

Theoretical and Practical Paths for the Protection and Utilization of Revolutionary Cultural Relics Under the Guidance of New Era Ideology

Kangfan Wei¹ Yifan Wang²

^{1,2} Xi'an University, Xi'an 710061, China

ABSTRACT

Revolutionary cultural relics, as material carriers that embody revolutionary history and manifest revolutionary spirit, serve as core resources for promoting revolutionary culture and passing on the red gene. The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. Guided by Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, particularly its important directives on revolutionary cultural relics work, the National Cultural Heritage Administration has specifically deployed and advanced the protection and utilization of War of Resistance relics,[1] providing fundamental principles and action guidelines for safeguarding and utilizing revolutionary cultural relics in the new era. This article is based on the strategic goal of building a cultural power in the new era, and deeply explains the inherent logical connection between new era ideology and revolutionary cultural relics work. It systematically sorts out the practical achievements of the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics in the new era, analyzes the prominent problems in current work, and ultimately explores the optimization path of revolutionary cultural relics protection and utilization guided by new era ideology.

Keywords: *New era ideology, Revolutionary cultural relics, Protection and utilization, Red gene, Cultural power.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping has issued over 180 important directives and instructions on the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics. He has personally inspected more than 100 revolutionary historic sites and cultural museums, profoundly addressing major theoretical and practical issues in revolutionary cultural relics work and establishing a systematic and comprehensive ideological framework for this field. In October 2024, during the 17th collective study session of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to steadfastly anchor the strategic goal of building a culturally strong nation, develop socialist culture with Chinese characteristics for a new era, and endow the work of revolutionary cultural relics with new missions

for the times.[2] On January 23, 2025, the Office of the National Cultural Heritage Administration issued the "Notice on Strengthening the Protection and Utilization of Cultural Relics during the War of Resistance against Japan Aggression", which clearly pointed out the importance of finding out the heritage resources of the War of Resistance against Japan.[3] Revolutionary cultural relics are not only historical witnesses to the heroic struggle of the Party and the people, but also important physical basis for verifying the historical process of sinicization and modernization of Marxism. The current new tasks of special investigation of cultural relics of the War of Resistance, global collection of historical materials, and coordinated protection of areas have put forward higher requirements for the theoretical adaptability and practical pertinence of the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics. The level of protection and utilization is directly related to the

inheritance of revolutionary culture, the cultivation of cultural confidence, and the effectiveness of building a cultural power. Taking the latest policies such as the compilation and deployment of the special plan for the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics during the 15th Five-Year Plan period as an opportunity, under the guidance of new era thinking, how to achieve the transformation of revolutionary cultural relics from "static protection" to "dynamic activation" and from "resource advantages" to "development advantages" has become an important issue that urgently needs to be deeply studied.

2. THE INNER LOGIC OF THE NEW ERA THOUGHT AND THE WORK OF REVOLUTIONARY CULTURAL RELICS

The deep integration of the new era ideology and the work of revolutionary cultural relics is the fundamental requirement for the implementation of Marxist cultural theory, the inevitable choice to follow the law of inheritance and development of China's excellent traditional culture, and the practical need to serve the construction of Chinese path to modernization. The two are highly unified and mutually reinforcing.

2.1 The "Two Integrations" Providing Fundamental Guidance for Interpreting the Value of Revolutionary Cultural Relics

The important proposition put forward by General Secretary Xi Jinping — to "persist in integrating the basic tenets of Marxism with China's specific realities and with the fine traditions of Chinese culture" — offers clear guidance for exploring the value of revolutionary cultural relics. As tangible manifestations of the integration between Marxist fundamentals and China's revolutionary practice, revolutionary cultural relics not only chronicle the Communist Party of China's leadership in the people's struggle for national independence and liberation but also embody the patriotic sentiments, spirit of resistance, and people-centered philosophy inherent in China's outstanding traditional culture. They stand as vivid physical evidence of the "two integrations". Simultaneously, the revolutionary culture embodied in these artifacts, as the contemporary essence of Chinese culture and the Chinese spirit, serves as a vital driving force for cultural development under

socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, providing spiritual nourishment for deepening the practice of the "two integrations".

