Model-Making and Policy Change in China

Shun Yan Olivia Cheung
St Antony's College

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of DPhil in Politics
in the Department of Politics and International Relations
at the University of Oxford

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis studies how conflicts over political ideas influence policy change in China. It argues that officials cultivate selected local areas into models in order to implement new policies, often under the rubric of paradigm shifts, or a reinterpretation of existing ideology. Models are platforms for ideational conflicts in the Party to be expressed, for consensus to be expanded within existing political factions, and for popular support to be mobilised. Model-making influences policy change in areas beyond the local policy experiments in which they are originally implemented by serving as intellectual testing grounds for new policies, triggering horizontal policy diffusion, and sowing the seeds for change. The arguments are developed from five detailed case studies of model-making from the late Mao period in the 1960s until 2012. These cases include three single case studies — Dazhai Model (1964–1978), Anhui Model (1979–1980) and Nanjie Model (mid-1980s to the present) — and two comparative cases in which the models were developed in dialogic relationship to one another by competing political factions — the Shenzhen Model vis-à-vis the Shekou Model (1979–1989), and the Guangdong Model vis-à-vis the Chongqing Model (2008–2012). Based on their

structural characteristics, this thesis argues that these models were best understood as exemplifying one or more of the following four categories: political theatre models, “rightful resistance” models, Maoist nostalgia models, and experimental zone models. This study relies mainly on first-hand data collected from fieldwork, archival records, and official Party and government publications. It advances model-making as a new theoretical framework to study ideational conflicts and factionalism in a historically comparative perspective. In addition, it contributes to the debate of authoritarian resilience by demonstrating that China’s reform process was in fact significantly more contested than what is commonly ascribed to the policy process of authoritarian regimes. (296 words)

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ABBREVIATIONS

BXZG	Beixuzhuang Group
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CCTV	Chinese Central Television
CMC	Central Military Commission
CMSN	China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CRPA	Comprehensive reform pilot area
CSER	China Society of Economic Reform
CSO	Civil society organisation
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GDP	Gross domestic product
LYG	Longyun Group
NJCB	*Nanjie Cun bao* (*Nanjie Village Newspaper*)
NJVG	Nanjie Village Group
NPC	National People's Congress
PB	Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party
PBSC	Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRD	Pearl River Delta
RMRB	*Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*)
SASAC	State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission
SCP	Soviet Communist Party
SOE	State-owned enterprise
SZTQB	*Shenzhen tequ bao* (*Shenzhen Special Zone Daily*)
XCA	Xiyang County Archive

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This year, China celebrates the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Reform and Openness policy. Since 1978, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-state has successfully survived the "third wave of democratisation," delivered enviable economic growth, and presided over a country that is rising on the global stage. The resilience of the Party-state challenges Western-centric regime theories, which maintain that authoritarian regimes are inherently fragile. Due to the lack of democratic institutions — which are considered indispensable for regime legitimacy and durability — authoritarian regimes are expected to over-rely on coercion and struggle with rampant corruption, factionalism, and destabilising leadership succession. It is anticipated that these problems would inevitably end authoritarian regimes, either through defection of the ruling elites and/or a massive fallout with the people.[1]

The resilience of the Chinese Party-state puts these hypotheses into question. Moreover, in addition to the Chinese Party-state, many other authoritarian regimes have proven to be resilient. According to Freedom House's latest survey of 195 countries in 2017, liberal democracies — regimes with robust observance of democratic procedures and political and civil liberties — only accounted for 45%.

1 Jason Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 16-43.

They were outnumbered by hybrid regimes[2] (30%) and heavy-handed authoritarian regimes (25%).[3] The endurance of authoritarianism could also be seen from the "modest harvest" of the Arab Spring. Of the 21 authoritarian Arab League member states, only six (Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya, Bahrain and Syria) experienced concerted challenges; in only four of them (Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya) were the autocrats overthrown.[4]

In political science, the resilience of a regime can be understood as its ability to "absorb shocks and disturbances while retaining essentially the same functions, structure, feedback, and therefore identity."[5] Indicators of regime resilience include the duration of which it is in power, the level of cohesion among the ruling elites, the strength of the opposition, etc. Political scientists have advanced various theories to explain why some authoritarian regimes are resilient while others falter easily. The most common explanatory variables are historical legacies, the party machinery and the loyalty of the military. These theories provide a comparative context to examine the scholarship of authoritarian resilience in the subfield of Chinese politics.

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2 Hybrid regimes display features of democracy (such as universal suffrage and protection of some civil and political liberties) and authoritarianism (such as manipulated elections and serious violation of some rights and freedoms). Many are either former authoritarian regimes that lack democratic consolidation or democratic regimes experiencing reversal to authoritarianism. For a discussion of hybrid regimes, see Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

3 Michael J. Abramowitz, "Freedom in the World 2018: Democracy in Crisis," Freedom House, January 16, 2018, https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018#anchor-one (accessed 15 July 2018).

4 Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud and Andrew Reynolds, "Tracking the 'Arab Spring': Why the Modest Harvest?," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (October 2013), pp. 29-44.

5 Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry, "Embracing Uncertainty: Guerrilla Policy Style and Adaptive Governance in China," in Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry (eds.), *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Asia Centre), pp. 1-29, at 8.

Firstly, in regard to historical legacies, Benjamin Smith demonstrates that authoritarian regimes that came into power under high political constraints (such as a powerfully organised opposition) and fiscal constraints (such as little or no access to rent sources) were significantly more resilient than those that did not. In response to high constraints, autocrats invested in building robust party institutions to mobilise broad-based social support, which strengthened their capability to monitor opposition groups in the long term. These regimes included Muhammad Suharto's New Order regime in Indonesia (1966–1998) and Julius Nyerere's regime in Tanzania (1962–1985). By contrast, authoritarian regimes formed under low political constraints (such as scattered opposition) and fiscal constraints (such as access to sizeable rent) invested little in party institutions, leading to regime fragility. For example, Smith finds that, under low constraints, Guinea-Bissau's Luís Cabral — who was in power from 1974–1980 — and the Philippines's Ferdinand Marco — who was in power from 1965–1986 — formed shallow coalitions through rent dispersion and made little effort in power-sharing. Both regimes collapsed in the face of serious political challenge.[6] Dan Slater likewise argues that authoritarian regimes confronted with a powerfully organised opposition at their formative period tended to be resilient, while those that did not tend to be less resilient. He reasons this was because contentious politics enabled elites to forge a strong collective identity on the basis of a common enemy, which compelled them to cooperate in the state, party and military institutions.[7]

6 Benjamin Smith, "Life of the Party: The Origins of Regime Breakdown and Persistence Under Single Party Rule" *World Politics*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (2005), pp. 421-451.

7 Dan Slater, *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

In China, notwithstanding over four decades of time lag between the pre-PRC revolutionary period (1930s–1940s) and adoption of the Reform and Openness policy in 1978, Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry argue that the legacies of the former period produced lasting effects on regime resilience in post-Mao China. In particular, their research has demonstrated that the CCP's guerrilla warfare in the revolutionary years has led to the routinisation of the guerrilla approach of policymaking in the PRC, helping the government to carry out complicated economic reforms in a "change-oriented push-and-seize style" successfully.[8] Other China scholars detail how the CCP's historical legacies have contributed to the resilience of the regime in other ways, such as the official manipulation of such legacies to promote a regime-serving type of nationalism. For example, Edward Friedman and Peter Gries find that the Party exploits the war against Japan to legitimate its claim as the saviour of the Chinese nation, and thus its political monopoly.[9]

Secondly, in addition to historical legacies, comparative political scientists have argued that the party machinery has a positive effect on regime resilience. Jason Brownlee demonstrates that ruling parties facilitate political co-optation, generate incentives for long-term loyalty and marginalise the opposition by, firstly, anchoring in an institutional setting that dispenses benefits for members of the coalition, and, secondly, regulating the pursuit of individual ambition within

8 Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry (2011), pp. 1-29.

9 Edward Friedman, "Raising Sheep on Wolf Milk: The Politics and Dangers of Misremembering the Past in China," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, Vol. 9, Iss. 2-3 (2008), pp. 389-409, at 390-395; Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 70-85.

comprehensible rules.[10] Milan Svolik maintains that ruling parties are "effective instruments of authoritarian control" due to their three core institutional features: hierarchical assignment of service and benefits, political control over appointments, and selective recruitment and repression. Within ruling parties, the benefits of party membership concentrate at the senior ranks. To access these benefits, junior party members must first prove their political loyalty by performing costly and often lengthy service for the party. Svolik argues that this serves to exploit the "opportunism and career aspirations of party members to create a stake in the perpetuation of the regime among the most productive and ideologically agreeable segments of the population."[11]

In China, the CCP machinery is often considered crucial to regime resilience for two main reasons. First, the Party exercises complete control over leadership appointment at all bureaucratic levels through the nomenklatura system of personnel management. Svolik's comparative analysis of authoritarian regimes suggests that the CCP's nomenklatura system represents "the most systematic form of administrative formalisation of benefits to party membership and service."[12] Specifically writing of the post-Mao context, Pierre Landry maintains that the nomenklatura system allows the Party centre to retain tight political control despite extensive fiscal and administrative decentralisation.[13] Until the

10 Jason Brownlee (2007).
11 Milan W. Svolik, *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 163.
12 Milan W. Svolik (2012), p. 169.
13 Pierre F. Landry, *Decentralized Authoritarianism in China: The Communist Party's Control of Local Elites in the Post-Mao Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Many scholars, including Landry, argue that post-Mao decentralisation has been crucial to the success of the economic reforms. For example, Gabriella Montinoloa, Qian Yingyi and Barry Weingast argue that it induced local governments to create a hospitable environment for

abolition of term limit for the state President in March 2018,[14] leadership succession in the CCP-state was perceived to have become increasingly norm-bound. It started with Deng Xiaoping imposing a term limit for the state President and an age limit for members of the Political Bureau of the Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee (PBSC). Andrew Nathan found these rules to have bolstered regime resilience by increasing the importance of meritocracy (as distinguished from factional considerations) in leadership succession.[15] Svolik argued that the observance of these rules under Presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao evinced the institutionalisation of collective leadership in the Party, which was conducive to credible power-sharing.[16]

Thirdly, besides historical legacies and the party machinery, comparative studies of authoritarian regimes have shown that the loyalty of the military greatly affects whether the regime can withstand political challenges successfully. Eva Bellin demonstrates that the military's loyalty depends mainly on two variables: levels of institutionalisation and social mobilisation in a popular protest. If the military is institutionalised in the Weberian sense — in which there is meritocratic recruitment and promotion, discipline maintenance based on inculcation of service ethic, etc. — it tends to develop a corporate identity separate from the regime.

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factors of production, and to perform proper fiscal management because of hard budget constraint. See Gabriella Montinola, Qian Yingyi and Barry R. Weingast, "Federalism, Chinese Style: The Political Basis for Economic Success," *World Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (1996), pp. 50-81.

14 See "Guojia zhuxi zhi duo zai ying zhongda gaige: renqi bu xian liang jie" [Major reform of the state presidential system: abolition of the two-term limit of office], *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong)* [Wen Wei Daily (Hong Kong)], February 26, 2018, http://news.wenweipo.com/2018/02/26/IN1802260002.htm (accessed 3 July 2017).

15 Andrew J. Nathan, "Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (January 2003), pp. 6-17.

16 Milan W. Svolik (2012), p. 194.

Consequently, if the regime is faced with serious political challenge, the military's loyalty to the regime is more likely to waver. By contrast, if the military is chiefly organised along patrimonial ties to the regime — such as blood, ethnic, sectarian and/or crony capitalist tie(s) — it tends to perceive its identity and interests as inseparable from those of the regime, and thus tends to staunchly defend the regime in times of crisis. In regard to the level of social mobilisation in a popular protest, Bellin finds that if it is low, the military is likely more prone to using lethal force to repress civilians. However, if it is high, the military is likely much more hesitant to use lethal force, and may even defect, in the interests of preserving its own legitimacy and internal cohesion. [17]

In China, the Central Military Commission (CMC) Chairman Responsibility System is designed to secure the loyalty of the military — the People's Liberation Army (PLA) — to the CCP. It allows the Chairman of the CMC — a position that is reserved for the CCP General Secretary — to appoint senior military personnel and make all major decisions for the PLA.[18] The PLA's willingness to repress a large number of civilians as per the Party's order was demonstrated in its violent crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. After this incident, the military's loyalty to the regime was yet to be tested by another large-scale social mobilisation. What explains the lack of popular challenge against the regime? Pei Minxin argues that it is mainly because, after the Tiananmen crackdown, the

17 Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (January 2012), pp. 127-149.

18 James Mulvenon, "The Cult of Xi and the Rise of the CMC Chairman Responsibility System," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 55, January 23, 2018.

regime has significantly strengthened its repressive capacity.[19] Wang Yuhua and Carl Minzer also find that the extensive "stability maintenance" (*weiwen*) apparatus that has been built after the Tiananmen crackdown pre-empts popular challenge by making local governance "increasingly oriented around the need to respond to social unrest."[20] Besides a robust security apparatus, many scholars attribute the absence of significant challenge against the regime to the high level of legitimacy it enjoys among Chinese citizens.[21] Plausible reasons for this include popular support for the Reform and Openness policy,[22] upward socio-economic mobility for large segments of the population,[23] and the availability of "input institutions," such as the letters-and-visitation system and administrative litigation, for political participation at the grass-roots level.[24]

In the past decade, while some scholars have exposed limitations to the resilience of the CCP-state,[25] many agree that the regime is strong. However, this near-consensus crumbled in 2012 following the infamous Bo Xilai Incident. Son of revered Party veteran Bo Yibo, Bo Xilai cultivated the ambitious "Chongqing Model" featuring the controversial "Sing Red, Smash Black" (*changhong dahei*)

19 Pei Minxin, "The Chinese Political Order: Resilience or Decay?," *Modern China Studies*, Iss. 1 (2014).

20 Wang Yuhua and Carl Minzner, "The Rise of the Chinese Security State," *The China Quarterly*, No. 222 (June 2015), pp. 339-359; Bruce Gilley, "Taxation and Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 26, No. 105 (2017), pp. 452-464.

21 Tang Wenfang, "The 'Surprise' Authoritarian Resilience in China," *American Affairs*, February 20, 2018.

22 Martin K. Whyte, *Myth of the Social Volcano: Perceptions of Inequality and Distributive Injustice in Contemporary China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

23 Teresa Wright, *Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China's Reform Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

24 Andrew J. Nathan (2003).

25 See, for example, Li Cheng, "The End of CCP's Resilient Authoritarianism? A Tripartite Assessment of Shifting Power in China," *The China Quarterly* (2012), Vol. 211, pp. 595-623; Bruce Gilley, "The Limits of Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of Democracy* (2003), Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 18-26.

Campaign. On the one hand, supporters of the Chongqing Model praised Bo for his extraordinary capacity and commitment to improve the well-being of the lower classes, and the model for "updating" the content of Chinese style socialism.[26] On the other hand, critics accused the model of reversing the ideological orientation of the post-Mao Reform and Openness policy: "Sing Red" romanticised the radical politics of the Cultural Revolution; "Smash Black" attacked the legitimacy of the domestic private economy.[27] The controversial Chongqing Model was openly approved by some ranking central leaders, which many interpreted as a sign of Bo's likely promotion to the powerful PBSC at the 18th Party Congress in November 2012. Since the Congress and its first Plenary Session were expected to elect, respectively, a new PBSC and a new General Party Secretary to succeed Hu Jintao, it was a litmus test of the Party's internal elite cohesion. More specifically, it was a test of whether the succession norms imposed by Deng Xiaoping could deliver smooth leadership transition without destabilising political purges. Yet, ahead of the Congress, the charismatic Bo was stripped of political office and expelled from the Party. He was subsequently convicted of bribery, power abuse and corruption, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. Thereafter, the state media repudiated the Chongqing Model as the "political model of the Cultural Revolution," which was said to have no place

26 See, for example, Wang Shaoguang, "Tansuo Zhongguo shi shehui zhuyi 3.0: Chongqing jingyan" [Exploring Chinese Socialism 3.0: The Chongqing Experience], *Makesi zhuyi yanjiu* [Studies on Marxism], No. 2 (2011), pp. 5-12.

27 See, for example, *Caixin*, "'Fansi Chongqing jiaoxun' zhuanjia fayan zhaiyao" ['Reflecting on the Chongqing lessons': a summary of remarks made by experts], December 7, 2012, http://china.caixin.com/2012-12-07/100470073.html

under the Reform and Openness policy.[28] Shortly after Bo's downfall, his patron, Zhou Yongkang, head of the national security apparatus who retired from the PBSC after the Congress, was put under investigation. He too was expelled from the Party, convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment. The Supreme People's Court accused Bo and Zhou of "trampling on the rule of law" (*jianta fazhi*), "damaging the Party's solidarity" (*pohuai dang de tuanjie*) and "engaging in political activities [not approved by the Party]" (*gao fei zuzhi zengzhi huodong*).[29]

The reason why the Bo Xilai Incident challenged the near-consensus view of regime resilience was because, as Li Cheng summarises:

> it "reveal[ed] flaws in China's political system, including nepotism and patron-client ties in the selection of leaders, rampant corruption, the growing oligarchic power of state-owned enterprises, elites' contempt for the law and the potential failure to broker deals between competing factions in the Party leadership. [30]

These flaws indicated that notwithstanding beneficial revolutionary legacies, apparently robust Party institutions, and the absence of popular challenge since 1989, the regime remained vulnerable to the sort of internal decay expected of authoritarian regimes in Western-centric regime theories. In addition to this, I argue that another important takeaway from the Bo Xilai Incident is that the

28 Guangming wang commentator, "Bo Xilai xiachang zai zheng wenge moshi shi yitiao silu" [What becomes of Bo Xilai demonstrates once again that the Cultural Revolution model is a dead road], Guangming wang, September 29, 2012, http://news.ifeng.com/history/shixueyuan/detail_2012_09/29/18004760_0.shtml (accessed 4 July 2017).

29 Ifeng.com, "Meiti: Zhou Yongkang gao fei zuzhi zhengzhi huodong cai dao fandang dixian" [Media: Zhou Yongkang engages in extra-organisational political activities, stepping on the anti-Party bottom line], March 19, 2015, http://news.ifeng.com/a/20150319/43376885_0.shtml (accessed 5 July 2018).

30 Li Cheng (2012).

existing scholarship on Chinese politics has failed to take seriously the conflicts over political ideas — or "ideational conflicts" — during the course of the post-Mao reform. It has long been assumed that conflicts surrounding the reform centre on material interests instead of the vision of the reform,[31] but the Bo Xilai Incident showed that both were heavily contested.

I argue that the implications of ideational conflicts to regime resilience in China are twofold. First, the existence of such conflicts indicates that the level of elite cohesion is shallow. This observation is consistent with Kenneth Lieberthal's "fragmented authoritarianism" model of Chinese politics, which maintains that the cumbersome bureaucratic structure fragments the authority in economic decision-making, the effect of which is accentuated by decentralisation.[32] The Chinese policy system is thus looser and more openly competitive than what is commonly thought of a Leninist regime. Given real possibilities for latent ideational conflicts to be played out in the open, regime resilience can be vulnerable to circumstantial variables that are hard to predict, let alone to manipulate. Therefore, it cannot be assumed based on favourable structural factors.

Second, since local leaders who are at the centre of ideational conflicts tend to invite "policy hedging" from the top Party leadership, this can lead to the disclosure of the identity and strength of patronage networks within the regime.

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31 This assumption is obvious in the scholarship on the Chinese ruling elites/bureaucracy and society. For the former, see, for example, Victor C. Shih, *Factions and Finance in China: Elite Conflict and Inflation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and Bo Zhiyue, *Chinese Provincial Leaders: Economic Performance and Political Mobility Since 1949* (New York, NY: M. E. Sharpe: 2002). For the latter, see, for example, Teresa Wright (2010) and Martin K. Whyte (2010).

32 Kenneth Lieberthal, "Introduction: The 'Fragmented Authoritarianism' Model and Its Limitations," *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley, CA; Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 1-32.

Victor Shih, expert of Chinese factional politics, observes that such political information is ordinarily suppressed in authoritarian regimes. While it serves the interests of maintaining political unity, it entrenches information paucity and uncertainty in the political system.[33] The information concerning patronage networks revealed through ideational conflicts is crucial and credible. It is crucial because it helps the ruling elites to identify and monitor power distribution within the regime. It is credible because it is disclosed in public and may entail politically costly consequences. For example, by endorsing Bo's Chongqing Model with over-the-top praises, Zhou Yongkang, member of the PBSC and head of the powerful CCP Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission, publicly revealed that he was Bo's patron. This contributed to his dramatic downfall soon after that of Bo. Knowledge of the close ties between Zhou and Bo apparently helped the ruling elites detect and pre-empt a political challenge — or, in official words, "eradicate a serious hidden political threat" (*xiaochu zhongda zhengzhi yinhuan*)[34] — and thus conserved the authority of the regime. However, given Bo's popularity as a result of mass support for the Chongqing Model, the purge of him and Zhou, his patron, undermined the Party's political legitimacy, especially in the eyes of Bo's many supporters. As seen from this example, while ideational conflicts can disclose crucial and credible information about patronage networks, it can be challenging for those in power to exploit the information to bolster

33 Victor Shih, "The Autocratic Difference: Information Paucity," working paper, University of Chicago Comparative Seminar, Chicago, IL, January 15, 2010.

34 See "Shiba jie zhongyang jilu jiancha weiyuanhui xiang Zhongguo gongchandang di shijiu ci quanguo daibiao dahui de gongzuo baogao" [Report on the work of the 18th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China], *Xinhua*, October 29, 2017, http://cpc.people.com.cn/19th/n1/2017/1029/c414305-29615051.html (accessed 5 August 2018).

regime stability.

The goal of this thesis is to interrogate the mechanisms through which some of China's greatest ideational conflicts influenced policy change from the late Mao period in the 1960s until 2012, the last year of Hu's ten-year tenure. This relatively long time span allows us to explore how left-leaning and right-leaning ideas evolved in China over time, as well as the identity and interests of the actors who purveyed those political ideas. The persistent trend of elites resorting to ideational conflicts as a means for amassing political capital, building political coalitions, and mobilising forces at the social grassroots reflects a continuation of Mao era practices into the reform period, despite the supposedly "radical break" with the past following the implementation of the Reform and Openness policy. The remaining sections of this chapter introduce the research question and main arguments, review the relevant literature, explain the research methodology, discuss the research significance, and provide an overview of the chapters.

1. How do ideational conflicts influence policy change?

The research question of this thesis is "How do ideational conflicts influence policy change in China?" Before introducing my main arguments, two more basic questions have to be addressed: "what are political ideas?" and "how do political ideas explain policy change?"

1.1 What are political ideas?

In political science, ideas have been referred to as "road maps,"[35] "beliefs, mental constructs, norms, culture,"[36] "collective memories"[37] and etc. Vivien Schmidt surveys the diverse approaches to ideas in the discipline and classifies the usage of ideas at three levels of generality. The first level consists of specific policies or policy solutions. The second and more fundamental level encompasses policy paradigms, being the "organising principles" and "underlying assumptions" of specific policies or policy solutions. They define the problems to be solved, goals to be achieved, norms to be applied, etc. Ideologies, being systems of meaning that bind different policy paradigms together to supply coherence and unity, belong to the third and most fundamental level.[38] In this thesis, I use the term "political ideas" to refer to policies, policy paradigms and ideologies on governance. Political ideas define the proper relationship of the state, economy and society, and carry answers to problems of resource allocation and power distribution. I consider economic ideas, which define the proper relationship of different constituents of the economy, a subset of political ideas.

Schmidt's classification of ideas can be used to classify political ideas in the Chinese political discourse. Her first level of ideas, policies, can be understood as "measures" (*cuoshi*), "policies" (*zhengce*), "systems" (*zhidu*), "institutions" (*tizhi*)

35 See James Walter, *What Were They Thinking: 150 Years of Political Thinking in Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2010), pp. 22-33.
36 See John L. Campbell, "Institutional Analysis and the Role of Ideas in Political Economy," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (June 1998), pp. 377-409.
37 Bo Rothstein, *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
38 Vivien A. Schmidt, "Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 11 (2008), pp. 303-326, at 306-307.

and "plans" (*guihua*) in the official parlance in China. A measure or policy usually gives considerable room for regional adaptation. A system or institution consists of multiple measures and policies that are more or less nationally standardised, and are coordinated by a plan. Her second level of ideas, policy paradigms, can be considered as the equivalents of "principle" (*yuanze/fangzhen*), "spirit" (*jingshen*), "consciousness" (*yishi*), "position, perspective and method" (*lichang guandian fangfa*), "direction" (*fangxiang*), "way of thinking" (*lilian*) and "concept" (*guannian*) in official Chinese usage. These lexicons are often employed by upper-level cadres to instruct their subordinates, who are required to "uphold" (*jianchi*) and "follow" (*gensui*) those ideas, and to "enhance" (*zengqiang*) their knowledge and commitment to them. Schmidt's third level of ideas, ideologies, have been referred to as "thought" (*sixiang*), "line" (*luxian*), "ideology" (*zhuyi/yishi xingtai*) and "belief system" (*xinyang*) by CCP cadres. It is the prerogative of the highest Party leader to interpret Marxism-Leninism, the official governance ideology. The regime claims to have sinisied and developed Marxism-Leninism, producing: Mao Zedong Thought (introduced under Mao in 1945), Deng Xiaoping Theory (introduced under Deng in 1992), the Important Thought of the Three Represents (introduced by Jiang Zemin in 2000), the Scientific Concept of Development (introduced by Hu Jintao in 2003), and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era (introduced by Xi Jinping in 2017) (see Table 1.1 for examples of the usage of terms connoting political ideas in the Chinese political discourse).

Schmidt finds that, policies, policy paradigms and ideologies embody two

dimensions: cognitive/causal and normative. The cognitive/causal dimension elucidates "what is and what to do." It speaks to how policies (first level) offer solutions to problems, how policy paradigms (second level) "define the problems to be solved and identify the methods by which to solve them," and how policies and policy paradigms "mesh with the deeper core" of ideology (third level). The normative dimension "attach[es] values to political action" and legitimates policies by appealing to the "logic of appropriateness."[39] It speaks to how policies (first level) "meet the aspirations and ideals of the general public," and how the policy paradigms (second level) underpinning the policies (first level) resonate with the dominant ideology (third level).[40]

39 James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1989), pp. 160-162, and *Democratic Governance* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995), pp. 154-157

40 Vivien A. Schmidt (2008).

Table 1.1: Terms connoting political ideas in the Chinese political discourse

Vivien Schmidt's classification of political ideas	Chinese political discourse / examples of usage[a]
Level 1: policies	"measure" (*cuoshi*): "protective measures for foreign trade development" (*waimao fazhan de baozhang cuoshi*)
	"policy" (*zhengce*): "implement a proactive import policy" (*shixing jiji de jinkou zhengce*)
	"system" (*zhidu*): "develop a modern property rights system" (*jianli xiandai changquan zhidu*)
	"institution" (*tizhi*): "accelerate reforms of financial institutions" (*jiakuai jinrong tizhi gaige*)
	"plan" (*guihua*): "the 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development" (*guomin jingji he shehui fazhan di shisan ge wu nian guihua*)
Level 2: policy paradigms	"principle" (*yuanze/fangzhen*): "uphold the people-centred principle" (*jianchi renmin zhuti diwei de yuanze*); "the principle of strengthening Party discipline" (*congyan zhidang de fangzhen*)
	"spirit" (*jingshen*): "the spirit of the Third and Fourth Plenums of the 18th Party Congress" (*shiba jie san zhong, si zhong quanhui jingshen*)
	"consciousness" (*yishi*): "enhance crisis consciousness and responsibility consciousness" (*zengqiang youhuan yishi, zeren yishi*)
	"position, perspective and method" (*lichang guandian fangfa*): "uphold the position, perspective and method of Marxism" (*jianchi Makesi zhuyi lichang guandian fangfa*)
	"direction" (*fangxiang*): "our Reform and Openness has its direction, position and principle" (*women de gaige kaifang shi you fangxiang, you lichang, you yuanze de*)
	"way of thinking" (*linian*): "Xi Jinping's new way of thinking in governance" (*Xi Jinping de zhiguo lizheng xin linian*)
	"concept" (*guannian*): "enhance the across-the-board concept" (*zengqiang daju guannian*)
Level 3: ideologies	"thought" (*sixiang*): "Mao Zedong Thought" (*Mao Zedong sixiang*); "The Important Thought of the Three Represents" (*sange daibiao zhongyao sixiang*); "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" (*Xi Jinping xin shidai Zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi sixiang*)
	"theory" (*lilun*): "Deng Xiaoping Theory" (*Deng Xiaoping lilun*)
	"line" (*luxian*): "the correct line of Marxism" (*Makesi zhuyi zhengque luxian*)
	"ideology" (*zhuyi/yishi xingtai*): "Marxism" (*Makesi zhuyi*); "consolidate the leadership position of Marxism in the realm of ideology" (*gonggu Makesi zhuyi zai yishi xingtai lingyu de zhidao diwei*)
	"belief system" (*xinyang*): "the belief system of Marxism" (*Makesi zhuyi xinyang*)

[a] These examples are taken from Xi Jinping's speeches and the 13th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social

Development of the People's Republic of China.
Sources: Xi Jinping xilie zhongyao jianghua shujuku [Database of Xi Jinping's important speeches], people.cn and www.cpcnews.cn, http://jhsjk.people.cn/article (accessed 1 July 2018); "Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guomin jingji he shehui fazhan di shisan ge wu nian guihua gangyao" [The 13th five-year plan for economic and social development of the People's Republic of China], *Xinhua*, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016lh/2016-03/17/c_1118366322.htm (accessed 1 July 2018).

