Jiang Qing and Cultural Revolution

Linda Longley

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JIANG QING

and

CULTURAL REVOLUTION

by

Linda Longley

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

History

Department of History
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December, 1996
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This thesis will examine the role of Jiang Qing in the events of China known as the Cultural Revolution, and show that this revolution was affected in its political as well as its cultural aspects by her influence. Historians have not carefully examined Jiang Qing's role in China's history, and have commonly regarded her simply as "Mao's wife." The theme that will be developed in this thesis is that she was of major importance in China during the years 1966-1976, the period of the Cultural Revolution. Materials from a variety of sources are analyzed and synthesized to support this position.
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Chinese Communist Party</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Cultural Revolution</td>
</tr>
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<td>GMD</td>
<td>Goumindong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JQ</td>
<td>Jiang Qing</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>People's Liberation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>People's Republic of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RG</td>
<td>Red Guard</td>
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<td>SEM</td>
<td>Socialist Education Movement</td>
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LIST OF CHARACTERS


Deng Xiaoping (1904- ): Born in Sichuan Province. Allied with Liu Shaoqi, opposed to Jiang Qing. Succeeded Mao as Party Chairman after that position was held for a brief period by Hua Guofeng. Ill and aged at the time of this writing.


Jiang Qing (1914-1991): Born of poor parents in Shandong Province, she used her position as Mao's wife to become a cultural and political leader.

Kang Sheng (1899-1975): Born in Shandong; was Mao's behind the scenes "hatchet man." Held high positions as head of security, espionage, and secret police. Regarded as cruel and ruthless. Life-long friend and supporter of Jiang Qing.


Liu Shaoqi (1898-1969): Born in Hunan. Was the second-ranking Party member at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. His political differences with Mao led to "two lines" of Chinese Communism, Maoism and Liuism. He and his wife, Wang Guangmei, were early victims of Cultural Revolution purges.


PROLOGUE

Stories of powerful women rulers hold an especially fascinating place in the minds of both westerners and orientals, and China has produced its share of illustrious female leaders. These include Wu Zetian of the Tang Dynasty, Empress Lu of the Han Dynasty, and Ci Xi, the infamous "dragon lady" of the Qing Dynasty. This thesis is an account of one other such person, Jiang Qing, who was the wife of Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong from the late 1930s until his death in 1976.

Jiang Qing (JQ) has been the subject of two important biographies in English, and non-controversial information about JQ that is included here usually comes from one or both of these sources. The earlier of these, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, by the American historian Roxane Witke, was based on interviews granted to Witke by JQ in 1972, and was published in 1977.¹ This book was the basis for a cover article in Time magazine, March 21, 1977, and gave the American public its first detailed account of JQ's life. JQ controlled the material that was included in this book, and while it is valuable as a starting point in assessing JQ and for a view of life inside China that was not generally available at the time of writing, it is an incomplete and inaccurate account of JQ and her importance.

Ross Terrill, an Australian with a journalistic background, and who was at one time a research associate at Harvard's East Asia Research Center, presented a more critical and insightful biography of JQ in 1992. In Madame Mao: The White-Boned Demon, Terrill traced details of JQ's life that had not been disclosed to Witke.² What emerged from Terrill's book was a picture of JQ that was less than flattering, and a picture in which
she was perhaps deserving of the cruel characterization of the book's subtitle. Still, Terrill's account lacked an appreciation of the role played by JQ in the politics of China during the Cultural Revolution (CR), and continued a tradition that regarded JQ as important only for her cultural contributions.

Several books were of special value in writing this thesis. Professor An Tai Sung, although educated in America, provided an Oriental (Korean) perspective on events of the CR. Written in 1972, his book *Mao Tse-tung's Cultural Revolution* was an early scholarly work that supplied good explanations for many of the basic "ingredients" of the CR. It lacked, however, an appreciation of the revolution's cultural significance. Books by foreign journalists often had insights into the Chinese people that could not be obtained from the suspect documents of the Chinese government, or the people themselves. Stanley Karnow's *Mao and China*, originally published in 1972, was such a book. A 3rd edition (in 1990) allowed Karnow to include an account of the later years of the CR. His detailed and well documented history presented more than a superficial analysis of events, and often broke through the bewildering maze of facts with a plausible explanation as to why those events took place. Fox Butterfield, another American journalist, lived in Beijing in 1981 and gathered material for his report *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*. He presented a view of life in China after Mao, and found that Chinese were still hesitant to speak frankly about their experiences during the CR, for fear of political reprisals.

Clare Hollingworth, a former British war correspondent, while writing about Mao (*Mao and the Men Against Him*), became preoccupied with JQ. Her study of China in the years 1974-76 revolved more around JQ that it did Mao. Written from a feminine perspective, Hollingworth furnished insights into JQ that were not found in other sources. A recent book by Mao's physician, Li Zhisui (*The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, 1994), likewise exhibited an inordinate interest in JQ.
Bonnie S. McDougall compiled a valuable collection of twelve scholarly articles on the arts in the People's Republic of China (PRC).\textsuperscript{8} Several of these articles are relevant to this thesis, and they are referred to frequently. Books by K. H. Fan, ed., \textit{The Chinese Cultural Revolution: Selected Documents}; the Asia Research Centre, \textit{The Great Cultural Revolution in China}; and James T. Myers, Jurgen Domes, and Erik von Groeling, eds., \textit{Chinese Politics: Documents and Analysis} are compilations in English translation of government documents originally written in Chinese.\textsuperscript{9} Historical background material has been obtained from Craig Dietrich, \textit{People's China}, John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, \textit{East Asia: Tradition and Transformation}, and Jonathan D. Spence, \textit{The Search for Modern China}.\textsuperscript{10}

The pinyin method of romanization of Chinese characters will usually be used here. When citing material written prior to the adoption of this method in the early 1980s, the spellings of the original sources will be retained, as it is under those spellings that those materials are referenced and catalogued in English language libraries. The most common occurrences of these spellings are "Chiang Ch'ing" (for Jiang Qing), "Mao Tse-tung" (Mao Zedong), and "Peking" (Beijing).
NOTES

1. Roxane Witke, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing (Boston, 1977). Hereafter referred to as Comrade.


3. An Tai Sung, Mao's Cultural Revolution ([No city], 1972).


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to Professor Sue Fawn Chung, my advisor, for suggestions and guidance in writing this thesis, and for help in many other areas. Her academic insights and life experiences have enabled me to progress in my journey through America.
CHAPTER 1

A STAR IS BORN

Setting the Stage

The fourth wife of Mao Zedong was born Li Chin in Shandong province, 1914. She was also known as Li Yunhe and Shu-meng. As a stage and film actress in Shanghai in the 1930s, she adopted the name Lan Ping (Blue Apple). When she became Mao's wife, she took the name Jiang Qing (Green River). In the Western world she was known simply as Madame Mao.

At the time of her birth, her father was over 60 years old, and her mother over 40; her brothers and sisters were all much older. Her mother left her abusive husband to work in different positions as a domestic servant, taking her young daughter with her, and these early formative years were a period of instability for JQ. There is some indication that JQ's mother may have worked in the household of Kang Sheng, who became a key figure in the PRC, and JQ may have met Kang at this time. At age seven, she was sent to the household of her grandparents, and after a short period of schooling, began to appear in theatrical productions. Some reports indicated that she was kidnapped and forced into this life by white slavers. This unstable environment of her youth may explain her readiness to abandon conventional life styles and her later attacks on the importance of the family in traditional Chinese culture.
In 1930, JQ had a marriage of a few months duration to a merchant, a Mr. Fei, in the city of Jinan. In 1931, she began living in the city of Qingdao with Yu Qiwei, a communist underground leader, and at that time showed an early interest in communist ideology. Accounts of these years of JQ presented her as a woman of distinctive and strong personality. She was described as a woman who was pretty, vivacious, perky and spontaneous; cocky, bold, aggressive, pushy, arrogant, unpredictable and difficult to please. She was also petty, spiteful, outspoken and abrasive; head-strong, self-willed, vengeful and vindictive. Her manner was perceived as being theatrical and dramatic. She was regarded as a woman of great courage and perseverance; fearless and independent, opportunistic and ambitious, but shrewd, scheming, domineering and calculating. Clearly, she projected different images of her complex personality to different people. While the circumstances of her life were to change, her character did not.

In 1934, she moved to Shanghai, the city known as the "Pearl of the Orient," and a city which was perhaps the most cosmopolitan in all of China. While there, she had an exposure to the life of the arts and artists, the liberal thinking of radical cultural elements, and bohemian life styles. She was a willing participant in the avant-garde artistic circles of Shanghai and during this time was "notorious for her promiscuity." Nora, the rebellious and independent heroine of Ibsen's "A Doll's House" became a role model for the equally rebellious JQ, and she successfully played the stage role of Nora in 1935. Her film and stage career in Shanghai was only moderately successful, however, and individuals there that she held responsible for inhibiting her career would incur her wrath in the later CR. It was here that she met, or re-met, Kang Sheng, who had become an early Communist leader.

While in Shanghai, in 1936, she had a one-year marriage, described as "stormy" (it involved public arguments, fights, and threats of suicide) to Tang Na, who was prominent in artistic and community circles in that city. Her Shanghai years indicated a continuing
interest in Communist left-wing activity. Communist affiliation was at that time no small matter, as fears of reprisal, persecution, and even death were well founded. Communist activity was carried out secretly and underground. Jiang Qing was herself imprisoned in 1934 by the Nationalist Government forces of Chang Kai-shek, the Goumindong (GMD), for three (or perhaps eight) months. Suspected communist sympathizers arrested at this time were sometimes treated harshly, by being physically mistreated, or more leniently, by being asked to leave the city. In that time of political uncertainty, there were no standard legal procedures to be followed in cases of political deviance, and penalties depended on decisions of local authorities. The date of her actual Chinese Communist Party (CCP) membership is given as diversely as 1933 and 1940, with 1933 being the most widely accepted year.

JQ, as well as other dedicated Communists, did not separate political activity from other aspects of life. Witke reported one striking example of this. While attending a theater performance in 1936, JQ expressed outrage at an actress for playing the role of mistress to a German general. This was not, in her opinion, a role suitable for a Chinese. Other members of the theatrical troupe became so agitated at JQ's conduct that they actually threatened her life. It would be unusual in any culture for a member of an audience to go backstage after a theatrical performance to berate a performer for "political errors," much less to such an extent that the situation became life threatening. This incident illustrated the passionate reactions that her personality was able to arouse. Her attitude was similar to that of a single-minded religious zealot, seeing all of life, in her case, as being painted with a political brush.

The Japanese invaded Shanghai in 1937. At this time, JQ traveled to Yanan, where Mao Zedong had set up CCP headquarters at the conclusion of the famous Long March. Mao was conducting public lectures at Yanan; JQ sat in front rows at these appearances, and responded enthusiastically to his speeches. It was apparent that she and
Mao did not meet by chance, but by JQ's design. Mao was certainly a willing participant in their union, having been "captivated" by the "vivacious and attractive actress."**

The prospect of the marriage of JQ and Mao was not readily endorsed by other party officials. "In the regimented community of Yanan, marriage was not a personal affair," and some Communist leaders there actually suspected JQ of being a GMD spy.*^ JQ's friend, Kang Sheng, attested to her Communist loyalty, and his sanction of the marriage was decisive. The union was eventually approved by the Party leadership, but with the understanding that JQ not involve herself in political affairs for, by some reports, a period of twenty years. This was an extraordinary stipulation on the terms of a marriage, and could not have been motivated by mere suspicion of JQ's possible GMD ties. There is no record as to which individuals opposed the marriage, but they must have included some of Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Lin Biao, and Liu Shaoqi, all of whom were present at Yanan and were to remain in leadership roles in China after the founding of the PRC. There was a suggestion in this incident that objectors to the marriage foresaw and were fearful of JQ's political ambitions, and this may have been an early attempt on the part of the Communist Party hierarchy to prevent those ambitions from being realized.

However, there is a more innocent interpretation of this restriction. The acting profession was held in low esteem by many Chinese, and these men, foreseeing Mao's eventual leadership of the Communist Party, may not have wished for the country to be "tainted" by having a former actress as First Lady. In support of this view, the New York Times speculated that she was "kept down" for twenty years because of (potential) "moral and political embarassment." In any event, the marriage took place in 1938. If in fact JQ observed a twenty-year exclusion from political activity as a condition of this marriage, this may account for her absence from the political scene until the 1960s.

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During the early 1940s, JQ was acting as Mao's secretarial assistant. Witke referred to JQ at Yanan as a "mute observer." Given the self-serving purpose of the Witke interviews, it is plausible that had JQ furnished Mao with political ideas of her own at that time, she would have mentioned this. Yet, JQ may have had some influence on Mao. Hollingworth stated that Mao's interest in culture was prompted by JQ. Whether prompted by JQ or not, Mao's interest in culture led to an event important for China's cultural future.

In 1942, Mao presented an essay entitled "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and the Arts." This was an unusual topic for a military leader, and especially for one who was facing far more pressing issues at that time. China was at war with Japan, the Communists forces were still in conflict with the Nationalist government headed by Chiang Kai-shek, and Mao was solidifying his own leadership of the communist movement. Yet Mao was a supreme theoretician, and, realizing the role that art could play in government, he developed in this essay a political foundation and rationale for artistic work. He spoke of bourgeois and imperialist themes "which we call traitor literature and art," and emphasized that "With us, literature and art are for the people . . . There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes or art that is detached from or independent of politics." Mao recalled the Leninist theme that literature and art were "cogs and wheels" in the revolutionary machine, and even his choice of words regarding art criticism was prophetic of events in the future CR: "Literary and art criticism is one of the principal methods of struggle in the world of literature and art."
Mao soon implemented a practical application of this theory of the arts in Yanan. Citing a Chinese tradition, "The use and adaptation by Chinese rulers of songs and dances among the people, both for court ceremony and for public instruction, has a long history in China," Mao politicized "yangge," which was a form of combination folk dance, music and variety act. Traditional roles in this art form were replaced by groups of workers, peasants, soldiers, and students. "Negative" characters were banished, and new words and plots were introduced to emphasize patriotic themes.19

Within the Chinese tradition, involvement in the realm of the arts by a political leader was no small matter. "The Party's decision to mount large scale yangge amounted to a claim on the Mandate of Heaven." David Holm suggested that yangge was not emphasized in the CR because JQ disliked folksongs and preferred the more refined cultural medium of Beijing Opera.20 Mao, well read in Chinese history, realized that a legitimate government of the Chinese people would include a policy involving their cultural lives. Perhaps anticipating his future victory over the GMD, he sought to establish an early Communist position on the arts. Yangge was an important aspect of the lives of the people, and even at Yanan there was an attempt by Mao to use art for the political purposes of affecting the lives of the "masses."

Of such importance was Mao's pronouncement at the Yanan Forum that "The year 1942 is widely regarded, both in China and by scholars in the west, as a watershed in the history of modern Chinese literature and the arts."21 Terrill reported that "Years later, she [JQ] said that she had influenced the Talks," but he provided no documentation for this claim.22 Witke did not record JQ as having had any part in that talk.

In those Yanan days, Mao advocated the theme that history was made by "the people," or the masses. Chinese theatrical productions traditionally presented a series of kings, princes, lords and ladies as main characters, and so gave a distorted version of "reality." Mao's government intruded into the arts, to bring them into conformity with
political reality. This idea evolved into a two-pronged assault on culture that was to find expression in the later CR: criticism (i.e., rejection, by government dictate) of old artistic models, and promotion (by governmental decree) of new, approved aesthetic ideals. JQ would recall Mao's words at this Forum many times during the CR.

The CCP arose in part as an alternative to the corruption and cruelty of the GMD leadership, and diminished roles of local warlords. These three conflicting groups had formed loose alliances to combat the threat of Japanese invasion in the late 1930s. After WWII, Mao and the Communist Party emerged victorious over the GMD, the warlords lost much of their influence, and China was "liberated" to Communism in 1949. Mao based his new government on many ideas formulated in Yanan. And JQ was to remain resentful of the fact that she was the only wife of a prominent Party leader who was not "on stage" at Tiananmen Square on October 1, 1949, at the official birth of the PRC.

