives set the tone for the style of Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportages—”personal” and “critical.” Qiu’s ability to provide a personal and critical description of soldiers’ combat experiences also came from his direct army experiences. Born in Haifeng, Guangdong, Qiu Dongping herded cattle in his village as a teenager and studied at a middle school at sixteen. He joined the CCP in 1927,

33 Shu, Buglers on the Home Front, 48. This original source of Hu Feng’s direction on the reportage writing was in Qiyue (July), No. 2 (November 1937): 39.
participated in a peasant uprising in Haifeng in 1928 and escaped to Hong Kong after the failure of the uprising. In Hong Kong, he supported himself by fishing, doing various odd jobs and managing a small business in his spare time. In the meanwhile he started to practice writing.

After Japan invaded the northeastern parts of China in 1931, Qiu went to Nanchang, Jiangxi to meet his elder brother Qiu Guozhen (1894-1979) who served as a chief of staff (canmouzhang) in a brigade of the 19th Route Army of the Nationalist military forces. Qiu joined the 19th Route Army and fought against the Japanese in the 1932 Battle of Shanghai. After the Shanghai Ceasefire Agreement was signed in May, the leadership of the 19th Route Army revolted against the Nationalist government in Fujian province. In response, Qiu left the Army and went to Hong Kong to launch propaganda campaigns for national salvation. He later participated in the Second Battle of Shanghai in August 1937, and went on to join the CCP’s New Fourth Army led by Ye Ting (1896-1949) in Spring 1938. He assisted the CCP leader Liu Shaoqi (1898-1969) in operating a branch of Lu Xun College of Arts and Literatures (Lu Xun yishu wenxue yuan) in central China. In 1941, however, he was killed by the Japanese during a skirmish in Yancheng, Jiangsu, during a botched attempt to help college students break out of a Japanese encirclement.

With the personal experience he gained from serving in the army, Qiu described in great detail the everyday life and fighting experiences as well as emotions and minds of soldiers. He adopted a critical approach to soldiers’ combat experience and conveyed his personal opinions “either explicitly through authorial comments or implicitly through
the selection of details.” This approach allowed his battlefield reportages to de-idealize war heroics with a relentless exposure of the combat trauma of Nationalist army soldiers.

Qiu’s first major contribution to Qiyue was the reportage “The Seventh Company” (“Diqilian”), published in January 1938 in the sixth issue of the journal. Drawn from the real story of his younger brother who was injured at war, “The Seventh Company” narrated cadet-turned-commander Qiu Jun’s experience of modern warfare. Qiu Jun was a graduate of the Guangzhou branch campus of the Central Army Officer Academy. During the Second Battle of Shanghai in August 1937, he was sent to the front and was appointed company commander of his army unit. The reportage described in detail the psychological transformation that Qiu Jun experienced as he matured from a military academy graduate to an army officer. Qiu Dongping did not confine the focus of his writing to describing the events or behaviors of his characters. Instead, he delved into the mind and subconsciousness of Qiu Jun.

“The Seventh Company” started with a description of Qiu Jun’s fear, self-doubt, and total incomprehension of the battlefield under heavy barrage. In this reportage, even a professional army officer who had received formal military training—like Qiu Jun—came to realize the extent of his own faintheartedness during battle. Before the battle started, Qiu already had doubt on the strength of his willpower, worrying that he might be the most cowardly among his military academy classmates. To strengthen his fighting spirit, he kept himself away from elements, which in his view, might crumble his strength as a soldier:

35Shu, Buglers on the Home Front, 89.
After we set out from Kunshan, I began a solemn and strange journey. Along the banks of a little creek near Qianmentang, a young, beautiful woman wearing a green dress appeared before our ranks. To all the men I said: “Halt, let’s take a rest here!”

Chen Weiying, a platoon leader, quietly asked me: “Why do you want to stop? Let’s catch up with her; what could be wrong with walking next to her?”

“This is my own philosophy,” I said; “Now every time when I run across a pretty woman I steer clear because she will stir up a lot of unnecessary, harmful ideas in me…”

Our special operations officer (tewu zhang) brought a phonograph from Taicang, and I made him hand it over to me; I took all of his records and smashed them because I am afraid to listen to music, too.

I constructed my own path with extreme care, as if I were cutting away brambles and paving with stones—because I want to make myself into a proper soldier, so that I can stand firm on this momentous battle line, on every side I was protecting myself from the poisons of emotion.36

As an army officer who had received formal military training, Qiu Jun had a strong sense of professional responsibility and honor. As he narrated, he planned his career path carefully and tried to appear as a proper soldier. Because of Qiu Jun’s professional pursuits, he faced head-on his susceptibility to the distraction of personal desires and consciously tried to avoid it.

For a professional army officer like Qiu Jun, the biggest enemy was not just the Japanese, but also the distraction of personal emotions, which were condemned by Qiu as poison that would weaken the fighting will of a combatant. These emotions that Qiu tried to restrain included not only attraction to women and music but also fear created by the fierce gunfire. The author vividly depicted Qiu Jun’s anxiety and fear when his troops stationed at the fire line were faced with overwhelming gunfire by the enemy. The

intimidating description of combat brutality removed the glorious aura surrounding the
cult of physical sacrifice advocated by Jiang Jieshi’s speeches to Whampoa cadets. Qiu
Dongping described:

The enemy artillery fire was amazingly accurate and their cannon shots
followed and chased our routed soldiers closely and relentlessly like a group of
spirited, running ghosts. Having thrown away their weapons, the [Chinese]
soldiers, covered with blood and mud, fled in the dense black smoke like mad
wolves. The enemy gunfire was fierce and it appeared all the more fierce when
it created fear on the battlefield and forced our soldiers on the front line to
retreat helter-skelter and pitifully, creating a frightening picture we had never
seen. It not only confused our morale, it almost completely snatched away our
morale. I realized that this frightening scene alone could dissipate our fighting
spirit before the enemy gunfire destroyed us.37

The description of the brutal and overwhelming enemy fire appeared several
times in this reportage. The narrator of this reportage Qiu Jun commented that the battle
scenes became fragmented and horrible impressions for the soldiers, whose minds were
disoriented in combat. Qiu Jun described the uniquely deafening sound from the enemy
gunfire as “a mysterious and horrible world,” which had made him “immersed in
depression.”38 Qiu Jun’s vivid depiction of battle scenes revealed his frustration and
helplessness:

The enemy’s accurate mortars played a cruel joke on our Chinese army’s battle
formation. The curved line created by the mortar’ impact ruts was a mirror
image of the curved line formed by our skirmishers. The dense artillery fire
made the ground around us shake differently; it no longer vibrated like a spring
but seemed to be dissolving the earth, like eruptions of massive waves in a
bottomless sea.39

37Ibid., 173. The translation of this paragraph is drawn from Shu, Buglers on the Home Front, 57.
38Ibid., 174.
39Ibid. The translation of this paragraph is drawn from Laughlin, Chinese Reportage, 189.
The battle was described as a world totally strange to a soldier who had received formal military training. Qiu Jun commented that “It seemed that I did not remember the gunfire; neither did I know it.” The overwhelming fire caused severe fear among soldiers:

We crouched in our trenches, grinding our teeth, enduring the irresistible weight of the artillery fire. In the beginning, we were calculating the rest of our lives in terms of months and weeks. Gradually it became days, hours, seconds, and now it was thousandths of a second.

Qiu Dongping’s detailed description of the terrifying battle and the soldiers’ emotion of fear contradicted the Nationalist propaganda for the soldier figure. This reportage did not celebrate the glory of death during battle as forged in Jiang Jieshi’s speeches to Whampoa cadets. The injuries and death caused by the brutality in battle were stripped of its romantic and glorious aura.

For Qiu Dongping as a writer with personal army experience, a proper soldier possessed enough personal responsibility to conquer his fears. The reportage wrote that Qiu felt it pointless to differentiate what was bravery and what was cowardice; all he remembered and pondered in his mind was his combat task. Qiu Jun’s sense of professional duty as a soldier drove him to unconditionally follow his commander’s order to “stand or fall with your formation!” The reportage wrote:

Our regimental commander called me on the phone, asking me bluntly: “Can you hold out?”

“Yes, commander, I can,” I answered.

“I hope it is perfectly clear to you that this is your chance to do something important and make a name for yourself; you must be deeply conscious of our righteous cause and be determined to stand or fall with your formation!”

I felt as if my commander were speaking directly to my soul; his words (according to the Chinese manner of communication between humans and

---

40 Ibid., 171.
41 Ibid., 175. The English translation is drawn from Laughlin, *Chinese Reportage*, 189.
42 Ibid., 172.
spirits) should have been written on paper and burned—and I was moved from the depths of my soul by his words, moved to the point of tears.\(^{43}\)

Qiu Jun considered standing or falling with the formation as the inherent nature of his profession. When he received this order from his commander, he felt moved to the point of tears. As the Chinese-literature scholar Charles Laughlin comments, “Qiu Jun overcomes his spiritual struggle with desire and emotion by recasting the stereotyped relationship with the battle formation as a projection of his very conscience and sense of responsibility into those very trenches.”\(^{44}\) Laughlin’s comments support the view that it was Qiu Jun’s conscience and sense of responsibility as a professional soldier that helped him overcome the distraction caused by the emotion of fear.

Although Qiu Jun’s sense of professional duty as a soldier drove him to unconditionally follow his commander’s order, he could not help himself from critically thinking about the order. No matter how moved Qiu Jun felt by the order to stand or fall with his formation, he thought that this order did not make much sense:

“All, stand or fall with your formation!” I was calm. I was constantly protecting myself from being cheated by these words. I felt the sentence was entirely wrong: Chinese generals and officers loved using it, and I was well aware of the sentence’s sacred significance, but I was still afraid that I would be swindled by it somehow. One’s “standing” or “falling” was really not an issue here; the guarding of a formation was another matter, which was really more important than one’s standing or falling.\(^{45}\)

As a professional soldier, Qiu Jun understood that the defense of the battlefield was beyond the soldiers’ control. Whether or not the soldier successfully completed his military order was less important than the strength of his resolve as translated into

\(^{43}\)Ibid., 174. The English translation is drawn from Laughlin, *Chinese Reportage*, 189.

\(^{44}\)Laughlin, *Chinese Reportage*, 190.

arduous actions in defense of the nation. Qiu Jun, as an army officer who had received professional military training, met the Nationalist ideal of a disciplined soldier in that he unconditionally followed his commander’s order. However, unconditionally abiding by military orders was only part of his sense of professional responsibility; as he pondered the order from a critical perspective. A model soldier for Qiu Dongping was not simply a fighting machine totally controlled by the army; he should maintain a degree of intellectual independence. In this sense, Qiu Dongping questioned the Nationalist ideal of a disciplined soldier. By depicting the hero of his fiction as an army officer who had a questioning mind and maintained intellectual autonomy, Qiu Dongping was also asserting his intellectual independence as a writer and social critic.

Qiu Dongping’s questioning of the Nationalist ideal of soldier heroics was also manifested in his critical understanding of bravery and soldiers’ bonding, the virtues advocated in Jiang’s speeches and Whampoa’s motto. As a professional army officer, Qiu Jun appreciated the significance of comradeship in combat. As Laughlin comments, “the arduous and tragic process of building the trenches is also a process through which Qiu Jun forges a caring, human relationship with his men.”46 At night, he walked on the battleground alone and when he saw his soldiers sleeping, Qiu found consolation from the thought that he was able to build friendship with them.47

Although Qiu valued emotional bonding with his soldiers, he did not let it prevent him from making rational decisions. When a platoon leader under Qiu’s command was about to leap from a foxhole to support his comrades, Qiu Jun stopped him. In his eyes,

46 Laughlin, Chinese Reportage, 190.
47 Qiu, “Diqilian,” 175.
“unnecessary exposure to enemy fire in the wake of their hasty attacks” was irrational behavior.\textsuperscript{48} He viewed such an action as misguided bravery and “impetuous heroism,” only capable of bringing meaningless casualties while presenting little to no benefits to the battle.\textsuperscript{49} But the platoon leader did not follow Qiu’s order; his action “inexorably exposed the configuration of the company’s battle formation to the enemy, whose cannon fire increasingly mirrored the actual shape of the formation.”\textsuperscript{50} When this platoon leader knew he might be shot because he violated Qiu Jun’s order, he deserted in a frantic panic.

Qiu Dongping subverted the Nationalist ideal of soldier heroics also by revealing that civilians did not necessarily treat the soldier as a model citizen to emulate. Instead, they thought of the soldier as an information source to satisfy their curiosity of war as soldiers and civilians had different understandings and experiences of war. When Qiu Jun left for the front, his nephew gave him a leather satchel and asked him to put a piece of an enemy soldier’s skull, an enemy army flag, and parts of an enemy machine gun inside the satchel. This request showed the romantic sentiment toward war and soldier among civilians. For Qiu Jun’s nephew, a war hero was manifested in his abilities to kill the body of the enemy, to destroy all the enemies and seize their flag, and to use modern weaponry. However, Qiu Jun did not respond with any heroic utterance to his nephew’s request; instead, he felt his nephew’s thoughts were absurd and ridiculous. War, which was unpredictable even to professional soldiers like him, was certainly beyond the comprehension of civilians like his nephew. Qiu Jun was not concerned about being a

\textsuperscript{48}Shu, \textit{Buglers on the Home Front}, 58.
\textsuperscript{49}Laughlin, \textit{Chinese Reportage}, 191.
\textsuperscript{50}Ibid.
model citizen for the civilians; he only aimed to prove to himself that he was a proper
soldier who fought bravely, unconditionally followed orders, and was also capable of
maintaining his own intellectualism in order to contemplate given orders.

The soldiers’ unique war experience in Qiu Dongping’s depiction centered on the
paradoxical meanings of war and violence. On one hand, it was violence that gave the
soldier a sense of strength and victory. In the 1935 reportage “Honghuadi zhi shouyu”
(The defense of Honghuadi), Qiu wrote:

The enemy could not realize his upcoming fate even just a thousandth of a
second before he died, and his fate was exactly controlled in the soldier’s
hands. The soldier thus developed a deep comprehension of the true essence of
what was strength and what was victory. And this was the fortune that only
soldiers could appreciate.\(^1\)

The soldiers draw power from killing—a sense inaccessible to civilians. On the other
hand, it was also war violence that made the soldier aware of his faintheartedness and
vulnerability. Qiu Jun, in “The Seventh Company,” failed the heroic ideal of committing
suicide in the event of a total defeat on the battleground. He had not fulfilled his promise
to put a piece of an enemy soldier’s skull, an enemy army flag, and parts of an enemy
machine gun into a leather satchel as his nephew asked him to do. When he returned from
the battlefield with nothing but failed promises, he gained little other than the realization
of his own frailty. War provided a source where the soldiers drew his power, but it also
revealed their weakness and caused scars that would hardly heal.

The paradoxical meanings of war to soldiers and civilians were highlighted in
Qiu’s 1932 reportage “Tongxunyuan” (Correspondent). The story begins with a village,

\(^1\)Qiu Dongping, “Honghuadi zhi shouyu” (The defense of Honghuadi) [1935], in *Qiu Dongping
dailiaozu* (Representative works by Qiu Dongping), ed. Zhongguo xiandai wenxueguan (Beijing:
Lin Ji, who was appointed as a correspondent because he killed a fat rent collector and thus was considered the bravest person in the village. Yet the reason of the killing was not explained, and it appeared unnecessary for the killer and the bystanders to justify killing. What mattered was the contrast of the spectators’ attitudes toward Lin before and after killing. Before the killing, Lin was mocked by villagers who questioned his courage to use a gun to kill. After the killing, however, Lin was praised by the villagers. The violence of killing was considered by civilians to be a myth which they were eager to observe, imagine and discuss. Lin’s neighbors tirelessly talked about their imaginations and speculations of war. They were eager to inquire about “some secret matters” from Lin and took delight in “spreading rumor and hearsay about war.” In this manner, they conceived of smart and resourceful combat strategies as if they were fighting in a battle. War and violence did not mean trauma, scar or fear to the civilians who were uninfluenced by it; instead, they were just legendary stories used for entertainment.

Lin Ji’s response to the neighbors’ fantasies of war was “only smiles with few replies.” For the soldier Lin, war did not have any romantic or glorious aura. When Lin Ji escorted a young soldier to perform a task, the young soldier was captured and brutally killed by the enemy because he lacked enough battle experience to overcome his enemies. Over time, Lin Ji felt it almost impossible to forget about the young soldier’s tragedy. Although Lin’s commander did not blame him and instead offered sincere comforts to

---

52 Qiu Dongping, “Tongxunyuan” (Correspondent) [1932], in Qiu Dongping daibiaozuo (Representative works by Qiu Dongping), ed. Zhongguo xiandai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2011), 32.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid., 33.
55 Ibid., 34.
him, he was still haunted by the scream of the young soldier and was thus trapped in a pain that could not be alleviated. Lin blamed himself for his inability to save the young soldier, and eventually suffered mental derangement and committed a suicide. Lin’s story questioned the Nationalist discourse that transformed the gloomy and dark sides of the death into a glorious and solemn beauty. The sacrifice of Lin Ji’s fellow soldier was not considered by Lin as an honor of eternal life; but instead it was a traged.

As a writer with personal combat experiences, Qiu Dongping’s reportages revealed not only the soldiers’ trauma in combat but also the absurdity and irony of the war. In the reportage “The Seventh Company,” when the only twenty-five soldiers that survived were madly and dizzily seeking their enemy in the midst of gunfire, soldiers from their allied army mistakenly misidentified them as the enemy and shot at them.\(^56\) The war was ironic in Qiu Dongping’s reportage also because military discipline, which was highly celebrated for making model soldiers in the Nationalist discourse, was stripped of its aura. One example was the 1938 reportage “The Lieutenant Colonel” (Zhongxiao fuguan), which detailed the the combat experience of a competent middle-level army officer who respected his commander, but was shot dead because he questioned the commander’s unreasonable order.

The lieutenant colonel highly respected and trusted his army commander, treating the commander as his idol. He believed that military generals could be viewed as sacred flags that symbolized national pride and honor. In battle, he was a competent officer who not only fought bravely but also had deep concerns about national resistance. For instance,

\(^{56}\) Qiu, “Diqilian,” 175.
he felt grief when he saw the death of common people due to their ignorance of war. He also detested the irascible attitude of the soldiers when they were educating the common masses on self-protection under the enemy bombardment. The lieutenant colonel commented that if the common people had been mobilized into the national salvation campaign earlier, they would have the intellect to understand the war and violence.57

His competence as an army officer was also manifested in his critical thinking regarding military orders. When the army commander ordered him to retreat, claiming that retreat was the most strategic option, he instead held the position and kept fighting to support the allied army who was still engaged in combat. The first time he questioned his army commander was over the question of retreat: “Does the military strategy teach a soldier to abandon the territory of the country?”58 Under the pressure of the army commander who was “sacred and inviolable,” the lieutenant colonel was shot dead.59 Qiu Dongping’s description of the face of this dead soldier who dared question the commander’s retreat order was full of respect:

His face, which is as strong as a horse, is like a perpetual statute of an old sage covered with steadfast and calm smiles and wrinkles. This expression that can only be seen in the faces of combat soldiers connotes his question of the military discipline in the army and battlefield.