1.2 How do political ideas explain policy change?

The explanatory power of political ideas has traditionally been viewed with suspicion in political science. As a concept, political ideas are difficult to define and measure. Political scientists use political ideas to mean very different things, creating inconsistencies and confusion. Schmidt's classification of political ideas serves to improve the clarity of the concept. However, there is still another problem: political ideas are obviously related to interests and institutions — the standard explanatory variables for policy change — but how they are connected, and how they can be/whether they should be separated from each other, if it is at all possible, are under-specified. The causal effect of political ideas on policy change is thus difficult to assess. This section addresses these issues with the discursive institutionalism approach, which is adopted in this thesis to tackle the research question.

Political ideas and interests are interdependent variables or cluster concepts

Do interests precede political ideas or do political ideas precede interests? The former is assumed to be true most of the time, given that the interests of political agents — power, money and self-preservation — are self-apparent givens. Their interests determine their preferences on political ideas, which they employ to further their interests. In the context of policymaking, whether political agents can

act on their interests depends much on if they have sufficient information to judge what is rational or irrational to do. Where a major policy failure occurs under situations of extreme uncertainty — or "Knightian uncertainty" in the words of Mark Blyth — in which causes of the failure and possible resolution are highly unclear, it is impossible for political agents to act on their interests readily. They must first resort to political ideas as "interpretive frameworks" to diagnose the policy failure. Since interests are not actionable without the information provided by political ideas, political ideas precede interests in an extremely uncertain policy process.[41]

In this thesis, I treat political ideas and interests as interdependent variables or cluster concepts that are indivisible and mutually-reinforcing. Political agents promote/delegitimate political ideas with the help of others when they face political attack. The political coalitions that are formed as a result are expressions of competing political interests, and their existence are legitimated by political ideas. The fate of a given political idea on the policy agenda depends much on the political fate of the political agents promoting the idea, while the political fate of the political agents is affected by the persuasiveness of the idea to other political agents and the public.

41 Mark Blyth, *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Discursive institutionalism endogenises policy change with political i**d**eas and discourse

Discursive institutionalism uses political ideas and discourse to endogenise policy change by explaining how and why political agents bring about policy change.[42] Schmidt defines discourse as the "interactive process of conveying ideas": "[it] is not only what you say…it includes to whom you say it, how, why, and where in the process of policy construction and political communication in the 'public sphere.'" It includes "coordinative discourse" — which occurs when political agents seek to coordinate among themselves on political ideas — and "communicative discourse" — which occurs when political agents present, deliberate, (de)legitimate political ideas to the public. [43] Mark Blyth and Sarah Eaton demonstrate, respectively, the causal importance of economic ideas (being a subset of political ideas, see Section 1.1 above) on institutional change using the approach of discursive institutionalism.

In *Great Transformations: Economic Ideas and Institutional Change in the Twentieth Century*, Blyth puts economic ideas front and centre to explain why the United States and Sweden, despite situated at opposite ends of the liberal-capitalist continuum, both created institutions of embedded liberalism in the 1930s and dismantled them in the 1970s–1980s. He argues this was because the political agents of both countries resorted to similar economic ideas to reduce uncertainty during economic crises, being situations of "Knightian uncertainty." They subsequently used economic ideas to overcome collective action barriers in

42 Vivien A. Schmidt, "Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 11 (2008), pp. 303-326.
43 Vivien A. Schmidt (2008), p. 310.

the relationship of business, labour and the state, the principal collective agents of advanced economies. Economic ideas supplied alternative narratives to redefine existing interests under uncertainty, thus making it possible to build coalitions to promote "common ends of actions" notwithstanding material-based divisions. In addition to coalition building, political agents used economic ideas as weapons to contest existing institutions, so that replacing them becomes possible. Following the delegitimation of existing institutions, economic ideas acted as institutional blueprints: the ideas that diagnosed the crisis dictated the form and content of the institutions that should be constructed to resolve the crisis. Finally, Blyth finds that economic ideas generated conventions to facilitate the institutional coordination of expectations among collective agents. The convergence of their expectations over time contributed to long-term institutional stability.[44]

In *The Advance of the State in Contemporary China: State-Market Relations in the Reform Era*, Sarah Eaton introduces her argument in the context of the State Council's four trillion *yuan* fiscal stimulus plan in 2008, in which central-level state-owned enterprises (SOEs) received the bulk of the fund. She argues that, contrary to the prevailing thinking around that time, the stimulus plan was in fact not the cause of the "advance the state" policy. Her research shows that the plan was best understood as a culmination of over two decades of government efforts in advancing the state sector, a process that is shaped by the adoption of a peculiar set of economic ideas. In the 1980s, the Party elites viewed the clunky planning bureaucracy and industrial fragmentation as urgent problems to be resolved. As a

44 Mark Blyth (2002).

result of this problem definition, they turned to two sources of economic ideas: Marxian economics and the development experience of East Asian developmental states, for policy solutions. While they learned from the former that marketisation would inevitably lead to monopoly, they learned from the latter that monopoly, if guided by the state, could be used to achieve national goals. The combination of these ideas led to the incremental creation of a new national production system based on regional specialisation. Since the 1990s, due to changing domestic and international circumstances, the Party elites redefined the problem for the reform in political terms. They were worried that the growing domestic private sector and increasing foreign trade could weaken the regime's political control. Because of this problem definition, they were favourably predisposed to the idea of creating "national champions," that is, building already large SOEs into globally competitive conglomerates in sectors that were deemed crucial to national security and technological development. The plan was that, through these national champions, the state could retain significant control over the Chinese economy and defend the domestic market from foreign competition.[45]

In light of the rich culture of ideational debates in the Chinese policymaking process, discursive institutionalism is a suitable approach to analyse the effects of ideational conflicts on policy change in China. Franz Schurmann argued that, under democratic centralism (the Party's organisational principle that remains in force today), during the decision-making process, Party members are not only allowed to express their views freely and openly within the Party, but also to

45 Sarah Eaton, *The Advance of the State in Contemporary China: State-Market Relations in the Reform Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

engage in sharp debates with each other to the point where the "juxtaposition or polarisation of opinions" occurs.[46] In addition to democratic centralism, the tradition of debates within the Party could also be attributed to the official adoption of the "line struggle" narrative during the Cultural Revolution. It was asserted that conflicts between proponents of two antithetical ideologies ("lines") were "waged" continuously at the highest echelons of the Party for decades, culminating to the Cultural Revolution, in which Mao mobilised the masses around his "proletarian revolutionary line" to defeat Liu Shaoqi's "bourgeois reactionary line."[47] Andrew Nathan describes the "line" discourse as a speech act of "doctrinalism," that is, the couching of factional power struggle in terms of ideological struggle in order to make interests inconspicuous.[48] While Deng Xiaoping prohibited the usage of the term "line struggle" in the early 1980s, [49] Andrew Kipnis observes that the "line" narrative remains influential in China's political discourse today, particularly among the neoleftist intellectuals. Kipnis writes that they tend to adopt "line-drawing rhetoric" to attack neoliberal ideas, advocate radical transformation of existing policies, and a not-so-critical assessment of the Mao era.[50]

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46 Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China (*Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 53-57. For the official interpretation of democratic centralism, see "Ruhe lijie minzhu jizhong zhi de neihan he jiben yaoqiu" [How to understand the content and basic requirements of democratic centralism], December 13, 2016, *Xinhua*, http://theory.people.com.cn/n1/2016/1213/c40531-28945941.html (accessed 15 January 2018).

47 Lowell Dittmer, "'Line struggle' in Theory and Practice: The Origins of the Cultural Revolution Reconsidered," *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 72 (1977), pp. 675-676.

48 Andrew Nathan, "A Factional Model for CCP Politics," *The China Quarterly*, No. 53 (1973), pp. 34-66, at 48.

49 [Deng Xiaoping], *Deng Xiaoping wenxuan* [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping], Vol. 2 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1994), p. 308.

50 Andrew Kipnis, "Neo-leftist versus Neo-liberals: PRC Intellectual Debates in the 1990s," *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, No. 3 (2003), pp. 239-251.

1.3 Main arguments

I argue that model-making is an important mechanism for ideational conflicts to influence policy change in China. In the Chinese political discourse, models are commonly referred to as "*moshi*" or "*mofan*," both connoting the idea of exemplarity. These terms suggest that models are recognised for the purpose of being modelled (*mofang*). A model can also be called "*dianxing*," which can be translated as "typical example." A model is a typical example not in the sense of being the most common. What is "typical" about it is that it displays exemplary ways of doing things that are easy for others to grasp, although not necessarily easy to emulate.[51] In state socialist regimes, the process of formulating and expressing political ideas has tended to become highly systematised by the Party-state apparatus, which retains the right to definitively espouse particular concepts and "lines" both in response to challenges, as well as in terms of long-term planning. Policy learning in China has likewise evolved into a highly systematised process, which is largely controlled by the Party School system, with emulation of Party-selected models — model workers, model cadres and model villages — emerging as one of the chief didactic vehicles for training officials.[52] While the Party-state apparatus designed model-making as a tool for enforcing political discipline, I argue that model-making has also been carried out by officials to engage in ideational conflicts.

First, model-making allows contentious political ideas to enter into the policy

51 Børge Bakken, *The Exemplary Society: Human Improvement, Social Control, and the Dangers of Modernity in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 177.

52 Frank Pieke, "The Production of Rulers: Communist Party Schools and the Transition to Neo-Socialism in Contemporary China," *Social Anthropology*, Vol. 17, Iss. 1 (2009), pp. 25-39.

system. With the backing of some central officials, local officials promote a selected locale — one that pioneers the implementation of a controversial policy — as a model for wider emulation within and beyond their jurisdiction. They legitimate the new policy with a policy paradigm notably different from the centrally-imposed policy paradigm. While the officials would refrain from introducing a new ideology, as it is the prerogative of the highest Party leader at the time, where blessed by powerful central patrons, they may evoke ideological interpretations by former Party leaders to claim the moral high ground for the controversial policy.

Second, as the model attracts more attention, it becomes a focal point for ideational conflicts within the regime to be expressed in the open. Supporters and opponents of the model compete to build coalitions to promote/discredit the model, to mobilise forces at the social grassroots, and to cultivate a broad-based consensus around the model. I consider these to be activities of factionalism where three conditions are satisfied. The first condition is that the central leadership is clearly divided on their views of the model. The second condition is that some of these activities take place outside the formal bureaucratic framework. The third condition is that, when the model is still in the national limelight, there is promotion/demotion of officials who are strongly associated to the model. If these conditions are present, the model — as carrier of controversial political ideas — is likely being exploited as a tool for power struggle.

Here, some explanations are needed for the concepts "factionalism" and "intra-Party faction." Factionalism are activities of political mobilisation being carried

out by officials under the above conditions. Intra-Party factions are, according to Lowell Dittmer, "vertically organised and informal patron-client networks linked by personal connections."[53] Due to the Party's formal ban on factions, there is no objective means to verify if officials engaging in factionalism are "members" of one or more faction(s). In this thesis, I consider officials who endorse a model as members of one faction, and officials who are against the model as members of an opposing faction. While such classification may be too simplistic and not fully accurate, it is a close approximation to the actual membership of factions. This is because taking sides in an ideational conflict means confronting fellow cadres publicly. It can be politically costly. It increases the cost of shifting sides in the future, which may compromise one's political security. Judging from the realities of Chinese politics, it is reasonable to assume that officials normally refrain from taking sides unless they feel confident that they are well-supported by patron-client networks. [54]

Third, ideational conflicts around the model influence national-level policy change through one or more of the following means. First, all models are resources for local and central policymakers to exploit in policy formulation and evaluation. They test the level of public receptivity to the political ideas under debate, and thus the political feasibility of corresponding new policies. Second, where the outcomes of the ideational conflicts are in the model's favour, other

53 Lowell Dittmer, "Informal Politics Among the Chinese Communist Party Elite," in Lowell Dittmer and Haruhiro Fukui (eds.), *Informal Politics in East Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 106-140, at 107.

54 See Victor C. Shih, "Nauseating Displays of Loyalty: Monitoring the Factional Bargain through Ideological Campaigns in China," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 70, No. 4 (2008), pp. 1177-1192.

locales would be emboldened to emulate the model. The regime can orchestrate a rapid diffusion of the targeted policy process by handing down formal documents and promoting the model through the central-level propaganda machinery. Third, if the ideational conflicts successfully delegitimate the model, the political ideas it carries would be purged from the policy process, and rendered taboo in the political discourse. While this strengthens the existing policy order in the short run, the political ideas may resurface — likely in the same model-making jurisdiction, being home to the legacy and agents specific to those ideas — when the political environment becomes less restrictive.

I argue that most models in China can be understood as exemplifying one or more of the following four categories: political theatre models, rightful resistance models, Maoist nostalgia models, and experimental zone models. A model can be a hybrid of two or more categories. Political theatre models are most strongly associated with Maoism and state socialism, both are highly performative: citizens are required to demonstrate their loyalty to the regime through purposeful behaviour, such as participation in political parades, political study sessions, struggle sessions against class enemies, etc.[55] Political theatre models aim to make the political ideas promoted by the model visible through the media of landscape and the daily life routines of residents. High-quality public amenities are completed within a short period of time to attest to the efficacy of those ideas on the landscape. Those who live in the model locales are trained to display a high level of consciousness to those ideas in their daily living. Political theatre models

55 Elizabeth Perry, "Moving the Masses: Emotion Work in the Chinese Revolution," *Mobilisation*, Vol. 7, Iss. 2 (2002), pp. 111-128.

were the standard category of model during the Mao era. They included, for example, the Dazhai and Fangualong Models, both nationally renowned during the Cultural Revolution, and were repudiated thereafter.[56]

Rightful resistance models originated in the early reform era, that is, during the period from the adoption of the Reform and Openness policy in 1978 to the Tiananmen Square movement in 1989. Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang use the term "rightful resistance" to describe semi-legal/illegal protest actions in rural China, in which peasants challenge the lawfulness of local policies with reference to upper-level directives and the idea of paternalistic government.[57] I adapt their concept to refer to models promoting political ideas that are suppressed/outlawed by the regime, such as the Anhui and Wenzhou Models. Model-making officials seek to legitimate such ideas by claiming them to be the "creation of the masses" and are consistent with common sense and pragmatism.

Maoist nostalgia models, as the name implies, are the distinctive products of the post-Mao period. This category of models features left-leaning political ideas that adapt Maoist institutions and practices to the context of post-Mao marketisation. Due to their ideational adaptation, some scholars refrain from

56 See Pang Ruilin, *Youling piaodang de taohe* [The ghosts hovering over the irrigation project] (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2006), pp. 211-12; Ho Wing-chung, "The (Un-)making of the Shanghai Socialist 'Model Community': From the Monolithic to Heterogeneous Appropriation(s) of the Past," *The Journal of Asian and African Studies*, No. 5 (2004), pp. 379-405, at 380.

57 For the concept of "rightful resistance," see Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, *Rightful Resistance in Rural China* (New York, NY: Cambridge University, 2006). The idea of rightful resistance will be elaborated in Chapter Three, which examines the making of the Anhui Model. For the Wenzhou Model, see Kristen Parris, "Local Initiative and National Reform: The Wenzhou Model of Development," *The China Quarterly*, No. 134 (June 1993), pp. 242-263.

calling them "Maoist," and use the term "crypto-Maoist" instead.[58] That being said, I think the term "Maoist nostalgia" is fitting because the model-making officials exploit the popular nostalgia for the Mao era to legitimate the political ideas they promote. Maoist nostalgia models include, for example, the Nanjie, Huaxi and Chongqing Models. The Chongqing Model is also an experimental zone model.

Experimental zone models feature large-scale reforms changing not only specific policies, but institutions and systems across diverse policy domains. Experimental zones are established by the Centre with an explicit mission to test-run new policies at the local level. In the early reform period, there were "special economic zones" (SEZs). In recent years, there were "comprehensive reform pilot areas" (CRPAs). The elevation of these zones into models often involves significant factional manoeuvrings, in which ideational conflicts come into play. This was the case in the model-making process of the Shenzhen SEZ, Guangdong CRPA and Chongqing CRPA.[59]

2. Model-making

There are two main bodies of literature on the practice of model-making in China. The first body, typified by the works of Børge Bakken, Pang Laikwan and Ann Anagnost, analyses models and modelling from the perspective of Chinese culture. It demonstrates that model-making carries strong normative expectations that

58 See Willy Lam, "The Death of Factions within the Chinese Communist Party?," *China Brief*, Vol. XI, Iss. 9 (May 20, 2011), pp. 2-4.

59 For a detailed study of the various types of reform zones in China, see Sun Dabu, *Zhongguo kaifa qu yanjiu: Ye da anli* [The contribution of FEZs to the economic development of China] (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press [China], 2014).

resonate with Chinese society. This helps explain why the term "model" is used very cautiously in the Chinese political discourse. Upholding a new model implies establishing a new standard of exemplarity and thus challenging the existing order. The second body of literature examines model-making as part of the CCP's policymaking methodology of "local policy experimentation." Sebastian Heilmann has written most extensively on this topic to date. While both his work and my thesis examine how model-making leads to policy change on a wider scale, our approaches are different. He conceptualises model-making mainly as a bureaucratic, technocratic and open-ended exercise of experimentation. By contrast, I focus on the political dynamics of ideational conflicts and factionalism that shape both the process and outcome of model-making. Drawing from the research of Cai Hongbin, Daniel Treisman and Mary Gallagher, I demonstrate that local policy experiments in the early reform period were neither as open nor as technocratic in their aims as Heilmann maintains.

2.1 Models and modelling: Building an exemplary society

Bakken finds that models and modelling in China, which go as far back as the Western Zhou dynasty (1110–771 BC), grow out of Chinese culture. The practice emphasises imitation and repetition, and asserts in the unlimited malleability and educability of all people.[60] He writes:

> The Chinese process of socialisation is still [sic] followed by massive doses of model learning, and people know their models

60 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 173.

as an obvious part of their cultural knowledge and identity.[61]

Throughout Chinese history, models and modelling were carried out by political elites in order to achieve social control. "A model is a silent order." As examples of the exemplary, models draw attention to particular courses of action, increase the salience of social norms, frame situations and problems in particular ways, and give clear signals about preferred solutions and consequences.[62] Ideally, in PRC history, models should emerge from the grass-roots level, and are not imposed from above: the former possess "social and cultural moorings" that the latter lack. The more concrete, local and realistic the models, the easier it is for people to believe that the outcomes they produce are achievable.[63] In her research on the Cultural Revolution at the grassroots, Pang finds ample evidence that learning from the exemplary fostered social bonding and submission to the dominant ideology. The power of models persisted whether the exemplary existed in real life ("models") or were fictitious constructions that embodied perfection ("templates"/ "*yangban*").[64]

Modelling, that is, the emulation of models, forces people to train their attention and focus their actions to conform to a particular norm. This helps to ensure the display of proper behaviour even in the absence of the use of force or direct surveillance.[65] True modelling, writes Bakken, transcends beyond

61 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 181.
62 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 167.
63 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 180.
64 Pang Laikwan, *The Art of Cloning: Creative Production During China's Cultural Revolution* (London: Verso, 2017), pp. 10-13.
65 Børge Bakken (2000), pp. 168, 99. See also the discussion of Bentham's Panopticon in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995).

mechanical copying to adopting behaviours that are "symbolic equivalents" of the behaviour of the model.[66] Moreover, social order that is achieved from modelling is not an end in itself. It is "placed within a narrative of progress that aims to channel and magnify an ethic of production." This, in Bakken's view, is what makes China an "exemplary society" that focuses on the attainment of the exemplary norm, as distinguished from Foucault's notion of the "disciplinary society" that focuses on conforming to the average norm.[67] Bakken remarks that the post-Mao regime has continued the historical use of models and modelling to achieve "moral planning," that is, to instil in Chinese citizens the values of initiative and adaptability, which are seen as crucial to success in market competition.

However, the exemplary society bears the stamp of hypocrisy.[68] Bakken observes that "structural ways of lying" are inherent in the system because it forces people to behave in prescribed ways. People display an "outer form" that can be completely separate from their inner reality as a coping strategy. Anagnost likewise critiques the "performative dimensions" of China's imitative-repetitive culture. She recalls the scandal of a man impersonating himself as the son of Li Da, a revered revolutionary cadre, in order to appropriate the privileges accorded to children of ranking cadres in 1979. Until his true identity was discovered several months later, everyone he came across offered him gifts in the hopes of favours in return. "Mimesis," Anagnost writes, is at heart of China's representational economy, where the "appearance of things" writes on the real,

66 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 178.
67 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 119.
68 Børge Bakken (2000), p. 411.

rather than reflecting the external reality.[69]

2.2 Model-making as CCP's policymaking methodology

Heilmann describes the "extraction and dissemination of model experiences" as part of the CCP's policymaking methodology of feeding local policy experiments into the national policy process. This has been officially referred to as "proceeding from point to surface" (*youdian daomian*) and "integrating point and surface" (*dianmian jiehe*). Local officials are encouraged to try new ways of problem solving, while the Centre exercises ultimate control over confirming, revising, terminating and spreading their model experiments. Heilmann observes that local policy experimentation has "decisively shaped" post-Mao economic reforms and has contributed to China's "unexpectedly adaptive authoritarianism." It allows policymakers to "tinker around" with piecemeal restructuring instead of becoming mired in deadlock due to the absence of top-level consensus. Moreover, it reduces the risks of large-scale policy change. "Broad-based local entrepreneurship" and gradual dissemination result in an incremental "fine-tuning of policy content and implementation," where policy parameters are cumulatively redefined in the search of generalisable policy solutions. The strength of China's reform experience is said to be "not its coherence but its openness to unexpected and tentative policy solutions that are seized upon when they come up." It is a

69 Ann Anagnost, *National Past-times: Narrative, Representation, and Power in Modern China* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 45-74. Timur Kuran argues that, in the case of the Soviet Union, it was the repetition of the ideologised norm that created a thin but vast culture of preference falsification. It caused mass defection from those norms once the regime's weakness was revealed in 1989–1991. See Timur Kuran, "Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989," *World Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (1991), pp. 7-48.

policy process where "discretionary experimentation precedes legislation," being the opposite of the legislation-centred policy process in Western democracies, where legislation precedes implementation. Heilmann notices that experimentation can be distorted by local rent-seeking, in which local officials "warp the original policy goals" and "do not search for generalisable solutions," but instead take advantage of the Centre's promotion of experimental points to demand preferential policies. It also undermines established laws and regulations, and can degenerate into "wasteful policy crazes" if individual policymakers turn local models into "prestige projects" that must not fail.[70]

Heilmann traces the origin of local policy experimentation to two sources in the pre-1949 era, neither were related to Soviet nor Marxist traditions, which did not consist of decentralised experimentation. Intellectually, Heilmann finds that the CCP's founders, including Mao, were attracted to the practice-based epistemology promoted by the American pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, who lectured on the experimental method in China in the early 1920s. It emphasised doing and learning through direct practical experience instead of trusting ideas or theories. The CCP founders were able to put this into practice in the Communist base areas. In 1928, experiments with different approaches to land reform were carried out by Mao in Jinggangshan and Deng Zihui in Minxi,

70 Sebastian Heilmann, "From Local Experiments to National Policy: The Origins of China's Distinctive Policy Process," *The China Journal*, No. 59 (Jan 2008), pp. 1-30; "Experimentation under Hierarchy: Policy Experiments in the Reorganisation of China's State Sector, 1978-2008," Working Paper No. 172, June 2008, Centre for International Development at Harvard University; "Maximum Tinkering Under Uncertainty: Unorthodox Lessons from China," *Modern China*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (June 2009), pp. 450-462; with Lea Shih and Andreas Hofem, "National Planning and Local Technology Zones: Experimental Governance in China's Torch Programme," *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 216 (2013), pp. 896-919.

respectively. The "Minxi Experience" was widely disseminated by 1930, serving as an important reference for land policies in the Jiangxi Soviet from 1931–1934. In the late 1930s–1940s, emulation campaigns of model experiences in organisational, educational, and land reform work proliferated in the Jiangxi Soviet. Heilmann finds that, for most of the period of "high Maoism" (1958–1978), the regime's ideological fervour led to the replacement of decentralised open experimentation by "centrally imposed model emulation" requiring "standardised implementation" and "swift total compliance." However, the post-Mao regime rehabilitated decentralised open experimentation. It took the practice out of its "mass campaign context" and integrated it into the "administrative and entrepreneurial state context," leading to the promotion of concurrent experiments and multiple models that address China's regional variation.[71]

Heilmann's approach conceptualises the point-to-surface policymaking methodology as a routinised, technocratic and bureaucratic process. My approach, on the other hand, focuses on the politics, where the agents for change are political coalitions and factions. Heilmann's approach strongly suggests that large-scale dissemination of new local policies takes place mainly, if not solely, because of its tested and proven effectiveness in problem solving. It recasts politicians into an elitist corps of social engineers, and policymaking from political to apparently impartial and efficient. It deemphasises agency, rhetoric and persuasion characteristic of the political process. By contrast, I argue that large-scale policy dissemination is possible only if the model's policies are legitimated by a new set

71 Sebastian Heilmann (January 2008).

of political ideas — which have to discredit those underpinning the existing policies successfully. Model-making is therefore a political process more than an administrative process. If we take politics into account, it seems that Heilmann's model is more suitable to explain policy changes that are relatively technical, trivial and/or enjoy broad-based consensus.