2.2 Cultural Confidence Providing the Core Driving Force for the Protection and Utilization of Revolutionary cultural relics

As a key component of the spiritual foundation of the Chinese nation, revolutionary cultural relics serve as a vital medium for fostering cultural confidence. The revolutionary spirit embodied in these relics constitutes the source of the Chinese Communist Party's spiritual strength and stands as a defining hallmark of the Chinese nation's identity. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that "historical and cultural heritage carries the genes and lifeblood of the Chinese nation, belonging not only to our generation but also to future generations", profoundly elucidating the strategic position of revolutionary cultural relics in building cultural confidence. Protecting revolutionary cultural relics safeguards the spiritual foundation of the nation; effectively utilizing them stimulates the genes of cultural confidence. Guided by the ideology of the new era, the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics have become an important practical pathway for strengthening cultural confidence and consolidating the cultural foundation for national rejuvenation.

2.3 The Concept of Putting the People First Providing Clear Value Guidance for the Role of Revolutionary Cultural Relics

Revolutionary cultural relics originate from the people and also serve the people. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the need to "make the achievements of cultural relic protection more accessible to the people," highlighting the popular stance that revolutionary cultural relic work adheres to. Its main function is to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the people, and to play the role of patriotism education, revolutionary tradition education, and ideal and belief education. From the restoration and opening of revolutionary sites to the entry of red exhibitions into communities and campuses, from the online dissemination of red stories to the integration of cultural and creative products into daily life, revolutionary cultural relics work has always been guided by meeting the needs of the people, using diverse forms to bring

revolutionary culture closer to the masses and nourish the soul. At the same time, the deep integration of revolutionary cultural relics with rural revitalization and cultural tourism not only promotes the economic development of revolutionary old areas, but also enhances the cultural sense of gain and happiness of the people, effectively implementing the people-centered development concept in the new era.

2.4 The Construction of an Autonomous Knowledge System Having Charted a Clear Developmental Course for Academic Research on Revolutionary Cultural Relics

As a vital component of Chinese-style philosophy and social sciences, research on revolutionary cultural relics bears distinct Chinese characteristics and contemporary features. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that “accelerating the development of philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics ultimately means building an autonomous knowledge system for China”. Currently, revolutionary cultural relics research must transcend traditional temporal and geographical boundaries, extending its scope to encompass the socialist construction era, the reform and opening-up period, and the new era. It should also integrate overseas dispersed revolutionary cultural relics resources, adopting a “grand historical” perspective to consolidate the research framework. By defining the core disciplines of revolutionary cultural relics studies, establishing interdisciplinary research platforms, and cultivating specialized talent, people can refine a discourse system for revolutionary cultural relics research that embodies Chinese characteristics and style, thereby providing crucial support for building an autonomous knowledge system.

3. PRACTICAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PROTECTION AND UTILIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CULTURAL HERITAGE GUIDED BY THE NEW ERA IDEOLOGY

Under the guidance of the new era ideology, China's mechanisms for protecting and utilizing revolutionary cultural heritage have been continuously refined, and innovative approaches have been consistently developed. This has fostered a favorable environment where protection and

utilization are equally prioritized, and inheritance and development are synergistically advanced, yielding historic accomplishments.

The principles of “comprehensive planning, integrated conservation, and coordinated display” outlined in the 2025 Core Requirements for the Protection of War of Resistance Cultural Heritage have propelled a theoretical shift in revolutionary heritage conservation from “isolated site protection” to “coordinated regional preservation”. [4] Each region strictly adheres to the work policy of “protection first, strengthening management, exploring value, effective utilization, and making cultural relics come alive”, and has established a four-level revolutionary cultural relic protection system at the national, provincial, municipal, and county levels. Especially on the one hand, major cultural relic protection projects are being carried out in an orderly manner, and significant results have been achieved in the restoration of revolutionary sites and the restoration of museum collections. Fifteen provinces (regions, cities) along the Long March National Cultural Park are collaborating to promote site restoration. The Guilin Xiangjiang Battle Site has constructed a “one road, four gardens, and multiple points” commemorative facility pattern. The core exhibition park of the Nanliang Revolutionary Base has completed the layout of “one street, one corridor, three alleys, and eight districts”, achieving the unity of authenticity and integrity of revolutionary cultural relics. [5] On the other hand, technological protection technologies are constantly upgrading, and digital protection methods are widely used. The Yan'an Revolution Memorial Site has conducted 3D modeling of old sites such as Baota Mountain and Yangjialing. The Gutian Conference Memorial Hall uses IoT technology to achieve all-weather monitoring of cultural relics environment, effectively reducing the risk of damage to revolutionary cultural relics caused by natural and human factors, and providing scientific guarantee for the permanent preservation of revolutionary cultural relics.

