

100 PATH TO GLORY

Manifesto becomes village heirloom

Thanks to generations of caretakers, 1926 communism booklet survives wars

By LI YANG
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Liu Yuhui, a member of the Communist Party of China from Liuji village in Guangrao county, Shandong province, could not have known that the Chinese-language version of *The Communist Manifesto* she brought back to her home village in 1926 would become an heirloom a century later.

This small pamphlet, which has survived wars and natural disasters, sowed the seeds of communism in the small hamlet.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, the village exhibition hall that contains the manifesto has just

been renovated. Liu Hongye, a 65-year-old villager, likes to hang out there when he has time. The objects and the photos exhibited in the memorial hall bring back memories of his childhood.

Liu Hongye's grandfather, Liu Shihou, was the manifesto's caretaker. He donated it to the memorial hall when it was built.

"I remember from a young age that my grandfather had a booklet locked in a box. He treated it as an object above all others and would not let the family touch it," Liu Hongye said, adding that the image of his grandfather sitting on the bed talking about 'Big Beard' (Karl Marx) remains deeply imprinted in his mind.

In 1925, one of the first CPC vil-

lage branches was secretly established in Liuji. Former village Party chief Liu Liangcai was given the manifesto by Liu Yuhui, who acquired it in the provincial capital, Jinan, in 1926. He then "translated" it into the local dialect. The farmer distilled the manifesto's meaning into one vivid saying: "Follow the words of 'Big Beard', and there will be land to till and food to eat."

Liu Liangcai wove the manifesto into local operas, which quickly became popular. More and more peasants began to realize the truth; that they had to unite and be bound together like the strands of a rope and resolutely fight for liberation. As a result, under Party leadership, local residents took part in countless revolutionary battles.

Liu Liangcai was promoted to Party chief of Weixian county in

1931 and gave the booklet to a member of the Liuji Party branch, Liu Kaowen, who then passed it on to Liu Shihou, an "honest and reliable" Party member.

Soon afterward, Liu Liangcai was killed in a revolutionary battle, and Liu Kaowen was arrested. To protect the booklet from Kuomintang searches and the Japanese puppet army's "mop-up campaign", Liu Shihou carefully wrapped it up and hid it in his house. In January 1945, the Japanese army started a fire that burned over 500 houses in the village to ashes. Liu Shihou was able to rescue the booklet, although its cover was partly burned.

"My grandfather sneaked back into the burning village to search for it. If he had gone a moment later, it might have been burned completely," said Liu Hongye.

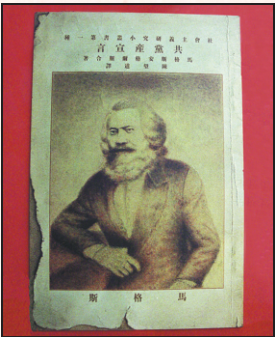
His grandfather protected the booklet like a treasure for decades.

In the autumn of 1975, the Guangrao county cultural administration committee visited Liuji in search of cultural relics. The then 84-year-old Liu Shihou donated the manifesto to the county, and it was quickly identified as a first-class national cultural relic.

Liuji has more than 190 Party or army members, 27 of whom are recognized as revolutionary martyrs.

Zhang Feng, curator of the memorial hall, said: "*The Communist Manifesto* took root in the hearts of the farmers and helped them find the right direction for their mass movement and revolutionary activities."

The village has become a Red tourism attraction, receiving



The cover of the first Chinese version of *The Communist Manifesto* kept by Liuji village. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

200,000 visitors a year, and tourism revenue is now a reliable source of revenue for the farmers.



Wang Chuanxi introduces the Lanling National Agricultural Park to overseas students in Lanling, Shandong province, in 2018. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Nation's first agricultural park transforms rural lives

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The Lanling National Agricultural Park, located in Daicun village in Lanling county, Shandong province, is the first national-level agricultural park in China. A combination of modern agriculture and tourism, as well as cultural and agricultural history, the park presents a beautiful, vivid picture of Lanling as "the hometown of vegetables in China".

Today, Daicun is peaceful, clean and tidy, and residents enjoy happy lives. As hard as it is to imagine, just 20 years ago, things looked totally different.

In 1999, Wang Chuanxi, who was in his early 30s and a successful businessman involved in construction, decided to do something for his home village. He had been unanimously elected as village Party branch secretary, but the village collective was deep in debt and Daicun had an unfortunate reputation as a poor, dirty place.

"As long as we find the right way, we are not afraid of difficulties," Wang said, summarizing his previous business experience. He set about inspiring his fellow villagers to change their lives.

He immediately discounted the idea of making money by selling land or developing polluting industries like some neighboring villages had done. Instead, with the villagers' support, Wang began building parks and gardens.