The other limitation of Heilmann's approach is that it neglects factors indicating that decentralised experimentation is often not "open experimentation." For example, Cai and Treisman find preliminary evidence suggesting that many of post-Mao China's most important decentralised experiments were in fact controlled by the Centre, with local officials merely serving as "actors in a game directed by Beijing." The experiments they cite include rural decollectivisation, foreign economic opening, and state sector restructuring, all of which are recast by Heilmann as technocratic models. They argue that, in all these cases, central leaders with different ideological predispositions and local connections co-opted, if not directly initiated, "local" experiments in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of the policies they favoured and boost their standing in the Party. The central leaders made provincial leaders carry out policy changes despite the latter's reluctance, using the powers of political appointment and removal to enforce compliance. They conclude that it was not decentralisation but rather factional competition that gave rise to local experimentation and model dissemination through patron-client networks reaching from central policymakers down to local administrators.[72]

72 Cai Hongbin and Daniel Treisman, "Did Government Decentralisation Cause China's

Gallagher also does not conceive of the local policy experiments she studies as open experiments. She argues that the content and outcome of these experiments were not so much the result of local entrepreneurship or horizontal policy learning. Instead, they were largely predetermined by the policy homogenisation effect of a pro-capital logic. She maintains that the impact of the sequencing of reforms on ownership structures in China, where foreign direct investment (FDI) liberalisation preceded both the privatisation of the state sector and development of a domestic private sector, unleashed powerful lock-in effects that made further marketisation the only possible option. The formation of a foreign-invested sector of the economy gave the central government justification to privatise the state sector and break the "iron rice bowls" for state workers on "nationalist grounds"— that is, to stay competitive against foreign firms. In other words, this FDI-first reform sequence allowed the state to reformulate the public versus private industry debate to a domestic versus foreign debate. Apart from this ideational breakthrough, this sequencing also reduced the political power of groups that were protected by socialism in two ways: first through fragmenting the urban workforce (FDI employed versus non-FDI employed) and local governments (coastal FDI-receiving regions versus inland non-FDI-receiving regions), and subsequently through increasing regional competition for economic growth. In this policy context, there was simply no room for local policymakers to "tinker around" policy options.[73]

Economic Miracle?," *World Politics*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (July 2006), pp. 505-535.

73 Mary E. Gallagher, "'Reform and Openness': Why China's Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy?," *World Politics*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (April 2002), pp. 338-372.

3. Case selection strategy

My case selection strategy is guided by information availability, in order to demonstrate the full range of variation in the relationship between ideational conflicts and policy change as manifested through model-making. Each of the cases I have selected received substantial publicity at the time of model-making, thereby providing a wealth of publicly available information about each model, facilitating detailed analysis. I have chosen four "typical cases," one "extreme/unusual case" and one "crucial case" from various points in time from 1964–2012, spanning the late Mao, early reform, to post-early reform periods.[74] The typical cases are Anhui, a rightful resistance model (1979–1980), Nanjie, a Maoist nostalgia model (1984–present), Guangdong and Chongqing, two experimental zone models (with Chongqing being a Maoist nostalgia model as well) (2008–2012). Each was representative of the typical causal relationship between ideational conflicts and policy change. Anhui represented a case of successful model-making, demonstrating the sequence of: ideational conflicts → model-making → horizontal emulation of the model → policy change in more areas → policy of model redefining national policy status quo. On the other hand, Nanjie was a typical case of model-making with limited success, where model-making did lead to policy change in areas other than the model, but failed to displace the existing state policy. Ideational conflicts represented by Guangdong and Chongqing were not only targeted against certain state policies, but also against each other. This reflected increasing regional competition for political and

74 See John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 86-150.

economic resources. As two competitive models, they influenced policy change by providing "intellectual resources" for central leaders to pick and choose from to improve existing policies.

Dazhai (1964–1978), a political theatre model, was an extreme/unusual case, in which ideational conflicts were contained within the model rather than occurring between the model and existing national policies (local versus centre) or the model with another model (local versus local). The Shenzhen SEZ, an experimental zone model (1979–mid-2000s) was a crucial case because it was a "least likely" case for ideational conflicts to emerge, let alone to affect policy change. From the early days of the establishment of the Shenzhen SEZ, its objectives were clearly delineated and were strictly technocratic: to transplant Hong Kong's capitalistic managerial system and to earn foreign exchange. However, ideational conflicts emerged within the Shenzhen SEZ model to the point that it was gradually transformed into a special political zone, and became the focal point for political reform in China.

I employ discursive institutionalism and process tracing, both commonly used to explain institutional change in the ideational tradition, to analyse the six cases. Process tracing is useful to demonstrate the sequential model of the role of ideational conflicts on policy change. I rely mainly on primary data collected from various libraries and archives in mainland China, Hong Kong and the United States between 2014–2017.[75]

75 Most of the materials for Dazhai were obtained from the digital archive of *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao*) available through the Bodleian, and official documents, many were previously classified, stored in Xiyang County Archive. The materials for Anhui are mainly official documents collected in the CCP Party History Press's *Compilation of Historical Materials of*

4. Research significance and chapters overview

This thesis contributes to the scholarship of authoritarian resilience in Chinese politics by showing that, contrary to what is commonly assumed of authoritarian regimes, the policymaking process of China has in fact been much more openly contentious. In explaining and tracing this process using the discursive institutionalism approach, this study advances the research on political ideas, which has been sidelined by China scholars in recent years due to the widely accepted view that "pragmatism has replaced ideology" in post-Mao policymaking.[76] This is despite the fact that pragmatism itself is an ideational construct meaning different things to different people in different policy domains over time. The five empirical chapters offer nuanced and detailed analysis of each of the policy models in a historically comparative perspective.

Chapter 2 discusses how the ideational conflicts between the radical and conservative factions were waged through the Dazhai Model. It is the first English language study making use of official archival records to study the Learn from Dazhai Campaign, which defined and redefined the shifting policy directions of

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Agricultural Collectivisation Since the Founding of the State (*Jianguo yilai nongye hezuohua shiliao huibian*). I read the book at Fung Ping Shan Library of the University of Hong Kong. For Nanjie, I rely heavily on the village gazetteer and newspapers obtained from village officials during my trip there, which involved interviewing several propaganda officials, visiting the village in an officially arranged tour, as well as attending a meeting arranged by the local Party committee for official visitors, workers, as well as local students and parents respectively. For Shenzhen, I obtained valuable information from extensively reading *Shenzhen Special Zone Daily* (*Shenzhen tequ bao*) at Harvard-Yenching Library, the Hong Kong periodical *Wide Angle* (Guang jiao jing) at Fung Ping Shan, and *Yearbook of China's Special Economic Zones* (*Zhongguo jingji tequ nianjian*) at the Bodleian. For Guangdong and Chongqing, I make many references to the local government yearbooks I read at Fung Ping Shan, and the local Party newspapers and other Chinese newspapers accessible through the Bodleian.

76 See, for example, Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu, *Gaobie geming: Huiwang ershishiji Zhongguo* [Farewell to revolution: Looking back at twentieth-century China] (Hong Kong: Cosmo Books, 1997), pp. 69-80.

Chinese agriculture for 14 years. These records, which were for internal circulation within the ranks of officialdom during the Campaign, shed important lights on the model-making process from the perspective of the local leadership and residents as it happened. They are likely more reliable than the recent interviews with Dazhai's residents who recalled that period of history.[77] By incorporating this archival material, Chapter 2 challenges the "Mao dominant thesis" that has characterised the mainstream of scholarship on Mao-era policymaking. The scholarship views that Mao was consistently dominant in the making of rural policies, except in the few years immediately after the Great Leap Forward in 1958. The model-making of Dazhai, however, demonstrated that Mao was in fact unable to pursue his visions for rural China despite having handpicked the village as a national model. Rivalrous factions were able to control the interpretation of the Dazhai Model to impose their own rural policy agendas. This demonstrated that factionalism was a serious political force to be reckoned with despite Mao's dominance.[78]

Chapter 3 examines how the survivor faction, which grew out of the conservative faction, cultivated the Anhui Model to topple nearly 30 years of rural collectivisation, which was at that time staunchly defended by Hua Guofeng's loyalist faction. This chapter clarifies the existing conceptual confusion concerning the range of household responsibility systems introduced after the

77 See Sun Liping and Liu Xiaoli, *Kuoshu Dazhai shi: 150 wei Dazhai ren shuo Dazhai* [Oral history of Dazhai: 150 Dazhai residents talk about Dazhai] (Guangdong: Nanfang ribao chubanshe, 2008).

78 For the Mao dominant thesis, see Lowell Dittmer (1977) and Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and Decline of Party Norms, 1950-1965* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), 2nd ed.

downfall of the Dazhai Model. The proliferation of these various systems was more than mere semantic errors. It resulted in serious misunderstandings of the political dynamics underpinning decollectivisation in the literature. For example, most scholars interpreted *baochan daohu* as equivalent to *dabaogan*, while in fact the policy paradigms of the two systems were entirely separate: *baochan daohu* preserved collective accounting and distribution, while *dabaogan* returned these powers back to individual peasant households. At the time, Anhui's leaders strategically elided the two terms in their official discourse in order to render the ideational challenge of *dabaogan* to the people's commune system less conspicuous, a strategic choice that was missed by most scholars working on the period.[79]

Chapter 4 examines the recollectivisation of Nanjie Village, which took place despite policies mandating post-Mao decollectivisation triggered by the Anhui Model. The Nanjie Model is frequently dismissed by sceptics as an outlier. However, while there is no doubt that the model has its own specificities, it is by no means irrelevant to rural policymaking. While there are no reliable statistics on the number of villages that recollectivised, either in whole or in part, in China to date, *Xinxi ribao* claimed that they totalled 2,000 in 2006.[80] Li Changping, village Party secretary turned prominent rural advocate, estimated that the number had surged to 7,000 in 2016.[81] This chapter examines the ideational and factional

79 See, for example, Kate Zhou, *How the Farmers Changed China: Power of the People* (Boulder, CO; Oxford: Westview, 1996), pp. 46-75.

80 He Zhongzhou, “Henan 'hongse yi yuan cun' de sheng yu shuai” [The rise and fall of Henan's “red billionaire village”], *Xinxi ribao* [Information Daily], April 9, 2006, p. 4.

81 Li Changping, “Guanyu fupin, wo shi zheme kan de” [About poverty alleviation: This is how I see it], April 27, 2016, in 360.doc,

foundation of the ill-understood recollectivisation movement, demonstrating how the left-leaning ideational agenda of retired Party elders and Mao's descendants were mapped onto the factional networks of Henan Province and Linying County, in order to cultivate the Nanjie Model and protect it from political attack.

Chapter 5 discusses the ideational conflicts within the Shenzhen SEZ, which were erased in the official historiography of the SEZ after the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. It details how the SEZ was in fact split into two models in practice: Shenzhen, which stayed within the centrally assigned mission of reforming the economic system, and Shekou, which carried out bold political reforms that have never been seen in China again. In addition, it explores how conflicts of interests between SEZs, which were given preferential policies, and non-SEZs, which were excluded from the SEZ-specific preferential policies, discredited the mechanism of model-making after 1989.

Chapter 6 revisits the controversial Guangdong and Chongqing Models, which were crafted respectively by Wang Yang and Bo Xilai, the former Party secretaries of these two places, ahead of the once-in-a-decade leadership transition at the 18th Party Congress in 2012. Much has been written about these two models, and particularly about the Chongqing Model. I analyse existing perspectives on the relationship between the two models, which I consider to be misplaced because of misunderstandings of the Guangdong Model. I demonstrate that although the ideational conflicts between the two models were initially substantive and ideologically driven, due to a combination of various exogenous

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http://www.360doc.com/content/16/0427/20/31950825_554322273.shtml (accessed 21 November 2017).

factors, when the Guangdong Model abandoned its original ideology, its contrast to the Chongqing Model lost significance. The ideological convergence of these two models served as an early warning sign that the space for ideational conflicts was becoming increasingly restricted in Xi Jinping's China. I will elaborate this point in Chapter 7, the concluding chapter, which revisits the main arguments and discusses the fate of ideational conflicts and model-making under Xi.

CHAPTER TWO

Staging Dazhai:

The making of a national political theatre model, 1964–1978

This chapter examines how Dazhai, an obscure village and production brigade in Shanxi's Xiyang County, was transformed into a model for nationwide emulation during the "In Agriculture, Learn from Dazhai" Campaign (1964–1978). I argue that Dazhai was "staged" by the higher-ups, particularly at the Centre. Dazhai was perhaps best understood as a "national political theatre model," in which various elements of drama, including role playing, set construction, and ventriloquism were used to lift it out of obscurity to become the authoritative symbol for rural policy at the national level. I analyse the rise of Dazhai in the context of the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward in 1958, which resulted in Mao's radical agricultural agenda being discredited and sidelined. I subsequently discuss how Dazhai in fact preserved and even strengthened Mao's radical agenda in the post-Leap period, prompting Mao to select it to serve as the national rural model. Thereafter, I analyse how Dazhai's cadres and villagers assumed stylised roles to act as spokespersons of the radical agenda. I investigate the sources of agency and funding of the massive landscape transformation in Dazhai. The new landscapes were "sets" constructed to inspire Dazhai's daily average of 1,000 visitors, most of whom were cadres from across China, of the power of self-reliance and hard work in transforming the countryside. Finally, I explain how the radical and conservative factions at the Centre exploited Dazhai as a vehicle for carrying out

the “ventriloquist trick” in order to shape the national rural agenda in their preferred directions.

1. The rise of Dazhai after the Great Leap Forward

The rise of Dazhai took place in the context of significant changes in central-level power dynamics and national rural policies as a result of the failure of the Great Leap Forward Campaign in 1958. Confident that rural China was ready to leap into communism, Mao launched the campaign to hurry peasants to organise themselves into people's communes, being the most collectivised form of rural organisation. The arbitrary management of communes and their egalitarian system of remuneration dampened the incentives of peasants to carry out agricultural production and led to food shortages, which deteriorated to the point of widespread famine. During the Leap, many peasants were forced to participate in capital construction works, such as building irrigation facilities, which was seen as a policy priority in the new communes. Their working conditions were frequently dismal, and physical overexertion was commonplace. By 1961, the total number of fatalities arising from the famine and injuries at construction sites in the countryside hit 30 million.[1]

To ameliorate the crisis, Mao begrudgingly agreed to relax the collectivisation programme of the Great Leap Forward for three years from 1959–1962. A diversity of remedial measures sprung up from the grass-roots level, including new distribution systems linking an individual's remuneration to their work

1 Yang Dali L., *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change Since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. vii, 38.

performance, restrictions on the number of days required of peasants to undertake capital construction works, restoration of private farming, and decentralisation of authority to the lowest administrative level in communes. Mao was of the view that once the rural economy showed signs of recovery, these measures should be scrapped, and the level of collectivisation should be raised significantly. However, most of his colleagues viewed that these measures should continue. To that end, the central leadership drafted the "Articles on the Work of the Rural People's Communes" to formalise the remedial measures into state policies, commonly referred to as the "Sixty Articles." It was formally adopted as the CCP's policy statement on communes at the Eighth Plenum of the Tenth CCP Central Committee in 1962.[2]

It was in this context that Dazhai was brought to Mao's attention by Tao Lujia, Party Secretary of Shanxi Province, in March 1964. Tao told Mao that the villagers of Dazhai Production Brigade "relied on their own hands" to carry out ambitious projects of landscape alteration during 1953–1963. This was for the sake of improving the village's ability to withstand droughts and floods, and to create more flatlands to pave the way for agricultural mechanisation in the future. Tao explained that while most of the new constructions were destroyed by a severe rainstorm in 1963, the villagers had shown commendable resilience in

2 For a discussion of the viewpoints of Mao and his colleagues on the remedial measures and the Sixty Articles, as well as the drafting of the Sixty Articles, see Byung-joon Ahn, *Chinese Politics and the Cultural Revolution: Dynamics of Policy Processes* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1976), pp. 54-55, 302, and Lowell Dittmer (1977). For the full text of the Sixty Articles, see "Nongcun renmin gongshe gongzuo tiaoli (xiuzheng cao'an)" [Articles on the work of the rural people's communes (revised draft)], September 27, 1962, in Huang Daoxia, Yu Zhan and Wang Xiyu, *Jianguo yilai nongye hezuohua shiliao huibian* [Compilation of historical materials of agricultural collectivisation since the founding of the state] (Beijing: Zhongyang dangshi chubanshe, 1992), pp. 732-741.

battling with adversity. They purportedly declined all forms of disaster relief, dutifully fulfilled their obligations of selling grain to the state, relying entirely on themselves to rebuild their homeland. Tao attributed Dazhai's extraordinary deeds to the leadership of Chen Yonggui, the village's Party Secretary, who had implemented a rigorous programme of ideological education to teach villagers to downplay self-interest, and consistently led by example. Mao was apparently delighted, and told Tao that he believed Dazhai's villagers had "put politics in command."[3] This was likely because Mao long associated strong community spirit to a high level of collectivisation, which he viewed as having been thwarted by the Sixty Articles.[4]

In December 1964, under Mao's instructions, Premier Zhou Enlai called upon all villages to "learn from Dazhai" at the First Plenum of the Third National People's Congress.[5] This marked the beginning of the prolonged "In Agriculture, Learn from Dazhai Campaign" (hereafter referred to as the "Dazhai Campaign") from 1964–1978, which largely overlapped with the Cultural Revolution in 1966–1976. Given that Mao lent his patronage to Dazhai, it was no surprise that the village boasted the adoption of many policies that were reminiscent of the Great Leap Forward, and were prohibited by the Sixty Articles. They included the

3 *Dazhai fengwu zhi* [Dazhai heritage gazetteer] (Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 2007), pp. 21-23.

4 This preference of Mao was apparent in his justification for launching the Socialist Education Campaign in 1963. See Richard Baum and Frederick C. Teiwes, *Ssu-Ch'ing: The Socialist Education Movement of 1962-1966* (Berkeley, CA: Centre for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1968).

5 For the central-level policy statement attributing the imperative to learn from Dazhai as Mao's "wise decision," see "Zhongguo gongchandang di ba jie zhongyang weiyuanhui di shiyi ci quanti huiyi gongbao" [Communiqué of the Eighth Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress of the Communist Party of China], *Renmin wang*, August 12, 1966, http://cpc.people.com.cn/BIG5/64162/64168/64560/65354/4442083.html (accessed 3 March 2015).

pacesetter work-point system, brigade-level accounting, abolition of private plots, household sideline production and rural trade fairs, as well as excessive demands for cadres to participate in manual labour, and for villagers to undertake capital construction works.[6]

1.1 Pacesetter work-point system

In people's communes, peasants were rewarded with work-points for their labour, which resulted in annual payment in crops and/or cash after harvest. Chen claimed in 1967 that the pacesetter work-point system had been implemented in Dazhai since 1960. It worked as follows. Initially, the local Party branch selected a few pacesetters from among the village's poor-and-middle peasants based on their excellence in the following criteria: diligence in studying Mao Zedong Thought, enthusiasm for labour, and a high level of physical strength, technical skill, as well as quality of work. The pacesetters were entitled to the maximum number of work-points. Every year, the Party gathered all peasants together, where each of them would take turns to evaluate how many work-points they thought they deserved, based on comparing their performance and class background with those of the pacesetters. Thereafter, the actual number of work-points allocated to them would be determined by the whole community.[7]

The pacesetter work-point system was opposite in spirit to the piece-rate work-point system required of all communes under the Sixty Articles. Under the piece-

6 See Appendix 1 for the provisions of the Sixty Articles that were violated by Dazhai.

7 Chen Yonggui, "Quanguo di er zhi xue Dazhai laodong guanli jingyan xianchang huiyi shang de jianghua" [Speech at the Second National Conference on Learning from the Experience of Labour Management of Dazhai], September 6, 1967, in Xiyang County Archive, hereafter referred to as "XCA," Vol. 3-1-442, p. 74 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

rate system, the number of work-points for each peasant had to be assessed daily on the basis of the level of physical strength and technical skills required for a particular piece of work, as well as the relative importance of that piece of work to the entire production process. It was designed to establish a clear connection between an individual's remuneration and work performance. It did not make use of a pacesetter, and did not take into account the class background or political attitude of peasants.

1.2 Brigade-level accounting

The Sixty Articles stipulated that all communes should practice team-level accounting. This was the most decentralised form of management within communes, where labour management, production, capital construction, work-point allocation and capital accumulation, were all decided and managed within the team, the average population of which in 1965 was 109 peasants (see Table 2.1). Instead of carrying out team-level accounting, the accounting of Dazhai was carried out at the brigade level, which was one level above the team. Brigade-level accounting was promoted during the Great Leap Forward, and was shown to be susceptible to mismanagement because of the large population of a brigade. Having said that, with an average population of 437 peasants in 1964–1978, Dazhai was almost half the size of the typical brigade in China, which had an average of 905 peasants. However, Chen made no mention of this at all when he

urged other villages to adopt brigade-level accounting in 1977.[8]

Table 2.1: Administrative hierarchy of people's communes, 1965

Level of administration	Party organisational unit	Number of units nationwide	Average rural population per unit
People's Commune	Committee	74,755	7,908
Production Brigade	Branch	648,000	905
Production Team	Cell	5,412,000	109

Source: *Zhongguo tongji nianjian, 1981* [China statistical yearbook, 1981] (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1982), p. 131.

1.3 Abolition of private plots, household sideline production and rural trade fairs

All aspects of the rural economy that allowed peasants to earn a private income, that is, income outside of the commune, were forbidden in Dazhai. While the Sixty Articles stipulated that 5–7% of the collective farmland should be set aside as "private plots" (*ziliudi*), where peasants could carry out agricultural production on a household basis, Chen abolished all private plots in Dazhai in 1963. Moreover, while the Sixty Articles required the local leadership to allocate "sideline production" — that is, non-essential production such as handicraft making, supplying transportation, and brick kiln operations — to households for the sake of "raising individual income," all sideline production was carried out

8 "Jianbao" [Brief report], January 21, 1977, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-895, p. 114 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

collectively in Dazhai. As a result, the rural trade fairs institutionalised by the Sixty Articles, in which peasants were allowed to trade their sideline products to each other, were rendered obsolete. The sole source of income for Dazhai's peasants was work-points resulting from collective labour.[9]

1.4 Excessive demands for cadres to participate in manual labour

The Sixty Articles required commune-level cadres to participate in manual labour (as distinguished from office work) for 60 days every year. Based on this requirement, the standard practice was to fix the requirement of manual labour for brigade-level and team-level cadres at 120 days and 180 days respectively. However, Chen required Dazhai's cadres to undertake manual labour for at least 300 days each year. They were also not allowed to put themselves forward as pacesetters or obtain bonus work-points to which cadres were entitled under the Sixty Articles.[10]

1.5 Excessive demands for villagers to undertake capital construction works

In 1975, Guo Fenglian, who succeeded Chen as Dazhai's Party Secretary in 1973, boasted that in every winter since 1953, Dazhai's villagers conducted capital

9 "Guanyu 1970 nian quan xian xue Dazhai qingkuang de zongjie baogao" [Summing up report concerning the situation of learning from Dazhai of the whole province], March 1, 1971, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-488, p. 72 (accessed 13-14 August 2015), and "Dazhai nong, lin, mu, fu sixiang shouru qingkuang duibi biao" [A comparison of the income of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and sideline occupations of Dazhai], 1960, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-132, pp. 23-24 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

10 "Dazhai ganbu canjia laodong de jingyan" [The experience of participation in labour of Dazhai cadres], January 10, 1978, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-967, pp. 23-24 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

construction works for over 16 hours each day.[11] As will be discussed in Section 3, this was quite likely an exaggeration. However, it was nonetheless another example of how Dazhai's leadership openly contravened the practices mandated by the Sixty Articles, which capped the maximum number of days spent on capital construction works to be 10 for male peasants, and 8 for female peasants.

2. Role playing in Dazhai

During the Dazhai Campaign, Chen, the young women of the village, and ordinary villagers played the roles assigned to them by the higher-ups before an average of 1,000 visitors every day. The majority of visitors were rural cadres from across China who were rewarded with one or more free trip(s) to Dazhai for having distinguished themselves in their posts. The central government hoped that they could use what they learned from Dazhai to transform their respective home villages accordingly. Their official visitation programme to Dazhai included a tour of the village guided by a local cadre, where they could observe the production and construction activities in progress, and listen to some of the villagers reciting the script that was specific to their assigned roles.[12]

11 Guo Fenglian, "Persist in Vigorously Criticising Capitalism and Building Socialism," speech at the First National Conference on Dazhai, October 15, 1975, in *Let the Whole Party Mobilise for a Vast Effort to Develop Agriculture and Build Tachai-Type Counties Throughout the Country* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1975), p. 38.

12 For statistics on official visitations to Dazhai, see *Dazhai fengwu zhi* (2007), p. 30. For a study of the use of role playing in cultivating another village into a model during the Cultural Revolution, see Jeremy Brown, *City Versus Countryside in Mao's China: Negotiating the Divide* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 200-228.

