What is the purpose of building a big, fancy, expensive monument? Some people say that a monument is for people to feel severe and respected. Other people argue that monuments are historical sites that help us remember history. Both of the theories have a great point. However, after seeing the Monument to the People's Heroes located in Beijing, China, I found out that monuments can also represent ideologies.

The Monument to the People's Heroes is located right in the middle of Tiananmen Square. After a long walk, we are now at Tiananmen's Square. It is the political center of China, like whitehouse to the U.S. Putting the monument there really shows how much the government values this monument.

The Monument to the People's Heroes is a ten-story obelisk that was erected as a national monument of China to the martyrs of revolutionary struggle during the 19th and 20th centuries. The monument is 38 meters tall and covers an area of 3,000 square meter. It weighs over 10,000 t and contains about 17,000 pieces of marble and granite from Shandong Province, as well as from the nearby Fangshan District. The government spends more than 3 thousand million dollars to build that.

One of the highlights of this monument is the image carved on the monument. There are 8 images carved on the bottom of this monument telling the story about the most difficult time in the history of China. The carved image on the monument helps Chinese remember the struggles of China and try to avoid going back. The carved images are so vivid that you can feel the urgency of the circumstances of the time. Through all the images, we can see that not a single image is only about one person. China is passing the ideology that China has come through these struggles not because of a great leader, but because of the collective effort of all the people in China. For example, this image about the May Fourth Movement described a story of hundreds and thousands of students. These students protested against the government's decision to allow Japan to retain territories in Shandong that had been surrendered by Germany in 1914.

The Monument to the People's Heroes also has an interesting effect on the people who visit it. I found out that many old people like this monument and younger people are less
enthusiastic. This is because old people have gone through these challenges personally and they can easily feel like they are the ones carved on the monument. However, younger people, because they have not gone through these struggles personally, feel less emotional appeals to the monument. Also, people usually cannot get close to the monument. Unlike most monuments where you can take a close look and maybe even touch the monument, this monument will not allow you to get closer to the monument. This is supposed to make people feel more respectful towards the monument.

Above all are what most monuments are able to do, making people feel respectful and help people remember the history. However, what’s more interesting about this monument is the epitaph carved on the back.

Eternal glory to the heroes of the people who laid down their lives in the people’s war of liberation and the people’s revolution in the past three years!

Eternal glory to the heroes of the people who laid down their lives in the people’s war of liberation and the people’s revolution in the past thirty years!

Eternal glory to the heroes of the people who from 1840 laid down their lives in the many struggles against domestic and foreign enemies and for national independence and the freedom and well-being of the people!

Through that, we can see that this monument is not trying to commemorate one single world-changing famous person. It is about the collective heroes that have saved China over the course of decades. This is very different from the heros in America. In the U.S, when people think about heros, people think about Martin Lurther King or John Adams, or people think about comic book characters such as Superman or the Flash. And monuments are usually about famous people such as presidents.

However, in China, we value groups over a single person. In the political center of China, we did not build a monument for Mao Zedong, who is the greatest leader in Chinese history but we built a monument that commemorates all people that have sacrificed
themselves for Chinese development. This is a great showcase of Chinese collectivism and what Chinese people value most. Our ideology teaches us that the interest of the Chinese people is more than our personal interest.

In conclusion, The Monument to the People’s Heroes not only commemorates the history or makes people feel respected. It also represents the ideology of Chinese collectivism. Even though we might not have such a big effect on the process of history, the Monument to the People’s Heroes still commemorates normal people like you and me.

China got Shandong province back probably is because of German's surrender but not the protest held by students. However, Chinese government still chooses to commemorate the group of normal people rather than the great people. We can see parts of Chinese ideology from this monument: the interest of the Chinese people is more than our personal interest.


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How monument can represent ideology