Qiu Dongping expressed his respect for the lieutenant colonel, for fearlessly fighting against the enemy and bravely expressing his critical opinion of the commander. When allied forces finally defeated the enemy the next day,

57 Qiu Dongping, “The Lieutenant Colonel” (Zhongxiao fuguan) [1938], in Qiu Dongping daibiaozuo (Representative works by Qiu Dongping), ed. Zhongguo xiandai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2011), 46.
58 Ibid., 51.
59 Ibid., 52.
the army commander—who just killed the lieutenant colonel—made the false, empty claim in his report that “I will not lose any inch of the land with the determination to sacrifice my life.” This report revealed the ironic aspect of military discipline in the Nationalist army. A soldier who had the bravery and resolution to fight to death was not killed by the enemy but by his own commander, who he highly respected. The destiny of the soldier did not solely depend on the consequence of the battle; it also depended on whether the soldier absolutely obeyed the order by his commander, even though the order was to give up and retreat.

The trauma of soldiers and the absurdity of war were also revealed in the 1938 reportage “Yige lianzhangde zhandou zaoyu” (A company commander’s combat experience). It was acclaimed by Qiu’s fellow writers as the best specimen of wartime reportage. In this reportage, Qiu Dongping described the mental pain and emotional scars of a company commander while criticizing the rigidity of military discipline in the Nationalist army. The commander of a company, Lin Qingshi, met a friend from his military academy Gao Feng, who retreated from the front. Gao’s description of his combat life was filled with misery and revealed a gap between his professional goal and the war’s cruel reality:

I think that all the soldiers are miserable. When a soldier graduates from the military academy, he wears a sword and military uniform, looking as brave and strong as other soldiers. When walking in the street, he often attracts the admiration from others...When he joins the front, death and injury is not his concern at all; the most painful thing to him is the inability to complete the

---

60 Ibid.
61 Shu, Buglers on the Home Front, 60.
combat task. I have great ambition to be an excellent soldier, which even sounds arrogant to others. Because of my ambition I always respect myself and feel proud of myself in front of others. …

Three months ago, I served as a second lieutenant at an army unit in Guangdong. My wife and my friends wrote letters to me congratulating on my promotion. However, I do not think it is my honor. I feel that I am marching in thick fog. My trace is so secret that nobody knows where I come from and leave for next…Not very long ago, our troops marched to the front and I served as a platoon leader. I knew that I might grow into an excellent soldier in combat…On the night of November 18, we were attacked by a group of powerful enemies. Thirty five soldiers died, and I was the only one that survived. This fact has extremely shocked me. I cannot figure out what the combat is now. I feel that the combat is like a robber or a thug. Whenever you relax just a little bit, it confronts you immediately. What has made me feel most painful is that ever since the combat started, we were confined to the passive status of being attacked. Our guns were held in our hands, but we just could not find our opponents…The combat is serious. I think that I have recognized its solemn yet cruel face. This face makes me scared and I really do not have the bravery to confront it….62

Gao Feng’s narrative demonstrated how the ambition of a military academy cadet to be a great soldier had to be compromised with the brutality of the war. No matter how well a soldier was trained at the military academy and how firm his fighting resolve was, the brutality of war easily disoriented him. His promotion, which was admired by civilians, did not heal his mental loneliness and emotional scars.

In this work, the soldier’s war trauma was not only caused by powerful enemy fire but also from the sheer rigidity of military discipline. Lin Qingshi, touched by his soldiers’ determination to fight, decided to break from the order from his commander and launch his troops into battle with a group of well-equipped Japanese enemies. When Lin made this decision, he knew that he would be executed by his commander even if he won

---

62 Qiu Dongping, “Yige lianzhang de zhandou zaoyu” (A company commander’s combat experience) [1938], in Qiu Dongping daibiao zuo (Representative works by Qiu Dongping), ed. Zhongguo xian dai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2011), 206.
the battle. After victory, Lin surrendered himself to his commander to take full responsibility for disobeying the order. Qiu Dongping made it clear that Lin’s surrender was motivated by his sense of professional duty. He wrote: “Lin could have escaped from the punishment, but he did not defend himself at all. Instead, he chose to accept the execution by the military law just to fulfill his dignity as a soldier.”⁶³ Qiu Dongping laments: “Unfortunately he is not defeated by the fierce fire of the Japanese army but killed by his fellow soldier.”⁶⁴ Qiu’s comment criticized the rigidity of military discipline in the army. Unconditional subordination to the military hierarchical structure may not result in victory in battle. Critical thinking allowed the competent army officer Lin Qingshi to make a decision beneficial to victory. Nonetheless, Lin’s choice, regardless of the military outcome, led to his execution. This reportage did not stop with Lin’s execution; instead, it ended with Qiu Dongping’s comment, “New Chinese soldiers are rising.”⁶⁵ These new soldiers Qiu was referring to were those like Lin Qingshi and the lieutenant colonel detailed above, who not only bravely and competently fought against the enemy but also possessed the ability to critically analyze military situations and maintained intellectual independence.

Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportages published in the journal Qiyue provided personal and critical descriptions of soldiers’ trauma and the absurdity of war. Several factors led to Qiu’s personalized and critical writing strategy. Qiyue was a literary journal which maintained its independence instead of serving as a propaganda mouthpiece. The

⁶³Ibid., 214.
⁶⁴Ibid.
⁶⁵Ibid.
journal’s editor, Hu Feng, selected reportages based on the principle of critically and realistically revealing dark sides of wartime Chinese society. Qiu Dongping’s personal army and combat experiences also allowed him to develop a critical and deeper understanding of the war and the soldiers’ combat experiences.

With a personal and critical tone, Qiu’s battlefield reportages revealed traumatic experiences of soldiers during the war and attacked the absurdity and irony of the war. Even though the soldier was depicted as a model citizen and the epitome in the GMD’s political rhetoric, that image heavily contrasted with the soldier in Qiu’s reportage writing. In his works, the soldier was the person that greatly suffered from and was subsequently traumatized by the horrors of war; it was difficult for civilians to understand these plights from the soldiers. By revealing the reality of war brutality and soldiers’ trauma, Qiu Dongping subverted the Nationalist discourse of the soldier figure by removing the romantic and glorious aura which surrounded the sacrifice, bravery and military discipline. In doing so, Qiu asserted the role of literary intellectuals as social critics while advocating critical thinking as a great virtue for Chinese soldiers. Like Xiao Jun, Qiu Dongping expressed deep social consciousness by exploring the dark sides of wartime Chinese society and searching for the hope of national salvation. In Xiao’s fiction, the hope lied in grassroots soldiers who bravely fought for peace and to better their family life or out of revenge. In Qiu’s battlefield reportage, hope mixed with a strong sense of professional responsibility that motivated the soldiers to fight fearlessly and maintain critical thinking and intellectual independence.
The Female Soldier Writer Xie Bingying

The image of soldiers in the writings of Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping were all males, either guerrilla soldiers or professional army officers. This section examines the female Whampoa graduate Xie Bingying (1906-2000)’s autobiographies in an attempt to show that soldier imagery in literary works could also be gendered. Soon after the Whampoa Academy was founded in 1924, a debate on whether Whampoa should accept woman soldiers as cadets unfolded. A cadet named Li Zhilong (1899-1928) published an article about this issue on August 17, 1925, in the *Zhongguo junren* (Chinese soldiers), a Whampoa journal published by the Association of Chinese Young Soldiers (Zhongguo qingnian junren lianhehui) led by Chinese Communists at Whampoa.\(^6^6\) This article, titled “Lujun junguan xuexiao zhaoshou nüsheng wenti” (The issue of recruiting woman cadets into the army officer academy), supported the view that Whampoa should allow women to join the Academy and become soldiers. Li pointed out that women were suitable for many roles in the army, such as staff officer (*canmouguan*), party representative, political worker, intelligence worker, logistics worker, and communications worker (*tongxinyuan*). He opposed recruiting all women into the army since he believed that women were physically weaker than men. But he advocated that as long as the women who wanted to join Whampoa had a strong body, they should be allowed to join.

Li also publicized a letter written by a woman named Jin Huishu\(^6^7\) to the GMD party representative of Whampoa, Liao Zhongkai, in which Jin requested that Whampoa

---

\(^6^6\)The journal *Zhongguo junren* was initiated on February 20, 1925 in Guangzhou and stopped the publication in March 1926.

\(^6^7\)Jin Huizhu's birth and death years are unclear.
recruit women cadets. Jin argued that it was a sign of inequality between men and women if women were barred from army service. In response, Liao expressed his understanding and support for Jin’s request. He also spoke against an article published in *Guangzhou ribao* (Guangzhou daily) on July 13, 1925, which criticized recruiting woman cadets for the stated reason that a woman’s presence in the army would cause sexual disorder and weaken military morale. Liao suggested that as long as women were physically strong, they would be allowed to enter Whampoa. 68

Liao allowed Whampoa to recruit a small group of women cadets on the condition that he expected the women to be strong and perform assistant tasks such as political work support. This decision was made as a compromise to promote equal rights for women and was intended to build the prestige of the newly founded Whampoa. After the Northern Expedition began in 1926, the Whampoa Military Academy opened a branch campus in Wuhan—the Wuhan Central Military and Political Academy (Wuhan zhongyang junshi zhengzhi xuexiao). This branch campus recruited female cadets for the first time in the history of modern China. 69 Two hundred and thirty one women were

---

68 Li Zhilong, “Lujun junguan xuexiao zhaoshou nüsheng wenti” (The issue of recruiting woman cadets into the army officer academy), *Zhongguo junren* (Chinese soldiers), No. 6 (August 17, 1925): 47.

69 Many well-known female revolutionaries in modern Chinese history used to study at the Whampoa Military Academy, such as Zhao Yiman (1905-1936) and Hu Lanqi (1901-1994). After the Mukden Incident in 1937, the Communist soldier Zhao served as the political commissar of the Second Regiment of the Third Army of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army. She was captured and executed by Japanese forces in 1936. Hu organized and led a team of women who supported the Nationalist army’s attempts to resist the Japanese invasion in 1937. Hu was appointed China’s first female major general by the Nationalists’ Central Military Commission. For Hu’s military experiences, see Kristin Stapleton, “Hu Lanqi: Rebellious Woman, Revolutionary Soldier, Discarded Heroine, and Triumphant Survivor,” in *The Human Tradition in Modern China*, ed. Kenneth Hammond and Kristin Stapleton (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 166.
accepted and constituted the sixth class of the Whampoa Military Academy.\textsuperscript{70} The women received training from February to July 1927, and were offered full scholarships which covered all tuition costs and food and accommodation expenditures as well as giving the women a monthly stipend.\textsuperscript{71}

This section will focus on the writings by one of the Whampoa female cadets, Xie Bingying (1906-2000), and examines the literary construction of the image of the soldier figure from a female perspective. Xie was one of the first female soldiers in modern Chinese history and also is well known for her literary production. Her autobiographies \textit{Congjun riji} (Army diaries, 1928), \textit{Xin congjun riji} (New army diaries, 1938), and \textit{Yige nübingde zizhuan} (The autobiography of a female soldier, 1936) received overwhelming praise in China and abroad when they appeared. Her autobiographies have been reprinted several times and have been translated into several languages.\textsuperscript{72} Xie’s works serve as a useful window to examine the motivation and mentality of female soldiers in modern Chinese history.

Xie’s autobiography described the story of a female soldier going through her life experiences. At first, she was a rebellious child who had a strong sense of bravery and


\textsuperscript{71}Ibid.

determination and eventually grew into a soldier and writer. Xie portrayed the female soldier as a woman fighting to free herself from the constraints of tradition Chinese society, especially the gender roles in marriage. Born into a traditional family, Xie was expected to be an obedient daughter and later on, daughter-in-law. Her education was largely restricted to learning how to spin cotton and embroider, and her reading was limited to such books as *Jiaonü yigui* (Teach your daughter traditional rules).\(^7\) Xie’s rebelliousness was often criticized by her mother as exemplifying a lack of daughterly obedience. From childhood, Xie was eager to control her own fate and fought hard to do so. She tried her best to resist the training she received from her mother that pushed conventional gender education. Despite her mother’s scolding, Xie ventured outside to play with the boys instead of going into the fields with older, engaged girls to pick tea leaves during the day and weaved in the evenings to prepare her trousseau. She “fought fiercely against having her feet bound by begging, coaxing, kicking, snatching, crying and roaring.”\(^7\) Xie recounted her efforts to secure a formal education at a *sishu* (private school) at the age of ten by threatening to commit suicide.

Xie brought her rebellious spirit to her school and later on to society. At twelve, she led a student uprising at a girls’ school because the instructor told her not to talk and play with boys. Later she was expelled from a church high school because she organized a student council with several other students and initiated a student parade to commemorate the 1925 May Thirtieth Movement, a major labor and anti-imperialist

\(^7\)Xie Bingying, “Yige nübing de zizhuan” (The autobiography of a female soldier), in *Xie Bingying daibiaozuo* (Representative works by Xie Bingying), ed. Zhongguo xiandai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2009), 59.

\(^7\)Jing Wang, *When “I” was Born: Women’s Autobiography in Modern China* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 179.
demonstration. She then joined the Wuhan branch campus of the Whampoa Military Academy in 1926 at the age of twenty. Her rebellious personality and her pursuit of heroic and chivalrous spirits was one of the main reasons she joined the army. She wrote in her autobiography:

Among the traditional novels *Shuihu zhuan* (All men are brothers) is my favorite one. Although *Honglou meng* (Dream of the red chamber) is also a masterpiece, it could not arouse my interest as *Shuihu*. I dislike the crying of Lin Daiyu. I also don’t like the foolish-looking (*shatou shanao*) of Jia Baoyu, who spent his whole day hanging around girls. I truly admire every hero in *Shuihu*. Their brave and chivalrous spirits have exerted great influence on my later participation in the army.\(^{75}\)

Xie’s narrative of her chivalrous spirits collaborated with the heroic soldier ideal advocated in Jiang’s civic education speeches at Whampoa. She wrote that the female cadets at Whampoa washed the rouge and powder off their faces and cut their hair short.\(^{76}\) Xie believed that to be a female soldier meant to cleanly rid themselves of all feminine qualities and to emulate the appearance and behaviors of male soldiers.\(^{77}\)

However, Xie’s echoed Jiang’s celebration of the heroic soldier ideal not with the intention to reform the army or to strengthen Jiang Jieshi’s authority. Instead, Xie’s heroic soldier ideal aimed to justify her challenge of traditional gender roles and her struggle for individual independence. Xie mentioned in her autobiography that she joined the army because of the pursuit of her writing career and her wish to control her marriage fate. She believed that a writer could not produce powerful and lifelike works without having some unique life experiences. Xie saw joining the army as a great opportunity to

---

\(^{75}\) Xie, “Yige nübing de zizhuan,” 72.
\(^{76}\) Ibid., 88.
\(^{77}\) Ibid.
build her physique and acquire substantial sources for her writing. Moreover, joining the army provided an emergent shelter for her to escape from the marriage arranged by her mother. She wrote in her diary that the top reason that female cadets joined the army was to “escape from the oppression of the feudal family.”

For Xie, the heroics of a woman soldier meant not only fighting against traditional practices and values that confined women within the patriarchal family but also to meet any life difficulties facing women in general. After the collapse of the First United Front between Chinese Nationalists and Communists in 1927, the class of female cadets was disbanded by Whampoa, forcing Xie to return home and fight against the marriage her family arranged for her. She experienced the failure of her first marriage and became a single mother. She was also thrown into a prison because she refused to attend the ceremony welcoming Puyi (1906-1967), the emperor of the puppet state of Manchukuo sponsored by the Japanese.

Xie echoed the GMD’s rhetoric of the soldier not only in celebrating the heroic soldier ideal but also in claiming assistant roles in the army for women soldiers. Xie’s autobiographies showed that she did not challenge Whampoa’s expectations for female cadets to perform non-combat assistant tasks. In her autobiographies, she often propagated meanings of the Northern Expedition to social masses who had little knowledge. Her main task during the Northern Expedition was to provide treatment to

---

78 Ibid., 79.
79 Ibid., 84.
80 Xie Bingying, “Congjun riji” (Army diaries), in Xie Bingying daibiao zuo (Representative works by Xie Bingying), ed. Zhongguo xiandai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2009), 5.
wounded soldiers, but she made political work her priority.\textsuperscript{81} As revealed in Chapter 3, during the Anti-Japanese War, Xie left her home to Changsha to organize the women’s war service corps, which went to the front line to provide treatment for the wounded soldiers and make war reports.

Although Xie collaborated with the GMD state in performing non-combat tasks, her goal of performing political work was not just to propagandize nationalist ideology and foster patriotic spirits amongst the social masses. In a letter she wrote to her brother, she listed her three-fold agenda: to treat and encourage the wounded soldiers, to perform political propaganda by mobilizing the peasants and workers to participate in the revolution, and to educate the women in villages and factories to fight for their liberation. Mobilizing women to fight for liberation and against patriarchal confinement was considered by Xie an important goal in her political work. She argued that women’s active participation in the nationalist revolution was the manifestation of China’s modernity by citing examples of women’s service in the revolutions in France and Russia.\textsuperscript{82} She was excited to see more village women holding their own local meetings and participating in the revolution of “fighting against the oppression from the feudal and bourgeoisie forces.”\textsuperscript{83} As Xie’s friend Yi Ming\textsuperscript{84} commented, Xie Bingying considered participating in the war service as the only way for women truly to achieve

\begin{flushright}
81 Ibid., 8.
82 Ibid., 39.
84 Yi Ming’s birth and death years are unclear.
\end{flushright}
emancipation. Although Xie did not challenge the GMD’s ideal for a female soldier, her goals of performing political work differed from the GMD’s expectation for a female soldier.

**Conclusion**

The three writers—Xie Bingxin, Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping—all had army experiences, either as a military academy cadet or as a combatant. Therefore, it is safe to argue that they had deeper and more personal understandings than the civilians and other writers of the war and of the mentality of soldiers. This chapter has shown how Xiao Jun, Qiu Dongping, and Xie Bingying created gendered images of soldiers in the literary works that represented the perspectives of male and female writers. These literary intellectuals who had direct army experiences either questioned or collaborated with the Nationalist rhetoric of heroic soldier figure to claim their own goals and agendas.