2.1 Chen Yonggui: The model cadre

If the visitors were fortunate, they might have been able to catch a glimpse of Chen, who was rendered legendary by the national media. He travelled extensively to promote the Dazhai Model. Because he was promoted to be a member of the Politburo of the CCP Central Committee (PB) in 1973, and to the vice premiership of the State Council in 1975, he was often in Beijing. Chen's ascendancy symbolised the new communist order upheld by Mao under the Cultural Revolution, whereby educated elites and youths were called upon to model themselves after workers and peasants, who were deemed to have superior political qualities despite being "uneducated, philistine, and uncouth" (*dalaocu*). Chen played the stylised role of a "red and expert" cadre, who boasted a high level of political consciousness and technical skills. Chen famously refused to claim bonus work-points entitled to cadres under the Sixty Articles. Chen said that this was to draw himself close to the masses. Examples of his hard work and frugality were widely disseminated in the *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao*), being the official mouthpiece of the CCP Central Committee, and were circulated as teaching materials for visitors prepared by the Xiyang Party Committee.[13]

2.2 Young women: The iron girls

Dazhai's women in their 20s to 30s were famously known as the "iron girls." The official narrative had it that they were named as such because they worked as hard

13 Chen Yonggui, "Quanguo di er zhi xue Dazhai laodong guanli jingyan xianchang huiyi shang de jianghua," September 6, 1967, p. 79.

as men, and even outperformed them in rebuilding their homeland after the catastrophic rainstorm in 1963. Some of the iron girls were admitted to be Party members, which was considered highly prestigious. Among them, Guo Fenglian and Jia Cunsuo even rose to the ranks of Party Secretary and Deputy Party Secretary respectively in the early 1970s. The iron girls were celebrated as icons of women's liberation.[14] However, the apparent complete gender equality they represented was in fact illusory. First of all, while the official narrative had it that the iron girls were treated as men's equals, the maximum number of work-points for female villagers in Dazhai was capped at 8, while that for male villagers was capped at 10.[15] Moreover, the gendered division of labour in Dazhai was unchanged. The iron girls were responsible for singing and dancing for central leaders during their visits, and the older women had to cook for them. The men were not assigned any of these hospitality duties.[16] In addition, a previously classified county-level document in 1972 showed that certain farm tasks in Dazhai were reserved for women only.[17]

2.3 Ordinary villagers: Maoists or Liuists

Dazhai had an average of 437 villagers from 1964–1978, 27% of whom were

14 CCP Central Committee of Xiyang County of Shanxi Province, "Dazhai dadui guanyu jiaoyu dangyuan, yishi xingtai geming de jingyan" [The experience of the Dazhai Brigade in cadre education and ideology revolution], December 16, 1974, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-638, p. 24 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).
15 Jia Chengrang, "Yong Mao Zedong sixiang tongshuai laodong guanli" [Using Mao Zedong Thought to command labour management], September 6, 1967, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-442, p. 80 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).
16 I learned this from the exhibits in Dazhai during my visit on August 12-13, 2015.
17 CCP Central Committee of Xiyang County of Shanxi Province, "Dazhai dadui guanyu jiaoyu dangyuan," December 16, 1974, p. 100.

formally stigmatised by the local Party branch as “former agents of Liu Shaoqi the scab” in 1974. They were sorted into one of these five categories: “capitalists” (47 peasants), “pretentious persons” (25 peasants), “democrats” (21 peasants), “class enemies” (17 peasants), and “bad elements” (7 peasants). These “Liuists” were subsequently mobilised to tell visitors about how they had come to repent and then become “enthusiastic lovers of Chairman Mao” thanks to the ideological education programme in the village. Most were members of Dazhai's so-called “young and strong group.” The official history of Dazhai had it that back in 1946, following Mao's call to form mutual aid teams, Dazhai’s “Liuists” left the old and weak behind to form their own labour-rich group. Chen allegedly sympathised with the outcasts, and organised them into a mutual aid group, which eventually outperformed the young and strong group. However, since Liu was neither in Dazhai nor presided over rural policymaking when the two groups were formed, charges that members of the “young and strong group” were in fact Liu’s agents were simply not credible. Nonetheless, the stigmatised villagers reinterpreted their personal histories and narratives to fit the roles assigned to them.[18]

3. Dazhai's makeover: Landscape transformation

It was well-reported in the official media that the villagers of Dazhai carried out major landscape alterations in 1953–1963 using only crude tools and farm implements. These included the construction of 183 stone dams and 9,300 metres of earthern embankments on Dazhai's seven gullies and eight ridges for the

18 CCP Central Committee of Xiyang County of Shanxi Province, “Dazhai dadui guanyu jiaoyu dangyuan,” December 16, 1974, p. 97; Chen Dabin, *Dazhai yuyan* [Dazhai fable] (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 2007), pp. 191-198.

purposes of flood control. In addition, 4,700 small farm plots were pooled to create 2,900 larger ones to prepare for large-scale agricultural mechanisation in the future. The official publications also had it that, as was recounted by Tao Lujia to Mao, while most of these constructions and farmlands were damaged in 1963, Dazhai's villagers were rebuilding them in a spirited fashion, and without relying on external assistance.[19]

However, a previously classified document of Xiyang County reported the involvement of the provincial government in Dazhai's reconstruction in 1963. It supplied the village with farm machines, fertilisers, coal, and constructed a high-power electric cable to transport construction materials. It also transferred over 1,000 able-bodied labourers from nearby communes.[20] This represented a 525% increase in labour supply for Dazhai, which only had 160 able-bodied labourers at that time.[21] Subsequently, once Dazhai was designated as a target for nationwide emulation in 1964, the capital construction works of the village became a matter of national planning and coordination. The best expertise and technology available in China were funnelled into Dazhai. The army constructed a state-of-the-art canal skirting mountains to supply irrigation to over half of Dazhai's farmlands,[22] and dug several reservoirs in the village to provide water storage.[23] A team of scientists from the Chinese Sciences Academy in Beijing were stationed

19 Guo Fenglian, October 15, 1975, p. 38.
20 CCP Central Committee of Xiyang County of Shanxi Province, "Guojia, gongye he xiongdi shedui dui Dazhai de zhiyuan" [Assistance from the state, industry and brother communes and brigades to Dazhai], May 8, 1964, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-351, p. 4 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).
21 *Dazhai fengwu zhi* (2007), pp. 50-51.
22 "China's Model Production Units," *Current Scene*, Vol. XIII (May-June 1975), pp. 26-29, at 27.
23 *Dazhai fengwu zhi* (2007), p. 33.

in Dazhai to provide technical advice. They used dynamites to reshape all of the village's sloping land into terraced farmlands that could be worked by tractors, and, what is more, the tractors were tailor-made to suit Dazhai's terrain under a State Council directive in 1971.[24]

If we see Dazhai as a stage, the new infrastructure and landscapes were the sets constructed to prop up a self-referential reality that the village was a successful national model. While the official narrative during the Dazhai Campaign attributed Dazhai's makeover mainly to the self-reliance and hard work of villagers, and only secondarily to state support, it was obvious to Dazhai's visitors that it was state support that was the most crucial to the village's success. Notwithstanding inflated claims of self-reliance, Dazhai's makeover certainly impressed on visitors the importance of the Dazhai Campaign, and the benefits of finding favour with the state.[25]

4. Central-level factions ventriloquising the national rural policy agenda

In order to advance the radical agenda of the Cultural Revolution, that is, to mobilise the masses to rebel against the "capitalist roaders" in authority, Mao brought some of his trusted cadres out of obscurity into positions of power. I

24 *Dazhai hongqi geng xianyan* [Dazhai's red flag is ever brighter] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1975), p. 6.
25 For the common reactions of rural cadres who visited Dazhai, see William Hinton, *Shenfan* (London: Picador in association with Secker & Warburg, 1984), pp. 188-189.

consider these newly installed central leaders and radical-leaning Party veterans as members of the "radical faction." They were "radical" in the sense that they saw political consciousness as the most important determinant of policy outcomes, and on that basis, strove to replace bureaucratic procedures with mass mobilisation in the policy process. They declared themselves guardians of Mao's "proletarian revolutionary line," from which the slogan of "putting politics in command" was derived. Since factions were officially banned in the Party, the radicals — and the conservatives too, for this matter — never referred to themselves a "faction." However, I consider them to be a faction because they were a relatively organised, durable and coherent political force competing for power against their political rivals, who contested their agenda. Moreover, they were all under Mao's political patronage.

The radical faction opposed the conservative faction. While the conservatives lacked a clearly identifiable political patron, they nonetheless shared a common political background, which bred solidarity among them. None of them benefited from the Cultural Revolution, and many were purged as a result of it. The political outlook of the conservatives was significantly more cautious and pragmatic than that of the radicals. They maintained that even if the masses had a high level of political consciousness, moral persuasion could not displace material incentives entirely in production. They also emphasised the importance of taking local conditions and objective limitations into account in policy implementation. They were rebuked by the radicals for purveying the "bourgeois reactionary line" later attributed to Mao's right-hand man, Liu Shaoqi, State Chairman from 1959–1968,

who was criticised, struggled violently and then purged during the Cultural Revolution.[26]

Despite the scholarly consensus view that policy fluctuations during the Cultural Revolution were the result of changing factional dynamics at the Centre, relatively little is known about the mechanisms through which central factions claimed control over agenda setting in this extraordinary period of Chinese politics.[27] Mao, who used to involve himself closely in policymaking, became increasingly withdrawn over the last decade of his life due to declining health. At the same time, political infighting was rife at all administrative levels. In the context of rural policies, I argue that both central-level factions seized Dazhai to serve as a ventriloquist's tool, in order to enact and project their respective policy agendas. While both factions remained keen to serve as the ventriloquist controlling Dazhai, realistically, only the more powerful faction could do so at a given time. As will be examined in detail below, due to frequent shifts in central-level power dynamics during the Cultural Revolution, the ventriloquist position alternated every year or so between the two key factions. The cumulative effect of this ongoing political struggle was that the national rural policy agenda oscillated back and forth between radicalism and conservatism throughout the prolonged

26 For a discussion of the origin of central-level factions during the Cultural Revolution, see Chang Yi-Chun, *Factional and Coalition Politics in China: The Cultural Revolution and its Aftermath* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1976). For a discussion of the structure of factions of the CCP, see Andrew Nathan, "A Factional Model for CCP Politics," *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 53 (1973), pp. 34-66.

27 See, for example, Bill Brugger, *China: Radicalism to Revisionism, 1962-1979* (London: Croom Helm, 1981). An exception to the lack of explanation in the mechanism of policy change is found in David Zweig, *Agrarian Radicalism in China, 1968-1981* (Cambridge, MA; London: Havard University Press, 1989). Zweig argues that changes in central-level factional dynamics led to changes in the prevailing "policy wind," which resulted in policy changes at the grass-roots level.

Dazhai Campaign, with Dazhai alternately representing both positions.

4.1 Ventriloquists: Factions and factional power dynamics

Based on the essential characteristics of the radicals and conservatives identified above, I classified all members of the Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee's Politburo (PBSC), and all purged members of the Politburo (PB), both full and alternate members, into either the radical or conservative faction (see Tables 2.2 and 2.3) over the course of the 1964–1978 period, the full duration of the Dazhai Campaign. I used two metrics to assess the relative power of the two factions on a monthly basis. The first metric is the extent to which a faction was represented in the PBSC. I gave each faction one point for each PBSC member it claimed. Moreover, save the fewer than 13 months when the PBSC had three or fewer members — the small size of which suggested that the ranking order officially assigned to each PBSC member was less important — I gave each faction one additional point for each member it had in the top three ranking orders. The second metric is the extent to which a faction survived political attack. I gave each faction a standard starting score of one point. I deducted from the faction's starting score 0.3 point, 0.2 point and 0.1 point for every PBSC, PB (full) and PB (alternate) members it had who came under political attack in any one of the following forms:

1. Demotion or removal from political office,
2. Making a formal report of self-criticism at a Central Committee meeting,
3. Subjected to official criticism by the Central Committee, or
4. Subjected to official investigation by the Central Committee.

The faction with the highest score was designated as the dominant faction in a given month. A faction that was dominant for more months than the other faction in a year was considered to be the dominant faction in a given year. On this basis, the radical faction, which is coded as "1" in Figure 2.1, was dominant in 1966–1970, 1974 and 1976, while the conservative faction, which is coded as "0" in Figure 2.1, was dominant in 1964–1965, 1971–1973, 1975 and 1977–1978.

In order to assess whether the dominant factions used Dazhai to broadcast their respective rural policy agendas, I carried out content analysis of a sample of articles on the Dazhai Campaign in the *People's Daily* in 1964–1978. I first used quantitative techniques to examine how the themes of the Dazhai Campaign shifted over time, and to check whether the shifts could be attributed to changes in the balance of power between factions. I subsequently carried out qualitative discourse analysis to probe deeper into the content of the respective policy agendas of the factions. Here, the materials examined included central-level documents and speeches on the Dazhai Campaign, in addition to *People's Daily* articles. I also compared the central-level discourse with that of Dazhai's leaders in order to investigate the extent to which Dazhai internalised the shifting central discourse as its own.

Table 2.2: Radicals and conservatives at the PBSC, 1964–1978

Radicals	Conservatives
Chen Boda (1966–1970)	Chen Yun (1963–1969; 1978)
Hua Guofeng (1976–1978)	Deng Xiaoping (1963–1966; 1975–1976; 1977–1978)
Kang Sheng (1966–1975)	Dong Biwu (1973–1975)
Li Desheng (1973–1974)	Li Fuchun (1966)
Lin Biao (1963–1971)	Liu Shaoqi (1963–1966)
Mao Zedong (1963–1976)	Tao Zhu (1966)
Wang Hongwen (1973–1976)	Ye Jianying (1973–1978)
Zhang Chunqiao (1973–1976)	Zhou Enlai (1963–1975)
	Zhu De (1963–1969; 1973–1976)

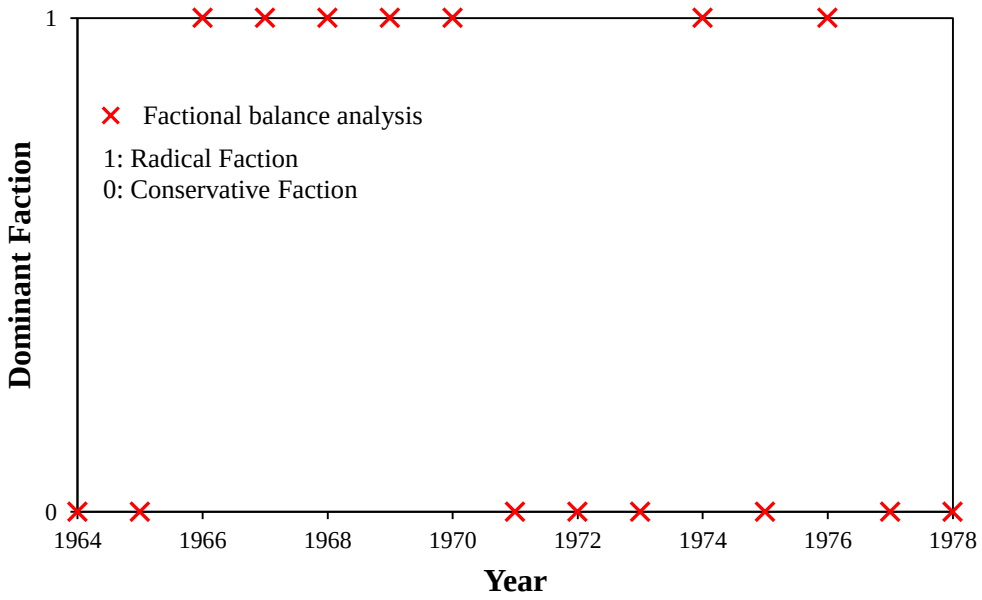
Note: The duration of office in PBSC for each PBSC member is shown in parentheses.

Table 2.3: Purged PB members based on factions, 1964–1978

Radicals	Conservatives
Chen Boda (1970)	Bo Yibo (1967)
Huang Yongsheng (1971)	Chen Yi (1967)
Ji Denghui (1980)	Deng Xiaoping (1966, 1975)
Jiang Qing (1976)	He Long (1966)
Kang Sheng (1975)	Li Fuchun (1966)
Li Desheng (1975)	Li Jingquan (1967)
Li Xuefeng (1971)	Liu Shaoqi (1968)
Li Zuopeng (1970)	Lu Dingyi (1966)
Lin Biao (1971)	Nie Rongzhen (1969)
Qin Huizuo (1971)	Peng Zhen (1966)
Wang Hongwen (1976)	Tan Zhenlin (1966)
Wu De (1980)	Tao Zhu (1966)
Wu Faxian (1973)	Ulanfu (1966)
Yao Wenyuan (1976)	Xu Xiangqian (1969)
Ye Qun (1970)	
Zhang Chunqiao (1976)	

Note: The year of purge for each PB member is shown in parentheses.

Figure 2.1: Dominant faction, 1964–1978



4.2 Quantitative analysis of ventriloquism

I selected 17 keywords for the Dazhai Campaign on the basis of an extensive literature review. The selection criterion was a high level of recurrence in relevant central-level publications. I categorised the keywords into seven themes. As can be seen from Table 2.4, most of the keywords were associated with the radical faction's policy agenda. This is expected because Dazhai was best-known as Mao's model, and the Dazhai Campaign was set against the backdrop of the Cultural Revolution. There are only three keywords that were associated with the conservative faction's policy agenda, being: “the Party's policies,” “economic policies,” and “rural policies.” Invariably, these served as codewords for the Sixty Articles. I found that when one of these codewords was used in place of the term “Sixty Articles,” the reference to the content of the Sixty Articles was positive.

However, when the Sixty Articles was mentioned by name, the reference was always negative. This was because it was well-known that Mao had reservations about the Sixty Articles, and Dazhai violated the key principles of the Sixty Articles.

I used the *People's Daily* digital archive to find out the total number of articles with one mention of the word "Dazhai" for every year between 1964–1978.[28] From the list of results, I classified an article as radical if it mentioned any of the 17 keywords but not the three codewords for the Sixty Articles. Conversely, I classified an article as conservative if it had a mention of any of the three codewords in addition to any of the other 14 keywords. From reading a sample of the articles, I consistently found that when a codeword and a radical keyword appeared in the same article, the emphasis was always on implementing the Sixty Articles. The reason for this will be discussed further in the qualitative discourse analysis in the subsequent section. As can be seen in columns 2, 3 and 4 in Table 2.5, radical articles significantly outnumbered conservative articles across all years, ranging from 2.16 times more to 55.76 times more. While this was anticipated in light of the radical nature of the Dazhai Campaign, the huge disparity rendered the numbers of radical and conservative articles not directly comparable to each other. To allow for comparison, I made use of the standard method of normalisation to bring the numbers down to the same scale, that is, the same order of magnitude. I used 55.76, the largest ratio of the numbers of radical to conservative articles, as the standard for normalisation. I divided the yearly

28 The *People's Daily* digital archive was accessible at the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford.

ratios of the numbers of radical to conservative articles by 55.76 to obtain the yearly normalised ratios (see columns 4 and 5 in Table 2.5 for non-normalised and normalised ratios respectively), which were used as the basis to evaluate whether radical or conservative articles prevailed in each year. I considered radical articles to be dominant if the normalised ratio of a given year exceeds 0.3, being the average value of all normalised ratios. Conversely, I considered conservative articles to be dominant if the normalised ratio of a given year is below 0.3. It was found that radical articles were dominant from 1967–1970 and 1974–1976, while conservative articles were dominant from 1964–1966, 1971–1973, and 1977–1978. These findings were plotted in Figure 2.2.

I produced Figure 2.3 by overlaying Figure 2.1, which uses crosses to represent the dominant faction from 1964–1978 based on analysis of the seat distribution in the PBSC and political attack on PB members, on Figure 2.2, which uses plus signs to represent whether the radical or conservative articles on Dazhai was dominant in the *People's Daily* in the same time period. As can be seen in Figure 2.3, the crosses overlap with the plus signs in 12 out of 14 years. The high level of agreement strongly suggests that the changing content of the Dazhai Campaign was closely related to the changing factional dynamics at the Centre. When the radical faction was dominant, the campaign was radical. When the conservative faction was dominant, the campaign was conservative. There were two exceptions to this pattern. In 1966, the radical faction was in power, but conservative articles on Dazhai were dominant. This could be because the data, which is measured on a yearly basis, is not sensitive enough to capture rapid power fluctuations between

the two factions within a year. This situation was especially serious in 1966, the year of which the Cultural Revolution was launched. In 1975, the conservative faction was in power, but radical articles on Dazhai were dominant. This might reflect the weakness of the conservative faction in power consolidation, although there were more conservatives than radicals in high office that year. A revealing signal of this was Deng Xiaoping, one of the most important conservative leaders, returned to the PBSC in January 1975 after being removed from the position in December 1966, but lost his seat for the second time in October that year.

Table 2.4: Themes and keywords of the Dazhai Campaign

Themes	Keywords
I. Political work-points	"Work-points" (*gongfen*)
	"Material incentives" (*wuzhi ciji*)
	"Putting money in command" (*jinqian guashuai*)
II. Large-scale capital construction works	"Conquering nature" (*zhantian doudi*)
	"Achieve a great deal" (*dagan*)
	"Militant fashion" (*wuzhuang*)
III. Construction of the superstructure	"Construction of the superstructure revolution" (*shangceng jianzhu geming*)
	"Lower-and-middle peasants" (*pinxia zhongnong*)
	"Class struggle" (*jieji douzheng*)
IV. Personality cult of Mao	"Living study and living application" (*huoxue huoyong*) and "Mao Zedong" and/or "Chairman Mao" (*Mao zhuxi*)
V. Anti-revisionism	"Anti-revisionism" (*fanxiu*)
	"Two-line struggle" (*liang tiao luxian de douzheng*) and/or "two-road struggle" (*liang tiao daolu de douzheng*)
	"Revolutionary line" (*geming luxian*)
VI. Dazhai-type counties	"Dazhai-type counties" (*Dazhai xian*)
VII. Sixty Articles	"The Party's policies" (*dang de zhengce*) "Economic policies" (*jingji [de] zhengce*) "Rural policies" (*nongcun [de] zhengce*)

Table 2.5: Total numbers and ratios of radical and conservative articles on Dazhai in the *People's Daily*, 1964–1978

Year	R Total	C Total	R:C	Normalised R:C
1964	167	21	7.952	0.143
1965	649	58	11.19	0.201
1966	1080	72	15	0.269
1967	412	24	17.167	0.308
1968	1394	25	**55.76**	1
1969	1477	47	31.426	0.564
1970	2381	114	20.886	0.375
1971	2815	441	6.383	0.114
1972	1709	716	2.387	0.043
1973	2400	420	5.714	0.102
1974	2563	130	19.715	0.354
1975	3828	229	16.716	0.3
1976	4771	152	31.388	0.563
1977	4012	366	10.962	0.197
1978	1039	481	2.16	0.039

Note: “R” stands for radical articles. “C” stands for conservative articles.

Figure 2.2: Normalised annual ratios of radical and conservative articles on Dazhai in the *People's Daily* compared against the 0.3 threshold, 1964–1978

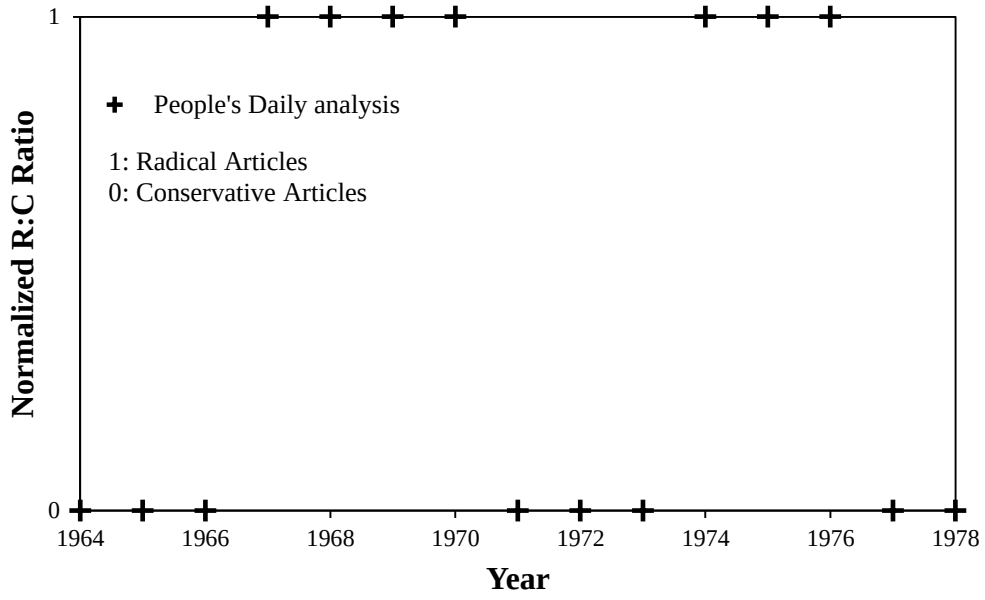
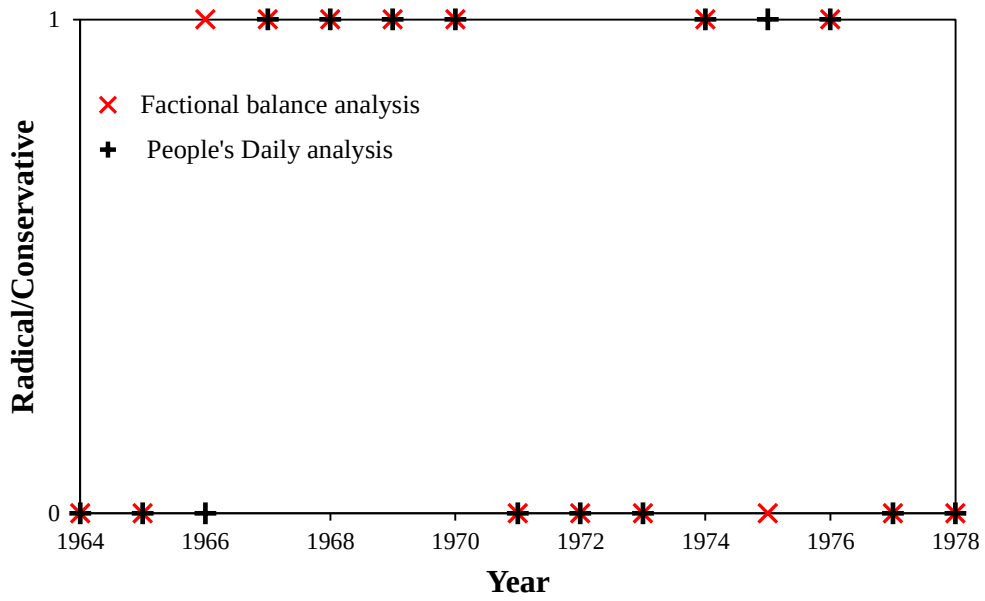


Figure 2.3: The *People's Daily* analysis compared to analysis of seat distribution in PBSC and political attack on Politburo members, 1964–1978



4.3 Qualitative analysis of ventriloquism

This section presents the qualitative discourse analysis of central-level and local-level materials of the Dazhai Campaign in six chronological phases, which are classified according to whether the radical or conservative interpretation of the campaign was dominant. The local materials I drew from came from Dazhai, Xiyang County and Shanxi Province. The official position of these three places on the campaign was firmly controlled by Chen Yonggui. In addition to continuing his position as the Party Secretary of Dazhai until Guo Fenglian, his chosen successor, replaced him in 1973, he became head of the county revolutionary committee from 1967, and provincial deputy Party Secretary from 1969. I found that when the conservative faction prevailed over the radical faction at the Centre, Dazhai's leaders always downplayed the radical elements of the model, and emphasised the importance of pragmatism instead. This suggested that Dazhai's leadership was not only mindful of its role as the ventriloquist's puppet, but willing to accommodate the shifting whims of the Centre.[29]

Combining "revolutionary spirit" with "scientific attitude," 1964–1965

Central-level discourse

The central-level discourse of the Dazhai Campaign between 1964–1965, a period during which the conservative faction was dominant, reflected a careful balance between radicalism and conservatism. The *People's Daily* printed a front-page

29 For a detailed discussion of the various policy themes of the Dazhai Campaign, see Jin-young Sou, *The Tachai Campaign and China's Rural Policy, 1964-1979*, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Washington, 1980), pp. 173-354.

article on the Dazhai Model for the first time in February 1964. It summarised the Dazhai experience as follows:

> No matter how bad the natural conditions are, as long as we combine revolutionary spirit with scientific attitude, we will certainly be able to achieve great things.[30]

In the article, "revolutionary spirit" referred to the attitude of "despising on difficulties" and the deeds of "conquering nature," both of which were said to be heroically exemplified in Dazhai's ten-year landscape transformation project (1953–1963). "Scientific attitude" referred to the "belief in technology" and a "careful and gradual approach in conducting experiments" to raise agricultural productivity. In another front-page article published in the *People's Daily*, "scientific attitude" was elaborated in terms of "giving full consideration of the objective conditions in building socialism."[31]

The balance between radicalism and conservatism was also reflected in the speech given by Zhou Enali to mark the beginning of the Dazhai Campaign in December 1964. Zhou said that every village should learn "one principle, one spirit, and one style" from Dazhai: the principle of putting politics in command, the spirit of self-reliance and arduous struggle, and the communist style of loving the state and the collective. He referred to these three things as Dazhai's "basic experience" (*jiben jingyan*), and stated that, when learning from Dazhai, villages should take their "concrete local circumstances" into account.[32]

30 Sha Yin and Fan Yinhuai, "Dazhai zhi lu" [The road of Dazhai], *Renmin ribao* [People's Daily], hereafter referred to as "*RMRB*," February 10, 1964, p. 1.
31 "Yige shi fen zhongyao de wenti" [A very important question], *RMRB*, December 27, 1965, p. 1.
32 Huang Daoxia, et al. (1992), p. 794.

Local-level discourse

In an article published in *Red Flag* (*Hongqi*), the Party's theoretical journal, under the name of Tao Lujia, Shanxi's Party Secretary, it was stated that Dazhai's "basic experience" was what Mao called the "three great revolutionary movements." These were class struggle, production struggle — being tied to the radical faction's policy agenda, and scientific experiment — which was more strongly associated with the conservative faction's policy agenda. These three elements were said to be "popularised" everywhere, but the capital construction works in Dazhai, which Tao referred to as its "specific experience" (*juti jingyan*), were not necessarily applicable elsewhere.

Combat self-interest, criticise and repudiate revisionism, 1966–1970

Central-level discourse

The careful balance between radicalism and conservatism was distorted in 1966–1970, as the radical faction prevailed over the conservative faction, launching the Cultural Revolution and the Combat Self-Interest, Criticise and Repudiate Revisionism Campaign (*dousi pixiu yundong*) nationwide in August 1966 and October 1967 respectively. Both movements promoted the radical faction's policy agenda, which was defined at the time as "struggling against economism," that is, "using economic laws (as opposed to mass mobilisation and ideological work) to run the economy" and "considering problems simply from the angle of production

forces but not the angle of class struggle."[33]

Dazhai's pacesetter work-point system, which violated the Sixty Articles, was introduced in the national media for the first time in March 1966. It was said that the question of whether the work-point system of Dazhai should be adopted was a matter of debate between socialism and capitalism. Dazhai's work-point system was extolled as socialist because it was designed to nurture the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses, dampen self-interest, and eradicate class differences.[34] In a document prepared for internal reference in December 1967, the Ministry of Agriculture claimed that the system had already been implemented by over 80% of production teams in Shanghai and Shanxi, and 60–70% of production teams in Shaanxi and Liaoning. It urged all provincial governments to do their part in promoting this "prevailing trend" in their jurisdiction. In particular, it stated:

> ...there are some people...who are worried that implementing the experience of Dazhai is inconsistent to the spirit of the "Sixty Articles"…They even think that promoting the experience of Dazhai is a technocratic task. All these [viewpoints] are wrong, and must be overcome resolutely. Promoting the experience of Dazhai is a revolution on production management. It must rely on Mao Zedong Thought as a weapon...[35]

Also in 1966–1970, the *People's Daily* expressed approval of the abolition of private plots in Dazhai, and criticised private plots for nurturing self-interest, and

33 Fan Xiubing, "Pichou Zhongguo Heluxiaofu de jingji zhuyi" [Criticise and repudiate the economism of China's Krushchev'], *RMRB*, September 4, 1967, p. 2.

