University of Alberta

Jiang Qing Revisited

by

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Abstract

Jiang Qing (1914-1991) represents one of the most notable and controversial women in modern Chinese history. She has been portrayed as the woman who was responsible for all of the ills emanating from the Cultural Revolution. She is also a woman who professed her innocence to the bitter end. This thesis embarks on a reexamination of Jiang Qing in an attempt to understand who this woman really was by finding some sort of middle ground between the demon and the innocent. By focusing on the themes of recognition and power, this thesis will demonstrate that Jiang Qing was unjustly vilified by history but guilty of her actions. Materials from a variety of Chinese and Western primary and secondary sources will be analyzed and synthesized to support this position.

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Acknowledgement

When Jiang Qing developed a model drama, the process went through countless suggestions, criticisms, and revisions until it finally reached a revolutionary drama based on a contemporary theme that she felt perfectly represented Mao Zedong Thought. This thesis has followed a similar process and would not have reached this state of completion without the comments and suggestions of my supervisors, Dr. Shuyu Kong and Dr. Wenran Jiang and the assistance of committee member, Dr. Ryan Dunch. Jiang Qing's dramas are like my thesis: neither could be completed on their own alone so I would like to express my indebtedness to all of them for their assistance and support.

Other important people that I would like to take this opportunity to thank are Cybele Angel for her friendship, support, and guidance as well as Fred Kong for my constant questions about life during the Cultural Revolution. Most importantly, I would like to thank my mother and father who have always been there for me. There are not enough words to express how thankful I am for their constant love and support. I take their confidence in me everywhere my present and future dreams take me. I would also like to thank Henry H. Hayes.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CRG	Cultural Revolution Group
GLF	Great Leap Forward
GMD	Guomindang
MZT	Mao Zedong Thought
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China

List of Figures

Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 (1904-1997) Born in Sichuan. Participated in the Long March. Denounced during the Cultural Revolution. By 1973, had regained favor replacing Zhou Enlai only to fall again in 1976. Marshal Ye Jianying led a coup after Mao's death that eventually put Deng in the top leadership position.

Jiang Qing 江青 (1914-1991) Born in Shandong. Mao's third wife. A moderately well known Shanghai actress who went to Yan'an and met Mao. Used her unique position to become a prominent figure in the Chinese arts and as Mao's political representative. Overthrown after Mao's death and became the most vilified woman for her role in the Cultural Revolution. Committed suicide in Qincheng prison in 1991

Ke Qingshi 柯庆施 (1902-1965) After 1955 was the mayor of Shanghai and one of Jiang Qing's earlier supporters of revolutionizing Beijing opera. Died at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

Lin Biao 林彪 (1907-1971) Born in Hubei. Became the Minister of Defense after Peng Dehuai's swift departure. Afterwards, appeared as Mao's successor and worked closely with Jiang Qing. Alleged to have plotted to assassinate Mao, but failed, reportedly killed in a plane crash with his wife and son in Mongolia.

Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 (1898-1969) Born in Hunan. Second to Mao and State President. His political differences with Mao led to the "two lines" of Chinese Communism, Maoism and Liuism. By 1966, Mao removed him from power and he became an early victim of the Cultural Revolution purges. Died in Kaifang prison.

Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (1893-1976) Born in Hunan. One of the founding members of the Chinese Communist Party. The Chairman of the People's Republic in 1949 until his death.

Peng Dehuai 彭德怀 (1898-1974) Born in Hunan. Defense Minister until he criticized Mao during the Great Leap Forward in 1959 and thereafter purged. Imprisoned in 1966 and died in prison in 1974.

Yao Wenyuan 姚文元 (1931-) Born in Zhejiang. Literary critic who worked at the Shanghai Party Committee and later a member of the Cultural Revolution Group) (CRG). Worked closely with Jiang Qing and published the *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office Criticism.* Appointed to the politburo in 1969 and later arrested as a member of the Gang of Four.

Yu Huiyong 于会泳 (1932-1977) Cultural Minister in 1975-76. China's de facto chief arts minister after 1971. Worked closely with Jiang Qing and the development of her dramatic theory and the model operas.

Wang Guangmei 王光美 (1921-) Born in Beijing. Wife of Liu Shaoqi. Jiang Qing's enemy and rival. One of the first recognized targets of the Cultural Revolution purges.

Zhang Chunqiao 张春桥 (1917-91) Born in Shandong. Became editor of the *Liberation daily,* the mouthpiece of the Shanghai Party Committee in 1951 and director of the Shanghai Propaganda Department in 1963. Worked closely with Jiang Qing. Member of the CRG and then Politburo in 1969. Arrested as a member of the Gang of Four. Received life imprisonment.

Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (1898-1976) Born in Jiangsu. Premier of China from 1949 until his death. Held a position of moderation during the Cultural Revolution.

Zhou Yang 周扬 (1908-1989) A major cultural and propaganda authority as well as a symbol of literary and orthodoxy as defined by Mao. Was unable to propagate Jiang Qing's artistic standard, which made him the target of her criticisms.

Introduction

China has entered a new era in which the Chinese Communist Party elders are passing the torch to a new generation of leaders. Furthermore, China has abandoned any idea of isolationism, embracing the global community. Hence, the time has come when scholars can begin to reevaluate China's modern history and the people who shaped it.

Jiang Qing represents one of the most notable and controversial women in modern Chinese history. She has been portrayed as the woman responsible for all of the ills emanating from the Cultural Revolution. She is also a woman who professed her innocence to the bitter end. These two opposing images are no longer acceptable as it is unrealistic to believe she could be wholly good or evil.

This thesis embarks upon a reexamination of Jiang Qing in an attempt to understand who this woman really was by finding some sort of middle ground between the demon and the innocent. In order to achieve this difficult task, this thesis will examine certain questions. How did Jiang Qing rise from being a moderately successful Shanghai actress to becoming the most prominent figure in the Chinese arts? Then, how did she achieve such a dominating political presence drewing support from those around her? Finally this thesis seeks to understand how her support could crumble so swiftly and how her power almost evaporated overnight. In order to answer these questions, this thesis will move

chronologically through Jiang Qing's life while focusing on the themes of recognition and power.

Methodologically, this thesis is divided into three main chapters: Jiang Qing's early life, her role as a dramatic theoretician, and her role as a politician. This thesis will use a combination of Chinese and Western primary and secondary sources to achieve a more accurate image of Jiang Qing. By the end, this thesis will demonstrate that Jiang Qing was a woman unjustly vilified by history although guilty of her actions. Although Mao sponsored her entry into politics and supported her as a dramatic theoretician, ultimately he distanced himself from Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four, thereby sealing their fate. The fall, when it came, was swift and unmerciful. Within months of Mao's death, Jiang Qing's enemies not only had her arrested and cast out of the party, but established her last and most recognized role as the White Boned Demon. Because this perception of her remains to this day, I hope that this thesis will be the first step in achieving the objectivity that only the distance of time and history can provide.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Much has been written in both Chinese and English on the Cultural Revolution and even though Jiang Qing was one of the most powerful individuals during this period, she has not received proper academic observation. Most general works on the Cultural Revolution simply regard her as Mao Zedong's wife, with no public role attributed to her. Those that provide a closer examination show two divergent images. The first is Jiang Qing as the representative of the Chinese revolutionary arts who became an effective politician transmitting Mao Zedong Thought (MZT). The second image is that of a woman who capitalized on her position, vindictively destroying any obstacle to her goal of becoming the next Empress of China.

Early Western historians of modern China[1] gave little attention to Jiang Qing. For example, a major study by MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution* (vols. 1-2, 1974, 1983), examined the relationship and interaction between the leadership and the political elite who comprised the upper echelon of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). MacFarquhar focused on elite politics, centered on Mao Zedong, but gave little mention to Jiang Qing.

On the other hand, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (1977) by the American historian Witke, a specialist in Chinese feminism, was a pioneering piece of scholarship because it was based on the conversations and interviews Witke and Jiang had in Beijing and Canton in August of 1972.[2] Since the establishment of

the CCP, no foreigner had ever been granted the opportunity to have such an intimate and lengthy interview with a high level Party member.[3]In order to appreciate the full significance of her disclosure to Witke, one must recognize that Jiang Qing was

> addressing herself not only to the world beyond China, but also to the internal record, where she feels that her past has been inadequately and inaccurately set down. In the absence of documentary information on her origins and early years, a few writers and biographical services have yielded to her temptation to supply a past for her, one compounded of the reminiscences of former friends and enemies, hearsay, and sheer speculation.[4]

When Jiang Qing spoke of her life to Witke, she provided unprecedented information, not only revealing her thoughts and ideas, but also how she wanted to be portrayed to the rest of the world.

Jiang Qing is portrayed as a woman growing up in poverty, family anguish, and conflict. Her childhood was abominable, but through her struggle as a woman in traditional China and her sheer strength of character, Jiang Qing survived. When she married Mao, she believed that she would be an agent of change in the new China. Jiang wanted to make a contribution, but she could not be recognized for her dedicated efforts. In their marriage, she was unnoticed and bound by her status as the wife of a revolutionary leader in a society which still remained largely patriarchal.[5] Even though society dictated that women should not have any aspirations, Jiang Qing was unique and possessed the ambition to seek a recognizable role that went beyond wife and mother.

One of the most revealing statements Jiang Qing made to Witke was "[s]ex was engaging in the first rounds, but what sustains interest in the long run

is power."[6] The political power and position of authority that Jiang Qing possessed came from the sexual relationship that she had with Mao. Without Mao, there could neither be Jiang Qing nor recognition. Jiang Qing knew that her status stemmed from her position as Mao's wife, but she also sought to carve out her own identity, using other men as tools to reap more influence in the political and artistic realms. Since she believed that being Mao's wife could also mean succeeding him in his death, Jiang Qing thrust upon Witke the image of herself as a one woman supporter of Mao who was the best possible person to carry on his work.[7] However, as this book was published only six months after Mao's death, there was no mention of her subsequent struggle for succession and her infamous fall from power.

This work is evidence of her desire to be recognized in history [8] and to attempt to record her biography in the best way possible through the telling of the story of her life in her own words. Witke's story would ensure that Jiang Qing was immortalized for her contributions to the Chinese arts, her consistent support of Mao, her unwavering commitment to MZT, and her desire to be recognized as an independent political figure in her own right. When she said to Witke, "Let me dissect myself before you,"[9] Jiang Qing was determined to portray herself as a Communist fighter who, even from the cradle, despised the bourgeoisie. In order to carefully craft her image, Jiang Qing censored huge chapters of her life to Witke, not mentioning her 'petit bourgeois' lifestyle in Shanghai, her previous husbands, or her admiration for Empresses Wu Zetian and Ci Xi. The men in her life and the women in her dreams were completely omitted from the record.[10]

All in all, this work provided a unique glimpse into Jiang Qing's rise from destitution to the upper echelons of power, while providing insight into her thoughts and ideas in this process. Because so little is known about her life before she rose to prominence, most information is based on hearsay, gossip, and speculation, all of which do not provide for an accurate account. *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* accounts for this, yet it must be understood that Jiang Qing is telling the story of her life in the way she wants it to be remembered. By being one of the first comprehensive books on Jiang Qing in English, the reader feels a sense of indebtedness to Witke for bring the story to fruition. Yet the final result and knowledge gained is only as reliable as the truthfulness of Jiang Qing's own words.

In February 1972, American President Richard Nixon visited the People's Republic of China (PRC) - a milestone event which marked a new era in international politics and the relations between the two world-powers. Consequently, many Americans began to readjust their perceptions towards China whose revolutionary movement had mobilized a nation whose population consisted of one quarter of mankind living in an area slightly smaller than the United States.[11] Therefore, it was essential to understand and evaluate the CCP, which carried out this revolution as well as provide more information about Chinese politics and the individuals directly involved in the process.

Overseas Chinese writer Dwan L. Tai wrote *Chiang Ch'ing: The Emergence of a Revolutionary Leader* (1974) in order to evaluate Jiang Qing's role in the Chinese revolutionary movement. Published in America, Tai began his

story of comrade Jiang Qing set against the backdrop of the CCP's leadership after 1949. Using the political elite approach, he examined her role in the propaganda and cultural organs of the Party as well as her authoritative directives in the Cultural Revolution Group (CRG).[12] Later through her use of revolutionary Beijing opera, ballet, and music, Tai concluded that she was a capable politician that communicated MZT to more people than any leader other than Mao.[13] Tai argued that since joining the Party in 1931, Jiang Qing made enormous contributions, serving as Mao's confidante and representative, and significantly influencing his thinking and his policies.[14] Jiang Qing was the carrier of MZT in the arts and Mao's representative in politics. Tai alleged that her authority stemmed from being the wife of the Chairman, but he also argued that since her active participation in the revolution, she had become a political force in her own right since she acquired influence in the military, mass media, literary and art circles, as well as the respect among Chinese women and the revolutionary masses.[15] Jiang Qing had all the necessary influence for authoritatively setting the standards for what was good, Leftist, and revolutionary while denouncing people that were bad, Rightist, and counterrevolutionary, justifying her entire position in terms of her relationship with Mao and MZT.

In regards to sources, Tai used standard research approaches, utilizing mainland Chinese periodicals such as *China Daily, China Reconstructs, Peking Review, and Red Flag.* He also utilized radio broadcasts throughout China as well as international newspaper reports from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and America. This book was intended to provide extensive information about Chinese politics

to the American public since the two countries had normalized relations. Tai took the information from these sources and complied it neatly into a readable book for the English-speaking public interested in the subject. As a result, there is almost no criticism of the Party; everything written is positive and lacking critical analysis.

Interestingly, as the situation between the America and the PRC was improving, there was more information in English available from such sources as Tai and Witke. Conversely, there was little earlier Chinese scholarship that closely examined Jiang Qing. Generally the central government did not release such documents so the Chinese general public knew nothing about Jiang Qing's past or any other non-political information. Only a few selected newspapers and journal articles approved by the Party were published in which the Chinese populace could actually view Jiang Qing's carefully crafted image of the *qishou* (旗手 ,standard bearer) of the Chinese revolutionary arts who was a dauntless warrior in promoting MZT.[16] Other than that, there is a paucity of information about her life before she became prominent. This has certainly affected contemporary discourse because modern Chinese scholarship does not adequately examine her. Sources from 1977 to 1979 carry strong biases against her. That period marked the end of the Cultural Revolution and the trial of the Gang of Four so many Chinese journals, most notably *China Reconstructs,* published numerous prejudiced articles, devoting a large portion of their publication to the subject of Jiang Qing.

In *China Reconstructs* (June 1977) an article entitled, "Chiang Ch'ing: The Enemy of Women's Liberation" labeled Jiang Qing as a phony women's champion.[17] In the fall 1978 edition, three quarters of the publication were devoted to attacking her. The first article entitled, "The Ghost of Empress Lu and Chiang Ch'ing's Empress Dream," stated "... Chiang Ch'ing, the bigwig among the Gang of Four ... ascended the throne and came to power ... [and became] an important component of the criminal activities in [her] dream to realize a fascist dictatorship in our country ... It was really a pipe dream."[18] The second article entitled, "Chiang Ch'ing's 180 Degree Turn," stated "Chiang Ch'ing and her ilk have become teachers by negative example for the people ... [and] the people have ... learned how to recognize counterrevolutionary double dealers."[19] The final article entitled, "Chiang Ch'ing's Foreign Sister," stated:

> The counterrevolutionary careerist Chiang Ch'ing is actually an ignoramus, but she went everywhere to deceive and bluff people by talking glibly about historical figures and well-known works of literature. She thus made herself a laughingstock for all and was really disgusting. In such irresponsible talks, there were revealed everywhere the wolfish designs and ugly soul of this white-boned demon.[20]

These featured articles represent only a few of the voluminous materials from mainland newspapers that have been translated into English. Articles not translated into English were also unsuitable for this reexamination because they generally comment on Jiang Qing's sexual prowess and ability to charm and marry the most powerful man in the CCP, who had just separated from his wife, He Zizhen, a model revolutionary. An article entitled *Ping Jiang Qing de Nu Huang Meng* (评江青的女皇梦 ,Criticism on Jiang Qing's Empress Dream)

takes this theme to the next level by over depicting Jiang Qing's desire to succeed Mao.

Upon examining earlier Chinese scholarship, it becomes clear that there is a tremendous amount of negative and biased information, which has impacted on the present perception of Jiang Qing. As stated previously, this vilification began shortly after Mao's death. After the chaos of the Cultural Revolution and the ultimate fall of the Gang of Four, the Chinese people became disillusioned with the constant political struggles of the past decade. They needed to vent their frustrations towards somebody or some group. In response to this, the new leadership allowed Jiang Qing to be ascapegoat the masses could hold accountable. The Party would not blame or condemn Mao because criticizing the Chairman would undermine the legitimacy of the CCP. However, since there could be no Jiang Qing without Mao, it became the new task of the Hua government to find every means possible to separate Jiang Qing from the deceased Chairman, downplaying the relationship between the two, while retaining the legitimacy of the new leadership. New questions surrounding the validity of the allegations that Mao was displeased with his wife's work and with the small group of people who were in fact his most faithful supporters needs to be addressed. When Jiang Qing and Mao's other supporters were at their height of power, they justified their positions in terms of MZT. The Hua government tried to justify its own positions in the same fashion, when it argued that the Gang of Four represented a left deviation from MZT. And later when Deng Xiaoping took power, he also used MZT to justify his position to legitimate a completely

different set of policies. Essentially, every political actor from 1949 to the present has tried to justify his or her position in terms of MZT. Despite the contradiction, the fact remains that no Party member wants to devalue Mao. His living successors have devoted their lives to promoting and upholding MZT. Therefore, it can be understood why the government perpetuated the notion that the 'disastrous' Cultural Revolution was the fault of the Gang of Four led by Jiang Qing. It is imperative that the Party keeps Mao's iconic image intact in order to maintain and legitimate their own positions, through the prolongation of the one-party system.

It was also less problematic to blame Jiang Qing because of the sexist prejudice against women in power in Chinese society. There is a longstanding popular perception that women should not hold political power or even be in positions that could indirectly affect the leadership. When a woman transcended the role of the traditional wife and mother and moved into the political realm, it was widely believed that disasters would occur as a consequence of the woman's ambition. A popular proverb, *Hong yan huo shui* (红颜祸水. Beautiful women are the source of disasters) [21] reinforces the stereotype that women should not rule. Thus, it is understandable how the government-controlled media could successfully use Jiang Qing as the individual the masses could direct their anger towards. She was a convenient political scapegoat because of her gender. Even to this day, Jiang Qing is arguably the most vilified woman in Chinese history and this abhorrence towards her is aptly reflected in the few examples of contemporary scholarship on her.

Modern Chinese writers who have written at length on the Cultural Revolution hardly mention Jiang Qing's role. Those that acknowledge her unique position either based their work on eyewitness accounts published after the Cultural Revolution, or were eyewitnesses themselves. The most recognized books in this field are *The Turbulent Decade* (1996) by Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao and *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (1994) by Li Zhisui.

The *Turbulent Decade* is a chronological narrative of the events of the Cultural Revolution.[22] Yan and Gao portray Jiang Qing as an actress who aspired to be a star on the political stage.[23] She achieved this through the development of the revolutionization of Beijing opera, which gave her the political capital that helped her climb to the top of the Party ladder. From there, Yan and Gao present a step by step unfolding of her career as a tactical politician who went beyond the boundaries of an effective official by altering real situations in her favor to achieve recognition. As she became more prominent, she is portrayed as a power-abusing individual who committed countless crimes: false accusations, the forging of evidence and intense criticisms in order to obtain more power within the Party. Jiang Qing is claimed to have taken for granted that she would be Mao's successor because there was no difference between succession to Mao and the succession to the throne.[24]

According to Yan and Gao, Jiang Qing had a great need to be recognized. Since her previous efforts were unsuccessful, she conspired with Kang Sheng and privately organized a group of leftist writers from Shanghai to criticize and attack *Hai Rui*.[25] Jiang Qing, they claimed, was not content with unpublicized activities

and with aspirations to be become a star. She began a spree of accusations and persecutions towards individuals who stood in her path to power.[26] These included Liu Shaoqi, his wife, Wang Guangmei, as well as those who knew her past 'bourgeois' life as Shanghai actress. Anyone who was associated with her past or blocked her rise to political power risked persecution. Jiang Qing is supposed to have committed countless crimes and could only maintain her position by committing more such unjust acts.[27]

In China, there are official histories that are supported by the Central Government as well as unofficial histories as well. *The Turbulent Decade* falls into the latter category because it is based on a collection of eyewitness accounts and people's opinions from all over China. The difficulty of critical examination based on individual human experience and emotion is obvious and uncritical analysis of secondary sources will always be questioned. After the fall of the Gang of Four, Jiang Qing was probably the most hated person in China because the government propaganda said it was so. Thus, in order to reexamine the life of Jiang Qing, alternate sources free of the taint of the government sanctioned witch hunt against her must be sought.

The Private Life of Chairman Mao is the personal memoir of Dr. Li Zhisui, Mao's personal physician for twenty-two years.[28] As the title suggests, it is largely focused on Mao, but it provided an interesting look at life of the political elite, specifically Jiang Qing within the confines of Zhongnanhai. This book is worthy of note because it provided a different perspective towards Jiang Qing.

Jiang Qing is portrayed as a bored housewife who before marriage was a moderately well known Shanghai actress, but afterwards became overshadowed by Mao, a point shared by Witke as a motivating factor which made her determined to enter politics. Li argued that Jiang was driven mad with boredom, dependency, and enforced idlenessmaking her increasingly irascible and demanding.[29] Over time, Li believed that their married life declined, but divorce was unthinkable because without Mao she had no identity. Her sense of self stemmed from being the wife of the Chairman, which accorded her "...a life of luxury. Everything she wanted, she was given [but] her life had no meaning. Jiang Qing was adrift."[30] Hence, she began to act like an Empress. Bored, she harassed her servants as well as Li. Over time, she became more paranoid and hypochondrial. In short, Li portrayed Jiang Qing as a woman who was frightened because she had no purpose or legacy to leave behind. With regards to her marriage, Jiang Qing was expected to remain in the inner quarters of Zhongnanhai as traditional women had. She could no longer be a stage actress and under the restrictive Communist system and with her true identity and underlying ambitions were suppressed; Jiang Qing would have to find a new role to play. After the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP (1962), Jiang Qing found that role by becoming more publicly active in politics, which was a complete violation of the terms set down in her marriage to Mao.[31] It was only when the political climate changed thirty years later that protocol demanded her presence.[32] Consequently, this new role kept her from Zhongnanhai and Li.

Li's interesting account provided remarkable insight into the inner quarters of Zhongnanhai and the machinery of the political elite. Mao sometimes insisted on discussing events with Dr. Li and often sent him out to investigate and report his findings back to the Chairman, [33] which Li later recorded in his journal. However, during the Cultural Revolution, Li destroyed the journal fearing that the Red Guards would find the incriminating evidence. It was only after his wife Lillian died and he was exiled in America that he began reconstructing these observations and events. Li stated he thought that his "twenty two years beside Mao would be able to make a contribution to our understanding of China."[34] However, some scholars have questioned the validity of Dr. Li's eyewitness account.

In a 1996 interview, Bakken discussed with Teiwes, a scholar of modern Chinese politics, Li's contribution to the field of history.[35] Teiwes said that "Li himself said before he died ... that his book should be left to the historians to correct." [36] As well, Teiwes stated that Ann Thurston, who interviewed the doctor and reworked the manuscript into the book ... recently described his memoirs as partly being 'an act of revenge."[37] Jiang Qing constantly accused Li of being a spy and an incompetent doctor. Therefore, in writing his memoir, Li is rather hostile to his life in Zhongnanhai.[38] He was unable to freely leave the compound and fulfill his dream to become a better doctor because he was caught up in court politics. This negative experience combined with his dislike for Jiang Qing would certainly bias her portrayal. Li depicted her as a bored housewife, trying to cope with her loneliness and isolation in Zhongnanhai. Jiang Qing's later public

transformation into a revolutionary comrade and the leader of the Gang of Four was largely neglected because it was out of the realm of Li's observations. And according to Teiwes, Li too often based evaluations on rumours, gossip, and the conventional wisdom of the Western Chinese community during the preparations of the book.[39] Beyond the image of the bored housewife, one does not get a strong impression of her public life. Jiang Qing is infamous in history for her role in the Gang of Four, not as a court wife. Therefore, it can be concluded that this book was useful to understand what motivated Jiang Qing to want to transcend the role of the housewife, but it has less value in contributing to an overall conception of the relationship between her private and political roles.

Many modern Western scholars have also neglected to examine the various roles Jiang Qing played. In the popular text, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (1989), Fairbank only mentioned Jiang Qing in passing. In *The Search for Modern China* (1990), Spence discussed her role in criticizing *Hai Rui* and her active participation in cultural politics.[40] He more thoroughly investigated how Jiang Qing began in the cultural realm, examining the natural alliance that she formed with Lin Biao. In the biographical glossary, Spence stated that she was "a major figure of the Cultural Revolution,"[41] however his actual text does not devote enough information to someone of such stature.

In contrast, the modern Western scholar Terrill provided the most comprehensive image of Jiang Qing. *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* (1992) has covered all aspects of her life from her childhood, her life as an actress, her Yan'an days, her rise in literary and art affairs, her role in the Cultural

Revolution, and finally her fall from power and her subsequent image as one of the most reviled women in Chinese history. The final image has not been addressed in other sources so this work has brought new and useful information for this thesis reexamination.

In order to turn the subject of Jiang Qing into something worthy of academia, research is paramount. Terrill utilized new sources from interviews and other unorthodox sources. He also had an invaluable research assistant, Yang Binzhang,[42] a Red Guard who once met Jiang Qing. During the Cultural Revolution, he had written a six-page letter for Mao and he and his older sister went to see if Mrs. Mao would be willing to pass it onto her husband.[43] Yang said at that time, "I didn't have a lot of respect for Jiang Qing as a politician ... but she was tremendously prominent and famous then-it seemed the best route to Mao."[44] Jiang had spent hours talking to Yang, ignoring his sister. Yang reported that: "Only Jiang Qing would have received us on the spur of the moment like that ... Zhou Enlai or Kang Sheng never would have done it. I still think that she was unreliable and misguided as a politician."[45] Later in 1991, Yang became a permanent resident of the United States, received his Ph.D. from Harvard, and wrote the book, *From Revolution to Politics*.[46]

Terrill also came across new sources, which provided a unique glimpse into her life that had previously never been documented. For example, he interviewed old classmates from Jiang Qing's acting school days, survivors from bohemian Shanghai, and those who knew her in Yan'an. Terrill was also able to interview her third husband, Tang Na in France. All of them provided great

insight into her life as an impoverished young woman, a struggling actress, a traditional housewife, and a politically naïve Communist. Terrill also made use of Russian, Japanese, Hong Kong, Taiwanese, and other English sourceswhere there was greater freedom to write critically, not being obligated to follow the Chinese Communist line of thought in their media.[47] In addition, Wilke's interview with Jiang Qing was used as an English supplement to *White Boned Demon,* but the latter was "written consciously as a correction to the earlier, more naïve, and nearly autobiographical work by Roxane Witke."[48]

As stated previously, following the Cultural Revolution the subject of Jiang Qing became an even more difficult one to approach because the mass of material pertaining to her was largely tainted by propaganda. In addition, because there are so few sources on her earlier life, one has to wonder how and where does the biographer begin? Terrill used considerable initiative and ingenuity to deal with this question by utilizing such unorthodox sources. However, when so much of the information is based on intimate details such as expressions, gestures, and confidences, as it was in this case, everything said has to be taken on trust.[49] Is it possible to trust an informant's memory from an event that happened many years ago? Terrill also used internal monologues to convey the thoughts and feelings of Jiang Qing. For example, when a man took advantage of her she stated, "What a tedious pig he was."[50] How does Terrill know this? Who really knows if she would have expressed herself in this fashion? No one really knows. This method makes his writing more accessible to a mass audience, but not necessarily acceptable to the academic community. However in defense of the

author, it is more difficult to record the informal and the intimate. Rumor and gossip, whatever their accuracy, have an important role in influencing and determining events, especially in China.[51]

Traditionally, Chinese historians focused their research on personal intrigue, not only because of a Chinese disposition towards personal factionalism, but also because the Emperor's isolation in the palace, surrounded by all of his family, concubines, and eunuchs, meant that his private life became entwined with his public one.[52] The failings of the rulers were blamed on the evil doings of the women at court, which is directly related to the *Hong yan huo shui* proverb. However, modern Chinese historians have taken this disposition to the next level by interpreting political events rather than in terms of the personal machinations of their leaders.[53] Little attention is paid to the informal and the intimate details of their leaders' lives. What is focused on instead is the degree of interplay between how personal factors affect the political process.[54] Terrill utilized this form of Chinese historiography to illustrate how Jiang Qing's personal life, focusing on the role of the family, kin, and *guanxi* (关系, personal networks) determined her allegiance and political patronage.[55]

Because women still remained subordinate to men, Terrill sympathized with Jiang Qing's desire to make a life for herself. Even though society was becoming more progressive at that period, sex and marriage were still the only ways for a woman to gain recognition and power. Jiang Qing would always be in Mao's shadow. She wanted to be a recognized figure in her own right, yet she used her unique position as Mao's wife to publicly allude that she was the most

intimate interpreter of Mao's words to reinforce her emerging power in opera reform.[56] In the end, Mao's image and his writings would always be the foundation for anything she did. Mao was China's God and she would always be in his shadow paying tribute to him. When Mao died in 1976, Jiang Qing's foundation crumbled.

Popular fiction in both Chinese and English has also been written on Jiang Qing, the two most notable being *Lan Ping Waizhuan* (蓝萍外传 , The Unofficial Biography of Lan Ping) (1984) by Ye Yonglie and *Becoming Madame Mao* (2000) by Anchee Min. As these two novels are written for a mass audience, they have a greater ability to shape the readers' perception of Jiang Qing more than any of the other scholarly books already mentioned.