Xiao Jun’s fictional work *Bayuede xiangcun* and Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportage subverted the Nationalist rhetoric by depicting soldier heroes in their writings as ordinary human beings that had personal fighting motivations and suffered from the war. The guerrilla soldiers in *Bayuede xiangcun* were not emulating the Nationalist ideal of a politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated citizen soldier. It was misery caused by the social crisis and the Japanese invasion that forced them to participate in the war as soldiers. The soldiers, armed with weapons, only enjoyed an illusory sense of honor and

---

85 Yi Ming, “Zai zhandi fuwu de Xie Bingying” (Xie Bingying in the battlefield service), in *Kangzhan zhongde nüzhanshi* (Women soldiers during the Anti-Japanese War), ed. Shen Zijiu (n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n. d. [1938]), 42.
strength. In actual combat they severely suffered from the war, experiencing frustration and helplessness. The brutality and absurdity of war and the trauma soldiers endured were hardly understandable to the civilians. Their combat stories removed the glorious aura surrounding death, bravery and military discipline fashioned in Jiang’s speeches.

Several factors could explain why the literary works by Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping subverted the heroic-soldier ideal promoted by the GMD. These include the tough personalities of Xiao and Qiu, their direct experiences with the military academy, the army and combat, the personal and critical style of their writing, and their concerns for the misery of grass-rooted peasants, common soldiers and lower-level army officers.

When depicting the soldier figure in their works, Xiao and Qiu set their aims higher than patriotic agitation or ideological propaganda. In subverting the Nationalist rhetoric of the heroic soldier figure, Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping both extended their thinking of China’s national crisis into creating the soldier figure, asserting the role of literary intellectuals as social critic. They treated the army as a microcosm of Chinese society, exploring the dark phenomena and the roots of the common people’s suffering. They attacked the cruelty of the enemy, the brutality of the war, the corruption within the army and the rigidity of the military hierarchy. In attacking the brutality of war and soldiers’ suffering, Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping were also seeking a way out for China’s national salvation. Xiao revealed the potential force of rural grassroots who had strong fighting spirits. Qiu advocated that a soldier’s sense of professional responsibility included not only fighting fearlessly but also maintaining a critical thinking and intellectual independence.
The literary images of the soldier figure were highly gendered. In Bayuede xiangcun, male soldiers fought the war to protect their families while the female soldier was forced to join the unit after experiencing severe misery. The suffering of soldiers was gendered as sexual oppression constituted a significant part of women’s war trauma. Although Xiao and Qiu subverted the heroic soldier ideal, the female soldier Xie Bingying echoed this ideal by highlighting her chivalrous and brave spirits. Xie also collaborated with the GMD in performing political work rather than combat tasks. However, her collaboration allowed her to achieve her personal agendas, which were to break the confinement of traditional gender roles and to argue for women’s political participation. As her autobiographies show, her military service at the Whampoa Military Academy was a continuation of her fight for an independent lifestyle and her commitment to social service.

This chapter has examined the literary images of three types of soldiers: soldiers in a rural guerrilla unit, soldiers in the Nationalist army, and a female soldier who graduated from Whampoa. The next chapter will discuss how educated youths who joined the Youth Army, especially the students, represented themselves in their writing.
Chapter 5

The Construction of the Soldier Ideal by Educated Youths

Introduction

The previous chapter showed that the writings of literary intellectuals had either subverted or, conversely, supported the GMD’s rhetoric of the heroic soldier figure in order to assert their social consciousness and serve their goals. This chapter focuses on how another group of urban publics—educated youths, particularly the students—constructed the soldier ideal to fit their concerns.

This chapter will first discuss the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army (Zhishi qingnian congjun yundong) launched by the GMD in 1944 to provide a historical background for the GMD’s efforts to militarize educated youths. Furthermore, it analyzes the writings by the Youth Army soldiers to examine what soldier ideal they advocated and practiced in their army life. This chapter will demonstrate that the student soldiers actively participated in the GMD’s state-building effort to build a strong army by joining the Youth Army after Jiang Jieshi launched the Campaign. However, an examination of their writings shows that their alliance with the GMD government was ambiguous; although they supported the rhetoric that Jiang used to militarize educated youths, they asserted their soldier identity based on the principles of self-government and
democracy and actually challenged the GMD’s disciplined and politicized citizen-soldier ideal.

As the Western allies entered the war against the Japanese after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, China’s resistance war against the Japanese became an important theatre of the Second World War (1939-1945). The new domestic and international situation also forced Jiang Jieshi to adjust his military mobilization policies. Jiang eventually launched the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army in late 1944, calling upon educated youths, mainly high school and college students, to join the army. Conscripting educated soldiers had been part of the GMD’s continued efforts to forge a militarized citizenry following the compulsory conscription law in the mid-1930s. Now, the GMD government elevated the political status of student soldiers in order to attract them to the army. These students viewed performing military service as a way to get politically involved in national politics and to extend the principles of self-government and democracy into the Youth Army.

The Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army (Zhishi qingnian congjun yundong)

The Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army was launched by the GMD government in 1944 in order to meet internal and external challenges pertaining to the Anti-Japanese War. By the latter days of the Anti-Japanese War, the GMD government was confronted by severe difficulties with conscription. The poor training of new conscripts coupled with the hampered implementation of the conscription system
made consistent military training for a growing military force difficult to continue. According to the Nationalist army general Bai Chongxi (1893-1966)’s recollection, the new conscripts had to join the front line to fight even though they had not completed necessary military training and fully familiarized themselves with using weapons. Because of these problems, the Nationalist army’s combat effectiveness severely deteriorated.\(^1\)Jiang Jieshi delivered a speech on behalf of the Military Affairs Committee on January 10, 1944, which said:

> Because of the long-established social discrimination against the soldiers, the majority of the nationals in our country have not fully embraced the concept of performing military service in accordance with the conscription law. Many able-bodied men claim exemption from performing military duty by pretending that they are students studying at high schools. The inability of the army to attract the participation of educated youths has severely reduced its fighting capacity. This is the biggest mistake of our army.\(^2\)

The reality of the reduced combat capacity of the Nationalist army during the last few years of the Anti-Japanese War has been discussed by the historian Hans van de Ven. He points out that, until 1941, the Nationalists were relatively successful as they drew nearly two million men each year into the army while maintaining social stability. However, because of the embargo imposed by Japan, China faced financial and monetary chaos and after 1941 the combat capability of the Nationalist forces dropped dramatically. During this period, the pool of men who could be recruited without serious consequences for local productivity had dried up. Another

---

\(^1\)Bai Chongxi, *Bai Chongxi huìyílù* (Memoirs of Bai Chongxi) (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1987), 218.

problem was that large parts of the Nationalist army became militarily useless and corrupt, engaging in smuggling, and trading with the Japanese.”

Driven by the decreased capability of combat troops within the army, the GMD government hastily designed new policies to reform the military. It reduced the size of the army, demanded that the army supply its own needs, and tolerated the army’s participation in smuggling and other nefarious activities. In 1944, Jiang Jingguo (1910-1988) made a proposal to his father Jiang Jieshi, arguing that “what China desperately required was a new sort of military force composed of literate and patriotic youths led by officers of high quality and dedication.” This proposal to organize an elite army was accepted by Jiang Jieshi.

Jiang’s acceptance of this proposal was a response not only to the conscription crisis at home but also to the international situation of China’s Anti-Japanese War. The Pacific War started on December 7, 1941 with the attack on the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by the Japanese. U.S. bases at Guam and Wake Island as well as Hong Kong were lost in the same month. After being driven out of Malaya, British forces in Singapore attempted to resist the Japanese during the Battle of Singapore but ultimately were forced to surrender to the Japanese on February 15, 1942. The rapid collapse of Allied resistance drove twenty-six countries including China, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union to meet in Washington, D.C. on January 1, 1942.

---

4Ibid., 276.
where they signed a manifesto of war against the Axis countries of Germany, Japan and Italy, vowing that no one would make a separate peace with the enemy.

As a result, China’s Anti-Japanese War was folded into the Asian theater of World War II (1941-1945). On January 3, 1942, Jiang Jieshi was named commander-in-chief of the Allied forces in the China war zone, responsible for commanding the Allied forces in China, Vietnam, Burma (present-day Myanmar) and Thailand. In February, Jiang set up the Chinese Expeditionary Army (Zhongguo yuanzhengjun) of over 100,000 soldiers and it entered Burma to fight alongside the British army for the first time. This unit was mainly armed with U.S. equipment and was subject to training by U.S. military officers.7 Major General Claire Lee Chennault’s (1893-1958) First American Volunteer Group—better known as the “Flying Tigers”—had begun training in August 1941 in Burma to defend China against the Japanese and were formally incorporated into the U.S. army as the Fourteenth Air Force Battalion in July 1942 with a new base in Kunming, Yunnan. Jiang continued to receive supplies and weapons from the U.S. as the Chinese conflict merged into the Asian theater of World War II. By 1944, the U.S. had implicitly agreed to create a modern Chinese air force,8 and was committed to training and arming thirty-nine Chinese army divisions.9 As a result, an army consisting of well-educated soldiers was in high demand in order to master the newly introduced foreign weapons and to communicate with Allied forces.

---

9Taylor, The Generalissimo’s Son, 119.
At home, China’s national resistance efforts met a severe challenge in 1944. The Japanese forces launched Operation Ichigō in April that year. The Nationalist army lost almost 600,000 soldiers and most areas in Henan, Hunan, Guangxi, Guangdong, Fujian and Guizhou provinces. Minister of National Defense He Yingqin wrote in his memoir: “In early September of 1944, 150,000 Japanese enemies invaded Guilin and Liuzhou, but our available units had less than 120,000 soldiers and suffered from difficulties in transportation; both factors caused our loss of the battle.” As Jiang stated in the “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu” (A speech to call on educated youths to join the army) delivered on October 24, 1944, “We had reached the critical point which could determine the result of the war and the destiny of our nation. The following year would be the crucial period for us to achieve the ultimate victory. This was surely a golden opportunity for our educated youths to serve the nation.” The setback in resistance efforts at home forced the GMD government to adjust its military policy and work on mobilizing the students to constitute an elite army.

According to the compulsory conscription law as issued by the GMD government in 1933, students and graduates of the high school level and above were made exempt from military duty. Jay Taylor notes that, “Seven years into the Anti-Japanese War, the Chinese government had not conscripted college students or graduates with the exception of some doctors, engineers, and English majors, the last to serve as interpreters.”

---

10 He Yingqin, Banian kangzhan zhi jingguo (The process of the eight-year resistance war against the Japanese) (Taipei: Liming wenhua shiye gongsi, 1982), 233.
11 Jiang Jieshi, “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu” (A speech to call on educated youths to join the army), in Guo Shaoyi, Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhilüe (The history of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) (Taipei: Youslyi wenhua shiye gongsi, 1987), 201.
12 Taylor, The Generalissimo’s Son, 119.
pointed out in the “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu” (A speech to call on educated youths to join the army) that although some educated youths participated in military-related work or joined the military academy, the performance of the educated youths in military service had not been popularized at the national level. Jiang recognized the patriotic spirits of the students and claimed this exemption in the conscription law as a hurdle to their patriotic action.\textsuperscript{13}

The students’ exemption from performing military duty was cancelled in the revised conscription law issued in March 1943. Chen Cheng (1897-1945), who was appointed the commander of the Chinese Expeditionary Army in 1943, requested the Military Affairs Committee to enlarge the army by recruiting well-educated soldiers.\textsuperscript{14}

The Committee demanded that every city in Sichuan province select 300 educated youths to join the expeditionary army. By the end of 1943, about 27,129 students in Sichuan province volunteered to join the army.\textsuperscript{15} The campaign gradually developed in another ten provinces.\textsuperscript{16} In Autumn 1944, the Japanese attacked Guangxi and Guizhou, posing serious threats to the GMD’s wartime capital of Chongqing. On October 11, 1944, the GMD government held a conference in Chongqing in an attempt to mobilize the educated youth across the nation to perform military duty. It established the General Supervision Office for Conscripting and Training the Educated Youth Army in the Military Affairs Commission (Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian

\textsuperscript{13}Jiang, “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu,” 203.
\textsuperscript{14}Jiang Pei, “Zhanshi zhishi qingnian congjun yundong shuping” (A study on the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army during the Anti-Japanese War), Kangri zhanzheng yanjiu (Studies on the Anti-Japanese War), No. 1 (2004): 67.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 68.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
zongjianbu) to handle the conscription and training of educated youths. Many military and political authorities as well as college principals served as members of this committee. On October 24, 1944, Jiang delivered the speech “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu,” calling upon educated youths throughout the country, including high school and college students, as well as teachers and civil servants, to enlist in the Youth Army. According to this speech, educated youths between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five who had graduated from high school or above, as long as they met physical standards, were encouraged to volunteer to join the army. In November 1944 Jiang named Minister of War Chen Cheng to command the officially named Educated Youth Expeditionary Army (Zhishi qingnian yuanzhengjun).

Launching the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army showed that the GMD government strengthened its efforts to broaden the militarized citizen ideal to include educated youths and further militarize the society. In his speech “Gao zhishi qingnian shu,” Jiang expressed his expectation for educated youths to fight as real combatants and perform a frontal attack on the enemy (chongfeng xianzhen) as a revolutionary vanguard (geming xianfeng). Jiang also expressed his belief that enlisting educated youths into the army could “fundamentally overthrow the social discrimination against the military profession.” The national crisis was ascribed to “the intellectuals’ value of putting intellectual pursuits above martial arts (zhongwen qingwu).” Jiang encouraged not only high school and university students but also school teachers and

---

17 Guo, *Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhiliüe*, 12.
18 Ibid., 201.
20 Ibid., 201.
21 Ibid.
professors to volunteer to join the army.\textsuperscript{22} He advocated that their participation in military service would fundamentally extinguish the discrimination against martial arts in the society.\textsuperscript{23}

To achieve militarization among the students, the GMD had to develop strategies to make military careers attractive to them. Chang Rui-te notes that because of the flowering of Chinese nationalism in the 1930s, a career in the military enjoyed unprecedented popularity among the youth during that period. Many students indicated their desire to pursue a military career, and the prestige of becoming a military officer ranked higher than becoming a doctor or lawyer. However, by the time the Anti-Japanese War had entered its middle stage after a long succession of embarrassing defeats, the pursuit of an army career had lost its appeal for most Chinese youths. As noted in Chapter Two, a decline in military pay and benefits also added to the problem.\textsuperscript{24} Since a military career was not popular among educated youths in the later years of the war, Jiang had to enhance the significance and status of the Youth Army in order to militarize the youth.

One way Jiang enhanced the significance of the Youth Army was to celebrate them as “the model and backbone for all the military units in the nation to promote their

\textsuperscript{22} Jiang Jieshi, “Duiyu zhishi qingnian congjun yundong zhi zhishi” (The direction on the campaign of enlisting educated youths), in Guo Shaoyi, \textit{Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhilüe} (The history of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) (Taibei: Youshi wenhua shiye gongsi, 1987), 190.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 187.
fighting spirit and improve their combat capacity.” 25 In the 1944 speech “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianxunde yaozhi” (The key principles in training the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army), Jiang claimed that the participation of educated youths could raise the intellectual level of national armies and their ability to employ superior weapons and advanced military tactics to the utmost. 26 Jiang stated that educated youths were intelligent and cultivated enough to judge the enemy’s situation and conduct battle independently. 27 This would allow one soldier in the Youth Army to defeat ten of the enemy; and the strength of one division of the Youth Army would be equivalent to that of ten divisions of common soldiers. 28 Elevating the significance of the Youth Army as a model and backbone for the national army revealed Jiang’s military agenda to use the Youth Army in raising the quality of the Chinese military in the war.

Another type of rhetoric Jiang often employed to make the military career more appealing to educated youths was to advocate that military knowledge and experience in combat were an indispensable part of the youths’ study and development. In the “Dui congjun xuesheng xunhua” (A lecture to student soldiers) delivered on January 10, 1944, Jiang claimed: “You [the student soldier] could enhance your knowledge, skills and physical capacity by performing military training; this experience could not be achieved

25 Jiang Jieshi, “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianxunde yaozhi” (The key principles in training the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) [1944], in Guo Shaoyi, Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhilüe (The history of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) (Taipei: Youshi wenhua shiye gongsi, 1987), 210.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
When Jiang attended the Chongqing conference on October
11, 1944, he discussed his own army experience in an attempt to illustrate the
significance of army service for the personal development of educated youths:

With forty-year experiences in the army, I do feel that joining the army is not
only a correct path to defend the nation. The knowledge and skills I have
acquired from the army experience are the most precious scholarship to me. The
structure of the army is the most advanced one among all social organizations.
Possessing military knowledge and skills and understanding the operation of the
army structure is extremely useful for one’s career development. Military
service is not only a joyful experience but also the most important education in
one’s life.30

Jiang shared his personal army experience to demonstrate that performing military
service was not only significant for the nation but also beneficial for the personal
development of the individual soldier.

The importance of military service for the personal development of educated
youths was also stressed in Jiang’s other speeches. In the speech “Gao zhishi qingnian
congjun shu” (A speech to call on educated youths to join the army), Jiang claimed that
“the battlefield was the only school for the youth to build the foundation for their career,”
and that “the youth could not achieve their personal ambition without army
experiences.”31 According to Jiang, the army could give youth useful and practical
knowledge and skills, promote their physical strength and help them develop a deep
understanding of life; none of the above could be learned from any regular school.32 In
the “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianlian zhi tezhi yu jiaoyu yaoxiang” (The peculiarity and

---

29 Jiang Jieshi, “Dui congjun xuesheng xunhua” (A lecture to the student army), in Guo Shaoyi,
Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhilüe (The history of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) (Taipei:
Youshi wenhua shiyé gongsí, 1987), 177.
30 Jiang, “Duiyu zhishi qingnian congjun yundong zhi zhishi,” 186.
31 Jiang, “Gao zhishi qingnian congjun shu,” 204.
32 Ibid.
key points in training the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) delivered to the Youth Army officer trainees on January 16, 1945, Jiang first praised young students as being well educated academically and fully indoctrinated with the beliefs of the Three Principles of the People.\textsuperscript{33} He celebrated them as “the elite of the society and the treasure of the nation.”\textsuperscript{34} However, Jiang pointed out that in order to become competent cadres in the post-war reconstruction, they needed to acquire military knowledge and combat experience.\textsuperscript{35} Jiang used this logic to justify his intention of extending the militarized citizen ideal beyond the war effort.