The deep application of digital and intelligent technologies promotes the transformation of revolutionary cultural relics from “static display” to “dynamic dissemination”, making red memories tangible and touchable. The first is to create an immersive experience through digital exhibitions. The Zunyi Conference Site Memorial Hall in Guizhou uses VR technology to recreate historical scenes, while the Luding Feiduo Luding Bridge Memorial Hall reproduces combat scenes through a

fully immersive interactive space, enabling the audience to experience the revolutionary process firsthand. The second is to integrate the advantage of resources through digital platforms. Shaanxi Province has built the country's first 5G revolutionary cultural relics education platform, integrating resources from 19 revolutionary museums, completing 720-degree panoramic collection of 100 revolutionary sites, and covering a cumulative audience of 16 million people; The "Hidden Red in New" team at Hangzhou Normal University has developed the "Red Collection Memory" platform, which provides high-precision 3D modeling of 217 collections. They have also developed interactive education modules and cultural relic story generators, resulting in a 42% increase in youth knowledge retention rate.[6] The third is to expand the influence of new media dissemination. Various regions spread red culture through short videos, interactive games, cultural relic murder scripts, and other forms. The "Red Cultural Relics 100" series of short videos focuses on a hundred revolutionary cultural relics, spreads widely through multiple platforms, focuses on cultural relic details through micro narratives, and links cross-border resources to create red trend scenes, transforming revolutionary cultural relics into spiritual symbols recognized by young people.

The deep integration of revolutionary cultural relics and ideological and political education has formed a collaborative education model of "venues + universities + society". On the one hand, universities and revolutionary venues jointly built a research platform, Shandong University and the CPC Central Committee Institute of Party History and Literature jointly built the "CPC Nanliang Spirit Collaborative Research Center", and 20 national revolutionary cultural relics collaborative research centers carried out campus tours and mobile ideological and political classes through the "museum school pairing", promoting the transformation of revolutionary cultural relics research achievements into educational resources. On the other hand, revolutionary cultural relics are integrated into the entire process of education and teaching. The Shaanxi Province 5G Revolutionary Cultural Relics Education Platform has developed a red story micro video course, compiled the "Entering the Red Memorial Hall" series, and selected it as a recommended book for primary and secondary school libraries nationwide;[7] Museums across the country have launched "exhibition expansion packages" and "red study routes". The Shaanxi Eighth Route Army Xi'an Office Memorial

Hall has carried out expert guided exhibitions, oral history collection and other activities. Sichuan's "Revisiting the Long March Road" study brand, Hunan's "Half a Quilt" story tourism route, and Fujian's "Long March Departure" characteristic route have made revolutionary cultural relics vivid teaching materials for patriotic education. By 2025, revolutionary museums and memorial halls across the country will receive over 500 million visitors annually, and the educational function of revolutionary cultural relics will be fully utilized.

4. THE PROMINENT PROBLEMS IN THE CURRENT PROTECTION AND UTILIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CULTURAL RELICS

Although significant achievements have been made in the work of revolutionary cultural relics in the new era, there are still shortcomings in ideological understanding, technological application, talent cultivation, and collaborative mechanisms, which restrict the full realization of the value of revolutionary cultural relics.

4.1 There Being a Deviation Between Ideological Understanding and Value Mining, and the Protection and Utilization Being Unbalanced

In some regions, the understanding of the contemporary value of revolutionary cultural relics is not comprehensive enough, and there are two extreme attitudes: "emphasizing protection, ignoring utilization" and "emphasizing development, ignoring protection". On the one hand, some small and medium-sized revolutionary sites have weak awareness of protection, insufficient funding, backward cultural relic restoration work, and long-term idle cultural relics in storage rooms; On the other hand, a few regions have engaged in excessive commercial development, leading to serious homogenization of red tourism projects and a trend towards vulgarization and entertainment, which goes against the fundamental purpose of inheriting the red genes of revolutionary cultural relics. At the same time, the explanation of the value of revolutionary cultural relics is not deep enough, and most exhibitions still remain at the level of listing historical events, with insufficient exploration of the spiritual connotations and historical significance behind cultural relics,

making it difficult to evoke deep emotional resonance among audiences.