The 1950s were a period of general poor health for JQ, for which she was often in Moscow for medical treatment. Still, this decade was a period when she began to express her own developing views on the relation between culture and politics. She initiated a crusade against Mei Lanfang, "the greatest Beijing opera actor of his day," whom she regarded as being "too attached to the old." She criticized one popular movie, "Inside Story of the Qing Dynasty," because it accepted the existence of a foreign presence in China in 1900, was critical of the patriotic Boxers, and had been made in "decadent Hong Kong." She attacked another movie, "The Story of Wu Xun," which had portrayed Wu's life as a success story. Wu Xun had been a beggar, who rose to a position of economic prominence and philanthropy. Not content with portraying the movie as evil, and against Mao's objections, JQ continued with an attack against the man himself, as a way of making it known that Wu's motivation (achievement of good through economic gain) was not acceptable in the new governmental scheme of things. This was an early instance when JQ would speak for herself, not Mao, when it suited her purpose.
Bonnie McDougall expressed the opinion that the 1950s were a decade of artistic decline in China as well. "There was hardly a single work of written literature in the 1950s and early 1960s that made a genuine claim to literary distinction," she wrote. "The performing arts fared slightly better, though in general the same perceptions could apply." She characterized the changing period in arts from the 1950s into the 1960s and 1970s as involving "the attempted transformation, consciously implemented by the new state, of an explicit, author-centered culture . . . into a mass, audience-centered culture." This meant in effect that artistic expression would be diverted to propaganda purposes. Confirming this redirection of the arts, Robert Hegel noted that "fiction by People's Liberation Army writers came to prominence just before the CR."

JQ received a few political appointments in the early 1950s, which included memberships on a Film Guidance Committee and in a China-Russia Friendship Association. As a member of the Guidance Committee of the Ministry of Culture, she had a reputation for interference. Edward Rice, American Foreign Service Officer and Consul General in Hong Kong for 1964 to 1967, quoted Lu Dingyi, a Deputy Director of Propaganda, as saying "When Comrade JQ is present, work becomes difficult." A report by Mao's personal physician confirmed this view of her irascibility: while working on this Committee, she "behaved so arrogantly, claiming to speak for Chairman Mao, that no one could get along with her." Arrogance was to characterize her entire political life. A more significant appointment came in the winter of 1951-52, when she was named head of the secretariat of the General Office of the Party's Central Committee, which gave her access to secret papers involving the governance of China. She was removed from all of these positions, for unclear reasons, but perhaps due to pressure from unknown party leaders who, wishing to be rid of her presence, recalled the terms of her marriage agreement with Mao. She soon exerted her influence, however, in ways in which she would no longer be dictated to, but would become the dictator.
Chinese theater, as was true of so many aspects of Chinese life, was noted for its complexity. "Perhaps the single most striking feature of the Chinese theatrical tradition is its variety."^29 "Beijing opera . . . has been the nationally dominant form of theater in China for at least one hundred years. However, it is only one among more than 360 indigenous, or traditional, forms of Chinese theater currently being staged," wrote Elizabeth Wichmann in 1983. Nor were these many forms simple variants of one another: "Each of the more than 360 forms of traditional theater is well defined, having its own characteristics, musical style and method of stylization."^30 Theatrical performances in China usually contained music, and were referred to as "operas," rather than plays. It was the Beijing Opera form of theater that JQ adopted for political usage, and these operas were a key component in the CR that was to follow. The evidence suggested that these ideas came from JQ.

After her health improved in the early 1960s, JQ held other minor governmental positions that involved censorship and control of the arts, especially films. Whenever films placed capitalism or China's upper classes in a favorable light, or extolled individual enterprise, she found them objectionable. She authored an article in the Summer of 1961, "The Good Traditions of a Certain Company of the Red Army," which contained little substantial content, but which commended the company for their role in guarding Mao and Lin Biao.^31 It is significant that JQ's interests at this time were not confined to cultural matters. In the early 1960s, she made "an enormous effort . . . to read basic Communist literature and to educate herself in Marxism." These efforts were successful to the extent that by the summer of 1965, she was "invaluable to the Chairman both as a reporter of what people were thinking and saying and as a political advisor" (my emphasis).^32

While practical aspects of communism were being implemented in rural areas via communes and state control of land, what Marx called the "superstructure" of society -- education, literature, and the arts -- was being neglected. In Communist doctrine, this...
superstructure required the centrality of the state, its leaders, and their ideology.\textsuperscript{33} Mao perceived a need to revise the superstructure to provide support for the base, and he could do this with a plan that would solve his political problems as well.

Mao's political problems were increasing during the early 1960s. These problems included social inequities and an entrenched power of new bureaucratic elites.\textsuperscript{34} This involved what Mao viewed as corruption within upper levels of party management. In fact, the misuse of power by party cadres had begun almost as soon as the PRC was established. A "three-anti" campaign of 1951 had targeted corruption, waste, and excessive bureaucracy in the CCP, and a similar "five-anti" program began in 1952. Although capitalists no longer "officially" existed in China, some cadres were perceived as exhibiting such capitalistic traits as the pursuit of material comforts and personal well-being. These bureaucrats exhibited a declining interest in Mao's theory of communism as a continuing class struggle. Mao viewed the dachaus and limousines of Party leaders in the USSR as symptoms of a "reactionary" direction Soviet Communism had taken, and Chinese-Soviet relations had deteriorated by 1960. Among "revisionist" views that Mao objected to were the use of economic incentives in industrial and agricultural management, over-reliance on technical skills, educational conservatism, copying Western cultural mores and having friendly feelings toward the USSR.\textsuperscript{35} There was no doubt that Mao genuinely feared that Chinese Communism could take this same "perverted" course.

Mao's discomfort over this issue was given popular expression by Yang Xiquang, a high school student in Hunan province, who in an essay "Whither China?" referred to a "decadent class" of high-ranking officials, who were no longer leaders, but who had become "red capitalist" rulers, with high incomes.\textsuperscript{36} The lives of most Chinese revolved around the "work unit" to which they were assigned, and CCP cadres controlled these units. They had the power to regulate marriages, job transfers, places of residence and many facets of daily life. The system lent itself to favoritism, similar to what in the west
would be called "having connections," and the power of these cadres was such that in many cases they had simply replaced the old landlords in their exploitation of workers.

Further adding to Mao's troubles were policy problems with local leaderships, especially those in Beijing. The "Hundred Flowers" campaign of Spring, 1956, in which Mao had invited public criticism of his government, produced such an unexpected expression of dissatisfaction, especially among intellectuals, that Mao reacted quickly to suppress this dissent. The ensuing "Anti-rightist" campaign, wherein hundreds of thousands of outspoken Chinese were sent to the countryside, produced a loss of confidence in his ability to lead. Economic disasters resulting from the Great Leap Forward (1958-61) added to this loss of confidence. Liu Shaoqi, then vice chairman of the CCP, was advocating general policies of "social stability," and "two lines" of Chinese Communism, Maoism and Liuism, were emerging. Mao saw China's problems as based in class struggle, and Liu saw them as caused by corruption among local cadres. Mao regarded "communism" as a continuing process, while Liu, inclining to a Soviet view, believed that the principles of communism would result in a stable society. These theoretical differences caused wide differences in policy. Mao hoped to solve these problems with the Socialist Education Movement (SEM), which lasted from 1962 to 1965.

The "Early Ten Points" of May, 1963, replaced by "The Later Ten Points" in September, set up the SEM, which was primarily designed to benefit rural areas and increase agricultural output. The even later "Twenty-three Articles," of January, 1965, indicated a continuing struggle between Mao and his opponents, especially Liu, over the issues of this movement. The twenty-three points "became the crucial document that led to the conflict between Mao and his opponents during the CR."37

One important point of dispute between Mao and Liu Shaoqi was over the method of dealing with party cadres who were found to be "mistaken" in their political thinking.
Mao advised a tolerant, permissive attitude, which would allow wayward cadres to repent, as it were, of doctrinal errors, while they continued in their positions. Liu advocated a radical approach, whereby cadres would be dismissed. In illustration of this disagreement, Wang Guangmei, wife of Liu Shaoqi, headed one work party team (as part of the SEM) at Qinghua University in Beijing, where she dismissed University Communist Party members without giving them a chance to reform through self criticism. By replacing these members with a new set of leaders, which consisted largely of children of other party officials who were friendly to herself and her husband, she further antagonized the Maoists. The disagreements of the SEM thus involved wide scale personnel policies.

During this period, JQ became more vocal in her attacks on what she regarded as cultural deviance. She began to criticize artistic productions, directors, producers, etc., for presenting "wrong ideas," which may have meant merely a favorable or even neutral presentation of capitalism, such as having a well-dressed capitalist on a stage. She enjoyed "throwing her weight around," and arts personnel resented being told how to "do their job" by the wife of the Communist Party chairman. Witke mentioned that JQ began making "inroads" into television broadcasting in the early 1960s. Robert Elegant, head of the Los Angeles Times' Hong Kong bureau during the CR, wrote that her initial "meddling" in opera and motion pictures was simply "regarded as a nuisance," and he even suggested that there was an element of sexism involved: "Disarmed by their own prejudices, the moderates refused to consider a female a serious threat," and in light of future retributions against some of these theater figures, he added: "Had they known Mao's wife better, Mao's enemies might have feared the vengeful starlet more." A consequence of Mao's Yanan talk on the arts was that "a committee was set up for the specific purpose of revising old pieces to conform with Communist doctrine." This committee was formed in 1948, indicating that the political apparatus was already in place for JQ's use in implementing her operatic revisions.
JQ was named as having written her own opera, "Spark Among the Reeds." This later became "Shajiabang," which was one of eight original "model operas" produced to express the new political attitudes of the CR. Initially, this play concerned eighteen wounded Chinese soldiers who were hidden from the Japanese by an elderly woman, a tea house operator in the city of Shajiabang. When the soldiers recovered, the woman, an underground Communist agent, led them in an attack on Japanese forces in the area. JQ changed the plot, and had the troops led by their own officer, who acted on inspiration of Mao's thought. JQ struggled with other composers and performers to rid "Shajiabang" of western influences. Peng Zhen, mayor of Beijing, a Party official who was influential in Beijing cultural circles, and a friend of Liu Shaoqi, objected to allowing the revised opera to be performed. Publicity and funding were denied to JQ. These were disagreements that she would not soon forget. Peng was no longer a vague political opponent of Mao, but was now a personal enemy.

Under JQ's supervision, other plays were re-written to reflect the new view of "political correctness." Villains were dressed in rags, and kept off center stage. Heroes and heroines, no longer representing upper classes, were portrayed as common people. They had all the "good lines," and even dismounted horses majestically. JQ was said to have advocated an artistic theory of "three prominences," which involved an emphasis on good characters, the story's heroes, and on the main hero. These three prominences became important enough that they "had a strangle hold on the novel." Robert Hegel attributed the three prominences theory to both JQ and Yao Wenyuan, an accomplished Communist writer from Shanghai who was to become with JQ one of the Gang of Four. Hegel explained that it was "a theory that took to further extremes the theme of 'revolutionary romanticism' developed in the 1950s," and that the new themes appealed to the less well educated.
In the spring of 1962, Mao asked JQ to draft an arts policy, which became the "May 16th circular" (a second "May 16th circular" was issued in 1966). This statement was presented to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and was a summary of Mao's arts policies as presented at Yanan. JQ's official position on the proper function of opera contrasted with her private tastes, which ran to the salacious and erotic. She and her friend Kang Sheng spent two months together in the spring of 1962 in Hangzhou, where they "forced" theatrical groups to perform these entertainments. This was but one instance of the discrepancy between her preaching and her practice.

JQ had also been at work producing other "model operas," which served as prototypes of future Beijing operas, and which were in experimental production at this time. These models included five operas proper: "The Red Lantern," "Shajiabang," "Raid on the White Tiger Regiment," "On the Docks" and "Raiding the Bandits' Stronghold," which later became "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy." This last opera, finished in 1970, was an example of the 'three prominences' theory. Completed by 1966 were two ballets, "The White Haired Girl" and "The Red Detachment of Women." Another work was a symphony based on the music of "Shajiabang." These eight are regarded as the core of the Cultural Revolution dramatic presentations. None of the operas were set earlier than the 1920s, when the CCP began, and all but "On the Docks" involved the theme of war. They carried the messages of class struggle, continuing revolution, the teachings of Maoism, and the creation of heroic images of workers, peasants, and soldiers (i.e., "the masses"). The model operas became "immediately very popular" and were a cultural centerpiece of the CR. This is an important point, as many commentators on the CR view it as having little to do with culture. "Revolutionary Beijing Operas are the backbone of virtually all theatrical production in the country," and they were "directed by JQ, the militant wife of Mr. Mao, and a leader of the CR," reported Seymour Topping of the New York Times in 1971. Yet, the operas were of dubious artistic merit. Deng Xiaoping,
who was Mao’s successor after a brief period when Hua Guofeng held that position, expressed a common opinion when he commented on the plays: "You just see a bunch of people running back and forth on the stage. Not a trace of art." In a facetious note, Deng remarked that he did not mind JQ’s producing operas, as long as he did not have to watch them. Deng, at least, was not intimidated by JQ.

At a Beijing Spring Opera Festival in 1964, Mao’s position with regard to artists had hardened: "It is necessary to drive all singers, poets, playwrights, and writers from the cities to the countryside." Plays portraying "ghosts [i.e. gods, or fictions], emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties" were to be banned. The emperors, princes, etc., were to be replaced in artistic presentations by peasants and common people, who were the genuine heroes of the communist world. The goal of artistic creation was to be the glorification of the common man.

This festival was not an annual event, and was apparently organized as an opportunity for JQ to present her new theatrical ideas. Colin Mackerras analyzed this festival: "Possibly the most important sign of the ascendancy of JQ's views was the Festival of Beijing Opera on Contemporary Themes, held in the capital from 5 June to 31 July 1964." JQ was given credit for having "persuaded artists to resist 'counter-revolutionary revisionists' like Peng Zhen, who, it was claimed, wanted them to perform traditional operas." After this festival, "traditional dramas were performed in Beijing only on a few special occasions . . . other cities soon followed Beijing's example." Mackerras attributed the ideas of these operas to JQ, not to Mao or the Maoists.

Twenty-eight opera companies, representing nineteen provinces, cities and regions, presented thirty-seven new operas at this festival. JQ's "maiden speech" was given during this event, but it was not published until three years later, due, she told Witke, to political interference. Beijing Operas were an important influence in the daily lives of the Chinese people. For a number of years thereafter, the model operas represented the only "culture"
available, and they were, as has been indicated, instruments of political indoctrination. Minister of Culture Lu Dingyi, under whose authority the Festival was authorized (at the direction of the Central Committee of the Politburo), commented that "The reform of Beijing Opera is a major event. It is not only a cultural revolution but also a social revolution." Edward Rice, however, questioned Lu's sincerity on this occasion. These comments by a single high-ranking leader, appearing in CCP sources, were taken as the officially approved position and indicated widespread acceptance. But again from an artistic standpoint, the plots of the operas were predictable, and "The model operas spelled the end of the [moral] complexity that modern fiction had shared with the old literati for most of a decade." JQ also authored a book on the topic of these operas.

In an incident that was to become of major importance, Mao found one opera, "Hai Rui's Dismissal," particularly offensive. Wu Han, author of the play, was a vice-mayor of Beijing, although his duties in this capacity were honorary rather than political. Wu was a prominent writer and historian, a professor at Beijing University, and a leading authority on the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). He was one of many Beijing intellectuals who were not in agreement with all of Mao's policies, and was on good terms with Peng Zhen, Beijing's mayor (and was thus allied with Liu Shaoqi). The play was first performed in 1961. It had been gaining in popularity, and was performed in several locations. Ostensibly, it recounted an event in the life of an actual Ming Dynasty official, Hai Rui, who angered the emperor by deciding a case involving land ownership and criminal misconduct of a wealthy landlord in favor of a peasant. Wu's play was interpreted by many, with justification, as a criticism of Mao, who had in 1959 dismissed Peng Dehuai, a popular general and Minister of Defense, for criticizing the policies of the Great Leap Forward. In early 1965, Mao appointed JQ, Yao Wenyuan, and Zhang Chunqiao to prepare a critical review of this play. Yao Wenyuan was a talented communist writer with a reputation for biting sarcasm, and Zhang Chunqiao was at that time a journalist, a
Director of Propaganda, and a high-ranking Party leader in Shanghai. (Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao were both included in the subsequent "Gang of Four.")

The critical review was published in a November, 1965, editorial in the Shanghai Ri Bao, the daily newspaper, and was soon reprinted in the Beijing People's Daily. The play was denounced as containing "monsters and demons," and as being a "poisonous weed." It was to be a theme of the CR that catch phrases and slogans assumed the significance of a religious litany, due to their mind-numbing repetition, and soon monsters, demons and poisonous weeds, although never precisely defined, were found everywhere.

But the lengthy editorial was more than a literary review. It outlined in detail the "political errors" of the play, such as the portrayal of peasants as passive, or illustrating the principle that there was no need for a revolution to achieve justice from a ruling class. Over one hundred further articles, representing both sides of the controversy surrounding the play and its review, were soon to appear. The main points at issue regarded the extent to which the play was to be taken as serious political theory, as the Maoists contended, or as simply an artistic work, to be interpreted on esthetic and academic grounds, as the Liuists advocated. Thus, the play struck at the deep divisions within the two lines of Chinese Communism. The controversy raised public awareness that political considerations would have an increasing impact on their daily lives. The review had fatal consequences for Wu Han, who eventually died of harassment, perhaps a suicide, and his family and supporters.