In order further to justify the importance of army experience for the development of the educated youth, Jiang proclaimed that the Youth Army was “the best professional school” for educated youths.\textsuperscript{36} According to Jiang, “The education and training in the army was not only the foundation for academic studies in regular schools but also more practical than regular school teaching.”\textsuperscript{37} The Youth Army encouraged every student soldier to identify one skill that was necessary for daily life to learn in his spare time. With a strong physical body, substantial knowledge, superior skills and a deep understanding of the operation of the army structure, the student soldiers could serve as the social backbone that were capable of leading the masses after the war.\textsuperscript{38} By advocating the Youth Army as the best professional school, Jiang attempted to make

\textsuperscript{33}Jiang Jieshi, “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianlian zhi tezhi yu jiaoyu xaoxiang” (The peculiarity and key points in training the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army), in Guo Shaoyi, \textit{Qingnian yuanzhengjun zhilüe} (The history of the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army) (Taipei: Youshi wenhua shiyé gongsi, 1987), 238.

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36}Jiang, “Dui congjun xuesheng xunhua,” 182.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid.
military service attractive for educated youths in order to persuade them to join the military.

Having stressed the importance of army experiences for the personal development of educated youths, Jiang encouraged them further to contribute their intellectual expertise to the army. Within one month after they were recruited to the army, educated youths were required to complete a registration form providing information on their interests, expertise, levels of scientific knowledge and technological skills. Based on this information, the Youth Army appointed soldiers to positions that matched to their individual skills. For example, around 10,000 vehicle drivers and radio communication personnel were recruited from the Youth Army. Encouraging the educated youths to apply their expertise to the military was made clear by Lieutenant-General Luo Zhuoying (1896-1961), who served as commandant of Army Officers’ Training Center at the Military Affairs Commission between 1944 and 1945. He told a Dagongbao reporter on November 14, 1944 that the training at the Youth Army was designed based on subjects the individual soldier would have learned before he joined the army. For instance, a student soldier who had studied civil engineering would be trained for performing projects such as bridge and road construction, whereas a student who studied physics would be trained to examine the composition and usage of new weapons; a student soldier who had studied chemistry would be trained for producing bombs. Luo used these

---

39Jiang Jieshi, “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianlian guanxun de fangzhen yu yaoling” (The principles and main points in training the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army), in Xian zongtong Jiang gong sixiang yanlun zongji (Comprehensive collections of the thoughts and speeches by deceased President Jiang), Vol. 20, ed. Qin Xiaoyi (Taibei: Zhongyang dangshi weiyuanhui, 1984), 565.

201
detailed examples to illustrate how military training advanced rather than impeded the students’ academic pursuits.40

To further demonstrate the compatibility of military training with personal development, Jiang advocated training in the Youth Army that combined military discipline and techniques with civic skills and artistic knowledge. Jiang borrowed the Confucian conception of “liuyi” (six arts) to support this training philosophy. According to the Zhouli (Rites of Zhou), Confucius (551-479 BCE) considered six areas named li (rites), yue (music), she (archery), yu (charioting or horsemanship), shu (literary writing and calligraphy) and shu (mathematics) to be essential for education of the junzi (superior man or perfect gentleman) as leader in civil-military affairs. Jiang explained “li” as military discipline, “yue” as artistic genres such as music, dance and fine arts, “she” as shooting, “yu” as driving military vehicles, “shu” as writing military orders, work reports and recording statistics, and “shu” as mathematic knowledge.41 Jiang claimed that a combination of martial techniques, civil scholarships, and artistic knowledge should be the education foundation for modern nationals, including Youth Army soldiers. Jiang appropriated liuyi to advocate applying the militarized citizen ideal to the youth’s education.

After educated youths were recruited and assigned to their respective divisions, they were subjected to a two-week basic training course which was intended to familiarize them with military discipline. The training included politicizing through

---

40 Sun Yuqin, “Kangzhan moqide shiwan zhishi qingnian congjun yundong shuping” (A review on the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army in the last stage of the Anti-Japanese War), Kangri zhanzheng yanjiu (Studies on the Anti-Japanese War), No. 3 (2010): 25.
ideological indoctrination and loyalty to the national leadership. Its main focus was regulating the daily practice of educated youths in order to turn them into soldiers. In the speech “Qingnian yuanzhengjun bianxunde yaozhi” (The key principles in training educated youths Expeditionary Army) delivered on December 7, 1944, Jiang told Youth Army officers to pay special attention to regulating educated youths’ behaviors in daily life.⁴² Jiang said, “The first step to train educated youths was to help them form proper life habits by guiding them on details of their daily behaviors such as wearing, eating, sleeping, as well as haircutting, doing laundry, washing shoes, cutting fingernails, etc.”⁴³ This two-week basic training demonstrated Jiang’s attempt to politicize and discipline educated youths upon their recruitment to the army.

By launching the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army in late 1944, the GMD government tried to extend its politicized, militarized and disciplined citizen ideals to high school and university students as well as civil servants—all groups that were exempted from compulsory military service prior to 1943. The decision to militarize educated youths was made in response to new developments both domestically and internationally related to the Anti-Japanese War. To justify the military mobilization campaign among educated youths, Jiang deployed a series of strategies in order to make the military profession attractive to them. He exalted the status of the Youth Army as the model and backbone for national armies, while advocating that military knowledge and experience were indispensable to the youths’ development, with the Youth Army as the best professional school. In terms of training principles, Jiang encouraged educated youths...

⁴³Ibid.
youths to apply their expertise to the military in order to advance their studies. With this in mind, in order to attract students with different majors to join the army, he also argued for national education as a combination of military techniques, civil scholarships and artistic knowledge.

The Self-Government Ideal in the Youth Army

The Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army was largely embraced among the youth in China. By December 1944, among the twenty-two division zones in Sichuan, about 27,129 students, civil servants and teachers volunteered for military service. By the end of 1944, the Youth Army had drafted approximately 140,000 students across the nation. According to a report written by a student soldier named Zhang Jingcang in January 1945, 55% of 100 Youth Army soldiers in his company were high school students, 30% of them university students, and the rest civil servants, journalists and other young professionals. After the recruited youths started military training, they wrote diaries and reportages in their free time, most of which were published in the literary supplement of the GMD’s official newspaper Zhongyang ribao (Central daily news). The fact that the GMD published these writings in its official

---

45 Taylor, The Generalissimo’s Son, 119.
46 Zhang Jingcang’s birth and death years are unclear.
47 Zhang Jingcang, “Xinzhanshi xinzuo feng” (New soldier and new styles), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 92.
48 The writings by the Youth Army soldiers published in the Zhongyang ribao were collected in several volumes. The writings analyzed in this chapter are drawn from the following three volumes: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, ed. Qingnian
newspaper implied its intention to propagandize its military mobilization campaign and justify its militarized ideal of citizenship.

However, the publication also allowed the Youth Army soldiers to express their concerns about building an army based on the self-government principle heard by the society. In their writings, the Youth Army soldiers supported and welcomed the GMD’s effort of militarizing educated youths. Zhang Qing argued in the article “Junzhong wenxue” (Literature and the army) written on April 26, 1945 that literature and the army shared the same spirits and rules. The army’s operation relied on a strict hierarchy, and literary works also required a compact structure. The army advocated a simple lifestyle while literary writers utilized unsophisticated words to illuminate profound meanings.Military training demanded solid exercise, and literary writings also required hard practice.49 Hou Bingchen, reported on February 3, 1945 in the “Xinjun xinshenghuo” (New army and new life), that many Youth Army soldiers preferred army life because there were no examinations or trivial bureaucratic work. They felt that life in the army purified their minds since they did not delve into romantic affairs or deal with meaningless social engagements.50 In the 1945 report “Laodong yu yule” (Labor and

49 Zhang Qing, “Junzhong wenxue” (Literature and the army), in Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan, ed. Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 66.

50 Hou Bingchen, “Xinjun xinshenghuo” (New army and new life), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 84.
entertainment), Zha Mi explained his belief that transforming biased attitudes of society toward soldiers required the mutual efforts of the government and educated youths.\(^{51}\)

Youth Army soldiers also embraced the significance of military training for their personal studies as advocated by Jiang. They treated the army experience as a way to enhance their knowledge and improve their physique. Lian Lulu wrote in the 1945 report “Wanhui” (An evening party) that Youth Army soldiers believed if a young person was able to both fight in combat and produce literary works, he was a true master of both military and civilian scholarship.\(^{52}\) In the 1945 report “Jiyu fulao” (To the elders in the family), Zhao Tingjun wrote: “After the two-year tough training in the army and the ordeal of the war, I would grow into a steadfast and resolute person.”\(^{53}\) Luo Qiqian wrote in his 1945 report “Qingnianjun yu qingnian Zhongguo” (The Youth Army and young China) that military training would prepare him to be a social leader by strengthening his body and enhancing his knowledge.\(^{54}\) A year earlier, Jia Yunfu’s report “Qingnian lushang” (On the road being built by the youth) described how the Youth Army soldiers happily worked on building roads as part of their military training. They competed to

\(^{51}\) Zha Mi, “Laodong yu yule” (Labor and Entertainment), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 24.

\(^{52}\) Lian Lulu, “Wanhui” (An evening party), in Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan (Selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers), ed. Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 18.

\(^{53}\) Zhao Tingjun, “Jiyu fulao” (To the elders in the family), in Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan (Selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers), ed. Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 29.

\(^{54}\) Luo Qiqian, “Qingnianjun yu qingnian Zhongguo” (The Youth Army and young China), in Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan xiji (Continued selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers), ed. Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui guanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 4.
work harder even though their palms were excoriated by hard labor.\textsuperscript{55} Zha Mi wrote in the 1945 report “Laodong yu yule” that Youth Army soldiers used their tender hands to dredge mud. Zha commented: “If the students and civil servants did not join the army, they would never have the courage and knowledge to perform labor work.”\textsuperscript{56} Zhao Tingjun wrote in the 1945 report “Jiyu fulao” that the student soldiers were getting stronger and more vigorous because of their regular life schedule and tough military training.\textsuperscript{57} Zheng Bingsen wrote in his 1945 public letter to mothers of the Youth Army soldiers that he could stand for hours and walk many miles carrying heavy materials without feeling exhausted. He and his fellow soldiers managed to complete the constructing and decorating of their barracks in one day. Zheng Bingsen was also brave enough to walk in the dark and not be afraid of rats. He had learned how to hide himself from the enemy, how to search and shoot targets. \textsuperscript{58} The Youth Army soldiers reported in their writings that thanks to military training, they improved their health and physique, grew braver and learnt substantial knowledge. They expressed their pride for these changes brought by their military experiences.

Although the Youth Army soldiers cooperated with the GMD’s military mobilization, they still managed some form of independence and treated the Youth Army

\textsuperscript{55} Jia Yunfu, “Qingnian lushang” (On the road being built by the youth), in \textit{Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan} (Selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers), ed. Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 4.

\textsuperscript{56} Zha, “Laodong yu yule,” 23.

\textsuperscript{57} Zhao, “Jiyu fulao,” 28.

\textsuperscript{58} Zheng Bingsen, “Gei muqinmen” (To the mothers), in \textit{Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan} (Selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers), ed. Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian congjun bianlian zongjianbu (Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945), 33.
as a laboratory to practice self-government. Their writings revealed how they practiced self-government in their study and entertainment. The soldier Zhao Tingjun wrote in his 1945 “Jiyu fulao” that every company had a club called Zhongzheng shi (Sun-Yat-sen room) where the soldiers played chess and musical instruments and organized a party once a week. 59 Qiu Hongyi wrote in his report “Women zai Hufeng” (We are in Hufeng) on February 5, 1945 that every evening the Youth Army soldiers read books, wrote diaries and letters for one hour, and at least once every week gathered in small groups to exchange their thoughts and works. 60 Chen Can wrote in the “Womende xin feidao zhanchang” (Our hearts have flown to the battlefield) on February 10, 1945 that the soldiers organized their own soccer teams, singing teams and wall poster teams. 61 According to Ouyang Wenhui’s report “Zhenggongban shenghuo zhuishu” (Memories of the life in the class for political workers) written in January 1945, the Youth Army soldiers organized an exhibition to show each other their art works. 62 These writings showed that the Youth Army soldiers actively participated in building the Youth Army by practicing self-government in their entertainment and study.

The Youth Army soldiers practiced the principle of self-government not only in their study and entertainment but also in the army administration. According to Zhang Jingcang’s report “Xinzhanshi xinzuofeng” (New soldiers and new styles) published on

59 Zhao, “Jiyu fulao,” 29.
60 Qiu Hongyi, “Women zai Hufeng” (We are in Hufeng), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 87-88.
61 Chen Can, “Womende xin feidao zhanchang” (Our hearts have flown to the battlefield), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 96.
62 Ouyang Wenhui, “Zhenggongban shenghuo zhuishu” (Memories of the life in the class for political workers), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 24.
January 29, 1945, before military instructors arrived and formal military training began, the Youth Army soldiers took initiatives in establishing self-government councils. These councils set rules to regulate the behaviors of the Youth Army soldiers, and patrolled the area around the military base, preventing them from escaping. According to Zhang, the effort of the Youth Army soldiers to govern themselves even received the support from the officers because it made the officers’ job easier. Shen Yi recorded, in the “Kaishile junying shenghuo” (The army life has started) published in January 31, 1945, that every company had a self-government council, which had five branches: including order-maintaining (jiucha), entertainment (kangle), research (yanjiu) and general affairs (zongwu). The council members were elected by the Youth Army soldiers themselves, and judged the behaviors of the soldiers by carrying out punishment if any soldier violated the established rules. Zhang Zhengquan’s report “Junshiduide yingzhong shenghuo” (The army life in the base) published on February 10, 1945 wrote that the self-government councils regulated every aspect of the life and training in the Youth Army, including diet, sanitation and reception. According to Ouyang Wenhui’s report “Zhenggongban shenghuo zhuishu,” when the authorities gave a lecture to the Youth Army soldiers, the self-government council members prepared the lecture room and provided reception service for the authorities. The self-government councils were also in

---

63 Zhang Jingcang, “Xinzhanshi xinzuofeng” (New soldiers and new styles), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n.l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 94.
64 Ibid.
65 Shen Yi, “Kaishile junying shenghuo” (The army life has started), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 72.
66 Zhang Zhengquan, “Junshiduide yingzhong shenghuo” (The army life in the base), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 76.
The sources examined above showed that the student soldiers celebrated the soldier ideal based on self-government and active participation in army administration.

The self-government practice encouraged the Youth Army soldiers to advocate an equal officer-soldier relationship and democratic spirit in the army. In the report “Xinjun xinshenghuo,” Hou Bingchen recorded that when the Youth Army soldiers felt the treatment by the company commander was unfair, they would organize a protest against the commander. Some soldiers even directly confronted the commander head-on. Their protest usually resulted in the commander’s apology. For instance, the commander let the soldiers decide on the deadline for when to return to the base before they were released for holidays. According to Hou, this concept of democratic spirit also applied to financial expenditures as they were completely transparent and managed by the soldiers themselves. The company commander only played the role as the military leader but not the financial minister. According to Qiu Hongyi’s report “Women zai Hufeng,” written in 1945, the company commander ate and slept together with the soldiers, and the army maintained the principles of freedom, equality and fairness, and did not have unjustified punishment. Some anonymous soldiers reported in the “Chufa xingjun ruying” (Marching to the military base) published on January 15, 1924 that there was no estrangement between the army officers and the soldiers. These writings showed that the Youth Army soldiers actively pursued the democratic administration within the army.

---

68 Hou, “Xin jun xin shenghuo,” 82.
69 Ibid., 83.
70 “Chufa xingjun ruying” (Marching to the military base), in Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army), ed. Luo Shiyang (n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946), 41.
Their pursuit did make a difference in the army culture by forcing lower-level army officers who directly led the Youth Army soldiers, to compromise and support their pursuits.

The ideal of self-government and democracy encouraged educated youths to voice their dissatisfaction with the political and military authorities in their writings. In his 1945 report “Kaishile junying shenghuo,” Shen Yi pointed out the discontent felt by the Youth Army soldiers to the government. Shen wrote that the reason why educated youths joined the army was to achieve democracy. He requested that the army improve their training techniques by promoting self-government and democratic spirits among the soldiers.71 The report “Chufa xingjun ruying” wrote that “the best strategy to train us [the Youth Army soldiers] was to stimulate our initiative,” and that “delivering political sermon to educated youths was like displaying accomplishments in front of the experts (banmen nongfu).”72 The Youth Army soldiers publicly asserted that their biggest concern was the realization of democracy, and expressed their eagerness to learn practical knowledge, such as using new weapons and driving vehicles, rather than to listen to political sermon.73 By advocating a soldier ideal that valued active and direct political participation in administering the Army itself in the GMD’s official newspaper, the Youth Army soldiers confronted the GMD’s discourse that celebrated a highly politicized and disciplined soldier ideal.

72“Chufa xingjun ruying,” 38.
73Ibid., 40.
Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army that was launched by the GMD government in late 1944. It examines the historical background of this campaign, the rhetoric Jiang used to appeal to educated youths, and the writings by the Youth Army soldiers published in the GMD’s official newspaper. It has shown that the Nationalist state strengthened its efforts to remilitarize society in the later years of the Anti-Japanese War. Educated youths participated in the GMD’s military mobilization by joining the Youth Army, but they also treated the Army as a site to practice self-government and democracy. In this manner, they welcomed and supported the GMD government’s effort to militarize educated youths, but they chose to support ideas of self-government, democracy, and active and direct political involvement.

Jiang launched this campaign during the period when China’s Anti-Japanese War reached a crucial period. A combination of domestic and international situations, including the deterioration of the conscription system and the combat capacity of the Nationalist army, the merging of China’s Anti-Japanese War into the Pacific War and the Second World War, the commencement of Operation Ichigō, and China’s increasing dependence on the Allied forces, forced Jiang Jieshi to think of new initiatives to increase the capacity of the Nationalist army and improve its international image. In this context, Jiang made efforts to militarize educated youths, as he believed that they were capable of learning how to use new weapons quickly, communicating with the Allied forces smoothly, and making judgments on the enemy’s situation independently.
Mobilizing educated youths into the army revealed Jiang’s state-building intention of extending the militarized citizen ideal to the social force. Jiang employed a series of rhetoric-based strategies in order to justify his plan to educated youths and make military service appealing to them. He elevated the status of the Youth Army as the model for national armies, and advocated the significance of military knowledge and experience for the youth’s development by claiming the Youth Army was the best professional school. Jiang also argued that applying their expertise to the military could help educated youths advance their studies.

The soldiers in the Youth Army embraced the GMD state’s state-building efforts of militarizing educated youths. The writings by the Youth Army soldiers showed that they accepted military training as a self-exercise to improve their physical abilities and learn practical knowledge and labor skills. However, they argued for a soldier ideal based on active political involvement alongside their military development. In the writings that were published in the GMD’s official newspaper, educated youths who joined the Youth Army identified themselves with the role of national spokesmen to express their pursuit for self-government and democracy. They believed that the army officer-soldier relationship should not be regulated by a rigid hierarchy; instead it should be based on the principle of democracy and self-government. Educated youths who joined the Youth Army treated the army as a laboratory to practice these principles and considered themselves as active advacator for these principles.

