

Nanjing's "Second Cultural Revolution" of 1974*

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Abstract

China experienced extensive civil strife in 1974, as elite factionalism during the “criticize Lin Biao and Confucius” campaign revived popular contention in the provinces. Past research has characterized these conflicts as a “second Cultural Revolution” – an offensive by resurgent red guards and rebels to resist the restoration of purged civilian officials to powerful posts. In Nanjing, however, the conflicts were of an entirely different nature. Civilian cadres directed the campaign against army officers who still dominated civilian government throughout the province. Popular protests in Nanjing were not led by former rebels, whose ranks had been decimated by unusually harsh military suppression campaigns, but were instead protests by ordinary citizens who had suffered in the purges and rustication campaigns of the late 1960s. While the campaign in cities like Hangzhou and Wuhan was an offensive by resurgent rebels against civilian officials, in Nanjing civilian officials used the campaign to ensure their victory over military rivals. The Hangzhou and Wuhan pattern revived the politics of the 1960s, while the Nanjing pattern anticipated the protests against Cultural Revolution abuses characteristic of the end of the Mao era.

Keywords: Cultural Revolution; “criticize Lin Biao and Confucius” campaign; regional Chinese politics; popular protest in China

The last five years of the Mao era were ones of pronounced conflict and rapid political change. Beginning with the death and disgrace of Lin Biao in late 1971 and ending with the arrest of the Gang of Four shortly after Mao's death in 1976, China experienced chronic factional conflict among national and regional elites and periodic eruptions of popular protest. Some of these local eruptions were echoes of earlier factional struggles, pitting protagonists of the 1967–68 conflicts against one another. Others were precursors of the popular reaction against the Cultural Revolution that culminated in the Qingming

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demonstrations in April 1976 and the short-lived democracy movement of 1978–79.¹ These two political tendencies faced in opposite directions. One looked to the recent past, drawing its inspiration from the slogans and mentalities of the red guards and rebels sponsored by Mao and officials later reviled as the “Gang of Four.” The other looked toward a post-Mao future, decrying arbitrary and violent repression, and calling for socialist democracy and the rule of law.

In the middle of this period is the 1974 “criticize Lin Biao and Confucius” (*pi Lin pi Kong* 批林批孔) campaign. The texts that accompanied the campaign were allegorical and indirect, their meaning obscure at the time. Lin Biao was originally denounced in 1972 as an “ultra-Leftist” who drove the Cultural Revolution into destructive excesses. Now, however, he was to be denounced as a “Rightist,” whose error was in fact to *oppose* Mao’s Cultural Revolution, inspired by a Confucianist philosophy of compromise and moderation.² Subsequent scholarship has identified two different political objectives pursued by Mao and other central-level politicians via this campaign. The first was to weaken the army’s lingering control over regional Party-state structures. The post-1971 campaign against the “Lin Biao clique” had drastically reduced the army’s power at the centre, but serving army officers still held key posts in many regions (hence, *pi Lin*). The second aim was to slow the on-going rollback of policies associated with the Cultural Revolution itself. Zhou Enlai had employed the earlier criticism of an “ultra-Left” Lin Biao to push for more effective civilian administration. The 1974 campaign was a Mao-sanctioned effort to weaken Zhou and halt the rise of veteran cadres and the reversal of the economic and educational policies of the Maoist camp (hence, *pi Kong*).³

Initiated in January 1974, the campaign (hereafter, referred to as *pi Lin*) openly encouraged criticism of leaders who allegedly opposed the aims of the Cultural Revolution and sought to restore the status-quo ante. This could include either regional military authorities or veteran civilian cadres. In many regions, a wide array of local forces mobilized to use the obscure language of central directives to their advantage. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals have observed, “As the weeks wore on, the central authorities found the progress of the campaign at the local level increasingly difficult to control...it was quickly hijacked by forces whose concern was less with denouncing the reactionary commonalities that may or may not have linked Lin Biao to Confucius and Mencius than with enemies closer to home.”⁴ In some regions, the campaign presented an opportunity for rebels who had risen to positions of authority during the Cultural Revolution. They used it to gain the upper hand in struggles with veteran Party cadres now returning to their posts to restore civilian administration after a period in political

1 Heilmann 1996.

2 Goldman 1975.

3 This is the interpretive overview offered by MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, 358–373, and elaborated in much greater depth by Teiwes and Sun 2007, 110–118; 142–164. A number of Chinese publications concur: especially An 2004, Tong 1996, and Chen 1996.

4 MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, 371.

limbo. For this reason the campaign encouraged popular mobilization and street protests, openly referred to as a "second Cultural Revolution" and a "second power seizure."⁵

Although it has long been known that the campaign created widespread political conflict and popular mobilization, there is relatively little published research on its local impact. Shaoguang Wang's account of Wuhan describes extensive popular mobilization by resurgent former rebel forces in the city.⁶ Keith Forster's analysis of Hangzhou portrays a similar campaign by former rebel leaders to increase their access to the halls of power.⁷ A vigorous wall poster campaign accompanied attempts at popular mobilization by former rebels in Guangzhou.⁸ The campaign had a similar impact, though relatively brief and muted, even in the radical stronghold of Shanghai.⁹

Forster's extensive research on Zhejiang province and its capital city of Hangzhou has become a template for understanding the campaign's impact outside Beijing in more general accounts of the period.¹⁰ In Hangzhou, prominent rebel leaders from the late 1960s mobilized to challenge the civilian cadres and military officials who controlled the province.¹¹ They drew on their mass base in schools and large state factories in Hangzhou to wage a campaign against allegedly "revisionist" provincial leaders, putting them on the defensive, disrupting production, and forcing them to promote former rebels to leading posts and grant immediate Party membership to thousands of their rebel followers. The campaign by the former rebels crippled the economy and threatened political stability; provincial trends of this sort were among the reasons why Mao finally decided to curtail the campaign in the second half of 1974.¹² The Hangzhou case has come to symbolize the "second Cultural Revolution" outside the nation's capital, and in the absence of detailed accounts from other regions, it is easy to assume that the conflicts there were replicated nationwide.

Events took a completely different course, however, in the neighbouring province of Jiangsu, whose capital of Nanjing was barely 200 miles from Hangzhou. In Nanjing the national campaign reverberated within a very different political environment. The actors who sought most aggressively to use the *pi Lin* campaign to their political advantage were not late-1960s rebel leaders, but were civilian cadres who had survived the tumult to assume positions in the provincial

5 Teiwes and Sun, 2007, 111.

6 Wang 1995, 228–251.

7 Forster 1986; Forster 1990, 131–176.

8 Chan, Rosen and Unger 1985, 4–9.

9 Perry and Li 1997, 177–184. The Shanghai campaign primarily affected factories and government offices, where former worker rebels in the city pushed to increase their representation in leading posts and pushed for recruitment into the Party. The city's leaders were protégés of Gang of Four supporters of the Cultural Revolution in Beijing, and were not targeted in the manner of Zhejiang.

10 See Teiwes and Sun 2007, 173–178, which relies almost exclusively on Forster's publications. The authors take no note of Shaoguang Wang's analysis of events in Wuhan, which is similarly detailed and largely consistent with Forster's account of Hangzhou.

11 Forster 1992.

12 Forster 1986, Teiwes and Sun 2007, 186–200.

revolutionary committee. These cadres used the campaign to undermine military officers who still dominated the local Party-state apparatus. Rebel leaders in Jiangsu were so completely crushed by the army that they were unable to play the active and assertive role of their counterparts in Zhejiang. Instead, the civilian cadres opportunistically presented themselves as champions of these former rebels, denouncing the military for its alleged responsibility for the repressions meted out to them in the “anti May 16 elements” campaign of 1971. There were popular protests in Nanjing, but unlike Hangzhou and Wuhan these were not mobilizations of former rebels. The Nanjing protests, instead, were by victims of the repression campaigns of 1968 and 1969 – individuals who were given political labels and expelled from the cities as the army consolidated the provincial revolutionary committee and absorbed former rebels into the new structures of power.