4.2 The Level of Technological Application Varying Greatly, and There Being Shortcomings in Digital Construction

Although digital protection and utilization have been widely promoted, the problem of uneven development between regions and venues is prominent. Large cities and key revolutionary venues have sufficient digital investment and mature technological applications, while small and medium-sized cities and grassroots venues are limited by funding and technology, with lower levels of digitalization and still relying mainly on traditional exhibition methods. In addition, there is a phenomenon of "emphasizing construction and ignoring maintenance" in digital construction, and some digital platforms lack continuous updates and operations after completion, resulting in insufficient data security protection; The matching degree between technological applications and audience needs is not high, and some digital exhibition forms are greater than content, with insufficient interactivity and experience, making it difficult to meet the needs of audiences of different age groups, especially the attractiveness of the youth group needs to be improved.

4.3 Professional Talent Team Being Insufficient and Interdisciplinary Support Ability Being Weak

The work of revolutionary cultural relics involves multiple fields such as cultural relic protection, historical research, exhibition design, digital technology, and educational dissemination, and there is an urgent demand for versatile talents. At present, the shortage of professional talents in grassroots revolutionary cultural relics venues is prominent, with problems such as insufficient staffing, uneven professional competence, and aging age structure; The construction of disciplines related to revolutionary cultural relics in universities lags behind, the professional settings are not perfect, talent cultivation is disconnected from practical needs, and there is a lack of interdisciplinary talents who understand both historical research and digital technology. The insufficient depth of research on revolutionary cultural relics and the lack of innovative exhibition

capabilities have constrained the high-quality development of revolutionary cultural relics work.

4.4 The Collaborative Linkage Mechanism Being Not Sound, and the Efficiency of Resource Integration Having Not Been Fully Released

The distribution of revolutionary cultural relics resources is scattered, and there are insufficient coordination and linkage between regions and industries, resulting in the phenomenon of "fighting on their own". On the one hand, the integration of cross-regional revolutionary cultural relics resources is weak, and revolutionary cultural relics with the same historical theme have not formed linked exhibitions and tourism routes, making it difficult to transform resource advantages into overall effects; On the other hand, the cooperation between museums, schools, and enterprises is not deep enough, and the efficiency of transforming research results from universities into practice is low. The enthusiasm of enterprises to participate in the development of revolutionary cultural relics and cultural creativity, as well as technical services, has not been fully mobilized. In addition, there is a lack of coordinated planning for the recovery and research of scattered revolutionary cultural relics overseas, and the international influence of revolutionary cultural relics needs to be enhanced.

5. OPTIMIZATION PATH FOR THE PROTECTION AND UTILIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARY CULTURAL RELICS UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF NEW ERA IDEOLOGY

In the face of current problems, it is necessary to take the new era ideology as the fundamental guideline, adhere to the principles of upholding integrity, innovation, and problem orientation, and make all-round efforts to comprehensively enhance the level of protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics.

Firstly, there is a must to deepen theoretical learning and publicity, incorporate General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on revolutionary cultural relics work into the education and training of party members and cadres, as well as relevant professional courses in universities, enhance the awareness of the value of revolutionary cultural relics in the whole society, and establish the correct concept that "protecting cultural relics is

also a political achievement". Secondly, it is essential to deepen the interpretation of the value of revolutionary cultural relics, establish interdisciplinary research teams, explore the revolutionary stories, spiritual connotations, and historical significance behind revolutionary cultural relics, and combine them with party history learning and theme education activities to launch a batch of in-depth and warm research results and exhibition masterpieces, and eliminate the tendency towards vulgarity and entertainment. Thirdly, it is of great significance to expand the scope of research on revolutionary cultural relics, incorporating red resources from the socialist construction period, reform and opening up period, and the new era into the revolutionary cultural relics system. It is essential to strengthen the investigation and research of scattered revolutionary cultural relics overseas, and build a comprehensive and multi-level value system for revolutionary cultural relics.