34 "Tuchu zhengzhi de shengdong yi ke: Chen Yonggui tan Dazhai dadui zai laodong guanli zhong jianchi shehui zhuyi fangxiang de jingyan" [A lively lesson that emphasises politics: Chen Yonggui talks about the experience of Dazhai brigade in persisting in the socialist direction in labour management], *RMRB*, March 22, 1966, p. 1.

35 Revolution Committee of Commune Department of Ministry of Agriculture, "Yong Mao Zedong sixiang tongshuai laodong guanli" [Use Mao Zedong Thought to command labour management], December 1967, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-442, p. 67 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

obstructing the proletarian class struggle.[36] In the spring of 1968, Chen Boda and Lin Biao, both radical leaders, established experimental points in Beijing and Hangzhou respectively to restrict private plots and rural trade fairs. Chen reportedly told peasants of Beijing's Sijiqing commune to "cultivate your private plots collectively as they do in Dazhai."[37]

The radicalisation of the Dazhai Campaign was intensified in 1969, soon after Lin, who was in charge of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), was designated as Mao's heir-apparent at the Ninth Party Congress in April that year. Lin shifted the emphasis of the campaign to the large-scale construction of capital works, and promoted the slogan "one, do not fear hardship; two, do not fear death" (*yi bupa ku, er bupa si*) in the process. He said that the campaign was a "battle against nature," where "700 million people become 700 million soldiers, and 10,000 miles of rivers and mountains [become] one military camp of 10,000 miles."[38]

Local-level discourse

The local leaders of Dazhai expressed strong support for the radicalisation of the Dazhai Campaign. For example, in his speech given at the Second National On-the-Spot Conference of Learning from Dazhai in September 1967, Chen Yonggui emphasised that Dazhai's pacesetter work-point system was the best ever work-point system, and criticised the piece-rate work-point system under the Sixty

36 "Yong Mao Zedong sixiang wuzhuang qilai de Dazhai dang zhibu [The Dazhai Party branch that is militantly equipped with Mao Zedong Thought], *RMRB*, May 22, 1966, p. 1.
37 David Zweig (1989), pp. 51, 56-57.
38 Jiangsu People's Broadcasting Station, June 16, 1970, in Jürgen Domes, "New Course in Chinese Domestic Politics: The Anatomy of Readjustment," *Asian Survey*, No. 7 (1973), pp. 633-646, at 643.

Articles harshly. He said:

> What are the problems of the labour remuneration method of the past [that is, the piece-rate work-point system]? In my view, first and foremost, it opposes to the teachings of our great leader Chairman Mao...The labour remuneration method of the past is suitable for the selfish and distracted mindset of peasants, and even encourages the spontaneous spread of capitalism. It is inherently inconsistent with Mao Zedong Thought. Therefore, we can be sure that the previous set of method does not put politics in command, but puts economics in command.[39]

In addition, in the same speech, Chen said that the most basic lesson to be learned from Dazhai was the spirit of serving the people completely and resolutely, which Dazhai modelled after the PLA. Guo Fenglian, a prominent Dazhai cadre, also spoke at the conference. Her speech was mainly about Dazhai's landscape transformation projects. She stated, "It is entirely possible for peasants to become an army of highly proletarianised and militaristic labourers, just like the People's Liberation Army."[40]

Criticise mechanical imitation of Dazhai, 1971–1973

Central-level discourse

The radicalism of the Dazhai Campaign was substantially moderated as a result of internal conflicts within the radical faction, which could be seen from Chen Boda being gradually sidelined in 1970, and Lin Biao's mysterious death in September 1971, after allegedly attempting to launch a coup to overthrow Mao and defect to

39 Chen Yonggui, "Quanguo di er zhi xue Dazhai laodong guanli jingyan xianchang huiyi shang de jianghua," September 6, 1967, p. 67.

40 "Qian tiao wan tiao, huoxue huoyong Mao zhuxi zhuzuo di yi tiao" [In a thousand and ten thousand rules, living study and living application of Chairman Mao's works is the first rule], September 1967, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-442, p. 29 (accessed 13-14 August 2015).

the Soviet Union. The conservative faction was able to take advantage of the split within the radical faction to impose their own rural policy agenda. They reframed the Sixty Articles as "the Party's rural economic policies formulated by Chairman Mao" in central-level publications, and promoted the idea that if communes did not follow these policies, it was because they were "not equipped with Mao Zedong Thought."[41] Another feature of the central-level discourse in 1971–1973 was that only the "basic experience" of Dazhai should be learned, while "mechanical imitation" of its "specific experience" — being practices that deviated from the Sixty Articles — should be avoided.[42]

The Northern Districts Agricultural Conference held in August and September 1970 was the first sign of return of conservatism. The conference called for restoring payment according to work, team-level accounting, and the return of private plots to peasants. Cadres were told that they should postpone the implementation of Dazhai's pacesetter work-point system if they thought that the level of ideological consciousness of their commune members was not high enough.[43] Moreover, the conference formally announced shifting the goal of the Dazhai Campaign to building "Dazhai-type counties." The most important criterion for Dazhai-type counties was defined as the level of grain production, instead of combating self-interest, which had been the main emphasis of the Dazhai Campaign in the previous period. The importance of implementing the Party's rural economic policies and to not learn from Dazhai mechanically was

41 "Yanzhe Mao zhuxi geming luxian duoqu nongye xin fengshou" [Follow the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao to obtain new bumper harvests], *RMRB*, February 18, 1971, p. 1.
42 "Nongye xue Dazhai" [In agriculture, learn from Dazhai], *RMRB*, September 23, 1970, p. 1.
43 David Zweig (1989), p. 36.

also stated in a State Council directive in December 1971.[44]

Local-level discourse

In July 1972, Dazhai's local Party branch published an article to promote "scientific attitude" as a measure to counteract the tendency of learning from Dazhai blindly. It emphasised the importance of adapting new policies to diverse local settings, and carrying out experiments of the new policies in a small scale before spreading it to a wider region.[45]

Revolution in the superstructure, 1974

Central-level discourse

The central-level discourse on the Dazhai Campaign was re-radicalised in 1974 as Mao approved of the radical faction to relaunch the Cultural Revolution, which was officially declared to have ended in April 1969.[46] In April 1974, the *People's Daily* published a front-page article to criticise the conservatism of the Dazhai Campaign over the previous few years. It was said that "some revisionists in authority raised some so-called reasonable suggestions in order to weaken the collective." The article urged cadres to resist such "spontaneous capitalist

44 "Nongcun renmin gongshe fenpei wenti de zhisi" [Directive on the distribution problem in rural people's communes], December 29, 1971, central document no. 82, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Zhonggong nianbao* [Yearbook on Chinese communism] (Taipei: Zhonggong yanjiu zazhishe, 1976), p. IV-2.

45 CCP Branch of Dazhai Production Brigade, "Gao hao kexue qingbao, cujin kexue shiyan" [Do well scientific intelligence, promote scientific experiments], July 2, 1972, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-572, pp. 100, 103.

46 However, in retrospect, both official and academic sources agreed that the Cultural Revolution was only ended when the four leading Cultural Revolution radicals — Jiang Qing, Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan, and Zhang Chunqiao — the so-called "Gang of Four," were arrested in October 1967.

resurgence," and to persist in the two-line struggle between socialism and capitalism.

In August 1974, radical leader Jiang Qing made Xiaojinzhuang Production Brigade in Tianjin Municipality a national rural model for "revolution in the superstructure," which the central-level discourse defined as the new focus of the Dazhai Campaign at that time. Xiaojinzhuang was praised for struggling against "feudal, bourgeois and revisionist trash," and in the process, created "ten new things" representing the "proletarian new ideology and culture," which was said to have helped it learn from Dazhai more effectively.[47] They were:

1. Establishment of a political evening school that was attended by every peasant three times per week;
2. Bringing up of a contingent of 58 Marxist-Leninist theorists among poor and lower-middle peasants;
3. Talks on history given by poor and lower-middle peasants;
4. Staging model revolutionary plays;
5. Establishment of spare-time literary and art propaganda teams;
6. Mass participation in poem and song composition;
7. Setting up a library;
8. Telling revolutionary stories;
9. Developing mass athletic activities; and

47 "Jinri Xiaojinzhuang: Ji wenhua da geming he pilin pikong yundong yilai Xiaojinzhuang de bianhua" [Xiaojinzhuang today: An account of the changes of Xiaojinzhuang since the Cultural Revolution and Criticise Lin Biao, Criticise Confucius Campaign], *RMRB*, December 27, 1975, p. 1.

10. Changing old customs and habits.[48]

Local-level discourse

The materials for cadre training produced by Dazhai's local Party branch between February to December 1974, which were used to educate cadres who came to visit the village, emphasised that the Dazhai Campaign was chiefly about struggling against revisionism. It was said that agricultural production was only a "small thing" (*xiao shi*), while being an expert in theory was a "big thing" (*da shi*) because it enabled one to guard against the revival of revisionism. Moreover, soon after Xiaojinzhuang's "ten new things" were promoted in the national media, Dazhai announced that it too had created "ten new things," being:

1. A Marxist theoretical contingent;
2. A spare-time literary and art performing troupe;
3. A contingent of literary writers;
4. A revolutionary music band;
5. A contingent of story tellers;
6. A movie projectionist team;
7. A contingent of newspapermen;
8. Red and expert librarians;
9. A contingent of energetic athletes; and

48 "Xiaojinzhuang shi jian xin shi" [Ten new things in Xiaojinzhuang], *RMRB*, August 4, 1974, p. 1.

10. A contingent of artists.[49]

Popularisation of Dazhai-type counties, 1975–1976

Central-level discourse

In January 1975, the conservative faction managed to incorporate some key provisions of the Sixty Articles into the state constitution,[50] which anticipated the deradicalisation of the Dazhai Campaign. At the First National Conference on the Learn from Dazhai Campaign in September 1975, Hua Guofeng, Mao's newly appointed heir-apparent, shifted the focus of the Campaign from revolution in the superstructure to the popularisation of Dazhai-type counties. He declared the goal of turning at least one-third of China's 2,200 counties to Dazhai-type counties by 1980. He introduced six criteria for a Dazhai-type county:

1. Strong Party leadership at the county level that consitstently carried out the basic line and policies of the Party;
2. Ascendency of poor and lower-middle peasants;
3. Participation in labour by cadres at the county, commune and brigade levels;
4. Speedy and substantial results in large-scale capital construction works, mechanisation of agriculture and scientific farming;

49 Guo Fenglian, *Peking Domestic Service*, February 26, 1975, in *Current Scene*, Vol. XIII (May-June 1975), p. 29.

50 The Sixty Articles provisions that were written into the 1975 constitution were concerned with team-level accounting, the permission of private plots and sideline production by households, and the principle of payment according to work.

5. Steady expansion of the collective economy, with the production and income of poor communes and brigades brought up to the average in the locality; and

6. All-round development and increased output in agriculture, forestry, livestock breeding and sideline production, increase in contributions to the state, and steady improvement in the living standards for commune members.[51]

These criteria attended to the priorities of the radical and conservative factions equally. The first criterion gave equal weight to the Party's "basic line" — the radical policy agenda of class struggle and putting politics in command, as well as "policies" — the Sixty Articles promoted by the conservatives. The second and third criteria were radical-leaning. The fourth criterion emphasised that massive capital construction, which was promoted by the radicals, had to be conducted steadily, as the conservatives preferred. Moreover, the balance between radicalism and conservatism in this criterion was also reflected in the mention of agricultural mechanisation, which both factions considered important, and scientific farming, which was strongly associated with the policy agenda of the conservatives. The fifth and sixth criteria were conservative-leaning. The process for popularising Dazhai-type counties outlined by Hua also reflected balance between radicalism and conservatism. The ultimate goal of Dazhai-type counties was to achieve

51 "Big Agricultural Conference Ends," *Current Scene*, Vol. XIII (December 1975), pp. 12-15, at 12; "Quan dang dongyuan, da ban nongye, wei puji Dazhai xian er fendou: zhonggong zhongyang zhengzhi ju weiyuan, guoowuyuan fu zongli Hua Guofeng zai quanguo nongye xue Dazhai huiyi shang de zongjie baogao" [Let the whole Party mobilise for a vast effort to develop agriculture and build Dazhai-type counties throughout the country: Summing-up report at the National Conference on Learning from Dazhai in Agriculture], *RMRB*, October 15, 1975, p. 2.

commune-level accounting, the most centralised and egalitarian system of production and distribution in a commune. Notwithstanding this radical goal, Hua did not impose a deadline for counties to attain the goal. He also emphasised the importance of taking local circumstances into account, and the validity of key provisions of the Sixty Articles. He said:

> Each county should set up their own timetable and procedures, and take concrete local circumstances into account in developing Dazhai-type counties...The current system of people's commune, which is based on three-level ownership, with the team as the basic accounting unit, is compatible with the situation of most counties. However, when more Dazhai-type counties are established, the transition to brigade-level and commune-level accounting should be made.[52]

Local-level discourse

At the same conference where Hua made the above announcements, Guo Fenglian, who was at that time Party Secretary of Dazhai, also gave a speech. In contrast to Hua's balanced approach, she emphasised only the radical dimension of the Dazhai Campaign. This was the first time in which the local leadership of Dazhai did not follow the central-level discourse imposed by the dominant faction. This might be because Hua's balanced approach provided room for radical interpretation of the Dazhai Campaign. This could be seen in the *People's Daily* reporting Guo's speech on 25 September 1975, while printing a newspaper's correspondent article to reinforce the conservative perspective of the Dazhai Campaign on the next day.

Guo said:

52 "Quan dang dongyuan," 15 October 1975, p. 2.

> Our experience in the past two decades has taught us that we must fight capitalism every year, every month and every day. We must fight it whenever it emerges and tear off whatever mask it wears. It is through struggle that we have learned how to persist in the socialist direction...We should relentlessly persist in the principle of enlarging the collective economy...to arouse the socialist enthusiasm of the peasants.[53]

The *People's Daily* correspondent wrote:

> It is only through implementation of the Party's policies that Dazhai-type counties could be popularised. We have to take the important questions that are related to ownership and distribution seriously. We cannot change these policies at random...we must persist in implementing the Party's current policies on brigade management.[54]

Reaffirmation of the Sixty Articles, 1977–1978

Central-level discourse

The balance between radicalism and conservatism in the Dazhai Campaign was shifted in favour of conservatism gradually after the Gang of Four was arrested in October 1976, and Deng Xiaoping was reinstated to the central leadership in July 1977. In the central-level discourse, Xiaojinzhuang was repudiated as Jiang Qing's plot to "oppose Dazhai's red flag,"[55] while Xiangxiang Production Brigade of Hunan Province, where Hua was Party Secretary (1970–1977), was named a

53 "Jianchi dapi zibenzhuyi, jianchi dagan shehuizhuyi: Dazhai dadui dang zhibu shuji Guo Fenglian zai quanguo nongye xue Dazhai huiyi shang de fayan (zhaiyao)" [Persist in vigorously criticising capitalism and building socialism: excerpts of speech of Dazhai Party branch secretary Guo Fenglian at the National Conference on Learning from Dazhai in Agriculture], *RMRB*, September 25, 1975, p. 2.

54 *RMRB* reporter, "Cong Dazhai kan quan guo: Quanguo nongye xue Dazhai huiyi taolun zenyang jinkuai puji Dazhai shi de xian" [See the whole country from Dazhai: The National Conference on Learning from Dazhai in Agriculture discusses how to popularize Dazhai-type counties rapidly], *RMRB*, September 26, 1975, p. 1.

55 "Jiang Qing yu Xiaojinzhuang: chedi qingsuan pantu Jiang Qing zai Xiaojinzhuang de fangeming zuixing" [Jiang Qing and Xiaojinzhuang: complete repudiation of traitor Jiang Qing's anti-revolutionary crimes in Xiaojinzhuang], *RMRB*, January 12, 1978, p. 2.

model for "conscientiously implementing the Party's rural economic policies" in the Dazhai Campaign.[56] Moreover, in 1977–1978, the *People's Daily* repeatedly used negative models to criticise Dazhai's radical policies. Below is a typical example.

> Some peasants said, "The more we learn from Dazhai, the less we have to eat!" Indeed, since some people's communes have carried out brigade-level accounting, and replaced the work-point system that had proven results with Dazhai's work-point system, the enthusiasm of peasants in production has dampened. As a result, productivity has plummeted, the collective has been drained, the peasants have become poorer, the amount of grain sold to the state has dropped, and the number of people's communes and brigades relying on sent-back grains and state loans has continued to rise.[57]

Local-level discourse

In July 1978, Xiyang County announced that its communes were no longer undertaking capital construction works based on *hugan dagan* (working through hardship and working a great deal), an initiative in which Dazhai (in)famously took the lead, and which often involved overworking the peasants, in a manner that was prohibited by the Sixty Articles. Xiyang's new approach was *hugan jia qiaogan* (working through hardship skilfully). It was said to be more scientific, and was based on reducing the number of work-days for captial construction works, and increasing the use of heavy machines. The change from *hugan dagan* to *hugan jia qiaogan* served to de-radicalise the local implementation of the Dazhai Campaign, and was consistent to the prevailing conservative central-level

56 "Luoshi dang de zhengce, jianqing nongmin fudan" [Implement policies of the Party, alleviate the burden of peasants], *RMRB*, July 5, 1978, p. 1.
57 "Luoshi dang de zhengce, jianqing nongmin fudan," July 5, 1978, p. 1.

discourse in this period.[58]

5. Conclusion

The making of Dazhai into a model was a textbook example of the contradictions in China's political and policy process under Maoist authoritarianism, which were exacerbated to an extreme level during the Cultural Revolution. While policymaking was highly centralised in the unitary state, the Centre was divided into rivalrous political factions purveying opposing policy agendas. While Dazhai was celebrated as an example of self-reliance, as soon as it became a model, local agency was displaced by central intervention. It was to the point where the village's self-reliance appeared mythical, and Dazhai's villagers and local leadership were merely actors in a stage directed by the state. While Dazhai was clearly established as the authoritative symbol for national rural policy, the oscillations in policy themes and interpretations during the Dazhai Campaign rendered the policy lessons to be learned from Dazhai ambiguous. The end of the Cultural Revolution, and the power consolidation of the conservative faction anticipated the end of the Dazhai Campaign, and the downfall of Dazhai. From January 1979 to August 1980, the Party leaders of Dazhai, Xiyang, and Shanxi submitted self-criticism reports to the Party centre, in which they apologised for infringing the Sixty Articles, and for turning Dazhai into a “model of class

58 CCP Central Committee of Xiyang County of Shanxi Province, "Dagan nongtian jiben jianshe, jianshe xiandaihua Dazhai xian" [Achieve a great deal in basic construction works for farmland, construct a modernised Dazhai county], July 6, 1978, in XCA, Vol. 3-1-965, p. 63.

struggle." Notwithstanding the conservative turn in politics and policies, the legitimacy of the Sixty Articles faced new challenges arising from increasing local demands for decollectivisation, and divisions within the conservative faction. The practice of model-making also underwent significant changes which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

Decollectivising Anhui:

The making of a rightful resistance model, 1979–1980

This chapter examines the model-making process that unleashed agricultural decollectivisation in the transitional period from the Mao to post-Mao era. I argue that Anhui's leaders and the survivor faction at the Centre, which grew out of the conservative faction, cultivated the province as a "rightful resistance model" in order to legitimate the universal implementation of *baochan daohu* and *dabaogan daohu*, the two most decollectivised forms of agricultural production within the structure of the people's commune. I further argue that, notwithstanding the shift of the model-making technique from "political theatre" to "rightful resistance," model-making was still heavily shaped by central-level factions, and served to advance a particular faction's policy agenda, and to discredit the opposite faction. In this chapter, I first discuss the official repudiation of the model-making technique underpinning the Dazhai Model. I subsequently examine the central-level factional dynamics under the leadership of Hua Guofeng, and review how Hua steered China's national rural policy agenda outside the scope of the Dazhai Campaign. This is followed by explanations of what *baochan daohu*, *dabaogan daohu*, and *baogong daozu* were, and why *baogong daozu* was the only form of "production responsibility system" (*shengchan zerenzhi*) that was centrally approved. Finally, I explore the main characteristics of the Anhui Model that

made it a rightful resistance model, trace the model-making process, and examine the outcomes.

1. Undoing Dazhai

The end of the Dazhai Campaign, and the subsequent downfall of Dazhai, saw the post-Mao regime's repudiation of the practice of model-making that turned Dazhai into a national political theatre model. While still acknowledging the benefits of promoting and learning from exemplars, the Centre stressed the practice should be carried out in accordance with the new political mantra of "seeking truth from facts." Essentially, this meant that the achievements of models should not be exaggerated, and the shortcomings of models should not be overlooked.[1] In August 1980, the Shanxi Party Committee submitted a self-criticism report to the Centre concerning the provincial implementation of the Dazhai Campaign. This anticipated Chen Yonggui's resignation from the vice premiership, which followed one month later. In November, the Centre transmitted the Shanxi report together with a new set of guidelines on model-making to all provinces and central ministries.

The new guidelines introduced the stipulation that, in order to consolidate the "advanced nature" of models, authorities should give them political and ideological guidance at all times. Moreover, unrealistic expectations should not be imposed on the model locales. If they lost the exemplary attributes that enabled them to be selected as models in the first place, their model status should be

1 "Yao shishiqiushi de kandai xianjin dianxing" [(We) have to seek truth from facts in treating advanced models], *RMRB*, July 17, 1978, p. 1.

scrapped. Cadres were required neither to lie about nor conceal the failings of the model locales, or to supply them with money, manpower, or other resources to make them model-worthy when they actually lacked intrinsic merits. It was mentioned in this context that models should be the "outcomes of the collective wisdom and hard work of the masses." The focus on local agency here contrasted sharply with the heavy state involvement in cultivating the Dazhai Model. Furthermore, as emphasised repeatedly by the conservative faction during the Dazhai Campaign, all local areas were urged to take their concrete circumstances into account in the process of emulating models. Mechanical or tempestuous emulation was specifically prohibited.[2]

When this document was issued in November 1980, Anhui had just recently risen as the new national agricultural model. As we will see below, the model-making technique underpinning the Anhui Model was in many ways opposite to that of Dazhai. However, central factions still played a major role in model-making, and still used it as a mechanism to usher national policy change. It was only that, in this early post-Mao period, the dominant political cleavage at the Centre was no longer between the radical and conservative factions, but rather, the loyalist and survivor factions.

2 "Zhonggong zhongyang zhuanfa Shanxi shengwei guanyu nongye xue Dazhai yundong zhong jingyan jiaoxun de jiancha baogao de piyu" [Comment of the CCP centre concerning transmitting the "investigation report on the experience and lessons of the campaign to learn from Dazhai in agriculture" of the Shanxi provincial Party Committee], central document no. 83, November 23, 1980, in Huang Daoxia, Yu Zhan and Wang Xiyu, *Jianguo yilai nongye hezuohua shiliao huibian* [Compilation of historical materials of agricultural collectivisation since the founding of the state] (Beijing: Zhongyang dangshi chubanshe, 1992), pp. 883-885.

2. Changes to central-level factional dynamics after Dazhai

The power dynamics at the Centre were significantly more stable after Hua succeeded Mao as both the Chairman of the Party and the Central Military Commission (CMC) in October 1976, having been installed by Mao as the Premier in February of the same year. Lacking experience and stature at the Centre, Hua needed the cooperation of Party veterans — many of whom were conservatives — for his political survival. This was the main reason why he had the Gang of Four arrested in October 1976, and Deng Xiaoping reinstated to the PBSC in July 1977. From the point of Deng's return until September 1980, when Zhao Ziyang, Deng's protégée, replaced Hua as the Premier, there was a de facto power-sharing arrangement between Hua and Deng.[3] This provided the political foundation for policy moderation, and caused the radical policy agenda featuring mass political mobilisation, class struggle, and socialist revolution to be sidelined. In this context, the political cleavage between the radical and conservative factions in the late Mao period gradually gave way to a new political cleavage between the loyalist and survivor factions. Just as before, due to the official ban on factions in the Party, cadres never referred to themselves as members of a faction openly. However, in practice, they formed factions in order to safeguard their own political security, compete for power, and advance a common policy agenda.[4] As will be seen below, the legacy of Mao, and in particular, the Cultural Revolution, underpinned the new factional divisions.

3 See Robert Weatherley, *Mao's Forgotten Successor: The Political Career of Hua Guofeng* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 43-111.

4 See Lowell Dittmer, "Chinese Informal Politics," *The China Journal*, No. 34 (July 1995), pp. 1-34.

The loyalist faction consisted of three types of central leaders. The first type was those who got into power during the Cultural Revolution. In addition to Hua, who was also the de facto leader of the faction, it included Ji Dengkui, Wu De, Wang Dongxing, and Chen Xilian. The second type was those who Mao personally protected from political attack during the Cultural Revolution, such as Li Xiannian and Ye Jianying. The third type was those who held strong personal loyalty to Mao and/or Maoism despite having been purged during the Cultural Revolution, such as Wang Renzhong.[5] Here, I refer to Maoism as Mao's preference for a large, highly centralised, and egalitarian commune system, or more concisely put, his belief in the absolute superiority of the collective economy. The loyalist faction defended the legacy of Mao, and especially the Cultural Revolution.

The survivor faction was formed of two types of central leaders who were rehabilitated after being purged during the Cultural Revolution. The first type was those who were PBSC members before being purged, such as Deng, whose prestige led him to become the de facto head of the faction, and Chen Yun, the economist. The second type was those who were only promoted to the core of the central leadership after the Cultural Revolution. Most of them were in their early 60s, being at least a decade younger than the first type of survivors, to whom they paid due deference. At the time of their purge, they were either second-tier central leaders or provincial chiefs. The major examples of this type of survivors were Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang and Wan Li, all of whom were Deng's protégées. These

5 See Mo Yuanqin, "Wang Renzhong he Mao Zedong xiangchu de rizi," *Dangshi tiandi*, No.2 (2008), pp. 4-13.

younger survivors were the most open to decollectivisation. The faction as a whole was keen to reassess Mao's legacy, and to arrive at an official repudiation of the Cultural Revolution, instead of simply repudiating the Gang of Four and their radical agenda.[6]

3. The national rural policy agenda after the Dazhai Campaign

3.1 Official reassessment of the rural situation

Ever since the Dazhai Campaign was launched in 1964, the national media continually reported good news from the countryside, from bumper harvests in formerly poor villages, increase in the level of agricultural mechanisation, to the completion of many large-scale capital construction works. They gave the impression that rural China had achieved unprecedented prosperity.[7] However, the central-level assessment of Chinese agriculture turned from celebration to a language of crisis following the end of the Cultural Revolution. In August 1977, the *People's Daily* reported that China had around one billion acres of farmland that were severely affected by drought or flood every year. Reportedly, of all of China's farmland, one-third produced a relatively stable yield, one-third produced a good yield only under favourable weather conditions, and the remaining one-

6 For a detailed study of the political struggles between the loyalists and survivors, see Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 25-121.