The village set aside agricultural land for a project entitled "five gardens, one belt". This was to be comprised of a flower garden, a fruit garden, a vegetable garden, a fine seed demonstration garden, an agricultural sightseeing garden and a national fitness belt.

The projects began taking shape in 2002. At the time, the combination of agriculture and tourism was somewhat avant-garde, and many people took a wait-and-see attitude to Wang's

“As long as we find the right way, we are not afraid of difficulties.”

Wang Chuanxi, founder of the Lanling National Agricultural Park, the first of its kind in China

projects.

Despite this, Wang showed confidence and foresight.

He took the collective on visits to other model villages in Shandong and Jiangsu to learn from their experiences. He told villagers that only when the collective became strong would it benefit and, more importantly, that it was only through shared prosperity that the village could avoid wealth gaps.

According to the village's rules,

regardless of the investment and management model followed — be it a collective joint-stock system, a joint-stock cooperative system or mixed ownership — the collective's share of a project should be at least 50 percent to ensure that it can have a say.

In 2007, the Daicun collective signed land transfer agreements with 2,200 farmers in five neighboring villages for more than 467 hectares of land and hired experts from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences to design a high standard agricultural demonstration park that covers nearly 700 hectares.

The decision proved farsighted. Five years later, rural and agricultural tourism began to develop in earnest. Shandong started to actively promote development of agricultural parks, a concept seemingly tailor-made for Daicun.

That same year, the Lanling National Agricultural Park, which was based on the "five gar-

dens, one belt" idea first suggested by Wang, was approved as the country's first national agricultural park.

Since then, the influx of tourists has brought in a great deal of revenue. Not only have the village's infrastructure and facilities been modernized, but the public services provided by the collective have also been greatly improved.

The park brings jobs, pensions and education to the villagers. Every resident has work, and every family earns a share of the bonus income. Today in Daicun, the young are educated, employed and have access to medical treatment, while the elderly and the vulnerable receive support and are able to lead pleasant lives.

Over the years, Wang has continued to insist that no matter how great Daicun's achievements, development should remain people-centered and oriented toward prosperity for all.

Agriculturist creates national maize revolution

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Li Denghai, director of the National Maize Engineering Technology Center (Shandong) and president of the Shandong Denghai Seeds Company, has received 23 science and technology awards at the national and ministerial levels for breakthroughs made in breeding high-yield maize.

Born in Laizhou, Shandong province, Li has carried out more than 790 experiments on high-yield maize over the last 49 years. In 1972, the yield of maize per hectare in his experimental fields exceeded 7,500 kilograms, double the national average at the time. Today, some varieties of the compact hybrid corn developed by his team can yield twice that amount in experiments.

In the 1990s, maize seeds developed by Li were planted nationwide. Over the course of five years, more than 6.7 million hectares of farmland was planted, and yields increased by 10 billion kg. Since then, the seeds have been planted in more than 800 million hectares of farmland.

Li's company was floated on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange in 2005, one of the few seed companies to be listed.

As far as the future goes, Li has said that he does not want to retire, but would rather continue working on projects that benefit the country socially and economically.

He said that life has no end, nor does innovation or the pursuit of high-yield seeds. "We, however, only live for a limited time, so we should devote our lives to the pursuit of unlimited scientific and technological innovation."



Li Denghai, director of the National Maize Engineering Technology Center (Shandong) checks the status of maize in an experimental field. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Veteran did not allow disabilities to stop him serving home



Zhu Yanfu tends to an orchid at his home in Yiyuan county, Shandong province. QIU CHENGLIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

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Born in Zhangjiaquan village in Yiyuan county, Shandong province, Zhu Yanfu lost his hands, his left eye and both legs below the knee in a battle during the Korean War in the 1950s. He was just 17.

In a coma for 93 days, he was sent home and over the next few years he underwent 47 surgeries. Declining to stay in the army nursing home, Zhu returned to his impoverished mountain village in 1956.

Fitted with artificial limbs, he was elected secretary of the Zhangjiaquan Party branch in 1957. Under his leadership over the next 25 years, the villagers were gradually lifted out of poverty.

Zhu spent his pension buying books for the reading room he opened in 1957. He later founded an evening school, the first in the village, to eliminate illiteracy because he understood that the best way to end the poverty in which villagers had been mired for generations was by enriching their minds.

In the early 1960s, Zhu encouraged the villagers to dig three wells in the mountain and to create 7.3 hectares of terraced farmlands from previously barren slopes.

In 1978, Zhangjiaquan became the first village to have electricity in the township.

In his spare time, Zhu wrote two full-length autobiographical novels, *Extreme Life* and *A Man without Regret*, clamping the pen between both arms to write. His story was widely reported from the 1990s onward and Zhu became a national hero.