It is necessary to promote the standardization of digital protection construction, formulate standards for the digital collection, storage, and display of revolutionary cultural relics, increase funding and technical support for the digital construction of grassroots venues, promote the sinking of high-quality digital resources to the grassroots, and achieve full coverage of digital protection of revolutionary cultural relics.[8] It is also necessary to innovate digital display and dissemination forms, combining new technologies such as VR, AR, artificial intelligence, and metaverse to develop immersive experience projects, interactive educational games, dynamic red story content, and adapt to the needs of different audiences; By utilizing short video platforms, live streaming, digital television and other "three screen linkage" models, it is aimed to expand the coverage of revolutionary cultural relics dissemination and enhance its effectiveness. There will also be a must to strengthen the management of digital resource security, establish a backup mechanism for the digital resource library of revolutionary cultural relics, use blockchain technology to ensure data security, improve the system of open sharing of digital resources, and achieve cross regional and cross venue resource interconnection.

In addition, it is necessary to improve the discipline and talent cultivation system, support universities to establish majors related to the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics, offer interdisciplinary courses such as cultural relics, history, digital technology, and

communication, develop professional textbooks, and cultivate composite talents, establish a collaborative education mechanism between universities and institutions, and enhance students' practical abilities through internships, project collaborations, and other means. It is also necessary to strengthen the training of grassroots talents, regularly carry out special training on the protection of revolutionary cultural relics, exhibition design, digital technology application, etc., and enhance the professional competence of grassroots staff; Improve the talent incentive mechanism, attract outstanding talents to root in grassroots revolutionary cultural relics work through professional title evaluation, performance assessment, project support, and other methods.[9] Then, it is necessary to build a talent exchange platform, establish a revolutionary cultural relics research society and expert think tanks, hold academic seminars and experience exchange meetings, promote cross regional and cross industry talent exchange and cooperation, and enhance the overall professional level of revolutionary cultural relics work.

What's more, it is a must to promote the coordinated development of cross regional resources, taking the construction of projects such as the Long March National Cultural Park and the Yellow River National Cultural Park as an opportunity to integrate revolutionary cultural relics resources along the route, create cross regional red tourism boutique routes, and hold joint exhibitions, and establish a regional revolutionary cultural relics collaborative protection and utilization alliance to achieve the goal of resource sharing and complementary advantages.

The local can create distinctive red cultural and tourism brands, combine the resource endowment of revolutionary old areas, develop differentiated red tourism products, integrate revolutionary cultural relics with rural revitalization, ecotourism, and intangible cultural heritage inheritance, cultivate a "red + green + intangible cultural heritage" integrated development model, and drive the economic development of revolutionary old areas. The most important is to standardize the development order of red tourism, strengthen the supervision of red tourism projects, eliminate excessive commercialization and homogeneous development, improve the quality of cultural and tourism services, improve the infrastructure construction of transportation, accommodation and other facilities in revolutionary old areas, strengthen the training of tourism practitioners, and

optimize the tourist experience; Meanwhile, it is necessary to develop high-quality red cultural and creative products, integrate the connotation of revolutionary spirit into cultural and creative design, integrate revolutionary culture into daily life, and achieve the sustained release of the value of revolutionary cultural relics.

6. CONCLUSION

Revolutionary cultural relics, as invaluable assets of the Party and the nation, serve as the core vehicles for passing on the revolutionary legacy and promoting revolutionary culture. They also constitute a vital pillar for building a cultural power in the new era. Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era provides fundamental guidance for the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics, with both sharing a high degree of alignment in value orientation, development goals, and practical approaches.[10] Currently, while significant achievements have been made in the protection and utilization of revolutionary cultural relics, numerous challenges remain, including insufficient exploration of their value, uneven application of technology, talent shortages, and inadequate coordination. Moving forward, guided by the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, efforts should focus on strengthening value interpretation, deepening technological empowerment, enhancing talent cultivation, and improving coordination mechanisms to comprehensively advance the high-quality development of revolutionary cultural relics protection and utilization. Through these measures, revolutionary cultural relics will be revitalized with new vitality in the new era, injecting a continuous stream of spiritual momentum into upholding cultural confidence and realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

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