In Nanjing the veteran cadres postured as *defenders* of the Cultural Revolution by attacking military cadres for their merciless campaigns against rebel leaders. Grateful finally to have advocates in the halls of power, former rebels cooperated with the veteran cadres to attack military officials in a criticism campaign organized within the local Party apparatus. Sensing an opportunity to gain advantage in a local atmosphere that was now openly critical of the military’s past actions, tens of thousands of urban residents who had been forcibly relocated to the countryside in the late 1960s streamed into the city, petitioning government authorities, blocking railway traffic and shutting down the city centre for weeks on end. Unlike Hangzhou (and Wuhan), the popular mobilization in Nanjing was a protest by victims of the late 1960s campaigns, not an effort by former rebels to foment a “second power seizure.” The *pi Lin* campaign was a victory for the veteran cadres, who engineered the final removal of the army from civilian government.

The campaign’s very different impact in these two adjacent regions illustrates the ambiguous and transitional nature of Chinese politics in 1974. In Hangzhou (as in Wuhan) it was a clearly backward-looking effort by former rebel leaders to revive the slogans and strategies of the late 1960s to make a political comeback at the expense of returning veteran cadres. The campaign in Nanjing, by contrast, was a partial foretaste of the politics of 1976 and the early post-Mao era. Although the Nanjing campaign was rhetorically a defence of Mao’s Cultural Revolution, at its core was a denunciation of excessive political oppression. This thread of political discourse was also evident in the 1974 wall poster campaign in Guangzhou;¹³ it developed further into a much broader popular critique in the Qingming protests of April 1976¹⁴ and popular campaigns for democracy at the end of the decade.¹⁵ The political aims of the veteran cadres in Jiangsu were much more limited and self-serving, but their manipulation of the rhetoric of Zhejiang-style radicalism foreshadowed the much broader protest against

13 Chan, Rosen, and Unger 1985, 9–16 and 31–86.

14 Louie and Louie 1981; Heilmann 1993–1994; and Zweig 1978.

15 Brodsgaard 1981; Rosen 1985; Garside 1981; and Goodman 1981.

political repression and extremism that would surface in 1976 and take more organized form in 1978–79.

None of those who played an active role in Nanjing showed any real concern with the ostensible ideological justifications offered for the *pi Lin* campaign. But they displayed a clear sense of how to use the campaign's rhetoric for local ends. Veteran cadres, in particular, used it to wage a surprisingly aggressive battle to advance their standing at the expense of their military rivals – and to ensure that the campaign in Nanjing would not ultimately target them. Veteran civilian officials led by Peng Chong 彭冲 and Xu Jiatusun 许家屯, emboldened by the recent departure of the powerful General Xu Shiyou 许世友 (Politburo member, head of the Nanjing Military Region, chairman of the Jiangsu revolutionary committee and Jiangsu's first Party secretary), used the campaign as an opportunity to roll back military control.¹⁶ Former rebel leaders like Zeng Bangyuan 曾邦元, Zhou Xilu 周锡禄, and Xu Songlin 徐松林, collaborated with them to reverse the "counter-revolutionary" verdicts they had received during the "anti May 16 elements" campaign of 1971, when they were purged from the provincial revolutionary committee and imprisoned.¹⁷ Ordinary urban residents and cadres judged as politically suspect and banished to rural villages during the repressions of 1968 and 1969 used the campaign to agitate for their return to the city. All of these groups employed the same political discourse to pursue their aims, but the underlying struggle was by a diverse coalition of civilians to undermine military authorities who had dominated local politics since 1968.

Our reconstruction of Nanjing events draws on published and unpublished local histories and chronologies, surviving wall posters and handbills, and the personal memoirs of officials, military officers and political activists who experienced these years, both published and privately circulated. We also draw on recent interviews with former rebel activists who were still politically active in 1974. Finally, we make extensive use of notebooks kept by the vice-head of the Jiangsu organization department and head of the Communist Youth League during 1974 and 1975. This leader attended all of the important provincial meetings and had access to transcripts of meetings held in Beijing. Twelve volumes in all, the notebooks detail major speeches, self-criticisms and debates in internal

16 Peng Chong was a member of the Jiangsu province secretariat who was attacked during the Cultural Revolution but who survived to become a vice-head of the provincial revolutionary committee in 1968 (Dong and Walder 2012). He became vice-secretary of the provincial Party committee when it was re-established in 1970, but exercised little authority. Xu Jiatusun was also a member of the pre-Cultural Revolution provincial Party secretariat who lost his post but was rehabilitated in 1969 as a vice-head of the provincial revolutionary committee.

17 Zeng Bangyuan was a political instructor at Nanjing University who led a major rebel faction and was named to the provincial revolutionary committee in 1968, and to the provincial Party committee when it was re-established in 1970. He was detained during the "anti May 16 elements" campaign in the fall of 1971. He was released in the Spring of 1974 and joined actively in attacks against incumbent military officials. Zhou Xilu and Xu Songlin were junior officials in the provincial Party offices who joined the rebel movement to become important leaders in major factions (though on opposing sides). Both joined the revolutionary committee in 1968 and, like Zeng, were victimized in the "anti May 16 elements" campaign. They were released in the autumn of 1973 to participate in the campaign against military officials.

Party meetings, and provide verbatim transcriptions of central and provincial documents.¹⁸ These sources afford us an unusually intimate view of the internal politics of a Chinese province during a period of sharp factional conflict.

Military Rule in Jiangsu, 1968–73

In January 1974, when the campaign unfolded, Jiangsu was still completely dominated by military officers who occupied positions as first Party secretary and heads of revolutionary committees throughout the province. Zhejiang's top military officials had been directly implicated in the Lin Biao affair and purged in 1972.¹⁹ In Jiangsu, by contrast, Xu Shiyou was untouched by the scandal and retained the full confidence of Mao and the Party centre. Xu had reason to be confident about his authority and national standing. During the summer of 1967 he had been targeted by a rebel insurgency, including officers from his own martial law forces, that sought to overthrow him for his allegedly biased handling of factional warfare in Jiangsu. Just at the point when it seemed that he would be toppled, Mao Zedong summoned him to Shanghai, personally assured him of his full support, and called a halt to the rebel insurgency.²⁰ From that point on Xu acted forcibly to suppress factional warfare and restore order to Jiangsu. Promoted to the Politburo in 1969 and uninvolved in the Lin Biao affair, he survived the post-Lin purge of the military ranks with enhanced authority and an even higher status in the national hierarchy. He was virtually unchallengeable in Jiangsu.

Xu Shiyou's sway over Jiangsu came to an abrupt end when he was transferred to Guangzhou in December 1973 as part of the nationwide rotation of all the regional military commanders that was designed to curb the regional political influence of the army.²¹ Ding Sheng arrived from Guangzhou to assume Xu's post as commander of the Nanjing Military Region. After Xu's departure, two of his top deputies assumed the top civilian posts: Colonel Wu Dasheng 吴大胜 took over from Xu as acting head of the Jiangsu provincial Party committee and Jiangsu revolutionary committee, and Colonel Jiang Ke 蒋科 continued as vice-head of the revolutionary committee in charge of provincial administration.²²

With Xu Shiyou now in Guangzhou, and with a new regional military commander who held no Party or government posts,²³ Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke

18 The official's name is Shi Zhaoxiang. A university graduate, Shi was a vice-head of Suzhou's Communist Youth League in 1966. He joined the Suzhou revolutionary committee in 1967 and became vice-head of a department under the Jiangsu revolutionary committee in late 1971. In October 1976, after the fall of the "Gang of Four," he lost his posts.