The GMD government and educated youths in the Youth Army both constructed their own discourses of the soldier to assert their goals and visions of how to build a
strong army. Another discourse of the soldier that coexisted with the GMD’s soldier ideal was the one forged by the CCP in the revolutionary base of Yan’an, which will be the focus of next chapter.
Chapter 6

The Army-People (junmin) Bond: The Construction of the Soldier Figure in Mass Culture in Wartime Yan’an

Introduction

The previous five chapters have shown that political, social and cultural forces in the GMD areas constructed discourses of the soldier figure to meet their state-building goals and articulate their respective political influences. Another influential political force in modern China was the Chinese Communists in their revolutionary bases during the Anti-Japanese War. This chapter will examine how the CCP in Yan’an constructed the soldier figure in its social movements and mass culture during the Anti-Japanese War. This case study will demonstrate that the CCP constructed the soldier figure along the line of an emotional bond between the army and the people. This rhetoric was essential for the CCP’s state-building agendas of winning support from the peasants in its areas and forging closer social integration in its revolutionary base.

During the Anti-Japanese War, the CCP accumulated strength incrementally village by village. Yan’an, a northwestern inland city isolated from eastern urban centers, became the seat of the Chinese Communist government of what became known as the
Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region (Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu, 1937-1947). In the first year of war the total Communist military strength was about ninety-two thousand, while by the end of war the Communist military forces had grown to one million regular troops, augmented by two million militia. To ensure continued popular support for military recruitment, the Chinese Communists made strenuous efforts to build army-civilian solidarity in Yan’an and other revolutionary bases.

Substantial mass cultural productions helped build the image of the soldier figure and army-people solidarity. Popular slogans such as “the army and the people are as close as one family” (junmin yijia qin) and “the army and the people bond like fish and water” (junmin yushui qing) dominated mass culture, which was facilitated and appropriated by the Communists as a propaganda medium in Yan’an. The soldier figure fervently celebrated in the mass culture in Yan’an was not just a national hero who fought against the enemy; he was the practitioner of the CCP’s advocacy of army-people solidarity. The soldiers depicted in the Communist mass culture in Yan’an also valued having an emotional bond with the peasants.

This chapter will first examine the CCP’s wartime cultural and social policies in Yan’an to reveal its goals of managing close social integration and winning the support from the majority of the society, the peasants. It aims to embed the discussion of the CCP’s construction of the soldier figure in Yan’an into the political, social and cultural

---

1 Throughout the Anti-Japanese War of 1937 to 1945, the CCP formed border region (bianqu) governments in north and central China. In September 1937, the Communists formally announced the formation of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region government. Nominally subordinate to the GMD government, the border region in fact subjected itself only to the control of the CCP and implemented only the CCP policies.

background in wartime Yan’an. The second part of this chapter will provide a close reading of a representative genre of mass culture in wartime Yan’an, the yangge drama, to explore the depiction of the soldier figure in the mass culture.

The construction of the soldier figure in the yangge drama corresponded with a series of social campaigns launched by the CCP to reconstruct the social relations. The CCP’s 1943 campaign of supporting the army was intended to be commensurate with the 1939 Great Production Campaign and the 1942-44 Literary Rectification in order to unify the thoughts and the emotions of social masses and mobilize wider social participation. In the yangge dramas, cultural propagandists celebrated the emotional ties between soldiers and peasants as a defining factor for the soldier figure. The construction of the CCP soldier figure within the framework of army-people solidarity in wartime mass culture was crucial to the CCP’s project of managing social integration in their revolutionary base.

**Institutionalizing Army-People Bond——Political and Social Background**

This part of the chapter will trace army-people relations in the CCP’s political and economic campaigns. It was in these social campaigns that the bond between soldiers and people was institutionalized. Since the early years of the CCP army in 1927, the regulation of army-people relations had been an arena where the CCP practiced political education among soldiers in order to consolidate its rule among peasants. As early as the Autumn Harvest Uprising (*Qiushou qiyì*) in 1927, the first armed uprising led by the Communists, Mao Zedong stressed that the Red Army must not be isolated from the
people and likened the army-people relationship as fish swimming in the sea. In the CCP’s view, building the army did not just involve military training of soldiers’ bodies; it also demanded regulating the military-civilian relations by celebrating the close connection between soldiers and the masses.

The strategy that the CCP employed to build the soldiers’ emotional bond with the peasants was to supervise strictly the everyday practice of the soldiers. During the Jiangxi Soviet Period (1931-1934), the commander of the CCP army Zhu De (1886-1976) developed several innovations for which the Red Army became known, one of which was the “The Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention” (sanda jilü baxiang zhuyi):

Three Rules

1. Obedience to orders.
2. Take not even a needle or thread from the people.
3. Turn in all confiscated goods.

Eight Points

1. Replace all doors and return all straw on which you sleep before leaving a house.
2. Speak courteously to the people and help them whenever possible.
3. Return all borrowed articles.
4. Pay for everything damaged.
5. Be honest in business transactions.
6. Be sanitary---dig latrines a safe distance from homes and fill them up with earth before leaving.

7. Never molest women.

8. Do not mistreat prisoners.³

Evans Fordyce Carlson (1896-1947), the famed U.S. Marine Corps leader, also documented the rules and regulations for the CCP army when he visited Yan’an in 1938.⁴ Most of these rules in both the Jiangxi Soviet period and in the Anti-Japanese War period dealt with the daily practice of the soldiers’ interaction with civilians. The rules and regulations on soldiers’ daily behavior attempted to cultivate a harmonious bond between the soldiers and the peasants.

In regulating military-civilian relations, the CCP was not only interested in regulating the soldiers’ behavior; the implementation of army discipline did not require participation from the masses. What the CCP aimed to achieve in the base areas was wider social mobilization. To this end, the CCP tried to build two-way emotional communication between the soldiers and the peasants: soldiers should respect and love the people, and the people should support the soldiers.

To enlist participation from the masses in building army-people solidarity, the CCP-issued edicts on the army benefits stipulated not only the favorable treatment that CCP soldiers could receive from the government but also the support they could get from the peasants. In December 1937, the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government issued

---
“Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu kangri junren youdai tiaoli” (Edicts of treating favorably anti-Japanese soldiers in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region), stipulating that anti-Japanese soldiers and their families should enjoy benefits in multiple ways. For example, they could be exempted from all kinds of taxes, live in public-owned houses without paying rent, enjoy a 1% discount when purchasing in public-owned stores, be able to send their children to school for free and receive free, medical treatment if injured from war. Moreover, if there was a lack of an adequately sized labor force in cultivating the land, they could request help from other people who resided in the Border Region. The policy of treating favorably anti-Japanese soldiers and their families was integrated into the “Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu kangzhan shiqi shizheng gangling” (Government guidelines in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region during the Anti-Japanese War) issued in 1939.

However, by the early 1940s the sense of supporting the army faded among a number of the CCP cadres and rural masses in the Border Region, largely due to years of living in relative peace. With the poverty of the border region exacerbated by blockade and war, and with the end of the subsidies from Jiang Jieshi’s Nationalist government for the Eighth Route Army and the Border Region in 1941, economic options available to resistance forces became narrower. Because of financial pressures, the tension between the army and the people loomed large. Many peasants who struggled to survive refused to

---

5 Lei Zhihua, and Li Zhongquan, eds., Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu minzheng gongzuo ziliao xuanbian (Selective materials on civil administration work in Shaan-Gan-Ning border region) (Xi’an: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 1992), 209.
6 Han Yanlong, and Chang Zhaoru, eds., Zhongguo xinminzhuzhuyi geming shiqi genjudi fazhi wenxian xuanbian, diyijuan (Selections of legislative sources in the revolutionary bases during China’s new-democratic revolution, volume 1) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1981).
7 The Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army were the CCP’s two main military forces active during the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945). Nominally, they were units of the National Revolutionary Army of the Republic of China led by Chinese Nationalists.
provide economic or food support to the army. This situation was exacerbated by the actions of some soldiers, who forcibly took provisions from peasants without payment. The Border Region government, confronted with the threat to its wide social support from the increasing army-people conflict, launched the Rectification Movement (Zhengfeng yundong) in 1942 to consolidate intra-party consensus. The Party also called for wider social participation in the Great Production Campaign (Dashengchan yundong) in the same year, in an attempt to promote a full-scale mobilization of the public sector in a drive for economic development and administrative economies.

The Literary Rectification ran parallel to the general political rectification of all party members. The Yan’an Forum on Literatures and Arts (1942-1944) was a crucial event in Chinese revolutionary culture. Mao Zedong’s talks at this forum guided the direction of subsequent party policies on literatures and arts and shaped the cultural aesthetics of the intellectuals. Mao’s talks set the tone for the propaganda culture in Yan’an by advocating “mass-ification” (dazhonghua) of literatures and arts. Mao clearly pointed out that the audience of art and literature in the base areas were supposed to be worker-peasant-soldier (gongnongbing) and their cadres (gemin ganbu).8

David Holm, in his study of yangge in Yan’an, suggests a redefinition of Mao’s concept of dazhonghua. In his opinion, dazhonghua was not a problem of how to put new content—the rudiments of the new learning, or “modern science,” or an “advanced world view”—into a form accessible to the popular masses; instead Mao turned this

---

around and said it was the writers and artists themselves who should be “mass-ified.” A close reading of Mao’s talks shows that dazhonghua is in effect intended to regulate the emotion of the cultural workers and social intellectuals such as the writers and the artists. Mao gave his own definitions of dazhonghua in his talks: “What is dazhonghua? It is that the thoughts and emotions of writers and artists should be fused with those of the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers” (wenyi gongzuozhede sixiang ganqing he gongnongbing dazhongde sixiang ganqing dacheng yipian). In other words, dazhonghua meant a complete integration in thoughts and emotions of the writers and artists with the masses.

Mao used his own examples of emotional changes (ganqing bianhua) to explain his standpoint that the peasants, workers and common soldiers should be treated with high respect.

I began life as a student, and at school I then used to feel it undignified to do even a little manual labor in the presence of my fellow students... At that time I felt that intellectuals were the only clean people in the world, while in comparison workers and peasants were dirty. I did not mind wearing the clothes of other intellectuals, but I would not put on clothes belonging to a worker or peasant. But after I became a revolutionary and lived with workers and peasants and with soldiers of the revolutionary army..., I fundamentally changed the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois emotions implanted in me in the bourgeois school. I came to feel that the workers and peasants were cleaner than the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intellectuals.

In Mao’s view, the intellectuals’ backwardness was rooted in their indifferent and prejudiced emotions toward the peasants. Mao urged that if the writers and artists who came from the intelligentsia wanted their works to be well received by the masses, they

9David Holm, Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 93.
10Mao, “Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art,” 73.
11Ibid., 74.
must change and remold their thoughts and emotions.\textsuperscript{12} Mao viewed the symbol of emotional changes as class transformation.\textsuperscript{13} In Mao’s cultural ideology, every worker of literature and art should be a propagandist of winning the support from the peasants and workers in the revolutionary base. Mao’s outlook of the emotional change for the writers and artists was stressed by other party authorities. Zhou Yang, the Head of the Lu Xun College of Arts and Literatures, stated that ‘it is critically important for workers of literatures and arts to transform their emotions.’\textsuperscript{14} For the CCP authorities, to forge closer social integration in its base required a thought and emotion reform among the writers and the artists.

At the same time as the Literary Rectification, the CCP also turned its attention from political and military concerns to economic matters in an all-out effort to strengthen the base areas. The Great Production Campaign, which was initiated in 1939 and had greatly enlarged its scale by 1943, aimed at “the creation of a self-sufficient and more prosperous economy organized on cooperative, mobilization and participatory principles.”\textsuperscript{15} The CCP’s production movement sought to make organized labor exchanges, like cooperatives and mutual-aid teams, the fundamental agricultural units in the base areas. The Literary Rectification and the Great Production Campaign both aimed to win the wider social support. If the Rectification could be seen as a cultural movement for the CCP to articulate the significance of the emotional bond with the peasants, then

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14}Zhou Yang, “Makesi zhuyi yu wenyi” (Marxism and literatures and arts), 1944, in Yan’an wenyi congshu: diyijuan, wenyi lilun (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 1, theories on literature and arts), ed. Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 215.
the Production Campaign was an economic movement to give the intellectuals and the soldiers a practical way to build the bond with the peasants. The Rectification was designed to make the writers and artists understand, sympathize and respect the emotions of the peasants, while the Production Campaign was waged to have cultural workers and the soldiers produce together with the peasants and thereby cultivate their emotional bond with the peasants.

In the Jiangxi Soviet period, the army had played no part in production “because grain had been plentiful.” In Yan’an, the first region-wide production campaign was launched in 1939 to counter the Guomindang blockade, but it was only in the aftermath of the economic and financial crisis and after the launching of the Rectification Movement that organizational production developed throughout the border region. The leadership sought to realize the full potential of the organizational sector of the economy, and it particularly stressed the significance of the labor reserve in the army. The engagement of the military in productive enterprises aimed not only to improve the livelihood of the troops; the emotional attachment between soldiers and peasants was also integrated into their slogans for the participation in production. The CCP army mobilized the soldiers to participate in the production campaign by evoking their sympathy toward the peasants. The army aimed at “a realization that the burden of the military on the strained financial resources of the people could be correspondingly lightened.”

---

16 Ibid., 197.
17 Ibid.
18 Kangri zhanzheng shiqi jiefangqu gaikuang (General situation in the liberation areas during the Anti-Japanese War) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1953), 15.
19 Selden, China in Revolution, 197. As the second section of this paper will show, the slogan of lessening the burden of the military on peasants was repeatedly articulated in the yangge plays.
rhetoric of lightening the burden of the military on the people demanded the soldiers to respect and be considerate to the interests of the peasants; the soldiers built their bond with the people by participating in economic production and lowering the burden on them.

The two important movements in Yan’an—the Literary Rectification and the Great Production Campaign—were both justified by the authentic principle of the emotional bond between the peasants and other social forces including the soldiers and the intellectuals. The CCP soldiers should build solidarity with the peasants by not only emotionally regarding the peasants with respect and understanding but also by physically pursuing production work together with them. The celebration of soldier-people solidarity was finally institutionalized in the 1943 Double-Supporting Movement (shuangyong yundong), which promoted a spirit of “supporting the army” (yongbing), “favorable treatment of soldiers’ families” (yongshu), and the “cherishing” of the people” (aimin).

In January 1943, Lin Boqu (1886-1960) and Li Dingming (1881-1947), respectively chairman and vice chairman of the Border Region government, issued “Yonghu jundui jueding” (Decisions on supporting the army) and “Bianqu zhengfu guanyu yongjun yundong yue de zhishi” (Directions of the border region government on the month of the movement of supporting the army). The CCP leaders also reformulated “Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu kangshu lihun chuli banfa” (Methods of dealing with the divorce of anti-Japanese soldiers’ wives) and “Youdai kangri junren jiashu tiaoli” (Edicts

According to Selden, the army played a leading role in the production movement and its activities were representative of those of other groups. The model unit was Wang Zhen’s (1908-1993) 359th Brigade, which since 1938 had been the leader in military production at Nan-ni-wan.
on treating favorably the families of anti-Japanese soldiers) as steps for further intervention into soldiers’ marriage and family life.\textsuperscript{20} In the same year, the headquarters and the political department of the Rear Corps of the Eighth Route Army (Balujun liushou bingtuan) issued “Guanyu yonghu zhengfu aihu renmin de jueding” (Decisions on supporting the government and loving the people), the first pact on supporting the government and loving the people in the history of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA).\textsuperscript{21} Issues of these edicts symbolized the beginning of the Double-Supporting Movement. Later that year the movement spread to other CCP’s liberation areas, eventually becoming a tradition institutionalized in the history of the CCP to present day.

The Double-Supporting Movement enlisted wide participation from the soldiers and rural masses in the CCP’s wartime revolutionary bases. Substantial literary and artistic productions of various genres were created with the theme of army-people solidarity. These cultural productions were published in various kinds of media and performed on diverse occasions; they were even written on village walls and read aloud by propaganda workers to illiterate people in village markets. These cultural works reached wide social audiences—most being common soldiers and local peasants—shaping their emotions and lives in many ways. As Holm argues, “a salient feature of the cultural workstyle that emerged after 1942 was the party’s sponsorship of model genres that could be used as the basis for mass movements in culture.”\textsuperscript{22} Yangge was a representative of these model genres that eventually developed into a mass

\textsuperscript{21}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22}Holm, \textit{Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China}, 9.
movement after 1943 because of its wide popularity in Yan’an. This mass movement involved extensive social participation mainly from the cultural workers and also from literate soldiers and peasants.

**Articulating Army-People Bond—the Yangge Movement**

The previous section has shown that the CCP’s Production Campaign, Literary Rectification, and the Double-Supporting Movement in wartime Yan’an justified the category of the army-peasant bond as a legitimate social relationship. The army-people solidarity became one of the dominant themes in cultural and propaganda works. This section focuses on how the CCP’s cultural workers articulated the army-peasant bond in the *yangge* movement and how this articulation shaped the construction of the CCP soldier figure. To achieve this goal, this section will provide a close reading of some representative examples of the *yangge* plays.

The wide popularity of the *yangge* drama among the soldiers can be partly explained by the low literacy rates and class backgrounds of the soldiers. Before 1931, the level of general education in the border region was very low; the literacy rate was only one percent. 23 By 1941, the CCP army’s anti-illiteracy efforts developed to the extent that the percentage of soldiers able to recognize two hundred words reached eighty percent. 24 The majority of CCP soldiers were able to read about fifty words. 25 In terms of class structure, sixty percent of the CCP soldiers were drawn from the peasants, twenty

---

23 *Kangri zhanzheng shiqi jiefangqu gaikuang*, 18.
24 Ibid., 19.
percent from the workers, and twenty percent from other groups such as merchants and students. Ninety-five percent of the soldiers were young men aged between eighteen and thirty-five. Although the literacy rate in the CCP army had greatly improved in comparison with the prewar situation, the majority of soldiers were still unable to read newspapers, fiction or other written forms of literature. The yangge drama, as an oral media, became a preferable cultural genre among young soldiers. The army often held night parties where the soldiers sang together and performed plays.

