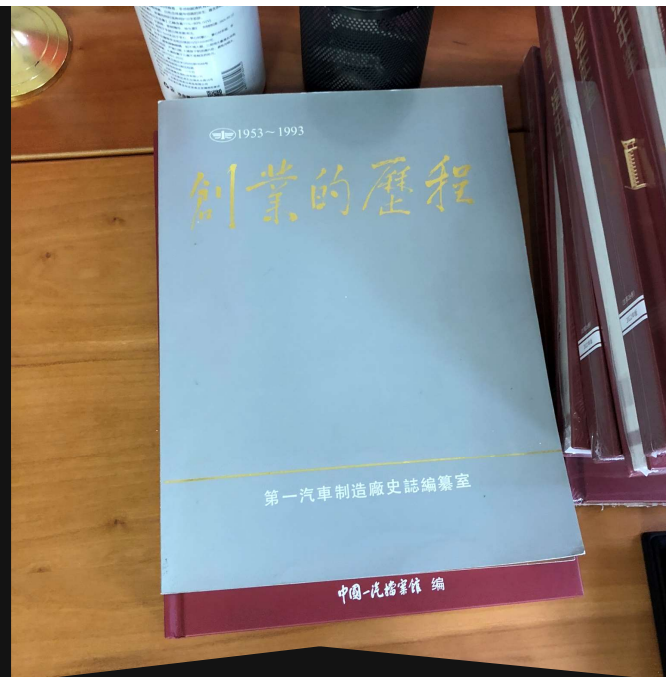
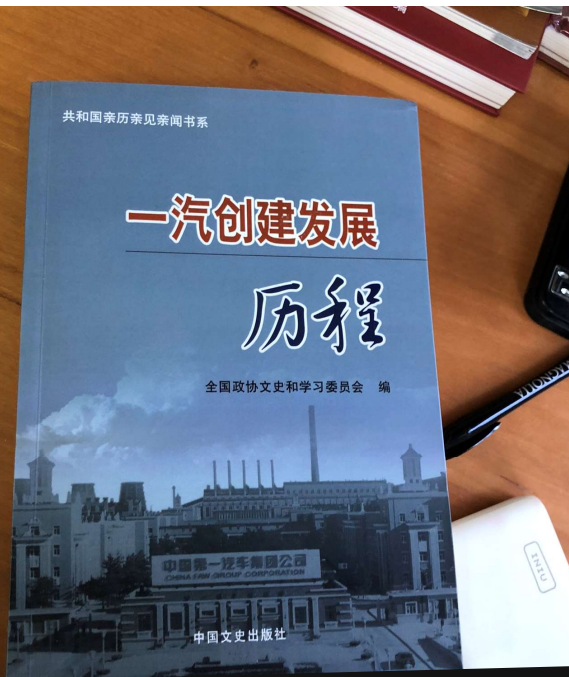




Exploring Yiqi (一汽): Insights from Archives and Interviews

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Yiqi & Yiqi Archives

- Yiqi is People's Republic of China's first state-owned automobile manufacturer and a cornerstone of socialist industrial development
- Its Archive is institutionally embedded within the enterprise and accessible only to approved industry peers, not to the general public

Research in An Enterprise Archives



Challenge:

1. Research at Yiqi requires navigating institutional legitimacy, professional identity, and trust, rather than relying on standardized access procedures
2. Materials could not be freely requested or reproduced
3. Interpretation had to remain attentive to institutional sensitivities

Significance:

1. Without accessing or interpret these spaces
 - Industrial History becomes fragmented
 - State-enterprise knowledge remains opaque