19 Forster 1990, 92–107.

20 See Dong and Walder 2011, 432–438.

21 Teiwes and Sun 2007, 132–146.

22 Wu Dasheng was originally vice-head of the Jiangsu revolutionary committee in 1968, and later joined the secretariat of the Jiangsu Party committee when it was reestablished in 1970 (*Jiangsu Provincial Annals* 2002, 30).

23 In addition to having been the Commander of the Guangzhou Military Region since 1969, Ding Sheng became first Party secretary and head of the revolutionary committee of Guangdong province in 1972, in the wake of Huang Yongsheng's arrest immediately after the Lin Biao affair. The fact that Ding was

were left somewhat precariously atop the Jiangsu hierarchy and would alone bear the brunt of any criticism of the military's conduct in the province after 1968. In Nanjing, as in most other Chinese regions outside Beijing and Shanghai, regular army units suppressed factional fighting and implemented a harsh and repressive form of martial law in 1968. Forming revolutionary committees that included nominal representation of surviving civilian cadres and leaders of rebel factions, military forces carried out a series of persecution campaigns against incumbent civilian officials and others.

These campaigns left a range of aggrieved groups in their wake. The most powerful were members of the pre-Cultural Revolution provincial leadership and the thousands of lower ranking cadres. After the rebel power seizure of January 1967, some two-dozen provincial cadres were publicly humiliated and beaten, tortured and imprisoned by rebel groups. When military control was established in March 1967, almost all of these officials were taken into custody by the army. The officials were imprisoned in a county seat outside Nanjing, and not one of them was released until after Xu's transfer to Guangzhou. None of them were rehabilitated until 1975.²⁴

The purge of the cadre ranks extended to the grass roots. The Nanjing military considered virtually all of the civilian cadres to be "old personnel" and systematically removed them from their posts, even those who had aligned themselves with rebel forces in 1967. In mid-1968, some 7,000 cadres and staff were sent down to the countryside for collective labour on the eastern outskirts of Nanjing. In early 1969, around 1,000 were cleared of the charges against them and return to posts as deputy heads of different offices under the revolutionary committee. For those who failed to pass the investigation, the military authorities established "May 7 Cadre Schools" in the Nanjing suburbs in the spring of 1969. The population of these re-education camps soon grew to 10,000. At the end of 1969, more than 3,000 additional office personnel were sent to the countryside along with their family members. By late 1972, there were still some 4,000 cadres in these camps.²⁵ Cadres who were released from these camps, or who avoided them altogether, were usually sent to work units as deputies of military officers who assumed control. Some were sent down to countryside with their families for re-education through labour.

footnote continued

limited to a military post after his transfer to Nanjing clearly indicated the Centre's intention of removing the military from civilian administration.

24 Ding 1999, 421.

25 Yuan 2008, 122–184. The author was a junior staff officer in the training department of the Nanjing Military Region staff headquarters. An associate of Xu Shiyong, he was named as a military representative on the provincial revolutionary committee when it was formed, and was put in charge of the "May 7 Cadre Schools" where the civilian officials were held. In late 1973 he was appointed vice-head of the Jiangsu province organization department, only to come under attack in 1974; he was transferred to purely military duties in 1975.

The rustication programme for civilian cadres in Jiangsu was carried out in the midst of almost continuous suppression campaigns initiated in 1968, the most notable of which was the “cleansing of the class ranks.”²⁶ By the end of 1969, close to one million people had been arrested and interrogated, frequently under torture, accused of vague offences as spies, traitors, and active counter-revolutionaries.²⁷ Through late 1970, another 83,000 of these individuals received “counterrevolutionary” verdicts.²⁸

Some veteran senior cadres like Peng Chong and Xu Jiatun were fortunate to survive these purges to join the Jiangsu revolutionary committee in 1968. But they were soon marginalized or forced out of their posts as the army consolidated power. Prominent rebel leaders like Wen Fenglai 文凤来 and Zeng Bangyuan, who were initially given nominally important posts, were also marginalized and eventually targeted in a subsequent campaign. In a report to the centre written in the middle of the 1970 Lushan Plenum, Xu Shiyu stated that 75 per cent of the former leaders at the provincial level were found to have serious political problems, and 70 per cent of the top officials at the prefecture and municipal level.²⁹

Former rebels were arguably treated more harshly than veteran civilian cadres. As veteran civilian cadres began to return to their posts, former rebel leaders and their followers were targeted anew. This took the form of an unusually large “anti May 16 elements” campaign. Conducted primarily in 1970 and 1971, more than 130,000 individuals in Jiangsu were charged as “May 16 elements,” and 57,000 confessed under interrogation. Public sources later claimed that more than 6,000 of them died or suffered permanent physical or mental disabilities as a result of their treatment in detention.³⁰ Individuals who participated in internal reinvestigations of these cases claim that the real number was twice as large.³¹ The toll in individual units selected as “key points” for the campaign could be staggering. At the Nanjing Radio Tube Factory, which had 3,800 employees, 2,700 were put under investigation and 1,226 were found to be “May 16 elements.” Seven died under torture during the interrogations.³² At the Nanjing Municipal Construction Company, over 1,200 were investigated, almost

26 Li Changwen 1974.

27 Jiangsu Provincial Annals 2001, 234.

28 Jiangsu Provincial Annals 2002, 318.

29 Qian 1974.

30 Liu 1999, p. 235; Jiangsu Provincial Annals 2002, 320; and Pan 2007. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, 237, single out Jiangsu as having an unusually extensive “anti May 16 elements” campaign.

31 Dong Guoqiang interview with Wang Chunnan, 9 January 2008, and Wang, Yu and Wang 1974. Wang Chunnan was a graduate student at Nanjing University at the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution and a rebel activist. After graduation he was assigned to work at *Xinhua Daily* and was on the newspaper’s investigation team for the “anti May 16 elements” campaign. In the spring of 1974, along with two co-workers, he put up this wall poster as part of the campaign against local military authorities. In 1975 he was transferred to work at *People’s Daily*. During that time Peng Chong privately revealed to him that the official investigation figures for the campaign in Jiangsu were incomplete. MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, 552, note 66, cite a separate source that claims many more casualties for this campaign.

32 Liu 1999, 235.

60 per cent of the employees, and 894 were found guilty.³³ At Nanjing University, more than half of the 3,000 faculty and staff who remained on campus were accused: 1,154 were placed under active investigation, 108 were isolated for prolonged and coercive interrogations, and 21 committed suicide.³⁴ These figures suggest that the local rebel forces were decimated by this campaign more thoroughly than in other regions, a factor that may account for the fact that former rebel forces would play little role in the popular mobilizations of 1974, unlike their counterparts in Hangzhou and Wuhan.