According to incomplete statistics taken from CCP archives, the period that saw a peak in the performance of yangge on the theme of army-people solidarity was during the Double-Supporting Movement, which was first initiated during the 1943 Spring Festival. The Northwest Bureau (Xibeijiu) of the CCP called for a bigger-than-ever yangge movement in Yan’an, encouraging the formation of yangge propaganda troupes in every office and unit within the Yan’an area. As Holm argues, “the Yangge Movement, as it came to be called, was clearly given high priority by the Party leadership, and detailed pieces of reportage on the activities of individual yangge troupes, some by well-known literary figures, were published.” The yangge play writer and performer Wang Dahua (1919-1946) recalled that he often performed yangge in the street or in the square

---

26Ibid.
28“Yan’an yanchu jumu” (Yangge dramas performed in Yan’an), 1945, in Kangri zhazheng shiqu Yan’an ji gekangri minzhu genjudi wenshu yundong ziliao (Materials on the literary movements in Yan’an and other anti-Japanese democratic base areas), eds. Liu Zengjie, et al. (Taiyuan: Shanxirenmin chubanshe, 1983), 333.
29Holm, Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China, 251.
and that every performance had about ten thousand in audience. People in Yan’an were proud of the success of yangge, and whenever they were asked about literature and art in Yan’an, they would talk about yangge.  

A number of yangge troupes were organized by students in the Lu Xun College of Art and Literature (simply Luyi) and other colleges in Yan’an, cultural workers in government agencies, army units, factories and other social institutions, as well as literate peasants and soldiers. According to the CCP’s own statistics, by 1944 there were 949 yangge troupes, which meant that every 1500 people had a troupe; their performances attracted a cumulative total of eight million in audience. Holm reveals that “open public performances of yangge by various troupes, whether together or separately, indoors or outdoors, were not uncommon around Yan’an and were probably the way in which the majority of the population saw the plays.” In 1943 more than 150 yangge dramas were performed. Among them, fifty-six described the theme of production, seventeen the theme of army-people solidarity, and ten the theme of self-defense. It is hard to assess the completeness of these statistics, but it is reasonable to argue that production and army-people solidarity were among the two most popular themes in the yangge movement.

30 Ibid., 130.
32 Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan xinwen yanjiusuo zhongguo baokanshi yanjiushi, ed., Yan’an wencui (Literature collections in Yan’an) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1984), 508.
33 Xue Xiaoxu, and Du Lei, “Yan’an shiqi de xin yangge yundong jiedu” (Interpretation of the new yangge movement in Yan’an), in Wenshi ziliao (Materials on literature and history), No. 33 (November 2008): 78.
34 Holm, Art and Ideology in Revolutionary China, 271.
35 Zhou Yang, “Biaoxian xin de quzhong de shidai” (The era of writing about new mass), 1944, in Zhongguo jiefangqu wenxue shuxi: wenxue yundong lilun (Series of literary works in the Chinese liberation areas: theories on literary movements), ed. Hu Cai (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1992), 534.
movement. The *yangge* dramas were not written by any individual; they were products of collective creation mainly by literature and art workers in Yan’an, who played the role as cultural propagandists.

The emotional ties between the soldiers and the peasants were highlighted in the *yangge* plays. The 1942-1944 Literary Rectification was a watershed in the discourse on the soldier-peasant bond. The *yangge* dramas before the rectification movement tended to portray Communist soldiers as a force that morally transcended the peasants, physically protected the peasants, and offered the peasants more help than the peasants offered the soldiers. The *yangge* plays were full of sentences such as: “Every river has its source and every tree has its roots” (*shui you yuan, shu you gen*), or “the Eighth Route Army was the lifeblood of us peasants and our parents” (*balujun shi laobaixingde dajuxing he qindieniang*). Before the Literary Rectification, the *yangge* dramas that focused on the soldier-peasant relationship as the main theme highlighted the merits of the army by writing about the negative sides of the peasants. Such examples included *yangge* dramas complaining about how the peasants did not open up wasteland as fast as the soldiers or how the peasants were worried whether the soldiers would eat their food.

During the Literary Rectification, the tendency of highlighting the army as a great force of guiding and protecting the people while depicting the peasants as backward and weak people was criticized by CCP cultural leaders. Zhou Yang (1908-1989), for

---


37 Zhou Yang, “Biaoxian xin de qunzhong de shidai,” 541.
example, claimed that to describe the peasants in this way was to make fools of them.\textsuperscript{38} Zhou pointed out that to emphasize the CCP army’s role of protecting the peasants was not the correct army-people relationship. According to Zhou, this relationship should have two layers of meanings. Above all, the people were the roots, lifeblood and parents of the army. Under this basis, the ideal emotions between soldiers and peasants were a parallel to son-parent relationship. The soldiers should regard the peasants as their parents with high respect. The soldiers received not only physical care but also education on production work from the peasants. The celebration of the peasants’ role as soldiers’ parents represented the CCP’s efforts to pursue the continued popular support from male peasants.

One example of the \textit{yangge} dramas dealing with the theme of the soldier-peasant relationship performed before the Literary Rectification was \textit{Shi’erba liandao} (Twelve sickles),\textsuperscript{39} which was created in 1938. In this play, the political commissar (\textit{zhengzhi weiyuan}) asked the peasant Wang Er to help make twelve sickles for the army so that the soldiers could participate in economic production. Wang Er’s wife, who came from outside the border region, strongly held the traditional attitude toward the army and viewed soldiers as nothing but villains who bullied the peasants. Wang Er was more than willing to accept the task given by the political commissar; he also educated his wife by explaining to her that the Eight Route Army pursued the interests of the peasants and had deep love toward the peasants.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39}Ma Jianxiang, \textit{Shi’erba liandao} (Twelve sickles), 1938, in \textit{Yan’an wenyi congshu: diqijuan, yangge} (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 7, the \textit{yangge} drama), ed. \textit{Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui} (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 19-50.
The wife agreed with Wang’s decision and gave him a hand by doing assistant work. However, she thought that since the political commissar was very eager to have sickles in a short period of time, they should charge him more money than the sickles were worth. She also told Wang not to work too hard on a task given by the army official. Wang told his wife that the army loved the peasants and thus to help army soldiers was something that the peasants should do. In this *yangge* play, the political commissar from the army only appeared once, but the task he gave the peasant Wang Er was treated as an honorable mission by Wang. Wang’s wife, who had come from outside the border region, had “backward thoughts” (*luohou sixiang*) in dealing with the soldier-peasant relations and thus needed to be educated.

The male peasant assumed the role of a propagandist and educator. His logic was that because the soldiers of the CCP army loved the people and helped the people fight against the Japanese, the people should help the army unconditionally. This *yangge* drama attempted to imbue into the peasants the sense that army soldiers were protectors of the people. The army’s agenda of protecting the safety of the peasants was treated as the single embodiment of the soldiers’ love for the people. The bond between soldiers and peasants was also gendered in this play; the army-people emotional ties were exclusively expressed between the soldier and the male peasant yet were compelled by the peasant wife.

When the Double-Supporting Movement was officially launched in spring 1943, the *yangge* movement reached its peak and even more *yangge* plays with the theme of the army-people bond were created than before. Among them, *Zhang Zhiguo* (The soldier
Zhang Zhiguo)\textsuperscript{40} and \textit{Jun aimin, min yongjun} (The army loves the people, and the people support the army),\textsuperscript{41} both performed in 1943, were the most popular ones. The soldier Zhang Zhiguo strongly resolved to be a model soldier by becoming a labor hero. Although his hands became swollen due to overwork at weeding, he still requested to join the army and weed every day. His director (zhidaoyuan) ordered him to rest, but he refused because he resolved to surpass the production task, so that the economic burden on the people could be lessened.

Another character in this play, the old peasant Tian, who was experienced in weeding, could remove thirty kilograms of weeds every day. When Tian heard that the soldier Zhang Zhiguo could remove 108 kilograms of weeds every day, Tian did not believe it and decided to go to the field and learn from Zhang’s experience in person. However, the soldier Zhang was very humble to Tian and requested Tian to become his teacher; Zhang also showed the peasant Tian his swollen hands. Tian felt extremely moved because he had not seen any army other than the Eighth Route Army that did production work to lessen the burden of the peasants. Tian was not only touched by the soldiers’ enthusiasm of working on economic production; he was also touched by the soldiers’ humble and considerate attitude toward the peasants. This play showed that a model soldier ideal demanded maintaining an emotional bond with the peasants by

\textsuperscript{40}Lianfangjun zhengzhibu xuanchuandui, \textit{Zhang Zhiguo} (The soldier Zhang Zhiguo), 1943, in \textit{Yan’an wenyi congshu: diqijuan, yangge} (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 7, the yangge drama), ed. Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 68-94.

\textsuperscript{41}Lianfangjun zhengzhibu xuanchuandui, \textit{Jun aimin min yongjun} (The army loves the people, and the people support the army), 1943, in \textit{Yan’an wenyi congshu: diqijuan, yangge} (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 7, the yangge drama), ed. Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 237-258.
actively participating in production work with the peasants and by adopting a humble and thoughtful attitude toward the peasants.

In this yangge play, the sentence that “the army and the people had the same mind and were one family” (junmin tongxin shi yijiaren) appeared repeatedly. “The same mind” shared by the soldiers and the peasants was not fighting but working together. The strong wish to do economic work justified the soldier’s intention of not following the order of his leader. Zhang was not punished by his superior; instead Zhang was praised and placed as a model for other soldiers to follow. To exchange experiences in production becomes the arena where soldiers and peasants built and strengthened their emotional ties, and to participate in economic work becomes an indispensable factor in defining a soldier figure in this play.

In the yangge play *Jun aimin, min yongjun*, the wife of the peasant Wang considered the Eighth Route Army soldiers as her saviors and wanted to send dumplings and cloth to them as gifts. In her eyes, the Eighth Route Army soldiers were not only competent in fighting but also capable of doing production work. The husband Wang also wanted to be a model of supporting the army (yongjun mofan). The squad leader (banzhang) Wang came to the peasant couple’s place to drop off some firewood and invite the peasant couple to attend the meeting of supporting the government and cherishing the people (yongzheng aimin hui). Wang Er wanted to give the gifts to the squad leader Wang, but the squad leader Wang left quickly pretending that he had a stomachache. As the squad leader Wang forgot his bag in the peasant couple’s house, so the peasant Wang put the gifts inside the bag and gave the bag to him when he came back.
to get his bag. However, when the squad leader Wang found the stuff in his bag, he secretly put the stuff in a basin at the door.

In this yangge play, the peasant couple expressed their sincere affection toward the soldier by insisting on giving gifts to the squad leader Wang; the squad leader Wang also showed genuine emotion to the peasants by refusing to accept the gifts without offending the peasants. The emotional communication between the soldier and the peasants happened in the home of the peasants. The way that they got along with each other by giving and refusing to take gifts was like normal interaction among family members. Although the peasant couple in this play were both enthusiastic in supporting the army, the expression of emotions between soldiers and peasants was still gendered. The way the peasant wife showed her love for the soldier was still to cook for the family, although the definition of family was enlarged to include strange soldiers. The celebration of army-people bond reinforced patriarchal values by stressing women’s roles in performing housework.

During the high tide of the yangge movement in 1944, two famous yangge plays were created, *Liu Shunqing* (Soldier Liu Shunqing) and *Niu Yonggui guacai* (The injured soldier Niu Yonggui). In *Liu Shunqing*, two old peasants, Zhang and Li, admired the abilities of 19-year-old company commander Liu and his resolution in clearing the wasteland and doing productive work. To support the army’s production,

---

42 Lianfangjun zhengzhibu xuanchuandui, *Liu Shunqing* (Soldier Liu Shunqing), 1944, in *Yan’an wenyi congshu: diqijuan, yangge* (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 7, the yangge drama), ed. Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 281-324.

they both gave part of their own land to the army. Due to the lack of production tools, Liu went to consult with the two peasants Zhang and Li. When Liu was worried that they could not find metal to produce tools, the two peasants told Liu that there were three old bells made of metal in the deserted village temple, but they did not believe that the three heavy bells could be made into tools of production. The commander leader Liu believed that he could manage it as long as he could find a blacksmith. Liu first requested the local government to persuade the peasants into allowing the soldiers to use the bells. He found a blacksmith and asked him to go to work at the army base. Originally the blacksmith was not willing to go out to work, but the commander leader Liu kept propagandizing to the blacksmith, saying that the reason that the army was also doing the production work was to help the peasants get rich. The blacksmith agreed with Liu, but was worried that the production tools might not be finished within the requested seven days. Liu mobilized his soldiers to assist the blacksmith. After the production tools were completed, the soldiers went to plough out the farmland. Because of a lack of farm cattle, the soldiers did the ploughing work that was normally performed by the cattle. The company commander Liu did not feel embarrassed when the two old peasants Zhang and Li saw this situation. Instead he requested the two peasants to check whether the land was ploughed well enough. The two peasants both thought that the command leader Liu was the real hero, while Liu believed that the army’s production totally depended upon the help of the peasants.

The message that the propaganda in this yangge play conveyed was not simply that the army was the savior of the peasants and the peasants were grateful to the army.
On one hand, the character of the soldier in this play, the company commander Liu, had faith and passion as much as in producing as in fighting. On the other hand, the army’s economic production and the making of their tools had to rely on the assistance of the masses. When the army had the difficulty of a lack of production tools, they consulted with the peasants. When they did not know how to make old bells into tools of production, they relied on the blacksmith. When they ploughed out the farmland without using the cattle, they asked the peasants to check on the quality.

The two peasants Zhang and Li admired the company commander Liu’s passion in production, his creativity in resolving the difficulty of lack of tools, and his spirit of ploughing out the land without relying on cattle. Therefore, the two peasants viewed Liu as the real hero. However, Liu always relied on the peasants for help whenever any difficulty arose. The emotional bond of the soldiers with the peasants is embodied in Liu’s humble attitude toward peasants and his readiness to learn from them. The situation in which the soldiers ploughed the farmland without using the cattle is also documented by Nationalist and foreign journalists who visited Yan’an in 1944. According to their observations, seeing the soldiers doing work that was normally done by animals led the peasants to overcome their hostility toward the soldiers. Working on production not only became an indispensable quality of a soldier hero but also served as the best channel to strengthen the emotional ties with peasants. The command leader Liu’s expression of

---

respectful emotions for peasants’ authority in productive knowledge fulfilled his image as a CCP soldier.

*Niu Yonggui guacai* is a 1944 *yangge* play of a common soldier called Niu Yonggui whose leg was injured in a battle. The peasant Zhao Shouyi had two sons: the elder one was beaten to death by the Japanese while the younger one was sent to join the Eighth Route Army. Zhao Shouyi was grateful to the Eighth Route Army because the army killed his enemy. The injured soldier Niu Yonggui happened to arrive at Zhao’s house. Zhao insisted that Niu should stay at his home, saying that he would protect Niu if the enemies came to search for the injured soldier. The next morning, Zhao Shouyi planned to leave because he was worried that he might get Zhao’s family into trouble. However, upon Zhao’s repeated requests, Niu went down into a tunnel at Zhao’s house. The Japanese beat Zhao harshly, asking him where the Eighth Route Army soldier was, but Zhao insisted saying that he did not know. The Japanese finally left. When Zhao was about to call the soldier Niu out of the tunnel, the Japanese, who happened to know that Zhao had a tunnel at his home, went back to Zhao’s home. The Japanese dared not enter the tunnel, so they forced Zhao to shout toward the tunnel that the Japanese had left. But nobody came outside from the tunnel, so the Japanese left again. After making sure the Japanese would not return again, Zhao stamped his foot on the ground three times, and Niu finally came out from the tunnel. Stamping the foot on the ground three times was the signal Zhao earlier told Niu that meant that it was safe to go out. Under Zhao’s help, Niu succeeded in returning to his troops.
In this play, the CCP soldier was an embodiment of the sincere army-peasant emotional bond. The soldier Niu Yonggui showed his care for the peasant; he was worried that he might get the peasant’s family into trouble. Niu also received the genuine love from the peasant Zhao, who was willing to risk his life to protect Niu. The soldier-peasant bond was justified by traditional father-son bonds in this play. Niu said that the Zhaos were his parents who gave him a second life (zaisheng dieniang), and Zhao replied that the Eighth Route Army soldiers were the children of the masses and that the masses should protect them.

A comparison of *Niu Yonggui guacai* and *Jun aimin min yongjun* shows that the soldier-peasant intimacy was gendered in both plays. In the campaign of supporting the army, the peasant wife in *Jun aimin min yongjun* could only play the leading role in housework by making dumplings and preparing other gifts for the soldiers. Women could only provide a supporting role in the fight against the Japanese. In *Niu Yonggui guacai*, it was the male peasant Zhao who risked his own life in the face of the Japanese to safeguard the life of the soldier. The peasant Zhao’s wife was portrayed as a loyal yet cowardly woman who did not know how to handle the Japanese and protect the soldier. Army-people bond, which became an essential element in defining the soldier figure, reinforced women’s supportive roles as caregivers. Furthermore, it reinforced the notion that the women were to be protected by their male counterparts. In this sense, the emotional bond between the soldiers and the peasants that was celebrated in mass culture strengthened the patriarchal values.
As Mao and his associates pressed for a new mass culture that drew on *yangge*, a new discourse on the soldier figure was forged along the lines of army-people bond. The celebration of the cult of army-people solidarity in the CCP’s significant social and political programs determined the way of how the image of the soldier was shaped in mass culture. In these *yangge* plays that portray the soldier figure, the camaraderie between soldiers and their feelings toward their lovers are both obscured. The soldiers are all single males in these plays, and their social emotion has only one focus—attachment with the peasants. The examples of the *yangge* plays examined in this chapter that were performed after the Literary Rectification did not depict the soldier as a symbol of military strength in fighting; the standard as a real CCP soldier was that he possessed a deep sentiment with the peasants. In the *yangge* dramas, the soldiers praised by the peasants as heroes not only because they fought against the Japanese but also because they humbly learnt from the peasants, eagerly consulted with the peasants, and worked hard on the farmland alongside the peasants.

By pursuing production work together with peasants, the soldiers were building social connection and the affirmation of relationship in the most fundamental terms the peasants know. As the anthropologist Sulamith Heins Potter concludes in her research on cultural construction of emotion in rural Chinese social life, in Chinese terms, “no mere emotional state or response could provide the wealth of meaning that measurable labor provides.”\(^\text{46}\)


A Communist soldier called Zhou Xinfu confessed the dual nature of his
occupation: one was a peasant and the other was a soldier. The CCP soldier was expected to strengthen the emotional ties with the peasants by devoting him to both fighting as the soldiers’ occupation and producing as the peasants’ occupation. To do the peasants’ occupation served as a catalyst in the strengthening of the emotional bond between the soldiers and the peasants.