Some historians regarded this "Hai Rui" incident as the point of origin for the CR.

Because she had been entrusted with the preparation of the important review of "Hai Rui's Dismissal," JQ's stature and influence within the CCP increased. In December, 1964, she served as representative from Shantung Province in a National People's Congress. (Theoretically, this Congress was China's highest governing authority, but in fact it merely endorsed the decisions of the CCP leadership.) Her "official" political credentials were becoming established. She developed contacts within the military, and
with People's Liberation Army (PLA) help, organized conferences on artistic topics from 1964 to 1966. Although these forums were centered in Shanghai, they were "followed by a series of national, regional, and local conferences throughout the army." In February, 1966, an unusual alliance was announced. A Forum on "Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces" was held; Lin Biao, head of the PLA and successor to Peng Dehuai as Minister of Defense, asked JQ to preside over this event. The political point of this alliance was to strengthen Mao's position within the PLA by having his wife direct their "cultural efforts!" In his address to this delegation, Lin Biao made Party leadership intentions clear: "Comrade Chiang Ch'ing [JQ] . . . has many opinions, and they are very valuable. You should pay good attention to them and take measures to insure that they are applied ideologically and organizationally." Meisner noted "the curious spectacle of the army, assisted by Mao's wife, JQ, involving itself in the reform of the traditional Beijing opera." Later, in November of 1966, JQ was officially named as a cultural advisor to the PLA. She was fond of emphasizing this new identification by wearing army fatigues, her new "costume."

JQ was asked to write a summary of this February forum. Her words were significantly and carefully chosen, and included the following points:

1 - there was ideological justification for a proposed revolution in culture (referring to Mao's thoughts on culture presented at Yanan);

2 - there had been widespread soldier, worker, and peasant activity in the Socialist Cultural Revolution over the past 3 years;

3 - the PLA was the chief instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat in China, and it must play an important role in the revolution;

4 - the CR must involve both destruction and construction; and
5 - revolutionary and militant art and literary criticism by the masses was to be encouraged.68

For JQ, "art criticism by the masses" meant destruction and elimination of art objects found to be objectionable. This criticism was to be carried out by the armed might and "aesthetic judgment" of the PLA, and it was an ominous sign that culture had thus become linked with military force. "As JQ's power status grew, she became increasingly unscrupulous in her interference in Military affairs."69 This interference extended to recommendations for appointments to higher positions within the PLA, and reflected growing differences between JQ and Lin Biao.

The forum summary was written partially in response to a report, the February Outline, authored by Peng Zhen, who had been chairman of a five-member CR group. This summary was known as "The Jiang Qing Thesis."70 For Mao, the CR was intended to involve political issues, while the February Outline, continuing a point of disagreement arising from the "Hai Rui" controversy, urged that it be kept on an academic level. The February Outline report, and JQ's Thesis, represented "Two diametrically opposed documents," representing the "two lines" of Chinese Communism.71

JQ also co-authored a second May 16th circular, four years after the original May 16th circular of 1962, which further discredited the February Outline report. This was a strongly worded document, beginning "The Central Committee has decided to revoke the 'Outline Report on the Current Academic Discussion Made by the Group of Five in Charge of the Cultural Revolution',' and continued "The outline covers up the serious political nature of the struggle." In intimidating, tough language, it presented detailed attacks on the February Outline, and listed ten theoretical errors committed therein, including accusations that it had violated the Marxist thesis that all class struggles are

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It included an attack on Peng Zhen, but gave a "gross misrepresentation of what had occurred" in the five-member committee under Peng's direction. Misrepresentation and character assassination were to be common techniques of JQ in assaults on opponents. The circular repeated the idea that there was to be "no construction without destruction," and stressed the importance of the PLA. One effect of the circular was to have the five-member committee replaced by a new eighteen-member Cultural Revolution Group. The circular was presented to the Central Committee in August.

In May, as the political events of 1966 unfolded, the eighteen-member Cultural Revolution Group essentially usurped the role of the Politburo and made political decisions for the country. Chen Boda, editor of Red Flag, the Communist Party policy journal, and who also acted as Mao's political secretary and speech writer, was head of this group. JQ was its "first deputy," a title given to emphasize that she was not just an ordinary group member. But Barnouin and Yu stated that JQ had "effectively taken charge" of this group, and that she "humiliated Chen Boda openly" when he criticized her "frequent violent outbursts." The historian Tang Tsou wrote that the transformation of the informal group consisting of JQ, Chen Boda, and their followers prior to the CR into the core of the CR Small Group illustrated the transformation of an informal group into a formal unit. By putting together the ideas that this informal group had become a formal unit, that it had usurped the function of the politburo, and that JQ controlled this group, the conclusion is that at this critical time, May-June, 1966, JQ was the single most influential individual in the Chinese Communist hierarchy. Indeed, there were not always clear lines of command within the Chinese government. JQ's proximity to Mao, together with her increased political prestige, made it difficult for anyone in authority to deny her requests or demands. Did she always speak for Mao? Or, on whose authority did she act? These questions had no answers.
Wang Li was a high-ranking party official, a member of the new eighteen-member Central Cultural Revolution Group, and was frequently given the task of writing official party documents. His detailed account of the early days of the CR, published in English in 1994, made it very clear that JQ had assumed a central position at this time. "She [JQ] called daily meetings of this group" and "represented the Chairman when issuing directives. . . . JQ was not even a Central Committee member, but she was the one who seeded the standing committee members. This was rare in party history." When Chen Boda and Kang Sheng were absent from the meetings of the team drafting the May 16th Circular, "JQ [was] in sole charge." When Deng Xiaopeng was elected to the standing committee by a unanimous vote, JQ reprimanded Chen and Kang: "You all had votes, why did you let Deng get a unanimous vote? What were you doing?" JQ had begun an early campaign to discredit Deng, who was allied with Liu, and was a recognized rival of Mao. She was also at this time continuing to denounce Liu, and was criticizing Chen Boda for giving Liu editorial assistance. Even Kang "was very nervous."77 Wang's article was a complete testament, from a unique vantage point, to the influence that JQ was wielding in the spring of 1966.

On May 25, 1966, Beijing University (known as "Beida") experienced protests against the University president, who was also the head of the University Party Committee. These incidents were initiated by Nie Yuanzi, a member of the Beida Philosophy faculty, and were instigated, according to John Byron and Robert Pack, by Kang Sheng.78 As JQ was a personal acquaintance of Nie Yuanzi, the protests could not have occurred without her prior knowledge and approval. Nie made use of "wall posters," large hand-written signs hung for public display, to attack specific individuals by name. Mao soon gave his approval to these posters. In the confusion occasioned by these events, "Mao's endorsement of the posters electrified Beijing University," and individuals found themselves having to declare their allegiance in what became an escalating
political controversy.\textsuperscript{79} The text of Nie's posters was published on June 2 in \textit{People's Daily} and was headlined "Big Character Poster Exposes Large Conspiracy."\textsuperscript{80} A public mass movement on June 18, designed to embarrass university administrators, turned into a riot. The poster attacks were taken as assaults on all intellectuals who were viewed as opposed to Mao's authority.

Mao's endorsement of the wall poster phenomena was no doubt hastened because the attack came in the intellectual center of Beijing, where he had political opponents of long standing duration. The posters, Mao felt, were a means by which the masses could express concerns, since many of the usual media sources were under the control of his "enemies." "Posters written in big characters are an extremely useful new type of weapon," he noted.\textsuperscript{81} In August, he contributed a wall poster of his own, "Bombard the Headquarters," which meant that people were to question or criticize members of the communist hierarchy whom they viewed as back-sliding. For a Chinese peasant, "headquarters" was the local government official to whom they were immediately responsible. This slogan was an attempt by Mao to enlist the masses in his effort to rid the Party of corrupt local cadres, and was in keeping with his "anti" campaigns of the 1950s.

Wall posters may seem a quaint way of communication, but they were a dramatic and effective means of attracting attention. They gave the appearance of coming spontaneously from "the people" rather than from government sources. Wall posters were a first indication that someone could expect trouble for being accused of being a counter-revolutionary, or a "capitalist roader." They were avidly watched, especially by people fearful of being named, who began to worry about who was for them and who was against them. While the use of wall posters was not new (they had been used in student demonstrations as early as the 1920s), their occurrence became widespread throughout China during the CR.\textsuperscript{82} Wall posters did reveal some scandals, but they were also used to
exaggerate, manufacture, or exploit spurious grievances. The New York Times referred to wall posters as "uniquely Chinese ideological weapons."  

On June 1 of 1966, JQ presented a speech explaining that the purpose of the CR was to "uproot revisionism." Also in June, the PLA took over the People's Daily, and an editorial urged "the masses" to "sweep out all monsters and ghosts," by which was meant bourgeois, capitalist and religious ideas and superstitions. This was the very language of JQ, extended from the field of the arts to the broader political arena, and showed that her influence had expanded beyond the sphere of the arts. As one indication of this trend, older films were removed from public circulation. JQ became Secretary to the Standing Committee of the Politburo in June, even though she was not then a Politburo member. And at Beida on July 22, she gave a radical speech urging that "It is time to overthrow the bourgeois academic clique."  

A letter from Mao to JQ dated July 8, 1966, suggested that she pay attention to the problem that Communist parties world-wide were abandoning Marxism. This indicated that Mao had accepted JQ as a person with whom he could share problems of international political concern. He cautioned her that she should not become "dizzy with success," a reference to the achievements as he saw them at that time, of the CR. He noted that not all of the "rightists" of the party could be overthrown at once -- and added that more ghosts and monsters would be eliminated when more of the movement was launched "after seven or eight years." How little Mao, or anyone, knew then of the consequences of the events that he had initiated.

Another phenomena, the establishment of a "cult of Mao," also arose in the summer of 1966. Lin Biao, head of the PLA, authorized publication and widespread distribution of the book Quotations of Chairman Mao, better known in the West as The Little Red Book. Mao's birthplace was made into a Chinese mecca. It was in contrast to his attempts to keep out of the limelight at this time that Mao allowed this to happen.
It is easy to explain his actions as being motivated by a desire to have his name and prestige promoted and prominent at a time he was about to launch the CR, and this may be true in part. But there was another, subtler, reason that may have been a factor here.

One way in which this cult following was expressed was this:

Long live the great Communist Party of China!
Long live the great leader, Chairman Mao!
Long live the great and invincible Mao Zedong's thought! 

This expression gave prominence to the thought of Mao, as if that was in some way separable from the man himself. It is possible that Mao wished the masses to adhere to his thought, which would in any case outlive Mao the person, and it was to be his revolutionary ideas that were to be the core of the communist expansion into the mental lives of the people. And who, it would be thought by many, understood the thought of Mao better than Madame Mao?
NOTES

1. The most probable year of her birth is 1914. But Edgar Snow, for one, in Red Star Over China (New York, 1938), 459, gave it as 1912. There are numerous discrepancies in the written record of the life of Jiang Qing.


3. Robert S. Elegant, Mao's Great Revolution (New York, 1971), 126. Elegant was head of the Hong Kong office of the Los Angeles Times during the CR.

4. Terrill, Madame, 37.


6. Terrill, Madame, 68.


8. JQ gave the figure of eight months in her interviews with Witke (Comrade, 91); the three month figure is from Terrill (Madame, 60).

9. Who's Who in Communist China (Kowtoon, 1969-70), rev. ed., 2 vols., published by the Union Research Institute (vol. I, p. 133), gave her party membership as beginning in 1940. Terrill (and others) dated her membership from 1933 (Madame, 133). Witke stated that her party membership was discontinuous (Comrade, 154). It is possible that both dates are correct, and that she joined the Party on more than one occasion.

10. Witke, Comrade, 103.

11. Terrill (Madame, 134), and others, suggested that JQ deliberately instigated their meeting, an action completely in accord with her character.

12. Byron, 149. Other Communist sympathizers who had previously been imprisoned by the GMD were also suspected of having cooperated with GMD authorities.
13. Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way* (Berkeley, 1972), 108. Rice did not explain why Mao needed party permission for this marriage. Terrill suggested that in Yanan the Party began to act like "a family head in feudal China" (*Madame*, 150), and so it would have some control over the personal lives of Party members.


15. 1938 is the most commonly accepted year of the marriage, although it is variously given as 1939 and 1940. *Who's Who in Communist China*, vol. 1, p. 133, stated only that she "became Mao's mistress" in 1940.


20. Ibid., 13, 35.

21. Ibid., 3.


23. Ibid., 192-97.


26. Rice, 204.

27. Li, 141.

28. Ibid., 199-200.


32. Hollingworth, 109, 110.


34. Ibid., 317.

35. An Tai Sung, xi. This is a partial list of the features of "revisionism" as supplied by An.


38. Karnow, 169.


40. Elegant, 123.


42. Witke, *Comrade*, 390.


45. Hegel, 220.


47. Byron, 265.

48. Hegel, 220.
49. This list of eight original model operas was given by Bell Yung, "Model Opera as Model: From Shajiabang to Sagabong," McDougall, 147. Jianhua (Joe) He, "A Historical Study of the Eight Revolutionary Model Operas in China's Great Cultural Revolution," Master's Thesis (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1992), gave a slightly different list. Witke (Comrade, 302) included a series of sculptures, "The Rent Collection Courtyard," in place of the symphonic version of "Shajiabang." Often, a second musical work, "Yellow River Piano Concerto," was included in these works. Tillman Durdin referred to "ten staples of those operas, all of which . . . were created long before the Cultural Revolution, but underwent extensive revision under the supervision of Chiang Ch'ing," New York Times, Report From China (New York, 1971), 326.

50. Han Suyin, Wind in the Tower (Boston, 1976), 239.


52. Terrill, Madame, 249. Terrill gives no reference for this quote.

53. Hollingworth, 117. No source given.


56. Witke, Comrade, 309.


58. Rice, 205.


61. Elegant, 93.


63. James Reeve Pusey, Wu Han: Attacking the Present through the Past (Cambridge, 1969), 50. Pusey mentioned that the PLA publication Liberation Army Daily did not print any articles in Wu Han's defense, indicating a PLA allegiance to Mao at this time (p. 49).


66. Asia Research Centre, 99.


68. Asia Research Centre, 101-10.


71. Ahn, 201.


73. Rice, 241. Roxane Witke suggested that since Rice had no access to Mao, or any of Mao's documents, letters, or records, and relied entirely on reports of Western 'China watchers" for his information, that his overall objectivity is suspect. "More Deluge in Mao's Way," *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXXIII (November, 1973), 99.


77. Wang Li, "Memoirs of a Year and Two Months," *Chinese Law and Government*, 27 (November-December, 1994), 8-16. Wang was one of two emissaries from Beijing who were held hostage in the Wuhan uprising of July, 1967.

78. Byron, 300.


80. Byron, 303.

81. Asia Research Centre, 308.
82. Byron, 300n.


85. Witke, Comrade, xx.

86. Edwin P. Hoyt, The Rise of the Chinese Republic (New York, 1989), 292. Hoyt had been a foreign correspondent in China in the 1940s, and so was viewing the events of the CR from a distance.

87. (No ed. or trans.), "Mao Tse-Tung's Private Letter to Chiang Ch'ing (July 8, 1966)". Chinese Law and Government, VI (Summer, 1973), 96-100, citing Issues and Studies, IX (#4, January, 1973, 94-96). The letter was released by the Central Committee for use in the campaign against Lin Biao.

88. Asia Research Centre, 230, citing People's Daily, the CCP official Beijing newspaper, July 1, 1966
CHAPTER 2

JIANG QING ON STAGE

Center Stage: 1966-68

As the CR began, JQ had taken on a political importance of her own. She was also becoming important to others as a conduit to Mao. The historical record of China of this period presents Mao as such a dominate political leader that it is easy to regard JQ as "merely" Mao's wife. Mao, so the story that we have been conditioned to believe goes, was the political leader and controller of China's destiny. Having been indoctrinated with that scenario, it is not easy to accept the possibility that at critical points in reaching that destiny, it was "Mao's wife," not Mao, who was making political decisions. As China entered the years of the CR, officials showed less concern with "leading the country" and more concern with personal survival. Policy decisions were replaced by personnel decisions. It is the position of this thesis that JQ made these decisions for the "radical" clique in this period, and that she was a spokesperson for Mao when Mao was declining to speak for himself.