Ye is a recognized biographer of well-known Chinese figures. This book has provided the Chinese readership with a tremendous amount of information about Jiang Qing's life as a Shanghai actress, though with little mention of her life beforehand. Ye argued that Jiang Qing's background combined with her 'dramatic' resentment and jealously for others might help explain why she committed such terrible acts. In regards to sources, Ye used numerous newspaper and magazine articles as well as acting journals to provide information about her life in Shanghai. Also, all interviews were conducted after the fall of the Gang of Four and were carefully chosen to construct a negative image. The Chinese knew very little about Jiang Qing's life and after her fall, interest in her grew substantially. When published, this book was intended to fulfill this curiosity to know more. It was very popular, selling millions of copies and thereby playing a

key role in reinforcing the image that Jiang Qing was the worst woman in modern China. Interestingly, *Lan Ping Waizhuan* is actually a collection of biographies in which only the first section is about Lan Ping. The other chapters are biographies about other individuals such as Luo Longji, one of the first victims of the 1957 Anti-Rightist Movement and Tao Yong, an army marshal who was tortured during the Cultural Revolution. Apparently, the publisher thought that by adding more biographies, the book would appear larger thereby selling more volumes because the title implies that it is only about Lan Ping.[57]

This tell-all book begins with the image of Red Guards ransacking a home. Everything is destroyed in order to find the proof necessary for denunciation. Ye discussed Jiang Qing's role in these kinds of searches as many documents have been issued proving that loyal followers went into homes to find or falsify evidence. Orders were passed from top authorities to the lower ranking army cadres disguised as Red Guards.[58] Therefore within the first few pages, Ye had already defined the popular opinion and image of Jiang Qing. The readers recall these uncomfortable events in their minds and wonder why so many innocent people had to suffer at the hands of this evil woman.

Like other sources, Ye discussed the later relationship between Jiang Qing and Lin Biao. Ye acknowledged the alliance between the two, but he also focused on a particular portrait that Jiang Qing, an avid photographer, had taken of Lin. Ye alleged that this portrait represented their relationship, one based on mutual gain. As it was widely published throughout China, Lin Biao was in greater proximity to Mao's prestige while Jiang Qing was becoming more recognized in

the PLA.[59] Before this book was published, the Chinese regarded Jiang Qing as a political villain, however after publication they saw that this criminal's private life that contradicted the life she represented as a Communist comrade. Hypocrisy loomed over Jiang Qing's image.

In *Becoming Madame Mao*, Min portrayed Jiang Qing as a young woman who faced adversity in her childhood due to the historical situation. Jiang Qing then fled the misery of her rural family life to become an actress in the big city. Later, she went to Yan'an and married the love of her life. In time, she found her husband inattentive and unfaithful, but nevertheless did not leave him.

Min endeavored to get into Jiang Qing's psyche and write a first person narrative. Unlike other novels, this one attempted to help the reader understand what Jiang Qing thought of her childhood, her relationship with her husband, and her rapid rise and fall from political power. It also took into account her feelings about her life and the future of China.

Because Jiang Qing's history has been so often fabricated and re-fabricated both for her own purpose and in the interests of the CCP, much of the information that is known about her will always be suspect.[60] Min utilized almost all of the sources already mentioned in this literature review, but she did not approach this story as a historian, but rather as a sympathetic novelist. Min was born in China from an upper middle class family, where she became intoxicated as a student activist during the Cultural Revolution.[61] Presently living in America, Min became popular by writing about her own experiences during this period, believing that her experience could offer some insight into the Cultural

Revolution. She admired Jiang Qing's personality, energy, and rebelliousness.[62] However, after reading this book, a Western reader not familiar with the Cultural Revolution would generally be sympathetic towards Jiang Qing. This is the biggest flaw of this book. It can be argued that she and her three other radicals were scapegoated for one of the most turbulent times in Chinese history, but Jiang Qing was a woman who harbored a great deal of resentment towards people in her past and in politics. She capitalized on the positions of power that Mao had entrusted her with as a means to revenge her old rivals. In the process, she destroyed thousands of people's lives. At the author's defense, the strength of this book is that Min points out that while Jiang Qing is regarded as the most hated individual of the Cultural Revolution, Mao, a far greater villain, has remained an icon. This is a tragic irony because the Western mass audience reading *Becoming Madame Mao* will not understand the extent of Jiang Qing's damaging impact and the Chinese readers from *Lan Ping Waizhuan* will not grasp the fact that their icon is really unfit to deserve that designation. It is for this reason that this thesis reexamination is so important because there exists a definite problem in the image of Jiang Qing thereby impacting the way people perceive this important individual.

Thesis Statement

From examining different sources of Chinese and Western scholarship, it is evident that there is no consistent image of Jiang Qing. She is either portrayed positively as a capable politician transmitting MZT and the standard bearer of the Chinese revolutionary arts, or negatively as a controlling, power hungry wife who eradicated anyone that was an obstacle to her dream of becoming China's next Empress. As well, some sources regarded her only as Mao's wife, with no public role attributed to her. Since no single source has effectively examined her, the reader is left to ask the question, who really was Jiang Qing?

My goal in this thesis is to take the information provided in the literature review and supplement it with other sources. This will provide for a more rigorous reexamination of Jiang Qing, which will hopefully enable me to gain a clearer overall understanding of this infamous woman. During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing was the most powerful woman in China, dominating culture with the development of her model revolutionary dramas, a dramatic theory, and her official appointment as cultural advisor to the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Politically, she held a high-ranking position in both the Cultural Revolution Group (CRG) and later in the Politburo, representing the most radical line of MZT. Jiang Qing used her authority in culture and as Mao's representative in politics to dictate what was good and revolutionary while denouncing those people who she perceived were counterrevolutionary thereby causing many individuals to experience untold suffering during this turbulent period. It is for

this reason that she became the most vilified woman in modern Chinese history. However, this is not the whole story.

At the center of this reexamination are three questions of power. How did Jiang Qing rise to the top echelon of male-dominated Chinese Communist politics? And how did Jiang Qing move from being a moderately successful Shanghai actress to play the most dominant role in the Chinese arts? This thesis will attempt to demonstrate that her rise to power in both politics and culture can be attributed to two main reasons: her own ambition to transcend the role of the housewife and the support she received from her husband given the changing political climate.

After Mao's death, Jiang Qing believed that she would succeed her husband. That dream vanished with the subsequent fall of the Gang of Four when the moderates seized power. She was arrested and at her trial she was charged with a series of crimes including treason which stemmed from their sweeping purges of the CCP. At her trial, Jiang Qing shouted her defiance stating, "I was Mao's dog. When he said to bite, I bit,"[63] justifying that she consistently upheld, promoted, and followed Mao and the Party line. From then on, her demise was publicly recorded in countless posters, cartoons, and articles but, the most shameful label applied to Jiang Qing was as the *bai gu jing* (白骨精 The White Boned Demon),[64] otherwise known as the worst woman in Chinese history. Indeed, the more the masses were able to direct their hatred towards this one woman, the White Boned Demon, the more credible it became to blame her as the

causes for Mao's errors. This term is problematic because it implies that she caused the havoc of the Cultural Revolution on her own.

If Jiang Qing really was the most powerful woman during the Cultural Revolution, the third question in this reexamination is how could the power she amassed during the Cultural Revolution vanish so quickly after Mao's death? One has to wonder whether Jiang Qing really was an independent politician who should bear responsibility or, as she argued, Mao's dog, a political instrument of her husband. In essence, the government-controlled media completely discounted Jiang in order to protect Mao, while she believed that she should be absolved of all guilt.

Since these two arguments are on opposite sides of the spectrum, this thesis reexamination will argue Jiang Qing's pursuit for recognition and success played a role in influencing the events of the Cultural Revolution. This combined with her unique position at a critical time with the support of a few key players allowed her to carry out and elaborate on Mao's work. Yet, it must be understood that Mao sponsored her entry into cultural politics when the right situation and timing made it possible. In this sense, Jiang Qing was able to transcend the role of the housewife while fulfilling her ambition to be recognized. Initially, it appeared that Mao generally supported her efforts, but then the situation changed. Therefore, the precise nature of their relationship becomes a crucial element in understanding her political role. This thesis will argue that their personal/private relationship was troubled, but publicly in matters of politics and culture, their relationship oscillated. Initially, Jiang Qing rose to prominence through Mao's

support. However, when she used the authoritative position Mao had entrusted to her as a means to stake out the highest degree of recognition and prominence for her efforts in the areas of culture and politics, Mao turned against her.

Methodologically, this thesis will be divided into three chapters: Jiang Qing as a Woman, Jiang Qing as a Theoretician, and Jiang Qing as a Politician. I have chosen to begin with her life as a woman because before she was recognized for the development of the model operas and her role in the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four, Jiang Qing's first and foremost experience and identity was of a woman in earlier China. I believe it is vital to begin from this point because her earlier experiences as a Chinese woman cannot be set aside when studying the later Jiang Qing as a theoretician and as a politician. In essence, I believe that an initial look at Jiang Qing as a woman will provide greater insight into her later roles. In addition, within the literature review, all of the sources examined possess an inherent theme: Jiang Qing's pursuit to find recognition, reflected in the historical May Fourth Era, which not only challenged old traditions, but the conceptions of women's identity and expectations as well. At different stages of people's lives, they have different identities. In Jiang Qing's case, the different periods of her life reflected this desire to be recognized. This chapter will highlight four different stages of her life and identity: as daughter and student, as an aspiring actress, as a revolutionary soldier, and finally as Mao's traditional wife. These identities will be examined chronologically to demonstrate that as Jiang Qing moved from one identity/stage of her life, her desire to be recognized

did not abate and I feel that it was the driving force behind her later roles as a theoretician and a politician.

The second chapter entitled, "Jiang Qing as Theoretician" will attempt to answer the first question, how did Jiang Qing rise from being a moderately successful actress to play the most dominant role in the Chinese arts? Her success in transcending the role of the housewife and becoming a recognized figure in cultural affairs could be attributed to good timing, the right position in the changing political environment, and to her support from Mao as well as other top politicians and radical intellectuals. By examining some of Mao's speeches and writings, then comparing them to Jiang Qing's, this thesis will demonstrate that Jiang Qing elaborated on, and carried out, Mao's ideas concerning art and literature, by acting as his cultural representative. Next, Jiang Qing's dramatic theory of the Basic Task and the Three Prominences and its relationship to the development of the model operas will be examined. By this time, Jiang Qing was the most powerful and recognized person in the arts, but she sought to take her dramas to the next level of prominence by turning them into films. This was Jiang Qing's legacy and her greatest contribution to the Cultural Revolution's plan to revolutionize culture for the masses. Finally, Jiang Qing's close relationship with Lin Biao from 1964 to 1966, which allowed Jiang Qing to move from the limited audience of arts reform to thepolitical center stage, will be addressed.

The final chapter will examine Jiang Qing as a politician because that is the state where she engaged her last metamorphosis - the climax of her recognition. "Jiang Qing as a Politician" will examine the swift change in the

political climate, the principle factor that moved Jiang Qing from the artistic realm into the political, serving two dominant and recognized positions as Mao's spokesperson and mentor to millions of Red Guards. By providing a new perspective through a chronological examination of some of her most recognized speeches, it can be argued that Jiang Qing took her husband's ideas, promoted and carried them out in her own speeches, which helped instigate the increasing violence of the Cultural Revolution. Little work has been done on Jiang Qing's speeches, which is unfortunate because they are invaluable for charting the direction of Beijing politics in the highly politicized mid 1960's and that is invaluable for understanding her role and responsibility thereby clarifying and reconciling some of the divergent images. It will be argued that Jiang Qing's position as Mao's political spokesperson was so elevated that her words were above the law, causing millions of Red Guards to turn violence into anarchy. Afterwards, Jiang Qing curtailed her radical message and public appearances where she tried to use MZT to resolve conflicts between the radical factions throughout the country.

After the chaos of the Cultural Revolution, the time came in 1969 when China needed to concentrate more on rebuilding the nation and promoting the economy and less on ideology and class struggle. Times were changing and the leadership was adapting to the situation, but Jiang Qing continued to espouse MZT. Events such as Lin Biao's death and Dr. Kissinger's visit made it obvious that the situation in China had altered, but Jiang Qing had not. Her inability to evolve with the changing circumstances because of her overzealousness in Mao's

revolutionary cause certainly did not help her political career. Consequently, she made many enemies. Jiang Qing sought to succeed Mao and made every effort to use the media to associate herself with other great female leaders in Chinese history, Wu Zetian and Empress Lu. She also agreed to talk with Witke in order to promote herself as a state person.

After the fall of the Gang of Four, Jiang Qing's demise was publicly recorded in countless cartoons, posters, and articles. Instead of being portrayed as a loyal supporter of Mao, she was pictured as a witch, a hypocrite, and a fallen Empress. Considering she had so much power, it seems strange that her demise happened so quickly. She was portrayed as someone wicked, the opposite of what she was viewed as while Mao was alive. Therefore, this reexamination of Jiang Qing will argue that she was a scapegoat for the Cultural Revolution so that criticism could be directed at her and not Mao. She would not have existed without Mao because her prominent positions in both culture and politics were to a degree from her own ambition, but truly possible through Mao's support. Her fate was largely due to her loyalty to him. Everything Jiang Qing accomplished was based on MZT. This is not to say that she did not try to seek out her own power, but because under Chinese Communism the method of accession to the pinnacle of power was through an intense power struggle. Jiang Qing did not have what it took to succeed Mao, but others like Deng Xiaoping did.

The moderate veteran government that toppled the Gang of Four used the media to show Jiang Qing as the woman the masses could vent their frustrations on and blame. She was labeled the White Boned Demon because it protected Mao

and given the historical acceptability of the notion that women involved in politics would eventually cause disasters. The Party could not assign the disastrous Cultural Revolution to Mao because that would undermine the legitimacy of the Communist government. The vilification of Jiang Qing legitimized the CCP and the prolongation of the one party regime.

Before commencing with these three chapters, it is necessary to provide some general historical background, which is crucial to understanding the events that shaped Jiang Qing's childhood and the ideas that would later influence her adult life. For many Chinese, Jiang Qing's name is synonymous with evil, but she was not born evil, nor was she born an angel. The person she became was shaped by her circumstances. There is a Chinese proverb, *san sui kan da, qi sui kan lao* (三岁看大，七岁看老 , the early years shape one's future).[65] The events that surrounded Jiang Qing's earlier years give great insight into the kind of adult she became and the ideas she represented. This period made her want to be more than what was expected of a woman from an earlier time. Therefore, the following section examining the historical background of the event, which influenced Jiang Qing will be divided into five main parts: Traditional China shaped by Confucian ideology; the collapse of the old order; Imperialism; Militarization; and finally the May Fourth Era. This historical framework will facilitate our understanding of the motivations behind the most powerful woman in Communist China.

Historical Background

Confucian Ideology

For more than two thousand years, China's stability and continuity were shaped by a distinctive political system based on Confucianism Although the system was secular, the emperor was designated to perform certain rituals of a religious nature and his ruling was identified with the Mandate of Heaven.[66] According to the Confucian ideal, government was central to setting decent and humane standards, as well as acting in accordance with ethical principles based on learning rather than divine revelation.[67] The ideal also involved constructing a cultural unity for all members of society. The result was an early and powerfully enduring sense of cultural identity as well as a profound sense of unity and greatness throughout the Chinese race[68] The Chinese early on developed a belief in the importance of education, morality, and an "ideal that human nature could be perfected."[69] Although Confucian ideals "tended to favor the elitist view that stressed the responsibility of rulers,"[70] it still believed that everyone regardless of class or gender should virtuously perform their allotted role in life and contribute to the general good of society.[71]

Confucianism was also the protocol for proper family life.[72] Factors such as sex, age, and generation were all guidelines that defined an individual's status, role, privileges, and duties.[73] Men dominated women and the young revered the old. Confucian tradition was firmly entrenched in China by the Song dynasty

(960-1279), but it became even more so with the advent of Neo-Confucianism. Women were placed in an increasingly subordinate position in society and the societal acceptance of women's inferiority confined them to lives within the inner quarters. Because it was considered attractive to men looking for a bride, women were expected to have bound feet and, upon marriage, were expected to bear sons and remain faithful to her husband and his family. After her husband's death, there were strong pressures against widow remarriage because "widow chastity was idealized as an expression of wifely fidelity, the highest feminine virtue in the Confucian pantheon."[74] A widow's fate and her children's future were placed in the hands of her deceased husband's family. Chinese women were in an inferior position. From the Song until the Qing (1644-1911), this socially acceptable system was undoubtedly suffocating women.

This presumed inferiority of women and their exclusion from public life made it appear unnecessary to provide women with a formal education based on the classics.[75] Women were educated differently from men, if at all. It was permissible for those rare few that attained literacy to receive an education through the reading of biographies for women.[12] In the *Biography of Great Women*, women's "primary accomplishment was their determined resistance to remarriage."[76] In the late Tang dynasty, *Classic Filial Piety for Girls* repeated the idea that men had the duty to remarry, but women could not.[77] Finally, in the final chapter of *The Analects for Girls* entitled, "Preserving Chastity," it described in detail how girls "until marriage should stay in the women's quarters."[78] Under standard Confucian texts, women were educated to be chaste, stay in the inner

quarters, resist widowhood, and preserve her husband's lineage by taking care of his children after his death. In the end, women were subjected to the three obediences: to her father in her youth; to her husband in her marriage; and to her son in her widowhood.[79] Therefore, this oppressive system perpetuated because of the education and socially entrenched accepted codes of female conduct, which kept women in an inferior and unchanging position until the collapse of dynastic rule and the establishment of China's first Republic in 1911.

The Collapse of the Old Order

Towards the end of Manchu rule (1860-1911), China began to slip into a phase of dynastic decline.[80] China was beginning to break down in the face of its own domestic problems as well as from Japanese and Western external forces, which would "integrate China irrevocably into a world political and economic order thereby foreclosing any possibility of the familiar dynastic solutions."[81] The 1911 Revolution was a milestone in Chinese history because it marked the year that defined what was modern and separated it from what was considered traditional, old, and antiquated. Consequently, traditional Confucian values and the patriarchal system rapidly eroded. And while the modern Imperialist powers were carving their own spheres of influence, national militarization was increasing. These combined factors quickly brought the collapse of the traditional order that had existed for thousands of years.

Imperialism

In the nineteenth century Imperialist powers, driven by capitalism, descended upon China. They sought out a market for their commodities and a supply of cheap raw materials and labour:[82] "The imposition of military force, cultural influence, and political interference were simply tools for the major goal, the appropriation of China's wealth."[83] The Opium War (1839-42) began a whole series of aggressive wars against China resulting in unequal treaties that forcibly opened up China's ports to foreign commerce and extracted extraterritorial rights.[84] Treaty ports were established where foreigners had settlements and concessions. They could engage in their own business under their own jurisdictions without the interference from the Chinese government.[85] By the end of the 1800s, these treaty ports became virtual colonial cities, symbolizing China's loss of sovereignty. To secure rights and privileges gained through warfare and intimidation, the Imperialist powers by the early 1900s had used persuasion, economic blackmail, and foreign aid to shape favorable political decisions made by the Chinese government. Foreign powers entrenched their positions to protect their own interests in China. On November 7, 1914, the Japanese moved into Shandong, occupying the port of Qingdao, the German's realm of influence. In response to this, Beijing asked that Germany's special transit and military rights be returned to China. The Japanese responded with the Twenty-one Demands, insisting that all German rights in Shandong become Japanese. [86]

The impact of Imperialism undermined the political, social, and economic fabric of Chinese society. It was further exacerbated by the mismanagement of the Nationalist Party which hastened the collapse of the national economy and the deterioration of life for the Chinese.[87]

Militarization

Since the Taiping Rebellion (1850-64), Manchu armies were used to suppress dissidents. Towards the end of the Qing, armies were increasingly used to solve China's internal problems. After 1911, militarization became common due to the power struggles among warlords and political parties, and uprisings of the local banditry.

When the Nationalists consolidated their power in 1927, military expenditures increased considerably. According to Feuerwerker, military expenditure, along with loan and indemnity services, accounted for 67-85% of total expenditure, leaving very little for public works and welfare. The pattern of expenditure and income negatively affected both economic development and the stability of the GMD government.[88] "At this point, military expenditure was based on [their] fear of the Communists, with campaign after campaign launched to suppress and wipe out the CCP and its remnants."[89] In addition, by the late 1920s, Shandong once again became a target. The Japanese seized Jinan from Guomindang troops and held it under martial law until the final settlement in

1929.[90] In the end, aggression and atmosphere of war on both fronts took its toll on the Chinese people. This period of militarization did nothing but bring about severe famines with dire consequences for all men and women.

Famines had occurred in China for centuries, but it was in the early decades of the twentieth century that they became more frequent and widespread.[91] After the Opium War, trade with the Imperialists turned many food crop-growing lands into cash crop production, which helped cause the 1919-21 famines of North China, covering all of Hebei, Henan, Shanxi, and Shaanxi, and large parts of Shandong.[92] Women became malnourished not only because they lacked enough food for themselves, but because they also provided for their children first. Because so little food was available, families were concerned about how many mouths they had to feed. In this context, other problems such as infanticide and childselling increased.

Military attacks and interventions certainly impacted women's daily lives, not only in terms of unemployment but also in terms of harassment and rape by foreign soldiers.[93] Some of these victims became prostitutes. One way to escape this terrible situation was to migrate to the cities. In many cases, peasant girls and women were sold to factory owners, working under terrible conditions and long hours of work with little or no wages. For women staying in the countryside or migrating to the cities involved both of exploitation and oppression as well as physical and psychological pain.[94] In the end it was inconsequential whether a woman came from the cities or the countryside. Their contact with Imperialism and militarization resulted in the destruction of their property, the end of their

employment, and continual harassment. It was in the context of this oppressive substandard situation that the women's movements emerged in China, working to resist imperialism and proclaim the revolution.[95]

The May Fourth Movement

A sense of national urgency struck the nation in the wake of Japan's Twenty-One Demands because China was compelled to surrender certain sovereign rights and hand over German interests in Shandong to the Japanese.[96] The postwar treaty drawn up in Versailles was a turning point as it revealed secret negotiations between Great Britain, France, and Italy in approving Japan's retention of the German holdings.[97] It left many Chinese insulted by the apparent lack of consideration for their national interests and resulted in national protests. The event united wide sectors of society who participated in demonstrations, boycotts, and demanded the return of Shandong concessions.[98] This period became known as the May Fourth Movement (1919).

This period was the beginning of a profound cultural transformation in China. The Chinese had always regarded their country as a civilization, not as a military power or an economic system. By this time however, the same stress on civilization entailed a different emphasis of one based on democracy, science, literacy, language reform and the status of women, which could potentially destroy thousands of years of Chinese culture and tradition.[99] In the minds of the

educated, the only way that China could become an independent state was if they declared a full-scale attack on China's cultural heritage.[100]

Ideas of Democracy, modernization, and equality gained in popularity. Scientific developments were made, which involved considerable importation of Western and Japanese ideas. In regards to language, Hu Shi, an American educated professor at Beijing University, argued that any hope of China becoming a democracy was dependent on a literate populace. He urged others to abandon *wenyan* (文言, complex classical prose) as the medium of communication for the educated and begin to write as they spoke, in *bai hua* (白話, plain speech) thus allowing people to easily read what they wrote.[101] The May Fourth protestors took up this cause and soon newspapers and magazines were printed in *bai hua* and school textbooks were rewritten in *bai hua*.[102]

In regards to women's education, there was a proliferation of magazines and journals that were founded and organized by Chinese women who studied abroad as students. Japan was the center for China's intellectuals who were keen on reforming China's cultural heritage.[103] And in China, *Funu zazhi* (婦女雜志, Women's Journal) was the first journal to be published that was specifically devoted to women's issues, motivating woman to participate in the national movement.[104]

This period also marked the birth of many young writers such as Lu Xun and Ding Ling, who focused their fiction on the condition of women and equality between the sexes. Dramas also played an important role in the promotion of women's rights. For example, Ibsen's *A Doll's House:*

> was translated into Chinese as early as 1918, immediately causing a great stir and leading to the emergence of cases of 'Chinese Noras.' Lu Xun later wrote a rejoinder to this phenomenon of China's Noras in an article entitled, 'What happens after Nora leaves home?' (1923) He stresses the necessity to link women's emancipation with their economic emancipation, as otherwise they would only change one cage for another.[105]

The high point of the May Fourth Era was the movement towards the decline of the patriarchal family system and the promotion of feminist ideas. Male intellectuals became prominent champions, promoting these causes in well-known magazines and journals. They were convinced that the patriarchal family under Confucianism was "both the symbol and the agent of China's weakness in the modern world."[106] In addition, the movement attacked the traditional family system, questioning arranged marriages, polygamy, women's chastity, and foot binding.

By the 1920s, China faced more urgent problems with the collapse of its central government and warlordism. Since there was no political organization that could unite the Chinese, the country became fragmented, entered a decade of warlord rule, and remained vulnerable to foreign powers: "Under the warlords, China's government deteriorated, the people suffered, and the Chinese society after a century of decline reached a nadir of demoralization."[107] Nationalist and revolutionary forces emerged, alternately competing and co-operating to restore China's integrity, while Imperialist powers protected their own interests. By the 1920s, this social and political crisis subordinated the ideological responses to woman and the family revolution. Many May Fourth radicals converted to Marxist Leninism and founded the CCP in 1921. While others joined the

Nationalist Party, heir to Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance.[108] Each party possessed their own ideologies and mobilization strategies reflecting the two opposing directions that women could embark on within the context of independent China.[109]

To conclude, these five historical periods help illuminate the dramatic changes in attitudes of Chinese society that Jiang Qing was brought into. She experienced first hand the poverty and hunger in Japanese-occupied Shandong as well as the crisis with the collapse of the Confucian tradition of filial piety and the patriarchal system. However, Jiang Qing was no longer confined to the female roles of a previous age. Following the May Fourth national trend of consciousness, Jiang Qing was able to do what women before her could not: she could seek her own destiny. In this period, Jiang Qing could leave her natal home, obtain an education, be exposed to Democracy and Nationalism, and become a dramatic actress in the big city. As this thesis progresses and examines her different roles as a woman, a theoretician, and a politician, it must not be forgotten that these events shaped her childhood and, in turn, formed her ideas and opinions about life. Now, this thesis will begin the process of reexamination with the first of three sections entitled, 'Jiang Qing as a Woman.'

[1] There are voluminous amounts of information on Jiang Qing. Therefore, for the purposes of this literature review, I have chosen to divided Western and Chinese historians of Jiang Qing and the Cultural Revolution into two groups: early (pre-1990) and contemporary (post-1990) as a favorable method to classify all of the sources that were utilized.
[2] Roxane Witke and Margery Wolfe, "Chiang Ch'ing's Coming of Age," in *Women in Chinese Society* eds. Roxane Witke and Margery Wolfe (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 169.
[3] Ibid.,169.
[4] Ibid., 169.
[5] Roxane Witke, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), 4.
[6] Ibid., 321.
[7] Ibid,. 321.
[8] Ibid.,4.
[9] Ibid.,5.
[10] Ross Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 321.
[11] Dwan L. Tai. *Chiang Ch'ing: the Emergence of a Revolutionary Political Leader* (New York: New Exposition Press, 1974), ix.
[12] Ibid., 17.
[13] Ibid., 46.
[14] Ibid.,173-4.
[15] Ibid., 176.
[16] "A Great Standard-Bearer, a Dauntless Warrior: A Chronicle of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's Activities in the Field of Literature and Art" in *Issues and Studies* 10 (October 1975): 90.
[17] "Chiang Ch'ing's Wild Dream Shattered," in *China Reconstructs* 25, no. 6 (June 1977), 6.
[18] History Writing Group of the CCP Kwangtung Provincial Committee, The Ghost of Empress Lu and Chiang Ch'ing's Empress Dream,"in *Chinese Studies in History* 12, no. 1 (fall 1978): 37, 51.
[19] Yu Hsiang, "Chiang Ch'ing's 180 Degree Turn," *Chinese Studies in History* 12, no. 1 (fall 1978), 58.
[20] Feng Fei, "Chiang Ch'ing's Foreign Sister," *Chinese Studies in History* 12, no. 1 (fall 1978), 59-62.
[21] Hong yan huo shui is a popular male chauvinist perception that reinforces the stereotype that women should not rule or hold any position of power. The earliest examples are represented in Daji from the Shang dynasty and Yang Guifei from the Tang. In these cases, Daji and Yang Guifei were blamed because their masters, Emperor Zhou and Xuanzong respectively loved them beyond the capable reason required the rule over a civilization. Another type of woman that suffered from this stereotype was the female figure that wielded some degree of political power. The best examples are Empress Wu Zetian (625-705) and Empress Dowager Ci Xi (1835-1908). Confucian tradition stipulated that women should stay in the inner quarters and be dutiful wives and mothers, certainly not participate in politics. Women who went beyond the inner quarters were seen as symbols of ambition. When such women rose and then fell from power, it was perceived that their ambition was the cause.
[22] Micheal Schoenhals, "Book Reviews of the Turbulent Decade by Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao," in *China Quarterly*, no. 156 (December 1998): 1044.
[23] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* Translated and edited by D.W.Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 352.
[24] Ibid., 516.
[25] Ibid.,352.
[26] Ibid., 356-59.
[27] Ibid., 374.
[28] Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* ed. Anne Thurston and trans. Tai Hung-chao (New York: Random House, 1994), 9.
[29] Ibid., xii.