The campaign essentially removed former rebel leaders from leadership posts, along with many of the veteran civilian cadres who had managed to earn the "revolutionary" label in 1968. During the conduct of the campaign, Wu Dasheng claimed that more than 55 per cent of the department heads and 30 per cent of the ordinary staff in the provincial apparatus were May 16 conspirators. In October 1971, more than 2,400 individuals were under active investigation.³⁵ The campaign targeted the vast majority of the standing committee of the Jiangsu revolutionary committee – 21 of the 28 original members. All nine of the former rebel leaders on the standing committee were purged, and all eight veteran provincial cadres were targeted, though some of them were able to keep their posts.³⁶ The purges extended even into the military ranks. A number of military officers who had participated in attacks on Xu Shiyou in the summer of 1967 were isolated for interrogation and removed from their posts.³⁷

Through these measures Xu Shiyou, who held all the top military, government and Party posts in Jiangsu, concentrated administrative authority in the hands of military officers he trusted. Despite Beijing's mandate that a "three-in-one" combination of army officers, civilian officials and rebel leaders should exercise administrative power, the army was in full control. Because so many of its standing committee members were removed from their posts for investigation, the Jiangsu revolutionary committee held no conferences from late 1970 until the end of 1973, when Xu Shiyou left Nanjing.³⁸ By 1970 the concentration of military power had reached the point where every one of the 14 first Party secretaries at the prefecture level, and 60 of 68 first Party secretaries at the county level, were army officers.³⁹ Xu's actions created deep resentments shared equally by former rebel leaders and veteran civilian cadres.

Tensions between the Nanjing Military and Central Authorities

Xu Shiyou's confident actions in Nanjing also created tensions with regional and national authorities outside Jiangsu. In the wake of the Lin Biao affair, in August

33 Nanjing Conference Compilation 1974, 44.

34 Pan 2007.

35 Zhou Zhihua 1974.

36 Wang Xuezhou 1974.

37 Shi Zhaoxiang notebooks, 25 October 1974.

38 Li Changwen 1974.

39 Zhou Zhihua 1974.

1972 Beijing called for the withdrawal of army officers from civilian administration in favour of veteran civilian officials with expertise and experience in economic affairs.⁴⁰ After his departure from Nanjing, Xu Shiyou was criticized for largely ignoring the document, a charge that directly affected his subordinate Wu Dasheng, who was in charge of Jiangsu's government administration. By the end of 1973 there still were more than 2,000 army officers in Party and government posts.⁴¹ All of the first Party secretaries at the prefecture level were still army officers, as were 39 of the 68 first Party secretaries at the county level.⁴²

The Nanjing military also resisted inquiries from Beijing about their conduct during the persecution campaigns. The “anti May 16 elements” campaign was particularly severe in Yancheng 盐城 prefecture, where ten out of 13 members of the Party standing committee were targeted and six found guilty, more than half of the 84 middle-ranking cadres in the prefecture offices were imprisoned, and more than half of middle- and basic-level cadres were similarly found guilty and 18 died under torture.⁴³ A large group of local cadres and farmers formed a delegation and travelled to Beijing to lodge a complaint. In March 1972, the Letters and Visits Office of the CCP Central Committee made three telephone calls to request copies of the provincial government's internal reports on the Yancheng campaign. When the request was relayed to Wu Dasheng, he told his subordinates to ignore it.⁴⁴

Central authorities were also annoyed at the Nanjing military's approach to the economy. Military officers who had no experience in economic affairs or industrial management sought to buttress their reputations through costly and wasteful infrastructure projects. They initiated a large number of such projects that were well advanced before they bothered to report them to Beijing, making large losses inevitable.⁴⁵ Central leaders were angered by this stubborn incompetence, reflected in a rebuke by Li Xiannian at a national work conference that referred to this kind of behaviour as “eating infrastructure” and “committing crimes.”⁴⁶ On other occasions, projects deemed essential by central ministries were blocked by Nanjing's military authorities, who told the national ministries to butt out of local affairs.⁴⁷

Xu Shiyou also made clear that he had little use for the powerful faction of civilian radicals represented by Zhang Chunqiao 张春桥 in nearby Shanghai. Xu had ample reason to resent the Shanghai radicals: Zhang had actively encouraged attacks on Xu when he was under fire by one of Nanjing's rebel factions in 1967, before backpedalling furiously after Mao made clear his support

40 CCP Central Committee 1972.

41 Shi notebooks, 15 August 1974, notes on Wu Dasheng's self-criticism.

42 Zhou Zhihua 1974.

43 Pan 2007; Wang Xuezhou 1974.

44 Wang Xuezhou 1974.

45 Xu 1974.

46 Zhu 1974.

47 Zhou Xilu 1974.

for Xu.⁴⁸ At one point Xu circulated among his subordinates a doggerel verse that showed his contempt for Zhang Chunqiao: "Wearing glasses, clutching a briefcase, writing verdicts, you can move up; talking ideology, complete nonsense; when the battle begins, flee to the rear."⁴⁹ In November 1973, Xu told Wu Dasheng to ignore a central document calling for localities to emulate Shanghai's policy of setting up workers' militias.⁵⁰

Local Conflicts Sparked by the Campaign

With Xu Shiyong gone, Wu Dasheng was left to cope with the *pi Lin* campaign. The first three central documents issued in January 1974 were directives about the campaign, and editorials in leading national publications announced its launch in February.⁵¹ On 4 February, Jiangsu's provincial Party committee convened an enlarged conference to study and implement the central documents and editorials. All of the provincial secretaries agreed that the documents were important but they did not understand the centre's aims. They were unsure how to connect the criticism campaign with local circumstances, so they designated a handful of work units in Nanjing and other localities to explore the masses' reaction.⁵² Experience in these units showed that many ordinary people were confused or fearful, but some who spoke out guessed correctly that there was a deeper motivation for the campaign: to capture certain wrongdoers through open criticism. Some even claimed that the campaign was the launch of a "second Cultural Revolution."⁵³

To try to keep a lid on the campaign, Wu Dasheng convened a conference of the heads of the provincial mass organizations in mid-February. He argued that the campaign should focus on certain doctrines advocated by Lin Biao, such as the "theory of genius" and "restoring the rites," and argued that the campaign's purpose was not to target wrongdoers through mass criticism. Instead, the campaign's aim was "mass education," to "break away from reactionary thought" and to better "grasp revolution and promote production." He called for strengthening Party leadership over the movement to teach the masses to distinguish between antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions.⁵⁴

These efforts proved unsuccessful. Former rebel leaders who had been sentenced as "May 16 elements" saw this as an opportunity to reverse their verdicts. In February, wall posters appeared at Nanjing University that challenged the army's May 16 investigations, and the university Party committee supported

48 See Dong and Walder 2011, 435–438.

49 "Dai yanjing, jia pibao; xie zongjie, hui tigao; lun sixiang, yituanzao; daqi zhang lai wanghou pao." Shi notebooks, 25 October 1974.

50 Wang Xuezhou 1974.

51 See *Hongqi* No. 2, 1 February 1974, *Renmin ribao* 2 February 1974 and 5 February 1974.

52 Shi notebooks, 4 February 1974.

53 Shi notebooks, 8 February and 11 February 1974.

54 Shi notebooks, 13 February 1974.

these challenges behind the scenes.⁵⁵ In March and April a series of similar wall posters, written by former Nanjing University rebels, detailed abuses during the campaign committed throughout the province, based on investigations by the newspaper's reporters.⁵⁶ In a conference of prefecture-level leaders, Wu Dasheng acknowledged that errors had been committed in the campaign, but pointed out that it was mandated from Beijing, sanctioned by Chairman Mao, and that its general orientation was correct. He warned against efforts by class enemies to sabotage the campaign, and called for local Party organs to strengthen their leadership and maintain vigilance.⁵⁷

The problem with calling for Party leadership over the campaign was that many of those in Party posts also harboured deep resentment over the recent persecutions. In early April, Wu Dasheng gave a speech to a mass meeting held by the provincial trade union, praising the new campaign and calling for activists to expose the crimes committed by Lin Biao and his followers in Jiangsu.⁵⁸ This came back to haunt him two days later at the same meeting, when provincial trade union chair, former Suzhou rebel leader Hua Linsen 华林森,⁵⁹ who had managed to hold onto his leading posts, denounced Suzhou's top military leader for complicity in Lin Biao's crimes. Hua's accusations also implicated Xu Shiyu. Other former rebels at the meeting joined in with similar accusations, one of which stated that Wu Dasheng censored incriminating references to Xu Shiyu, Xu's wife and Jiang Ke from the investigation report on the local activities of the Lin Biao clique when it was transmitted to Beijing in early 1973.⁶⁰