On August 8, 1966, the pieces were in place. At the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth CCP Central Committee, a program referred to as "The Sixteen Points" was adopted, and the CR became official policy. To distinguish this program from cultural efforts that had preceded it, and to give it an exclamation point, it was called "The Great
Proletarian Cultural Revolution." Important features of this program decreed that it would "touch people's souls," that "courageous and daring pathbreakers" would carry out the aims of the revolution (these daring pathbreakers would be the notorious Red Guards), and that old ideas, culture, customs and habits would be changed. Productive segments of the economy (that is, industry and agriculture), as well as PLA members, and scientists, were to be exempted from disruption by the revolution.\(^1\) Maurice Meisner, the noted Mao scholar, referred to the Sixteen Points of August, 1966, as "the charter" of the CR.\(^2\)

In the revolving door of the Chinese political hierarchy, Liu Shaoqi was out as Mao's chosen successor after this session. He remained virtually powerless until his death in 1969. Mao had at first advocated moderation in dealing with Liu, while JQ had advocated extremism and his removal: "The Chairman's original intention was only to demote Liu at the Eleventh Plenary Session." When Liu made a self-criticism that Mao thought was very good, JQ objected to it, called it "terrible," and Liu had to continue with his "confession." Later, Mao added "If they [Lin Biao, Jiang Qing, and Chen Boda] want to overthrow [Liu], then let them do it!"\(^3\) Professor S. K. Ghosh wrote "It was she who was mainly responsible for harassing and humiliating the former Head of State, Liu Shaoqi, and the former Party Secretary, Deng Xiaoping, and it was at her insistence that Liu Shaoqi and Marshals He Long and Peng Dehuai were persecuted."\(^4\) In the matter of Liu Shaoqi, JQ's view prevailed.

Another point of disagreement between Mao and JQ also came after the Eleventh Session. At a joint meeting of the Standing Committee and the Cultural Revolution Group members called by Mao, "The Chairman instructed the session to criticize Liu Shaoqi. Lin Biao and JQ were both of the opinion that Liu was not the chief threat, but that the chief threat was Deng [Xiaoping] . . . therefore, they ignored the Chairman's instructions and lined up people to criticize Deng." Deng, "forced to hand over his work" to Kang Sheng,
told Kang "I can no longer carry on." This was not an isolated attack on Deng. JQ "led a campaign to get Deng Xiaoping expelled from the CCP, as being a capitalist roader and enemy of the people." The result of these political maneuverings was that, at the instigation of JQ and Lin Biao, both Liu and Deng lost their influence. As an indication of Mao's growing inaccessibility, he was not at this meeting.

Wang Li stated that JQ was also opposed to Zhou Enlai as early as September, 1966, when she was "ready to get the Premier," and "Jiang Qing's machinations put the Premier in an obviously difficult position." As an example of these machinations, "After the central work conference [in October, 1966] Jiang Qing ousted Wang Renzhong and Zhou Rongxin by uttering only one comment . . . Zhou Rongxin was the Premier's chief aide in handling the Red Guards. He was abruptly ousted to hurt the Premier. . . . The Premier later told me: 'This event more than any other put me in a defensive position.'"

Wang revealed the existence of yet another governmental agency in which JQ was wielding influence. "The Central Case Examination Group" was parallel with the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and evaluated conduct of party members. "JQ asked Kang Sheng to suggest to the chairman the setting up of special case investigations on Liu, Deng, and Tao [Tao Zhu, an ally of Liu Shaoqi and Head of a Propaganda Department]. Mao protested: 'It can't be done. They are all standing committee members elected by the Eleventh Party Plenary Session of the Central Committee.' JQ's reply: 'We'll do it nevertheless. We'll include them all in Peng's [Peng Zhen] case.'" JQ "repeatedly stressed; 'I will be in charge of the cases and will be directly accountable to the Chairman.'"

Wang's entire report, written from the perspective of a high government insider and participant in these events, reflected a major concern with JQ and her activities during this period. The incidental way in which he recorded her actions indicated that they were not unusual. There was a general acceptance of JQ's political role, and a deference to her opinion. Later, on May 1, 1967, for instance, "the Premier ordered that day's Renmin
rihao [People's Daily] recalled and reprinted." The reason was to put the names of the Cultural Revolution Group members above those of the Central Committee members; "the Premier had misgivings about JQ making a big deal about it after the paper came out. JQ's position then was already above that of the Politburo and secretariat."^9

During these early days of the CR, JQ was already at work undermining Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Zhou Enlai. Her supporters included Lin Biao (head of the PLA), Chen Boda (Mao's secretary), Kang Sheng, Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao and of course Mao himself.

The revolution envisioned by JQ and her group was to be no small revision, or passing fad for the arts. It was to be a wholesale program on a national scale to force people to rethink their values and social roles. Mao perceived that the class struggle needed to become sharper in the continuing war between the bourgeoisie and "counter-revolutionaries." Professor An Tai viewed the CR as a "spiritual" movement, designed to mold Chinese Communism into Mao's image of Communism as perpetual, total struggle.10

In a broad sense, "culture" involved "education," and culture was to be the tool by which the masses would be re-educated. This revolution did not involve education in the traditional sense, as schools were closed in June of 1966. (The original temporary suspension of schools was extended to a period of four years.) Nor was this re-education to be an easy, painless, process. It was to involve more than government propaganda campaigns, and more than simple, individual brainwashing. It was to be a way in which people would be forced to look within themselves for self-criticism, and to rely upon group support to discover correct ways of thinking. Old thought patterns were to be abandoned; the psychology of self-interest, and its political manifestation in capitalism, had truly to be rejected.

This was to be a revolution, an idealistic revolution at that, to purge peoples' minds of such "false beliefs" as the primary importance of their own welfare and well-being. The
cultural revolution was to strike at the foundation of human nature, at the very ways people think and believe. The virtues of concern or regard for others, or consideration for the importance of the group, were to be the primary and sole virtues. Robert Elegant described the CR as "history's single most audacious endeavor to transform the essential character of a nation, a society, and hundreds of millions of human beings." Given the Marxist philosophical view of the inevitability of communism on an international level, the CR was designed to transform the thinking of all mankind. Eric Sevareid, an American journalist, grasped this essential feature of the CR when he asked another American journalist, James (Scotty) Reston, "But you don't believe, do you Scotty, that they're going to succeed, by social means, by political means, of changing the nature of the human mind?" This question was posed as an afterthought within the context of a general discussion of Reston's visit to China in 1971, and was given little notice.

The CR is understood to be the creation of Mao Zedong, and to a large extent it was. But this paper will examine the significant and pivotal role played by JQ in this compelling drama. Who, but a person experienced in the craft of the theater, could evoke the emotions of the masses (a captive national audience existing beyond the artificial constraints of spectators in a theater), and stir them to action on the world's stage? Who had experience in the arts, and knew the communist principles to be applied there? Who desired the center of the stage, and the applause of the crowd? JQ was the perfect person for this highly visible role, which exactly fit the character of Lan Ping, the actress. At the precise moment in Chinese history when Mao needed a new weapon to neutralize his political opponents and promote his political agenda, his wife was leading a reform movement in the Chinese performing arts. Culture became of primary significance, and aligned with education. The Cultural Revolution was born, and Madame Mao was ready, experienced, prepared, and eager to act as its spokesperson. Terrill noted that "It was a
coincidence of great importance that JQ was both a specialist in the performing arts and a resurgent figure within the Mao court. But this was no coincidence. JQ had actively and deliberately created the circumstances of this situation, which represented a perfect psychological and historical union between a person and an idea.

One point of the sixteen point agenda was that members of the bourgeoisie were still trying to use old ideas, culture, customs, and habits to corrupt the masses. These four concepts — ideas, culture, customs and habits — which very much define the essence of a nation, became the "four olds." Rejection and elimination of the four olds became rallying points of the early stages of the revolution. The attempt to change a nation in its fundamental character by government edict was to entail resistance, horror, bloodshed, and tragedy. The "Anti-Four Olds" campaign was a far, far different program than, for instance, an economic Five Year Plan.

The "daring pathbreakers" of the Sixteen Point Program proved to be Red Guard (RG) members, who, in the initial stages of the CR, were groups of Chinese youths, many of them students, organized by Mao. From August through November of 1966, between 11 and 13 million Chinese youths came to Beijing for a series of eight rallies. The London Times reported JQ's presence at the opening of one of these rallies, and noted that she "has recently emerged from years out of the news to play an important part in the CR." These youths were to form the core of the RG movement. They were a paramilitary force used by JQ, and the early years of the CR were characterized by the actions of these RG groups. The Sixteen Point Program was ambiguous both in defining the extent to which "the masses," who were essentially these RG units, would be permitted to use violence to enforce the new views, and in a vague distinction between "good" and "bad" party members. These ambiguities allowed for differing interpretations of the program's intent, and RG units soon engaged in government sanctioned rampages against "bad" elements. The slogan "destruction before construction," which had been revived at the Eleventh
Session, suggested that violence by the RGs would be tolerated, and RG groups were quick to react to this suggestion.

JQ was now speaking with political authority. She, and others of the CR leaders, warned these RGs of a "stormy class struggle," and of the need to eradicate "the four olds." RGs were urged to question parental and pedagogical authority, and "drag out capitalist readers." They were told to carry out a process of struggle-criticism-transformation, which bore an analogy to a individualized version of Marx's thesis-antithesis-synthesis triad. In practice, this process became one of coercion and intimidation. The American historian Edward Rice spoke of this period as "The Unleashing of Madam Mao," although if the premise of this thesis is correct, she needed no unleashing. Rice confirmed that at this time "she appeared to have become the de facto leader of the Cultural Revolution Group," and that "it was the purge aspects of the CR that were uppermost in her mind."^{15}

Persons purged included lower ranking cadres as well as members of the CCP upper hierarchy. But the effects of the destructive phase of the CR were felt through all of Chinese society. Any person, on any whim, could be targeted, harassed, and "criticized." In the apt phraseology of Jonathan Spence, persons could be subject to "allegations of unspecified crimes committed at unspecified times."^{16} Franklin W. Houn, born and educated in China, was a member of the Chinese GMD government from 1946 to 1948, and in the 1960s was a Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts. He was in a position to see China through Chinese eyes without fear of government censorship or reprisals. Houn reported that thought reform had been a well-established aspect of Chinese education under communism, and typically consisted of three phases: 1 - group identification, 2 - personal and emotional self-criticism and confession, and 3 - denunciation of one's reactionary or bourgeoisie father, and rebirth into the new communist order.^{17} The organized "struggle meetings" that took place in the CR were a
phenomena that expanded and brutalized this procedure. These meetings were forms of kangaroo courts designed to humiliate and elicit confessions.

Officially, JQ was one person in authority over RG groups, and her use of these units was at times particularly effective. Her theatrical abilities enabled her to arouse their passions and motivate them to action against targets deemed objectionable. By convincing them that they, the common people, were the real heroes of life, she provided government sanction for them to act as judge, jury, and executioner. Karkow reported that "[JQ] carried enormous weight with the radicals," and "the young radicals admired JQ."18 One RG member wrote that "Although JQ was nominally advisor to the Red Guards, we did not think much of her at all," but this seemed to be an isolated opinion.19 The New York Times reported that "The stenographic record of CR rallies, carried by RG papers, suggest that these leaders show an almost obsequious deference to Miss Chiang."20 There was no central, coordinated control of the diverse RG organizations, and local RG groups functioned very much autonomously. But the authority under which RGs operated rested in the government headed by Mao, and the voice of that government was that of JQ. While she could not have directed or been aware of all their actions in detail, she praised the RGs "in their search of bourgeois cultural remnants," and commended them, "you have done an excellent job."21

"Scholars had supposed that young people almost arbitrarily joined one or another of the RG factions," wrote Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen, and Jonathan Unger. These writers rejected this supposition, and argued that choices of joining a RG unit "were more theoretically based in antagonisms over class issues, in high schools preceding the CR."22 They traced RG membership to such issues as class tensions, and the lack of future opportunities. But RG groups were complex and diverse; one Cantonese worker estimated that there had been eighty-five separate RG organizations in his factory, and that
"the situation appeared as confusing to the Chinese as it did to the outside world."\textsuperscript{23} Peggy Durdin, in *The New York Times Magazine*, reported that there were from "two to twenty RG groups in each school, office, and factory."\textsuperscript{24} In view of this complexity, it is doubtful that any choice of a RG unit was simply motivated.

The government, under the guise of promoting revolution, had many RG members sent to work in the countryside. There, they were isolated and essentially imprisoned. Forgotten by the government they believed they had served, they too became victims, as real as those they had victimized.

Although no reliable figures on the number of persons victimized during the CR will ever be available, the numbers are so large as to lose meaning. Rodzinski estimated that "A total of 729,000 people were 'framed and persecuted,' of whom 34,900 were 'persecuted to death.'"\textsuperscript{25} Hoyt stated in even more general terms that "Before the CR ended, 500 million people, or three-quarters of the people of China, were sorely hurt and millions were killed."\textsuperscript{26} Accounts published later of personal hardships endured during this time are called the "scar literature."

JQ had more than an advisory role as the early events of the CR unfolded. In October, for instance, Zhou Enlai prohibited RG units in Beijing from going to Tibet. The Chinese military "representative" in Tibet was General Zhang Guohua, who was allowing local RG units there to proceed with the destruction of the "four olds," but he was apparently unhappy when they began to "bombard the headquarters," when those headquarters were his own. JQ, however, authorized five youth groups to go there, apparently with the purpose of forcing Zhang to be more loyal to Mao. When Zhou ordered these units back to Beijing, JQ granted permission for them to stay, and JQ's orders prevailed. She was not beneath enforcing her views in the face of the highest opposition.\textsuperscript{27} Zhou Enlai was a voice of the "moderates" throughout the CR, a position which put him in opposition to JQ and other "radicals."
JQ's rise in the CCP hierarchy paralleled to some extent that of her friend, Kang Sheng, who was noted as having risen from 16th in line at the beginning of 1966 to 7th by August of that year. Kang had held a number of key intelligence positions throughout his career, but preferred a background role of "advisor" to Mao. These positions included heads of a "Social Affairs Department," which overlooked internal security issues and gave him control of secret service personnel, and of an "International Liaison Department," which coordinated business with Communist organizations in other countries, and controlled various police, security, espionage, and special agent groups. His underlings were reportedly among the worse offenders of cadres exhibiting high life styles and bourgeoisie tendencies. It is not clear to what extent they were targeted during the revolution. He had the reputation of being Mao's "hatchet man," was thought of as China's version of Russia's Beria, and was regarded as being ruthless and brutal. Much of Mao's authority, Byron and Pack suggested, was due to the little publicized role of Kang's strong-arm tactics. "It was Kang who ultimately decided the fate of most of the high cadres hauled from their offices by the Red Guards."  

In November of 1966, with the CR well under way, JQ's appointment as cultural advisor to the PLA was confirmed. In commenting on this role, Xie Tang Zhong, a high-ranking official in the PLA cultural department, remarked that "Her appointment is an important decision for strengthening the revolutionisation of our army's cultural work and for making it more militant." On this occasion, Time magazine used stronger language: "She is now the deputy director of the CR's subcommittee and the sole advisor to the PLA's purge group." This appointment was more than simply honorary, as it gave JQ censorship control of the arts and the enforcement authority of the PLA. 

JQ used this occasion to make a speech which summarized many of the developments in the progress of the CR. She mentioned her convalescence period of the late 1950s as a time when she noticed "unacceptable ideas" in the theater, and formed the
idea of merging culture and politics. She referred to "criminals" of the Ministry of Culture (who were the allies of Liu Shaoqi, but in the political style of the time, they were unnamed, so that everyone would worry), and emphasized the purgative aspects of the arts. Her rhetorical questions regarding the necessity of rejecting classical art forms that did not fit socialist ideological content was met with responses of "Yes! Yes!" from the audience. There were again reminders that Mao had provided a philosophical justification for this transformation in culture in his Yanan essay of 1942, when he said that "There is no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes or art that is detached from or independent of politics," and that the criterion by which to judge works of art lay in the effects they had "on the masses in society." 32 "Hai Rui's Dismissal" was mentioned with disdain, and her model operas were extolled. At the end of her speech, she added that "the struggle had to be conducted by reasoning and not by coercion or force. There must be no beating of people." 33

But it was much too late for this much too little disclaimer. The admonition to avoid violence, which was already well under way, was not taken seriously, as perpetrators of violence were not punished. JQ's rhetoric here paralleled the ambivalence toward the use of violence that was present in the sixteen point directive of the Central Committee of the previous August. Had Mao or JQ been serious about curtailing RG violence, the PLA would have been ordered to end it.