[30] Ibid., 7.
[31] Ibid., 140.
[32] Ibid., 501.
[33] Ibid., xv.
[34] Ibid., xiii.
[35] Borge Bakken. "On the Memoirs of Mao's Personal Doctor Li Zhisui: An Interview with Frederick Teiwes" in *Nordic Newsletter of Asian Studies,* no. 3 (October 1996), 1. www.nias.ku.dk/Nytt/Regional/EastAsia/Articles/maodoc.html
[36] Ibid., 1.
[37] Ibid., 1.
[38] Ibid., 5.
[39] Ibid., 5.
[40] Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton & Company, 1990), 598.
[41] Ibid., 597.
[42] Ibid., 418.
[43] Ibid., 418.
[44] Ibid., 419.
[45] Ibid., 412.
[46] Ibid., 412.
[47] Ibid., 412-13.
[48] See Terrill Reference Notes, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon,* 420-452.
[49] Elizabeth Croll, "Occupying the Stage "in *Times Literary Supplement* 3 August 1984, p. 872.
[50] Merle Goldman, "I Married Jiang," in *The New Republic* 190 (April 9, 1984), 32.
[51] Croll, "Occupying the Stage, " 872.
[52] Ibid., 872.
[53] Ibid., 872.
[54] Ibid., 872.
[55] Ibid., 872.
[56] Ibid., 872.
[57] Fred Kong told me this after I questioned why *Lan Ping Waizhuan* would have other biographical sections besides hers.
[58] Yonglie Ye, *Lan Ping Wai Zhuan* (The Biography of Lan Ping), (Dalian: Dalian Chubanshe, 1988), 1-16.
[59] Ibid., 116.
[60] Sol W. Sanders, "Woman of Ill Repute," *National Review* 52, no. 16 (August 28, 2000), 51.
[61] Ibid., 51.
[62] Ibid., 51.
[63] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* prologue.
[64] The White Boned Demon originated from the novel *Xi you ji* (Pilgrimage to the West or Journey to the West). The female character is cruel and tricky, able to change her image. In one moment, she is charming and beautiful and the next, she is manipulative and evil, bringing terrible harm to those she encounters.
[65] This is my translation of *san sui kan da, qi sui kan lao.*
[66] Lucien Pye, *China: An Introduction* (New York: Harper Collins, 1985), 31.
[67] Ibid., 31.
[68] Ibid., 31.
[69] Ibid., 31.
[70] Ibid., 31.
[71] Ibid., 31.
[72] Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 31.
[73] Ibid., 31.
[74] Ibid., 34.
[75] Ibid., 36.

[76] Patricia Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 195.
[77] Ibid., 195.
[78] Ibid., 195.
[79] Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* , 39.
[80] John King Fairbank, Edwin O Reischauer and Alberta M. Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* rev. ed (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 435.
[81] Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China,* 39.
[82] Bobby Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949* (London: Zed Press, 1981), 21.
[83] Ibid., 21
[84] Allen Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 34.
[85] Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949,* 21.
[86] Whiting, *China Eyes Japan,* 33.
[87] Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949,* 63.
[88] Albert Feuerwerker. *The Chinese Economy: 1912-1949* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, 1968), 58.
[89] Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949,* 63.
[90] Whiting, *China Eyes Japan,* 34.
[91] Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949,* 64.
[92] Ibid., 93.
[93] Ibid., 73.
[94] Ibid., 93.
[95] Ibid., 93-4.
[96] Christina K. Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920's* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 21.
[97] Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* , 33.
[98] Ibid., 33.
[99] Akira Iriye. *China and Japan in the Global Setting* (Cambridge; Harvard University Press, 1992), 45.
[100] Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920's*, 22.
[101] Raymond Chang and Margaret Scrogin Chang, *Speaking of Chinese* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 68.
[102] Ibid., 68.
[103] Ravni Thakur, *Rewriting Gender: Reading Contemporary Chinese Women* (London: Zed Press, 1997), 40.
[104] Ibid., 40.
[105] Ibid., 41.
[106] Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China,* 72.
[107] Fairbank, Reischauer, and Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* rev. ed , 758.
[108] Ibid., 74-5.
[109] Siu, *Women of China: Imperialism and Women's Resistance 1900-1949,* 94.

Chapter Two

Jiang Qing as a Woman

Within the literature review, all of the sources examined show an inherent theme: Jiang Qing sought to find her own recognition and success. Her desireoriginated from the May Fourth era which not only challenged old traditions, but challenged the conceptions of women's identity and expectations as well. In Jiang Qing's case, the different periods of her life reflected desire. This chapter will highlight four different stages of her life and identity: as daughter and student; as an aspiring actress; as a revolutionary soldier; and finally as Mao's wife. Each stage of her identity's development will demonstrate that her desire to be recognized and successful was molded in her early experience first and foremost as a woman in earlier China. This ultimately affected her later roles as a theoretician and politician.

Daughter and University Student

Jiang Qing was born in 1914 in Zhucheng, Shandong into a traditional patriarchal family and given the name Shumeng.[1] When and where she was born provides great insight into China's situation at that time. Since the last dynasty had fallen three years prior, there was domestic instability compounded by an impending sense of war. Shandong was one of the first victims of Imperialism.

Zhucheng, located on the south bank of the Wei River, was about eighty kilometers from Qingdao, close enough to the Yellow Sea to be influenced by the Japanese.[2] The year of her birth also marked the period in which the Japanese appropriated the German-held interests in an attempt to draw Shandong into the swelling and highly militarized Japanese empire.[3] In her interview with Witke, Jiang Qing discussed her childhood during the Japanese occupation, poverty, and famine. Her firsthand experience made her, like many youth of her generation, hold a deep and longstanding resentment towards the Japanese. She aruged that reform, education, and a new political order were the only means to restore China's sovereignty.

Jiang Qing's family also provided interesting insight into her place in the traditional Confucian patriarchal household. Chinese sources reported that her father, surname Luan, was a merchant, while others claimed that he was a middle-class peasant.[4] According to Witke's accounts, her father was a handicraft worker and Terrill said he was a full time laborer with the surname Li.[5] In some Chinese accounts, Jiang Qing's mother was a maidservant and in Witke's interview, Jiang Qing never mentioned her mother's status in the household. Terrill argued that Jiang Qing's mother, whose name was unknown, was in fact a concubine since Jiang's father was at least thirty years older than her mother and his eldest children were about the same age as her mother.[6] If this were the case, Jiang's mother would be resented as an interloper and her presence would create complexity in the all-important matters of inheritance[7] because all sources agree that Jiang's father died when she was only a young child. Jiang Qing was already

at a disadvantage because she was a girl. Following the Confucian tradition that a girl was not reared in the same way as a boy, it was expected that Shumeng would eventually marry into another family. However, she would not realize that her mother's ambiguous position in the family would undoubtedly affect her future.

Terrill and Witke both confirm that one Lantern Festival when Jiang was about five years old her father flew into a rage and beat her mother. Why he committed such a violent act in public is unclear. Perhaps Li had grown tired of her, or perhaps the tensions between her and his regular family had become too great to endure.[8] Terrill argued that Li paid her off and sent her on her way, a rare event for any woman in such a situation: "Alone with child, she was far away from her own parents and hometown, open to all kinds of exploitation, and an easy target for gossip about the ways of a wandering single woman."[9] This information was not mentioned in any of the Chinese sources. Instead, these sources showed that when Jiang Qing's father died, they went to live with her mother's parents, a point that Terrill also confirmed when mother and child went to live with Jiang's grandparents in the capital city of Jinan. This move eventually enabled Shumeng to attend drama school at the Experimental Arts Academy.

According to Terrill, due to Jiang Qing's poverty she wore boy's hand me downs and worn out shoes, but more importantly Jiang Qing mentioned in her interview that the memories of her school days were wrought with teasing and bullying because of this poverty.[10] However, the worst thing for Jiang was being the object of ridicule because she was a girl without a father. Teachers were no help to her situation. The bullying turned her into a strong-willed young girl who

hated individuals in a position of authority. Then, when she was about fourteen years old, her mother dropped out of her life. Some sources argue that she died while others state that she worked as a maidservant in another family. Either way, Shumeng continued to live with her grandparents in Jinan without a mother or a father.

None of the sources had provided a name for Jiang Qing's mother, which is not surprising because her mother was, like so many countless women in earlier Chinese society, unable to live free lives. She never had a clear position in the Luan/Li household, which indicated that she certainly was not his wife and that her position was tenuous. Hence, whether she was a concubine or a maidservant is inconsequential to this thesis because the important point is that her position in the household was insignificant. Given the changing attitude towards women during the May Fourth Era perhaps Jiang Qing's reaction was a determination to never be like her mother who had no legacy nor history to leave behind. People would recognize Jiang Qing's name and she would exceed the expectations of women in earlier China because when her mother left, Jiang Qing had to become more self-reliant and seek her own destiny. Perhaps the instability of her youth help to explain her readiness to abandon the conventional lifestyle of a traditional woman and instead embrace a more adventurous and independent lifestyle as an actress.

Theater people had always been looked down upon socially, but the May Fourth Movement removed some of this prejudice. Since Jiang Qing did not come from a well-established family it was unlikely that she would have been able to

marry into a good family. Her family background placed certain restrictions on what she could do with her life. She wanted to be free and independent, the opposite of what her mother had been, and she saw the dramatic arts as a means to that end. She did not want to be another faceless woman; she wanted an identity and gravitated towards the aspiration of becoming a recognized actress.

Jiang Qing was most influenced by the Ibsen's drama, *A Doll's House.* A classmate interviewed by Terrill recalled that Jiang Qing wanted to play the role of Nora, the main character, who wanted the smash the doll of the doll's house, a symbol of women's oppression within the patriarchal system.[11] Unfortunately, only a year later the Experimental Arts Academy closed down due to the changing political situation with the warlords and the Japanese. Afterwards, she wandered to Beijing and returned back to Jinan but still could not find professional success. Jiang Qing was without anyone to depend on so she did what any Chinese woman in an unfortunate situation would do: she married. In 1930, she and a young man named Fei married and, as was the custom, she took residence in the Fei family home as the dutiful daughter-in-law. This was a life-changing step that seemingly contradicted the independent life she hadsought as a recognized actress.[12] However, within a few months, the couple divorced. Jiang Qing was independent again and had to decide where her next step in life would take her.

There can be no question that Jiang Qing was born in unfortunate times. She grew up in a traditional patriarchal family and being the female made a difficult situation worse. She lived in poverty, which was only exacerbated by

Imperialism, warlordism, and famine. Yet the May Fourth Era was changing women's roles, identities, and expectations. Jiang Qing lived through these obstacles and was able to obtain an education, leave home, marry and divorce, as well as chart her own destiny by the time she was sixteen. After her divorce and professional failure, her next goal was to pursue a university education at Qingdao University.

In the Republican era, it was not unusual for a poor student to attend university as an auditor. Jiang Qing did the same work as a regular student,but did not have the right to a degree.[13] However, for the first time in her life she came into contact with intellectuals who had new ideas and were immensely influential in the minds of a questioning generation of youth.[14] Her university days also marked her introduction into politics.

Jiang Qing met Yu Qiwei, the leader of the Communist underground in Qingdao. The two fell in love and their relationship exposed Jiang Qing to political activism, Communism, and China's struggle against Japanese Imperialism. After the September 18 Incident, which lead to the Japanese seizure of three provinces in northeastern China, Qingdao University became a hotbed for class boycotts and protests against the Japanese.[15] Jiang Qing had joined the Seaside Drama Society which toured rural areas giving performances such as *Lay Down your Whip,* a patriotic story about Manchurian refugees suffering under the Japanese.[16] Through her acting Jiang Qing was being recognized as a youth that was contributing to future of China by giving patriotic, anti-Japanese performances.

Like the youth of her generation Jiang Qing was fiercely nationalistic and anti-Japanese. She took a keen interest in the Communist Party and recognized that she had a place in the movement through her contributions in the Seaside Drama Society. Following the end of her relationship with Yu Qiwei she moved to Shanghai to try her luck as an actress.

Aspiring Actress

In the early twentieth century, cosmopolitan Shanghai was the center for arts, politics, and economics for all of China:

> A variety of configurations of Shanghai attracted the modern Chinese imagination: it was a place of higher learning and Western Enlightenment, a place of career opportunities and financial speculations, a place of romantic fulfillment and sexual adventure, and a place of revolutionary activity and national salvation. As the celebrated site of the birth of the Chinese Communist party, as well as the 'Paris of the East,' the 'capital of the tycoon,' and the 'whore of Asia,' Shanghai covers a wide range of culture images in modern China.[17]

Jiang Qing was nineteen when she arrived in Shanghai. She was exposed to the arts, liberal thinking, and a bohemian lifestyle. Young, beautiful, and determined, Jiang Qing aspired to be a recognized actress. She had come to the one city where success could materialize and where failure, for a woman of humble origins, would very likely result in having to prostitute one's self.[18] She was an actress "dabbling in politics, while working as a teacher to make both ends meet."[19] As a member of the Communist Youth League, she threw herself into left-wing politics and in October 1934. Some sources indicated that she was arrested by the

Nationalists and placed in prison for many months.[20] After her release, she focused less on politics and concentrated more on her acting.

To mark her new life in Shanghai, she gave herself a new name, *Lan Ping* (蓝萍 Blue Apple) and in 1935, her breakthrough as a professional actress came in playing Nora, her dream role, in *A Doll's House*:

> The sparse, powerful Ibsen drama, whose theme is the gradual, surprising growth of Nora's resolve to leave the domesticity of a conventional marriage to Torvald Helmer, a lawyer, for something-anything-else, had been Lan Ping's favorite play since her days at the Arts Academy in Jinan. "I threw myself into the part," she said of the rehearsals, to which she devoted long hours each day for two months. For the opening night the Golden City Theater was jammed. Every beacon in the sky of the Shanghai Theater was there ... Before the night was out; Lan had the audience at a fever pitch by the challenge to Chinese tradition in the words falling from Nora's lips. Lan found a submerged aspect of her personality in turning herself into this 'woman rebel' ... Lan Ping was Nora.[21]

The critics praised her performance as a progressive actress and after the two-month run she was offered a small contract with the Dian Tong Studio, a left-wing group that produced low budget movies that raised social and patriotic consciousness.[22] In mid 1936, the studio collapsed. Parlaying her fame, she moved onto a better contract with the bigger, more profitable Lian Hua studio marking her introduction into the film industry.[23]

In her first major movie, *Langshan diexueji,* (狼山喋血记 Blood on Wolf Mountain) (1937) she played a suffering wife who was afraid of wolves, the symbol for the Japanese invaders.[24] The character, like herself in many ways, fought against the oppressive enemy and survived. That same year, in *Wang Laowu* (王老五, Bachelor Wang), she played the role of a poor, but determined

young woman who meets bachelor Wang. She marries him, not because she loves him as he loves her, but out of gratitude for his kindness when her father dies. Poverty, alcoholism, and the Japanese invasion added to her life of suffering. However she persevered and in the end, triumphed over the weaker Wang by outliving him. The movie ends with Lan bent over his dead body, unfazed by tears and blood, swearing defiance toward her own and China's enemies.[25]

It was at this time where she met her future husband Tang Na, a well-known theater critic. Tang spoke English, had a Western education, and understood its culture. In her Qingdao relationship with Yu Qiwei, she gained exposure to Communist politics. But her relationship with Tang Na in Shanghai was different in that he exposed her to culture, drama, and all things un-Chinese. Theirs was a conventional Western marriage, which in those days was quite fashionable for the cosmopolitan and well publicized theatrical couple.

With confidence and perseverance Lan Ping was becoming a more recognized actress in Shanghai as she received increasingly prominent roles to play. The critics generally praised her work even though the roles were the same: struggling women in oppressive circumstances trying to seek an independent life of their own. Perhaps she was typecast or she specifically sought to play these women of unfortunate times. Either way, her acting mirrored her personal life. By the time she was twenty-one, her third marriage was suffering. In an interview with Tang Na in France, he stated: "her ambition was swelling too large for the theater to contain it."[26] After the break up of their marriage, Lan Ping did what she had done every time a personal relationship disintegrated; she moved on to the

next adventurous place. Her next stop was Yan'an, the Communist base in northwestern China.

Revolutionary Soldier

After her divorce from Tang Na, Lan Ping packed her few possessions and endured a long arduous journey to Yan'an, Shaanxi, the center of the Communist movement. Shanghai had crumbled to the Japanese forces and therefore out of necessity Lan Ping began a new chapter of her life in a new place that would be different- as different from Shanghai as Shanghai had been from Zhucheng.[27] Her new home was known for its barren landscape and harsh climate. Food was difficult to come by; three million people had died from famine and what food was available was rough and difficult to digest.[28] Locals had never seen a toilet or taken a bath except at birth, wedding, and in death. Few knew their date of birth or even where the capital, Beijing was located. Their poverty and lack of social practices were unimportant because they were true Communists. This ideology was not only their religion, but also their means of survival.[29]

Many women from peasant backgrounds joined the Red Army to escape a prearranged marriage, being sold or starvation. On the other hand those like Lan Ping, who had just come from the city, were idealistic individuals seeking a different way of life, an adventure, and the chance to make a positive difference in their country. By joining the army in Yan'an, she could simultaneously pursue her work in the theater and in the Communist movement. Her position as an actress

made her highly visible among the men, but she was not seriously by the other more politically knowledgeable female soldiers.

In the male dominated world of Yan'an the wives of the veterans of the Long March became victims. Their marriages were in jeopardy because their husbands became attracted to the young revolutionary recruits. Lan's attractiveness and cosmopolitan presence in bleak barren Yan'an provided a touch of glamour that none of these other woman could match. She was undoubtedly recognized. Yet all her beauty and charm could not make up for her lack of knowledge in politics and Marxist-Leninism theory. She was also not accepted by many of the established female Communists who participated in the Long March, studied abroad, and had done labor organizing or education work in the 1920's and 1930s.

The men and women of the Long March (1934) had the strength, courage, and will to make the seemingly endless trek of more than 6000 miles, enduring much hunger, harsh climate, and endless violence. They finally found sanctuary in the loess hills of Northern Shaanxi and made Yan'an their base by 1936.[30] The women of the movement were praised for their hard work and commitment to Communism. Some of the most notable women from this period were He Zizhen, Kang Keqing, and Cai Chang. While they came from very different backgrounds they shared the same determination and belief in Communism. Since they participated in the struggle from the very beginning they were seen as role models for the next generation of female Communist freedom fighters. When Lan Ping's relationship with Mao intensified, these women were unable to reciprocate these

feelings of admiration and respect towards her. In fact, these women were quite vocal in protesting the relationship because their comrade He Zizhen was suffering and many of these older women realized that much of their appeal to their husbands was lost. Even Li Min, the daughter of Mao and He Zizhen, admitted that her biological mother was no match for Jiang Qing's beauty and intelligence. And it was no surprise when she caught the attention of Mao.[31]

It can be argued that when Lan Ping arrived in Yan'an,she did not posses the necessary skills to become a respected Communist. She did not have the proper political education and her background in Shanghai was suspect. In the Terrill interview Tang Na helped explain Mao's attraction to her:

> I think Lan Ping did to him what she did to me. She was attractive, and she presented herself as revolutionary-the combination hooked Mao. I am convinced that if Lan Ping had not just come out of the Shanghai world, Mao would never have been enticed by her as he was. You see, our Shanghai life, and Mao's life in the hinterland, where the peasants looked up to him as a god, were from two different worlds.[32]

Despite the fact that many women resented Lan and her relationship with Mao certain men like Kang Sheng, deputy head of the Party school, helped vouch for her revolutionary character. Kang Sheng and Lan Ping came from the same hometown in Shandong so when she arrived in Yan'an, he provided her with tremendous support by assisting in her party membership, finding favorable employment at the Lu Xun College, and in obtaining the proper education. She received intense political study that was useful to her future cultural reforms. She would become one of a few who that had experience in both drama and political theory.[33] Kang also made it possible for Lan to meet Mao. The relationship

between the two quickly blossomed. With Kang's help and support, Lan would find an ally with a direct link to the most powerful man in China. This became a fruitful relationship that lasted for many decades.

Mao and Lan Ping began living together, causing a great scandal among the top cadres in the Party.[34] Opinions in Yan'an were very much against Mao's new living arrangements This was in part out of sympathy for He Zizhen, and in part out of disapproval of Mao having chosen an actress to replace her. Abandoning a comradely wife of longstanding to marry a despicable actress was a common view.[35] Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, and as well as many others were opposed to it because Mao, the leader of the Party was living with Lan Ping, an actress, while married to another, a model revolutionary, which was in complete violation of the Party rules. The relationship represented two of China's past traditions: men having mistresses and inequality between the sexes. It clearly appeared that in this relationship Lan had everyone against her. While veryone labeled her as a villain and, a home wrecker, she still had her friend, Kang Sheng. Thanks in part to Kang, a compromise had been made in which a divorce was granted. Lan and Mao were free to marry upon certain prescribed conditions: she was required to devote all of her energies to looking after her husband and was not allowed to participate in politics because her past acting career did not exemplify the ideals of a CCP political wife.[36]

In a previous age, marriage invovled marrying into a good family. In this regard Lan Ping reached the pinnacle of this system by marrying the head of the CCP. Becoming Mrs. Mao brought her a certain degree of recognition and

notoriety. She was viewed as the woman who broke up Mao's previous marriage with model revolutionary, He Zizhen. By agreeing to give up her acting career and to abstain from politics, everything that had encompassed Lan's identity as an independent woman ended with her marriage. She took on a new and uncharacteristic role as the dutiful housewife and a mother. The party tightly controlled her identity. In a way she had gone full circle. But everyone, including hersel,f recognized Jiang Qing as the wife of Mao Zedong.

Mao's Wife

For the first time, Jiang Qing embraced the role of the dutiful wife. Her life was comfortable. But her dreams of being an actress had vanished. However, Jiang Qing would find another source of happiness: as the mother of Mao's two daughters. Being Mao's wife and the mother of his children brought her a certain kind of recognition, but what would she do next? Jiang Qing's identity was entirely based on being the wife of Mao Zedong. This chapter will show that as Jiang Qing could not become the conventional CCP wife, she had to find another route to achieve the recognition that she sought. In her previous relationships, Jiang Qing could seek her own identity But under Yan'an Communism the Party tightly controlled her identity. The low point was when Mao took to the rostrum in Tiananmen Square on October 1, 1949 to commemorate the People's Republic. Jiang Qing was not by his side because she held no formally recognized political position. For the time being, that did not matter However, the 1950s would be a

disappointment for Jiang Qing, as she did not have any job or sense of purpose. While she was in Russia, the All China Federation of Literary and Artistic Circles was established and almost every cultural figure of importance became members, but her name was not on the list.[37] Her old theatrical colleagues had been assigned jobs, a function to play in the new republic. But Jiang Qing, the former actress/present housewife, had not. She only received a strictly honorable title, as a member of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association.[38] Jiang Qing was clearly becoming a non-functioning token of the CCP.

The pressure on Jiang Qing to stay out of public life was similar to the pressure on all Chinese women in the 1950s to disappear into the home and bear children. The sense of equality and the break from traditional female roles that was evident in China's road to revolution had vanished. Similar to wives of an earlier age, the wives of leading revolutionaries were expected to devote themselves to their husbands. Jiang Qing served as Mao's personal secretary, which meant her revolutionary career was to attend to Mao's daily needs.[39] Ensuring the welfare of the Chairman would ensure the stability of the country. This position made it difficult to separate Mao and Jiang's personal relationship between Party affairs; disobeying Mao was tantamount to disobeying the Party.[40]

If a Chinese woman was to rise to prominence, it could not be as a private individual with a distinguished career of her own. The only ways in which a woman could transcend the role of a housewife was either to become involved in women's organizations or to utilize her husband's power and position. Wives of politicians in Communist China were not given jobs simply because they were

wives. They had to earn the position and the respect. For example, Deng Yingchao received a high post in the China Women's League because she devoted many years to the women's movement. Other women in the Party who wanted to contribute also took this path and devoted themselves to 'women's work.' Jiang Qing, on the other hand, was not willing or interested in this kind of work. According to Terrill, because she started out as an actress, it only made sense that she utilize her professional background and become involved in the arts.[41] However Jiang Qing had not yet discovered how to transfer that skill into something more meaningful. Attaining political recognition through her husband's power was also not feasible because Mao never introduced her publicly and the Party continued to keep her away from any visible or powerful public position, giving her little hope of any public career. At this time, however, another woman, Wang Guangmei, utilized her husband's power to obtain mass recognition and this made Jiang Qing quite resentful.

Wang Guangmei was the talented and beautiful wife of State President, Liu Shaoqi. As she came from a distinguished family dedicated to the Foreign Service and international affairs she was a highly educated, self-confident woman who spoke many languages.[42] Jiang Qing thought Wang Guangmei was stealing the spotlight, but Wang did not intend to outshine Jiang Qing. Because Mao never publicly introduced his wife to the Chinese public or foreign visitors, everyone regarded Wang Guangmei as the first lady of China. During the years in Yan'an every Party leader's wife was behind the scenes. However after 1959 Liu Shaoqi became President, allowing him more opportunity to attend diplomatic functions

where his impeccably mannered wife began to appear by his side. Salisbury stated, "The contrast with Jiang Qing, gauche, overeager, overdressed, insecure, became plain to everyone and certainly to Jiang, still hobbled by the old Party ban on her participation in politics."[43] On September 1962 the wife of President Sukarno of Indonesia arrived in Beijing. All of the events were comprehensively publicized in the *People's Daily* with many photos of Liu Shaoqi and his wife with Madame Hartini Sukarno seen throughout numerous mainland newspapers,[44] which made Wang Guangmei more exposed in the media. Salisbury continued saying that it would be impossible to imagine that Wang Guangmei was unaware of Jiang Qing's feelings. Nonetheless, Liu did admonish Wang protectively to remind her that she was not the First Lady.[45] It became clear that Jiang Qing had become jealous because only a few days after that incident, on September 29th, Jiang Qing's name was for the first time publicly mentioned as Mao's wife, when she was also pictured with Indonesia's First Lady. From that moment on, everyone recognized Jiang Qing as Mao's wife.[46] In addition to participating in international diplomacy, Wang Guangmei also played an important role in the Socialist Education Campaign, (1963) which attempted to revive socialist values in Chinese society through the use of the four cleanups.[47] Wang led an investigation of rural cadre corruption in Taoyuan, Hebei as a part of this campaign. Disguising her true identity, Wang stayed there for over five months, participating in mass meetings and building up a circle of local informants.[48] As a result, Wang painstakingly compiled numerous dossiers concerning graft and incipient capitalism among the local cadres. She concluded that:

> in Taoyuan the four uncleans [had existed] universally among the cadres. All of them, big or small have problems and cannot be trusted. Among the peasants too, she uncovered no less than 66 forms of incipient capitalism, from selling chickens to building independent family businesses. When her report was submitted to her husband ... he instructed her to initiate public struggle sessions against the miscreants. Forty out of forty-seven ranking cadres in Taoyuan were publicly criticized or removed from office. That summer of 1964, Liu and his wife made a well-publicized tour of central and south China ... to spread their warnings against party corruption and to urge the need for stern correctives.[49]

Because her political activities were so widely publicized in the media Wang Guangmei became a household name. Resembling a jealous actress who saw her rival getting more attention Jiang Qing's resentment towards Wang Guangmei grew. Accordingly, when Wang Guangmei's popularity rose, so did Jiang Qing's determination to find something meaningful outside the role as a housewife.

Given Jiang Qing's professional background, it can be understood that she was an ambitious woman who sought recognition, however, her options were limited. Jiang Qing was not interested in furthering the women's cause like Deng Yingchao, nor was she a model revolutionary. Jiang Qing was also not in the position to use her husband's position for her own purposes like Wang Guangmei. Jiang Qing was once an actress, a profession that was considered one of the lowest in society. The other wives had political clout. They were members of the CCP Central Committee or the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. They all attended important state functions and accompanied their husbands when visiting foreign heads of state. In Yan'an, Jiang Qing was seen as a woman who did not have the qualifications to be the Chairman's wife. And although the Party could do nothing to stop the marriage, they could make sure

that she did not have a role of political importance. Jiang Qing was not able to become the conventional CCP wife so while these other wives held positions of prominence and were widely recognized, Jiang Qing was unknown and confined to the household. Yet if the Party limited her to the domestic realm, Jiang Qing would use her household power, as Chinese women always used in the past to compensate for their exclusion from public or political life.[50] However after decades of being a housewife, Jiang Qing wanted a new role to play. It made sense that given her background she should become involved in the arts. As this thesis progresses, it will become evident that Mao's *Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art* (1942) were the turning point for Jiang Qing. Advocating her husband's theories of proletarian culture would become the basis of her recognition. However Jiang Qing would have to wait until the 1960s for the opportune time to assert her opinions and turn them into concrete reforms to revolutionize dramas. Through these constant reforms, revisions, and with Mao's tacit support, Jiang Qing became a rising political star and her work in revolutionizing Beijing opera became the most dominant art form of the Cultural Revolution.

This chapter on Jiang Qing as a Woman has examined her life experiences and the inherent theme of recognition that helped set the stage for her later life. The historical collapse of the old order, Imperialism, and the May Fourth Era were factors which not only impacted the entire country, but intimately affected Jiang Qing's life. She was born into poverty and raised in an unstable family

environment. In her childhood she was faced with great hardship, but the experience made her a stronger individual. Perilous times gave her the chance to be a woman with an identity - something that her mother never had. Jiang Qing could leave her natal home, seek her own destiny, become a new woman in the new society, and become a recognized actress. Her ambition to succeed enabled her to take the small steps at becoming a better actress.

When she went to Yan'an, she moved her life in a completely different direction. First, as a student of political theory who believed that Communism would restore national order and integrity, and later as a dutiful wife, who was forced to give up her identity for the Party. Being Mrs. Mao fulfilled her for the time being, but Jiang Qing wanted more. She realized that her achievement in marrying Mao meant little when women like Wang Guangmei were becoming more prominent and recognized. Jiang Qing resented this and this situation provided her with the impetus to find a more satisfying role. When she heard Mao's Talks at Yan'an, she had found a way to transcend the role of the housewife. With her experience in the arts she could elaborate on her husband's ideas and take them to the theatrical realm while becoming recognized as comrade Jiang Qing, not just the wife of Mao Zedong.