Wu Dasheng's efforts to contain the movement unravelled further when Peng Chong and Xu Jiatusun, civilian cadres on the revolutionary committee, proposed a more explosive agenda for the criticism campaign than the one proposed by Wu. Xu Jiatusun called for an investigation of the activities of Lin Biao's followers in Jiangsu, something that struck directly at the local military establishment. He was quoted as saying at one large provincial conference, "the young revolutionary generals [i.e., student and worker rebels] stood up to go against the tide, so why should our veteran cadres not do the same?" Peng Chong argued that the campaign should focus on the crimes of Lin Biao's followers in Jiangsu, on the excesses of the "anti May 16 elements" campaign and on abuses of military

55 Yu 1974.

56 Ge Zhonglong interview, 13–14 April 2007; Ge was a rebel leader from Nanjing University who was isolated for interrogation in the "anti May 16 elements" campaign in 1970. Wang Chunnan interview, 9 January 2008; Wang was also a rebel leader from Nanjing University, and was part of *Xinhua Daily's* investigation group for the May 16 campaign.

57 Shi notebooks, 14 March 1974.

58 Shi notebooks, 2 April 1974.

59 Hua Linsen was a model worker, Party member and rebel leader in a Suzhou machinery factory who became a vice-head of the Suzhou revolutionary committee in 1968. He attended the 9th Party Congress and was selected as an alternate member of the central committee; in 1970 he became vice Party secretary of Suzhou, and was elected to the central committee at the 10th Party Congress in 1973. At the time he was Chairman of the Jiangsu Province General Trade Union.

60 Shi notebooks, 4 April 1974.

officials like the "selection of concubines." Peng set up three special investigation groups to pursue the issues.⁶¹

The open split in the provincial leadership poured fuel on the movement among ordinary citizens, and the campaign soon escalated. Under pressure from several directions, Wu Dasheng acknowledged at a leadership conference in mid-April that the "anti May 16 elements" investigations in Jiangsu had committed many errors, and that the provincial leadership bore responsibility for them. He agreed to release a group of prominent rebel leaders who were still in custody, all of whom had played prominent roles in the events of 1966 and 1967, and who initially earned places on the Jiangsu revolutionary committee.⁶² He also agreed to investigate the army officers who still served as first Party secretaries in Suzhou and Wuxi for their involvement with Lin Biao's activities in the province. He gave a brief self-criticism for his own errors.

On 21 April, Peng Chong reorganized the provincial government's general office to place it under the Party standing committee, taking it away from the personal direction of Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke. He reactivated the previously moribund "Lin Biao Investigation Group" and strengthened its orders to pursue Lin's followers in Jiangsu. The campaign in Jiangsu now moved in a new direction, and would focus on a series of accusations that implicated Xu Shiyou, Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke in the activities of Lin Biao and his wife, Ye Qun 叶群, in Jiangsu. There was plenty of material for such investigations, because Lin Biao's primary home away from Beijing had been in Suzhou. Presented with the results of these investigations at a provincial leadership conference held in early May, Wu Dasheng was forced to make a longer self-criticism.⁶³ The matter would not end there, because a larger storm was brewing.

The Popular Movement

The widening torrent of criticism against the army's actions in previous years encouraged urban residents who had been expelled from the cities to attempt a return to their homes. More than 350,000 urban residents had been relocated to villages involuntarily during the first years of military control, 130,000 of them from Nanjing alone.⁶⁴ At the Lunar New Year festival in late January

61 Shi notebooks, 6 April 1974. The "selection of concubines" affair was an organized effort by the wife of General Qiu Huizuo to find a suitable match for Lin Biao's son, Lin Ligu. The activity was denounced in the earlier investigations against the Lin Biao Clique. In Jiangsu, Jiang Ke was put in charge of the local effort to find appropriate beauties for the younger Lin's examination, which implicated him in the local activities of the clique. This was one of the items deleted from the provincial investigation report.

62 The group included Wen Fenglai, Zeng Bangyuan, Zhu Kaidi and Lu Xuezhi. Wen and Zhu, members of the provincial revolutionary committee who lost their posts during the "anti May 16 elements" campaign, were mentally broken by their treatment in prison. Wen Fenglai was a faculty member at Nanjing University who founded and led a major rebel faction and rose to the top of one of the major factional alliances. He was released in 1974 and committed suicide in 1976. Zhu Kaidi was a worker who led a major rebel alliance, and after his 1974 release spent many years incapacitated at home.

63 Shi notebooks, 11, 14, 21, 23 April, and 6 and 7 May 1974.

64 Shi notebooks, 26 November 1974.

1974, several thousand of these expelled residents returned to Nanjing to petition the authorities to restore their urban registration and jobs. Both the provincial and municipal authorities refused to meet with them. For almost three months, the petitioners demonstrated at the provincial and municipal Party headquarters, put up wall posters detailing their plight and engaged in periodic street marches. Their activities attracted large numbers of onlookers, tying up traffic in the downtown area. The stalemate lasted until 28 April when the petitioners became agitated and rushed the train station en masse, attempting to force their way onto Beijing-bound trains to take their demands to the capital. After the train crews refused to let them board, they sat down on the tracks and prevented the departure of trains from Nanjing station. Rail traffic to Beijing and Shanghai was blocked for more than two days.

The Staff Office of the Central Committee phoned the provincial leaders on 29 April and again on 30 April to instruct them not to permit any petitioners to leave for Beijing. They told the provincial authorities that they may acknowledge that excesses may have occurred during the relocation campaign, but that petitioning of this type was a deviation from the campaign's political aims. Issues of this sort would be dealt with only at the end of the movement. The Beijing authorities stated that the problem was caused by Wu Dasheng's refusal to meet with the petitioners, and they ordered the top provincial officials to go to the train station, listen to the petitioners' complaints and persuade them to permit the resumption of train service.⁶⁵ Wu Dasheng and other provincial officials went to the train station to negotiate. He faced a difficult task: the centre forbade "economism" – offering material benefits to deal with political problems – yet the petitioners would not be satisfied with political blandishments. After tough negotiations an eight-point agreement was signed on 2 May. The petitioners' original urban work units were instructed to find places for their former employees and supplementary pay and food rations were promised.⁶⁶

The deal solved the problem at the Nanjing railway station, but created an even larger problem. As word spread that the petitioners' demands had been met, another fifty thousand petitioners swarmed into Nanjing from the surrounding countryside, seeking the same deal. The local authorities lacked the financial resources to settle with so many petitioners, and when this became clear, they clogged the downtown streets to protest, or rushed to take their pleas to Beijing. Because central documents criticized the disruption of railway traffic, some of the petitioners hijacked buses and trucks along the highway. Cadres sent to intercept the protesters and persuade them to desist were roughed up, some of them injured.⁶⁷

On 9 May the central authorities issued a document that condemned Wu Dasheng's handling of the original group of petitioners. They charged that he

65 Shi notebooks, 29 and 30 April 1974, and Nanjing Archives Bureau 1985, 195.

66 Li Zhirong, n.d. The author is affiliated with the Nanjing Municipal Party School.

67 Nanjing Archives Bureau 1985, 195–6.

had failed to heed his original instructions, inciting "economism" by giving in to the demands rather than conducting ideological work to persuade the petitioners. By inciting others to rush to the city and make additional demands, he had reversed the orientation of the *pi Lin pi Kong* campaign. The centre insisted that local officials not cave into economic demands and persuade citizens to negotiate them later.⁶⁸