As an indicator of American perceptions of JQ at this time, Stuart Schram, writing about this speech soon after it was given, called it "an obvious and depressing example of a raucous and spiteful person enjoying her hour of triumph over the party authorities who have so long slighted her and frustrated her ambitions." But a few pages later, Schram was referring to JQ as "gentle and retiring." 34 Karnow, too, noted the "increasing prominence of JQ" during this period, but saw her speechmaking role as one designed only "to whip up radical enthusiasm." 35
November 1966 was also the time when control of the Beijing arts groups was transferred to a branch of the PLA. It was reported in the London Times that the PLA had "taken over" the Beijing Opera companies, the Philharmonic orchestra, and the song and dance ensemble "as a prelude to a new 'general offensive' against dissidents in literature and the art."\textsuperscript{36} Witke commented that this was comparable to the Pentagon being put in charge of the Metropolitan Opera Company.\textsuperscript{37} But this abstract comparison was not appropriate in the context of the political scene of China, where culture, politics, and military force were not so clearly delineated. The importance of culture in the military had a historical basis for the communists. At Yanan, the survivors of the Long March were military people, and theatrical productions there had a core of army members. "Every army had its own dramatic group," reported Edgar Snow.\textsuperscript{38}

In late November, Mao went on a trip to the Shanghai area and "JQ took the center of the stage almost immediately after Mao's departure from Beijing."\textsuperscript{39} Hollingworth added that in Mao's absence "JQ, acting on his orders, assumed a leading role in the public direction of the CR."\textsuperscript{40} Mao was in fact and in theory Chairman of the CCP, but he was leaving day-to-day operation of the Party, and hence the government, and hence the country, to others, and specifically to JQ.

Although the Beijing Communist Party Committee members had already been removed from office, many of these leaders, including Peng Zhen, were arrested on December 3. These leaders included men "who had dominated the stage and screen world of Communist China," and were political opponents of Mao. They were to be struggled against, denounced, and humiliated. Mao did not return to Beijing until early January, 1967. Rice's account of the nearly six-week period of Mao's absence included a virtual day-by-day chronology of JQ's activity in directing RG actions, which included the first struggle meeting of Liu's wife, Wang Guangmei.\textsuperscript{41} JQ's animosity toward Wang Guangmei was particularly intense. Wang was from a wealthy and sophisticated family,
had appeared "on stage" at Tiananmen Square at the founding of the PRC in October of 1949, and was in many ways the person that JQ aspired to be.

In December of 1966, JQ convened a forum, ostensibly for the purpose of curtailing Red Guard attacks. But the result of the forum was to allow RG units to enter into agricultural and manufacturing sectors of society, in violation of the original sixteen point program of the previous August. JQ and Chen Boda both urged seizure of the CCP's main labor organization, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions. Kamow attributed these orders to "the Maoists," not Mao himself. The policies were those of Mao, but Mao was adopting a less visible role in their advocacy. As the CR progressed, it was JQ who was the more visible spokesperson of the Maoist views.

Some workers, having for years been ill-treated and neglected by their local work unit cadres, took advantage of the tumultuous times to present their grievances. JQ publicly received the petitions of a group of workers on December 25, 1966. She belittled Xi Zhanyuan, a vice-minister of labor and the subject of these grievances: "The Ministry of Labor is simply a Ministry of Lords," she charged, bursting into tears (undoubtedly for dramatic effect) at governmental indifference to the workers' plight.

In January of 1967, a group of radical students from Beijing took control of Shanghai radio and TV stations and denounced "economism," a term which referred to activities such as offering workers economic and material incentives for increased productivity, work slowdowns, and payoffs to workers for support against invading RGs. Economism in this sense was seen as an appeal to short-term individual interests, rather than long-term group goals, and so was contrary to the new thinking of the CR. Normal urban activities in Shanghai ceased: utility services were disrupted, transportation was halted, factory production ended and a "new" government was created by the RG leaders. General chaos resulted. After earlier praising these leaders for their accomplishments in ousting the established cadres, Mao had to admonish them for advocating what amounted
to anarchism when events of the revolution became uncontrollable. This was one indication that Mao was attempting to distance himself from excesses of the CR, while of course continuing to reap political benefits. And on January 23, 1967, the PLA was authorized to support the Maoist rebel groups. "Army intervention in the CR was the major factor in shifting the balance of power in China's internal power struggle... in favor of the Maoist leftists."

Mao is often quoted as having said that a revolution is not a picnic. The CR was to be no exception to this rule. Victims and casualties, even numbering in the hundreds of thousands, had to be expected, as in any revolution. JQ told Witke: "the battles were not good of themselves because they engendered loss of life and property. But at the same time they clarified contradictions between classes and promoted ideological and cultural transformations that were beneficial in the long run." She was not the first political leader to use ends to justify means. Even Mao himself was not completely happy with JQ's activity. On February 10, 1967, at a meeting of the Standing Committee, he "severely reprimanded" Chen Boda, and then JQ: "You, JQ, have high-flown aims but little ability. You're ambitious but incompetent. You look down on everyone else." JQ diverted this attack "entirely onto Chen," and to such a degree that "Kang Sheng claimed, 'She's forcing Boda to the verge of suicide." Later, she "pointed at Chen's nose and challenged "Go ahead and commit suicide. Go ahead! You'll be expelled from the party and called a traitor. Do you have the courage to commit suicide?" This was her attitude toward Chen, who, it will be recalled, was one of her allies. Wang added, in characteristic Chinese understatement, that the Cultural Revolution Group "was certainly not a solid bloc." The transactions of some of these meetings illustrated Terrill's observation that "personal grudges made playthings of policy issues." JQ's grudges, and the strength of her personality, affected Chinese politics for ten years.
On April 4, JQ addressed student activists in Beijing, and explained that it was the duty of the PLA to support radical factions. She repeated this message on April 10 to the Military Affairs Committee, China's highest Army Council. These were attempts to restore peace between warring PLA and RG units. Kamow also quoted JQ as saying in April 1967: "There cannot be peaceful coexistence in the ideological realm. Peaceful coexistence corrupts." This phraseology went beyond the usual political rhetoric and exhortations ascribed to JQ. Here, she was uttering political and philosophical theory, albeit theory of an easy, general nature. Perhaps these words were those of Yao Wenyuan, the gifted writer who had collaborated with her in composing the initial critique of Wu Han.

These speeches were more than just occasions for JQ to encourage RG forces to continue their course of "re-education." They presented situations in which she could announce policy. "During the 1st and 2nd quarter of 1967, the radical faction led by JQ had been dominant in the Maoist policy-making council in Beijing." JQ's speeches carried the full weight of the Politburo, of which she was a determining factor. In May, she presided over a Beijing rally commemorating the 25th anniversary of Mao's Yanan talks.

Also in May, 1967, a meeting was held in Beijing to appoint General Zhang Guohua, the military commander in Tibet, as head of a Revolutionary Committee governing neighboring Sichuan Province. Kamow recorded that JQ advised Zhang that the army's role there was to "minimize internal strife," which meant, in this context, that Zhang was to unify elements sympathetic to Mao and "subdue" his opponents. Zhang's loyalties may have been suspect, since he came, like Deng Xiaoping, from that province. At a later conference on Sichuan, in March, 1968, JQ accused General Zhang "mercilessly" of having failed to properly promote the CR there, and asserted that "We don't know where your sympathies lie." Kamow's comments revealed both that JQ was
a regular participant in meetings of this sort, and that she was not a silent participant. And she did not hesitate to berate generals for political shortcomings.

In recorded accounts of this period, fewer and fewer pronouncements of Mao are found, and more and more proclamations of "Maoists," who were JQ and her "clique." Elegant, however, overstated the case when he claimed that "the Chairman had not made a single public statement during the entire revolution."52

In a speech on April 13, JQ revealed that she had acted as "a roving sentinel for Mao, observing events in culture, education, and international affairs."53 In this way, JQ was also gaining experience and knowledge for herself. At a July 22 RG rally, she repeated the token advice that RGs were to attack by words, but defend by force.54 As RG rampages were widespread at this time, her feeble advice for them to "defend by force" was just more rhetorical camouflage similar to the way government officials refer to military forces as being based in a "Ministry of Defense."

A more serious point of difference between JQ and Mao arose in June of this year. Wang reported that Mao was opposed to the use of force in the CR: "Ever since seizure of power broke out, he [Mao] had ceaselessly opposed armed struggle, assault, and looting. . . . The Chairman also opposed 'kangaroo courts;' he instructed members of the Cultural Revolution Group to investigate and dissolve all such courts wherever they were found and to release all victims." Much of this talk was apparently simple political verbiage, as kangaroo courts continued and victims were not released. But in June, even Mao's rhetoric changed. "If the Chairman had held on to this idea [of minimizing violence], the CR would not have had such serious repercussions. The fact was that he later began to think about it from another side."55 Wang did not add the obvious conclusion that it was on JQ's advice that Mao thought about the other side.

The most notable example of PLA reaction to RG actions occurred in the city of Wuhan in July of this year, 1967. In this incident, local PLA forces refused to yield to RG
demands, and their resistance led to armed conflict and bloodshed. JQ used this incident to blame army elements for CR failures, thereby allowing army cadres to become targets of RG sanctions.\textsuperscript{56} Byron and Peck wrote that Lin Biao actually had limited authority in controlling the vast PLA, and that "tough provincial commanders," reacting to events at local levels, were able to put down RG activities. On July 25, with Mao again absent from Beijing, JQ and Kang Sheng, during a Tiananmen Square RG rally, instructed RG leaders to "drag out capitalist roaders and counter-revolutionaries in the army" and to spread this information as coming from Mao (but in fact Mao did not approve of RG assaults on the PLA).\textsuperscript{57} In this instance, the radicals adopted belligerent and inflammatory language: arms were to be used to defend the CR with "life and blood." With regard to the interpretation of this language, "Nobody encouraged the revival of violence more openly than did Mao's wife, Jiang Qing."\textsuperscript{58} The alliance of JQ and Lin Biao through the PLA, while perhaps never firm, had proved to be short lived. Hoyt attributed more grandiose aspirations to this pair: "What Mao did not know was that his wife and Lin Biao . . . had decided to take power in China."\textsuperscript{59}

In August, JQ and Lin Biao initiated attacks on cadres of the Foreign Ministry, designed "to embarrass the Chinese government with foreign powers."\textsuperscript{60} A former RG member identified by Butterfield as "Lo" was later accused of being a member of an ultra-radical group that took over this ministry. Lo claimed that "his group followed direct orders from JQ."\textsuperscript{61} The purpose of these attacks would be puzzling until it is realized that Zhou Enlai had assumed responsibility for this Ministry the previous April. Foreign relations had been "paralyzed" (Karnow's word) throughout the CR, and these attacks were designed to reduce further Zhou's authority and prestige. The attacks expanded to include assaults on "diplomats of almost every foreign mission" in Beijing, and included

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the burning of the British embassy. The Chinese government, in an effort to regain loss of international prestige arising from these incidents, later tried and imprisoned at least one Chinese diplomat for these actions.

In early August, JQ "denounced the 5/16 (May 16th) group," presumably a semi-secret terrorist organization which was alleged to have instigated this burning, and was believed by some to be under the control of Lin Biao. This speech illustrated as well that JQ had no reticence about publicly criticizing Lin, although they were still included together as part of "the radical faction." JQ, Chen Boda, and Kang Sheng all spoke at a Beijing Municipal Party Committee meeting on September 1, and continued to blame the 5/16 clique for counter-revolutionary activity. At this time, Zhou Enlai denied the importance of this group; "Don't magnify the question of the May 16th elements. It's not a big problem, only a question of some bad leaders."

On September 5, JQ made an important speech, representing Mao's views to a large meeting of delegates from Anhui province. She explained that her speech was given extemporaneously, claiming that Kang Sheng had dragged her there at the last moment. If that was true, the speech testified to JQ's ability to speak at length and on short notice on issues of the CR. The record of the speech showed that she was interrupted at one time by comments from Yao Wenyuan, who was also in attendance. In this speech, JQ claimed that she was opposed to armed struggle, and again attacked the May 16th clique, which she linked to spies of the United States, Russia, and even Chiang Kai-Shek. She urged the RGs to show some respect to the PLA, a view which may have been a reflection of Mao's realization that the violence of the RGs was not producing beneficial results. This speech came at a time when the PLA was beginning to take an active role in suppressing RG excesses. Further major speeches followed on September 14 and 15, to new propaganda teams of workers and soldiers, and in which she made some attempts to tone down CR violence and blame what violence there was on Chen Boda.
A speech at a Beijing forum on literature and art in November provided a revealing insight into JQ's thinking. There, she spoke ominously of "accounts must be settled for the fifty days, for the seventeen years, and for the nineteen thirties as well." These accounts were for actions performed by Liu Shaoqi from May to July, 1966, when Liu sent CR work teams to Universities, and which teams she viewed as having protected "dissident elements." The accounts to be settled also included transgressions of Mao's opponents for the entire period from 1949 to 1966, and even back to the 1930s, during the early years of struggle within the Party and against the forces of the GMD. Revenge against real or imagined wrongs of the past was a motive for many of JQ's vindictive actions. Xia Yan, a former boss of hers in Shanghai, and other Shanghai filmmakers, were humiliated and struggled against. Xia had once given a role that she (as Lan Ping) wanted to someone else. These men were accused, thirty years later, of political deviations "recently uncovered." JQ's memory of past grievances was long, indeed.

In promoting idealistic aspects of the CR, JQ emphasized self-criticism, and an inward struggle to purify thought. "We are prosecuting two revolutions . . . one to reform the objective world and one to reform the subjective world. . . . Only when power is thoroughly seized from the Ego in the mind will it be possible to insure a complete victory in the struggle to seize power from the power holders who take the capitalist road." This was a reaffirmation of the idea that the CR was to be based on a complete revolution in human thinking, and that human minds had to be purged of thoughts of self-interest.

A second issue emphasized by JQ during the CR was the idea that people learn to do by doing. This was a repetition of one of Mao's themes, which was phrased as "we learn to swim by swimming." Given the future goal of a pure communist society, it may not be clear what steps will lead to that goal. So the CR became in some respects an experimentation with different means to attain that end; it was of no consequence that innocent people, or hundreds of thousands of innocent people, suffered in the process of
reaching this higher good. The CR was the result of uniting this particular type of political single-minded thinking with an artistic and cultural emphasis.

There was a sense at this time that no one was in control in China. Elegant, speaking of the formal government, wrote that "China entered the winter of 1967-68 devoid of even the pretense of a functioning central authority," and that "central power had been virtually destroyed in China by April, 1969. The Communist Party had been shattered, and the People's Government was the gaping facade of a gutted edifice." An Tai Sung stated that for the years 1967-72, "the PLA was running China," so that some semblance of order was maintained.

Meanwhile, JQ continued to make speeches. In January, 1968, she, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Yao Wenyuan and Zhou Enlai addressed an "important seminar" held for representatives from Hunan Province, which was designed to establish a Hunan Provincial Revolutionary Committee. Zhou was a master of diplomacy, and maintained his difficult position throughout this chaotic time. On March 27, JQ addressed PLA cadres. Ostensibly, she was to explain "the process of recognizing double-dealers," but her speech was another attack on "traitors," who were this time the leaders of the "February Adverse Current." This was the five-member CR Group which had been headed by Peng Zhen. In the May Day celebration in Beijing, she was observed as being "in the 9th leadership position, up from 19th in October of 1967." It was in 1968 that the popular slogan "learn from Jiang Qing" appeared throughout China. She was accepted as a political authority by the Chinese people, and it was in 1968 that she reached the peak of her public prominence.

Karnow wrote that JQ had become disenchanted with the course of the CR in early 1968, and indeed she made few public speeches advocating CR reforms after that time. Perhaps the political fervor of the movement had simple burned out, although the CR was
far from over, and RG and PLA units continued their numerous violent encounters. But on July 27, Mao, tearfully, it is reported, "in an attempt to destroy the monster he had invented, repudiated the Red Guards," because they had failed to unite and their persistent fighting was ruining the country. 76

JQ's declining enthusiasm with the CR may have coincided with Mao's own. But while her speechmaking diminished, her political activity did not. Vice Premier Li Fu-Chang, who was aligned with Zhou Enlai, was one object of attack. After this confrontation, JQ had "scored a victory," and she "soon began to appear on public occasions in the fifth place that Li Fu-chang had previously occupied." On June 24, Nie Changzhen, another vice premier and Chairman of the Scientific and Technological Commission, was attacked in a wall poster written by JQ's daughter, Li Min. 77 Nie was aligned with Beijing mayor Peng Zhen, and a friend of Fan Jin, who had replaced JQ as Yu Qiwei's lover in the 1930s.