This thesis will now commence onto the next chapter, "Jiang Qing as a Theoretician." It will begin to examine the process of how Jiang Qing went from

being a traditional housewife to becoming the most recognized figure in culture as the *qi shou* (旗手, standard bearer) of literature and arts.

[1] Ross Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 20-1.
[2] Huamin Zhong. *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing) [Hong Kong: Youlian Chubanshe, 1967), 6.
[3] Roxane Witke and Margery Wolfe, "Chiang Ch'ing's Coming of Age" *Women in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 171.
[4] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 6-7.
[5] See Witke and Wolfe, "Chiang Ch'ing's Coming of Age" *Women in Chinese Society,* 173 and Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon,* 22.
[6] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 22.
[7] Ibid., 23.
[8] Ibid., 23.
[9] Ibid., 24.
[10] Witke and Wolfe, "Chiang Ch'ing's Coming of Age" *Women in Chinese Society,* 176.
[11] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 34.
[12] Ibid., 37-8. I also define independence to solely mean identity and not economic independence. Her marriage to Fei meant a new identity as Fei's wife hence the contradiction.
[13] Witke and Wolfe, "Chiang Ch'ing's Coming of Age" *Women in Chinese Society*, 186.
[14] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 41.
[15] Ibid., 43.
[16] Ibid., 43.
[17] Yingjin Zhang, "Imagining the Modern Woman in Shanghai," *The City in Modern Chinese Literature and Film: Configurations of Space, Time, and Gender* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 189.
[18] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 49.
[19] Ibid., 56.
[20] Ibid., 56.
[21] Ibid., 67.
[22] Ibid., 70.
[23] Ibid., 95.
[24] Ibid., 101.
[25] Ibid., 102.
[26] Ibid., 113.
[27] Ibid., 125.
[28] Anchee Min, *Becoming Madame Mao* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 99.
[29] Ibid., 99.
[30] Harrison E. Salisbury, *The Long March* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 1.
[31] Wang Xingjuan, *Li Min, He Zizhen yu Mao Zedong* (Li Min, He Zizhen, and Mao Zedong) [Beijing, 1993], 127-8. Cited in Qiu Jin, *The Culture of Power: The Lin Biao Incident in the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 141.
[32] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 139.
[33] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 58.
[34] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 149.
[35] Ibid., 149.
[36] Ibid., 154.
[37] Ibid., 187.
[38] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 47.
[39] Jin Qiu, *The Culture of Power: The Lin Biao Incident in the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 141.
[40] Ibid., 141.
[41] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon,* 190.
[42] Harrison Salisbury, *The New Emperors* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1992), 227.
[43] Ibid., 229.
[44] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon,* 239.

[45] Salisbury, *The New Emperors,* 229.
[46] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 58.
[47] Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton & Company, 1990), 807.
[48] Ibid., 593.
[49] Ibid., 593.
[50] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon,* 218.

Chapter Three

Jiang Qing as a Theoretician

Success for Jiang Qing meant being able to transcend the role of the housewife and be recognized for her efforts in the arts. This would be a formidable task, as she could not revive her role as a moderately successful dramatic actress because she was in the unique position as Mao's wife. Furthermore, party discipline forbade her to have any political involvement. Yet despite these obstacles, Jiang Qing went from being a housewife who occasionally dabbled in art and literary affairs, to becoming the most prominent figure in Chinese culture through the revolutionization of Beijing opera and the development of model operas based on contemporary and revolutionary themes.

This chapter will argue that Jiang Qing's success could be attributed to good timing, the right position in the changing political environment, and surrounding herself with theorizing radical intellectuals like Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Yu Huiyong, while allying herself with certain high level politicians such as Mao, Kang Sheng, Ke Qingshi, and Lin Biao. By examining some of Mao's speeches and writings, then later comparing them to Jiang Qing's own words, this thesis will demonstrate that in her unique position, she elaborated and carried out Mao's ideas concerning art and literature, while acting as his cultural representative. Then, this thesis will examine Jiang Qing's dramatic theory of the Basic Task, the Three Prominences and their relationship to the

development of the model dramas. By that point, Jiang Qing was seen as the most powerful and recognized person in the arts. However she sought to take her dramas to a new level of prominence by turning them into films. This was Jiang Qing's legacy and her greatest contribution to the Cultural Revolution's goal of revolutionizing culture to represent the masses. Finally, Jiang Qing's close relationship with Lin Biao from 1964-1966 will be addressed because that allowed Jiang to move from the relatively small stage of the arts to play her biggest role as the politician, where she was represented as Mao's political spokesperson and acted as a mentor to millions of Red Guards.

Good Timing

Good timing is the first element that accounted for Jiang Qing's success. Compared with the 1940s and 1950s, the 1960s proved to be the most successful period for Jiang Qing's reform of Beijing opera. Before 1949, various attempts had been made to reform Chinese opera. One of the earlier and most notable efforts in the twentieth century came from Mei Lanfang and his literary collaborator, Qi Rushan. They introduced gestures, movements, and singing styles from the *kunqu* performing style into Beijing opera which were generally recognized as improvements.[1] For a long period of time these operas were considered sources of entertainment However, that irrevocably changed when Mao presented his views in his *Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art*

(1942). This became the single most important document for the CCP, dominating Chinese literary, artistic, and cultural norms for the following decades.[2]

The central idea of the Yan'an talks was that art and politics were indivisible. Mao believed that art, whether intended or not, propagated a certain viewpoint that, unlike the art of the West, could not be devoid of a political message. According to Mao:

> Art is propaganda and this means that the Chinese theatre must express the correct Party line on ... all matters. Art is part of the superstructure of society; it is affected by the economic base, which it can influence in turn. On artists falls the duty of ensuring that their work benefits the broad mass of the people, and not the bourgeoisie.[3]

The absolute aim was to create a diverse range of art that was both stimulating aesthetically, and politically correct.[4] Art should express creativity, yet also have popular appeal to propagate the Communist doctrine to the masses. In literature and art, Mao stressed that *puji gongzuo,* (普及工作, popularization) was more important than *tigao gongzuo* (提高工作, elevating the cultural level of the audience).[5] Moreover, Mao's emphasis on art as propaganda did not imply that he considered the culture of the past to be inferior. In fact, he argued that a splendid old culture had been created during the long period of Chinese feudal society But it was imperative to separate the refined old culture that possessed revolutionary character, with those that promoted the decadent decrepit feudal order.[6] I n essence, Mao believed that new revolutionary art and literature could be developed through the critical assimilation of historical works. From there,

experiments to reform Beijing opera were undertaken because of its popularity, prestige, and influence among the people.[7]

At that time, the best-known example of an assimilated historical work was the Beijing opera, *Bishang Liangshan* (逼上梁山 , Driven to Join the Liangshan Marsh Rebels) . It was one of the few operas that the Chairman gave his full support to.[8] The work was staged in December 1943 in Yan'an. On January 9, 1944, Mao wrote *Kanle Bishang Liangshan yihou xiegei Yan'an Pingjuyuan de Xin* (看了"逼上梁山"以后写给延安评剧院的信A Letter to the Yan'an Beiping Opera Company on seeing Driven to Join the Liangshan Marsh Rebels). The letter commended the actors for producing a history that was made by people who seized the dominance of the stage from the lords and ladies.[9] Mao wrote: "Now you have righted this reversal of history and restored historical truth ... thus opening up a new life for old opera."[10] From the successful reform of this particular Beijing opera, the government established committees to reform other operas in line with Communism. Jiang Qing became involved in this context, taking on a more professional role that went beyond being Mao's personal assistant and dutiful wife. She held minor positions on three committees: working in the Film Office (1948) and the Central Film Administrative Bureau (1949) of the Propaganda Department of the CCP Central Committee and from 1950-54 she was apart of the Film Enterprise Guidance Committee of the Ministry of Culture.[11] Jiang Qing wanted to apply Mao's concepts to revolutionize the arts but since she was on the sidelines, only holding minor positions in these

cultural committees, she was unable to make her voice heard. Hence, she was unrecognized - a humiliation for the wife of the Chairman.

The Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Culture played a tremendous role in implementing Mao's Yan'an Talks. Both used party discipline to keep Jiang Qing on the periphery as well. During the 1950s, these two cultural establishments were making reforms. However, Jiang Qing believed the process was too slow and demanded a more radical reform to bring Chinese culture in line with Communist thought. Unfortunately, she experienced little success because no one was interested in allowing someone of Jiang Qing's background to dictate the best method of reform. Furthermore, her interference was not appreciated and tolerance for the Chairman's wife was low.[12]

The Propaganda Department was responsible for the Party's major cultural activities.[13] Zhou Yang, China's cultural czar, was its chief. He enforced the Party's cultural line, ensuring ideological orthodoxy in every sphere of Chinese cultural life.[14] However, in the 1960s Zhou, like many other top officials in the Party, became disillusioned with Mao's policies and leadership after the failure of the Great Leap Forward (GLF). Although he was later labeled bourgeoisie and imprisoned, Zhou had been unswerving in his belief in, and implementation of, Mao's cultural policies.[15]

The Ministry of Culture's main responsibility was to revise traditional works based on historical settings, reforming the plot to bring it in line with Communism. In order to achieve this operas were rewritten. All phrases in the dialogue that seemed reactionary, and any passage showing a popular hero in a

humiliating position, were deleted.[16] Sentences describing a sympathetic person as superstitious, or even religious, were removed and, in many cases, the reactionary characters were placed in a negative light while the main heroic character was accentuated.[17]

Despite her minor role in reform committees, Jiang Qing sought other avenues to not only realize her desire for recognition, but also to achieve Mao's goals. She began her reform crusade by repeatedly advocating Mao's revolutionary stance in art and literature at various meetings with a repudiation of the film, *Qing Gong Mi Shi* (清宮秘史, Inside Story of the Qing Court). However, from examining different sources it appears that her role in this important criticism is unclear. For instance, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing on Literature and Art* (1968) was a chronological account of the major events in art and literature that was reportedly initiated, sponsored by, and related to Jiang Qing. It was a government-sponsored source that hailed her as the great standard-bearer and dauntless warrior.[18] This work praised Jiang Qing for her *Qing Gong Mi Shi* reform crusade for persistently advocating the Chairman's revolutionary line. Liu Shaoqi praised the film but Mao thought it was a national betrayal.[19] Nevertheless, this source said that Jiang Qing persisted in the truth, energetically rejecting the consensus and refuted with a sense of righteousness and stern words, insisting on its criticism.[20] Another source, Zhong's *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (, The Biography of Jiang Qing) (1967) which was published in Hong Kong, outside of the Party's influence, took a different stance. Zhong was more critical of Jiang Qing's role in the criticism, arguing that she had attacked the drama on

her own (without Mao backing) and was not only unsuccessful, but also blocked by Liu and Zhou Yang.[21]

In 1951 Jiang Qing attempted another dramatic criticism of the highly acclaimed film *Wu Xun Zhuan* (武训传, The Story of Wu Xun). It received much support and praise from Zhou Yang and the cultural organs he represented. Wu Xun was a famous beggar from Shandong who put aside some of his earnings and eventually established schools, providing education to the poor.[22] On the surface, it is easily understood why Wu Xun's work was widely praised however, the story posed a serious problem. Both Mao and Jiang criticized *Wu Xun* because the work lacked the element of class struggle. As a result, Mao sent his wife to Shandong to conduct an extensive investigation into Wu Xun's history. [23] Jiang Qing saw this as an opportunity to avenge the Zhou Yang establishment and promote her radical views - an opportunity made possible by Mao's support.[24] Returning to Beijing Jiang launched a severe attack against Zhou for his stubbornness to resist criticism. Zhou Yang, a man undoubtedly more powerful in cultural circles, was able to fend off Jiang's attack. As Jiang Qing's resentment towards Zhou and his supporters grew, her determination to adhere to Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art intensified.

Zhong alleged that Jiang Qing was successful because in this instance, she had Mao's backing. He implied that her previous attack on *Qing Gong Mi Shi* was unsuccessful because she did not have the required support to be taken seriously. Zhong claimed that Jiang Qing had won the battle because the Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Culture both issued directives calling for the film

to be criticized and ordering those who supported the film, like Zhou Yang, to make self-criticism.[25] People began to take note of Jiang Qing because Mao's vocal support certainly helped her cause, but Zhong said that her role was not mentioned in the press.[26] In 1954 the reorganization of the Film Guidance Committee dispensed with her position - the only official one she held on cultural matters.[27] Her membership in the China-Russia Friendship Association also ceased to exist. In the end, Zhong argued that Jiang Qing won the battle of *Wu Xun Zhuan* but lost the war against Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Yang when her positions in art and literary circles dissolved. However, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* indicated that this was the beginning of her success at becoming the standard bearer of the arts.[28]

In the next seven years it looked like Jiang Qing had retired from public life because Red Guard publications did not mention any role she played at that time.[29] It is unclear what she did. One explanation is that she may have returned to the role of the housewife, which would have been a failure in her desire to seek recognition. In order to understand what ultimately brought her out of retirement and into public life, the cultural policies, political events, and her own personal problems during 1954 to 1961 will now be examined.

At this time, the Ministry of Culture was abuzz with activity, creating new operas containing contemporary and revolutionary themes. However, this large-scale, hastily executed movement to revise or originate such a large number of operas resulted in a lowering of artistic standards and with the departure from the stage of popular traditional elements, attendance fell sharply.[30] This set-back was

in tandem with the Hundred Flowers Movement (1956-57). Reactionary operas were relaxed and many traditional operas were returned to their original forms. Operas containing revolutionary themes were performed far less often.[31] However right after the Hundred Flowers the political climate changed, reflecting a modification in art and literature policy. In the spring of 1957 the Party launched the Anti-Rightist Campaign against the outspoken intellectuals who expressed strong criticisms against the Party during the Hundred Flowers. Because many people were labeled as rightists, the arts community felt their artistic freedom was compromised They felt great pressure to tow the party line by promoting literature and art with contemporary and revolutionary themes.[32] The theatre was naturally affected by this abrupt change in policy.

In the fall of 1958 the Party issued *Guanyu Jiaoyu Gongzuo de Zhishi,* (关于教育工作的指示, The Directive Concerning Educational Tasks) in coordination with the GLF and instituted a new policy of uniting education with productivity.[33] Students and teachers of drama institutes were 'sent down' to the people's communes to receive a revolutionary education and write and stage plays to meet the political aims of the GLF. At the same time, opera was to 'walk on two legs,' which meant theatrical companies would split their repertories between those with contemporary and revolutionary themes and those with traditional and historical elements. The latter would bring the audiences into the theatres and the other would be used to relay to correct political message.[34]

Politically, the failure of the GLF forced Mao at Lushan to withdrawal from daily political activities. As food shortages and depressed peasant morale

propelled China into economic chaos, the party bureaucracy became disenchanted with Mao's ideological stance:[35] "It is not known whether Mao was compelled to withdrawal by colleagues who were enraged at the Leap's policies or whether he withdrew willingly, but in April 1959 he stepped down from the presidency of the government to be replaced by Liu Shaoqi."[36] Mao did retain his chairmanship and continued as the dominant ideological theoretician, dealing with the Sino-Soviet Split (1960), but he was cut off from day-to-day political functions of the Party.[37]

As the economy was in a state of crisis, the Party sought to revive it by whatever means proved the most effective. They introduced material incentives and private ownership of small land plots to encourage production. They also sought to help certain wrongly accused 'rightist' intellectuals who had been denounced after the Hundred Flowers. Thus, the party began a period of relaxation in order to gain the cooperation of the intellectuals to help them solve the economic difficulties and to replace the Soviet experts who had been withdrawn following the Sino-Soviet Split.[38]

In regards to the arts, the situation yet again relaxed the 'walk on two legs' policy, allowing for more traditional operas to be played for the audiences' enjoyment and less on the promotion of government propaganda.[39] As the GLF waned theatrical companies gave more attention to the older pieces and by 1960 these pieces constituted ninety-seven percent of all produced.[40] Society was recovering from the socioeconomic catastrophe of the GLF and the Party was naturally more concerned with increasing production and putting the nation back

on track by putting Mao's ideas concerning art and literature were put on the backburner.

The period of the late 1950s was also a source of turbulence for Jiang Qing, exacerbated by marital conflict and the fact that she was without a public role to play. With her beauty, talent, and recognized position as Mao's wife she probably had great ambition and expectations for her future. However as Jin argued in *The Culture of Power* (1999), the Mao-Jiang relationship was problematic from the beginning.[41] Because of her past as a Shanghai actress she was considered by many to be unsuitable to be Mao's wife and hence, the First Lady. Initially there was a backlash against her marriage, but in time she was recognized as Mao's wife. However, by the late 1950s, Jiang Qing felt that she was on the brink of abandonment:

> Mao understood Jiang's problem. "What really bothers her is that she is afraid that one day I might not want her anymore. Mao told Dr. Li. "I have told her many times that this is not true and that she should stop worrying about it." Mao's promises did little to reassure Jiang Qing, since she knew that Mao had affairs with numerous young women. According to Dr. Li, Mao in his later years did not even bother to hide his affairs from Jiang Qing. Once, Dr. Li caught Jiang crying on a park bench just outside of Mao's compound in Zhongnanhai. She begged him not to tell anyone and told him that Mao's womanizing was becoming so flagrant that she feared that he would eventually abandon her.[42]

Personally, Mao and Jiang lived separate lives. It was this separation that put Jiang Qing in a precarious situation. While Mao continued his womanizing, Jiang Qing had no possibility of finding a lover. The sexual double standard still existed in China that it was acceptable for a man to have a lover, but immoral for a woman to do the same. Jiang Qing had no choice but to forego a romantic

attachment and sexual contact, for any such discretion would give Mao the perfect excuse to abandon her.[43] But, being alone in her marriage to Mao was just as dangerous to Jiang Qing since Mao's history of leaving one wife for a fresh young face was all to close to home. This situation was further exacerbated by her own search for recognition- if Mao abandoned her she was no one, but if the relationship stayed the same, she was no one. Perhaps if Jiang Qing found a role aside from being his wife - a more professional one - relevant to culture or politics, she could be of use to her husband and thereby assuage her fears. In the 1950s, Jiang Qing had little public role However by the 1960s, the timing was in her favor because it new political events were bringing Jiang Qing into the spotlight. By the late 1950s and early 1960s Mao had many issues, such as his political differences with Liu Shaoqi, the Sino-Soviet split, and the failure of the GLF to contend with. At that point, Mao could utilize Jiang Qing's professional experience to help carry out his ideas concerning the arts on his behalf and in turn, she could transcend the role of the housewife. This new and evolving professional relationship was beneficial to Mao but extraordinary for Jiang Qing because it reinforced her position as a recognized figure for Mao's cause. From there her identity as a housewife abruptly ended while her image of Mao's carrier of MZT in the arts flourished.

A Favorable Position in the Changing Political Climate

The second element of Jiang Qing's success lay in her position in the changing political climate. While Jiang Qing had held only minor position in cultural affairs and was generally unrecognized for her work, she did have one advantage: she was Mao's wife and that accorded her a unique position that provided certain privileges. The authority derived from being in touch daily with the Chairman and it appeared that she, to some extent, served as political confidante to her husband. For example, Lieberthal stated that Jiang Qing flew to Lushan when Mao informed her about the troubles that erupted there with Defense Minister Peng Dehuai.[44] Apparently Mao had called her from the meeting to discuss with her his response to Peng's challenge. Therefore, it can be inferred that to some degree there was some discussion between Mao and Jiang on political matters. It can also be inferred that she was in a unique position to convince Mao that culture needed reform and that she, given her professional background, was the right person for the task. In the spring of 1962 Mao asked her to draft a policy statement on the CCP's position on culture.[45] Following the Chairman's instructions, she provided some of the background for Mao's call at the Beidaihe Conference to promote proletarian culture.[46]

The Beidaihe Conference (August 1962) was an important event in modern Chinese politics because it marked the polarization between Mao and his supporters' leftist line and the Liu-Deng economic and politically ordered line as to which direction China should embark on.[47] Just before this meeting, the latter

group had been focused on formulating policies to improve production through the adoption of more liberal economic policies such as the individual *dan gan* farming policy, which was intended to provide peasants with their own private plots of land.[48] This would encourage production and prevent the famines that had occurred during the GLF. Mao was against such policies and angry at the support for the Liu and Deng faction. To the Chairman this policy was an obvious retreat from the socialist policies he supported. Consequently, at the end of the conference Mao emphatically warned against the possibility of a capitalist or even feudal restoration in the PRC.[49] To have the country revert back to the pre-1911 capitalist ways was the worst thing that could happen to China; it was far worse than any war, famine, or revolution that the Chinese could ever experience.

The next month at the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP (September 1962), Mao attempted to regain his power by giving the impassioned cry, "Never forget class struggle!" This was an important moment because it reflected Mao's underlying fear that China was beginning to move towards the path of revisionism.[50] The struggle for control over the theatre became an integral part of Mao's ideological and political counter-offensive. Listening to his wife's arguments about cultural reform, he instructed her to examine thousands of pieces of Beijing opera and make suggestions regarding the banning of those that were deemed ideologically unfit.[51] Once again Jiang Qing called the attention of Zhou Yang and the Ministry of Culture and was not taken seriously. Zhou was far too influential in cultural affairs to be concerned with Jiang Qing and accordingly, her frustration towards him became more radicalized. Their

longstanding battle would be played out in the Cultural Revolution, with Jiang Qing triumphant, justifying her 'correct' position given her relationship to Mao and MZT.

In theory, the Tenth Plenum embraced Mao's overall analysis . But in its concrete provisions it was closer to the more liberal methods that had been worked out to bring recovery to the GLF. This compromise produced a communiqué that in some paragraphs, echoed Mao's rhetoric and in others drove home the logic of Liu and Deng.[52] It was evident that these two groups had divergent opinions concerning China's future. As the conflict between Mao and Liu intensified, Mao wanted to get rid of Liu and his supporters represented in the military, education, arts and literature, and economic departments.[53] The Party controlled the entire country by demarcating six zones based on locality. Mao had support from Lin Biao, his newly appointed Minister of Defense and of the two zones: *huadong,* (华东, Eastern China) and *zhongnan,* (中南, Central Southern China.) Liu had the support of the other four zones, but Mao was confident that he could recover his power by *yi wang da jing* (一网打尽, to round up the enemies in one fell swoop). Mao wanted to find a way to rid Liu and his numerous supporters in one strike.[54] There were many top officials who supported Liu and his policies including his wife, Wang Guangmei, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen and Zhou Yang. The Cultural Revolution became Mao's *yi wang da jing,* a swift development that removed Liu and his supporters in one comprehensive radical leftist strike against the Party establishment.

Since the 1940s, Jiang Qing had been influenced by Mao's *Talks of the Yan'an Forum*, believing that art and literature should reflect class struggle and the representation of contemporary and revolutionary themes through the portrayal of the worker, peasant, and soldier. However, given the changing political climate Jiang Qing developed an intense hatred that she shared with her husband against the Liu-Deng bureaucratic establishment. Liu was the state President and responsible for the day-to-day governing of the country. Jiang Qing realized that Liu was her main opponent and she regarded his presence as the primary reason for her lack of recognition regarding her participation in revolutionizing Beijing opera. Like Mao's *yi wang da jing,* Jiang Qing needed to find a way to get rid of Liu and his supporters in one strike if she was to achieve recognition in the arts. In addition, Mao had become increasingly suspicious of the Party bureaucracy and against this feeling of revisionism, Mao saw Jiang Qing as a loyal supporter who had consistently carried out his line of thinking. This is aptly shown in the 1961 quatrain Mao wrote entitled *Ti Lijin Tongzhi* (, To Comrade Li jin)[55] on the back of a photograph Jiang Qing had taken of the Fairy Cave in Lushan. At the time, Jiang Qing's image was relatively unknown and this gesture was tantamount to legitimizing her public position. As this thesis progresses, it will be seen that she used this poem at the height of the Cultural Revolution to legitimate her close relationship with Mao, implying his support and an intimate understanding of Mao Zedong Thought (MZT).

Mao also used his wife as well as the support of two other allies: Kang Sheng and Lin Biao, which coincided with the development of the independent

political ambitions of these three individuals.[56] All of them agreed on the desirability of changing succession so that Liu or someone who shared his views would not eventually take full power from Mao. Thus, this period became entangled up in coalition politics, ultimately giving Jiang Qing the chance to align herself with those who could help her realize her personal aspirations to be recognized.

Surrounding herself with the right group of people

The right timing and being in the right position helped Jiang Qing. But ultimately it was those two factors combined with the support that she surrounded herself with that brought a successful outcome. Mao was, of course, central to her efforts. But Jiang Qing also found an alliance with two other men, Kang Sheng and Ke Qingshi, who had known her from the pre-Revolutionary days.[57] As stated previously, Kang and Jiang came from the same hometown and Kang had helped her obtain CCP membership. Kang himself had risen to prominence within the CCP, but later fell from grace. He wanted to recover the power that was taken away from him:

> Kang specialized in three areas of work: liaison with other Communist parties, public security, and higher education ... Kang was evidently fairly sophisticated ... in Marxist-Leninism while he was learning the finer points of police work from the NKVD in the Soviet Union in the mid-1930's, and his ongoing involvement with the issues of revisionism and counterrevolution.[58]

In regards to public security, Kang was partly blamed for some of the aftershocks of the Khrushchev de-Stalinization speech at the Soviet Twentieth Party Congress. As such he was dropped from full membership in the Politburo (September 1956).[59] However, by the early 1960s, he became more politically involved because the Sino-Soviet Split was reaching a critical point and Mao needed a theorist to assist with the dispute.[60] According to Lieberthal, Kang, probably through his long friendship with Jiang Qing, learned about her own efforts and Mao's push to proletarianize Chinese culture. Kang could play a useful role, especially if he could link it to counterrevolutionary activities to justify his involvement.[61] He used his linkage at the Tenth Plenum to launch an attack on Xi Zhongxun's involvement in the production of a purportedly 'counterrevolutionary' novel about Liu Zhidan, an early Communist guerilla fighter in Shaanxi. Kang claimed this work not only vilified Mao, but also argued that the use of novels for the purpose of contemporary political criticism was a new invention thus establishing a theoretical link with Jiang Qing's own attempts to call Mao's attention to the political attacks against the Chairman that she had seen in the writings of intellectuals since the 1950's.[62]

Because Kang also specialized in higher education, he had access to prominent educational institutions, knew some of the most influential intellectuals, and cultivated those with radical leftist ideals. From Beijing, he introduced Jiang Qing to intellectuals from the Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, specifically Guan Feng, Qi Benyu, and Lin Jie, who specialized in history and philosophy.[63] In Shanghai, Kang

introduced her to the Municipal Propaganda Department, where she met the director, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan. Radical intellectuals met Jiang Qing who, as Mao's wife, was in a position to exploit their talents for her own agenda. Jiang Qing provided the nucleus for *wenge pai* (文革派, cultural radicals) by assembling a group of relatively young radical intellectuals to help her reform Beijing opera.[64] Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan had the closest relationship with Jiang Qing because they helped her achieve the success she sought. As this thesis progresses, it will become clear that they were instrumental in assisting her to formulate an approach to become recognized as a theoretician of the dramatic arts through the revolutionization of Beijing opera.

As stated previously, Jiang Qing faced considerable opposition from the Beijing cultural establishment. However Shanghai was full of leftist spirit, a by-product of the city's rivalry with Beijing, which was in part due to Shanghai's efforts in the Communist era to compensate for its historical past.[65] Shanghai's was a positive environment for reform, which Jiang Qing used this to bui9ld a base of support, thriving in a freedom far removed from Beijing's atmosphere of bureaucracy. She already had the endorsement of the radical intelligentsia, so Kang Sheng assisted her in expanding her political base by involving Shanghai mayor, Ke Qingshi. Ke had been one of the most enthusiastic supporters of Mao, his GLF policies, and his marriage to Jiang. When Jiang Qing was in Shanghai, Ke made sure that she was well attended to and had access to all the resources she needed. In late 1962 Kang Sheng spoke with Ke about the need to have literature

and art portray proletarian heroes, a line that was very much in line with Jiang's own thinking.[66]

Jiang Qing had emerged at the forefront as the most radical activist of MZT, and Beijing opera reform had become a major political and ideological issue. Despite this recognition she still struggled to establish her signature repertoire of proletarian theatre in the face of the Beijing cultural establishment. In 1963, Jiang Qing gave the script of one of her model works, *Hong Dengji* (红灯记, The Red Lantern) to the Beijing Opera Institute, attached to the Ministry of Culture, to be adapted into an opera.[67] Then, she gave the script of the Shanghai drama, *Ludang Huozhong* (芦荡火种, Spark Amid the Reeds) to the Number One Beijing Opera Troupe attached to the Beijing Party Committee and then invited the Shanghai Opera Troupe to Beijing to promote the production. Both of these actions were carried out without the permission of the cultural bureaucracy.[68] With Mao's support Jiang Qing felt that she could interfere at will and override bureaucratic channels. Peng Zhen said the latter drama was crudely written although his objections probably had more to do with jurisdictional issues rather than actual content.[69] Objections aimed at Jiang Qing were usually done so indirectly. Verbally, they went along with her reforms Bbut behind the scenes, they sabotaged them by not providing a theatre for her to rehearse in, diverting performers to other productions, and denying her access to funds. From every angle, Jiang Qing faced some sort of opposition from the cultural hierarchy that was uninterested in radically altering historical dramas with contemporary revolutionary themes. Mao was also frustrated with the cultural establishment and

their lack of reforms. Mao depicted them as a group of the dead, which ultimately sealed their fate. He discussed the situation of culture in a speech on December 12, 1963:

> The dead still dominate in many departments. As for such departments as the opera, great problems exist. The social and economic base has changed, but the arts as part of the super-structure, which serve this base, still remain a serious problem... Is not it absurd that many Communists are enthusiastic about promoting feudal and capitalist art, but not socialist art? [70]

The cultural official's resistance to Jiang Qing's interference reached a climax at the Beijing Opera Festival on Contemporary Themes from July 5-31, 1964 where Jiang Qing presented some of her works. Mao, top cultural officials, and other theatrical professionals were in the audience, listening to Jiang Qing's first public speech entitled, *Tan Jingju Geming* (谈京剧革命 , On the Revolution of Beijing Opera). This speech was Jiang's debut onto the political stage. It elaborated on some of the main ideas encompassed in Mao's previous speeches and writings. In this speech, Jiang Qing used MZT to explain the importance of the revolution of Beijing opera reform and developed the guiding principles on this issue. This was an important work in applying Marxist-Leninism and MZT in solving the problems concerning the revolution of Beijing opera.