7 See, for example, "Ni zhui wo gan, biandi huaka: Ji Shandong sheng Penglai xian xue Dazhai yundong you dian dao mian de xin fazhan" [You chase and I hurry, flowers blossom everywhere: An account of the new developments of carrying out the Learn from Dazhai Campaign from point to surface in Penglai County of Shandong Province], *RMRB*, April 2, 1974, p. 4.

third produced a low and unstable yield. It concluded that less than a quarter of China's farmland produced a high and stable yield consistently.[8] In August 1978, Vice Premier Li Xiannian told rural cadres that food availability in China was "very tight," despite the fact that "seven billion peasants of China's eight billion population were responsible for feeding the country."[9] Hu Qiaomu of the Social Sciences Academy, a research institute under the State Council, told cadres that the amount of food available per person in China in 1977 was the same as it had been in 1955.[10]

The national media exposed the prevalence of power abuse in people's communes in 1978. It was reported that cadres at the commune and brigade levels often arbitrarily transferred farm labour belonging to production teams to undertake capital construction works in lieu of compensation. The misappropriation or theft of production team funds and equipment by upper-level commune cadres was also commonplace. Moreover, it was found that, since many communes were maintaining excessively large fiscal reserves, which was disproportionate to their income, most peasants were severely underpaid, and sometimes even not paid any cash at all. This was not to mention that official corruption was rampant.[11] Worse still, likely due to frequent oscillations between

8 "Zao dongshou, zao guihua, zao jianxiao" [Work early, plan early, and see the results early], *RMRB*, October 8, 1978, p. 2.

9 Li Xiannian, "Zai quanguo nongtian jiben jianshe huiyi shang de jianghua (yi jiu qi ba nian qi yue er shi'er ri)" [Speech at the National Conference of Farmland Capital Construction (July 22, 1978)], *RMRB*, August 16, 1978, p. 1.

10 Hu Qiaomu, "Anzhao jingji guilu banshi, jiakuai shixian si ge xiandaihua" [Do things according to economic laws, accelerate the realisation of the four modernisations], *RMRB*, October 6, 1978, p. 1.

11 *RMRB* commentator, "Diaodong nongmin jijixing de guanjian zai luoshi zhengce" [The key to mobilising the enthusiasm of peasants is to implement the policies], *RMRB*, February 15, 1978, p. 1.

radicalism and conservatism in the national rural policy agenda throughout the Dazhai Campaign, rural cadres generally felt unsure about the legitimacy of the Sixty Articles, despite the fact that the post-Mao leadership had stressed the importance of implementing the Sixty Articles consistently. Instead of doing what they were told, many rural cadres persisted with radical policies. They confiscated the "private plots" of peasants, imposed restrictions on family sideline production and rural trade fairs.[12]

3.2 Hua Guofeng's new rural policy agenda

The central leadership introduced a series of measures and policies to resolve these problems. Here, it is important to emphasise that these initiatives were originated mainly from Hua, instead of other central leaders.[13] Hua was able to assume almost complete control in rural policy because his expertise and familiarity thereof surpassed all of his colleagues significantly. Before he ascended to the Centre in 1976, he built his political career on the agricultural collectivisation campaign in Hunan Province for nearly two decades since the early 1950s.[14] Now, as Chairman Hua, he set two goals for the national rural policy agenda. The first goal was the "four modernisations of agriculture," which referred to increasing agricultural mechanisation, electrification, irrigation, and

12 *Xinhua* special correspondent, "Zenyang kandai zhengdang de jiating fuye?" [How should proper family sideline productions be viewed and treated?], *RMRB*, April 21, 1978, p. 2.
13 For a detailed discussion on this point, see Frederick C. Teiwes and Warren Sun, *Paradoxes of Post-Mao Rural Reform: Initial Steps Toward a New Chinese Countryside, 1976-1981* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), pp. 16-47.
14 See Robert Weatherley (2010).

fertilisation. The second goal was "alleviating peasant burden."[15]

Hua decided that both goals were to be attained mainly through a huge increase in state expenses for agriculture. To achieve the "four modernisations," the total amount of state funds expended on rural capital construction works was increased for nearly 20%, from 4.23 billion *yuan* in 1978 to 5.04 billion *yuan* in 1979. To alleviate peasant burden, the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Party (hereafter referred to as "the 1978 Third Plenum"), which was held in December 1978, announced that the mandatory quota of grain procurement by the state from communes would be capped at the level used during 1971–1975. Moreover, the procurement price for the mandatory quota of grain would be raised by 20%, and for grain that was sold to the state on top of the mandatory quota, by a further 50%. The procurement prices for 18 major non-grain agricultural products, including cotton, oil crops, sugar crops, etc., were also increased. Concurrently, it was declared that the sale price for agricultural machines, fertilisers, pesticides, and other products to be used in agricultural production would be lowered by 10–15% in two years' time.[16] In June 1979, the central government announced a reduction or waiver of taxes on poor communes, which was calculated to represent a loss of over five billion *yuan* in central revenue.[17] The official estimate of the total amount of national expenditure that

15 Hua Guofeng, "Tuanjie qilai, wei jianshe shehui zhuyi de xiandaihua qiangguo er fendou: yijiuqiba nian er yue ershiliu ri zai di wu jie quanguo renmin daibiao dahui di yi ci huiyi shang de zhengfu gongzuo baogao" [Unite together and strive to build a modernised and strong socialist country: Government work report for the First Session of the Fifth National People's Congress on February 26, 1978], *RMRB*, March 7, 1978, p. 1.

16 "Zhongguo gongchandang di shiyi jie zhongyang weiyuanhui di san ci quanti huiyi gongbao" [Communiqué of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China], *RMRB*, December 24, 1978, p. 1.

17 Yu Qiuli, "Guanyu yijiuqijiu nian guomin jingji jihua cao'an de baogao" [Report on the draft

was spent on agriculture was over 240 billion *yuan* in 1979, being the highest record ever under CCP rule.[18] This figure did not include state funds that were used to import around 10–20 million tonnes of food from abroad every year beginning in 1979, which was necessary to compensate for the reduction in mandatory grain procurement.[19]

The 1978 Third Plenum also promulgated a revised draft of the Sixty Articles (hereafter referred to as the "1978 Sixty Articles"), which retained all of the major provisions in the old draft.[20] Besides the new Sixty Articles, the Centre also handed down directives urging rural cadres to examine their work with reference to Hunan Province's Xiangxiang Production Team and Shaanxi Province's Xunyi County. The directives detailed how the cadres of these two locales had exploited peasants previously, but more recently made amends.[21]

1979 national economic plan], *RMRB*, June 29, 1979, p. 1.

18 "Zhang Jinfu buzhang xiang renda daibiao xiangxi shuoming yusuan zhichu fenpei qingkuang, genju jingji tiaozheng fangzhen anpai jinnian yusuan zhichu" [Minister Zhang Jinfu explained the allocation of the expenditure budget to delegates of the National People's Congress in detail. This year's budget expenditure is arranged in accordance to the principle of economic adjustment], *RMRB*, June 25, 1979, p. 1.

19 Zhao Ziyang, *Gaige licheng* [The secret journal of Zhao Ziyang] (Hong Kong: New Century Press, 2009), p. 115.

20 "Nongcun renmin gongshe gongzuo tiaoli (shixing cao'an)" [Articles on the work of the rural people's communes (provisional draft)], December 22, 1978, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 902-909.

21 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhuanfa Hunan Sheng Xiangxiang xianwei baogao de pishi" [Comment of the CCP centre concerning transmitting the report of Xiangxiang County of Hunan Province], Central Document no. 37, June 23, 1978, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), p. 874; "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhuanfa Shaanxi shengwei guanyu Xunyi Xian shaoshu ganbu qiangpo mingling, weifa luanji wenti de diaocha baogao de pishi" [Comment of the CCP centre concerning transmitting Shaanxi provincial Party Committee's "investigation report concerning the problems of commandism, violations of the laws and discipline of a minority of cadres of Xunyi County], central document no. 42, July 19, 1978, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 875-876.

3.3 Failings of Hua's new rural policy agenda

While Hua's programme improved the rural economy and alleviated peasant burden, it fell short of achieving the "four modernisations" for agriculture, and of alleviating peasant unhappiness with agricultural collectivisation. The first of these two shortcomings was reflected in the "Decision of the CCP Centre Concerning Several Questions on Speeding up Agricultural Development" that was adopted by the Fourth Plenum of the Eleventh CCP Central Committee in September 1979 (hereafter known as the "1979 Fourth Plenum Decision"). In the draft of this central document adopted by the 1978 Third Plenum for implementation on a trial basis (hereafter known as the "1978 Third Plenum Decision"), ambitious numerical targets were set for the increase in grain output, fertiliser output, number of capital construction works, acreage of cultivable land, and acreage of irrigated farmland by 1985. However, these mentions were deleted from the final version of the document that was adopted at the Fourth Plenum in 1979. Moreover, the sentence "In order to achieve agricultural modernisation, we need to first achieve agricultural mechanisation, electrification, irrigation, and fertilisation," which was found in the 1978 Third Plenum Decision, was removed from the 1979 Fourth Plenum Decision.[22]

Regarding the second shortcoming of Hua's programme, that is, peasant dissatisfaction with agricultural collectivisation, it was the mismanagement of the

22 See "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiakuai nongye fazhan ruogan wenti de jueding (cao'an)" [Decision of the CCP centre concerning several questions on speeding up agricultural development (draft)], December 22, 1978, in *Xinjiang linye* [Forestry of Xinjiang], No. S1 (1979), pp. 1-11; "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiakuai nongye fazhan ruogan wenti de jueding" [Decision of the CCP centre concerning several questions on speeding up agricultural development], September 28, 1979, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 910-918.

communes that played the largest part. By mid-1979, many provincial Party Committees openly acknowledged that the rural cadres in their regions resisted the implementation of the Sixty Articles, mainly because they feared being punished as "capitalist roaders" should the political climate become radicalised again. Their fears escalated in April 1979, when Deng introduced the "four cardinal principles" that must be upheld at all times: the socialist path, the people's democratic dictatorship, the Party's leadership, as well as Mao Zedong Thought and Marxism-Leninism. While the "four cardinal principles" was introduced to suppress growing demands for political liberalisation by Chinese intellectuals, many rural cadres interpreted it as a signal of impending political radicalism.[23]

In addition to having failed to achieve its intended goals, the massive increase in state expenditure in Hua's new rural policy programme contributed to high levels of national debt and inflation. The amount of annual national debt in 1979–1980 hit over 100 billion *yuan*, causing the Party's elders from both factions, especially Chen Yun from the survivor faction, and Li Xiannian from the loyalist faction, to raise serious concerns. Some time in mid-1980, Chen proposed a significant reduction in national expenditure, as well as the number and scale of infrastructure projects, in order to achieve fiscal credit balance at the expense of slowing economic growth in 1981. Li even wanted to see a fiscal surplus. Deng backed their proposals, and the Centre formally decided to reduce agricultural

23 See the transcripts of the broadcasts of various provincial Party Committees, and speeches of various provincial First Party Secretaries concerning this situation between July to October 1979 in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Zhonggong nianbao* [Yearbook on Chinese communism] (Taipei: Zhonggong yanjiu zazhishe, 1976), p. II-98.

subsidies and investment in July 1980.[24]

Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun recently argued that it was solely high debt and inflation, which necessitated a reduction in state expenses on agriculture, that contributed to central approval for agricultural decollectivisation nationwide.[25] I disagree with their argument on two grounds. First, there was no reason to assume decollectivisation as the natural solution that the central Party-state, regardless of factional divisions, would resort to in light of financial difficulties. Second, I argue that the model-making process of Anhui demonstrated that members of the survivor faction, notably Wan Li and Du Runsheng, had been pushing for agricultural decollectivisation since late 1979 and early 1980 respectively, when high debt and inflation were not in the picture.

Teiwes and Sun claimed that Deng's speech on 31 May 1980, which opened the green light for agricultural decollectivisation, was solely the result of his sudden realisation of the fiscal problems, and had nothing to do with factional struggles. However, as will be demonstrated in Section 5, high-ranking leaders of the survivor faction had been trying to create a more hospitable policy framework for decollectivisation well before Deng's speech. I find that when *baochan daohu* was a political taboo, Deng allowed Anhui to experiment with the "responsibility field" (*zeren tian*) system (which was repudiated by Mao as a slippery slope for *baochan daohu*) in October 1979. Deng Liqun and Hu Yaobang supported Anhui to continue with *baochan daohu* sometime between July to November 1979. Zhao Ziyang blocked the transmission of an anti-*baochan daohu* document in the name

24 Zhao Ziyang (2009), p. 112.
25 Frederick C. Teiwes and Warren Sun (2016).

of the CCP centre in January 1980. By contrast, Hua, Li Xiannian, and Wang Renzhong of the loyalist faction attempted to derail Anhui's experimentation with *baochan daohu* on multiple occasions.

4. Agricultural decollectivisation: The non-agenda

4.1 Agricultural decollectivisation was forbidden

In Hua's national rural policy programme, agricultural decollectivisation was conspicuously ruled out, as reflected in the 1978 Sixty Articles. Other than reinforcing the legitimacy of the 1962 Sixty Articles as discussed earlier, what was new about the 1978 Sixty Articles were the following stipulations:

> *Baochan daohu* (contracting output to households) should not be carried out. *Fentian dan'gan* (dividing the farmland for going it alone) should not be carried out.

Baochan daohu and *fentian dan'gan*, which was commonly referred to as *dan'gan* (going it alone), were two systems of decollectivisation, with the latter reducing the dependence of peasants on the collective to a greater extent than the former. Both systems could be seen as an extension of the provision of private plots permitted under the 1962 and 1978 Sixty Articles. As reviewed in Chapter 2, this policy required 5–7% of the communal land to be distributed to every household for independent cultivation. On a household basis, peasants could cultivate crops of their choice on their private plot, and sell them at rural trade fairs in return for cash. Their earnings in the fairs were often their only source of private income, and were usually significantly higher than their income from the

commune. It was commonly found that peasants worked much harder on their private plots than on the communal farmland, and consequently, the outputs of the former were often a few times higher than those of the latter. This was why the radical faction criticised private plots as "selfish plots" and "tails of capitalism," and called for their abolition during the radical phases of the Dazhai Campaign.

Under *baochan daohu*, the production team would divide the entire communal farmland into "private plots" to be distributed to individual households. The households would contract a production quota for grain and non-grain crops from the production team for independent cultivation on their respective "private plots." During harvest season, each household would hand over the entirety of its produce to the team for collective accounting and distribution. The team would allocate to each household the pre-agreed number of work-points if they fulfilled the production quota, and in addition to that, bonus work-points in the event of over-fulfilment of quota. If a household under-fulfilled the production quota, the team would deduct the pre-agreed number of work-points proportional to the shortfall. The value of each work-point was decided by the team mainly on the basis of the total productivity of all households. This system of work-point calculation replaced the piece-rate work-point system under the 1962 and 1978 Sixty Articles.[26] After accounting, the team would distribute produce and cash to each household on the basis of their work-points.

The only difference between *dan'gan* and *baochan daohu* was that the former did away with the work-point system, and thus abolished team-level accounting

26 For details on the piece-rate work-point system, see Section 1.1 of Chapter 2 and Appendix 1.

and distribution. After harvest, households only had to hand over the produce that was specified in their pre-agreed output quota to the team, which sold a portion to the state under the compulsory grain procurement programme, and redistribute a portion to vulnerable households. The households could retain all of the produce that was harvested outside the output quota for their own use, usually for self-consumption and for sale in rural trade fairs. Given that under *dan'gan*, the collective ownership of farmland was the only "collective" feature that remained of the commune system, *dan'gan* was officially classified as private farming. Since the mention of *dan'gan* was a political taboo, it was referred to as *dabaogan daohu* (net output contracting to households) by Wan in June 1979, and the Centre in September 1980, when they permitted the implementation of *dan'gan* in Anhui Province and the rest of China respectively. The term *dabaogan daohu* gave the false impression that it was not private farming, but simply another type of production responsibility system, where both work and output (*gan*) were contracted (*bao*) to households.

4.2 *Baogong daozu* distinguished from decollectivisation

While *baochan daohu* and *dan'gan* were banned, both the 1962 and 1978 Sixty Articles permitted *baogong daozu* (contracting work to work groups). *Zhuangye chengbao* (specialist contracting), *yizu siding* (one work group, four specifications), and *xiaoduan baogong* (piecemeal seasonal contracting) were the three major sub-categories of *baogong daozu* permitted by the Centre. Each of these systems was considered to be a legitimate form of the production

responsibility system. This was because they enhanced the clarity of responsibility in production and dampened incentives for free-riding by establishing pre-agreed contractual targets and reducing the size of the production unit. In 1978, the size of an average work group was 40 peasants, 5.5 times smaller than the size of an average production team, which had 220 peasants.[27]

While all types of *baogong daozu* were sidelined during the Dazhai Campaign, they were widely implemented since early 1979. *Baogong daozu* was not considered decollectivisation because it simply sub-divided the production team into several work groups to carry out agricultural production. The groups contracted skill-intensive farm works from the team in exchange for a fixed number of work-points if the works were completed to the quality mutually agreed in advance. Commonly contractable farm works included transplanting rice-seedlings and cultivating fruit trees or cash crops. Bonus work-points were awarded if the work was completed to a quality higher than agreed, completed ahead of schedule or with fewer resources than specified. Conversely, work-points would be deducted if the contract was under-fulfilled. The cadres of the group had to allocate the work-point to each peasant in the group using the piece-rate work-point system discussed in Section 1.1 of Chapter 2. Work that was categorised as non-skill-intensive, such as ploughing, sowing, irrigation, and capital construction work, still had to be carried out on a team basis.[28] The *People's Daily* urged

27 The figures were provided by Zhou Yueli, deputy director of Anhui Province's agricultural commission. See Ma Shixiang, "Dui Shannan Xiaojing Zhuang baochan daohu shidian de huigu yu sikao: Zhou Yueli fangtan lu" [A revisit and reflection of the experimental point of *baochan daohu* in Shannan's Xiaojing Zhuang: an account of the interview with Zhou Yueli], *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP History Studies], April 2009, pp. 92-97, at 93.

28 Xiao Shimao and Xu Xiji, "Guanling xian shixing baogong daozu, lianxi chanliang jisuan

cadres to educate peasants of the superiority of collective farming, in order to help them resist the temptation of subdividing their group into sub-groups on a household basis.[29]

5. Anhui's rightful resistance: From anti-model to national model

5.1 What is "rightful resistance" and why Anhui?

Kevin O'Brien introduced the concept of "rightful resistance" to describe a form of contention that falls between quiescence and rebellion in rural China. During the 1990s, O'Brien used the term to describe a protest tactic in which villagers cited central policy guidelines or regulations to make "rightful claims" against local governments. Issues commonly raised in this process included the collection of exorbitant fees and manipulation of elections by local cadres, and the "undemocratic" work-style of local cadres.[30] "Rightful resistance," a concept that was subsequently elaborated in the work of O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, had four characteristics: it operated near the boundary of authorised channels of complaint, used the rhetoric and commitments of the powerful to curb the exercise of power,

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baochou quzhe jingguo shuoming: Guanche baogong daozu zerenzhi yao pi jizuo, yao xiangxin nongmin, jianjue gen dang zou, yao gan shehui zhuyi, zhixing dang de nongcun jingji zhengce buneng yaoyao baibai" [An account of the twists and turns underwent by Guangling County in implementing baogong daozu and linking outputs to remuneration. To implement the responsibility system of baogong daozu, we must repudiate ultra-leftism, believe in peasants, and follow the Party's path persistently. We must not sway in achieving a big deal in socialism, and carrying out the Party's rural economic policies], *RMRB*, April 29, 1979, p. 1.

29 "Bianzhe dehua" [Words from the editor], *RMRB*, March 1, 1979, p. 4.

30 Kevin O'Brien, "Rightful Resistance," *World Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (October 1996), pp. 31-55.

exploited the divisions within the state, and mobilised support from the community.[31]

I borrow their concept of "rightful resistance" to refer to the model-making technique that was used by Anhui's leadership and the survivor faction to cultivate Anhui into a model. The Anhui Model had two main elements, both were exploited the factional divisions of the Centre. The first main element was the making of "rightful claims" by appealing to the paternalistic duty of the Party in providing for peasants, downplaying the central discourse associated with the loyalist faction, and professing allegiance to the central discourse introduced by the survivor faction. For example, in his closing speech at the Anhui Agricultural Conference in January 1980, the provincial Party Secretary Wan Li stated that the "guiding thought" of the 1979 Fourth Plenum Decision was to "take care of the material interests and political rights of peasants fully." Wan elaborated it by quoting the political slogans "thought emancipation" and "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth." These slogans were famously introduced by the survivor faction to challenge the legitimacy of Maoism, and to counteract the slogan "Whatever Chairman Mao said, we will say; whatever Chairman Mao do, we will do," which was promoted by the loyalist faction.[32]

Wan used the survivor faction's slogans to justify his reasoning that the local implementation of central directives should reflect "flexibility" on the basis of "actual (local) circumstances," and his approval for *baochan daohu* to be

31 Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, *Rightful Resistance in Rural China* (New York, NY: Cambridge University, 2006); Kevin O'Brien, "Rightful resistance revisited," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 6 (2013), pp. 1051-1062.

32 For details of how these three slogans were introduced and used, see Richard Baum (1994), pp. 58-71.

implemented by production teams that were "lagging behind (in agricultural productivity) for a long time," so that "the problem of feeding and clothing" peasants (*wenbao wenti*) could be resolved. This violated the express provisions of the 1979 Fourth Plenum Decision, which stated that only isolated households located deep in the mountains, or in remote and sparsely populated areas could implement *baochan daohu*.[33] In this speech, Wan deliberately omitted some relevant content in the Decision. First, he did not mention the caveat of the guiding thought that he cited, "on the basis of increasing the socialist education for peasants." Second, he was silent on the other guiding thought of the Decision, that is, "to make full use of the superiority of socialist institutions." These statements were strongly associated with the loyalist faction.[34]

The second main element of Anhui's "rightful resistance" was the widespread perception of Anhui as a testament to the failure of radical agricultural collectivisation, which Hua used to promote vigorously in Hunan in the 1960s.[35] Anhui was the province that suffered the most as a result of the devastating famine resulting mainly from the Great Leap Forward in 1958, when a highly centralised form of rural collectivisation — being the opposite of *baochan daohu* in many ways — was implemented across China despite opposition from peasants. In the aftermath of the Leap, the mortality rate of Anhui was 68.6 for every 1,000

33 Wan Li, "Wanshan shengchan zerenzhi (jielu)" [Improve the production responsibility systems (extract)], closing speech delivered at Anhui's Agricultural Conference, November 1, 1980, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 932-934.

34 See, for example, Hua Guofeng, March 7, 1978.

35 CCP Central Committee of Hunan Province. "Hua Guofeng tongzhi shi Mao zhuxi geming luxian de zhuoyue jichengzhe" [Comrade Hua Guofeng is an excellent successor of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line], *Hongqi* [Red Flag], No. 2 (1977), pp. 19-26.

persons in 1960. It was the highest of all the provinces and nearly three times above the national average mortality rate of 24.7 for every 1,000 persons in that year.[36] Records from Anhui's Fengyang County indicated that 17.7% of the province's rural population died from famine during 1959–1960.[37] Zeng Xisheng, Anhui's long-serving Party Secretary at the time, introduced the system of "responsibility field" (*zeren tian*) in attempt to raise the level of agricultural productivity in 1961. Under this system, the "large farm works" (*da nonghuo*), that is, labour intensive works, such as sowing and harvesting, were still carried out collectively. However, "small farm works" (*xiao nonghuo*), that is, smaller farm works that were less labour intensive, such as, maintaining irrigation pipes, farming with draught animals and seedling care, were contracted to households. The outputs in the field were divided between the collective and households according to a pre-agreed proportion.[38] Mao harshly criticised this variant of household contracting as a slippery slope leading to *baochan daohu* in 1962, leading to the purge of Zeng. This made him China's third most senior cadre who was purged in relation to *baochan daohu*, after Liu Shaoqi, State Chairman from 1959–1968, and Deng Zihui, head of the Central Rural Work Department from 1952–1962.[39] In fact, Anhui had always been known as one of the poorest

36 Yang Dali L., *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change Since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 57.

37 "Guanyu Fengyang wenti de baogao" [Report of the problems of Fengyang County], year unspecified, Fengyang County Archive, in Chen Dabin, "Zhongguo nongcun gaige de yi ci yuyan: Anhui 'zeren tian' xingqi shimo" [A prelude to China's rural reforms: the origin of the rise of Anhui's "responsibility field"], *Dangshi zonglan* (June 2004), pp. 36-40, at 40.

38 CCP Committee of Anhui Province, "Zhonggong Anhui shengwei guanyu shixing tianjian guanli zerenzhi jia jiangli banfa de baogao" [Report of the CCP Committee of Anhui Province concerning the implementation of the field management responsibility system and bonus scheme on a trial basis], July 24, 1961, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 650-654.

39 Du Runsheng, "Agricultural Collectivisation in China: Past and Present," speech delivered to

provinces. Anhui's peasants were nationally infamous for sporadically taking up begging since the Ming Dynasty, a practice which continued well into Mao's time. For example, due to food shortage, it was estimated that 18,000 peasants of Fengyang County left Anhui to beg elsewhere between January to March 1967. 37% of the county's entire peasant population were led by cadres to beg in March 1969.[40]

It was the result of this constellation of reasons that prompted the survivor faction to select Anhui from among the provinces permitting the local implementation of *baochan daohu* to be the national model for rural reform.[41] While there was no official campaign that called for learning from Anhui akin to the Dazhai Campaign, Anhui's national model status was nonetheless apparent in the early post-Mao period for several reasons. First, after his brief tenure in Anhui from 1977–1979, where he was best-known for backing *baochan daohu*, Wan was promoted to the vice premiership with the specific responsibility of overseeing

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the Party School of the CCP Central Committee on November 28, 1980, in Du Runsheng and Thomas R. Gottschang, *Reform and Development in Rural China* (Basingstoke: Macmillan; New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 21-34.

40 Xu Zhongying and Chen Xiuyi, "Yu qunzhong 'fengyu tongzhou' de ganqing: Cong Chuxian diqu nongcun de bianhua kan dangqun guanxi de gaishan" [The feelings of "being in the same boat under wind and rain" with the masses: An examination of the improvement of the relationship between the cadres and masses from the transformation of the countryside of Chu Prefecture's regions], *RMRB*, June 23, 1981, p. 5; Ma Licheng and Ling Zhijun, *Jiaofeng: dangdai Zhongguo sanci sixiang jiefang shilu* [Clashes: a record of three times of thought emancipation in contemporary China] (Beijing: Jinri zhongguo chubanshe, 1998), pp. 128-129.

41 By March 1979, *baochan daohu* was carried out by some production teams in some regions in Guangdong, Sichuan, Anhui, and Jilin, with the approval of the provincial authorities. See Xu Qingquan and Du Mingming, "Baochan daohu tichu guocheng zhong de gaoceng zhenglun: fang guojia nongye weiyuanhui yuan fu zhuren Du Runsheng" [Disputes at the high level in the process of introducing *baochan daohu*: an interview with Du Runsheng, former deputy chief of the State Agricultural Commission], *Yanhuang chunqiu*, No. 11 (November 2008), pp. 1-5. By May 1980, b*aochan daohu* became the "prevailing trend" in Guangdong, Guangxi, Henan, Fujian, Anhui, Shandong, Jiangxi, Hebei, and Shanxi. See People's Commune Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture, ed, "Guangdong Sheng deng yixie ganbu qunzhong dui baochan daohu, fentian dan'gan de fanying" [The reports of some cadres and masses on *baochan daohu* and *fengtian dan'gan* in Guangdong and other provinces], May 1980, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 970-971.

national rural policies in January 1980.[42] Second, Chinese Central Television (CCTV), the national broadcaster, released a seven-part documentary on the implementation of household-level contracting in various parts of Anhui beginning on 23 May 1980.[43] Third, two places in Anhui were named by Deng Xiaoping when he gave his now-famous speech approving the universal application of *baochan daohu* and *dabaogan* to his PBSC colleagues on 31 May 1980. No other places were mentioned.[44]

In the subsequent sections, I examine the model-making process of Anhui in two time periods. I argue that during September to December 1978, Anhui's leaders gradually formed a tacit agreement with peasants that *baochan daohu* and *baochan daozu* could be carried out secretly. In September 1978, Wan increased the autonomy of production teams, and gave peasants extra rights for household-based production that greatly exceeded the permissible scope under the "private plot" policy. In December 1978, the Third Plenum promulgated two central documents that prohibited *baochan daohu* expressly. I subsequently argue that from February 1979 to September 1980, Anhui's leaders who supported *baochan daohu* or *baochan daozu* in the previous time period, as well as the survivor faction, cultivated Anhui as a "rightful resistance" model in order to push for the legitimation of *baochan daohu* and *dan'gan* (in the name of *dabaogan daohu*)

42 See Wan Li, "Nongcun gaige shi zenme gao qilai de?" [How did rural reforms begin?], in Ou Yangsong and Gao Yongzhong, *Gaige kaifang koushushi* [Oral history of reform and openness] (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2014), pp. 9-20.