In response to the rebuke from Beijing, the provincial Party committee convened a meeting on 10 May. Wu Dasheng made a thorough self-criticism that went into considerable detail about the negotiations, making clear that he felt that the civilian leaders, Peng Chong and Xu Jiatusun, shared responsibility. Peng and Xu followed with their own self-criticisms about the negotiations, but they went on the attack against Wu Dasheng, and stated that as the top official he bore primary responsibility. They charged that Wu's errors were not coincidental – he had all along tried to avoid "lifting the lid off of class struggle" against the Lin Biao clique, and his effort to divert the movement to economic issues was in line with previous stance. Peng and Xu then raised a series of pointed questions about Wu Dasheng's culpability for the "anti May 16 elements" campaign, bringing the question back to the military's persecution of civilian leaders – veteran cadres and rebel leaders alike.⁶⁹

Taking the cue from Peng and Xu, *Xinhua Daily* published an editorial on 11 May calling for mass criticism of the incorrect line followed in the provincial Party committee in the past, and for exposure of the class struggle and line struggle within the provincial leadership. The paper publicized a series of mass criticism rallies in mid-April that targeted the recent errors of the military authorities.⁷⁰ Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke were not named, but it was clear who the targets were. The articles implied that Wu and Jiang were diehard followers of Lin Biao.⁷¹

From mid-May to the end of June, the provincial Party committee held mass criticism meetings of department heads in the provincial guesthouse on Zhongshan Road. Dozens of "mass representatives" were invited, most of them former rebels and victims of May 16 investigations. They denounced the military authorities in no uncertain terms. The participants also circulated handbills and put up wall posters in public places, many of them openly denouncing Wu Dasheng by name.⁷² Peng Chong and Xu Jiatusun attended many of the

68 Shi notebooks, transcription of Central Document No. 14, 1974.

69 Shi notebooks, 10 May 1974.

70 *Xinhua ribao* 1974a, 1974b, 1974c.

71 The head of *Xinhua Daily*, Fan Fayuan, a veteran civilian cadre, had been attacked during the Cultural Revolution but was rehabilitated in 1969 and enthusiastically took part in carrying out the "anti May 16 elements" investigations. However, in 1974 he stood firmly on the side of Peng Chong and Xu Jiatusun in their struggle against Wu Dasheng.

72 Two examples are "Jianjue hanwei Zhonggong zhongyang shishi hao wenjian, chedi fensui Wu Dasheng deng ren de changkuang fanpu" ("Resolutely defend Central Committee Document no. 14: completely smash the vicious counterattack of Wu Dasheng and people like him", 24 May 1974) and "Yanzheng kangyi! Qianglie yaoqiul!" ("Solemnly protest! Vigorously demand!", 7 May 1974). Both handbills were signed by "Representatives of the Meeting to Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius of the Provincial Party Offices."

meetings, and they also coached some of the activists in small group meetings beforehand.⁷³ They communicated privately with former rebels, who were not qualified to participate in the criticism sessions, to put pressure on the military leaders in their own units.⁷⁴

As the tide turned, military officers who were in charge of government offices and other work units began to turn on Wu and denounce him themselves. Most damaging of all were revelations that Wu had been directly involved in efforts to name Lin Biao as Mao's successor at the Ninth Party Congress in 1969, and that he was complicit in some of the local activities of his son, Lin Liguō 林立果. These accusers not only implicated Wu in the alleged crimes of the Lin Biao clique, they also detailed the way in which he instructed his subordinates to ignore civilian leaders and central documents, and otherwise cut civilian Party officials out of decision-making.⁷⁵

In a series of self-criticisms at these mass meetings, Wu Dasheng insisted that his mistakes were due to shortcomings in his thought – “contradictions among the people” – a much milder charge than complicity with the traitorous Lin Biao clique. Peng Chong and Xu Jiātun pushed for exposure and criticism by the masses, and held citywide mass rallies over a loudspeaker system. They arranged for the accusations and self-criticisms of participants in the provincial criticism meetings to be circulated publicly, and they called for the continuing investigation of the errors committed during the “anti May 16 elements” campaign and the “concubine” affair, in effect pushing for the most severe political interpretations of Wu Dasheng's errors.⁷⁶ They demanded the release of victims of the campaign who were still in prison, and they ordered the leaders of their work units to get them to participate actively in the unfolding criticism campaign against Wu Dasheng.⁷⁷

The Attacks on Military Leaders

The *pi Lin* campaign created widespread social unrest in much of China, causing production to decline in the first half of 1974. Mao responded by instructing Li Xiānniān 李先念, Ji Dengkui 纪登奎 and Hua Guofeng 华国锋 to pay closer attention to stability and the economy. The response was Central Document No. 21.⁷⁸ The document blamed social unrest and declines in production on local leaders' failure to thoroughly conduct the criticism campaign, failing to

73 Shi notebooks, 21 June 1974; Yuan Gang 2008, 202–205; and Wang Chunnan, n.d.

74 Interview with Ge Zhonglong, 13–14 April 2007. Ge, a former rebel leader and victim of the “anti May 16 elements” campaign, had earlier tried to meet with Wu Dasheng and Peng Chong to gain rehabilitation. At this point in time Peng Chong secretly encouraged Ge to mobilize his fellow rebel leaders to demonstrate for rehabilitation at the provincial Party headquarters. He mobilized more than 200 to demonstrate there, and forced Wu Dasheng to reverse the verdicts on them and release Wen Fenglai from prison.

75 Shi notebooks, 11 May and 21 June 1974.

76 Shi notebooks, 21 June 1974; Wang Chunnan, n.d.; Yuan Gang 2008, 202–205.

77 Shi notebooks 21 June 1974.

78 Cheng 2005; Teiwes and Sun 2007, 189–200.

admit their errors and inducing conflict by caving in to economic demands, which confused "the masses" and permitted "class enemies" to take advantage of the situation to sabotage production. All economic demands would be addressed only at the end of the campaign.⁷⁹

While the document singled out Jiangsu as one of the provinces where problems had become severe, it was open to different interpretations. Was the unrest due to excessive zeal in attacking the military officers who still headed the provincial government? Or was the problem that these same officials were still unwilling to honestly confess their prior wrongdoing? When the central document was discussed at the meeting of provincial department heads on 5 July, Peng Chong pushed the latter interpretation, and argued forcefully that production in Jiangsu had been harmed because "revolution" – that is, the criticism of Wu Dasheng's errors – had not been thoroughly conducted. Peng Chong's interpretation was strongly supported by Xu Jiatusun and many other civilian cadres at the meeting. They resolved to push the campaign against "Lin Biao's followers" with even more vigour.⁸⁰

Public criticism rallies continued during August and September, and Peng Chong pushed the offensive against Wu Dasheng in meetings of provincial leading cadres. On 15 August, Wu finally admitted to activities in support of Lin Biao during the Lushan Plenum of 1970 and cover-ups of actions by Xu Shiyou and his wife that implicated them in the Lin Biao clique.⁸¹ Jiang Ke made a long self-criticism on 21 and 22 August, focusing on his complicity, along with Xu Shiyou, in the nationwide effort to select potential marriage partners for Lin Liguo.⁸²

The confessions by the two leading military officials in Jiangsu, far from placating their critics, fuelled the anger against them for refusing to admit their crimes for so many months. Moreover, because both confessions implicated Xu Shiyou directly, the conference participants began to direct their criticism directly at the former military boss.⁸³ At the conclusion of the conference on 31 August, Peng Chong summed up the conclusions: Xu Shiyou's mistakes as the former provincial head could and must be criticized, and local Party organs should send exposures of his errors to the provincial Party committee, who would forward the material directly to Beijing. He asserted that the "anti May 16 elements" campaign was an effort to reverse the gains of the Cultural Revolution as part of Lin Biao's conspiracy, and he ordered a formal document to rectify errors committed in the campaign.⁸⁴

79 CCP Central Committee 1974.

80 Shi notebooks, 7 July 1974.

81 Shi notebooks, 15 August 1974. The main points of Wu's self-criticism on this occasion, which included details about his complicity in Lin Biao's activities and the conduct of the "anti May 16 elements" campaign in violation of central directives, sabotaging local collective leadership, are described in *Jiangsu Provincial Annals* 2002, 323.