Through quantitative analysis, Jiang Qing argued that Beijing opera needed reform because there were few theatrical companies, not including amateur troupes and unlicensed companies, that still highlighted feudalistic images. She argued that there were approximately three thousand theatrical

companies and over two thousand eight hundred of their stages were still occupied by kings, generals, ministers, beauties, and ghosts.[71] Professional drama companies still predominantly produced plays that were occupied with dead images from foreign or historically themed productions. In her speech, she argued that there were 600 million people in China and only a handful of landlords, rich peasants, and counterrevolutionaries so Jiang Qing wanted to know why the present themes were serving these latter groups?[72] She claimed that the peasants grow the food that everyone eats, the workers make the clothes everyone wears, and the PLA stands guard at the fronts of national defense for all Chinese people. These three groups are the real creators of history and the true masters of our country.[73] Therefore, it is imperative that revolutionary opera be based on contemporary themes represent these people's lives since the establishment of the PRC. As Jiang Qing believed that the theatre should educate the people, she also stressed that images of contemporary heroes be presented.

Next, Jiang Qing highlighted the point that few people have had experience developing revolutionary plays. She argued that writers should acquire some life experience in the dramas they would be composing. In addition to writing new plays, Jiang Qing said the key to tackling this problem was to formulate a three-way combination between the leadership, the professional artists, and the people.[74] She praised the drama, *Nanhai changcheng* (南海长城, The Great Wall along the South Coast) because they followed this process. First, the leadership set the theme and then the professional playwrights went three times to acquire experience about participating in a military operation.[75] After the

play was completed, many leading members from the Guangzhou Military Command participated in discussions, opinions were brought forth, and revisions were made. Jiang Qing said that *Nanhai changcheng* was an example of creating a good revolutionary play based on a contemporary theme in a relatively short period of times because they followed this process to success.[76]

This speech is noteworthy because on the surface, Jiang Qing was elaborating on the revolution of Beijing opera, and there was an underlying message to her landmark speech. By stating that the art process needed to be reformed and properly managed, she was arguing that she should manage the process, not the established Ministry of Culture. She was also indirectly attacking the 'dead' cultural establishment as Mao had done seven months previously in his speech on December 12, 1963. Jiang Qing argued that the cultural establishment should be held accountable for not reforming culture in a more radical fashion that satisfied Mao. In addition, Jiang argued that overthrowing the feudal elements and the 'dead' cultural establishment, heroic characters and revolutionary themes could be fully developed, inspiring the masses to move forward.[77] In turn, revolutionary operas could reflect the themes and lives of the workers, peasants, and soldiers, while protecting the socialist economic base that Mao had elaborated on in his Yan'an Talks. In this speech, Jiang Qing's remarks appear more dogmatic and less theoretical than Mao's own thinking. There seems to be little doubt that she was acting as a roving protector for Mao, focusing attention on his major ideological concerns which had been developing more rapidly since his political problems at Lushan.[78] As this thesis progresses, it will

be seen that Mao's two concepts, the promotion of class struggle and the portrayal of positive heroic characters became the foundations for Jiang Qing's own dramatic theory of the 'Basic Task' and the 'Three Prominences.' Jiang Qing merely elaborated, radicalized, and carried out his conception of what constituted good Socialist art and literature.

Jiang Qing's speech highlighted Mao's concepts, but it was her role in *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office,* a contentious work by Wu Han, the prominent Ming historian and deputy mayor of Beijing, that enabled her to knock down the 'dead' Beijing cultural establishment that stood in the way of her success and recognition. From 1962 Jiang Qing and her radical supporters talked to the directors of the Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Culture about criticizing *Hai Rui,* but they typically refused. Jiang Qing would not give up, convincing her husband that this work was an indirect attack on his leadership. Later Mao saw this refusal to recognize this issue, he felt that his power was being undermined and as a result, he vehemently lashed out; calling the 'dead' Ministry of Culture a Palace of Hell.[79] Not responding to Jiang Qing's claim proved to be a huge mistake. The approach she adopted in criticizing *Hai Rui* had the greatest impact because she focused on the issue that Kang Sheng had raised earlier at the Tenth Plenum: novels and plays could be used for political purposes to discount Mao.[80] The publication of this criticism arguably marked the starting point of the Cultural Revolution.

Hai Rui Dismissed From Office

At a work conference in Shanghai in March of 1959, Mao had enjoined his colleagues to emulate two celebrated Confucian bureaucrats, Wei Zheng (AD 580-643) of the Tang dynasty and Hai Rui (AD 1515-87) of the Ming dynasty. Mao had criticized the work-style of those who feared to speak the truth, believing that people were entitled to their own opinions and speaking out should not be penalized.[81] Acting on Mao's injunctions, the Propaganda Department issued instructions for Wei Zheng and Hai Rui anthologies to be prepared. In addition, Zhou Yang encouraged a play about Hai Rui to be arranged. It was staged for the ten-year anniversary of the Republic and entitled *Hai Rui Sends a Memorial,* in reference to the Ming bureaucrat's legendary act of criticizing the Emperor directly.[82] Meanwhile, Wu Han also acted on Mao's injunction. In the 1930s, Wu was a well-known writer who satirized the GMD. As deputy mayorhe wrote a series of articles that not only referred to Hai Rui's criticisms of the Emperor, but also examined the point that Hai Rui was dismissed from office. [83] To take this idea to the next level Peng Dehuai had implicitly criticized Mao at Lushan and was promptly dismissed. That event in 1959 occurred at around the same time when Wu Han was writing his series. When reexamining this event, it seems coincidental that allegations that Hai Rui was Peng Dehuai were conceivable. However in the increasingly suspicious atmosphere of the mid-1960s, Jiang Qing had finally found the right time to strike. With Mao's support

she persuaded Yao Wenyuan to write a critique of the play that raised the hidden political issue supposedly involved.[84]

According to Zhong ,from September to October 1965, Mao tried to bring forth the issue of Hai Rui, but with little success. As a result of this setback he sent his wife to Shanghai where she enlisted the help of Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan to put together a criticism of Wu Han.[85] It is interesting that when Mao tried to bring about criticism he was unsuccessful; Jiang Qing succeeded. This shows evidence that Jiang and Mao worked together and that Jiang could do something that Mao could not. Under Yao's name the article, *Ping Xin Bian Lishi ju 'Hai Rui Baguan'* (评新编历史剧'海瑞罢官", A Criticism of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office) was published before the Five-Man Group under Peng Zhen could approve it. The Party Secretariat formed this group in 1964 to coordinate efforts towards cultural reform. According to Jiang Qing, the Five-Man Group generally followed the preferences of the Beijing cultural establishment.[86] Nevertheless, this group had the authority to approve and at least prepare a response to Yao's article, but this criticism was published in Shanghai without their consent. For the meantime Peng had succeeded in blocking its publication But it was eventually published with an editorial note in the *Jiefang Junbao* (解放军报 , Liberation Army Daily) and then with a skeptical introduction in the *People's Daily*.[87] This event was shocking because it was the first time in which the Shanghai Metropolitan Committee openly attacked Peng Zhen in Beijing. The Party was beginning to resemble the politics of an imperial court, where one faction in Shanghai was trying to bring down the other in

Beijing. In addition, Yao's publication brought the issue of cultural reform, which had largely been an academic matter argued by intellectuals, into a serious political concern.[88]

In the Five-Man Group, Peng had continued to obstruct the publication of further articles by radical leftist writers that were excessively critical of Wu Han, a subordinate and close friend of Peng's and thus putting his loyalty of Mao to the test.[89] Mao vigorously accused Peng of ignoring the analogy between Hai Rui and Peng Dehuai so Peng Zhen assured Mao that the Group would reach a consensus, which was later elaborated on in the *Eryue Tigang* (二月提纲, February Outline). This document acknowledged the problem of bourgeoisie tendencies in art and culture, but argued that problems should be 'reasoned out' under the principle of seeking the truth from the facts. In addition it suggested the struggle against bourgeoisie ideology should be conducted under the leadership prudently and over a long period of time.[90] This submission contradicted Mao's line that the struggle against bourgeoisie ideology should be treated as a political issue and a struggle where dissenting anti-socialist or counterrevolutionary views should be upgraded to the most serious political issue that required suppression by administrative means.[91]

The *Eryue Tigang* avoided any conclusion about the Wu Han issue and thus evaded the responsibility Mao had assigned to it. Liu Shaoqi had approved the Outline so it appeared that Mao's attempts had failed. This naturally led to a second effort under the auspices of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing in which another document, contrasting the February Outline, was prepared and entitled, *Lin Biao*

Tongzhi Weitou Jiang Qing Tongzhi Zhaokai de Budui Wenyi Gongzuo Zuotan Hui Jiyao (林彪同志委托江青同志召开的部队文艺工作座谈会纪要, The Summary of the Forum on the Work and Literature in Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Biao Entrusted Comrade Jiang Qing).[92] This document clearly stated that there were two divergent lines on the cultural front between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and it severely criticized those with the latter tendencies. It also vigorously opposed the more relaxed and scholarly kind of criticism envisioned in the February Outline. The Summary ignored the Wu Han issue altogether focusing instead on the Five-Man Group and their counterrevolutionary anti-socialist black-line, which they felt was diametrically opposed to MZT.[93]

Consequently at the May Politburo meeting, (1966) the *Wuyiliu Tongzhi,* (五一六通知, May 16th Circular) revoked the February Outline, dissolved the Five-Man Group, and established a new group called the *Wenhua Geming Xiaozu* (文化革命小组, Cultural Revolution Group) (CRG) in which Jiang Qing became a high ranking member with her supporters Kang Sheng, Yao Wenyuan, and Zhang Chunqiao. The CRG reported directly to the Standing Committee of the Politburo (Mao) rather than the Party Secretariat (Liu). And whereas the majority of the Five-Man Group had opposed Mao's idea of the Cultural Revolution, Mao's personal supporters and radical intellectuals surrounding Jiang Qing dominated the CRG.[94] After the Hai Rui incident, it was apparent that Mao believed that the Beijing establishment was too right and Shanghai was properly left. Mao would have to launch an attack on the capital that relied on forces

outside the central Party apparatus. First, he achieved this by radically altering the process and the committees he thought were obstacles. Then, he placed his supporters in positions of authority and power, utilizing his wife and her coalition of theorists and intellectuals.[95]

Jiang Qing's role in criticizing *Hai Rui* helped set the stage for the Cultural Revolution. This period symbolized a new cultural awakening and Jiang Qing used this time to reform Beijing opera, as she was determined to carry out Mao's instructions of creating drama that would reflect MZT and represent the workers, peasants, and solders. Following this path would give Jiang Qing the greatest success allowing her to be recognized in a way that being an actress once gave her. Jiang Qing and her radical leftist theorists and intellectuals collaborated on developing the dramatic theory of the 'Basic Task' and the 'Three Prominences,' which became the standard for all genres of art and literature. However, this theory exercised an extremely restrictive influence resulting in a few works being produced.

Jiang Qing's Dramatic Theory

Since Yao Wenyuan's criticism of *Hai Rui,* opera had become a contentious issue both politically and culturally. If the repudiation of the last seventeen years was essential in accordance with Mao's axiom, *bupo buli* (, Destruction must precede construction), then the major theme of the period was the creation of a new proletarian culture.[96] Dismantling the feudal historical dramas and creating new revolutionary plays that represented the masses reflected this theme. Jiang Qing thought MZT should be communicated in all mediums. And in the theatre, a revolutionary play must represent Chinese contemporary life. This would be achieved by creating revolutionary dramas, which presented the images of the worker, peasant, and soldier. Model revolutionary operas became a crucial artistic form used to promote Communist propaganda.

After Jiang Qing's first speech in 1964 she had reached a position of authority and influence with the Chairman to officially state the future direction of Chinese opera. Jiang Qing became the number one authority on the arts. But in order to maintain that position, she needed to do more than simply promote lofty ideas in her speeches. She needed to develop a concrete theoretical framework to demonstrate her method of reform and a campaign to promote it. Jiang Qing wanted her models to represent a new dramatic theory. She succeeded with the help of her coterie of radical theorists, specifically Yu Huiyong, who helped develop the theory. Yu was the principle theorist behind the models and behind *Chu Lan* (初瀾 First Wave), a pseudonym for the well-known writing group that

espoused radical cultural reform and attacks on Zhou Yang and his supporters.[97] With Jiang's patronage, Yu became the Minister of Culture in 1975 and 1976, and China's de facto chief arts administrator after 1971.[98] The result of their close collaboration was the development of theories referred to as *genben renwu* (根本任务, The Basic Task) and *san tuchu* (三突出, The Three Prominences).[99]

Genben renwu, (The Basic Task)

The 'Basic Task' of socialist literature and art was initially presented in Jiang's first public speech, *Tan Jingju Geming* (On the Revolution of Beijing Opera) in 1964 where she stressed the need to develop artistic images of revolutionaries that would inspire and lead the masses forward.[100] The main purpose of creating models was to promote the positive revolutionary attributes of the characters in order to inspire the viewing masses to conduct their lives in a similar fashion to these revolutionary characters. The 'Basic Task' of socialist art and literature was to create positive proletarian *dianxiang, xingxiang, renwu* (典型形象人物 proletarian heroic model, images, and characters) through highlighting the model heroic character.[101]

San Tuchu, (The Three Prominences)

Attributing the concept to Jiang Qing, Yu Huiyong on May 23, 1968 published the Three Prominences in the *Wenyi Bao,*[102] where it consequently became the manufacturing formula for all art and literary works.[103] The 'Three Prominences' elaborated on how the proletarian heroic models, images, and characters from the 'Basic Task' should be portrayed. Of all the characters, prominence should be given to the positive characters. Among the positive characters, prominence should be given to the heroic characters. Finally, among the heroic characters, prominence should be given to the main heroic character.[104]

The characterization, presentation and development of conflict were the two main features of the 'Three Prominences.'[105] The first feature highlighted different categories of characters ranging from the main heroic character to the negative character. The relationships between the characters were also important because the negative character was usually a Japanese officer or a class enemy who clearly represented the antithesis of the heroic character. The second feature was showing the progression of conflict and class struggle between the negative and heroic characters. This feature was for the sole purpose of revealing the virtues of the main heroic character that became conceptualized as the representative of the proletariat.[106]

In regards to characterization, by the early 1960, the controversy over the *zhongjian renwu* (中间人物, middle characters) was raised, questioning for whom artists created their works.[107] Zhou Yang and his deputy, Shao Quanlin

suggested that works should reflect the many different groups represented in Chinese society. They believed that society had changed and evolved since the Yan'an days and that art and literature should also reflect such newly emerging groups. On the other hand, the radicals like Jiang Qing stressed the continuing relevance of Mao's Yan'an Talks, in which literature and art must represent the worker, peasant and soldier. To the radicals, it made no difference that an urban middle class had emerged and actually was increasing along with industrialization.[108] They were prepared to ignore the existence of an emerging middle class and instead of treating this issue as a difference of opinion with Zhou Yang, the radicals attacked what they saw as a dissident view, upgrading it to the highest and most serious political issue. Fortunately, Yu Huiyong understood that the middle character issue was really a metaphor for China's class system and his position in *Chu Lan* helped solidify his relationship with Jiang Qing and the radicals. When the Cultural Revolution was in full swing she entrusted Yu with many projects because she was busy with more overtly political issues.[109]

Jiang Qing's 'Basic Task' and the 'Three Prominences' made strong references to Mao's own speeches and writings However, Jiang Qing was able to take Mao's position in art and literature to a new level of prominence and artistic control. As stated previously, Mao wrote a letter in 1944 to the Beijing Opera Troupe after seeing *Driven to Join the Liangshan Marsh Rebels.* He declared that it was a "watershed in the portrayal of history because it returned the people (renmin) their proper place as its creators."[110] This letter supported bringing people to their place on the stage and thereby correcting the ruling class'

distortions of history. *Driven to Join the Liangshan Marsh Rebels* used a historical theme to illustrate the Communist conflict with Japan.[111] To achieve this was a giant step forward in the process to reform Beijing opera, supporting future dramas to be reformed in this fashion. In the latter era and the political rhetoric of the Cultural Revolution, the concept of bringing people to their place on the stage and thereby correcting the ruling classes distortions of history was interpreted by the radicals as requiring the proletariat to take center stage.[112] By highlighting the main character, Jiang Qing's theory of the 'Three Prominences' achieved this aim. In addition, she insisted that works represent the worker, peasant, and soldier, following Mao's Yan'an Talks. However, Jiang Qing also took it another step because she provided the framework to create characters and the class struggle that would mobilize and inspire the audience. In every model opera, the 'Three Prominences' dominated every scene, promoting the hero as the perfect human being. The theory itself is quite simplistic, but in her unique position, Jiang Qing used her Yu Huiyong and his *Chu Lan* writing group to widely propagate this theory.

The Eight Model Dramas

Jiang Qing achieved another level of recognition through the development of the *Ba ge Geming Yangban xi* (八个革命样板戏, The Eight Model Revolutionary Plays) which included six Beijing operas: *Hong Deng ji*

(红灯记, The Red Lantern) *Qixi Baihu Tuan* (奇袭白虎团, Raid in the White Tiger Regiment) *Zhiqu Weihu Shan* (智取威虎山, Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy) *Hai Gang* (海港, On the Docks) *Long Jiang Song* (龙江颂, Ode to the Dragon River) and *Du Juan Shan* (杜鹃山, The Azalea Hill.) There were also two ballets *Hongse Niangzi Jun* (红色娘子军, The Red Detachment of Women) and *Bai Mao Nu* (白毛女, The White-Haired Girl). These eight models were central to the Cultural Revolution's task of mobilizing the masses, envisioned in a romanticized heroic character that was not only present in every model drama, but also the embodiment of Jiang Qing's dramatic theory as well.

Jiang Qing elevated the heroic characters through the dramatic image, stressing the promotion of class struggle and MZT. For example, the heroic image of Li Yuhe in *The Red Lantern* standing upright in a blood stained shirt is only one example, which may seem melodramatic today, but was a central dramatic image of the Cultural Revolution and a symbol of Proletarian culture. Heroism in this sense is a dramatic construction that evokes an emotive force in the model opera.[113] *The Red Lantern* exemplifies some of the general features of a model opera. Thematically, it can be seen as a wartime drama, liberation from the Japanese and a victory- commemorating those who made it possible.[114] Almost all of the eight model operas are rooted in actual historical events, but the Anti-Japanese and Civil war periods seem to be the most prolific themes. In regards to the character, Li Yuhe is a hero that accomplished *maodun chongtu* (矛盾冲突, the playing out and the resolution of conflict) through his source of power, his

support from the CCP, which was only made possible because of his superior moral qualities and dedication:[115] "The consequences of this access to power are demonstrated in the hero's ability to defeat enemies and to lead other heroes and positive characters."[116]

When generally examining the Eight Model Dramas, every lead character has displayed sorrow and an inherent repugnance towards an oppressive individual that negatively affectes their lives. In 'Raid in the White Tiger Regiment,' Yang Zirong's father was forced to commit suicide by the landlord. In the 'Red Detachment of Women,' the local tyrant, Nan Baitian, had oppressed Wu Qinghua. In 'The Red Lantern,' the warlords executed Li Tiemei's parents. In 'Azalea Hill,' Ke Xiang's husband was killed by the GMD. [117] These protagonists all experienced tragedy and hardship and from that point, their character development was reflected in their acquisition of MZT.[118] Wu Qinghua was driven to join the revolution to escape oppressive circumstances and seek personal revenge. She was rash and lacked discipline. Yet when she joined the CCP she found her calling: fighting against those who threatened to undermine Communism. Fang Haizhen in 'On the Docks' and Jiang Shuiying in 'Ode to the Dragon River' won every round of battle with their enemies without guns because they mastered MZT. Mao's teachings guided them to discover the hidden enemies and find solutions for every problem they encountered.[119] Under the Party's teachings all of these characters matured into heroes with high proletarian class-consciousness because they placed class interests ahead of personal hatred and revenge because they developed a profound understanding of MZT.[120] All of

these heroic characters represented models that the masses strove to emulate in their daily lives.

Another feature of the model operas was the promotion of the status of women. Jiang Qing had always felt the discrimination against women in society, which dated back to Confucianism:

> In all the eight model dramas, women were the leading characters or the most important supporting heroines. In fact, five out of the eight model operas had their story lines centered around female roles ... The message was simply expressed: women had the talents and abilities to lead the proletarian revolutionary cause. Old prejudices had to be cast aside.[121]

According to Jiang Qing, the popular male chauvinistic perception that a woman in power would lead to problems was categorically wrong. She was determined to be the woman who proved them all incorrect.

Another characteristic of the model operas was the complete elimination of romantic love, which was considered by Communism to be a product of Western bourgeois ideology.[122] Romantic love would spiritually pollute the masses so it was removed when plot lines were reformed. This is evident in the original 1959 film "The Red Detachment of Women." In this case, the audience could see evidence of the romantic feelings developing between Wu Qinghua and her mentor, Hong Changqin. When Hong tragically died Wu showed the emotion of a young woman who discovered her lover was dead. When Jiang Qing turned the film into a model ballet such feelings were entirely removed from the plot. Wu Qinghua fought the revolution because her love was exclusively for Chairman Mao.

In all of the models there is also no mention of any of the characters marital status. If these individuals had a personal relationship involving love or marriage, that would weaken the 'Three Prominences' because nothing could take away from the heroic main character's love for Chairman Mao. As a result, their personal lives, excluding anything that could be used to build up class hatred, was entirely removed. For example, Yang Zirong and Shao Jianbo in 'Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy' were single. Li Yongqi, the local militia leader was a widower. In 'The Red Lantern,' Li Yuhe was a widower. Yan Weicai, Guo Jiangguang, Fang Haizhen, and Jiang Shuiying from 'Raid on White Tiger Regiment,' 'Shajiabang,' and 'On the Docks,' respectively, were all single.[123] The implication for young women growing up in this period was that romantic love and demonstrative affection were wrong.[124] By ignoring their personal lives and focusing exclusively on their love for Chairman Mao, the heroic character became flat, larger than life, and unattainably perfect. With so many specific political purposes and artistic restrictions, it was inevitable that the model operas could not express or leave the audience with any vivid human emotions.

For a long period of time Jiang Qing worked to revise and polish the Eight Model Dramas that represented the 'Three Prominences.' From May 1 to June 17, 1967, in order to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Yan'an Talks, Jiang Qing organized a drama festival in Beijing that performed 218 versions of the eight dramas.[125] This event formally connected all of them into one cohesive group that became known as the Eight Model Revolutionary Operas. All members of the Politburo attended, offering support and thus making her position in the arts

unshakable. Yet her works were just plays, only limited to a small audience. Therefore, it was Jiang Qing's next aspiration to take these plays and make them into movies. Movies could propagate MZT on a greater scale and bring unimagined recognition to their producer.

Jiang Qing once said, "When you perform a revolutionary opera, you are a revolutionary person."[126] To help her realize her new ambition, she rehabilitated many of the movie technicians, directors, photographers, screenwriters, actors etc., that were once labeled black-liners ,by giving them a second chance by working to make revolutionary movies.[127]

Turning the operas into films proved to be a formidable task because once they were made, they could not be easily modified. Jiang Qing gave technical direction on every facet of the movie, often changing her mind, exhausting herself, and making the movie making process quite arduous for everyone involved. Financially, it required a large amount of money and the constant revisions made it more costly. She did not want to take a movie camera and record a stage play. Rather, she wanted to make a perfect full production movie that would become an everlasting masterpiece immortalized in history as her great legacy to Chinese culture. Jiang Qing was once an actress. Every actress wants to be a brilliant star in performing arts. As Mao's wife, she could no longer pursue that profession. But with her revolutionary dramas she could be more dazzling that any famous actress. Recognition was what Jiang Qing was after and she ultimately achieved that dream because of her unrelenting ambition to succeed.

For ten years the Eight Model Dramas were the only works performed on the screen and in the theatre. They symbolized proletarian culture and represented Jiang Qing's personal success in finally being recognized in the cultural realm. All propaganda produced abouton the performing arts revolution credited the creation of these models to her perseverance. She had the best conditions to make extraordinary model operas with the most recognized actors and actresses and the best orchestras:

> ... performances of these outstanding professional improved the acting and rhyme scheme of Beijing operas with contemporary themes. Even today when the Cultural Revolution and its product, the movement of popularizing model operas are criticized in China, people still generally believe that the model operas were performed well.[128]

To this day, certain parts of these movies have become immortalized in history and the heroic characters have become cultural icons. The Eight Models were not dreadful because the fact that they are still enjoyed only proves that they are not unsatisfactory. The problem lies in the fact that they were the only entertainment source for ten years even though Jiang Qing's theory and her dramas were ultimately used to knock down Mao's and her enemies, the bureaucrats like Zhou Yang. Unfortunately, in this political struggle over culture, it was the Chinese people who suffered from a cultural famine because these Eight Dramas were the only thing that they were permitted to watch; they were brainwashed. Therefore when examining this period of arts creation and considering that it was a revolution in culture, one has to ask why was there so little art? Why were there only eight dramas?

There are several reasons offered by Kraus to help explain this . The first reason lies in the centralization of the cultural reform program.[129] Jiang Qing was at the apex of this power and everything had to be approved by her. Kraus argued that Jiang and her supporters wanted a thriving revolutionary culture to supplant all that had gone before, but they were ultimately fearful of what mass participation in China's 'new revolutionary' culture might unleash.[130] And as time went on new centers of cultural power were emerging. Beijing and Shanghai were the main centers but had to share power with such upstart areas like Shenyang that were becoming more recognized.[131] The power was shifting but they were unwilling to decentralize, which in turn ensured little output. Therefore, control and recognition were more important to Jiang Qing than the audience's entertainment and the number of works produced.

The second reason that accounts for why there was so little art produced lies in the selection of opera as the primary vehicle for revolutionary art.[132] Jiang Qing chose opera because it was what she was most familiar with, but it was difficult to reform into revolutionary plays given its complex, unwritten rules regarding composition and rhyming schemes. Yu Huiyong emphasized these difficulties, stating, "We must realize that the landlord and capitalist classes fostered the Peking opera for some two hundred years, developing it from among a great variety of Chinese operas into a theatrical form demanding exceptional skill."[133] Therefore, it would not be an easy task to remake an opera and turn it into a revolutionary model play in a short period of time. Jiang Qing also believed that making a model work perperly would require years. Making them into

movies presented an even greater task because the film industry had been denounced. In order to achieve her goal, she had to rehabilitate many of the movie technicians that were once labeled black liners. In addition, the artists did little to increase output because the political climate of uncertainty made them cautious. It was easier to remain idle and express little spontaneity than risk conflict and denunciation.[134] Everything took a great deal of time so there were only eight produced, but ultimately Jiang Qing was the one in control of the entire process.

It is widely argued that Jiang Qing should not be given any credit for reforming operas. Instead of recognizing her contribution, she is labeled the destroyer of China's culture. After Mao's death and her subsequent fall from power, Jiang Qing was charged with consciously distorting Mao's plan. Yet at the time, Mao approved of and supported her revolutionization of the arts. Whether this was due to his ailing health, the existence of a calculated policy to let her cultural radicalism counterbalance the pragmatism of the Party moderates, or simply his disinterest in the application of cultural policy, Mao allowed his wife to become to spokesperson of MZT in the artistic realm.[135] Therefore, if one should condemn Jiang Qing's role in the arts, one must also place responsibility on the individual who approved and consistently supported her artistic direction in the first place. Instead of the infamous saying, *shi nian ba ge xi* (十年八个戏, Ten years of the Cultural Revolution with eight model plays) those that condemn her should be asking themselves, "Who allowed her to do her reforms in the first place?" "Who allowed them to be perpetuated for as long as they did? And who really caused China's cultural famine?" The answer of course is Mao Zedong. If

people choose to condemn Jiang Qing, then they should also consider examining Mao's role.

Since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing promoted herself as the standard bearer of literature and the arts. She tried to earn political capital by revolutionizing Beijing opera and promoting the theory of the "Basic Task' and the 'Three Prominences.' She was successful because Jiang Qing was indisputably the person who was guiding the direction of Beijing opera, the primary vehicle of revolutionary art that espoused MZT. But it was her relationship with Lin Biao that ultimately enabled her to move from the small stage of opera reform to the larger platform of advocating literature and art in the armed forces with her official appointment to the PLA on cultural work. Their relationship helped Jiang Qing snag her greatest role of playing the politician, where she acted as Mao's political representative and mentor to millions of Red Guards.