Conclusion

The examination of the construction of the soldier figure in Yan’an’s mass culture during the Anti-Japanese War shows that the CCP tried to discipline the emotions of the masses in achieving its state-building goals of building the army and forging closer social integration. It tried to make the cultural workers forge an emotional bond with the peasants, and make the soldiers and the peasants develop an emotional bond toward each other. Disciplining the emotions of different social forces and transforming social relations were as crucial to the CCP’s rise as the mobilization of a labor and fighting force. These efforts also helped the CCP to enlist the support from the peasants, the most numerous and most steadfast of the CCP’s allies according to Mao.

During the Great Production Campaign, the intellectuals and the soldiers were mobilized to build the emotional bond by working together with the peasants; during the Literary Rectification, the intellectuals were commanded by the CCP to reform their emotions toward the masses of the people; during the Double-Supporting Movement, the

---

47 Feng Mu, Yang Sizhong, and Huang Gang, “Women de budui zai shanlin li” (Our army in the mountains and forests), in Yan’an wenyi congshu: diliujuan, baogaowenxue (Series of Yan’an literatures and arts: Volume 6, documentary literatures), ed. Yan’an wenyi congshu bianweihui (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1983), 183.
soldiers and the peasants were encouraged to show their emotional support to each other. By launching these cultural and social movements, the CCP established army-people bond as a legitimate category of social emotion in Yan’an. Intellectuals, who largely became the CCP’s propaganda workers after the Literary Rectification, celebrated the army-people bond in the yangge movement——the bond that the CCP tried to build by launching the Great Production Campaign and the Double-Supporting Movement. The soldiers-peasants bond was institutionalized by the CCP’s campaigns into a legitimate category of social relations. The cultural workers, who reformed their emotion toward the peasants after the literary rectification, played the role as the cultural army of the CCP by propagandizing this bond in the yangge mass movement.

A comparison of the discourses on the soldier figure constructed by the GMD and the CCP showed that these two parties both valued the significance of military virtues for their state-building project of creating a strong army. The GMD defined the virtues of a model soldier as a code of ethics that was marked by his obedience to the political doctrine of the Three Principles of the People, his submission to the discipline and regulation over personal behavior and emotional expression, and his subordination to Jiang Jieshi as the leader of a hierarchical system. Jiang and the GMD state justified the virtue of political discipline and ideological indoctrination by appropriating the traditional principle of five components in warfare proposed in Sunzi bingfa (Master Sun’s art of war) and by trying to incite the knight-errant spirit among the nation’s soldiers.
For the Communists in wartime Yan’an, the virtue that fulfilled a model CCP soldier was a strong emotional tie with the peasants. The CCP had stressed the significance of army-people bonding ever since its army was built in 1927. When the CCP initiated the Great Production Campaign in 1939, it promoted this virtue by mobilizing social members including the soldiers to work on economic production together with the peasants. In launching the Literary Rectification Movement in 1942, the CCP justified this virtue by demanding a complete integration in thoughts and emotions of the intellectuals with the peasants. The CCP further legitimated this virtue during the Double-Supporting Movemnet in 1943, which was intended specifically to strengthen the army-people solidarity. By launching a series of social and cultural campaigns in its revolutionary base, the CCP institutionalized army-people solidarity as an ultimate military virtue in the army.

The Maoist discourse on the soldier heroes in mass culture engineered social emotions between soldiers and peasants as a method of state building alternate to that of the GMD. Mass culture in the CCP revolutionary base in Yan’an described the soldier figure not only as a national fighter but also as a farmland producer just like the peasants. In the discourse on the soldier figure constructed by the CCP’s mass culture in Yan’an, the soldiers received care, assistance, guidance and education from their parents—the peasants, and thus treated the peasants with high respect. The CCP constructed the soldier figure to meet its goal to win the support from the peasants it ruled in the revolutionary base. The mobilization of the social bond between the soldiers and the peasants is crucial
for the rapid development of the CCP army and the social integration in the CCP’s revolutionary base during the war.
Conclusion

This dissertation focuses on the construction of the soldier figure between 1924 and 1945 by various political, social and cultural forces. The forces examined in this dissertation primarily include Jiang Jieshi’s Nationalist government, the Whampoa Military Academy, urban intellectuals, professionals, literary writers and students in the Nationalist areas, as well as Chinese Communists in the revolutionary base of Yan’an. The discourses these forces constructed represented their various and sometimes conflicting goals, agendas and strategies in the participation of the state-building processes. The conceptualization of the soldier figure served as the ideological base on which Chinese Nationalists and Communists justified their legitimacy and strengthened their rule, and where the aforementioned non-governmental urban publics asserted their political influence and voiced their own respective social concerns and criticisms of the GMD government. The various ways that these political, social and cultural forces constructed the soldier figure revealed the divergent trajectories of state-society relations during the tumultuous period that China experienced during the first half of the twentieth century.

The state-building project of the Nationalists first demanded the creation of a strong army to defeat regional warlords and to unify China under the GMD banner. For Jiang Jieshi, the process of building his Nanjing Nationalist state started with the
foundation of the Whampoa Military Academy in 1924. As Chapter 1 shows, the primary goal of this academy was to establish a reliable, well-trained and politically indoctrinated armed force to support the Nationalist Party’s objective of unification and salvation. The Nationalists intended to cultivate the cadets at Whampoa into model soldiers and by extension a highly capable cadre who could constitute and lead the national army. The strategy employed by Whampoa was to carry out civic education that fully regulated the cadets’ mind, behavior, emotional expression and socialization.

As the commandant of Whampoa, Jiang Jieshi exerted his strong influence on civic education through constant lecturing and admonishment to the cadets. According to his lectures, a model soldier for the national army should be reformed according to a code of ethics: he should arm his mind with the doctrine of the Three Principles of the People; he should unconditionally subject his body practices and daily life to the military discipline; he should cultivate his morality by developing a heroic outlook on physical sacrifice; he should be a ferocious warrior with bravery and toughness to endure cruel military training; he should repress his emotional expression and limit it only to his nation, parents and army colleagues; and he should show fraternity to his fellow soldiers and loyalty to Jiang as the national leader. The soldierly ideals advocated in this code were consolidated by military rules such as Lianzuofa, Jiang’s personal interaction with Whampoa cadets, ritual and holiday commemoration, and the establishment of the Whampoa Alumni Association. In the discourse constructed by Jiang at Whampoa, bravery, military discipline, physical sacrifice, and army hierarchy were surrounded by a heroic, glorious and romantic aura.
For Jiang, the model soldier trained at Whampoa would shoulder the responsibility of being a part of the national army and take on a leadership role that involved absolute submission to his chain of command within the Academy and the army. Training loyal Whampoa cadets served Jiang’s state-building goals of strengthening his own authority and penetrating the influence of his Central Army into the forces of regional warlords. To this end, Jiang employed the strategy of opening temporary training classes or branch campuses affiliated with Whampoa and recruited army officers from the regional warlords’ armies. The regional warlords and common soldiers resisted the soldier ideal created by Jiang. They viewed Whampoa cadets not as model soldiers who could help national armies raise the professional standard, but as Jiang’s political tools to reinforce his rule or as a formidable rival that would threaten their own interests. Although some Whampoa graduates constituted the influential Whampoa clique in the Central Army, many of them were often victims of discrimination in the various warlords’ armies.

The resistance from regional warlords that Jiang met in extending the soldier ideal to national armies reveals that the GMD government and army were unsuccessful in achieving total control of regional forces. Tension also existed within Jiang’s army and Whampoa Academy. Many Whampoa cadets challenged the rigidity of military discipline and army hierarchy by requesting to defend their hometown and demonstrating against the unfair aspects of the Academy’s administration. The emotional connections among Whampoa cadets through diverse networks also encouraged them to confront the Academy authority to protect fellow members in their groups.
The building of Whampoa was not limited to the Nationalists’ initial state-building effort to create a strong army to achieve national salvation; it also served Jiang’s personal state-building goal of consolidating his authority within national armies. After Jiang’s Nanjing Nationalist government was founded in 1927, specifically as the threats from the Chinese Communists and the Japanese increased in the 1930s, military mobilization and social control became Jiang’s priorities in reinforcing the legitimacy of the GMD state. As Chapter 2 shows, one effort made in the state-building project of militarizing and disciplining society was the issuing and implementation of the compulsory conscription system in the mid-1930s.

At the same time that the GMD government was designing its compulsory conscription system, it reintroduced the traditional local control model of mutual surveillance; the baojia system between 1932 and 1934. This system, which was designed to militarize grassroots organizations, reflected the GMD’s state-building strategies of expanding the state institutions and penetrating the state’s influence into local society. The baojia organizations, which performed the function of registering and administering military training of able-bodied, were intended to serve as the basis for compulsory military service.

The GMD government issued the first Compulsory Conscription Law on June 17, 1933 to complement the pre-existing mercenary system. By stipulating military service as a legal duty of all male citizens, the GMD government advocated the militarized and disciplined citizen ideal. Several months after the conscription law was implemented on March 1, 1936, the GMD government made several notable revisions. It introduced the
concepts of exemption from military service, deferment of military service, and prohibition of military service. The GMD’s effort to revise the conscription law continued throughout the Anti-Japanese War. The revised 1943 conscription law placed compulsory conscription as the only military system in the GMD state. It reinforced the notion that performing military service would fulfill citizen status and that the citizen soldier was a model citizen and a national hero to be emulated and respected by society. During the war, the GMD government also issued a series of edicts regarding the benefits and duties of soldiers as national citizens. These edicts revealed the GMD’s effort to penetrate its influence into soldiers’ personal lives.

The compulsory conscription laws and its revisions institutionalized the link between the soldier and citizen. To achieve military mobilization and social control, the GMD government tried to create a citizen ideal that was not only military-ready but also morally cultivated. The soldier was constructed by the GMD propaganda as a model citizen and the epitome of morality. Literary education in the army was conducted as citizen education which included cultivating moral virtues for the soldiers. From 1934, the New Life Movement propagandists tried to justify the applicability of moral virtues advocated in the movement and celebrate the soldiers as the exemplar practitioners of them. The GMD’s military laws, army education, and political propaganda, together with Jiang’s civic education lectures at Whampoa, elevated the soldiers’ rhetoric status as a model citizen and a national hero who was militarized by the Nationalist army, politicized with nationalist ideology and the Three Principles of the People, disciplined
by military laws and army hierarchy, and morally cultivated by virtues advocated in the New Life Movement.

The celebration of soldier heroics in the GMD’s discourse served the GMD’s state-building goals of military mobilization and social control. However, the soldiers did not fully benefit from the rhetoric elevation of their status; society did not highly respect them nor felt inclined to emulate them in performing military service either. The rank-and-file soldiers were paid poorly and badly fed, and their treatment deteriorated as the threats from the Japanese increased. The observable reality of the true low status of soldiers impeded active participation by society in performing mandatory military service in accordance with the conscription law. The implementation of the conscription system at local levels did not follow the principles of equality and fairness as prescribed and met resistance from both local residents and baojia heads. This resistance revealed the great tension between the GMD government and rural society.

As Chapter 3 shows, although the GMD’s discourse of the soldier figure was resisted by regional warlords and rural society, it was echoed by some urban intellectuals and professionals who participated in the state-building process by supporting the army and serving the soldiers after the Anti-Japanese War broke out in 1937. The commitment of these social forces to national salvation forged a wartime alliance between them and the GMD state. Many of these intellectuals who participated in war service were affiliated with the GMD government and they propagated nationalist resistance to the masses when they visited the front line. They participated in army support and soldier service in various ways, such as reporting war stories from the front line, comforting and
treating the wounded soldiers at the hospital, writing books summarizing their soldier support experience and offering suggestions.

In the war reportages, the intellectuals highlighted the soldiers’ bravery and expressed their deep respect for it. The soldiers’ bravery not only showcased their fearlessness but also their contempt for the enemy. In this sense, they collaborated with Jiang’s discourse of celebrating the soldiers’ heroics. However, by depicting the soldiers as ordinary human beings who suffered both physical and psychological pains in war, they diverged from the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal. The soldiers did not refrain from expressing their emotions either. Their bravery was described by the intellectuals not to encourage social masses to emulate the soldier and become a military-ready, politicized and morally cultivated citizen. Instead, it was depicted as a contrast with the poor treatment of soldiers by the government. This contrast served the intellectuals’ goals to justify the importance of larger social participation in national affairs and to assert their political influence as social mobilizers. It also allowed them to explicitly voice criticism of the GMD government’s maladministration in organizing timely relief to the soldiers. In their view, it was not just physical injuries but also poor treatment from the government that led many soldiers to weak heartedness, irritability and pessimism.

Like the intellectuals, urban professionals also actively participated in army support. They identified themselves not merely as social mobilizers but as army educators and aimed to serve as the bridge between the military and the civilian. The Soldier Service Branch of the Chinese YMCA, which was a voluntary organization, served soldiers in various aspects of their lives. To meet the work agenda and style of this
organization, the social activist Liu Liangmo described the image of the soldier as an affectionate and lonely human being who needed emotional support from the civilians and also valued sincere friendship with the civilians. Liu highlighted the soldiers’ moral qualities, such as being sincere and valuing friendship; in this sense, he collaborated with the GMD’s discourse of celebrating the soldier as the epitome of morality. However, he also complicated the GMD’s soldier ideal by stressing that soldiers were poorly educated, especially when it came to knowledge of the nation and nationalism and on cooperating with the public. He also described wounded soldiers as tired and scared of war. Liu argued for establishing the Club for Wounded Soldiers to implement the strategy of education through entertainment. In advocating this strategy, Li criticized the high-handed measure adopted by many government bureaucrats in treating wounded soldiers and asserted the authority of urban professionals as army educators.

The urban professionals who claimed their role in influencing military education also included vocational educators. They argued that army education should cover professional skills from which the soldiers’ long-term career development could benefit. The educational professional Chen Junming did not oppose the GMD government’s expectation for wounded soldiers to return to the battlefield after recovery, but he argued that it was no practical for wounded soldiers to do so. In this way, Chen supported providing vocational training for wounded soldiers. The social activist Duan Shengwu, who served at the Political Branch of the Logistics Department of the Military Affairs Committee, referred to wounded and disabled soldiers as honorable soldiers, and urged the government to cooperate with urban professionals in providing education and training.
for them. The efforts for proposing vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers advocated by urban professionals and social activists were institutionalized by the GMD through the Association of Vocational Coordinator for Honorable Soldiers in 1940 at Chongqing.

The GMD government’s effort in promoting the vocational rehabilitation for honorable soldiers was supported by the educational professional Yu Zhaoming. Yu wrote a book on this undertaking upon the government’s request in 1942. He argued for greater social mobilization in the vocational rehabilitation programs and advocated that the government support and cooperate with social forces in practicing this undertaking. To justify his goals, Yu first praised the soldiers for possessing moral qualities that were essential for them to navigate smooth transitions into civilian professions. In this sense, Yu echoed the GMD government’s rhetoric for celebrating the soldier as the epitome of morality. However, Yu complicated the GMD’s rhetoric by stressing that soldiers were poorly educated and thus lacked the knowledge and skills required for career-building. Yu claimed that soldiers should expel any sense of superiority over civilians. To demonstrate their important role as army educators, vocational rehabilitation professionals also pointed out how the function of honorable soldiers as moral model was very ambiguous; if they did not receive vocational rehabilitation, they might become a potential source of social disorder.

The urban intellectuals and professionals who provided support and education for soldiers both echoed and complicated the GMD’s discourse of the soldier figure; in doing so, they promoted for their political influence as social mobilizers and army educators.
The ways these social forces constructed the soldier figure revealed that their alliance with the GMD government was ambiguous. As Chapter 4 shows, this ambiguous alliance with the government also existed among the literary writers Xiao Jun, Qiu Dongping and Xie Bingying, who created imagery of guerrilla soldiers, lower-level Nationalist army officers, and female Nationalist soldiers in their fictional writings, battlefield reportages and autobiographies.

Xiao Jun was a soldier-turned-writer with both military education and army service experience. His 1935 fiction Bayuede xiangcun, which depicted a small group of guerrilla soldier heroes in a Manchuria village, represented the fighting spirit of rural grassroots in the face of social crisis and foreign invasion; the ideal he embraced since childhood. In revealing the great suffering and brave struggles of social masses in this fiction, Xiao assumed the role of social critic who pursued the ideas of national independence and liberation. Xiao recognized the necessity for social masses to be militarized in order to survive social and national crises. However, Xiao questioned the GMD’s heroic soldier discourse in many ways. In his fiction, national heroes who bravely defended the nation were not highly politicized, disciplined and morally cultivated soldiers trained by the GMD army. Instead, the guerrilla unit was led by the Chinese Communists while the soldiers were common people from the lower rungs of society who fought in order to achieve a peaceful and better-off personal life. Even though these grassroots heroes did not receive formal military training, they had possessed the determination and drive to not only fight bravely in combat but also to rely
on each other for survival. Additionally, these grassroots heroes did not restrain themselves from expressing their natural sexual desires.

The GMD’s heroic-soldier ideal was also subverted by Qiu Dongping’s battlefield reportages published in *Qiyue*, a journal motivated by a strong desire for independence. Qiu joined the Nationalist army to defend Shanghai in 1937. His direct army experience allowed him to adopt a personal and critical perspective in describing the experiences, emotions and minds of Nationalist army soldiers in his battlefield reportages. Qiu praised the bravery of the Nationalist army soldiers in fighting against the Japanese and expressed his respect for them. In this sense, Qiu collaborated with the GMD’s heroic soldier discourse. However, Qiu also questioned the GMD’s soldier ideal by revealing the brutality of the war and soldiers’ suffering and faintheartedness during the battle.

In Qiu’s reportages, physical sacrifice, bravery, military discipline and army hierarchy advocated by Jiang Jieshi and the GMD government lost their glorious and heroic aura. War was absurd in that its violence not only gave the soldier a sense of strength but also made the soldier aware of his vulnerability. The soldier was treated by civilians as an information source to satisfy their curiosity about war rather than as model citizens to emulate; his mental pain and emotional scars were hardly understandable to civilians. Qiu revealed the ironic aspect in the Nationalist army that many competent and brave soldiers were not killed by the enemy but instead by their own commanders simply for questioning their orders or challenging the hierarchy out of sheer professional responsibility.
In questioning the GMD’s heroic soldier ideal, Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping both expressed a deep political consciousness by exploring social crises caused by foreign invasion and the enemy’s brutality. They also searched for how to build a strong army and nation in their writings; in this sense, they participated in the process of state building. For Xiao, it was these social grassroots who constituted the vanguard of Chinese national resistance and the hope of Chinese recovery. If well mobilized, they could form the basis of a strong army. For Qiu Dongping, professional army officers with a strong sense of responsibility were those who could shoulder the mission of national salvation. They consciously conquered the distraction of personal emotions such as attraction to women and music, anxiety, fear and self-doubt. They valued the bonding with their fellow soldiers, fought the war bravely, and followed military orders loyally. They also maintained a rational mind, intellectual independence, and critical thinking toward disciplines and orders.