82 Shi notebooks, 21 and 22 August 1974.

83 Shi notebooks, 9 and 26 August 1974.

84 The content of the document about errors committed in the "anti May 16 elements" campaign are outlined in *Jiangsu Provincial Annals* 2002, 320. Peng Chong's speech is described in Shi notebooks.

The offensive led by Peng Chong and Xu Jiatus did meet some resistance. A number of prefecture-level leaders tried to defuse the momentum of the campaign, clearly worrying that they would be sacrificed like the leader of Suzhou had been some months before. Rumours circulated that the campaign against Lin Biao's followers would soon be curtailed by the centre, and that Mao had commented that the criticisms against Wu Dasheng were excessive. The most direct challenge came from the military officer who headed Xuzhou 徐州 prefecture. He challenged the claim that "the Jiangsu Party committee failed to take a correct attitude toward the Cultural Revolution" and challenged the authority of local officials to make such claims. He questioned the motives of those who pushed the criticisms, wondering about ulterior motives.⁸⁵ In leadership conferences during September some officials claimed that the strident charges against Wu Dasheng were "creating confusion among the masses," and that the movement was becoming overheated. Others stated that the general orientation of the "anti May 16 elements" campaign was correct, and that it should not be completely repudiated. The army officer who served as Party secretary of Yancheng prefecture reportedly declared that only Wu Dasheng represented the Party leadership of Jiangsu, and that he would not accept directives from any other provincial leaders.⁸⁶

These stirrings of resistance never spread, because a central work conference in Beijing from 6 to 14 October came down firmly on the side of Peng Chong and Xu Jiatus's interpretation. Several central leaders spoke, and their main thrust was to criticize local leaders who defied and ignored directives from the centre. Li Xiannian in particular appeared to speak directly to Jiangsu's situation when he criticized the factional attitude expressed by the military officer who served as Xuzhou's Party secretary. On 14 October, Wang Hongwen 王洪文 and Zhang Chunqiao attended the final session of the conference and explained that Mao's call for unity and stability did not mean that the campaign should be halted, but that the political struggle must be properly conducted in order to achieve a higher level of unity. Stability and unity, they argued, could not be attained when there were still hundreds of thousands of victims of the "anti May 16 elements" campaign whose cases were not redressed. These speeches, along with Li Xiannian's, clearly endorsed the stance of Peng Chong and Xu Jiatus in Jiangsu.⁸⁷

When Xu Jiatus returned to Nanjing from this conference, the provincial Party committee summoned the heads of all provincial departments, prefecture-level leaders and the heads of the political department of the Nanjing Military District to hear the latest set of clarifications from Beijing. Liberally quoting the radical officials Zhang Chunqiao and Wang Hongwen, Xu and the other civilian officials pushed for intensified criticism of Wu Dasheng and Xu Shiyou. Wu

85 Shi notebooks, 9, 10 and 14 August 1974.

86 Shi notebooks, 5 and 18 September 1974.

87 Shi notebooks, mid-October 1974.

made yet another self-criticism on 23 October, admitting to even more of Xu Shiyou's alleged complicity in activities attributed to the Lin Biao clique. On 24 October, one of Xu and Wu's military subordinates admitted that Xu deliberately used the "anti May 16 elements" campaign to attack former rebel leaders, and that he circulated Xu's satirical verse that ridiculed Zhang Chunqiao. On 25 October, a senior civilian cadre charged that Xu Shiyou had openly slandered all former rebel leaders during the "anti May 16 elements" campaign, and that Xu had personally interrogated and tortured some of the more senior victims.⁸⁸

The conference concluded with six major charges against Xu and Wu: they were involved in the Lin Biao conspiracy; they carried out his revisionist line; they split the Party, army, and masses; they overturned the gains of the Cultural Revolution and the "newborn socialist things"; they set up an independent kingdom, subverting central authority; and during the *pi Lin* campaign, they tried to keep the lid on class struggle, covering up to protect themselves, sabotaged production, and failed to confess or correct their errors. A bulletin summarizing the indictment against Wu Dasheng was circulated, but Xu Shiyou was not named, pending a decision by central authorities about whether he would be included in the charges.⁸⁹

Civilian Cadres Ascendant

On 13 November, the victory of the civilian officials was sealed. The top leaders of the Nanjing Military Region and Jiangsu Province, including Wu Dasheng, Peng Chong and Xu Jiatun, were summoned to Beijing. That afternoon they met with Politburo Standing Committee members Wang Hongwen, Ye Jianying 叶剑英, Zhang Chunqiao, and Ji Dengkui. The leaders announced that Peng Chong would be promoted to first Party secretary of Jiangsu and head of the Jiangsu revolutionary committee, and that he would become the second ranking political commissar of the Nanjing Military Region. Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke were suspended from their duties and would continue to undergo criticism for their errors. The leaders stated that Mao himself had made this decision, after considering the Jiangsu problem for a number of years. They instructed the new provincial leadership to carefully deal with the problem of those forcibly relocated to the countryside, and the reinvestigation of May 16 cases. Xu Shiyou's name did not appear on the central and local documents that relayed these decisions, so the local charges made against him did not stick.⁹⁰

After the Jiangsu officials returned to Nanjing, they convened a leadership conference to relay the latest central instructions. Bowing to Beijing's directives, Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke declared their support for the decision and pledged loyalty to Peng Chong.⁹¹ On 30 December, the Jiangsu Party committee and

88 Shi notebooks, 19, 23, 23 and 25 October 1974.

89 Shi notebooks, 28 to 31 October 1974

90 Politburo Instructions 1974 and transcription in Shi notebooks for late November 1974. Interviewees confirm that transcriptions of the speeches circulated widely at that time.

91 Shi notebooks, 19 November 1974.

the Jiangsu Military District jointly ordered all military personnel working in organs of civilian government to return to their military units.⁹² Veteran civilian cadres were sent out to take over leading positions at all levels of government.

In the first two months of 1975, the new provincial leaders consolidated their victory. In early January, Peng Chong noted that there were still wall posters on the streets of Nanjing calling for “exposing the black gang.” He argued that this was a deviation from the correct Party line; to “repudiate everything” was wrong. Wu Dasheng had committed grave errors, but now was the time to strengthen Party unity. Former rebels were now welcome to “help leading Party comrades correct distortions of the Party line, but they must support the work of the Party committee.” Xu Jiatus advocated rehabilitating those who had been wrongly charged by the military; those who deserved it should be released immediately from prison. But this should not be done indiscriminately. Some of those wrongly accused in the “anti May 16 elements” campaign had committed other kinds of errors, so not everyone would be automatically released.⁹³ The new civilian authorities acknowledged the excesses of the military’s persecution campaign, but they insisted that the former rebels’ demand for restoration of their former leadership posts should be rejected by Party committees at all levels. The former rebels were released from prison and had their “counter-revolutionary” labels removed, but they were denied return to the corridors of power.⁹⁴

As for those who had been relocated to the countryside, Peng Chong stated that the problem had yet to be resolved. He ordered officials to go down to the countryside during the Lunar New Year festival in early 1975 to provide living supplements and counsel patience among those who were affected, and he ordered rural revolutionary committees to pay attention to the livelihood problems of these families.⁹⁵ Well into 1976, Peng would report to the Party leadership that the problem of these households had yet to be satisfactorily resolved.⁹⁶ The majority of those affected would be unable to return to the cities until the 1980s, and most of them never returned to their former state sector jobs.