Lin Biao, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Jiang Qing

Lin Biao was Mao's newly appointed Minister of Defense after Peng Dehuai's abrupt departure. He was fully aware that his position of authority solely rested on Mao's support. Lin knew that if he wanted to remain in power, and haveany hope of later advancement, likesuccession to Mao, that he would have to tow the Chairman's line. Since Mao symbolized China and the masses hailed him as a hero, Lin Biao turned praise for Mao into a nation-wide personality cult.[136]

Lin compiled a collection of Mao's most famous works and by 1963 the PLA was diligently studying *Quotations of Chairman Mao.* Millions of soldiers studied Mao's words, literally taking Mao to a new level of reverence.[137] From there, Lin began a campaign based on the life of a young soldier, Lei Fang, who had sacrificed his own life for his country: "The fact that the ... [the story] was fictitious, concocted by PLA propaganda writers, should not conceal its basic significance, which was to launch an attack against the lack of revolutionary fervor displayed by many intellectuals and writers."[138] While Lin Biao was trying to stir up revolutionary spirit in his army, Jiang Qing was trying to find her own role by revolutionizing Beijing opera. It was natural that an alliance between the two was possible because each of them had their own agenda. Both wanted to be more prominent and they needed each other to promote themselves. Their alliance put Lin Biao in closer proximity to Mao's power and prestige. And through Lin's consistent praise for Jiang Qing, everyone in the PLA recognized her for her astute knowledge concerning politics and art.

In the speech, *Lin Biao Tongzhi Weitou Jiang Qing Tongzhi Zhaokai de Budui Wenyi Gongzuo Zuotan Hui Jiyao* (林彪同志委托江青同志召开的部队文艺工作座谈会纪要, The Summary of the Forum on the Work and Literature in Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Biao Entrusted Comrade Jiang Qing) [139] Lin Biao stated to the PLA soldiers that Jiang Qing had many valuable ideas and all of them should be paid close attention and applied ideologically.[140] Then, he encouraged all of his soldiers to meet with her if any of them should have any concerns, asked that they help keep her abreast on

any situations concerning art and literature, and ordered that all army documents concerning art and literature be sent to her.[141] Lin Biao also said that since meeting Jiang Qing, he realized that her knowledge of MZT was quite profound and that her experiences had helped him a great deal.[142] Jiang Qing received tremendous praise from Lin Biao, legitimizing her position as a comrade who was an expert in literary and cultural affairs and deserved the respect from the PLA.

When further examining *Summary of the Forum on the Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces,* Lin Biao also expressed Mao's similar ideas concerning class struggle, promoting proletarian ideology, and reforming Beijing opera that Jiang Qing had stated in her first speech, *Tan Jingju Geming* (On the Revolution of Beijing Opera). Lin Biao stated that in the last three years there had been a great socialist cultural revolution and that the best examples evident were the Beijing operas with contemporary themes. Some had argued, like the Ministry of Culture, that revolutionized Beijing opera had discarded the traditions and basic skills of traditional Beijing opera. However, effective reforms, under Jiang Qing had proven that even under the most stubborn stronghold of the Ministry of Culture that Beijing opera could be successfully revolutionized.[143] Jiang Qing's biggest obstacle in reforming Beijing opera was the 'dead' Ministry of Culture who, as a group, did not have the same vision as her. They did not take her work seriously and questioned its artistic merit. After Lin Biao's words, her critics were silenced. Then, Lin Biao said that in order to reflect the present day people must urgently refine, create, and develop Beijing opera through real life experiences,[144] which in turn further legitimized Jiang Qing's personal crusade.

This chapter has discussed Jiang Qing's success in finding a role in cultural affairs. For a long time, Jiang Qing's own attempts at cultural reform proved unsuccessful and she remained unrecognized for her work in art and literature committees. However, it was not until Mao sensed a greater degree of revisionism in the Party that Jiang Qing's call to make art and literature in line with the socialist economic base finally reached her husband's attention. It was from that point that her participation was possible, existing from her husband and remaining only through his tacit support. Her pivotal role in the *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* criticism set the stage for her to hold a greater responsibility in the arts, revolutionizing Beijing opera with the development of model dramas But it was Mao's support that made the development of her model operas possible in the first place. From there, Jiang Qing and her radical supporters developed the Basic Task and the Three Prominences, a concrete theoretical framework that demonstrated the 'strict' guidelines of reform, utilized when the operas were turned into films. To this day certain parts of these movies have become immortalized in history and the heroic characters have become cultural icons. This was Jiang Qing's legacy and her greatest contribution to the Cultural Revolution's plan to revolutionize culture for the masses. But this legacy was not only used to promote and carry out Mao's revolutionary culture, but also to knock down the obstacles of the Beijing cultural establishment that were originally against Jiang Qing's participation in arts reform in the 1950s. By the 1960s, however, Jiang Qing was at the apex of the arts, centralizing the art reform

process to such a degree that artistic output greatly suffered due to her need to control the reform. For ten years, her eight model dramas were the only operas produced for the stage and screen. They symbolized proletarian culture and represented Jiang Qing's success in being recognized for cultural reform. The Chinese people suffered a cultural famine because it was the only thing that they were permitted to watch.

In order to be successful, Jiang Qing surrounded herself with theorizing intellectuals such as Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yu Huiyong and the support of key politicians such as her husband, Kang Sheng, Lin Biao, and Ke Qingshi. All of these men each had their own relationship with Jiang Qing and provided her with the means to be successful. All of their talents combined, whether political or intellectual, made her almost invincible. With such a strong team of supporters Jiang Qing was unshakable in matters concerning the cultural realm. When Mao began to contemplate his reassertion of power he used his wife and Lin Biao's support in his quest. As a result her position rose substantially during the Cultural Revolution and with the swift change in the political climate, she moved from the artistic realm into an overtly political role that will be discussed in the next section entitled, 'Jiang Qing as a Politician.'

[1] Bell Yung, "Opera Model as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979,* ed. Bonnie S. McDougall (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 145.
[2] Mao Zedong, "Talks of the Yan'an Forum on Literature and the Arts," in *Chinese Theories of Performance from Confucius to the Present,* ed. Faye Chunfang Fei (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 129.
[3] Ibid., 129.
[4] Colin Mackerras, *The Chinese Theater in Modern Times: From 1840 to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), 164.
[5] D.W. Fokkema, *Literary Doctrine in China and Soviet Influence, 1956-1960* (London: Moulton & Company, 1965), 6.
[6] Mackerras, *The Chinese Theater in Modern Times: From 1840 to the Present Day,* 165.
[7] Yung, "Opera Model as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979,* 146.
[8] Colin Mackerras, *Chinese Theater: From its origins to the Present Day* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), 155.
[9] Ibid., 155.
[10] Ibid., 155. The original letter can be found in Huang Yuchan, ed., *Mao Zedong shengping ziliao jianbian yibajiusan nian-yijiuliujiu nian* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1970), 221. Mackerras has followed the official translation in "Hail the Great Victory of the Revolution in Peking Opera," in *Chinese Literature* 8 (Aug 1967), 125-6.
[11] *Who's Who in Communist China* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1969-70), 133.
[12] Zhou Yang has been alleged of making the comment that as long as Jiang Qing remained, "works would be difficult to complete." Cited in "A Great Standard-Bearer, A Dauntless Warrior: A Chronicle of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's Activities in the Field of Literature and Art" in *Issues and Studies,* no. 10 (October 1975): 91.
[13] Merle Goldman, *China's Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 39.
[14] Ibid., 39.
[15] Ibid., 39.
[16] Ibid., 39.
[17] Mackerras, *The Chinese Theater in Modern Times: From 1840 to the Present Day,* 167.
[18] "A Great Standard-Bearer, A Dauntless Warrior: A Chronicle of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's Activities in the Field of Literature and Art" in *Issues and Studies,* no. 10 (October, 1975): 88.
[19] Ibid., 90.
[20] Ibid., 90.
[21] Huamin Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing) [Hong Kong: Youlian Yanjiusuo Chuban, 1967), 48.
[22] Ibid., 51.
[23] "A Great Standard-Bearer, A Dauntless Warrior: A Chronicle of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's Activities in the Field of Literature and Art" in *Issues and Studies,* no. 10 (Oct.1975): 91.
[24] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 51.
[25] Ibid., 48-9.
[26] Ibid., 49.
[27] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent,* 76.
[28] These two sources aptly show the divergent views on Jiang Qing's role in Chinese dramatic criticism. While caution must be used when considering a source like *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing,* when taken with other sources they provide valuable information. With regards *Qing Gong Mi Shi it* is difficult to accept *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's* interpretation of events, but when considering *Wu Xun Zhuan,* both sources imply that this was the beginning of Jiang Qing's new role in dramatic criticism.
[29] Red Guard tabloids have information on Jiang Qing up to 1954 then there is a gap until 1961. There had been mention of poor health however the truth is unknown. See "Chiang Ch'ing:

Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene: Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 5.
[30] Yung, "Opera Model as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979,* 147.
[31] Ibid., 146.
[32] Constantine Tung, "Tradition and Experience of the Drama of the People's Republic of China," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China* eds. Constantine Tung and Colin Mackerras (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 7.
[33] Ibid., 8.
[34] Yung, "Opera Model as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979,* 147.
[35] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 18.
[36] Ibid., 18.
[37] Ibid., 18.
[38] Ibid., 19.
[39] Yung, "Opera Model as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979,* 147.
[40] Ibid., 147.
[41] Jin Qiu, *The Culture of Power: The Lin Biao Incident in the Cultural Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 143-4. Jin based this statement on Li Zhisui's book, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* ed. Anne Thurston and trans. Tai Hung-chao (New York: Random House, 1994)
[42] Jin, 144. Cited in Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao,* 45, 259.
[43] Ibid., 144.
[44] Ibid., 132.
[45] According to the Red Guard tabloids, Jiang Qing had again begun a campaign to reform art and literature, but it was not reported at that time. She was not reported in the media of doing this until 1962. See "Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene: Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1. (Jan. 6, 1969), 5.
[46] Ibid., 132.
[47] Ross Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 240.
[48] Kenneth Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993), 122.
[49] Ibid., 123.
[50] Ibid., 124.
[51] Tung, "Tradition and Experience of the Drama of the People's Republic of China," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China,* 9.
[52] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 125.
[53] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 56-7.
[54] Ibid., 57.
[55] Li Jin was the childhood name that Jiang Qing used to sign her photographic art. This is also confirmed in Roxane Witke, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), 45.
[56] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 133.
[57] Ibid., 133.
[58] Ibid., 133.
[59] Ibid., 133.
[60] Ibid., 133.
[61] Ibid., 133.
[62] Ibid., 133.

[63] Harry Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 158.
[64] Lowell Dittmer, *China's Continuous Revolution: The Post-Liberation Epoch 1949-1981* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 114.
[65] Terrill, *Madame Mao: White Boned Demon,* 244.
[66] Ibid., 244.
[67] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 80.
[68] Ibid., 80.
[69] Ibid., 80.
[70] See Mao Zedong's comments under the title "Instruction on 12 December 1963" in *Five Documents on Literature and Art, 1967* (Beijing: Beijing Foreign Language Press, 1967), 10-11.
[71] Jiang Qing, "Tan Jingju Geming," (On the Revolution of Beijing Opera) in *Jiang Qing Jianzhuan* (The Biography and Selected Works of Jiang Qing) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhongguo Yanjiusuo chuban, 1967), 25.
[72] Ibid., 25.
[73] Ibid., 25.
[74] Ibid., 26.
[75] Ibid., 26.
[76] Ibid., 26.
[77] Ibid., 29.
[78] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 76.
[79] *A Glossary of Political Terms of the People's Republic of China* ed. Kwok-sing Li and trans. Mary Lok (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1995), 582.
[80] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 135.
[81] Roderick MacFraquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution,* vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 207.
[82] Ibid., 208.
[83] Ibid., 208.
[84] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 135.
[85] Zhong, *Jiang Qing Zhengzhuan* (The Biography of Jiang Qing), 68.
[86] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 135.
[87] Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 166.
[88] Lieberthal, "The Great Leap Forward and the Split in the Yan'an Leadership 1958-65," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 135.
[89] Ibid., 135.
[90] Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 167.
[91] Ibid., 167
[92] Ibid., 168.
[93] Lin Biao, "*Lin Biao Tongzhi Weitou Jiang Qing Tongzhi Zhaokai de Budui Hui Jiyao,"* (The Summary of the Forum on the Work and Literature in Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Biao Entrusted Comrade Jiang Qing) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Jianghua Xuanbian: 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969), 3-4.
[94] Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989,* 171.
[95] Ibid., 171.
[96] Ellen Judd, "Prescriptive Dramatic Theory of the Cultural Revolution," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China* eds. Constantine Tung and Colin Mackerras (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 94.
[97] Richard Kraus, "Arts Policies of the Cultural Revolution: The Rise and Fall of Cultural Minister Yu Huiyong," in *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* eds. William A. Joseph, Christine P.W. Wong, and David Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 119.
[98] Ibid., 119.

[99] Judd, "Prescriptive Dramatic Theory of the Cultural Revolution," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China,* 96.
[100] Jiang Qing, "Tan Jingju Geming," (On the Revolution of Beijing Opera) *Jiang Qing Jianzhuan* (The Biography and Selected Works of Jiang Qing) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhongguo Yanjiusuo chuban, 1967), 29.
[101] The original source is Chu Lan, "Jingju geming shi nian," (Ten Years of Beijing Opera Reform) *Suzao wuchanjieji yingxiong dianxing shi shehuizhuyi wenyi de genben renwu* (Model Proletarian Heroic Models and the Basic Task of Communist Art and Literature) [Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, n.p. 1974), p. 5. Also see Judd, 95.
[102] Judd, "Prescriptive Dramatic Theory of the Cultural Revolution," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China* , 95.
[103] Zhai Jiannong, *Hongse wangshi 1966-1976 nian Zhongguo Dianying* (Red Memoir: China's Films from 1966-1976) [Beijing: Taihai Chubanshe, 2001], 69.
[104] Judd, "Prescriptive Dramatic Theory of the Cultural Revolution," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China,* 95.
[105] Ibid., 101.
[106] Ibid., 102.
[107] Kraus, "Arts Policies of the Cultural Revolution: The Rise and Fall of Cultural Minister Yu Huiyong," in *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution,* 223.
[108] Ibid., 223.
[109] Ibid., 225.
[110] Ellen Judd, "Dramas of Passion: Heroism in the Cultural Revolution's Model Operas," in *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* eds. William A. Joseph, Christine P.W. Wong, and David Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 268. Original source can be found at Mao Zedong, "Kan le Bishang Liangshan yihou xiegei Yan'an Pingjutuan de xin," (A Letter Written to the Yan'an Beijing Opera Troupe after seeing Driven up Liangshan), in *Mao Zedong ji* (Collected Writings of Mao Zedong; Xianggang, n. pub, 1975), IX, 95.
[111] Ellen Judd, "Prescriptive Dramatic Theory of the Cultural Revolution," in *Drama in the People's Republic of China* eds. Constantine Tung and Colin Mackerras (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 100.
[112] Ellen Judd, "Dramas of Passion: Heroism in the Cultural Revolution's Model Operas," In *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* eds. William A. Joseph, Christine P.W. Wong, and David Zweig (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 268.
[113] Judd, "Dramas of Passion: Heroism in the Cultural Revolution's Model Operas," 267.
[114] Ibid, 268.
[115] Ibid., 269-70.
[116] Ibid., 270.
[117] Joe He, "A Historical Study on the Eight Revolutionary Model Operas in China's Great Cultural Revolution" (master's thesis, University of Neveda, n.d), 55.
[118] Ibid., 56-7.
[119] Ibid., 57.
[120] Ibid., 57.
[121] Ibid., 57.
[122] Ibid., 57.
[123] Ibid., 57.
[124] Ibid., 57.
[125] Zhai, *Hongse wangshi 1966-1976 nian Zhongguo Dianying* (Red Memoir: China's Films from 1966-1976), 69.
[126] Ibid., 69.
[127] Ibid., 69.
[128] He, "A Historical Study on the Eight Revolutionary Model Operas in China's Great Cultural Revolution," 19.
[129] Kraus, "Arts Policies of the Cultural Revolution: The Rise and Fall of Cultural Minister Yu Huiyong," in *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution,* 234.
[130] Ibid., 234.

[131] Ibid., 226.
[132] Ibid., 234.
[133] Ibid., 234.
[134] Ibid., 235.
[135] Ralph Crozier, "Review Article: Chinese Art in the Chiang Ch'ing Era," in *Journal of Asian Studies* 38, no. 2 (Feb. 1979), 307.
[136] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* Translated and edited by D.W.Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 180-1.
[137] Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: Norton & Company, 1990), 597.
[138] Ibid., 597.
[139] Lin Biao, "*Lin Biao Tongzhi Weitou Jiang Qing Tongzhi Zhaokai de Budui Wenyi Gongzuo Zuotan Hui Jiyao*" (The Summary of the Forum on the Work and Literature in Art in the Armed Forces with which Comrade Lin Biao Entrusted Comrade Jiang Qing) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Jianghua 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969], 3-5.
[140] Ibid., 3-5.
[141] Ibid., 3-5.
[142] Ibid., 3-5.
[143] Ibid., 8-9.
[144] Ibid., 8-9.

Chapter Four

Jiang Qing as a Politician

From the mid-1960s, Mao had the support of his wife and Lin Biao, which not only helped in his reassertion of power, but also enabled each of them to realize their own political ambitions. With the support of the military Mao was hailed as China's savior and in the artsMZT was proclaimed China's religion. Because of Jiang Qing and Lin Biao's support in these two key areas, Mao's prestige was taken to a new level of reverence. With her criticism of *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office,* Jiang Qing's position rose substantially. Throughout the course of the Cultural Revolution she became China's fastest rising political star.

On May 16 1966, the CRG and its vice-deputy, Jiang Qing were at the apex of the political system.[1] Three months later, the *Shiliu Tiao* (十六条, The Sixteen Point Decision) (August 1966) was released. It outlined the objectives of the Cultural Revolution and acted as the dominant state governing system. At this time, Mao also unleashed the Red Guards to break down established party patterns and government authorities that had rightist tendencies.[2] The swift change in the political climate enabled Jiang Qing to move from the artistic realm into an overtly political role. She began serving two key functions, as Mao's spokesperson, and as a mentor to millions of young and impressionable Red Guards.

A chronological examination of some of Jiang Qing's most recognized speeches is invaluable for charting the direction of Beijing politics during this

dynamic period. In these speeches Jiang Qing, on numerous occasions, alluded to her close relationship with Mao and on the authority granted her on the basis of her daily contact with her husband. Specifically, Jiang Qing used the political power of appointment that Mao had assigned her in the CRG to dictate who and what were good and revolutionary while attacking those that were anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary on the basis that she was Mao's representative, his closest comrade in arms. From there, it can be argued that her speeches helped bring about the increasing violence of the Cultural Revolution. Following her husband's plan of unleashing the Red Guards to break down the 'rightist' party establishment, Jiang Qing promoted violence, radicalism, and aggression in her speeches to the Red Guards. Her words were above the law and affected millions of frenzied youth that responded to Jiang Qing's call for violence by dehabilitating a longstanding cultural heritage and a nation. People suffered a great deal because they had to clearly show their political stance. This sometimes separated families and friends in the name of a political struggle between the left and right. When Red Guard violence turned into anarchy, Jiang Qing curtailed her radical speeches and public appearances. From there, she acted as Mao's mediator/facilitator, where she tried to use MZT to resolve the violent factional conflicts throughout the country that she had helped bring about in the first place.

The Eleventh Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP (August 1966) endorsed the May Politburo decision concerning the dismissal of Peng Zhen. Liu Shaoqi was stripped from his vice-Chairmanship and Lin Biao succeeded Liu as second in command and Mao's successor. In addition, Kang

Sheng was reinstated in the Politburo.[3] Yet, despite the notable changes in certain individual's status the main purpose of the Eleventh Plenum was the adoption of the 16-Point Decision. That outlined Mao's Cultural Revolution. This document stressed to criticize, to struggle against, and to transform by criticizing reactionary bourgeois academic authorities, transforming education, literature, and the arts as well as all other parts of the superstructure not corresponding with the socialist economic base. Most importantly, it stressed to struggle against and overthrow those individuals in authority who were taking the capitalist road.[4] In order to realize Mao's Cultural Revolution, the masses needed to be mobilized to engage in an intense political struggle that relied on the CRG, the highest organ of power during the Cultural Revolution.[5]

Since the early 1960s, Mao believed that the Party establishment had been responsible for the emergence of revisionism. The best way to combat this was to mobilize the ordinary citizenry, especially the Red Guards and the Chinese youth, against it.[6] Composed of mainly high school and college students, their participation can be explained in

> large part by the normal idealism of the young, which made them ready to share Mao's indignation at the elitism, inequality, and bureaucratic stagnation that seemed to be plaguing China in the mid-1960's. China's student population doubtless also welcomed the sense of importance and power provided by their involvement ...[7]

In addition, the educational policies of the early 1960s, had produced serious cleavages and grievances among Chinese students that helped fuel their resentment towards the Party establishment. Although there were increasing opportunities for primary and junior middle school education,

> enrollment at both senior middle schools and universities declined sharply from the levels attained during the GLF, as the state sought to retrench overextended budgets during a period of serious economic recession. There was a shaper differentiation between elite middle schools, whose graduates had a good chance to go to college, and lesser institutions, whose graduates had little prospect for higher education.[8]

The majority of students were not in the position to attend university - the prerequisite for success and upward mobility. They realized that the declining opportunities combined with the 1964-65 program foreshadowing the mass rustification policies of later years would mean middle school students who had not been placed in universities would be sent to rural areas for employment.[9]

Previously class background, political behavior, and academic achievement were the three criterion in assigning students to elite middle schools, universities, and the most desirable jobs postings. With the changing political climate of the mid-1960s, the first two criterion became more important than the latter. Therefore, by the late 1960s, the most fortunate students came from military families. Next came the students from worker and peasant backgrounds, who were offered compensation based on what was often mediocre academic achievement. The most undesirable were the students from the bourgeoisie or intellectual families who generally had the highest academic achievement,. But according to the Communist regime, they possessed the worst class background.[10] Within the Red Guard movement there was generally frustration against the party establishment from the latter group who felt their chances for upward mobility steadily declining. They were most likely to be sent to the rural areas to live a life that was contrary to their existence in urban China:

> The Red Guard Movement drew on many of the socioeconomic cleavages and grievances ... Beyond this, the mobilization of the Red Guards was facilitated by several other factors: a sense of excitement at being called upon by the leader of their country to become involved in national affairs; a sense of opportunity that one's future would be fundamentally affected by involvement in the Cultural Revolution; the suspension of classes and admissions examinations, which relieved millions of middle school and university students of academic responsibility; and above all, the provision of free railway transportation to Red Guards seeking travel around the country to exchange revolutionary experiences.[11]

Mao unleashed the Red Guards on August 18, 1966. Jiang Qing, given her position in the PLA, was by his side wearing an army uniform. One million Red Guards traveled all over the country, making their pilgrimage to the capital where they gathered at Tiananmen for a mass rally to celebrate the Cultural Revolution. Eight rallies were organized by the CRG with the logistical support of the PLA, who brought 13 million Red Guards together in three months from August 18 to November 26.[12] Mao gave them tremendous support, encouraging them to apply the conditions of the 16-Point Decision. This decision clearly stipulated that any struggle should be conducted through reason and not through force. However, Mao soon broke from that instruction. At one of these rallies a young girl named Song Binbin (宋彬彬, Gentle and Polite) put an armband on Mao, to which he responded: "Be Militant!" From that moment on, she changed her name to Song Yaowu

(宋耀武, Song the Militant). This interesting event was widely publicized in the media and the gesture was considered to be tantamount to openly advocating militancy.[13] So when the Red Guard violence of attacking people and vandalizing property, causing social disorder and violating basic human rights broke out all

over the country, Mao himself was to blame. Jiang Qing used her position in the CRG to follow through with his directive of militancy. This thesis will later show that from the period of 1964-67, Jiang Qing time and time again delivered speeches that encouraged violence and promoted radicalism.

As a former actress Jiang Qing was no stranger to the stage. As a politician, she had little difficulty transferring this skill onto the political rostrum, representing Mao, espousing MZT, and mentoring the Red Guards, all with great confidence because she had the support and the power to do so authoritatively. She was in the position to help Mao in his mission to mobilize the masses. During the 1960s Russian Sinologist, Zhelokhovstev wrote an illuminating eyewitness account of one of Jiang Qing's appearances at a student rally and her ability to foster excitement among her audience.[14] Chen Boda, leader of the CRG, was presiding over the rally. When he gave the stage to the students, they

> ...orated with a tremendous amount of feeling. At times cursing [about] the 'black party committee,' 'right opportunism,' and the Soviet Union, [then] they changed over to a shout that sounded almost to the point of cracking. Chiang Ch'ing came up to them exclaiming 'very good!' [and] gave them a glass of water. That gesture of hers literally stunned the meeting. The students roared with admiration-how simple, how charming that public figure was.[15]

According to Zhelokhovstev's account, Jiang Qing's slim-waisted figure, dressed in a closely fitted green PLA uniform, was in constant motion. Her army cap and oversized eyeglasses gave her a serious and imposing presence. But she presented herself as approachable figure, conducting herself in a casual manner:[16]

> Hiding behind a courteous tone, she would constantly interrupt the speakers with her own remarks, and ask them questions,

> manifesting in every way her 'revolutionary zeal,' and playing games with the audience, who kept bursting into applause. I watched her- true, from a distance—with interest and curiosity.[17]

Zhelokhovstev listened to the opening speeches of both Chen Boda and Kang Sheng, but when the stage was given to Jiang Qing, the audience went crazy. She began with her usual warm greetings and flattery:

> You are the new revolutionary generation ...You are leading our revolution forward... We, the older generation, are leaving, and as we go, we give to you our revolutionary traditions. Chairman Mao is leaving China to you. You will govern China. The school of the Cultural Revolution is a great school! The state will belong to you.[18]

Using oratorical techniques that would be termed religious in another culture, Jiang Qing drummed into the hearts and minds of the young impressionable Red Guards the spirit of the revolution.[19] She was a source of encouragement and speculating on their lack of life experience and their desire to participate, Jiang Qing evoked from them a false self-delusion of their own importance, their position, and their role.[20] From Jiang Qing's words, the audience developed the illusion of independence and the historical importance of their actions. Who could resist flattery like that? [21] After this particular rally, the audience went wild. Every Red Guard tried to promote himself or herself as the most revolutionary student of MZT.

Speech #1: Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Wenyijie Dahui shang de Jianghua (江青同志在文艺界大会上的讲话, Comrade Jiang Qing's Speech at the Rally of Art and Literature Communities) (November 28, 1966)

During September and October of 1966 Jiang Qing, the first deputy leader of the CRG under the Central Committee of the CCP and advisor on cultural affairs to the PLA, continued to speak at student rallies where she urged the Red Guards to destroy established patterns of Party and government authority.[22] This was Jiang Qing's first major speech published after the official start of the Cultural Revolution and it elevated her already high position in the arts to a new level of dominating influence. Jiang Qing received thunderous applause from the audience and she extended revolutionary salutations to them. From the research made available it has been revealed that there were two different versions of this speech: one published on November 28, 1966, and the other published on December 4, 1966, six days later. As the first version is documented verbatim, it can be inferred that the second one, written in the third person, was delayed because it needed to be adapted into a more suitable format for formal publication in the *People's Daily,* [23] where it became an important widely read document outlining the Cultural Revolution.

The beginning of this speech clearly demonstrated how Jiang Qing moved into the process of reforming Beijing opera and how that process evolved into her participation onto the political stage.[24] Through her close association with Mao, Jiang Qing began a process of understanding the purpose behind the Cultural Revolution. For some time Jiang Qing had been ill and her doctors recommended that she watch and listen to the Chinese arts, to recover her hearing and sight.[25] Following her doctor's orders, she viewed many films and operas and was quite surprised that Beijing opera did not properly reflect the Socialist reality

of the PRC. Works were not only based on monarchs, officials, scholars, and beauties, but ghost plays were being performed as well. In addition, many people sought entertainment through foreign dramas. Even works like *Hai Rui Dismissed From Office,* which showed serious reactionary political tendencies, were preformed. Jiang Qing she came to the conclusion that reform was necessary because if Chinese literature and art did not relate to the socialist economic base, the two would inevitably destroy it.[26]

On one hand, Jiang Qing stated that Mao defended the orientation of literature and art to serve the workers, peasants, and soldiers and he posed the question of developing the new through the critical assimilation of the old. However, Jiang Qing also argued that in many cases it is impossible to develop because how can we critically assimilate ghosts, gods, and religion? This is not possible because we are atheists and communists.[27] How can we critically assimilate things that were used to oppress and exploit the people? This is not possible because China is a country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, in order to remove all remnants of a system of exploitation and the old ideas of custom, culture, and habits, Jiang Qing justified the importance of the Cultural Revolution.

Jiang Qing asked the audience whether art that did not reflect the socialist economic base should be reformed. The audience of course felt it shoud. But Jiang Qing stressed that this process involved a class struggle which would be a difficult, and painstaking task.[28] Jiang Qing then attacked the anti-party, anti-Socialist leadership of the 'dead' Propaganda Department of the Party Central

Committee, and the 'dead' Ministry of Culture that as a group opposed the revolution of culture. Jiang Qing believed that the reform of Beijing opera, the ballet, and symphonic music could only be achieved after destroying this obstacle. It was in this spirit that Jiang Qing felt she needed to do something about this situation; reform was the only answer. From that point she targeted other groups that she felt were reinforcing Mao's fear of revisionism. She denounced those which were counterrevolutionary, and attacked anything that undermined Socialist art and literature.

Jiang Qing's main attack was on the Number One Beijing Opera Company. Ironically at the beginning of the speech she first praised it, calling the group the first to reform Beijing opera. Guided by MZT, it had achieved good results, creating operas with contemporary revolutionary themes that set an example for the whole country's efforts in the reform of Beijing opera.[29] Staging the operas was an important triumph of the Cultural Revolution because it represented Chairman Mao's ideas that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants, and soldiers. Then, in a 180-degree turn, Jiang Qing condemned the Number One Beijing Opera Company because she argued that it had still not revealed the other members' counterrevolutionary revisionist line, claiming that it was necessary to draw a clear line between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.[30] The question of what the spearhead of the struggle be directed against was an important question of right or wrong, one of the principles that Jiang Qing claimed was central to the Marxism-Leninism of MZT.[31] After that message, all Chinese people had to clearly show their political stance, which sometimes

separated families and friends all in the name of a political struggle between the left and right.