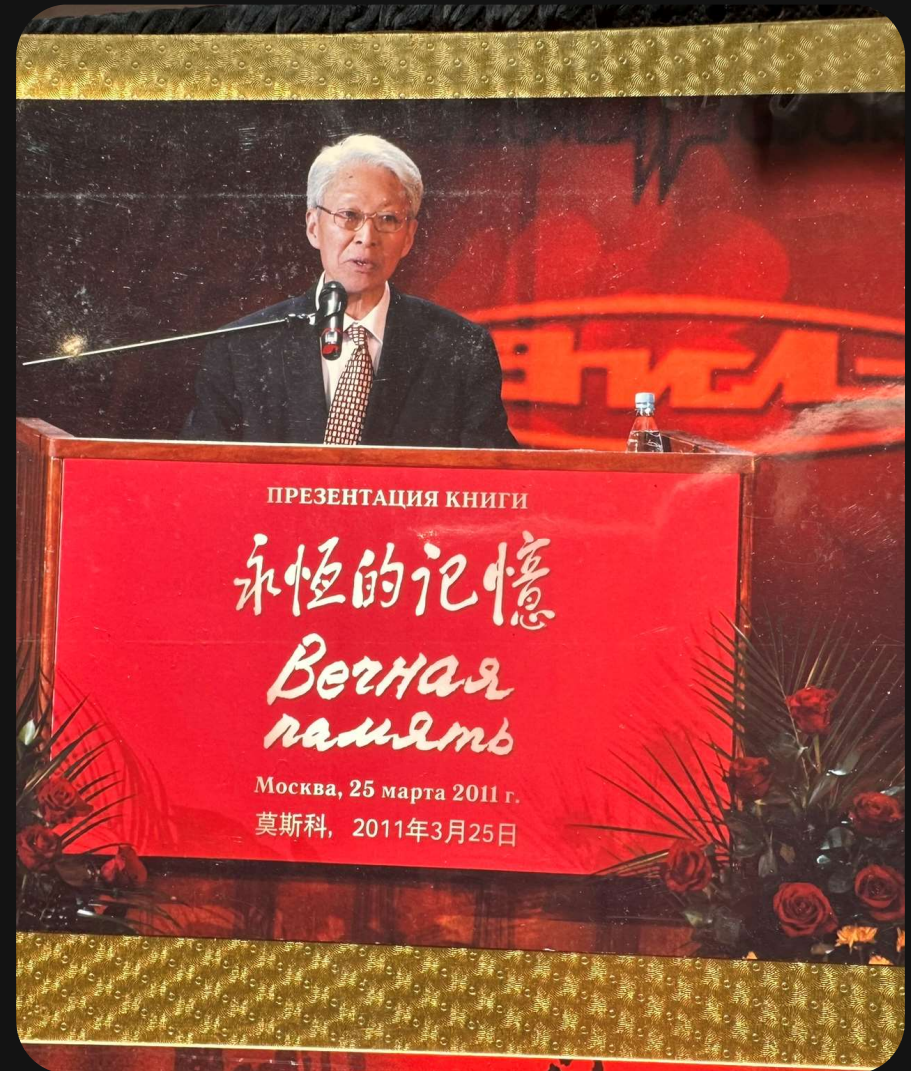
Liu Renwei as a Mediator of Industrial Knowledge