On September 6 of 1968, the People's Daily declared a "decisive nationwide victory" in the CR. Indeed, early Western accounts of the CR contained such phrases as "by the time the CR began winding down in 1968." 78 For these writers, the period of the CR was 1966-68. But in April of 1969, at the Ninth Party Congress, when Madame Mao was appointed to the Politburo, the themes of the CR were adopted as continuing national policy, and later historians dated the end of the CR with Mao's death in 1976. The day after her Politburo appointment, JQ made an impromptu speech at a rally celebrating formation of provincial revolutionary committees throughout China, in which she commended the RGs, urged workers not to repress them, and added "I am saying this on Chairman Mao's authority." 79

Under JQ's direction, the effects of the CR were felt across all aspects of Chinese society. Richard Kraus commented that established artists, not yet adjusted to the new political realities, found it easier to remain idle during this period rather than to run the
risk of facing political disfavor. The effect on academic thinking and research was equally stifling. At the time of the subsequent trials of the Gang of Four, it was mentioned that the study of city planning ceased, as it "served the urban landlords," and the studies of finance, banking and accounting were tainted as "putting money first; ... research in our Institute of Economics was disrupted for more than a decade and the enthusiasm of our comrades was greatly dampened. People still fear and tremble." Frederick Wakeman Jr., a prominent Mao scholar, visited China soon after Mao's death. In discussions with representatives of China's Institute of History of the Academy of Social Sciences, he reported one member as saying "Under the domination of Chiang Ch'ing [JQ] and Chung Ch'ung-ch'iao [Zhang Chunqiao] there had been no opportunity for scholarly debate. If Chiang Ch'ing had felt that one particular historical interpretation or fact was correct, then no other viewpoint was tolerated." Wakeman's point was that Chinese historians were subject to political control during the CR, but he incidentally verified that it was JQ who was responsible for that control.

American writer Harrison Salisbury spoke with History Professor Chun Hsi-chang of Fu Dan University in 1976. Chun recalled an incident when "orders came down from the party for research about a 19th century Prime Minister, Li Hung-chang" which was to be used as an attack on Zhou Enlai. It had to be written "according to the new formula laid down by Miss Chiang and her associates for historical writing: 70% fact and 30% imagination," although sometimes, the professor added, the percentages were reversed. Salisbury recorded that "No feature films whatever were produced in China from 1966 to 1973." He wrote that "writers, composers, poets, artists are now beginning to emerge from the shadows," and referred to "the nonpresence of writers and artists" that he had found there on a previous trip to China in 1972.

Another methodology of CR leaders, illustrating the policy of "putting politics first," was made explicit at the time of the trials of the Gang of Four: "Data must be
obtained with the needs of the struggle in mind and not for its own sake." This was in effect the grim political realization of the Western joke about fitting facts to conform to theory. The Cambridge History of China, in its Bibliographical Essays, stated that during this period, "few new books appeared, virtually all specialized journals ceased publication." JQ's influence was felt on the superstructure as well as the base of society.

By the end of 1968, much of the violence against civilians had ended. RG and PLA factions continued fighting, but the CR entered a new phase. And JQ was to pursue yet another more ambitious objective.

In the Wings: 1969-76

At the Ninth Congress of the CCP (April, 1969), JQ, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan were elected to the Politburo. Writing of her career at that time, Professor An stated that "She is by far the most powerful woman in China, soaring within three years from total obscurity to a seat in the Party Politburo." Her importance was emphasized, when An added "She has exercised authority second only to her husband in the past three years." The new Standing Committee of the Politburo consisted of five men: Mao, Zhou Enlai, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, and Lin Biao. At that time, these five were the most powerful in China, the world's most populous country. How striking it is that JQ had close connections with each of these five: she was married to Mao, and a childhood friend of Kang Sheng. Although she was politically aligned with Chen Boda and other "radicals," she had dismissed Chen as being "weak," although he was among the most
loyal of Mao's supporters. She had feuded with the moderate, Zhou Enlai, whom she regarded as opposed to the aggressive policies of Mao's government, and was quarreling with Lin, who was selected by Mao at this Ninth Congress to be his successor as party chairman. JQ herself desired to be Mao's successor, and animosity between JQ and Lin Biao intensified over this issue.87

Zhou Enlai gave the keynote address on October 1, 1969, in a celebration marking the 20th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic. The fact that this speech was given by the moderate, Zhou, indicated a decline in the visible power of the radicals. The excesses of the CR began to be blamed on those who were "too radical." Some RG members were held accountable for their crimes, and some over-zealous party activists were purged as they had purged unto others. Chen Boda was one leader of the highest rank who was discredited. He was accused of "ultra-leftist" inclinations, and lost political importance. And JQ, while removed from the spotlight, remained busy in the wings.

For one thing, she was again active in cultural affairs. The New York Times reported that she was in charge of revising the model operas, which began to show "more emphasis on selflessness for the sake of the masses and on discipline than in the earlier revisions." The new emphasis was designed for a time of "internal consolidation and external threat," rather than (as in the earlier revisions) a time of struggle for political power. She introduced no new model operas. Having tasted higher powers, perhaps she could not return to the less ambitious activity of artistic creation. Or, she and her public may have just become tired of the same operatic themes.

For another thing, JQ was not absent from the political arena. Newsweek had written of her supposed demise in 1968: "At the frenzied pinnacle of China's Cultural Revolution, a single word from Chiang Ching - the dowdy, demoniacal wife of Mao Tsetung - was enough to make strong men tremble . . . Recently, Chiang Ching has held her
tongue . . . they [the radicals] have been consigned to political oblivion.**89 Two years later, *Newsweek* presented a revised opinion. After noting that "neither the Cultural Revolution nor the internal struggle for control had run their course," *Newsweek* continued: "Still more interesting to China watchers was the re-emergence into the political fray of Chiang Ching, the wife of party Chairman Mao Tse-tung, and, as a member of the Politburo, China's leading voice of cultural affairs." Having reinforced the preconceptions of JQ as "Mao's wife" and as important for "cultural affairs" (views attributed to unnamed "China watchers"), *Newsweek* provided an insight indicating worldwide adoption of her radical ideas: "Mao's statement of May 20 [1970], extolling the atmosphere of world revolution - [is] in line with the more militant views being attributed to Chiang Ching and her followers."**80

The Witke interviews were conducted in August of 1972. It might be supposed that an account of JQ's accomplishments in the years 1970-72 would form an important part of this unofficial biography. However, Witke's account only briefly mentioned this period. In fact, one major activity of JQ during this time was the denunciation of Lin Biao, who was no longer alive, and his supporters, many of whom were very much alive. The circumstances surrounding Lin's death formed an incident of major importance for the Chinese political scene and for JQ's future.

Public information about this incident was not quickly available. The Chinese government on January 13, 1972, announced to party officials that Lin, with his wife and son, had died in a plane crash near the Soviet border in September of 1971. But it was not until June 26 of 1972 that details of an official version of his death were released.**91 The government also announced that there was irrefutable evidence that Lin and his son had plotted, with others, assassination attempts against Mao. The delay in publicizing the event, however, aroused suspicions about the facts of the case. The scenario presented by the government was that after the plots were discovered, Lin died, accidentally and
incidentally, in an attempt to flee the country. Although Lin had been designated as Mao's successor in 1969, he and Mao had a "confrontation" at a conference in Lushan in late August of 1970, and they had feuded openly ever since.

Previously, JQ had perhaps flimsy reasons to disapprove of Lin, and her attacks were of a milder nature. For instance, eleven photos taken by JQ appeared in China Pictorial, a "Peking propaganda magazine," in August of 1971. These included a picture of Lin without his hat on, showing a clearly bald head, "a subject about which he was sensitive." Such an action was a deliberate attempt to embarrass and discredit Lin.

But the uncovering of these plots revealed Lin as a traitor, and he and the mysterious May 16th clique that was reputedly under his control came to be blamed for the evils of the CR. Past points of disagreement between Lin and Mao, or Lin and JQ, now became issues signifying early signs of treachery, and were traced back many years. Lin was alleged, for instance, to have undermined JQ's efforts at film production in the early 1960s. No doubt delighting in the task, and now with a certified villain to attack, and a dead villain at that, JQ became a chief designer of a campaign to expose and discredit Lin. Wherever the facts of responsibility for excesses and evils of the CR may have rested, Lin and his followers became easy scapegoats. In fact, at its strongest, the 5/16 group was never of much importance and had few members, although thousands of individuals were purged and persecuted because of alleged allegiance to this largely fictitious organization. Dietrich referred to this group as "possibly nonexistent."

Barnouin claimed that "In the late 1970s, it was officially admitted that the group was an invention." And Terrill stated bluntly "Yes, JQ faked the truth about Lin Biao," referring to her accusations that Lin had tried to poison her, and that he had instructed film laboratories to sabotage her movies.

Lin's death in 1971 came at a time when relations between China and the United States were unexpectedly becoming friendlier, with the result that then President of the
United States Richard Nixon visited China in February, 1972. At the time of this visit, JQ was acting as spokesperson of communist ideas. At a performance of the opera "Red Detachment of Women," Nixon asked her for the names of the writer, composer, and director, and was told that the work was "created by the masses," affirming the party doctrine that groups, not individuals, were the creative forces of artistic achievement. She was also involved in the visit to China (Shanghai and Beijing) by the Philadelphia Orchestra in September of 1973, and whose music she attacked, in the Spring of 1974, as being "bougeois." These American visits to China also indicated a diminished role of the radical faction in determining foreign policy. "The Politburo members in the extremist faction, JQ, wife of Mr. Mao, and Kang Sheng, who had been concerned with security matters, seem to have lost some influence. A third, Chen Boda, formerly Mr. Mao's secretary, had not been seen publicly since August, 1970," recorded newsman Seymour Topping. In September of 1974, Imelda Marcos, at that time wife of Philippines' President Fernando Marcos, visited China and was hosted there by JQ. The two women toured Xiaojinzhuanzhuang, which had been designed by JQ as a "tiny utopian proletarian culture" with about six hundred peasants.

The anti-Lin campaign became aligned with another anti-campaign, this one against Confucius, at the Tenth Party Congress in August of 1973. JQ chaired the committee organized to head the campaign to criticize these two. There were again references to the party being under the control of "the JQ faction." In the People's Daily of August 7, Confucius was referred to as "the thinker who stubbornly defends the system of slavery." A combined Lin and Confucius attack lacked a common link, as Lin had no strong Confucian background. But the Confucian ethic severely restricted roles of women in society, and those roles precluded the opportunity for them to govern. Seizing on the obvious vulnerability of Lin, and seeking to prepare a way for acceptance of a woman ruler in China, the opportunity to combine the two campaigns was irresistible.
It was widely understood, however, that the real target of this campaign was Zhou Enlai. This campaign was analyzed by Frederick Wakeman, who decided that it was turned into "a movement to study the history of the struggle between Legalists and Confucians. This 'meticulously plotted trick' had been directed by Chiang Ch'ing . . . because she dared not name her real enemy, who was Chou En-Lai." This revealing article indicated not only that Wakeman assumed that JQ and Zhou Enlai were "enemies," but also that he attributed to JQ considerable political expertise. As Wu Han had indirectly attacked Mao through the use of Hai Rui, so JQ took this indirect method of attacking Zhou Enlai.

In 1971 and 1972, JQ was busy with other plans which she did not reveal to Witke. In April of 1971, Mao had ordered the establishment of a central propaganda group, "a powerful organ controlling ideology, cultural, and propaganda activities." This group was headed by Kang Shang, and included JQ. This propaganda machine was engaged in researching precedents of women rulers in China, and presenting histories of these rulers for public distribution. The purpose, of course, was to prepare the Chinese people for JQ's assumption of Mao's leadership position. Wu Zetian (of the Tang dynasty, 8th century) had ruled China for fifty years, and Empress Lu of the Han dynasty had ruled for sixteen. More recently, the Dowager Empress Ci Xi (1850-1908) had ruled for forty-eight years at the end of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Disregarding the early CR notion that "old traditions" were to be rejected, and relying now on those traditions to establish authority, a nationwide publicity campaign was launched to legitimize the notion of a female head of state. As Kang became incapacitated because of illness, control of this operation passed directly to JQ in May of 1974. Hollingworth acknowledged this transfer of power: "Throughout 1974 and 1975, diplomats and correspondents based in Peking realized that the media [were] under the direction of JQ." While visiting China as part of the "ping-pong diplomacy" thaw in U.S.-China relations, James Reston sought
information about this agency, but "we were not, oddly enough, able to get at the propaganda apparatus. It is a fantastic apparatus, centered somewhere in the Central Committee, with the primary voice of it being the People's Daily in Beijing."106 What was odd here was that Reston thought the prevention of his inquiries into this agency was odd.

Not long after Lin's death, Mao began to disparage JQ publicly, referring to her "wild ambition and general incompetence."107 Mao also objected to JQ's 1972 interviews with Witke, which he viewed as simply a means of self-promotion and glorification. In July, 1974 and May, 1975, Mao also publicly objected to the "Gang of Four" (Mao's own phrase), and warned JQ against forming cliques. In December of 1974, he spoke directly to JQ: "Don't form a faction. Those who form factions will fall down."108 Other writers had noted the emergence of a quartet involving JQ. Hoyt stated that the Gang of Four was forming a visible group at this time.109 And Zhao Yanqi (pseudonym), who had been asked to write an "official" account of Lin Biao's death, referred (in 1973) to the Gang of Four as "rapidly rising."110 A letter from JQ to Mao dated November 12, 1974, was returned to her with a marginal note advising her "not to make many public appearances, not to approve documents, and not to organize a cabinet or act like a backstage boss."111 Mao, too, used theatrical terminology when referring to JQ's career.

Due, perhaps, to Mao's admonition for her to refrain from public appearances, there is little record of her activities in 1975. In one speech in March of that year, an Address to Diplomatic Cadres, she represented herself as relaying messages from Mao: "The pith and soul of Marxist-Leninism-Mao Tse-Tung thought are adherence to the doctrine of class struggle and the implementation of the proletarian dictatorship."112 She spoke at that time of a world-wide victory for Communism, and made suggestions about the proper conduct for Chinese diplomats stationed in other countries. In a letter to an agricultural conference dated July 2, 1975, she repeated the idea that the way to solve problems was "to arm our leadership with the theories of Marxism."113
But she did make one "important speech" at a national conference on "Learning from Dazhai in Agriculture," in early September, 1975. She urged "a gradual return to the original organizational concept for the communes, as they had been developed in 1958" and for "poor and lower-middle class peasants to continue to wage class struggle in the villages." She could not resist, perhaps, blaming China's agricultural problems on an old foe, Liu Shaoqi.114 Her recommendations were in opposition to those proposed by Hua Guofeng, who in a year's time was to succeed Mao. In an ironic sequel to this conference, a "Second National Conference on Learning from Dazai in Agriculture" was held in December of 1976. It was addressed by Hua Guofeng, and he urged a policy of moderation toward the then recently arrested Gang of Four. His comments indicated the dilemma facing the party: "Take JQ for example, after all, she was Chairman Mao's wife. No matter what outrageous crimes she committed, if we deal with her in the extreme, it would have implications for Chairman Mao, which would be harmful to the cause of the Party."115 The problem facing Mao's successors would be to find a way to condemn Mao's wife, and yet spare Mao.

After Lin Biao's death, the dominant Communist leader besides Mao was Zhou Enlai. Several instances of friction between JQ and Zhou have been recorded here. This friction, initiated by JQ, was part of her plan to achieve sole leadership of the communist party. While her activities in 1975 were curtailed, she continued feuding with both Zhou and Deng Xiaoping. Hua Guofeng, who did not have the political support structure that Deng (thanks to Liu) had, was apparently not important enough for her to combat.

But the publicity effort was not forgotten. "She continued to orchestrate a campaign to set herself up as Mao's successor," using publicity provided by control of news media.116 In a quotation provided by Witke, although occurring four years after her interviews, but before Mao's death, JQ claimed that "The man must abdicate and let the woman take over. . . . Even under Communism, there can still be an empress." This
publicity campaign was successful to the extent that "JQ's reputation soared in the fall of 1974, and into the next spring, and so did those of empresses." And, in a desperate attempt to lay claim to Mao's position, JQ was alleged to have forged and altered documents to prove that Mao had named her as his successor. There was evidence to support this claim, which became one of the issues at her trial as a member, indeed leader, of the Gang of Four.

Throughout the CR, JQ's attacks on individual, successful women were particularly noteworthy. She insured the public trial and humiliation of Fan Jin, who had become editor of the Beijing Daily News, and who many years before had replaced her in Yu Qiwei's favor. Xu Guangping, wife of Lu Xun, "the twentieth century's greatest protest writer and a man whom she idolized," was persecuted and eventually died. Why? "It was an aftereffect of the literary struggle between Zhou Yang and Lu Xun during the middle 1930s," she glibly explained. Sun Weishi, "a very bright and innovative woman theatrical director, and an adopted daughter of Zhou Enlai, was imprisoned and tortured to death in 1968, in Qin Cheng Number One, a secret prison in a suburb of Beijing." Butterfield suggested that Sun's imprisonment was simply professional jealousy on the part of JQ, but it may also have been motivated by JQ's continuing enmity with Zhou. Even Zhou's high-ranking position was not enough to save his daughter from this fate.