In the revised version of this speech PLA Cultural Minister, Xie Tangzhong announced the incorporation into the PLA of the Number One Beijing Opera Company, the National Beijing Opera Theatre, and the Central Philharmonic Society as constituent parts of the army for political and literary art work, in accordance with the decision of the CRG. [32] Because so many artists were incorporated into the PLA many were seen wearing an army uniform. Jiang Qing was always pictured in army fatigues. In fact, a whole nation of young people could be seen wearing army fatigues. As Jiang Qing held a high-ranking position in the CRG and was official cultural advisor to the PLA, these artistic groups formally came under Jiang Qing's jurisdiction. As a result she had the final say in anything relevant to cultural affairs and her status was elevated to. One of the dominant themes of the Cultural Revolution was the creation of a new proletarian culture and Jiang Qing certainly played a tremendous role in this process at this particular art and literary rally in Beijing.

With regards to inciting violence, this speech was noteworthy. Jiang Qing mentioned that Mao received a million Red Guards on August 18, 1966. With Mao's backing, these impressionable youth went out and 'made' revolution, destroying the four olds (culture, ideas, customs, and habits). Jiang Qing responded to the violence by stating "We, the comrades of the Cultural Revolution Group, under the Party Central Committee, rejoiced."[33] Support from such a high level representative of Mao's gave the Red Guards reason to be more

revolutionary, one had to struggle and be more aggressive on society. However, towards the end of the speech, Jiang Qing emphasized that struggle had to be conducted through reasoning and not by coercion and force. There must be no beating of the people. Struggle by coercion or by force can only touch the skin and flesh while struggle by reasoning can touch the soul.[34] This completely contradicted what she said shortly beforehand so the audience never gained a clear understanding of Jiang Qing's intention. On one hand, she promoted violence but on the other, she reasoned against it. Finally, at the very end of the speech, she advocated violence as a means of destroying the bourgeois reactionary line and those who took the capitalist road. Her speech began rather moderately in tone, then went back and forth between promoting and condemning violence to finally supporting it wholeheartedly and rationalizing it on the basis of preserving MZT.

Jiang Qing wanted to participate in the cultural reform process but from the very beginning the Beijing cultural establishment would not permit it. Her frustration and her determination to prove them wrong was not mentioned in this speech. As well, her resentment towards Wang Guangmei was not addressed. According to Jiang Qing's words she became interested in reform because she was simply following her doctors recommendations to watch films and dramas, not because she wanted to avenge the system that for years would not recognize her. After her speech, Jiang Qing's status was elevated and she was in a position to denounce people like Wang Guangmei.

For the first time, in September 1964, Jiang Qing was granted official status when she was elected as deputy for Shandong province. After that she appeared with Mao on several occasions, thus publicly displaying her new status.[35] As stated previously, Wang Guangmei was already a household name as a result of her contributions to the Socialist Education Campaign and her well-publicized visit with Madame Hartini Sukarno. Shortly after Jiang was accorded official status Wang was also given the same position in her home province of Hebei.[36] When Jiang Qing entered the stage of opera reform in the mid-1960s Wang Guangmei was also making her mark in agricultural reform in Hebei. Jiang Qing grew increasingly resentful of Wang Guangmei. Accordingly, when Liu Shaoqi became Mao's greatest obstacle, Jiang Qing would ensure that his wife was crushed as well.[37] In a fierce political struggle Jiang Qing verbally attacked Wang at rallies. Consequently the Red Guards ransacked Wang's home. After she was labeled a spy, a capitalist, and a Nationalist, she was thrown in jail:

> Wall posters and cartoons of Wang Guangmei covered the land. She had been a spy for America almost from the cradle ... she lived like an empress ... The drawings of her cuddling up to Sukarno, with lips that suggested fellatio, clad in dresses that turned her breasts into Guilin mountains, wearing necklaces of gaudy beads the size of balloons ... put her into the one mold that Chinese culture reserves for the woman in public life who falls foul of today's authority-the prostitute.[38]

Wang Guangmei spent the next twelve years in prison. Since Mao thought that a period of political turmoil was good for the country, he allowed Jiang to persecute Wang because it served his own political purposes of purging Liu Shaoqi.[39] There were other instances when Mao allowed Jiang Qing to persecute certain people because it served his own purposes. Jiang Qing had to continue her

denunciations and persecutions in order to maintain her positionand ensure her advancement to a higher position of authority. Only time would tell what that position was, but Mao's health was always a subject of concern. By the late 1970's, the question of leadership succession would be on Jiang Qing's mind.

Speech #2: *Zai Renmin Dahui Tang de Jianghua* (在人民大会堂的讲话
Jiang Qing's Speech at the Great Hall of the People) (January 10, 1967)

Although this speech was presented in a forum of grand political stature, the audience was comprised of predominantly comprised of Red Guard representatives. This is known because Jiang Qing said she wanted the workers to come. There were few worker comrades in the audience because Jiang Qing said that recently she had not been in contact with many of them, thereby implying that few could attend.[40] Using her authority Jiang Qing began her speech by guiding the audience to label and criticize Lu Zhengcao, Minister of Railways.[41] When Mao unleashed the Red Guards in 1966, they caused havoc in many cities across China, especially in Shanghai. Jiang Qing believed that Lu had caused all the strikes, gridlocks, disruption of railway services, and general chaos from these Red Guards, not Mao who had incited the chaos in the first place. She called Lu the destroyer of China's transportation system.[42] Jiang Qing took these problems in Shanghai and Lu's supposed mismanagement and with her authority highlighted them as the most serious political issue, opposing MZT.

Next, Jiang Qing discussed the subject of saving money. She urged the Red Guards to *jianku pusu,* (艰苦朴素 , simplify your lifestyle and save money).[43] The wide spread violence and chaos brought vandalism. The economy was at a standstill and the damage caused by the Red Guards was costing a great deal to the already limited capital resources. This statement could infer that Jiang Qing wanted the Red Guards to curtail the violence for the sake of the economy. She did not want them to disrupt the economy and she ordered them to stop stealing propaganda trucks.[44] It is important to note that Jiang Qing wanted the Red Guards concentrate their violence on certain 'rightist' individuals instead of randomly attacking people.

From there, Jiang Qing moved on to the subject of Foreign Minister, Chen Yi. Many had denounced him, but Mao said Chen was a good comrade so Jiang Qing had been forced to declare so as well.[45] Jiang Qing said in this speech that she and Chen have had many heated arguments on certain subjects, yet despite this, he spoke his mind.[46] This statement showed that she had certain limits placed on her. Jiang Qing's position was elevated above millions of people, but she was still under Mao. She had almost boundless power and authority - her only constraint was the Chairman.

After protecting Chen Yi, Jiang next focused on those who were counterrevolutionary - specifically Liu Zhijian. Before the Cultural Revolution, Liu had been a low ranking army officer who was later promoted to head the All Forces Cultural Revolution Small Group of the PLA.[47] Given his position, he would have to work closely with her. In this particular speech Jiang Qing said that

Liu never reported to her or discussed ideas with her.[48] Liu's work style was far too independent for Jiang Qing so in her typical fashion, she guided the Red Guards to denounce him in an effort to reorganize the Group. With Jiang Qing's prodding, the denunciation of Liu began immediately during this meeting and appeared in the form of slogans and posters.[49] Interestingly, Yu Huiyong also worked in close collaboration with Jiang on the 'Basic Task,' the 'Three Prominences,' and as the development of the model operas. He followed her work –style, and as a result, was promoted through the system until he became Cultural Minister, a position he retained from 1975-76. Liu Zhijian did not work well with Jiang and, as a result, he was denounced. It can be inferred that when someone worked well with Jiang Qing and followed her orders, that person would be promoted, but when they worked too independently for her, they would eventually be removed from their position and replaced with someone who would tow her line. Liu was denounced on the basis that he was counterrevolutionary, which really meant that he was not following Jiang Qing. Not respecting her or failing to take her seriously represented a serious political issue nd meant that Liu was not adhering to Mao and MZT.

As her speech progressed Jiang Qing's worst enemies, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, were named. She instructed her audience to point their spearhead towards them.[50] In a straightforward fashion, she wanted to ensure that everyone understood her meaning. The implication was that it is your decision whether you wish to follow these suggestions but, as Mao's representative and comrade in arms, it would be in your best interest to follow them.[51]

In her concluding remarks Jiang Qing believed that everyone should be divided into three groups: enemies, friends, and allies. To Jiang Qing even one's superiors should be grouped into these categories and if they should fall into the first group, they should be struggled against.[52] With these words Jiang Qing granted permission for the Red Guards to violently overthrow those of high ranking – those that they deemed to be the 'enemy.' With such encouragement the Red Guards could hardly hold back.

Jiang Qing used this speech as a vehicle to denounce and criticize certain individuals or groups. This was the reoccurring theme of the entire speech. In one paragraph she would denounce and in the next, she would criticize. She moved from one subject to another without any eloquent transition. She spoke about many different subjects and would frequently say one thing and really imply another. In one breath Jiang Qing said she would not tolerate violence but in the next, she would condone it. Jiang Qing did not want to stop the chaos the Red Guards created; she wanted to control the violence, harnessing it to purge all of her enemies. Shewas above the law and she used this to her advantage tp getting rid of er rivals. In addition, at end of the speech the editor wrote that Jiang Qing's words were unclear and was aware of the numerous grammatical errors, which were not the fault of the editor.[53] This book was published in Hong Kong so it was acceptable to say that Jiang Qing's words were not always logical or well thought out.[54] The fact that she would speak poorly and without fear only proved that Jiang Qing had reached such a high position of authority in the Cultural

Revolution that she could mention a name, say they were bad, and the Red Guards would attack.

By January 1967, the violence in Shanghai was alarming from the *Yiyue Fengbao* (一月风暴, January Storm), which put power into the hands of the revolutionaries. This event was a watershed in the overthrow of the establishment. Other seizures of power resulting from the proliferation of weapons among rival groups were only a prelude to the violent armed struggles which would occur across the country.[55] There are numerous accounts of bloodshed and senseless violence. But what made matters worse was that Jiang Qing encouraged violence, advocating that revolutionary people should be armed to the point that lethal weapons became commonplace across the country.[56] Consequently, the military was used to bring order. The result was an ominous silence on the revolutionary front at a time when the CRG objectives had not yet been completed. This *Eryue Nieliu* (二月逆流, February Adverse Current) became the shameful term used by Jiang Qing and her supporters to describe the setback.[57] By March 1967, Jiang Qing and other radical Maoists appealed to Zhou Enlai to continue the revolution and, as a result, the violence and disorder rose to a crescendo by the end of August.[58]

Speech #3: *Wei Renmin Li Xin Gong* (为人民立新功, Make New Contributions for the People) (April 12, 1967)

Jiang Qing's next speech was presented to the highest-ranking army officers of the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the CCP. In many instances, Mao began his speeches with a *jiegu yujin,* (borrowing a story from ancient times to relate to the present day).[59] As Mao's representative, Jiang Qing for the first time used this style in her speech. It can be inferred that since Jiang Qing did not possess a strong background in ancient Chinese literature, she would require some assistance to do this.

Her speech began with a story about the Queen Mother, Zao Taihou, and her grandchild, Prince Chang'An. A very wise minister, Chuzhe (surname is unknown) believed that Zao was excessively spoiling Chang'An. So Chuzhe indirectly persuaded Zao to give her favorite grandchild to an ally kingdom in exchange for some military assistance to combat invaders. The idea was to sacrifice the child for the sake of the country.[60] This story was not widely known by most Chinese, but after Jiang Qing's quoted this ancient story it became a required text for senior high school students.[61] Relating this story to the present political situation, the most radical Red Guards were the children of these high-ranking army officers. Jiang Qing was Chuzhe, indirectly and authoritatively persuading the audience not to give up their child as a hostage to another kingdom. But rather, telling them to discipline their children for the sake of the country and in the name of preserving Mao's bastion of support, the PLA. As the Red Guard violence was increasing, the military was needed to maintain some semblance of order and stability. Because of this dire situation Jiang Qing felt that it was essential to speak out against the violence. Jiang Qing's speech was a call

to these families to discipline their children in order to help bring the chaos under control.

In her concluding remarks Jiang Qing discussed her personal involvement in the Cultural Revolution, beginning with Beijing opera reform, continuing with the organization of the Shanghai newspapers in the criticism of *Hai Rui,* and the attack on the former Beijing Party Committee. Jiang Qing said that it was such a struggle and discussed her contributions in great detail,[62] implying that she made a lot of contributions, but it was still not enough. In this speech, Jiang Qing was not entertaining the audience with an ancient story but rather, she used this *jiegu yujin* to encourage her audience to contribute more - hence the title, "Make New Contributions for the People."

As disorder spread throughout the nation Jiang Qing's appearances, as reported in the *New China News Agency,* decreased. This lead some observers to conclude that due to her effect on the excitable revolutionary masses, the government intentionally reduced her exposure in order to curtail the violence.[63]

Speech #4: Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Anhui Lai Jing Daibiao Huiyi shang de Jianghua (江青同志在安徽来京代表会议上的讲话 Comrade Jiang Qing's Speech at a Meeting with Anhui's Representatives in Beijing) (September 5, 1967)

In any case, Jiang Qing reappeared on the political stage to once again speak out against aggression. The audience was comprised of Anhui Red Guard representatives who were in the capital seeking support from the CRG to settle

factional differences. The violence in Anhui was becoming quite serious as many Red Guards had stolen firearms from the provincial PLA units and were bringing about a more violent revolution. Jiang Qing took on a new role trying to facilitate the conflict and control the situation. Jiang Qing chastised the Red Guards for attacking the army and fighting amongst themselves.[64] From there, Jiang Qing read the September 5th order from the highest authority of the CCP's Central Committee's. Speaking on their behalf, Jiang Qing ordered the Red Guards not to take weapons and equipment from the PLA.[65] This was a formal and urgent message in an attempt to bring about some semblance of order.. Afterwards, she condemned certain wrong-doings of Red Guards, such as their attacks on the British embassy and foreign freighters. Jiang Qing believed that such attacks would be ruinous to China's reputation.[66] This was important because she encouraged the factions to end the violence by working together towards a common goal.

China's leaders hailed the speech and as such, tape recordings and copies of it were distributed around the country to be studied. Jiang Qing, who had stood on the front line of the mass revolutionary movement, had called for an end to the violence.[67] After that, she gave several speeches with a similar message because there were thousands of provincial Red Guard representatives coming en masse to Beijing, seeking support from the CRG. On September 26, 1967, she gave a speech to the representatives from Henan and Hubei provinces.

Speech #5: Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Beijing Wenyi Zuotanhui shang de Jianghua

(江青同志在北京文艺座谈会上的讲话

Comrade Jiang Qing's Speech at the Art and Literature Symposium in Beijing)

(November 9 and 12, 1967)

This speech is noteworthy because it undermined the moderation she espoused in the Anhui speech. This speech was similar to the first speech in the section, "Jiang Qing Speaks at the rally of Art and Literature Communities," (November 28, 1966) as it was a revised copy that was produced for formal publication. It was widely read as an important Cultural Revolution document.

The audience consisted of a group of literary and art cadres from the PLA. It began modestly but then changed radically in tone . Jiang Qing believed there was sufficient time to revolutionize by the Chinese New Year. There were at least a few months for every unit to reorganize and beat their enemies. Then, she encouraged them to use force in order to destroy their opponent's reputations. She argued it would be difficult to continue our art creation otherwise.[68] Jiang Qing believed that it was not until every enemy had been denounced and attacked that art and literature that represented the Socialist economic base could truly flourish. As the authority on the arts, Jiang Qing was responsible for taking Mao's ideas and putting them into China's daily culture, a job that eclipsed Zhou Yang in influence. And she did everything in her power to ensure every one and everything she believed to be counterrevolutionary was destroyed, in the name of preserving MZT and her realm on the arts.

In this speech, Jiang Qing also said she believed there were still some 'bad' people who were trying to beat the revolution down. She said,

> "During the present period, some units need to be thrown into confusion to a certain extent. Other units, already thrown into confusion, need no further confusion. In units which have to be thrown into confusion, if the confusion is directed at the enemy, and not ourselves, then this is entirely proper ... We are not afraid of confusion.

[69] Arguing that a certain degree of confusion and violence was acceptable to achieve the goals of the revolution, this speech was reportedly taped and distributed to PLA literary and art units. They later found their way into the Red Guard press, where they were cited as justification for continuing the violence. Factional fighting spread and intensified. Some argued that her speech was the direct result of the violence.[70] It has been conjectured that the absence of any mention of Jiang Qing in the media from December 3 to January 26 reflected the government's dissatisfaction with her encouragement of violence, rather than poor her health, the explanation given by Zhou Enlai.[71] "With the country in chaos, no annual plan could be formulated for the national economy, and 1968 became the only year since 1949 without an annual national economic plan, seriously affecting economic development."[72] At the height of the violence, the country was kept in a state of constant turbulence as various factions used increasingly violent activities to gain power. The CRG, the highest organ of power during the Cultural Revolution, took advantage of these factional struggles to get rid of their opponents and to clear the way for their attempt to seize supreme power in China.[73]

For the last two years, Jiang Qing's image had been prominent as Mao's representative and her voice had dominanted as the mentor to millions of Red Guards. By late 1968, the Cultural Revolution was reaching a close and what

began as a drive to get rid of rightist bureaucrats was beginning to simmer down.[74] Jiang Qing and her supporters were at their height of power during the Cultural Revolution, but when the turbulence finally concluded in 1969, Jiang Qing was in a transitional stage in her political career. Her political power thrived in chaotic and violent times, but the CCP's Ninth National Congress (April 1969) irrevocably changed that. This congressional event was important because Jiang Qing, Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao all became members of the Politburo, while having their positions in the CRG having been eliminated.[75] On one hand, it can be interpreted that their political promotion accorded them a higher status, but in reality, this Shanghai group had lost a great deal of power and authority. In the Cultural Revolution, the CRG was the most powerful organ of political authority, but after the elimination of the CRG at the Ninth Party Congress, this group was excluded from rebuilding the party and government. Rehabilitated party bureaucrats under the leadership of Zhou Enlai and later Deng Xiaoping carried out this mission, bringing about a greater sense of peace, stability, and development for China, while threatening the radicals with their increasing power and authority.

The Next Eight Years (1969-1977)

From this point on this thesis will examine the time frame from 1969-1977. With the end of the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing and her supporters felt a real threat with the return of the rehabilitated rightists after the Ninth Party Congress. Hence, the radicals became more determined to protect themselves while attempting to destroy the moderate veteran leadership. As a result of their prominence in the media, Jiang Qing and her supporters played an important role in the launching of two major campaigns, *Pi Lin, Pi Kong* (批林批孔 Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius) and *Shuihu Zhuan* (水滸傳, The Water Margin) for the primary purpose of undermining the rightist leadership of Zhou and Deng.

In addition to these movements, external circumstances such as American Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger's clandestine visit on behalf of President Nixon, began the process of normalizing relations between the two powers, and the surprising death of Lin Biao were the two major setbacks for the radicals. Preserving their legitimacy and separating themselves from Lin Biao were the next steps to solving the problem now looming over Chinese Communist politics: leadership succession. It was at this point that where Jiang Qing once again began her own campaign to make her voice heard. There was a race to find a successor to Mao. In this spirit, Jiang Qing promoted herself as the most suitable candidate, using the media to associate herself with and extol the virtues of the few Chinese women leaders such as Empress Lu and Empress Wu Zetian who have reached the pinnacle of political power.

The Return of the Right

After two years of putting Mao's axiom, "destruction must precede construction," into practice the time came in 1969 when China needed to concentrate on rebuilding the nation and focus less on the *shiliu tiao* and its focus on revolutionary class struggle. The Chinese needed more than political rhetoric to live by; they needed a stable economic and political system. To achieve this the distribution of power shifted into the hands of the veteran leadership, "who returned in increasing numbers from exile, prison, farms, and factories to fill the party bureaucracy, economic ministries, and military hierarchy."[76] Even Mao understood that the Cultural Revolution had devastated the economy and hindered China's development because there was no economic plan. Industry, communications, and transportation were all on the brink of collapse. Factories had stopped production while China's neighbours Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong began an economic boom.[77] Therefore, Zhou Enlai was called in to put the economy back on track. By 1972, he had issued numerous directives to develop the national economy through agriculture, industry, and science. In a similar fashion to that which Liu Shaoqi had used to stimulate the economy after the GLF, Zhou used material incentives and the introduction of more liberal policies to do whatever proved effective at reviving economic production. Jiang Qing, however, had neither the experience nor the background to participate in such matters. She saw only certain professionals who had been previously denounced being rehabilitated and returned to work. Certainly she was not happy about this, but these bureaucrats knew how to get the country back on course. The Cultural

Revolution was an ideal time ideal for promoting her views and Jiang Qing naturally did not want that control and influence to end. But the period after the Ninth National Congress created a positive environment that focused on economic and political stability. Jiang Qing, like any other political actor of the time, had to justify her position in terms of Marxism-Leninism by promoting MZT and her views on art and literature in the media. However she was unable to evolve with the changing circumstances and this inability to adapt eventually became one of Jiang Qing's biggest obstacles in her attempt to succeed Mao and gain the ultimate recognition.

In matters outside politics and economics, Jiang Qing's model operas still dominated the screen and stage. But after 1969 there was also a reappearance of local operas and more variety in literature because this period was comparatively more open and less focused on political correctness:[78] "The Shanghai group became increasingly on the defensive as they were isolated more and more, not only from the centers of political and economic power, but even from their own power base in the cultural sphere."[79] While remaining a political faction, by the early 1970s the radicals began to resemble an intellectual group that were expressing themselves publicly through the central media, (The People's Daily, Red Flag, and The Guangming Daily) which they controlled.[80] This "gave their pronouncements an aura of legitimacy, for the population had grown accustomed to trusting the media's pronouncements as an accurate reflection of official policy even though that was no longer true." [81] From 1973 until Mao's death, the radicals launched two major campaigns, *Pi Lin, Pi Kong* and *Shuihu Zhuan* These were

intended to communicate to the Chinese populace certain policy directives and priorities while also attacking the rightist party bureaucracy.

Pi Lin, Pi Kong (Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius)

In August 1973, Mao's comment that Lin Biao and Confucius should be criticized together became the impetus for radicals and the *Pi Lin, Pi Kong* Campaign.[82] Following Mao's directive, Jiang Qing brought together a group of intellectuals positioned at Qinghua University to undergo critical research designed to link Lin Biao with Confucius. The group became known as *Liang Xiao* (兩校, Two Schools) and under her support, members received special accommodations and food, and were frequently taken on fact-finding missions with Jiang Qing.[83] On January 18, 1974, under Jiang Qing's guidance the group published a document which marked the formal start of the campaign entitled, "The doctrines of Lin Biao, Confusius, and Mencius."[84] The campaign's purpose was to attack Zhou, who they argued was trying to turn back the wheel of history.[85] This was the theme that dominated the campaign and the argument was that there were two groups: those that wanted to continue moving the revolution forward and those that wanted to turn back history, thereby undermining the continuance of China's socialist revolution. From there, Jiang organized *Pi Lin* and *Pi Kong* rallies and traveled all over the country delivering speeches, dominating media reports. While the political struggle intensified the campaign assumed different themes and slogans. The campaign that ultimately climaxed

with the *Shuihu Zhuan,* Water Margin Campaign from August to December 1975.[86]

Shuihu Zhuan, The Water Margin

With the death of Zhou, Deng became the great Confucianist .[87] His rise during his year of leadership substantially increased the fears of the radicals. However he continued Zhou's line and tacked the most serious problems concerning the military, labour unrest, and industry, as well as producing important policies to accelerate the economy.[88] Because of Deng's increasing influence, the radicals began the *Shuihu Zhuan* campaign in the summer of 1975 to create popular hostility against rightist policies.

For example, Jiang Qing was highly critical of Deng's policy position on agriculture. At the First National Conference on Learning from Dazhai brigade in Agriculture, Jiang Qing gave a speech in which she called for the return of the commune ideal of the GLF that emphasized egalitarianism and class struggle. while Deng, like his predecessors, focused on material incentives.[89] Jiang used her speech to attack Deng. From then on, Deng was labeled a capitulationist and the present day Song Jiang [90] from the Chinese novel *Shuihu Zhuan,* The Water Margin. Jiang said that

> this book must be read carefully to see the features of this renegade ... That man Song Jiang had many double dealing tricks! ... Song Jiang made a figurehead of Chao Gai; aren't there people just now who are trying to make a figurehead of the Chairman? I think there are some.[91]

In this instance, Jiang Qing was following Mao's line of thinking. He had previously made some criticisms Shuihu Zhuan and, given his poor heath, Yao Wenyuan was able to orchestrate a reinterpretation of the Chairman's comments made on August 13, 1975. A few days later Yao was able to use the media to depict Song Jiang as a traitor and the *Water Margin* as a reactionary novel.[92] Other articles were published through *Liang Xiao* and other media sources which compared the power struggle in *Water Margin* to resemble the current political struggle:

> These articles warned that capitulationists like Song Jiang, who looked like revolutionaries but were actually counter-revolutionaries, had appeared in revolutionary ranks throughout history and into the present. The reader would have had no trouble ... connecting these Water Margin counter-revolutionaries to present-day counter-revolutionaries. Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping had suppressed the radicals and brought back purged officials, whom they appointed to high posts. The description of Song Jiang and his associates was thus more obviously analogous to Zhou and Deng ...[93]

The theme of a weakening Mao and an increasing powerful Deng dominated the campaign more and more.[94] Anticipating what might happen to them when Mao died, the radicals used this campaign to forewarn the public of the current rightist leadership, urging them to completely overthrow the existing political system. In doing so they further legitimatized the slogan of the Cultural Revolution: "Rebellion is justified."[95] Therefore, in order to maintain their position, the radicals had to promote violence, radicalism, and aggression in the media, and in their rallies and speeches.

The political struggle between the radicals and the bureaucrats for supreme power was becoming increasingly intense in the media. The result of these campaigns was confusing for the populace and they had grown weary of politics. Despite its 'legitimacy' in the media, the revolutionary movement had cooled down. Essentially the radicals could no longer provide the revolutionary ideology that had appealed to so many youths and workers during the Cultural Revolution. People were less interested in politics. They had witnessed the damage that two years of political revolution had done to the country and they wanted to get on with their lives. Nevertheless, Jiang Qing continued to espouse Mao's political rhetoric and denounced rightists in the mass media. When the Chinese read in the newspapers that Dr. Kissinger had met with Mao to begin the process of normalizing relations, the Chinese populace was shocked. But at the same time they were optimistic that China was on the path to recovery through its participation in the international community.[96]

Dr. Kissinger's Visit to China

For a long period of time China believed that it was the center of the world's Communist revolution.[97] It had considered U.S imperialism as its number one enemy, and Soviet revisionism as its second biggest threat. China had only a few supporters and had succeeded in isolating itself from the rest of the world. As such, it came as a great shock to everyone that Dr. Kissinger, during an official visit to Pakistan, made a secret visit to Beijing, meeting with only Mao and Zhou.

No one else was aware of the meeting and when the events were published in the media everyone, including Jiang Qing, was surprised. Jiang Qing did not have any experience in foreign affairs or diplomacy and was unaware of the events that were transpiring. Considering the situation, this event was inconceivable, but it was nevertheless the right direction in China's path to stability. In 1972, President Nixon visited China and the two countries normalized relations. Prime Minister Tanaka of Japan also visited China and the relations between the two countries were established at the ambassadorial level. China realized that it should join the international community[98] contradicting the radicals;' anti-foreign stance.

Lin Biao's Death

The next setback for the radicals was Lin Biao's surprising death. The *jiuyisan shijian* (九一三事件, September 13 Incident) (1971), named after Lin Biao's failed military coup d'etat, was arguably the biggest political crisis in the Party since 1949. The media vilified Lin Biao thereby deflecting criticism from Mao. However, this incident was Jiang Qing's biggest challenge because from 1964, Jiang Qing had been closely associated with him. Lin Biao's death came as a great shock to Jiang Qing, but more troubling was the relationship between Mao and Lin Biao that was revealed. It appeared that everyone around them knew that there were problems between Lin and Mao, just as there were problems between Mao and Jiang. In fact, Jiang Qing had firsthand knowledge of these problems from a letter Mao wrote to her on July 8, 1966.[99] Unfortunately, it seems that

Jiang Qing did not appreciate the extent of these problems. After Lin died and the media had vilified him, she realized that she had to separate herself from Lin or else be considered guilty by association. Jiang Qing recognized that any further association with Lin would only widen the gulf between her and Mao. Jiang Qing had to maintain her connection with Mao to save her position. As a result, she had to use any means available to separate herself from Lin: "To give new impetus to the Cultural Revolution, which had sunk into a deep trough after the September 13 Incident, Jiang Qing launched a nationwide campaign to criticize Lin Biao and Confucius."[100] As she had done every time in the past, she used the media to further denounce Lin Biao. The populace was uninterested however, and numbed after reading about one political campaign after another. But, because Lin Biao's death had shocked everyone, especially Mao, the public was attentive as it became quite clear that a successor had to be chosen.