As Chapter 5 shows, another social force that constructed the soldier figure in the GMD areas was educated youths, especially current students. They actively joined the Youth Army when Jiang Jieshi and his GMD government launched the Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join the Army in later 1944. This campaign showed that the GMD’s state-building efforts of militarizing society strengthened during the war. By performing military service in person, educated youths supported the GMD’s state-building agenda of creating a strong army.

This campaign was intended to meet internal and external challenges in the later years of the Anti-Japanese War. The GMD army was confronted with decreasing combat
capacity and severe difficulties recruiting new conscripts. As China’s Anti-Japanese War was integrated into the greater World War II after the Pacific War broke out in 1941, Jiang Jieshi became commander-in-chief of the Allied forces in China, Vietnam, Burma (present-day Myanmar) and Thailand. The increased collaboration with the Allied forces and the equipment and personnel support from abroad made the need for well-educated soldiers a high demand. China’s Anti-Japanese efforts met serious challenges after the loss of Operation Ichigō in 1944. All these factors led Jiang and his GMD government to strengthen their efforts in militarizing educated youths, specifically high school and university students—the social group which was exempted from performing military service by the 1933 compulsory conscription law.

The GMD reversed the exemption of students from performing military duty in March 1943 in the revised conscription law. In October 1944, the GMD held a conference that officially started the campaign to mobilize educated youths to join the army. To attract their participation, Jiang employed several forms of rhetoric to enhance the significance of the Youth Army. He first elevated the status of the Youth Army as the model and backbone of all national armies. The ability of the Youth Army soldiers to judge the enemy’s situation independently promoted fighting spirit and combat capacity of national army units. Jiang also stated that military knowledge and combat experience were indispensable to the youth’s study and development. The Youth Army was advocated as the best professional school that could teach the youth practical skills and necessary knowledge on the army structure, thereby increasing the youth’s ability of
leading the ranks. Jiang argued that military training, which would advance the youth’s own academic studies and career pursuits, was a significant part of national education.

Educated youths, particularly the high school and university students, actively joined the army upon the GMD’s military mobilization efforts. They supported the GMD’s army building efforts and agreed with Jiang’s rhetoric that justified the campaign for militarizing students. They claimed in their writings that their army experience was one way to enhance their knowledge and improve their physique. However, they argued for a soldier ideal that differed from the one created by Jiang and his GMD government; they portrayed themselves as the practitioner of the principles of self-government and democracy. In this manner, they applied these principles not only in their study and entertainment experiences, but also in the role of army administration. Doing so encouraged the soldiers in the Youth Army to argue for an equal officer-soldier relationship even though they did not win any compromise from the army officers who directly led them. The pursuit of self-government and democracy also encouraged educated youths to voice their dissatisfaction with the political and military authorities. The educated youths who joined the Youth Army asserted a soldier ideal that was based on active and full participation in army administration.

Construction of the soldier figure was practiced not only by the GMD government and the intellectuals, professionals, writers and students in GMD areas who sought to assert their state-building goals in regard to creating and supporting the army. As Chapter 6 shows, during the Anti-Japanese War, the CCP in the revolutionary base of Yan’an also created a discourse of the soldier figure in pursuit of its state-building goals of winning
support from the largest population in the base—the peasants—and managing closer social integration.

In order to ensure continued popular support for military recruitment, the Chinese Communists made strenuous efforts to build army-civilian solidarity in Yan’an. To this end, the CCP actively united the peasants to justify its social, economic and cultural movements and remold the emotions of the intellectuals and the CCP soldiers. To forge an emotional bond with the peasants, the CCP strictly disciplined the daily behavior of its soldiers related to their interaction with the peasants. The CCP not only demanded that the soldiers respect and love the peasants, but also encouraged the peasants to support the soldiers.

To further discipline the thought and emotion of all in Yan’an, the CCP carried out the Literary Rectification Movement and the Great Production Campaign in 1942. Mao’s talks during the Rectification set the tone for the cultural intellectuals’ production and aimed to forge complete integration in thoughts and emotions of the intellectuals with the peasants. The Great Production Campaign was intended to let the intellectuals and the soldiers consolidate their emotional ties with the peasants by performing production work together. The CCP’s effort of forging emotional communication between soldiers and peasants reached its peak in the 1943 Double-Supporting Movement. These cultural, economic and social movements launched by the CCP in wartime Yan’an were intended to validate the authentic principle of the emotional bond between the peasants and the soldiers and justify the army-peasant bond as a legitimate social relationship.
An examination of the *yangge* dramas shows that army-peasant solidarity was one of the dominant themes in the cultural works in wartime Yan’an. The different ways that the *yangge* plays depicted soldier-peasant relations before and after the 1942 Rectification showed that cultural workers remolded their own thought based on the emotional bond with the peasants. The *yangge* dramas before the Rectification tended to highlight the army as a great force for guiding and protecting the peasants while describing the backward thoughts of the peasants. However, the *yangge* dramas created during and after the Rectification stressed that the soldiers should highly respect the peasants and regard them as their parents. The soldiers received physical care and education on production knowledge from the peasants. The emotions between soldiers and peasants were thus engineered by the CCP’s discourse on the soldier figure in mass culture to serve its state-building goals of winning the support from the peasants and managing closer social integration.

The construction of the soldier and their social participation in state-building processes regarding how to build and support the army were highly gendered. The GMD state stipulated in its 1933 compulsory conscription law that military service was only a male citizens’ duty; the revised 1943 conscription law claimed that women too had military duties, but their duties were limited to non-combat ones. Although women intellectuals and activists like Xie Bingying did not challenge the GMD’s stipulation, they asserted their political influence as social mobilizers by describing the soldiers as fragile and affectionate and in need of care from larger social masses even including children. Xie, who was also a woman soldier with Whampoa experience, did not depict
the soldier as vulnerable to war brutality as the male writers Xiao Jun and Qiu Dongping did in their writings. Instead, she portrayed herself as a brave rebel who opposed traditional gender roles and struggled for independence. In Xiao Jun’s fictional *Bayuede xiangcun* (Village in August), war trauma was gendered as women’s suffering included sexual assault. Men fought the war to protect their lovers and struggle for a better life for their families, while women joined the army unit because they had no choice and were overwhelmed with the resolution to revenge the killing of their families by the Japanese.

The construction of the soldier in the CCP’s discourse was also gendered. In the *yangge* dramas celebrating the CCP’s value of army-people bond, male peasants wholeheartedly supported soldiers and were brave enough to fight the Japanese to protect them. In contrast, women peasants in the *yangge* plays either were portrayed as being morally backward or supporting the soldiers only by performing housework. The gendered role of the social masses by supporting the army revealed the CCP’s intention of winning male peasants.

The political culture surrounding the construction of the soldier figure shows that the GMD and CCP governments, the intellectuals, professionals, writers and students all had different state-building agendas and priorities. Treating state building as the same as the process of nation building, Chinese Nationalists intended to build a strong and loyal army to unify China and consolidate the rule and legitimacy of the GMD regime, and to penetrate its influence into regional warlords and rural society; Jiang Jieshi also aimed to strengthen his own authority within the army and the society. Conversely, Chinese Communists aimed at building a state at the revolutionary base and considered their
priorities as winning the support of peasants who constituted the majority of the population at the base and forging close social integration by reforming the thought and emotion of social members in the base.

Separate from the parties’ apparatuses, the intellectuals, professionals, writers and students discussed here embraced the nationalistic appeal and considered contributing to national salvation and asserting their political influence as priorities of state building. The intellectuals and professionals supported the Nationalist army by reporting the war from the frontline, serving wounded soldiers at hospitals, and writing pamphlets on soldier support experiences and plans. They argued for their influence as social mobilizers and army educators when participating in the state-building processes. The literary writers revealed the brutality of the war, the cruelty of the enemy, and the suffering of the soldiers. They asserted their role as social critics and searched for the potential forces that would constitute a strong Nationalist army. The educated youths, specifically students, actively joined the Youth Army upon the GMD government’s military mobilization, helping build the army to meet domestic and international challenges. They argued for the practice of self-government and democracy as a soldier ideal in their published writings.

State-society relations engendered during the state-building processes in regard to creating and supporting a strong army presented different trajectories. The GMD’s soldier discourse that advocated Whampoa cadets as model soldiers was resisted by regional warlords who viewed the cadets trained at Whampoa as Jiang’s personal tools to penetrate his influence. The GMD’s highly disciplined soldier ideal was also challenged
by some Whampoa cadets who tried to uphold their own interests. The GMD’s elevation of the soldiers’ rhetoric status to model citizens and as the epitome of morality was also largely resisted by rural society organized in the baojia system, who viewed the soldiers’ life as miserable.

The GMD’s heroic soldier ideal and rhetoric justifying the militarization of society was echoed by urban intellectuals, professionals, writers and students. They praised the bravery and dutifulness of the Nationalist soldiers, recognized the necessity of militarizing the society, including rural grassroots and educated youth. However, they echoed the GMD’s discourses of the soldier figure not with the intention of forming a strong alliance with the GMD government. Instead, they complicated, de-idealized or confronted the GMD’s soldier ideals to argue for their own political agendas and assert their own influence. Although the intellectuals in the GMD areas constructed a soldier figure that did not fit the GMD’s soldier ideals, the construction of the soldier in mass culture in Yan’an served as propaganda supporting the CCP’s army-peasant solidarity ideal. In this sense, the CCP managed closer social integration than the GMD during the Anti-Japanese War. In closing, this dissertation has shown that the construction of the soldier figure was shaped by the various forms of participation in the state-building processes by multiple forces, revealing that there existed diverse trajectories in state-society relations in modern China.
GLOSSARY

Balujun liushou bingtuan (Rear Corps of the Eighth Route Army) 八路軍留守兵團

Beifa (Northern Expedition) 北伐

Benxiao kaishi jinianri (Commemoration of the Foundation of the [Whampoa Military] Academy, June 16) 本校開始紀念日

Bianqianqu (Reorganized military zone) 編遣區

Dashengchan yundong (Great Production Campaign) 大生產運動

Dongzheng (Eastern Expedition) 東征

Erdengbing (Private E-1) 二等兵

Guochi jinianri (Commemoration of National Shame, May 9) 國恥紀念日

Guomin canzhenghui (National Political Council Conference) 國民參政會

Guomin gemingjun (National Revolutionary Army) 國民革命軍

Guominbing (Citizen-soldiers) 國民兵

Guonanxiang (National-calamity-pay) 國難餉

Huanghuagang lieshi jinianri (Commemoration of Huanghuagang Martyrs, March 29) 黃花崗烈士紀念日

Huangpu junxiao (Whampoa Military Academy) 黃埔軍校

Huangpu junxiao biyesheng diaochake (Investigation Office of Whampoa Academy) 黃埔軍校畢業生調查科
Huangpu junxiao jiaodaotuan (The Training Regiment of Whampoa Military Academy)
黃埔軍校教導團

Huangpu tongxuehui (Whampoa Alumni Association) 黃埔同學會

Huangpu xi (Whampoa Clique) 黃埔係

Huanyi (Deferment of military service) 緩役

Jingshen jiaoyu (Civic education) 精神教育

Jinyi (Prohibition of military service) 禁役

Kangri minzu tongyi zhanxian (Anti-Japanese National United Front) 抗日民族統一戰線

Kangri zhanzheng (Anti-Japanese War) 抗日戰爭

Laodongjie (Labor Day, May 1) 勞動節

Lian E rong Gong (Alliance with the Soviet Union and the CCP) 聯俄容共

Lianzuofa (Law of joint responsibility) 連坐法

Liao dangdaibiao beibu jinianri (Commemoration of the Capture of Party Representative Liao Zhongkai, August 20) 廖[仲愷]黨代表被捕紀念日

Mianyi (Exemption from military service) 免役

Qingnianjun (Youth Army) 青年軍

Quanguo gejie jiuguo lianhui (United Association of Various Circles for National Salvation) 全國各界救國聯合會

Rongyu junren zhiye xiedao hui (Association of Vocational Coordination for Honorable Soldiers) 榮譽軍人職業協導會

Sanda jilü baxiang zhuyi (Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points of Attention) 三大紀律八項注意

Sanmin zhuyi (Three Principles of the People) 三民主義
Sanping yuanze (Principle of the Three Equals) 三平原則

Shaan-Gan-Ning bianqu (Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia border region) 陝甘寧邊區

Shaji can’an jinianri (Commemoration of Shaji Massacre, June 23) 沙基慘案紀念日

Shangdengbing (Private First Class E-3) 三等兵

Shanghai can’an jinianri (Commemoration of the Shanghai Massacre, May 30) 上海慘案紀念日

Shangshi (Staff Sergeant) 上士

Shuangyong yundong (Double-Supporting Movement) 雙擁運動

Sichuan tongxianghui zhandi fuwutuan (War Service Corps of Sichuan Native Place Association) 四川同鄉會戰地服務團

Tongmenghui (Revolutionary Alliance) 同盟會

Wenyi zhengfeng (Literary Rectification) 文藝整風

Xiangtu xiaoshuo (Countryside Fiction) 鄉土小說

Xiashi (Corporal) 下士

Xinshenghuo yundong (New Life Movement) 新生活運動

Yidengbing (Private E-2) 一等兵

Yiwu zhengbingfa (Compulsory Conscription Law) 義務徵兵法

Youxia (knight-errant) 遊俠

Zhandi baogao wenxue (battlefield reportage) 戰地報告文學

Zhandi fuwutuan (War Service Corps) 戰地服務團

Zhishi qingnian (educated youths) 知識青年

Zhishi qingnian congjun yundong (The Campaign to Mobilize Educated Youths to Join
the Army) 知識青年從軍運動

Zhishi qingnian yuanzhengjun (Educated Youth Expedition Army) 知識青年遠征軍

Zhongguo qingnian jidujiao xiehui junren fuwubu (The Soldier Service Branch of the Chinese Young Men’s Christian Association) 中國青年基督教協會軍人服務部

Zhongshi (Sergeant) 中士

Zhonghua zhiye jiaoyushe (Society for Chinese Vocational Education) 中華職業教育社

Zhongyang lujun junguan xue xiao (Central Army Officer Academy) 中央陸軍軍官學校

Zongli jinianzhou (Premier Sun Yat-sen Weekly Memorial Service) 總理紀念周

Zongli shishi jinianri (Commemoration of Premier Sun Yat-sen’s Death, March 12) 總理逝世紀念日

Zongli danchen jinianri (Anniversary of Premier Sun’s Birthday, November 12) 總理誕辰紀念日

Zongli yixun (Last Testament of Premier Sun Yat-sen) [孫中山]總理遺訓
CHINESE-LANGUAGE PRIMARY SOURCES


Han, Yanlong, and Chang Zhaoru, eds. Zhongguo xinminzhuzhuyi geming shiqi genjudi fazhi wenxian xuanbian, diyijuan (Selections of legislative sources in the revolutionary bases during China’s new-democratic revolution, volume 1). Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1981.


Hu, Lanqi. Zhandi ernian (Two years at the front line). Ji’an: Laodong funü zhandi fuwutuan, 1939.


Huangpu xunlianji diyiji jingshen xunlian (Volume one on civic education in the training materials at the Whampoa Military Academy). n. l.: n. p., n. d. [1925].

Jiang, Jingguo. “Gao fushang jiangshi shu—wei qingzhu sanshinian yuandan er zuo” (To the wounded soldiers—a speech written for the celebration of the new year of 1941). Shangbing zhi you (Friends of the wounded soldiers), Vol. 9 (January 1, 1941): 8-10.


Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, ed. Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangle zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, ed. (Selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers). Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945.
Qingnian yuanzhengjun chuangzuo zuopinxuan xuji (Continued selections of the works by the Educated Youth Expeditionary Army soldiers). Chongqing: Junshi weiyuanhui quanguo zhishi qingnian zhiyuan congjun bianlian zongjianbu, 1945.

Junshi weiyuanhui weiyuanzhang Nanchang xingying, ed. Shiping shizi keben, disance (Literacy textbooks for soldiers, level 3). Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1935.

Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, ed. Bingyi xuanchuan ji youdai zhengshu fa ling huibian (Compilation of conscription propaganda as well as laws and regulations on favorably treating soldiers’ dependents). Chongqing: Junzhengbu bingyishu yizhengsi xuanchuanbu, 1943.

Kangri zhanzheng shiqi jiefangqu gaikuang (General situation in the liberation areas during the anti-Japanese war). Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1953.


Liang, Xiaochu. Zhonghua jidujiao qingnianhui zhanqu fuwu quanguo weiyuanhui baogaoshu (Reports of the national committee for war area service led by the Chinese YMCA). n. l.: Zhonghua jidujiao qingnianhui, 1933.


Luo, Shiyang, ed. Huoyue de qingnianjun (The active Youth Army). n. l.: Qingnian chubanshe, 1946.


Qian, Daquan. “Zhongyang junxiao xiqian jishi” (Narratives on the relocation of the Central Army Officer Academy to the west) [1963]. In Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuankan xuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of military specialties), edited by Wen Wen, 37-40. Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2010.


Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui, eds. Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui diyi niandu gongzuo baogao (Reports on the first-year work of the Vocational Coordination Association for the Disabled Veterans). Chongqing: Rongyu junren zhiye xiedaohui, 1941.


Tian, Han, ed. Zhandi guilai (Return from the battlefield). n. l.: Zhanshi chubanshe, n.d.

Wang, Zhuochao. “Yi Nanjing zhongyang junxiao” (Remembering the Central Army Officer Academy at Nanjing) [1982]. In Guomindang zhongyang lujun xuexiao yu junshi zhuankexuexiao (The Nationalist Party’s Central Army Officer Academy and colleges of


______. *Xie Bingying daibiaozuo* (Representative works by Xie Bingying). Zhongguo xian dai wenxueguan (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2009.


**CHINESE-LANGUAGE SECONDARY SOURCES**


Xue, Xiaoxu, and Du Lei. “Yan’an shiqi de xin yangge yundong jiedu” (Interpretation of the new yangge movement in Yan’an). Wenshi ziliao (Materials on literature and history), No. 33 (November 2008): 78-79.


**ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRIMARY SOURCES**


**ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SECONDARY SOURCES**


Bichler, Lorenz. “Coming to Terms with a Term: Notes on the History of the Use of Socialist Realism in China.” In *In the Party Spirit: Socialist Realism and Literary


Gao, Hua. Hong taiyang shi zenyang shengqi de: Yan’an zhengfeng yundong de lailong qumai (How the red sun rose: the origins and development of the Yan’an Rectification Movement). Hong Kong: Zhongwen daxue chubanshe, 2000.


Wang, Jing M. *When “I” was born: Women’s Autobiography in Modern China.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.