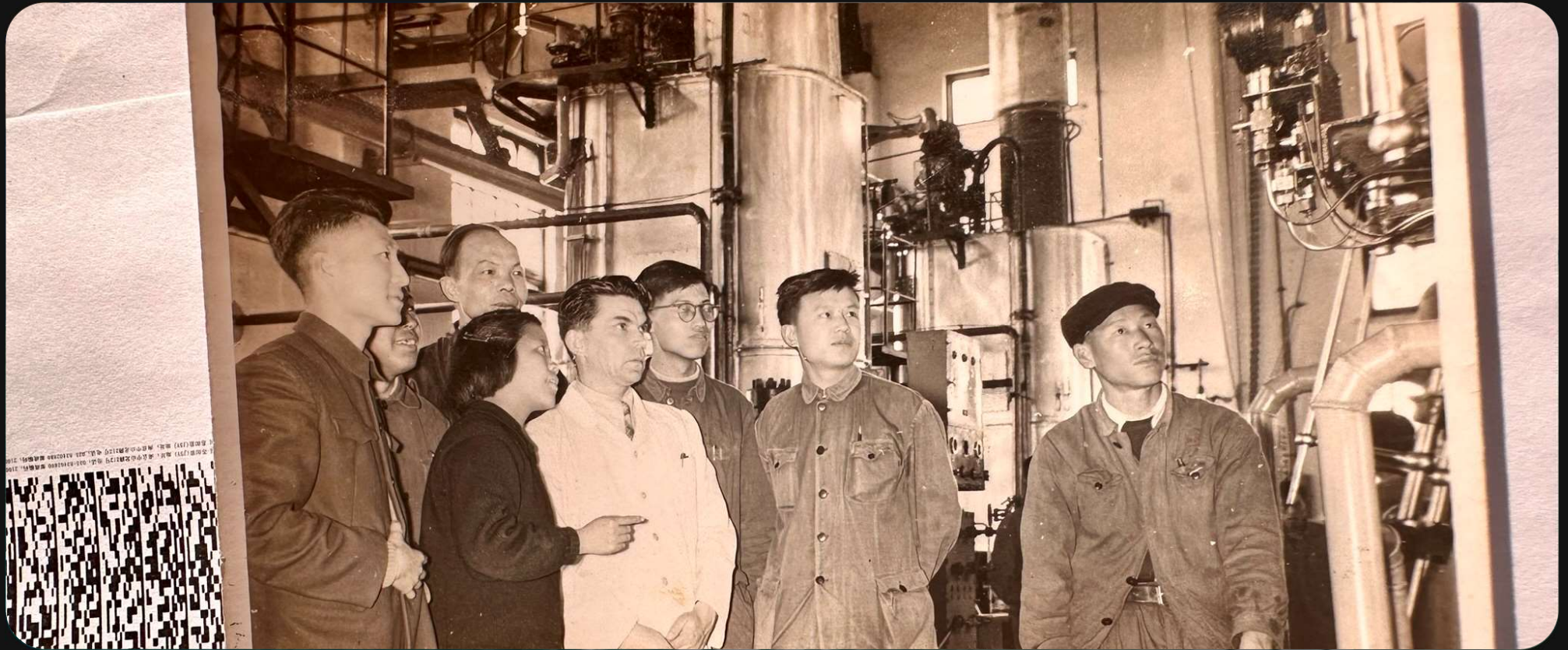


Liu Renwei

An Institutional Insider at Yiqi

- Joined Yiqi, in 1953, at its founding stage, during the earliest phase of China's automobile industry
- Served as interpreter for Nikolai Yakovlevich Kireev, a thermal power engineer from the former Stalin Automobile Works, reflecting early Sino-Soviet technical collaboration
- Closely involved in the establishment of China's Second Automobile Works and the China National Automotive Industry Corporation, contributing to the expansion of the national automobile system





Yiqi Founding Moment: Sino-Soviet Technical Collaboration

Liu Renwei translating for Kireev during the early construction of Yiqi in the 1950s



Reconnecting After Rupture: Sino-Soviet Relations Resume

Kireev dining with Liu and Yiqi founding members in 1989, following the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations



Institutional Memory Across Borders

Liu Renwei visiting the archives of the former Stalin Automobile Works, later named the ZiL (Likhachev) Plant, during the 2000s



Return After Separation: Remembering a Shared Past

Liu and Kireev at the Guangzhou Martyrs' Memorial Cemetery during Kireev's return visit to China after more than three decades of the Sino-Soviet Split

Conclusion: Research, Access, and Institutional Archives

- Yiqi Archives demonstrates that many critical sources exist outside public or academic repositories
- Access depends on collaboration between researchers, archivists, and institutions
- Interviews with figures such as Liu Renwei are essential for contextualizing archival materials, as they illuminate how documents were produced, preserved, and interpreted within institutional settings
- While research conducted within China operates within certain institutional frameworks, sustained and thoughtful engagement remains important, as it enables scholars to build relationships and gain insight into archival practices that are not easily accessible from outside the country.

THANK YOU!

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