In the wake of the September 13 Incident, three groups began to emerge in the Politburo: the radicals, the survivors, and the beneficiaries of the Cultural Revolution. The radicals were Jiang Qing and her supporters, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yao Wenyuan. The survivors were the senior officials like Zhou Enlai who had collaborated with Mao but had certainly disapproved of the purposes behind the Cultural Revolution. The final group was the beneficiaries of the Cultural Revolution. They were primarily military figures that had risen through the ranks as a result of the purge of senior officials and their own ability to manipulate through the turbulent politics of that period.[101]

From these three groups it was apparent that Mao had no clear successor. Zhou was the highest-ranking official under Mao, but as he had recently been diagnosed with cancer, Mao looked to the radicals for a like-minded successor.[102] Mao must have been aware that the PLA was unlikely to accept as successor anyone who had done so much to stir up violence, bloodshed, and disorder as Jiang Qing or Zhang Chunqiao had. After Lin Biao's failure, it was impossible for someone of similar mind to obtain support from the PLA. His death severed Jiang Qing's alliance with the army. Her inability to get support from the Army was another reason why she could not gain supreme power. It was also apparent that no beneficiary of the Cultural Revolution had the stature needed to attract broad-based support and endorsement from Mao.[103] Given this difficult situation, Mao took a junior radical, Wang Hongwen and catapulted him to the apex of Communist politics. Wang had risen from being a factory security chief, to the workers' leader supporting Zhang and Yao during the January Revolution. By the early 1970s, Wang was the boss of Shanghai and by 1973, under Mao's direction, he became a member of the Politburo:[104]

> The rise of Wang Hongwen was clearly designed to provide a more acceptable image for the radical faction. Wang, at thirty-seven, was good-looking and personable, and symbolized two constituencies critically important in the Cultural Revolution: youth and the workers. Through Wang, the radicals may have hoped to rekindle the youthful enthusiasm that had been dampened by the disbanding of the Red Guards.[105]

It is doubtful that Jiang Qing had a choice in the matter of whether or not to accept Wang Hongwen. Luckily for Jiang, she could manipulate him. But her plan did not succeed as Mao recognized that Wang was becoming a political

token of Jiang Qing. Unfortunately for Jiang, Mao saw her as a political liability. With the number two position in the Party still vacant and her husband's health ailing, Jiang Qing saw a clearer path to the top position of power:

> Lin Biao's death had eliminated the biggest obstacle on her path to the top. She believed she could turn her ambition into reality with just a little more effort. Hence, Jiang changed her identity overnight, making herself a victim of Lin Biao's persecution and a heroine who struggled against him.[106]

The relationship between Mao and Jiang had been strained for quite some time. Jiang Qing had salvaged her marriage by creating a pubic persona which gave support to Mao in times of instability. From 1964-71, Mao needed, and therefore utilized, Jiang Qing's contributions thus ensuring that her marriage and her public recognition remained intact. After Lin's death, Jiang Qing believed that a path had opened up for her to become Mao's heir. However, she misread her relationship with her husband. Over the next five years Mao's own position within the Party and the country was reaffirmed. Hence, he no longer had as great a need for Jiang Qing's support. What Jiang Qing failed to appreciate was that as Mao became more secure, he needed her less; once again she found herself dangerously close to being shut out of Mao's inner circle for good. Over the last six years, Jiang Qing had sown the seeds of her own destruction by helping her husband eliminate his enemies. This time was different because instead of creating a new role in which Mao could draw upon, she became solely concerned with her own rise to power.

From there, Jiang Qing began to refocus her direction. The question of succession led to an intense political struggle that demanded Jiang Qing's involvement. She began to promote herself as a state person. First, she indirectly achieved this through the emergence of Elena Ceausescu's personality cult. Secondly, she spoke to American historian Roxane Witke, and finally, she used her control in the media to extol the virtues of Empress Lu and Empress Wu Zetian by revising their negative historical image.

In the summer of 1971 the CCP hosted a visit for Romanian Party Secretary, Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena.[107] Unlike her husband who was promoted as a cult of personality, Elena had low public profile. Her position was similar to Jiang Qing's position in the 1950s. Being in the shadow of a larger than life husband, Elena was not satisfied with her life in Romania. When Elena went to China and met Jiang Qing, she was inspired by her host's accomplishments and sought to find her own role and sense of recognition. In *The Rise and Fall of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu* (1992), Almond argued that it was Elena's visit to China and her meeting with Jiang Qing that influenced her future ambitions to become a prominent figure in Romanian politics.[108] After observing Jiang Qing's dominance in the Chinese arts and her entrenched political authority, Elena returned to Romania determined to find a role of prominence. She had a background in chemistry and soon after her return she received honorary degrees andeventually became the director of the Central Chemical Research Institute. A

year later, she became a member of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee. And by 1980, she was ranked only second to her husband in the Party.[109] Every time a newspaper mentioned her name, they would sing her praises, calling her a genius and an active politician who played a crucial role in promoting Romanian science, education, and culture.[110] While Jiang Qing did not directly play a role in Elena's rise to power, in 1971 she acted as a statesperson who possessed the skills necessary to be a politician of such high stature. Jiang Qing began to have an impact abroad because women like Elena Ceausescu wanted to emulate Jiang's success.

The next step Jiang Qing took to promote herself as a state person was agreeing to be interviewed at length by American historian Roxane Witke. Jiang Qing met with Witke at the Great Hall of the People and the historian was honoured to have the opportunity to meet a woman of such elevated political stature. Originally, the two women were expected to meet only once. Officials were even unsure that Jiang would agree to meet with a foreigner; however, they met six times for more than fifty hours in Guangzhou.[111] Jiang must have known that her husband would not have approved.But she was reaching beyond Mao, presenting herself not as his wife, but as an accomplished follower who was well-equipped to take control when her husband departed. [112]Jiang told Witke,

> I have never before told any foreigner my life story. You are the first one ... I am not suppose to publish an autobiography in China. So I hope you can write one for me and publish it overseas ... You may write and publish anything that I've told you ... Snow wrote *Red Star Over China,* and it became world famous; I hope you can follow Snow's example.[113]

In their six interviews, Jiang Qing portrayed herself as a person of high political stature. She had guards, physicians, several nurses, interpreters, a stenographer, and an official from the News Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs present, witnessing their conversations. Jiang Qing tried to present Witke with the image of a capable effective politician and a woman who could succeed at carrying on Mao's revolutionary work.

The final ay Jiang Qing promoted herself as the most suitable successor to Mao, was to extoll the virtues of Empress Lu and Empress Wu Zetian in the mass media. She wanted to revise their histories because "Female rulers were traditionally denounced by male historians for their disruption of the Confucian patrilinear succession system for their alleged misdeeds."[114] As stated previously, there is a longstanding perception in China that a woman could not become the supreme ruler of China or play a honourable role in politics. According to Confucian tradition, men and women have certain socially prescribed roles: women stay at home and strive to be good wives and mothers. The most highly respected women are those who abide by these rules. When a woman transcends these roles and enters the world of male dominated politics, it is widely believed that problems will arise. Jiang Qing was at the height of political power and with the question of succession being raised, she sought every possible means to promote the idea of a woman becoming the supreme ruler of China. Before this campaign, Jiang Qing was never promoted as a female politician. Instead she was given the gender-neutral title, "Comrade in Arms." Chinese Communism in general does not distinguish between the sexes, but Jiang Qing needed to

associate herself with a woman, a model who had achieved supreme power. The longstanding Confucian perception would be her greatest obstacle, but she used her control of the media to promote Empress Lu and Empress Wu Zetian. For instance, she had the *People's Daily* praise Empress Lu as follows: "After the death of Liu Bang, Empress Lu was in power. She was resolute and steadfast and assisted Liu Bang in bringing peace and order to the country."[115] However, Jiang Qing was more likely to compare herself to Wu Zetian, the only woman who effectively ruled her own dynasty, the Zhou. In the *Tianjin Daily,* she was praised as an outstanding state person who was ten times superior to Emperor Gaozong.[116] Jiang Qing used the media to promote herself above her husband. But she was unsuccessful because under Communism, she would always be measured against her husband and MZT. In addition, her media activities were beginning to be challenged by the veteran bureaucrats in their intense political struggle for supreme leadership. Mao was also becoming increasingly irascible towards Jiang Qing.

According to Terrill, by 1975 a serious marital conflict was looming over Mao and Jiang. Political difficulties were attributed as the cause of the rift. Mao certainly gave that impression, telling her on March 21, 1974, "It's better not to see each other: You have not carried out what I've been telling you for many years; what's the good of seeing each other anymore. You have books by Marx and Lenin and you have my books; you stubbornly refused to study them."[117] Then at a Politburo meeting in July 1974, Mao for the first time criticized his wife's political actions in front of everyone present, referring to her and her

supporters as a "Gang of Four." [118] Mao said that Jiang Qing represented only herself and had wild ambitions for wanting to become the chairman of the CCP. Some sources argued that Jiang Qing moved out because she was outraged over Mao's liaison with a young railway car attendant whom he had introduced into his household.[119] Whatever the reason, the relations between Mao and Jiang were tense:

> In the 1960's the marriage soared because the pair's expectations were congruent: Mao needed Jiang and Jiang had everything to gain by seizing the political opportunity Mao's need gave her. In the 1970's they were no longer working together as a political team. Mao reigned but no longer ruled ... In a loosened-up [political] situation Jiang Qing became an independent force. She did indeed fail to "carry out" some of his advice to her; with her eyes on the post-Mao era she was no longer the loyal wife expending her own life for her husband's career.[120]

Jiang Qing continued to promote herself as the next successor, believing that only she was the most suitable candidate for the job.. As a woman, Jiang Qing was one of the handful that had arisen to such political heights, yet Jiang's independence aggravated Mao. This was the first time that Mao had articulated such an idea, but he never did anything decisive to kill her ambition. Mao let her attack and denounce Zhou and Deng as well as criticize the other veteran bureaucrats who were putting China's economy back on track. In January 1976, Zhou Enlai's death marked the demise of the Gang of Four. Jiang Qing refused to let the public grieve and pay tribute to his memory. This proved to be a bad decision compounded by the fact that the Gang of Four controlled the media thus enabling them to restrict the public airing of grief and to publish blatant attacks on Zhou's leadership. They crossed the line of tolerance, enraging the public with a front-

page article in the *Wenyi bao* that referred to Zhou as a capitalist-roader.[121] Consequently, student protests swept the country demonstrating support for Zhou and Deng and venting their hatred towards the Gang of Four. On September 9, 1967 Mao died, leading to the prompt arrest of Jiang Qing and her gang.

The Gang of Four had clearly risen to power ecause of Mao's political patronage. The radicals had a considerable base of support in Shanghai and they assumed that their relationship with Mao, their position in the Politburo, and their control of the media was enough to sustain their power in Beijing after his death -[122] but it was not. The Gang did not succeed and within a month were arrested because the veteran bureaucrats were able to overthrow and imprison them on the basis that they were radical politicians, who were too left in nature.In prison, Jiang Qing's demise was recounted in countless posters, cartoons, and articles. Instead of being portrayed as a radical she was pictured as a witch, a hypocrite, and the fallen Empress. In gender-neutral Communist China, she was associated with *Hong yan huo shui.* Mass hatred was vented towards her while her husband of thirty-eight years was revered, respected, and worshiped. Jiang Qing became the most powerful woman in Communist China and one of the few in China's long history that held such a position of power and authority. , Jiang Qing could not avoid the same historical demise that women like Wu Zetian and Empress Lu faced thousands of years before.

[1] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7 no. 1. (Jan. 6, 1969): 8.
[2] Ibid., 8.
[3] Harry Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 177.
[4] *A Glossary of Political Terms of the People's Republic of China* ed. Kwok-sing and trans. Mary Lok (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1995), 582.
[5] Ibid., 411.
[6] Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 179.
[7] Ibid., 159-60.
[8] Ibid., 160.
[9] Ibid., 160.
[10] Ibid., 160.
[11] Ibid., 181.
[12] Sun Dunfan ed. *Zhongguo Gongchandang Lishi Jiangyi* (Teaching Materials of the History of the Chinese Communist Party vol.2) [Jinan, Shandong Renmin,1983], 254. Cited in Harding, "The Chinese State in Crisis in 1966-9," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 181.
[13] Fred Kong informed me of this, recalled from his experience in China.
[14] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1. (Jan. 6, 1969): 8.
[15] Ibid., 8.
[16] Ibid., 8.
[17] A. Zhelokhovtsev, "Soviet Describes China Trip," in *Joint Publications Research Service* no. 45701 (June 17, 1968), 14.
[18] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1. (Jan. 6, 1969): 8.
[19] Roxane Witke, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), 324.
[20] Zhelokhovtsev, "Soviet Describes China Trip," in *Joint Publications Research Service* no. 45701 (June 17, 1968), 14.
[21] Ibid., 14.
[22] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1. (Jan. 6, 1969): 9.
[23] Jiang Qing, "Jiang Qing Tan Xiqu Geming" (Jiang Qing Talks on the Reform of Traditional Opera) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhongguo Yanjiusuo, 1967), 41.
[24] Jiang Qing,"Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Wenyijie Dahui de Jianghua," (Jiang Qing's Speech at the Rally of Art and Literature Communities) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Xuanbian: 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969], 18.
[25] Ibid., 18.
[26] Ibid., 19.
[27] Ibid., 19.
[28] Ibid., 21.
[29] Ibid., 21.
[30] Ibid., 21.
[31] Ibid., 22.
[32] Ibid., 37.
[33] Ibid., 23. This is my translation of this sentence.
[34] Ibid., 27.
[35] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 6.

[36] Ross Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 278.
[37] Ibid., 278.
[38] Ibid., 282.
[39] Ibid., 283.
[40] Jiang Qing, "Zai Renmin Dahuitang de Jianghua" (Jiang Qing's Speech at the Great Hall of the People) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhongguo Zhongguo Yanjiusuo, 1967), 28.
[41] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* ed. D.W.Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 202.
[42] Jiang Qing, "Zai Renmin Dahuitang de Jianghua" (Jiang Qing's Speech at the Great Hall of the People) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Yanjiusuo, 1967), 28.
[43] Ibid., 28. This is my translation of *jianku pusu.*
[44] Ibid., 28.
[45] Ibid., 29.
[46] Ibid., 29.
[47] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 122.
[48] Jiang Qing, "Zai Renmin Dahuitang de Jianghua" (Jiang Qing's Speech at the Great Hall of the People) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhongguo Yanjiusuo, 1967), 29.
[49] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 122.
[50] Jiang Qing, "Zai Renmin Dahuitang de Jianghua" (Jiang Qing's Speech at the Great Hall of the People) ed. Ding Wang (Hong Kong: Dangdai Zhonguo Yanjiusuo, 1967), 29.
[51] Ibid., 30-1.
[52] Ibid., 30-1.
[53] Ibid., 31.
[54] Ibid., 31.
[55] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 391.
[56] Ibid., 392.
[57] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 9-10.
[58] Ibid., 10.
[59] This is my translation of *jiegu yujin.*
[60] Fred Kong informed me of the story about Chuzhe and its relationship to Jiang Qing's political intentions.
[61] Fred Kong informed me of this information because he was a high school teacher in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution.
[62] Jiang Qing, "Wei Renmin Li Xin Gong," (Make New Contributions for the People) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Jianghua Xuanbian: 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969], 39-41.
[63] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 10.
[64] Jiang Qing, "Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Anhui Lai Daibiao Huiyi shang de Jianghua," (Comrade Jiang Qing's Speech at the Interview of Anhui's Representatives in Beijing) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Jianghua Xuanbian: 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969], 56-9.
[65] Ibid., 62-3.
[66] Ibid., 63.
[67] "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 10.
[68] Jiang Qing, "Jiang Qing Tongzhi zai Beijing Wenyi Zuotanhui shang de Jianghua," (Comrade Jiang Qing's Speech at the Art and Literature Symposium in Beijing) in *Jiang Qing Tongzhi Jianghua Xuanbian: 1966.2-1968.9* (The Selected Speeches of Comrade Jiang Qing) [Hebei: Renmin Chubanshe, 1969), 75.
[69] Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 11.
[70] Ibid., 11.

[71] Comrade Chiang Ch'ing: Chairman Mao's Enigmatic Spouse," in *Current Scene Developments in Mainland China* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 6, 1969): 12.
[73] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 394.
[73] Ibid., 394.
[74] Merle Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 156.
[75] Ibid., 156.
[76] Ibid., 157.
[77] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 408.
[78] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 157.
[79] Ibid., 157.
[80] Ibid., 157-8.
[81] Ibid., 159.
[82] Yue Daiyun and Carolyn Wakeman, *To the Storm: The Odyssey of a Revolutionary Chinese Woman.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 323. Cited in Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 286.
[84] Ibid., 323-6. Yue Daiyun's knowledge of *Liang Xiao* is extensive because her husband, Tang Yijie was one of the group's members. Cited in Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 287.
[84] Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 286.
[86] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 439.
[86] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 201.
[87] Tien-wei Wu, *Lin Biao and the Gang of Four* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), 171.
[88] Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, 293.
[89] Ibid., 294.
[90] Tien-wei Wu, *Lin Biao and the Gang of Four*, 171.
[91] History Writing Group, "The ghost of Empress Lu," 55. Cited in Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 294.
[91] Goldman, *China's Intellectuals Advise and Dissent*, 203.
[93] Ibid., 204.
[94] Ibid., 206.
[95] Ibid., 207-208.
[96] Fred Kong informed be of this. At the time, he was living in Shanghai and told me about his impression of Dr. Kissinger's visit and the events publicized in the People's Daily. He stressed that this was a shock amongst the Chinese because it contradicted China's stance towards the United States. Despite this, Kong emphasized that the Chinese were excited about the prospect of being apart of the international community because it had not been apart of it for so long.
[97] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 432.
[98] Ibid., 433.
[99] See Jin Qiu, *The Culture of Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 72-3 and MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989* ed. Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 277.
[100] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 430.
[101] Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, 278.
[102] Ibid., 280.
[103] Ibid., 280.
[104] Ibid., 280-1.

[105] Ibid., 281.
[106] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 404.
[107] Cheng Mo, *Xueshu Nuhuang* (Romania's Academic Queen). This document can be found at http://cnd-f.cnd.org/HXWZExpress/01/12/011212-3.gb.html, p. 1.
[108] See Mark Almond, *The Rise and Fall of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu* (London: Champans, 1992) This document can also be viewed on an electronic document www.geocities.com/carnival_isha/Elena _Ceausescu.html
[109] Cheng, *Xueshu Nuhuang* (Romania's Academic Queen). This document can be found at http://cnd-f.cnd.org/HXWZExpress/01/12/011212-3.gb.html, p. 1.
[110] Ibid., 1.
[111] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 406.
[112] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 321.
[113] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 406.
[114] MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, 290.
[115] Yan and Gao, *The Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, 443.
[116] Ibid., 443.
[117] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 324-5.
[118] Ibid., 324-5; Witke, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), 476.
[119] Roderick MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, 295.
[120] Terrill, *Madame Mao: The White Boned Demon*, 324.
[121] MacFarquhar, "The Succession to Mao and the End of Maoism, 1969-82," in *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, 301.
[122] Ibid., 308.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

As there is no single piece of scholarship that has effectively examined Jiang Qing, the main purpose of this thesis reexamination has been to endeavor to answer the question: who really was Jiang Qing? During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing was the most powerful woman in China, dominating culture with the development of her model revolutionary operas, her theory of the Basic Task and the Three Prominences, and her official appointment as cultural advisor to the PLA. Politically, she had a high-ranking position in the CRG as well as membership in the Politburo, where she represented the most radical line of MZT. Jiang Qing derived her authority in culture and politics by positioning herself as Mao's representative. She dictated what was good and revolutionary while denouncing those who were counterrevolutionary thereby causing many individuals to experience great suffering during this turbulent period. It is for this reason she became and remains the most vilified woman in modern Chinese history. The tremendous suffering that many people experienced during the Cultural Revolution is widely known. And, while it cannot be denied that Jiang Qing deserved a certain degree of responsibility for causing that suffering, nothing has ever been mentioned of Jiang Qing's loyal support to Mao and MZT. From her beginnings as a young naïve Communist in Yan'an in the 1940s, to her

position a dramatic theoretician and her role as Mao's representative during the 1960s and 1970s, Jiang Qing never strayed from Mao's line.

However despite being one of Mao's most steadfast supporters, the driving force in her own life was to gain recognition. Jiang Qing's to transcend the role of a housewife, combined with Mao's support, allowed her to achieve the recognition, power, and authority she sought. All of the high-ranking positions Jiang Qing held in politics and culture can be directly linked to her husband's support. However, this quest for recognition did not begin with her marriage to Mao. In fact, it was an important theme throughout her life. Over the course of Jiang Qing's life she constantly sought greater recognition, only to realize she wanted to play a more prominent role. As a result, she began to envision herself like other great Chinese women such as Wu Zetian, who had achieved effective power. In the end, Jiang Qing could never really be an independent power. It was her role as a politician that ultimately led to her demise.

In chapter two, "Jiang Qing as a Woman," I described her experiences which, coupled with the changing nation around her, set the stage for the woman she was ultimately to become. The fall of dynastic rule, Imperialism, and the May Fourth Era were certainly factors that intimately affected Jiang Qing's earlier years. Her first identity was as a daughter in a traditional Confucian setting. Witnessing her mother's insignificant existence made Jiang Qing determined to seek out a better life. And while this seed was planted early, it would not have grown had it not been for May Fourth Era. This period in particular altered the old traditions and conceptions of what a woman's identity should be. Jiang Qing was

no longer confined to the role of mother and wife. Unlike women in the past, Jiang Qing would be able to leave her natal home, obtain an education, and decide her own destiny as an actress in Shanghai. After experiencing these new identities, she chose a new role as a revolutionary soldier in the emergent Communist Party. While in Yan'an, Jiang Qing reached what she believed was the pinnacle of her life, when she married China's savior, Mao Zedong. Yet she was forced to give up the identity that she had carved out for herself by the Party, believing that becoming Mrs. Mao accorded her a certain kind of recognition that more than made up for what she lost. This thesis started its reexamination with her early years because it was important to understand that Jiang Qing was more than willing to reinvent herself whenever necessary.

As the Communist Party moved toward unification, Chinese women were taking on greater roles as feminists, leaders, and role models. Jiang Qing realized that her achievement in marrying Mao meant very little when women like Wang Guangmei were transcending the role of the housewife. Jiang Qing resented this and began to construct a new identity that would give her greater recognition. It only made sense that Jiang Qing should utilize her professional experience in the arts to create herself a role in the cultural reformation.

In chapter three, "Jiang Qing as a Theoretician," Jiang's success in finding a role in cultural affairs was demonstrated. For a long time, Jiang Qing's own attempts at cultural reform proved unsuccessful and she remained unrecognized for her work in art and literature committees. It was not until Mao sensed a greater degree of revisionism in the Party that Jiang Qing's call to make art and literature

in line with the socialist economic base finally reached her husband's attention. It was then that her participation was possible,. Not only did Mao need her to reform culture, but also because his own position in the Party was unstable. Jiang Qing became Mao's most loyal comrade. Her pivotal role in the *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office* criticism, which is regarded by historians as the prelude to the Cultural Revolution, set the stage for her to play a greater role in the arts. She revolutionized Beijing opera with the development of model dramas based on contemporary revolutionary themes. This became a crucial art form to promote Communist propaganda. It was Mao's support that made the development of her model operas possible . From there, Jiang Qing and her supporters developed a dramatic theory, the Basic Task and the Three Prominences - a concrete theoretical framework that demonstrated the 'strict' guidelines of reform and set the standards for what all good literature and art should represent. By this time, Jiang Qing was the most powerful person in the arts, but she sought to take her dramas to the next level of prominence by turning them into films. To this day, certain parts of these movies have become immortalized in history and the heroic characters in them have become cultural icons. This was Jiang Qing's legacy and her greatest contribution to the Cultural Revolution's plan to reform culture for the masses.

Ultimately, Jiang Qing's cultural theory and her dramas were not only used to promote and carry out Mao's revolutionary stance, but also to knock down the obstacles of the Beijing cultural establishment that were originally against Jiang Qing's participation in arts reform during the 1950s. However, by the 1960,

the changing political climate, coupled with Mao's continued support, allowed Jiang Qing to reach the apex of the arts, centralizing the art reform process to such a degree that artistic output greatly suffered due to her need to control the reform. She carved out her own influential position and recognition in culture by surrounding herself with theorizing intellectuals such as Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao, and Yu Huiyong, andwith the support of key politicians such as Kang Sheng, Lin Biao, and Ke Qingshi. Each of these men had their own relationship with Jiang Qing and provided her with additional means to gain recognition. Their combined talents, whether political or intellectual, made her almost invincible. However these individuals were attracted to Jiang Qing because of her proximity to Mao. Jiang Qing achieved an immensely powerful position where she was only accountable only to her husband.

For ten years, her eight model dramas were the only operas produced for the stage and screen. While they symbolized proletarian culture and represented Jiang Qing's success in being recognized in cultural reform, the Chinese people suffered a cultural famine because it was the only thing that they were permitted to watch. And while these dramas are still enjoyed to this day, even after her fall, she has never been credited for her contributions. In fact, Jiang Qing was charged by the government-controlled media with consciously distorting Mao's Talks at Yan'an. But at the time, Mao had approved and supported her process of the revolutionization of the arts. Her participation in the cultural reform process was a prelude to her role in the political realm that ultimately benefited Mao the most because it provided him with the support he needed in difficult times.

The final element of this thesis was found in chapter four, "Jiang Qing as a Politician." This chapter analyzed Jiang's swift movement into political realm, where she achieved the height of her recognition as well as her subsequent fall from power. Jiang Qing achieved a position of prominence rather swiftly after 1966 as Mao began a struggle to reassert his position against those whom he believed were becoming increasingly right in nature. Beginning with her criticism of *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office,* Jiang Qing's position rose substantially and throughout the course of the Cultural Revolution, she became China's fastest rising political star. Jiang Qing moved from the artistic realm into an overtly political role serving two key functions as Mao's spokesperson and as a mentor to millions of young and impressionable Red Guards.

By examining the speeches that Jiang Qing gave during the late 1960s, it becomes apparent that her words promoted violence, radicalism, and aggression. However it was Mao who initially promoted violence after he unleashed the Red Guards at Tiananmen. As Mao's representative, Jiang Qing's speeches were merely a reiteration of Mao's directives. As a high-ranking member of the CRG, answerable to only Mao, her words affected millions of youth who responded to her call for violence by de-habilitating a longstanding cultural heritage and a nation. Jiang Qing thrived in the position as Mao's representative and it was the chaos of the Cultural Revolution that had put her in that position in the first place. , she did not want the chaos to end and she used her speeches to not only promote the revolution and rid the counterrevolutionaries, but also as a vehicle to denounce and criticize certain people. Mao believed political turmoil was good

for China, but the chaos could not continue indefinitely. Jiang Qing wanted to harness the instability and use it to purge her enemies. Ultimately, when the violence created anarchy, Jiang Qing had to curtail her radical speeches and public appearances. From there, she acted as Mao's mediator, using MZT to help resolve the factional conflicts that she and Mao had helped.

Jiang Qing always supported for Mao's line, promoting it tirelessly in her speeches But even Mao realized that stability needed to replace the chaos. Economic development became China's number one priority and the moderates worked hard to solve this problem by rehabilitating certain individuals who could help develop the national economy. Jiang Qing had no experience in such matters. Therefore, she could only continue to promote MZT. The circumstances had obviously changed, but Jiang Qing did not adapt. Other than her contributions to art and literature, Jiang Qing did not have the requirements to run a country or be a state person. This deficiency was the result of her background and while she had shown in the past that she was willing to remake herself as the situation required, she simply did not have the education, talent, the charisma to be a leader. Her talk with Witke at this time proved that she wanted to project the image of such an individual. But without Mao, MZT, and with only her artistic background to help her, she did not have what it took to succeed Mao.

During the Cultural Revolution, Mao jettisoned Jiang Qing to the top levels of power. Over time, however, Mao became increasingly irritable towards her. Serious marital conflict had loomed over the couple for many years and political difficulties only widened the gap. The turning point for Jiang Qing was

the death of Lin Biao. She had to find a way to distance herself from a man who had been one of her closest supporters despite their rivalry. Furthermore, Lin's death left an empty seat for the number two spot in China. In Mao's attempt to find a replacement, he discovered Jiang Qing's aspiration to take this position. He began to openly criticize his wife, no longer giving her the support she required. Mao referred to her and her supporters as a "gang of four." He said that she had wild ambitions of wanting to become the next Chairman. These comments isolated her, making her an even stronger target for the moderates once Mao died.

After Mao's death in 1976, Jiang Qing believed that, given her experience and relationship with Mao, she would be the best person to succeed him. After all, Jiang Qing had a strong base of support in Shanghai and a membership in the Politburo; however, this could not protect her from those people she had failed to destroy. Shortly afterwards, she and her radical associates were arrested for their involvement in the Cultural Revolution. At her trial she defended herself, shouting her defiance that she was only Mao's dog, professing her innocence by claiming that she was the one who upheld and promoted MZT, while following the Chairman and the Party line. Jiang Qing was given a life sentence in Qincheng prison; yet, the worst incident was the moderate's vilification campaign against her. She was labeled the White Boned Demon, which not only allowed for the masses to direct their ten years of anger and frustration towards her. But it also became credible given the historical acceptability of *Hong Yan Huo Shui* to blame the woman, Jiang Qing, since none of the ills of the Cultural Revolution could be laid at Mao's door. The Party would not take the blame or denounce Mao because

condemning the Chairman would undermine the legitimacy of the Communist leadership. Therefore, the vilification of Jiang Qing as the White Boned Demon legitimized the CCP and the prolongation of the one party regime.

Jiang Qing will never be fully understood until China and the CCP allows for an open reexamination of the Cultural Revolution. This thesis has shown that she was neither the White Boned Demon nor the innocent radical loyalist she proclaimed herself to be. The truth lies somewhere in between and unless Mao can be objectively commented on and criticized, Jiang Qing will remain the White Boned Demon to all Chinese touched by the Cultural Revolution. Jiang Qing was not a one-woman power. While she achieved her position in culture and politics by utilizing her talents, she also had many supporters around her, especially Mao, who made her dreams of recognition a reality. Ironically, while the ultimate goal evaded her, her demonization in Chinese history has given her a level of recognition that she could never have predicted.

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