Other women of ability and reputation fared no better. Ding Ling had supervised political education, edited records of the Long March, and taught literature while in Yanan. While there, she was known as "a trailbreaker in every field, particularly in the emancipation of women." She had ridiculed the CCP leadership over hypocrisy regarding their talk about equality for women and their actual treatment of women, and antagonized JQ over the issue of her marriage to Mao. She had been imprisoned by the GMD and again by the Communist government during the anti-rightist movement after the Hundred Flowers campaign. JQ showed her no sympathy, and she was imprisoned yet
again, for five years, in April of 1970. One other female cadre and CCP member, Zhang Zhixin, who spoke out against the Gang of Four and became a cult hero, claimed that JQ was a destroyer of China's culture and literature. Zhang was arrested, tortured, and executed by having her throat slit, in April of 1975.\textsuperscript{123}

Much of JQ's venom was reserved for Wang Guangmei, wife of Mao's political rival Liu Shaoqi, and toward whom she was engaged in a personal "vendetta."\textsuperscript{124} As wife of China's Chief of State, she was for many years China's "First Lady" and was also politically active. She was "struggled against" and publicly humiliated on several occasions. Three years earlier, she had asked JQ's opinion about the propriety of wearing a necklace on a state visit to Indonesia. Against JQ's advice, she wore the necklace. Antagonism between JQ and Wang Guangmei ran deep; JQ regarded Wang as a poor representative of communism, and Wang may have been jealous of JQ's rising status.\textsuperscript{125}

Numerous other wives of renounced communist leaders, as well as their families, became JQ's victims. JQ "insisted that every time an official was purged, his wife also be felled."\textsuperscript{126}

Women did not form a significant portion of political leaders in China, or in any of the important sectors of Chinese life. Perhaps inhibited by the culture of the Confucian ethic, or just simple prejudice, a woman leader in any field was a rare occurrence. Fox Butterfield reported (in 1982) "a great leap forward of human dignity that Chinese women have made since 1949." But although one-third of China's scientists and engineers were female, 80% of farm field work was done by women, and old assumptions about male superiority and feminine inferiority remained. Butterfield concluded that "the CR had no immediate effect of the status of women."\textsuperscript{127} Terrill concurred with the unimportance of JQ's achievements in support of feminism: "Playing the sex-and-power game meant, indeed, turning one's back on women's solidarity. . . . The game JQ was playing could
only be played on her own behalf, not for the cause of women in general." Peggie Thorn Vannozzi concluded that the feminism of the revolutionary operas merely "reaffirmed traditional sex roles." Given JQ's opportunities, she could have accomplished much more in the advancement of feminist causes.

Zhou Enlai's death in January, 1976, presented an opportunity for JQ. "After the Premier's heart attack, JQ assumed an ever increasing role, . . . because she had automatic access to the Chairman's bedroom and study." Mao himself had been in ill health for several years, and was virtually incapacitated at this time, and it is not clear how much governmental business was conducted between Zhou's death in January and Mao's death in September. But, "inside people' claimed that it was JQ who personally prevented him [Mao] from attending any of the sad celebrations that marked the Premier's lying in state." At Zhou's funeral, JQ angered many Chinese by refusing to remove her hat, a sign of disrespect, and her popularity was in decline. In April of that year, public support of the memory of Zhou led to a spontaneous Tiananmen Square demonstration. When the government removed wreaths brought to honor Zhou, thousands of Chinese protested repression and injustice. Karnow claimed that the crowds were disbursed at JQ's command, although she was later to deny this.

The personal relation between Mao and Madame Mao, about which it would be difficult to obtain reliable information, has not been carefully documented. Butterfield reported an unnamed member of Mao's family as saying that JQ and Mao stopped living together as husband and wife as early as 1949, and that "Mao couldn't stand her. All her nagging and ambitions." This was not a topic about which JQ confided any details to Witke, while Terrill stated simply, "In the 1960s, the marriage revived." Toward the end of his life, Mao and JQ entered yet another phase of their relationship. As a sign of trust between the two, she "was the only person who could use the Chairman's chop (seal), which is more important than a signature in China," and "The relations between
Mao and his wife were, in fact, the unspoken but major problem of all those Chinese ministers responsible for both foreign and domestic policy roughly from the end of the Tenth Party Conference in August 1973 until Premier Zhou's [Enlai] death early in January 1976.\textsuperscript{134} It is not the intent of this thesis to document the personal relationship between Mao and Madame Mao. It should be noted, however, that this relationship and the perception of it by high CCP officials had an effect on events and policies of the CR.

Hidden behind the public image of the actress Lan Ping was the real person, JQ. Before the CR, she could use her influence to make demands and give orders to directors, producers, or arts' personnel. These demands and orders may or may not have been followed, but with her increased political power, she could and did enforce her wishes by having dissenters arrested or otherwise harassed. Terrill observed correctly that "Had she not been Mao's wife, JQ would have been a perfect target of the CR."\textsuperscript{135} This could be true, given her lifestyle and previous way of life in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{136} But had she not been Mao's wife, she would not have been in a position to act as she did. Equally important, the CR would not have been the same without her influence. Her personality alone would have made her many enemies, but whether they would have persecuted her to the extent she persecuted them is doubtful. Madame Mao became, in the words of Edward Rice, the CR's "grand inquisitor."\textsuperscript{137} The grand inquisitor was herself soon to be inquisitioned.
NOTES

1. Fan, 161-73. This document was titled "Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution."


5. Wang, 14.

6. Hollingworth, 298.


8. Ibid., 29.

9. Ibid., 34.

10. An, 1.


14. London *Times*, September 2, 1966, p. 9. Three weeks later, after a little more research, the same *Times* reported that her previous public appearances had been at a reception for Sukharno's wife in 1962, and when the King and Queen of Afghanistan visited China in 1964. September 23, 1966, p. 13.


19. Ling, 211.


22. Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen, and Jonathan Unger, "Students and Class Warfare: the Social Roots of the Red Guard Conflict in Guangzhou," *China Quarterly*, 83 (September, 1980), 394-446. This article was based on the doctoral dissertations of these three writers, who regarded Guangzhou as typical of other provinces.

23. Karnow, 189.


27. Karnow, 281.

28. Byron, 304. This 1992 biography of Kang, the authors claimed, was based on material from a biography of Kang published in China in limited edition, and restricted to high Communist officials. The material presented here on Kang is primarily from this source.

29. Ibid., 348.

30. Asia Research Centre, 428.


32. Fan, 16, 18.

33. Asia Research Centre, 430-36.

34. Stuart Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (New York, 1966), 306n, 324


37. Witke, Comrade, 326.

38. Edgar Snow, 123.

39. Rice, 270.

40. Hollingworth, 146.

41. Rice, 272-85.

42. Karnow, 218.

43. Liu, 45-47.

44. Witke, Comrade, 330.


46. Witke, 363.

47. Wang, 40-44.

48. Terrill, Madame, 19.

49. Karnow, 312-15. The quote is attributed to JQ in April of 1967, but no source is given.

50. An, 34.


52. Elegant, 447.


54. Han, 311.

55. Wang, 62.

56. An, 37.

57. Byron, 376-78.

59. Hoyt, 300. Hoyt (p. 303) believed that JQ and Lin were co-conspirators in an attempt to usurp power, but this view is to be rejected. It was clear from her attempts to include army cadres in CR purges that differences between the two were irreconcilable, and there was soon open friction between the two.

60. Ibid.


64. Han, 311. Han claimed that Lin Biao controlled the 5/16 group, which would make JQ's speech a direct attack on Lin.

65. Liu, 106, citing speeches of Zhou Enlai on September 16 and 17, 1967.


67. Witke, Comrade, 34-47.

68. Rice, 432, citing Chinese Communist Party Documents, 601.

69. Terrill, Madame, 263.


71. Elegant, 404, 449.

72. An, 47.

73. Rice, 437. The revolutionary committees were composed of three elements: RG members, PLA advisors, and local cadres who had not been ousted. They were designed to replace local governing bodies, and were widespread throughout China during the CR.

74. Barnouin, 167.

75. An, 53.

76. Kamow, 388, 406.

78. Witke, Comrade, 392.

79. Han, 333.

80. Richard Kraus, 235.


82. Frederick Wakeman Jr., "Report from China: Historiography in China after 'Smashing the "Gang of Four,"" China Quarterly, 75 (September, 1978), 893.


86. An, 83.

87. Rodzinski, p. 179, stated that "two main factions had taken shape at the very pinnacle of the CCP hierarchy - one led by Lin Biao, the other by Jiang Qing."


89. Newsweek, April 1, 1968, p. 39+

90. Ibid., June 8, 1970, p. 46.

91. Yao Ming-le (pseud.), The Conspiracy and Murder of Mao's Heir (London, 1983), 4. Relying on documents not available to the public, Yao provided more detail on the plots by Lin against Mao, and claimed that Mao had Lin and his wife murdered on the night of the alleged plane crash, September 12. This view has not gained wide acceptance.


93. Dietrich, 195, Barnouin, 193, and Terrill, Madame, 308.

95. Witke, Comrade, xxiii.


97. Witke, Comrade, 460.

98. Dittmer, 197.


100. Myers, vol. 2, 196.

101. Dietrich, 224.

102. Wakeman, 893.

103. Barnouin, 225.

104. Byron, 403.

105. Hollingworth, 287.


109. Hoyt, 303.

110. Yao Ming-le, 187.

111. Byron, 404.


113. Ibid., vol. 2, 331.


115. Ibid., 65-68.


118. Andres D. Onate, "Hua Kuo-feng and the arrest of the 'gang of four'," *China Quarterly*, 75 (September, 1978), 547.


120. Butterfield, 354-55.

121. Helen Foster Snow, *The Chinese Communists* (Westport, 1972), 262. Helen Snow was the wife of Edgar Snow, and was also in Yanan in 1937.

122. Hollingworth, 66.


124. Karnow, 167. Hollingworth, 353, referred to JQ's "violent jealousy" toward Wang, and suggested that it was an additional factor in the split between Mao and Liu.


126. Terrill, *China*, 88-89.

127. Butterfield, 163, 166.


129. Peggy Thorn Vannozzi, "The Evolution of Chinese Womanhood: From Confucian Prohibition to Communist Participation," Master's Thesis (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1984), p. 50. But this conclusion is in opposition to that of He, who believed that JQ enhanced "the promotion and status of women," p. 57. His conclusion on this point was even stronger: "The prominent position and importance given to the female leading roles clearly reflected her [JQ's] own desire to be politically important and dealt a blow to the Liuist cultural elites," p. 18. There is little evidence to support He's conclusion that JQ was promoting feminism in the model operas. It is true that the roles of women in these operas were departures from previous representations of women, but these departures were for the purpose of extolling Chinese Communism, not feminism.

130. Hollingworth, 276, 290.


133. Terrill, *Madame*, 252.
134. Hollingworth, 277.

135. Terrill, Madame, 268.

136. Hollingworth also reported on her "fondness for establishing secondary residences crammed with luxuries and serviced by excellent chefs" (p. 276), and wondered why her hypocritical lifestyle wasn't mentioned at her trial (p. 292). The answer to that question is that too many other cadres were equally culpable, and the prosecutors decided not to raise that issue.

137. Rice, 285.
CHAPTER 3

GRAND FINALE

The Curtain Falls

According to traditional Chinese belief, natural disasters are omens of political change. An earthquake centered near the northern China city of Tangshan, "the worst disaster of its kind in the history of mankind," preceded by six weeks the death of Mao Zedong. One month later, on October 8, "every radio broadcast the electrifying news: 'The Central Committee, under the leadership of First Party Vice-Chairman Hua Guofeng, has completely smashed the counter-revolutionary group, the Gang of Four!!!!'. The "Gang" included Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan, and JQ.

Sreemati Chakrabarti, based on radio reports from the Hunan Provincial Service, wrote that three types of charges were initially made against the gang. He categorized these as vague, minor, and concrete. Examples of vague charges were such things as "sabotaging Chairman Mao's instructions," "hampering the economy of Hunan," and "discouraging agricultural mechanization in Hunan province." Minor offenses included "purposely delaying by 53 minutes the plane carrying representatives from Hunan to Beijing to mourn Mao" and "the drinking of wine during the mourning period." The concrete charges were equally innocuous: "They attacked the opera 'Gardener's Song' and criticized and censored the movie 'Pioneers'" and "forced Zo Dabring [who had played a leading female role in local Hunan opera] to conduct self-criticism." 'Gardener's Song' had been staged successfully in 1972, was later filmed, and withdrawn because JQ thought it

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"negated the CR." All of the concrete "crimes" included in this list are of this relatively minor nature, and all involved genuinely cultural, not political, activities. As Hunan was mentioned prominently in these broadcasts from Hunan, similar sets of complaints appropriate for other provinces were no doubt issued.

For all the horrors and excesses of the CR, these charges seem innocent enough. However, within the Chinese conception of justice there is a distinction between \( li \) and \( fa \). Professor Benjamin Schwartz explained that \( li \) has been translated as "propriety," while \( fa \) has been translated as "laws."\(^4\) Observing \( fa \) meant adhering to written, codified statutes, while observing \( li \) involved doing what one was expected to do, given one's position in life. JQ and the Gang of Four had committed "crimes" in the sense that they had acted in ways high governmental officials were not supposed to act. They were accused of violating \( li \), not \( fa \), but the accusations were no less serious because of that. The Chinese government would take four years to prepare criminal charges.

Not long after the arrest of the Gang of Four, \textit{Time} magazine published a cover story on Jiang Qing (March 21, 1977), keyed to the publication of Witke's biography, and which contained long excerpts from that book. \textit{Time} announced that she was one of the world's most powerful women (but did not suggest any other women who were as powerful). The article reflected certain American misconceptions of JQ. One misconception was the common one, that her importance was confined to cultural matters. A second was that her criminal activities occurred late in the CR, after the rise of the Gang of Four, and were related to attempts to "seize power." This misconception conveniently separated JQ from any earlier wrong-doing by Mao. Adding to her mystique, \textit{Time} described JQ as "A woman of great complexity, . . . very intelligent, capable of great charm. She is also arrogant, unpredictable, self-centered. She is tireless, nervous, excitable."\(^5\) But \textit{Time} exaggerated the charges when it had reported earlier that during Mao's last illness, "she tried to murder him."\(^6\) Nothing of this serious nature was
mentioned at her trials, nor by Mao's physician, Li. *Newsweek* acknowledged her aspirations to succeed Mao, and reported that she circulated a poem by Mao that urged her "to reach the top," and to complete the revolution he had begun.\(^7\)

The Gang of Four trials, which began in November, 1980, actually involved ten defendants. In addition to the "Gang," they included Chen Boda and five generals associated with Lin Biao, who had been arrested at the time of his death in 1971.\(^8\) In an ironic turn of events, JQ was linked in these trials with Lin. One part of the report of the trial was entitled "Records of the Trial by the People's Supreme Court Against Major Defendants of the Anti-Revolutionary Clique of Lin Biao and JQ."\(^9\) Yet JQ's alliance with Lin had been brief, and she was feuding with him long before the exposure of his plots against Mao's life. JQ was apparently linked with Lin, whose criminality was not questioned by the Chinese, to reinforce, by association, the idea of her own guilt.

At their trial, the four were accused of committing national betrayal, hampering foreign trade, ruining the educational system, threatening civil war, counter-revolutionary activity, framing innocent people, being ambitious, trying to capture supreme power, and insulting people, among other charges.\(^10\) The actual indictment against the defendants, "Indictment of the Special Procuratorate," spelled out in some detail forty-eight more or less specific crimes.\(^11\) Lin Biao and Kang Sheng, although necessarily not present at the trial, were prominently mentioned in the charges. Item three was typical: "Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng cooked up false charges to persecute Members of the Eight CCP Central Committee." Also, at one time, JQ had sent emissaries to Mao to persuade him not to make Deng Xiaoping a Vice Premier, hence, another violation of *li*, not *fa*.

JQ was tried last. Terrill suggested that by placing her trial tenth, the all-male court attempted to further denigrate her.\(^12\) But her placement in tenth position can also be interpreted as an admission of her importance. At her trial, JQ pleaded that she was Mao's dog, biting whom he said to bite.\(^13\) She cursed her enemies, and insulted the court.
and prosecutors. "In the face of irrefutable evidence that she collaborated with Kang Sheng to concoct cases against the revolutionary cadres of the Eighth Central Committee, JQ had the impudence to hurl insults at witnesses and disrupt the order of the court." When questioned about the events of April, 1976, in Tiananmen Square, when the government suppressed supporters of Zhou Enlai, JQ responded, "Don't ask me, ask the man who was Minister of Public Security at the time [i.e., none other than Hua Guofeng]." Her defiance at least illustrated her courage, and even won the admiration of some, as it was clear that she would not kowtow to the judges who literally held her life in their hands.