43 See Bai Jingwei, Wei nongye dabaogan bao hukou de ren: Wang Yuzhao [The person who applied a *hukou* for *dabaogan* in agriculture: Wang Yuzhou] (Beijing: Zhongguo fazhan chubanshe, 2007), p. 185.

44 Deng Xiaoping, "Guanyu nongcun zhengce wenti" [Concerning the problems of rural policies], May 31, 1980, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), p. 925.

nationwide. In February 1979, Wan gave explicit approval for the local implementation of *baochan daohu*. In September 1980, the Centre formally permitted the universal implementation of these two systems.

5.2 Tacit approval for *baochan daozu* and *baochan daohu*, September to December 1978

In June 1977, Wan was transferred from the Ministry of Railways to take up the position of Anhui's Party Secretary under Deng's recommendation. Within the first year of his new appointment, the province was hit by a severe drought. After summer harvest in 1978, it was found that the level of grain output of the whole province was 10 billion catty (*jin*) below the level anticipated in the provincial plan. As the drought persisted, Wan announced three measures in September 1978. First, any production team that could complete the spring sowing plan assigned by the upper-level authorities could retain all of the wheat it produced in excess of the output quota set in the plan after summer harvest in 1979. Given the severity of the situation, the standard practice for calculating the amount of wheat a team was obligated to sell to the state, which was based on the total amount of wheat produced, would not apply. Instead, the calculation would be based solely on the amount of wheat that was specified in the plan. Second, in addition to the "private plots" allocated to peasant households under the Sixty Articles, an additional proportion of the collective farmland could be set apart for household-based production, the precise acreage of which was to be determined locally. Third, peasants were encouraged to cultivate wheat and vegetables in the empty spaces adjacent to their villages, their houses, the roads, and bodies of water. The

produce would belong to the cultivator for private use.[45]

Baochan daozu in Mahu Commune

Around the time Wan announced these measures, the provincial Party Committee was aware that some production teams in Fengyang County's Mahu Commune had been implementing *baochan daozu* (contracting output to work groups) for almost half a year since March 1978.[46] This was so despite the fact that *baogong daozu* (contracting work to work groups) was the only contractual system at the work group level that was allowed by the Centre. In both *baochan daozu* and *baogong daozu*, "production quotas" (*shengchan zhibiao*) including the quantity and quality of work, as well as the amount of time and resources required to complete the work, were contracted out by production teams to work groups. After summer harvest, the production team would reward each work group a pre-agreed number of work-points if they completed the work according to the set specifications. Subsequently, on the basis of the number of work-points earned by the work group, the production team would reward each peasant in the work group a certain number of work-points according to the piece-rate work-point system.[47] The amount of cash payment that peasants were entitled to depended not only on their respective numbers of work-points, but also the value of the work-points, which was calculated differently under *baochan daozu* and *baogong daozu.*

45 Wan Li's speech at the meeting of the standing committee of the provincial Party Committee on September 8, 1978, see Wan Li, *Wan Li lun nongcun gaige yu fazhan* [Wan Li discusses rural reform and development] (Beijing: Zhongguo minzhu fazhi chubanshe, 1996), pp. 14-17.

46 This was reflected in the timing of Zhou Yueli's visit to Mahu Commune, which will be discussed in the next paragraph.

47 See Section 1.1 of Chapter 2 and Appendix 1.

Under the former, the main determinant of work-point value was the output level of a given work group, while under the latter, it was the average output level of all work groups in the same production team.[48] In 1978, an average production team had 5.5 work groups.[49] Notwithstanding this important difference, the work-point value in both systems was affected by the budgetary and expenditure obligations of the production team, such as funds to be set aside for collective investment, subsidies to vulnerable households, and taxes and fees to the government. [50]

Compared to *baogong daozu*, *baochan daozu* was more popular with peasants because of the more direct and stronger connection between individual labour and remuneration. In April 1978, Chen Tingyuan, Party Secretary of Fengyang County, gave his personal permission for Mahu Commune to continue with the practice of *baochan daozu* during a private conversation with Zhan Shaozhou, the commune's Party Secretary. By the middle of June 1978, 42 out of 48 production teams in Mahu carried out *baochan daozu*.[51] The news soon spread to other parts of the province. Zhou Yueli, deputy director of the provincial agricultural commission, went to Mahu Commune to investigate the local implementation of *baochan daozu.* He submitted a highly favourable report of *baochan daozu* to Wan, who submitted a written petition to the preparatory committee of the 1978 Third Plenum in Beijing to request the state to lift the ban on *baochan daozu* in

48 Wu Xiang and Zhang Guangyou, "Lianxi chanliang zerenzhi haochu henduo" [Output-linked production responsibility systems have many benefits], *RMRB*, April 9, 1980, p. 2.
49 See Ma Shixiang (2009), p. 93.
50 See Chapter 10 of the 1978 Sixty Articles, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), p. 907.
51 See Zhan Shaozhou, "Guanyu Mahu gongshe shixing zerenzhi de huiyi" [Recollections of the implementation of responsibility systems in Manhu Commune], date unspecified, in Chen Huairen and Xia Yurun, eds., *Qiyuan: Fengyang dabaogan shilu* [Origin: A record of Fengyang's *dabaogan*] (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1998), p. 43.

October.[52] Whilst in Beijing, in a private setting, Wan asked Hua in the presence of Deng Xiaoping and Ye Jianying, if Anhui could carry out Zeng's "responsibility field" system, which was repudiated by Mao as a slippery slope for *baochan daohu*. Hua denied his request, but Deng gave his approval, citing his "cat theory" — "It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice" — to justify the decision. After Deng's remarks, Ye said he concurred with Deng.[53]

Baochan daohu in Shannan Commune

Wan's private request to implement the "responsibility field" system in October suggested that he was well aware that the measures he announced in September could become a slippery slope for *baochan daohu*. This was especially so because both his measures and the "responsibility field" system gave local cadres wide discretion to divide the collective farmland for household-based production, and thus significantly expanded the scope of household-based production permissible under the "private plot" policy of the 1962 and 1978 Sixty Articles.

Moreover, it was quite likely that Wan had some knowledge that for many production teams, the implementation of his measures resulted in *baochan daohu*

52 Zhou Yueli, "Jiaqiang shengchan zerenzhi de yige hao banfa: guanyu Mahu gongshe fenzu zuoye, yichan jichou de diaocha" [A good method for strengthening the production responsibility system: an investigation of production at the work group level and output-linked remuneration in Mahu Commune], September 1978, in Chen Huairen and Xia Yurun (1998), pp. 52-56.

53 Ma Licheng and Ling Zhijun (1998), p. 85. Deng was well-known for introducing the cat theory at a Central Party Secretariat meeting in July 1962, when he was expressing support for whichever production responsibility system that could revive the rural economy. See "Deng Xiaoping tongzhi 'heimao baimao lun' beihou de gushi" [The story behind comrade Deng Xiaoping's "black cat or white cat theory"], *News of the Communist Party of China*, date unspecified, http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/85037/8530953.html (accessed 8 November 2017).

being carried out to varying degrees. In most places in Anhui, *baochan daohu* was carried out for certain types of non-stable food crops that only accounted for a small share of the production team's revenue. However, in Shannan Commune in Feixi County's Shannan District, since the entire collective farmland was divided to individual peasant households, *baochan daohu* was carried out for all crop types. Therefore, the collective was completely replaced by households in agricultural production, and the entirety of the production team's revenue rested on the outputs of individual households.[54] The implementation of *baochan daohu* for all crop types in the commune was tacitly permitted by the Shannan District Party Committee with the support of the Feixi County Party Committee. They decided in internal meetings that they would "give acquiescence" (*moxu*) to local demands for *baochan daohu* in their regions, but that they would do so without any explicit advocacy, publicity or promotion (*bu tichang, bu xuanchuan, bu tuiguang*). Notwithstanding the low-key approach, *baochan daohu* for all crop types soon spread from Shannan Commune to the whole Shannan District. By the end of 1978, 77.3% of all of the district's 1,006 production teams had carried out *baochan daohu.*[55] At that time, *baochan daohu* was explicitly prohibited in the 1978 Sixty Articles and the 1978 Third Plenum Decision that were promulgated for trial implementation nationwide in December. In addition, while not prohibited explicitly, *baochan daozu* was implicitly banned by the 1978 Sixty Articles, which stated that *baogong daozu* was the only type of contractual system

54 For the editorial notes for Wan's speech at the meeting of the standing committee of the provincial Party Committee on February 6, 1979, see Wan Li (1996), pp. 43-44.

55 Fan Xianrong, "Huangtu dishang de yi chang weida biange: Jiating chengbaozhi zai Feixi de xingqi yu tuiguang" [A great transformation on the yellow earth: The rise and progress of the household responsibility system in Feixi], *Dangshi zonglan*, No. 3 (1993), pp. 20-22, at 20.

permissible.

Given that these new central documents threatened the rapid spread of *baochan daozu* and *baochan daohu* in Anhui,[56] the provincial leaders felt pressed to break the silence of their tacit approval, and petitioned the Centre in order to protect the legitimacy of these two systems. With the sympathy and support of central leaders of the survivor faction, Anhui's leaders began promoting the province as a rightful resistance model. In so doing, they steered the national rural policy agenda away from Hua's formulation — significant increase in state investment in agriculture and reducing the burden of peasants — towards agricultural decollectivisation. This was a powerful critique of the Mao era that served to undermine Hua's authority.

5.3 Anhui as China's rightful resistance model, February 1979 to September 1980

Wan gave explicit permission for *baochan daohu*, February 1979

In February 1979, during a meeting of the standing committee of the Anhui provincial Party Committee, Wan gave his first explicit permission for Shannan Commune to continue to implement *baochan daohu*. He couched his approval using the terms strongly associated with the survivor faction's "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth" narrative. He also suggested in the meeting that the Centre's repudiation of *baochan daohu* during Mao's time might have been wrong. He said:

56 See Wan Li (2014), pp. 13-14.

> *Baochan daohu* was repudiated for a decade and more in the past. Many cadres are afraid of being repudiated. When *baochan daohu* is being spoken of, their hearts tremble. When speaking of *baochan daohu* themselves, their faces change colour. However, among the things repudiated previously, some might have been repudiated correctly, while others might actually be correct, but were mistaken and repudiated nonetheless. They should be examined through practice. I am of the view that Shannan Commune should be allowed to carry out experiments with *baochan daohu*. There are more benefits than drawbacks for small-scale experimentation...If [Shannan Commune] slides onto the path of capitalism, it is not a worry. We have ways to pull them back. If they fail to produce enough grain, the provincial Party Committee will be responsible for allocating grain to them.[57]

Ten days later, Wan chaired a meeting with the Party Secretaries of Chaohu Prefecture, Chu Prefecture, of which Fengyang County and Shannan Commune belonged, and Liuan Prefecture, of which Feixi County and Mahu Commune belonged. He encouraged them to permit *baochan daohu* to be carried out in their regions. He assured them not to worry about the potential political crackdown by the Centre because he would step in and take personal responsibility should it happen. He emphasised the importance of "thought emancipation," as oft-repeated by central-level survivors, in order to legitimate his approval for *baochan daohu*.[58]

The Seven Provinces and Three Counties Meeting in Beijing, March 1979

At the Centre, Du Runsheng, deputy chief of the State Agricultural Commission (*nongwei*), who was an ally of Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the CCP Central Committee, invited the leaders of agricultural work from seven provinces —

57 Wan's speech on February 6, 1979, see Wan Li (1996), pp. 43-44.
58 Wan's speech on February 16, 1979, see Wan Li (1996), pp. 48-49.

Guangdong, Hunan, Sichuan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Hebei and Jilin — and three counties — Anhui's Quanjiao, Guangdong's Boluo and Sichuan's Guanghan — for a meeting in Beijing during 12–24 March, 1979. These places were chosen because some of their production teams had been carrying out *baochan daohu*, and the attitude of the local leadership towards this varied. The leaders of Guangdong, Sichuan, Anhui and Jilin were supportive, the leaders of Jiangsu were hostile, while the leaders of Hebei were on the fence.[59] At the meeting, Anhui's Zhou Yueli spoke strongly in favour of *baochan daohu*, and introduced the spread of the system from Mahu Commune across Feixi County. He said that Anhui's official position was that all forms of production responsibility systems could be experimented, so that the masses could find out through practice which system was the most suitable for them. On the last day of the meeting, Hua mentioned his observations of rice plantation in Hunan, and on that basis, concluded that collective labour participation at the team level was essential for efficient division of labour in agricultural production. He specifically stated that not everything could be performed at the level of work groups, and defended the remuneration system under the Sixty Articles on the ground that the calculation of work-points "takes output into account." Hua's reservations for *baochan daozu* implied his opposition to *baochan daohu*, since the latter decollectivised collective production and accounting to an even greater extent.

After a few days into the meeting, Wang Renzhong, a loyalist and chief of the State Agricultural Commission, transmitted a hitherto classified document that

59 Xu Qingquan and Du Mingming (2008), pp. 1-5.

criticised *baochan daozu* and *baochan daohu* to the *People's Daily*. It was published on the front page of the newspaper as a letter to the editor in the name of Zhang Hou, a little-known cadre from Gansu Province, on 15 March. At the beginning of the article was an editorial note stating that Zhang's criticisms of the two systems were correct, and that production teams that had contracted output to work groups should "conscientiously study" the 1978 Sixty Articles and 1978 Third Plenum Decision, in order to "correctly implement" the Party's rural policies. The editorial note also stated that, since the existing commune system had been in place "for over 20 years already," "practice has proven that it [is] consistent to the concrete circumstances of the villages, and the masses [have] become used to it." The mentions of "practice" and "concrete circumstances" implied that the Centre's prohibition of *baochan daozu* and *baochan daohu* was reasonable even if measured against the survivor faction's standards.[60]

A sign of factional balance at that time was that on 30 March, the *People's Daily* published on the front page a letter from Anhui's agricultural commission, which accused Zhang's letter of "causing disturbances" in their province, and defended *baochan daozu* on the ground that it was of the same nature as *baogong daozu*, since the production team carried out unified accounting and distribution in both systems.[61] Shortly thereafter, on 3 April, the Centre transmitted a summary of the Seven Provinces and Three Counties Meeting to all provinces, which approved the implementation of *baochan daozu*. Moreover, while it required

60 Zhang Hou, "Sanji suoyou, dui wei jichu yinggai wending" [The system of three-level of ownership with the production team as the basis should be stabilised], *RMRB*, March 15, 1979, p. 1.

61 Xin Sheng and Lu Jiafeng, "Zhengque kandai lianxi chanliang de zerenzhi" [Treat output-linked production responsibility systems correctly], *RMRB*, March 30, 1979, p. 1.

cadres to "actively guide" peasants to "reorganise" if they had carried out *baochan daohu* and *dan'gan*, it relaxed the blanket ban on *baochan daohu*. It was stated that: "the implementation of *baochan daohu* by isolated households deep in the mountains or in remote and sparsely populated regions should be allowed (*yingdang xuke*)."[62] As the Centre's restrictions on decollectivisation were relaxed, Chen Tingyuan and Wan yielded to the request of the peasants of Fengyang County's Xiaogang Production Team for carrying out *dabaogan daohu* on 15 April and 2 June respectively.[63] This was so notwithstanding the fact that *dan'gan* was still banned by the Centre, and Xiaogang's location did not even qualify it to implement *baochan daohu*.

Campaigning for *baochan daohu*, July 1979 to February 1980

In July 1979, Guo Chongyi, an Anhui provincial cadre, went to Beijing to petition the central government to lift the restrictions on *baochan daohu*. Guo approached Chen Yizhi, a leading cadre at the state's Institute of Agricultural Economics, with a report of the implementation of *baochan daohu* in Feixi County. As discussed earlier, Feixi pioneered the implementation of *baochan daozu* in late 1979. However, Guo's report attributed Feixi's bumper harvests in the summer to *baochan daohu.* This indicated that *baochan daozu* was indeed a slippery slope for *baochan daohu* in practice. Chen relayed the report to Deng Liqun and Hu

62 "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan guojia nongwei dangzu baosong de 'guanyu nongcun gongzuo wenti zuotan hui jiyao' de tongzhi" [Notice concerning the CCP centre's transmission of the "summary of the seminar on rural work" submitted by the Party organisations of the state agricultural commission], April 3, 1979, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 917-920.

63 See Chen's permission and Wan's permission in Chen Huairen and Xia Yurun (1998), pp. 156 and 167 respectively.

Yaobang, both of whom commented on it favourably. Deng Liqun even asked Song Ping, Gansu's Party Secretary, to implement *baochan daohu* in his province, saying that if *baochan daohu* could transform Anhui, it might well be able to transform Gansu, another poor province.[64] Thereafter, Chen went to Feixi and Fengyang counties to investigate the implementation of *baochan daohu*. His main findings were that *baochan daohu* was popular with peasants, and that production teams adopting *baochan daohu* recorded a 30% increase in grain output on average. He relayed his investigation report to Deng Liqun, Hu Yaobang, Deng Xiaoping and Yao Yilin, all central cadres of the survivor faction. By November 1979, Chen had also held more than ten meetings to present his findings at various state-level research institutes, including Deng Liqun's CCP Central Committee Secretariat's Research Institute, as well as Hu Qiaomu's Chinese Social Sciences Academy.[65] Significantly, Chen did not involve any loyalist in the process, not even Hua Guofeng, who had been chairing the making of rural policies.

In January 1980, the State Agricultural Commission convened the People's Commune Management Conference for all provinces in Beijing. Du Runsheng arranged for Zhou Yueli to present on the implementation of *baochan daohu* in Anhui. As anticipated by the Seven Provinces and Three Counties Meeting in March 1979, Hua Guofeng and Wang Renzhong reiterated the ban on *baochan daohu*. Li Xiannian, Hua's major ally, read and endorsed Wang's speech at the beginning of the conference. According to official protocols, the summary of the conference — which contained content hostile to *baochan daohu* — should be

64 Chen Yizhi, *Chen Yizhi huiyilu* [Memoir of Chen Yizhi] (Hong Kong: New Century Press, 2013), p. 211.
65 Chen Yizhi (2013), pp. 235-236.

transmitted to all provinces in the name of the CCP centre. However, Zhao Ziyang of the survivor faction, who was newly appointed to the PBSC in September 1979, opposed to this. He felt that progress for *baochan daohu* would be more difficult if the summary was transmitted in the name of the CCP centre, which would make it one of the highest ranked central-level documents. Thanks to Zhao's intervention, the summary was transmitted in the name of the State Agricultural Commission.[66]

Shortly after the conference, Wan was transferred to Beijing to become the vice premier overseeing agriculture. He used this new position to promote Anhui's experience of *baochan daohu* by commissioning Wu Xiang and Zhang Guangyou, Anhui-based Xinhua News Agency journalists, to write a series of articles detailing the implementation of *baochan daohu* in Anhui. Some of these were published as classified materials for circulation within the PBSC and State Agricultural Commission, while others appeared in the *People's Daily*. These articles served to undermine the credibility of the anti-*baochan daohu* articles published in *Rural Works Communication* (*Nongcun gongzuo tongxun*), a periodical under the auspices of Wang's State Agricultural Commission.[67] Significantly, one of Wu and Zhang's *People's Daily* articles, which was published in April 1980, advocated not only *baochan daohu*, but also *dabaogan*. However, they did not specify which level of contracting this was referring to, whether it was contracting at the team level (*dabaogan daodui*), the work group level (*dabaogan daozu*), or household level (*dabaogan daohu*). It was unlikely

66 See Xu Qingquan and Du Mingming (2008).

67 "Fentian dan'gan bixu jiuzheng" [Dividing the farmland for going it alone must be corrected], *Nongcun gongzuo tongxun* [Rural Works Communication], March 2, 1980.

that they were referring to *dabaogan daodui*, given that this was the arrangement stipulated by the 1962 and 1978 Sixty Articles. Under *dabaogan daodui*, the production team could retain all the above-quota outputs for distribution within the team using the piece-rate work-point system, after handing over the pre-agreed quota of outputs to the production brigade. However, it was unclear whether they were referring to *dabaogan daozu* or *dabaogan daohu*. *Dabaogan daozu* was similar to *dabaogan daodui.* The only difference between these two systems was that, under *dabaogan daozu*, the contractual relationship was between the work groups and the production team. However, *dabaogan daohu*, which was pioneered by the Xiaogang Production Team, was private farming (*dan'gan*) in all but name. Just like *baochan daohu*, under *dabaogan daohu*, agricultural production was carried out on a household basis (rather than collective basis). However, unlike *baochan daohu*, under *dabaogan daohu*, households did not have to hand over all of the produce to the production team for collective accounting and distribution. They only had to hand over the amount of produce within the pre-agreed output quota to the production team. They could retain all the above-quota produce for private use. The ambiguity in reference in Wu and Zhang's article was likely intentional, given that *dabaogan daohu* was too much of a political taboo when even *baochan daohu* was contentious.[68]

68 See Wu Xiang and Zhang Guangyou, April 9, 1980.

Approval of *baochan daohu* and *dabaogan daohu* by the Centre, May to September 1980

In May 1980, like Wu and Zhang, Deng Xiaoping did not specify which contracting level he had in mind when he spoke of *dabaogan*. At a PBSC meeting on the 31st, Deng expressed his preference for lifting the ban on *baochan daohu* and *dabaogan*, by making explicit references to the experiences of Feixi and Fengyang counties.[69] Thereafter, on 28 September 1980, the CCP centre circulated a document giving explicit permission for the implementation of *baochan daohu* and *baogan daohu* (which was equivalent to *dabaogan daohu*) across China, officially legitimating *dabaogan daohu* at the national level. At the same time, the document also stated that, as a general rule, production teams that were relatively well-to-do should not carry out *baochan daohu* unless the peasants demanded it. In such situations, local cadres were required to guide peasants to carry out a gradual transition from *baochan daohu* to a more collectivist form of production and distribution.[70] Despite the ostensibly pro-collective official stance, shortly after the document was issued, Hu Yaobang and Wan personally went to every province in the west and east respectively to urge the provincial Party Secretaries to permit the implementation of *baochan daohu* and *dabaogan daohu* in their regions.[71]

69 Deng Xiaoping, May 31, 1980, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), p. 925.

70 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yinfa jinyibu jiaqiang he wanshan nongye shengchan zerenzhi de ji ge wenti de tongzhi" [Decision of the CCP centre concerning the printing and distribution of the notice concerning several questions on further strengthening and perfecting the agricultural responsibility systems], September 27, 1980, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 925-929, at 927.

71 "Wan Li he ta de 'lao huoji' men" [Wan Li and his old colleagues], *Fenghuang wang*, July 15, 2015, wemedia.ifeng.com/282574489167798/wemedia.shtml (accessed 5 October 2016).

Hu and Wan's imposition of household-level contracting despite resistance of many provincial leaders seemed to be politically motivated. The survivor faction promoted this as a cheap and effective alternative to Hua's national rural policy agenda, which greatly increased state investment in agriculture, but permitted no reform to the collective structure. This could be seen in the special commentator's article in the *People's Daily* published in March 1981, which stated that:

> In the period of adjustment, it is impossible for the state to come up with a lot of money to develop agriculture. Agricultural development should not depend on investment mainly, but it should firstly, depend on policies, and secondly, depend on science. The potential of these two aspects is huge...the ability of contracting [production] responsibility to households, and contracting [production] responsibility to labour in mobilising the incentives of peasants is obvious and cannot be underestimated.[72]

In the CCP centre document no.1 issued in January 1982, there was neither explicit nor implicit reference discouraging well-to-do production teams to implement *baochan daohu*. It also did not impose restrictions on the implementation of *baochan daohu* or *baogan daohu*, both of which were referred to as "production responsibility systems of the socialist collective economy," alongside *baochan daozu* and *baogan daozu*.[73] The central government estimated that 45% of all of China's production teams adopted either *baochan daohu* or *dabaogan daohu* by the end of 1981, and 77.9% and 97.9% of all of the country's production teams adopted *dabaogan daohu* by the end of 1982 and 1983

72 *RMRB* specially commissioned commentator, "Ruhe zhuahao jinnian de jingji gongzuo" [How to grasp well the economic works for this year?], *RMRB*, March 9, 1981, p. 2.

73 "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'quanguo nongcun gongzuo huiyi jiyao'" [The CCP centre's transmission of the "summary of the National Rural Works Conference"], January 1, 1982, central document no. 1, in Huang Daoxia, et. al. (1992), pp. 991-996.

respectively.[74]

6. Conclusion

Anhui's advocacy for agricultural decollectivisation — beginning with Wan's significant expansion of the scope of household production, and culminating to the implementation of *baochan daozu*, *baochan daohu*, and *dabaogan daohu* at sub-provincial levels — completely revamped the technique of model-making that was characteristic of the late Mao era. Anhui's leaders cultivated the province as a rightful resistance model by using the survivor faction's "practice is the sole criterion for testing truth" narrative, emphasising policy flexibility and local diversity in making "rightful claims" for decollectivisation in light of the province's poverty and peasant demands. As demonstrated in the case of Anhui, and reinforced by the central document repudiating the Dazhai Model in November 1980, model-making was no longer as expensive, or as tightly controlled by the Centre. Quite the contrary, the survivor faction gave Anhui much leeway to make their own policies. They used the province to steer the national rural policy agenda away from Hua's policy goals — an increase in state expenditure in agriculture and alleviation of peasant burden — to decollectivisation, while sidelining the loyalists, notably Hua, in the process. Having said that, notwithstanding these changes in model-making techniques,

74 For the 1982 figure, see *Zhongguo nongye de guanghui chengjiu tongji ziliao* [Statistical data of the glorious achievements of Chinese agriculture, 1949-1984] (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1984), p. 5; For the 1983 figure, see *Zhongguo tongji nianjian, 1984* [China statistical yearbook, 1984] (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1984), p. 131.

what did not change was that the process and outcome of model-making were still mainly driven by factionalism at the Centre, which continued to be significantly more influential than initiatives at the grass-roots level. Eventually, *dabaogan daohu* was stabilised in 1984, when the Centre guaranteed the right of peasant households to contract farmland from the collective for 15 years. In 1993, the Centre decided that after the expiration of the 15-year land lease, peasants were entitled to renew the lease, which would be valid for 30 years from the point of renewal. The rural land lease currently held by most peasants is due to expire by around 2027. In Chapter 4, I explore the problems of *dabaogan daohu* and this rural land lease system, which have given rise to the quasi-(re)communisation movement, and with that, the making of Maoist nostalgia models reminiscent to the political theatre model of Dazhai to some extent, in some parts of Henan Province.