Conclusions

Nanjing’s “second Cultural Revolution” unfolded in a manner that was fundamentally different than widely accepted understandings of this campaign based on influential studies of Hangzhou and Wuhan. In the latter cities, former rebel leaders mobilized their followers to halt the rise of veteran cadres, which they characterized as a reversal of verdicts on the Cultural Revolution. In Nanjing, by sharp contrast, these same veteran cadres were able to manipulate

92 Jiangsu Province Chronology 1988, 329.

93 Shi notebooks, 4 and 5 January 1975.

94 Shi notebooks, 19 and 26 November 1974.

95 Shi notebooks, 2 February 1975.

96 Shi notebooks, 10 August 1975 and 28 February 1976.

the local campaign into an assault on still-strong military control of the province. They did so, in part, by posturing as champions of the legacy of the Cultural Revolution, accusing the military authorities of repudiating the legacy of the Cultural Revolution in their persecutions of "May 16 elements." Of the two nationwide goals for the *pi Lin* campaign, the task of finally removing the military from civilian administration was the only one that was served. The political outcomes could not have been more different: civilian cadres were the clear winners in Nanjing, and were the aggressors in steering the campaign toward their preferred results. In effect, Nanjing's "second Cultural Revolution" was nothing of the sort.

There are several reasons why the campaign played out differently in Nanjing. The most important was the still-overwhelming role of military officers in civilian administration. Xu Shiyou's high national standing and complete dominance of the province permitted him to delay the withdrawal of the military that was completed much earlier in other provinces, especially those like Hangzhou, where local military commanders were removed after being implicated in the Lin Biao affair. As a local strongman Xu had ensured, through an unusually thorough "anti May 16 elements" campaign, that former rebels were in no position to challenge the restoration of government authority. The victims of the campaign were still in jail at the end of 1973, and several key leaders were shattered by the experience and unable to resume political activism.

The first consequence of Xu Shiyou's long reign in Nanjing was that former rebels did not lead the popular mobilizations that disrupted Nanjing's economy, unlike Hangzhou and Wuhan. In the latter two cities, rebel leaders mobilized their former factions, invoking identities and slogans of the late 1960s among their followers in large enterprises and public institutions. In Nanjing, by contrast, massive street protests were composed not of former rebels but of petitioners from the countryside – entire families expelled from the cities in the persecution campaigns of 1968 and after. These were individuals with suspect histories or family backgrounds that had made them victims of the final campaigns of the 1960s.⁹⁷ Nanjing's economy was not paralyzed by work stoppages due to rebel activity, but by disruptions of municipal and inter-city transportation networks by masses of petitioners.

A second consequence of Xu Shiyou's tenure in Nanjing was that the task of removing the military from civilian administration was still in its early stages. If the *pi Lin* campaign was to target power holders, the Nanjing military was the most logical target. Peng Chong and Xu Jiatus were part of the Nanjing power structure during all of the persecution campaigns carried out under military rule, but this did not prevent them from opportunistically and aggressively steering the campaign into a repudiation of the alleged "errors" of Xu Shiyou in previous years, for which his subordinates Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke would

97 MacFarquhar and Schoenhals 2006, 253–272.

have to answer. Despite the fact that Xu Shiyou was deemed completely loyal and uninvolved in the alleged conspiracy of Lin Biao to seize power, Peng Chong and Xu Jiatun nonetheless tarred the military under Xu Shiyou with the brush of the “Lin Biao clique,” accusing them of political conduct – well short of conspiracy – that displayed the same errors for which the “Lin Biao clique” was earlier criticized. The most creative line of attack by the civilian cadres was their posing as champions of the former rebel leaders targeted in the “anti May 16 elements” campaign. This permitted them to pose as defenders of the Cultural Revolution legacy and convince Beijing that they deserved support. Through these manoeuvres, veteran civilian leaders in Nanjing were able to engineer a campaign that worked in the opposite direction from Hangzhou and Wuhan. Instead of becoming targets of a campaign designed to stem the growing tide of veteran cadre authority, in Nanjing the campaign hastened the return of veteran cadres to full control of the province.

Interestingly, the campaign through which Wu Dasheng and the Nanjing military were finally pushed aside included widespread public accusations of misconduct in which Xu Shiyou – still a high ranking official in the national hierarchy – was directly implicated. Especially interesting is the public airing of accusations that Xu had openly expressed contempt for Zhang Chunqiao and the Shanghai civilian radicals. This surely was designed to ensure support in Beijing for the Nanjing cadres’ campaign, and further buttress their somewhat dubious claims to be safeguarding the victorious fruits of the Cultural Revolution. It is also interesting to note, however, that Xu Shiyou was not implicated in the final central document that ordered the removal of Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke from their posts and the wholesale withdrawal of the army from civilian administration in Jiangsu. The criticism campaign against the Nanjing military made clear that Xu Shiyou had alienated important figures in Beijing. But the rotation of China’s military commanders permitted the criticism of his past actions while retaining the services of an officer whose loyalty to Mao was not in question. Wu Dasheng and Jiang Ke fell, while Xu Shiyou retained his posts.

Once the veteran Nanjing cadres had achieved their aim of removing the military from key Party and government posts, they did not further champion the cause of the former rebels. They made very clear that these individuals would not be returned to the leadership posts they achieved in 1968. Victory, it was clear, belonged to the civilian cadres. The new civilian leadership, further, tamped down the protests of those who sought a return to the cities and rehabilitation for the false charges made against them in the late 1960s. This set the stage for the next round of contention in Nanjing, which is beyond the scope of this article. The former rebels recovered sufficiently by 1976 to use the “criticism of Deng Xiaoping” campaign to complain about the restoration of the veteran cadres at their expense. And in a very different vein, the groups that had protested the policies of the Cultural Revolution on the streets of Nanjing in 1974, along with others, returned to the city centre shortly before the Qingming festival in 1976 and engaged in massive street demonstrations. The

"Nanjing Incident" of late March 1976 was in fact a forerunner, and in some analyses an instigator, of the more famous Qingming protests in Tiananmen Square on 4 and 5 April.⁹⁸

The "second Cultural Revolution" in Nanjing deviated almost completely from established accounts of events in Hangzhou and Wuhan, which have thoroughly shaped our understanding of the "second Cultural Revolution" of 1974. The civilian cadres in Nanjing fashioned a criticism campaign against the political extremism of the "anti May 16 elements" campaign that inadvertently stimulated massive and sustained street protests by other victims of the Cultural Revolution. In this limited sense events in Nanjing in 1974 presaged the politics of protest *against* the Cultural Revolution that assumed a more mature form in 1976, and which emerged again in 1978–79 to undermine civilian cadres identified with the radical politics of the late Mao period. The unexpected form that the "second Cultural Revolution" took in Nanjing should remind us once again that political impulses emanating from Beijing could have unanticipated and starkly opposed local outcomes. It should also warn us against generalizing political events in one or two well-understood regions onto a national scale. This should serve as a reminder that however much our understanding of politics in Beijing has advanced in recent scholarship, our understanding of nationwide political dynamics of this complex and pivotal period of Chinese history is still in many ways in its infancy.

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98 See Louie and Louie 1981; Zweig 1978.

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