Beginning in October of 1967, and continuing for three years, Kang Sheng had supervised 700 military clerks in a search for references to activities in Shanghai of JQ, Zhang Chunqiao, and himself, dating from the 1930s. The point of this was to eliminate any evidence that could be used against these three during and after the CR, and JQ "lived in constant fear of possible revelations about her past." It is a testimony to Kang's thoroughness, perhaps, that he was successful in such an imposing project, for nothing of this period of JQ's life was mentioned at her trial. Kang became ill of cancer in 1970, and died in 1975. Terrill reported that Kang kept some files on JQ which showed that she had indeed been a GMD collaborator in the 1930s. On the basis of evidence disclosed at the Gang of Four trials, Kang was implicated in many acts of cruelty, and some people concluded that he was "The brains behind the Gang of Four." Throughout the CR, Kang had been JQ's friend and ally, and much of her influence was due to his support. Had he lived long enough, there may have been a Gang of Five.

Chinese tradition maintained that the accused at a trial first confess to the crime before sentence was passed. In spite of claiming to being a loyal Communist, JQ was too much of an individualist to accept this doctrine when applied to herself. Harvard Law Professor Jerome Cohen wrote that "intensive interrogations in an inquisitorial setting,
long periods of detention between interrogations, constant repetition of the theme of leniency for those who confess, and application of other psychological techniques to break the suspect's resistance create an inherently coercive environment that elicits many confessions. JQ did not succumb to this pressure, intimidation, imprisonment, and threat of execution, and remained unrepentant and defiant. Professor S. K. Ghosh cited "two cardinal sins" that JQ committed, apart from any crimes of which she was accused: "She challenged the authority of the court, which is seen as sacred, being the symbol of the nation, and she showed 'insincerity' by not making a confession." Eight of the defendants meekly admitted to various crimes; Zhang Chunqiao remained silent, refusing even to acknowledge the legitimacy of the court. Newsweek reported that at one time the trials had to be postponed because JQ continued to insist that she acted with Mao's consent and refused to confess.

Business Week reported that the general theme of the trials was that an ill and aging Mao was exploited by the Gang of Four. Ghosh echoed this idea: "it was the effective judgment of the court that . . . during the last few years of his life, Mao had no effective control over the 'Gang' led by JQ, who, in view of her closeness to the Chairman, took maximum advantage of the situation and dominated the Chinese political scene."

Butterfield described the trials as being "disguised as a Beijing opera, complete with rehearsals," and they reminded others of organized struggle sessions. Newsweek confirmed this theatrical aspect of the proceedings; "one pre-trial hearing was filmed three times before officials were happy with JQ's performance." Although some aspects of the trials were televised, many of the proceedings were held in secrecy. Public television versions of the trials had been heavily edited.

Reminding the court that she had accompanied Mao to the battle front in WWII, JQ asked the judges where they had been hiding at the time. She was removed from the
courtroom on more than one occasion, shouting the CR slogans "To rebel is justified," and "Revolution is no crime." In a final act of defiance and in a belief that she would be killed, JQ challenged the court to execute her in public, in Tiananmen Square. She was actually sentenced to death, but given two years time in which to "reform." At the end of the two years, the sentence was changed to life imprisonment.

There were few women with whom JQ had close friendships, and instances of her vindictive attitude towards specific women has been documented here. She did not contribute significantly to feminist causes in general, and her attitude toward males is illustrated by the comment that "Man's contribution to human history is nothing more than a drop of sperm." Having thus alienated herself from both sexes, JQ had few persons to defend her. Li added credence to the belief that she was generally disliked, or feared, even by those close to her, when he quoted Wang Dongxing, head of security for Mao for many years, who said that he "would go to the end of the earth to get rid of JQ."

The trials were a cause of general happiness among the Chinese people; "at last we had someone to blame for our miseries." Some shops exhausted their supplies of alcoholic beverages, as people celebrated. Meals consisting of four crabs -- three male and one female -- became very popular, as a crab, with its sideways, broad manner of walking, was a symbol of someone wanting to "hog the whole road." The Gang of Four members became objects of social ridicule. A comedy sketch "Maozi Gungchang" ("The Hat Factory," 1977, by Chang Guitian and Chang Baohua) satirized them for putting "hats" -- that is, labels, or unfair accusations -- on people. "Whiteboned Demon Unmasked" was a lengthy comedy routine (by Ma Ji and Tang Jiezhong) directed at JQ herself. JQ was viciously satirized in this comedy act, in which an 'autopsy' was performed on her body, and a second face found on the back of her head, symbolizing the public perception of her hypocrisy in urging them to live a life of austerity and sacrifice,
while she herself led quite another lifestyle. When her stomach was opened, worms tumbled out, which the comedians (humorously) stomped on, all over the stage.\textsuperscript{33}

The Gang of Four became symbols "upon whom the Chinese people could vent their anger," but for many Chinese intellectuals, "the Gang of Four remained a flimsy answer to a problem that required deeper explanation. It was ridiculous to think that four people somehow did it all."\textsuperscript{34} Indeed, four people did not do it all, but in a movement of such complexity, involving so many, the separation of the guilty from the innocent was an impossible task.

In a "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party Since The Founding of the People's Republic of China," adopted June 27, 1981, at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP, the ideas and practices of the CR and the Ninth Congress were renounced.\textsuperscript{35} This document placed responsibility for the CR on Mao, and accused Mao of committing errors in not adhering to "Mao Zedong Thought." The 'thought' of the man was to be revered, if not the man himself.

**Critical Reviews**

China is too vast and complex a stage for any one person to direct the entire scope of events that occur therein, but it has been the thesis of this paper that JQ had a major influence on the events of the CR. She was a unique person in a unique position at a critical time in China's history, and was a suitable vehicle to carry out the ideas of this revolution. The CR was the product of Mao's plan and JQ's personality. She determined its emphasis and much of the extent to which it was violent. Without her presence, the CR would have been a far different event in China's history. Terrill, recognizing something of her importance, suggested that "without JQ there may not have been a CR, and certainly
Mao would not have called it a *cultural* revolution." Various writers have ascribed to JQ a responsibility here or there, or on this point or that point, but no single source has attributed the importance to JQ that I have assigned to her here. Chinese authorities were not misled about her relevance. For all the horrors of the CR, she was one of only two persons (the other being Zhang Chunqiao) who was sentenced to death. The significance of this was lost on Western writers.

Early Western historians of the CR gave little attention to Madame Mao. In *The Cultural Revolution in China* (Berkeley, 1971), Thomas Robinson, ed., Jiang Qing was mentioned only once, and then in a footnote. A major study by Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution* (New York, 1974), gave her little more notice and no more significance. In *China in Ferment*, by Richard Baum (Englewood Cliffs, 1971), JQ was listed only in a chronology of events, in connection with a Red Guard speech. Franklin Houn noted that the article criticizing "Hai Rui's Dismissal" had been "written under the direct guidance of Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing," and acknowledged that she "was shortly to play a leading role in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," but he did not develop the theme of her contributions in this role.

Maurice Meisner's *Mao's China and After* (London, 1986), an updated version of his original work *Mao's China* (New York, 1977), is a major source of information on the CR. In the 1986 version, Meisner acknowledged that earlier he had known little about the Gang of Four. A new chapter on the "concept of cultural revolution" was added, but even the new version shows little appreciation of the revolution's cultural significance, and JQ's role is merely one of making radical speeches.

Later writers of the 1980s, of whom Rodzinski is typical, began to acknowledge JQ's presence, but only in the context of a group: "the clique of JQ" or "the faction to which JQ belonged" are ways in which she was referred to then. Craig Dietrich's *People's China* (New York, 1986) is a readable account of the period, but Dietrich likewise viewed
her as one of the radical faction, allied with Chen Boda. This phraseology tacitly recognized her importance, by making her the group leader. John K. Fairbank, in his popular text *East Asia*, (Revised Edition, Boston, 1989), mentioned JQ only in passing. In the excellent book *The Search for Modern China* (New York, 1990), Jonathan Spence gave few details on JQ, although his biographical sketch referred to her as "a major political figure of the CR."39 In 1989, Michael Schoenhals, a researcher for the Swedish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, reviewed over a dozen official and unofficial histories and collections of articles on the CR.40 Yet in his reviews of these works, Schoenhals referred to JQ twice, and then only in relation to Lin Biao. Schoenhals did make numerous references to the Gang of Four, a partial admission of her importance, but only within that group.

*New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* (1991), a collection of scholarly articles edited by William Joseph, Christine Wong, and David Zweig, gave scant notice to JQ. She was mentioned (of necessity) in Richard Kraus' article "Art Policies of the Cultural Revolution," but Kraus' subtitle, "The Rise and Fall of Cultural Minister Yu Huiyong," indicated his main interest. For all of these writers, and many more, the CR may very well have occurred without JQ's presence.

More surprising is the fact that her major American biographer, Roxane Witke, did not acknowledge her political significance. Part V of her book, summarizing JQ's achievements, was entitled "Mistress of the Arts."41 Witke viewed JQ as aspiring to "supreme cultural control," but she had not carefully examined JQ's role in the CR.42 For her, JQ's political life was as "one of the Gang of Four." Terrill's more extensive biography of JQ still regarded her primarily as "Mao's wife," and traced her CR activity as a series of vindictive acts against past enemies. His chapter on her life in the 1960s is entitled simply "Recovery [i.e. from illnesses of the 1950s] and Revenge."43 But while
Terrill acknowledged something of her importance, he did not attribute to her any political prominence.

The Bibliographical Essays section of Volume 15 (1991) of the authoritative *Cambridge History of China* recorded this observation: "Interestingly, there have been few full-length scholarly studies devoted to the CR." This comment remains true today. A reason for this may be that the events are still too recent to allow for the historical perspective required for scholarly analysis. It was foreign journalists and diplomats, looking from the outside in, that provided much of the record of that period. The *Cambridge History* continued with another interesting observation: "little has been written that focuses specifically on Mao's role in the movement." The lack of studies on Mao indicates that perhaps his role was not central in understanding much that happened during the CR.

A major reason writers overlooked JQ's influence during the CR was of course that she was difficult to distinguish within the immense shadow of Mao. Her dependence on Mao extended beyond relying on his political authority. "While Mao was alive, JQ had been accorded the greatest respect. When she walked into a meeting, everyone would stand and the room would fall silent." After Mao's death, "No one paid any attention when she came into the room . . . the atmosphere within the Politburo had been transformed." Beyond the obvious conclusion that JQ was dependent for her political power on the fact that she had been Mao's wife, there is the additional point here that after Mao was gone, Chinese officials no longer felt that they even had to be polite to her.

Another reason JQ has been overlooked may be due to preconceptions about women's abilities to contribute. Mark Selden's otherwise fine book on the Yanan years, for instance, can be read without ever learning that JQ (or Ding Ling) were present there. Further, JQ was neither wise nor benevolent, and persons who believe that countries are governed by wise and benevolent rulers, acting in the best interests of the
citizenry that they govern, will be disappointed in the view expressed here that JQ was a major factor in determining the course of China's history during the CR. Because she lacked a significant, positive political theory of her own, it does not follow that she was not influential.

JQ was tried in a Chinese court, and little that is new by the way of judgment will be presented here. Her interviews with Witke are almost entirely accounts of herself and her feuds and disputes with other people, and it was charged against JQ that these interviews were not conduct befitting a Communist leader. But Mao had not been censured for several interviews with the American journalist Edgar Snow, and JQ had no doubt been motivated by Mao's earlier interviews in seeking her own biographer.

Throughout her life, JQ's relationships with so many people were antagonistic. Motivated by vindictiveness and jealousy, she sought to redress wrongs she imagined to have suffered as long ago as forty years earlier. Anyone who disagreed with JQ, or opposed her in any way, became an enemy and an object of revenge. But she fell out of favor with the Chinese people, and her fall confirmed the Chinese saying that for a leader to lose the peoples' hearts is to lose the world. Deng Xiaoping, shortly before her trial, remarked that "She is a very, very, evil woman. She is so evil that any evil thing you say about her isn't evil enough."48

Who can predict the further excesses the people of China would have had to endure, had JQ succeeded in her aspiration of becoming head of the Communist Party, virtually a position of Empress? Whatever form her rule would have taken, it would have sooner or later self-destructed: the constant themes of revolution and the rejection of authority would have led to its own ruin. JQ as empress? Surely she would at least have taken a new name! We cannot believe that this would have been a productive time for China. The theme of continuing revolution soon becomes revolution for its own sake, with no other purpose, as happened with much of the fighting between factions of RGs.
JQ's political theories were merely repetitions of Maoism, and those were dated views that belonged to a China which had not been enlightened by exposure to the effects of those views when put into the hands of political extremists.

A cynical interpretation of the CR would view it as the scenario of a power struggle among Chinese leaders. Yao Ming-le described the CR as a three-way power struggle between JQ, Lin Biao and Zhou Enlai. That JQ and Lin Biao desired the most powerful position as head of the CCP is now clear. It is not clear that Zhou wanted this power for himself, and his position throughout the CR was one of moderation, and a genuine desire for the welfare of the Chinese, rather than a blind adherence to a political doctrine. And Terrill adopted this cynical view when he wrote of the CR that there was "nothing rational beneath the vanity, frustration and thirst for revenge that triggered it." But an idealist interpretation would view the CR as an attempt to convert the thinking of the masses to the "pure" thought of true communism, as propounded by Chairman Mao. This view would make the CR analogous to a religious movement, and indeed the similarities are numerous: the single-minded fervor of the true believer, the mind numbing repetition of litany-like slogans, the appeal to the emotions of the crowds to sweep away unrighteousness, the near deification of Mao, and yes, even the extreme cruelty shown to those unwilling to accept the new doctrine, which was to "touch people's souls." "Confess and repent" are slogans of evangelists, and are words that have firm religious connotations. Similar ideas of the CR were to "cleanse human nature of egotism" via a "perpetual process of purification." JQ and her followers, who had no strong religious backgrounds or beliefs, sought to destroy and change human nature, and to coerce human activity into other-directed behavior in accordance with their preconceived theories. They unknowingly resorted to well-known religious techniques of the Western world as a practical means of achieving those objectives.
Tang Tsou, among others, has noted that "one of the most extraordinary and puzzling events of the 20th century is surely the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China."\textsuperscript{52} It has been a secondary objective of this thesis to partially disagree with this assessment, and to show that while the events of the CR were certainly not predictable, they were, by occurring within the political situation of China as they did, to some extent understandable.

JQ was sentenced to death in January 1981, subject to a two-year period in which she could show signs of rehabilitation. Adding to her humiliation in a petty way, the \textit{People's Daily} referred to her as a "third-rate actress."\textsuperscript{53} She was imprisoned in Qin Cheng Number One, and her sentence was changed to life imprisonment in January of 1983. Various medical problems, including her throat cancer, began recurring, and she was allowed to be under house arrest in May, 1984.

\textit{Time} magazine reported her death by suicide in June, 1991. She was acknowledged in a follow-up article to have "wielded vast and malevolent power in the last decade of Mao's life."\textsuperscript{54} Witke wrote that after her death, the Chinese government prohibited the distribution of books, articles and photographs about her, and forbade radio and television broadcasts of the model operas.\textsuperscript{55} Witke clung to the kindlier portrayal of JQ from her 1972 interviews, and attributed more vicious portraits to a "cunning distortion" of those interviews. Although she attributed paranoia and hypochondria to JQ, Witke still respected her enough to speculate that Mao, declining in health during the 1970s, may have needed JQ's support of his image to remain in his top position. JQ was, during the time of the CR, "the most powerful woman in the world."\textsuperscript{56}
NOTES

1. Onate, 540. The cause of Mao's death, on September 9, 1976, was widely reported as Parkinson's disease. His physician, Li Zhisui, however, said that it was due to a rare motor neuron disorder, popularly known as Lou Gehrig's disease (p. 9).

2. Liang Heng and Judith Shapiro, Son of the Revolution (New York, 1983), 264. Wang Hongwen, a vice chairman of the CCP from 1969 to 1976, has not been discussed here. Hollingworth (p. 273) stated that he had become the third man in the Party, but that "he did little but run around for Jiang Qing."


8. Dietrich, 267-68.


10. Onate, 540.


12. Terrill, Madame, 14.

13. Ibid., 412. Terrill gave a good account of her conduct at the trial, p. 379-92.


17. Barnouin, 209.

18. Terrill, Madame, 356. Kang confided this information to Wang Hairong and Nancy Tang, two close associates of Mao, during his final illness. These two decided not to report the matter to Mao.


23. Business Week, November 24, 1980, p. 63. Business Week also noted that Mao’s pictures were being removed from public places, and that there were fewer references to his economic and political theories, in anticipation of the eventual "re-interpretation" of Mao.


25. Butterfield, 357.


30. Li, 621.

31. Liang, 264.


35. Myers, vol. 4, 43-94.


37. Houn, 295.


39. Spence, 797.


42. Ibid., 375.

43. Terrill, *Madame*, 237-301.


45. Ibid., 896.

46. Li, 629.


49. Yao, 193.


51. Karnow, 222.

52. Tang, 67.


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