CHAPTER FOUR

Recollectivising Nanjie:
"Building a small community of communism" in Post-Mao China, 1984–present

In the early 1990s, left-leaning Party elites bankrolled the high-speed development of Nanjie Village, which bucked the nationwide trend of decollectivisation to recollectivise between 1984–1990. They cultivated the village into a socialist model in order to promote their hardline ideological agenda and communist ideals, and to highlight what they perceived as problems of the market reform. Their patronage prompted Nanjie's leaders to declare the goal of turning the village into a "small community of communism" in 1994. Three radical measures — all contradictory to the national status quo policy — have been carried out ever since, being: recollectivisation of the means of production, adoption of an egalitarian remuneration system, and promotion of the personality cult of Mao. Nanjie was caught in a media storm that cast doubts on its collective achievements in 2008. The village leadership responded by reaching out to the sons and daughters of veteran Party leftists for support. In addition to discussing the making (and attempted unmaking) of the Nanjie Model by its patrons and critics, I demonstrate that the Party centre co-opted the model to the Party line by downplaying its leftist ideational agenda and reinterpreting its prosperity with reference to national policy goals. The comparison of the Centre's treatment of Liu Zhuang Village with that of Nanjie reveals that the Centre was in fact open to

recollectivisation as an alternative to decollectivisation, insofar as the village concerned did not discredit the market reform. I analyse the development of Longtang Village and Beixuzhuang Village, the once self-professed "clones" of Nanjie that switched from complete public ownership to mixed public/private ownership.

1. Recollectivisation after decollectivisation

In 1982, Nanjie Village of Henan Province's Linying County, which was a production brigade at the time, followed the nationwide trend to implement *dabaogan*. The collectively owned and managed farmland was divided into multiple small plots, the usage rights of which were leased out to the village's 544 households. Consistent with the spirit of agricultural decollectivisation, the village's only two enterprises: the brick manufacturing and flour milling plants, were contracted out to two individual operators, both from other villages. While decollectivisation apparently worked well elsewhere, it did not in Nanjie. Most of Nanjie's residents left the village to find work in cities. They let their farmlands lay fallow, resulting in a gradual but marked decline in agricultural output. By 1984, it had dropped from a previous high of over 1,000 kilograms per *mu* to only 500 kilograms per *mu*.[1] At the same time, the outside contractors repeatedly defaulted on the payment of wages to workers and contract fees to the collective. As the situation worsened, the local Party branch led by Wang Hongbin sought to

1 One *mu* equals 0.067 hectares.

abolish decollectivisation.[2] Three measures were undertaken. First, in 1984, the two factories were confiscated from the contractors, so that collective management by the local Party branch could be resumed. Second, in the same year, the three-fold movement to "learn from Lei Feng, study Mao's works and sing revolutionary songs" was launched to cultivate strong collective spirit, which served to justify the subsequent abolition of *dabaogan*. Third, in March 1986, Nanjie's residents were encouraged to turn the usage rights of their land to the collective, in return for a supply of 40 kilograms of grain per person every month. The collective regained control over all of the village's land by October 1990, the majority of which was converted to industrial usage.[3]

2. Becoming a red billionaire village

This section analyses the foundation of the Nanjie Model, from the angles of economic conditions, factional coalitions and ideational underpinnings. I first provide an overview of Nanjie's economic development from 1984, the inaugural year of recollectivisation, to 2013, the last year which data on Nanjie's annual production value is available, in three segments: exponential growth (1984–1996), steady growth (1997–2008) and linear growth (2009–2013). I subsequently examine the role played by the Party's Left in cultivating the Nanjie Model, and by retired county leaders in using their residual political influence to support the village. Finally, I describe when and how Nanjie took up a confrontational ideational position vis-a-vis that of the central Party line.

2 See *Nanjie Cun zhi* [Nanjie village gazetteer] (Nanjie Village: CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, 2010), p. 249.
3 See *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 329, 178, 257.

2.1 Nanjie's initial rose to fame and subsequent development

Nanjie's economy took off shortly after the two factories were recollectivised in 1984 (See Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1). It experienced exponential growth throughout 1984–1996, with the annual production value in 1996 being over 2,000 times that of the 1984 amount. In 1991, the total production value of the village, agriculture and industry combined, reached over 100 million *yuan*, making it the first "red billionaire village" of Henan and probably of the whole country. As a result, despite being only a village Party secretary, Wang was selected by higher-ups to serve continuously as a delegate to five successive National Party Congresses since 2002. In addition, also in 1992, he was awarded with the new post of deputy secretary of the Linying County Party Committee, which he has held concurrently with the post of Nanjie's Party secretary ever since. In the same year, the Party branch of Nanjie was elevated to the rank of a Party Committee at the township level. This entitled Nanjie to oversee its own police substation, tribunal, procuracy and discipline inspection commission.[4] In 1993, Nanjie was honoured a "Star Village of Henan Province" by the provincial Party Committee.[5] In 1994, the amount of tax paid by Nanjie accounted for more than a quarter of the total amount of tax paid by Linying County. In 1995, Wang boasted that Nanjie's development outpaced that of the Shenzhen SEZ by a large margin. He said: "Shenzhen's speed of development increased 70 times in the span of a

4 Feng Shizheng, "Guojia, shichang yu zhidu bianqian: 1981-2000 nian Nanjie Cun de jiti hua yu zhengzhi hua" [State, Market and Institutional Change in Post-Mao Era: The Maoism-orientated re-centralisation in Nanjie Village, 1981-2000], *Shehuixue yanjiu* [Sociological studies], no. 2 (2007), pp. 24-59, at 30.

5 Data collected from the exhibition hall in Nanjie Village. Site visit on 26 June 2015.

decade, while in a decade's time, Nanjie Village's speed of development increased by over 1,100 folds!"[6]

During 1997–2008, Nanjie maintained its annual production value at a steady level, hovering around 1.4–1.6 billion *yuan*, with the exception of peaking at over 2 billion *yuan* in 2003. This outlier seemed to suggest that the Nanjie Village Group Limited (NJVG) — the collective entity that has held the collective holdings of all of the village's enterprises since its establishment in 1997 — made significant gains from its "second venture" (*er ci chuangye*) that began in August 2002. In the process, it added new production lines to its food processing factories, bought pharmaceutical companies in Luohe Prefecture and Linying County, and invested in building the village's tourism infrastructure.[7] The combined value of profits and taxation of Nanjie's tourism company was calculated to be in excess of 200,000 *yuan* in 2004 and over 278,000 *yuan* in 2005.[8] In 2005, Nanjie was named one of the "Top 10 Famous Villages in China" by the Forum of China's Village Mayors (*quanguo cunchang luntan*), a high-profile annual meeting for village chiefs across China.[9]

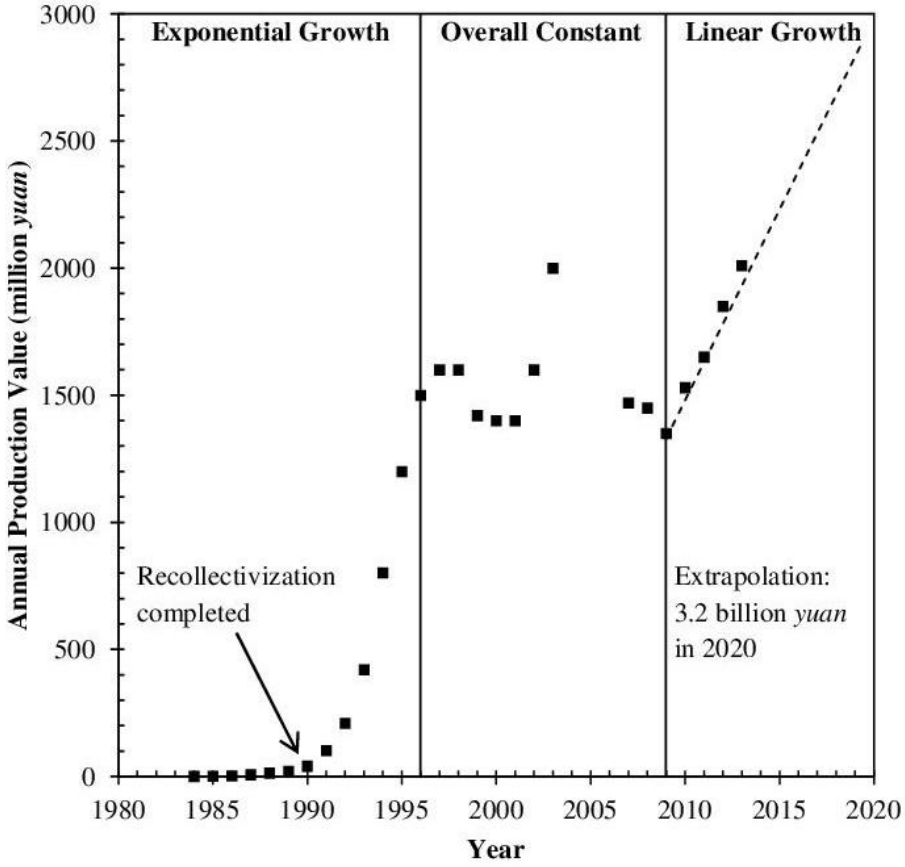
From 2009–2013, Nanjie's annual production value increased at a linear rate, rising for an average of around 164 million *yuan* or 7% every year. In 2011, Nanjie was upheld as one of the "Happiest Villages in China" by the China Association for the Promotion of Village Development (*Zhongguo cun she fazhan*

6 Feng Shizheng (2007), p. 30.
7 Shi Yu, "Yige lishi fuhao de zhongjie, Nanjie Cun shangyan guquan jili, Wang Hongbin bian shen hongse zibenjia" [The end of a historical symbol, Nanjie Village gives out equity incentives, Wang Hongbin turns red capitalists], *Diyi caijing bao* [China Business News], January 17, 2008, p. A06.
8 See *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), p. 248.
9 Shi Yu (2008).

cujin hui).[10] In 2013, NJVG was ranked 44th in the provincial league of the "Top 100 Enterprises based on Comprehensive Strength."[11] In 2014, NJVG emerged as the fourth largest taxpayer of the county, paying 29,270,000 *yuan* to the state and 3,950,000 *yuan* to the prefecture.[12] This impressive performance led the prefecture government to set for NJVG the ambitious goal of achieving 10 billion *yuan* of annual production value by 2020.[13] The NJVG currently owns and manages a conglomerate of 28 enterprises covering a broad range of industries, including: food processing, brewery, beverage production, transport, printing, packaging, pharmaceutical manufacturing, electrical appliances manufacturing, electric cable manufacturing and tourism (see Table 4.2).

10 Data collected from the exhibition hall in Nanjie Village. Site visit on 26 June 2015.
11 Gong Shaodong, *Henan gongye fazhan baogao* [Annual report on industrial development of Henan] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2014), p. 290.
12 Data obtained from a billboard of Linying County's Tax Bureau in Shuishou Fazhi Guangchang (Tax Revenue and Rule of Law Public Square) bordering Nanjie Village. Site visit on 30 June 2015.
13 "Nanjie Cun zhaokai 2014 nian gongzuo huiyi" [Nanjie Village convenes the work conference for 2014], *Nanjie Cun bao* [Nanjie Village Newspaper], hereafter referred to as "*NJCB*," 25 January 2014, p. 2.

Figure 4.1: Nanjie Village's annual production value from 1984–2013, and extrapolated to 2020



Sources: For data from 1984–1995, see CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* [The glow of ideals: Nanjie people discuss building a small community of communism] (Nanjie Village: CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, 1995), http://www.nanjiecun.cn/web_old/book/lixiangzhiguang1.asp (accessed on 24 April 2015).

For data from 1996–2002, see Song Zhaolai, *Zhongguo zenme zou: Lixing toushi Zhongguo* [How has China come along? A rational perspective on China] (Hong Kong: Boxue chubanshe, 2010), p. 267.

For data of 2003, see He Deqian and Liu Shengqing, "'Nanjie Cun' bei rending Zhongguo chiming shangbiao deng er ze" ['Nanjie Village' is recognised as China's famous trademark and another piece of news], *Jiefangjun bao*, December 2, 2004.

For data from 2007–2013, see, respectively, "Weiwen xin" [Greeting letter], *NJCB* [Nanjie Village Newspaper], February 1, 2008, p. 1, January 20, 2009, p. 1, February 8, 2010, p. 1, January 26, 2011, p. 1, February 5, 2013, p. 1, and January 25, 2014, p. 1.

Table 4.1: Nanjie Village's annual production value, 1984–2013

Year	Annual production value (*yuan*)	Percentage change (%)
1984	700,000	-
1985	Over 1,300,000	Over 85.71
1986	Over 3,200, 000	Over 146.15
1987	Over 7,300,000	Over 128.13
1988	Over 14, 000,000	Over 91.78
1989	Over 21,000, 000	Over 50
1990	Over 41,000,000	Over 95.24
1991	102,000,000	148.78
1992	210,000,000	105.88
1993	420,000,000	100
1994	802,000,000	90.95
1995	1,200,000,000	49.63
1996	1,500,000,000	25
1997	1,600,000,000	6.67
1998	1,600,000,000	0
1999	1,420,000,000	-11.25
2000	1,400,000,000	-1.41
2001	1,400,000,000	0
2002	1,600,000,000	14.29
2003	Over 2,000,000,000	Over 25
2004	-	-
2005	-	-
2006	-	-
2007	1,470,000,000	-
2008	1,450,000,000	-1.36
2009	1,350,000,000	-6.90
2010	1,530,000,000	13.33
2011	1,650,000,000	7.84
2012	1,850,000,000	12.12
2013	2,010,000,000	8.65

Sources: Same as sources for Figure 1.

Table 4.2: Enterprises owned by NJVG

Year of establishment	Enterprises owned by NJVG
1976 (closed in 1999)	Brick-making factory
1979	First flour milling plant
1984	Cake and candy factory
1984	Pig farm
1985	Transport company
1987	First packaging factory
1991	Condiment factory
1991	Colour printing company[a]
1993	First instant noodle factory
1993	Offset printing company[b]
1993	Brewery[b]
1993	Second packaging factory
1994	Second flour milling plant
1994	Chocolate factory[a]
1995	Third flour mill
1995	Fresh wet noodle factory[a]
1995	Ink factory
1997	Second instant noodle factory
1998	Technology company
1998	First pharmaceutical company
1999	Electrical appliances company
1999	Design and printing company[b]
2000 (closed in 2004)	First subdivision of the flour milling plant
2001	Second pharmaceutical company[b]
2002	Beverage company
2002 (closed in 2004)	Second subdivision of the flour milling plant
2002	Fourth flour mill
2002	Winery
2003	Tourism company
2004	Wooden crafts company
2011	Electric cable company

[a] Jointly funded by Japanese investors and NJVG.

[b] Jointly funded by Hong Kong investors and NJVG.
Sources: *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 204-232; *Nanjie Cun: Zhongguo chiming shangbiao* [Nanjie Village: China's famous trademark] (Nanjie Village: CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, year unknown).

2.2 The Party's leftist faction: Nanjie's sponsors in the early 1990s

Nanjie's exponential growth in the early 1990s was due to the direct intervention of high-ranking left-leaning Party elites, who upheld the village as a socialist model of discipline and control. The leftist faction emerged from an internal split within the survivor faction, which became increasingly apparent since the mid-1980s, in the light of central level disagreements over the content and pace of the market reform. On the one hand, the leftists were apprehensive about the threats of privatisation and marketisation to China's stability and the Party's legitimacy. This justified their preference for a high level of public ownership and central control. On the other hand, the pro-market faction in the Party were mainly concerned with the inefficiency of the planned system and the state sector, which they viewed as best being resolved by privatisation, marketisation and decentralisation. The leftists gained an upper hand after the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989.[14]

Qiao Shi and Song Ping — both members of the PBSC reshuffled after the Tiananmen Square protests — were Nanjie's patrons. They were well-known for their hardline attitude against the liberal-leaning political ideas that were purveyed by Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang (see Chapter 5). Shortly after Deng Xiaoping orchestrated the removal of Hu Yaobang, who he deemed too open-minded and thus politically unreliable, Qiao was promoted to the PBSC with fellow hardliners

14 For the power dynamics between the leftists and liberals in the 1980s to early 1990s, see Richard Baum (1996).

Li Peng, Hu Qili and Yao Yilin in 1987. After the crackdown on the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989, Qiao, as Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (1987–1992), launched a rectification campaign to investigate all Party members in connection to their attitude and behaviour in the period preceding the protests. In 1989, Song, who often warned of the dangers of "bourgeois ideological corrosion," entered the PBSC with fellow hardliner Li Ruihuan, after Zhao, like Hu, was removed for being too lenient in suppressing the spread of calls for political reform.[15]

During his trip to Nanjie on 25 August 1990, Qiao expressed strong appreciation to the local Party Committee for "disciplining the masses with Mao Zedong Thought."[16] On 20 September 1995, when Song was at Nanjie, he expressly called for the whole country to learn from the village, which was, in his view, "a spiritual treasure and a good Party school." He said: "...Nanjie puts ideology in command and politics in the priority. This is what a Party school does. It cultivates a correct worldview."[17]

On 17 September 1990, nearly a fortnight after Qiao's visit, Wang allegedly said at an internal meeting:

> Now, it it not difficult for our Nanjie to obtain loans. A few days ago, our deputy Party secretary Guo Quanzhong and manager Huang were in Beijing, where they reached an

15 For Qiao's role in the rectification campaign at the end of June 1989, see Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 466-468. For the factional ties between Song and Chen, and their warning against "bourgeois ideological corrosion," see Richard Baum (1996), pp. 344-347.

16 Feng Shizheng and Su Yang, "The Making of Maoist Model in Post-Mao Era: The Myth of Nanjie Village," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 46, no. 1 (2013), pp. 39-51, at 41.

17 He Puxiao, "Nanjie Cun de kexue fazhan" [The scientific development of Nanjie Village]. June 27, 2006, in news centre for Northwest A & F University, http://news.nwsuaf.edu.cn/ztwz/shshwy/pl/24484.htm (accessed on 31 December 2016).

> agreement with the central bank, which agreed to give us loans. Every aspect of the current situation is highly beneficial to our Nanjie. Leaders and functionaries at every level want to grasp the Nanjie Model. The provincial Water Resources Department and municipal Water Resources Bureau want to implement an irrigation sprinkler project in Nanjie. All the funds needed are supplied by the state, every supply amounts to a few million *yuan*. We have to grasp every opportunity in order to bring about a big turnover in Nanjie within two to three years.[18]

Shortly after Qiao's visit, the Agricultural Bank of China (Henan branch) listed NJVG as one of the province's 50 "key units for support" (*zhongdian zhichi danwei*). It funded the expansion of Nanjie's instant noodles factory with a 50 million *yuan* loan in 1991. In response to Nanjie's request for an additional 130 million *yuan* loan in 1992, it lent 80 million *yuan* at first instance. Thereafter, it issued provincial-wide bonds to raise the remaining amount, which was transferred to NJVG in two months' time. In 1994, the bank even established a branch office in Nanjie. In 1995, it loaned another 50 million *yuan* to NJVG to pay off the huge deficits incurred by its brewery.[19]

In 1992, the Nanjie Party Committee created the Veteran Cadre Advisory Board (*Laoganbu guwen bangongshi*) to absorb the retired leaders of Linying County who were deemed politically influential and healthy to work for the village. The board had at least 15 former county leaders by 1998. Those who were previously head or deputy head of the public security bureau, procuratorate or county courts were entrusted with the responsibility of debt collection. According to Nanjie's official sources, they successfully collected from NJVG's debtors over

18 Shangguan Jiaoming, "Nanjie zhenxiang" [The truth of Nanjie], *Nanfang dushi bao* [Southern Metropolis Daily], February 26, 2008, p. A14.

19 Zhao Guoliang and Cui Jianlin, *Lixiang zhiguang (III): Nanjie ren kaizhan gongyouzhi dataolun* [The glow of ideals (III): Nanjie people initiated a big discussion on collective ownership] (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1998), pp. 144-147.

22 million *yuan* and 25.3 million *yuan* of debt by the end of 1996 and 1998 respectively. In addition to debt collection, they sometimes represented Nanjie in negotiations with the authorities. They were also in charge of filing lawsuits to crackdown on counterfeits of "Nanjie" branded products, such as the best-selling instant noodles. Retired county leaders who used to work for the education and/or propaganda authorities were responsible for delivering training classes for locals who were eager to join the Party.[20] In exchange for their contributions to the village, these former county leaders were awarded the status of Nanjie's "honourary residents." This entitled them to the full range of welfare provision available to native residents free of charge, as described in Section 3.1 below.

Beginning 1994, Nanjie has hosted 170 generals, 30 lieutenant generals and 20 major generals. The military commended Nanjie as a "beacon for communism" that exalted the Party's revolutionary spirit. On 23 May 1994, General Yang Dezhong, director of the Central Security Bureau of the Party Central Committee (1978–1994), had Wang introduce the Nanjie Model to around 100 central cadres at a Grand Hall in Zhongnanhai. Leading cadres of the CCP Central Committee's General Office and Central Policy Research Office were in attendance. In a video that is still being shown to Nanjie's visitors on site to date, Wang recounted this event in detail, including what Yang had told him:

> There have been some controversies surrounding Nanjie Village's development model. There is no need to feel distressed; controversies are normal in times of transition. You should be resolute in your belief that Nanjie Village is on the correct path. It must persist with what it has been doing and obtain success. What makes people think that we should not talk about communism? What made us, the older generation, risk our lives

20 Zhao Guoliang and Cui Jianlin (1998), pp. 134-36; *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 10-11.

> at wars? We did not fight for money, but for the great goal of communism. It is wrong to think that we should not talk about communism. We have talked too little about communism in recent years. [21]

General Zhang Aiping, former Defence Minister (1982–1988), also linked the Nanjie Model to the Party's goal of communism. On 11 July 1994, the *People's Daily* published his private letter to the CCTV, in which he urged the broadcaster to show on the national TV channel a documentary on Nanjie that was produced by Henan Television.[22] Although the appeal was unheeded, he continued to campaign for Nanjie.[23] During his visit to the village on 10 September 1994, he described recollectivisation as a correct path for achieving common prosperity (*gongtong fuyu*). He also expressed appreciation for the local Party Committee, saying that they had worked for the people wholeheartedly and preserved a down-to-earth style of living. They had, he said, "demonstrated the Party's glorious tradition and excellent work-style."[24] The leftist periodical *Zhongliu* reprinted an excerpt of his speech with the annotation: "Although the international Communist movement has stepped into a valley, it is not a dead end. The future of communism is prosperous."[25]

2.3 Recollectivisation turned ideational

In order to align with the expectations of the Left, Nanjie's leaders clarified their

21 Video shown in Nanjie Village Movie Theatre, 29:13-30:37. Site Visit on 1 July 2015.
22 Zhang Aiping, "Kenqing bofang jishi dianshi pian 'Nanjie Cun'" [Please broadcast the documentary 'Nanjie Village'], *RMRB*, July 11, 1994, p. 3.
23 Zhang Sheng, *Cong zhanzheng zhong zoulai: Zhang Aiping fuzi de duihua* [Coming out from wars: dialogues between Zhang Aiping and his son] (Hong Kong: Cosmos Books Ltd., 2012), p. 570.
24 *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), p. 19.
25 Zhang Sheng (2012), p. 572.

ideational position to make it quintessentially communist. Previously, the village's socialist orientation was implicit in the policy of recollectivisation and the three-fold movement to "learn from Lei Feng, study Mao's works and sing revolutionary songs." But it was never made explicit, either in any written materials of the village, or in the statements of the village leadership. This was not only because so doing would be controversial and could hence backfire, especially where high-level patronage was lacking. This was also because Nanjie's recollectivisation in fact had little to do with ideological commitment to socialism/communism. Decollectivisation was reversed simply because it had not worked well for the village, particularly as it pertained to the outsourced village factories. In 1994, Wang reinterpreted the rationale for recollectivisation completely, saying that it served mainly to "combat and eradicate self-interest," which he said was "the heart of all evils."[26] In the same year, the village Party Committee declared that the village's goal was to become a "small community of communism" (*gongchan zhuyi xiaoshequ*). This contrasted with the ideological position of the Party centre — that is, "socialism with Chinese characteristics" — which stood not for the commitment to socialism, but reconciliation of the capitalistic market reform and the allegedly communist nature of the Party.[27] Patronage of the Party's Left aside, the other reason for the lack of central-level crackdown on Nanjie's ideational challenge was the rising Maoist nostalgia in Chinese society. Despite the national de-Maoification programme in the mid-

26 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* (1995).

27 For a detailed study of the origin, meaning and application of "socialism with Chinese characteristics," see Sun Yan, *The Chinese Reassessment of Socialism: 1976-1992* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

1980s, the early 1990s witnessed the flourishing of Cultural Revolution memories in the popular literature, and the emergence of a "Mao Industry" featuring Mao-themed merchandise, restaurants and resorts. Popular resistance to de-Maoification indicated that the stakes for a crackdown on Nanjie were high.[28]

Between March 1994 to May 1995, the Nanjie Party Committee initiated the "Big Discussion on Building a Small Community of Communism" (*jianshe gongchan zhuyi xiaoshequ dataolun*), a mass mobilisation campaign in the village. During the campaign, Wang criticised the market reform as a "savage attack of collective ownership," and for "breeding capitalism, individualism and moneyism, resulting in class oppression and exploitation."[29] Wang even claimed that, as a result of the reform, "the leadership role of the Party is being undermined, socialism is losing direction, the dictatorship of the proletariat no longer has a target, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought has to be re-discussed." Similar to General Yang's remarks mentioned earlier, Wang said, "As long as the 'Communist Party' has not been renamed the 'free Party' or 'private Party,' it should be resolute in promoting communism. If not, how can we qualify as the Communist Party?"[30] Two principles on which Nanjie's "small community of communism" would be built emerged out of the campaign. They were: "destroying the private and building the public" (*posi ligong*) and "putting politics in command" (*zhengzhi guashuai*), both formerly extolled at the Dazhai

28 For Maoist nostalgia in the early 1990s, see Michael Dutton, "The Mao Industry," *Current History*, September 2004, pp. 268-272; Yang Guobin, "Days of Old Are Not Puffs of Smoke: Three Hypotheses on Collective Memories of the Cultural Revolution," *China Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 13-41.

29 Zhao Guoliang and Cui Jianlin (1998), p. 216.

30 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* (1995).

Campaign.[31] In 1997, the village leadership carried out another mass mobilisation campaign — "Big Discussion on Public Ownership" (*gongyouzhi da taolun*) — to address growing doubts on the merits of Nanjie's collective model of development within the village. Some of the former county leaders who were serving on the Veteran Cadre Advisory Board were called to instruct Nanjie's Party members and cadres of the negative effects of the private economy.[32]

3. Building a small community of communism

This section is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the three measures that have been carried out by the Nanjie Party Committee since the early 1990s in the name of "building a small community of communism." The first measure was recollectivisation of the means of consumption, which extended from flour supply in exchange for land usage rights in 1984 to generous provision of cradle-to-grave welfare by 1997. The second measure was the adoption of an egalitarian system of remuneration. Moreover, the culture for cadres and Party members to take the lead of asking for "voluntary" pay cut, and for workers to work overtime in lieu of compensation was imposed. The third measure was the promotion of the personality cult of Mao, which attracted the support of many of China's best-known Mao's loyalists. The second part examines the negative publicity that discredited Nanjie's collective achievements in 2008, which drove Nanjie closer to the sons and daughters of its leftist patrons back in the early 1990s.

31 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* (1995); "Mingque fangxiang zeng dongli: Lun 2013 nian zhengti gongzuo zhidao sixiang" [Make clear the direction to increase motivation: A discussion of the guiding thought for the overall work of 2013], *NJCB*, 24 January 2013, p. 1.

32 Zhao Guoliang and Cui Jianlin (1998), pp. 134-136; *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 10-11.

3.1 Recollectivisation of the means of consumption

While Nanjie finished recollectivising the means of production for industry by 1984 and agriculture by 1990, recollectivisation of the means of consumption took place more slowly. Before the Party's Left lent their patronage to Nanjie, the local Party Committee could only afford to supply residents free flour and food — in other words, relatively low-cost commodities produced within the village — in exchange for their land usage rights. However, since Nanjie received a windfall as a result of the leftists' intervention, the local Party Committee became able to extend the recollectivisation of the means of consumption to virtually all necessities. Wang justified this in the language related to the goal of "building a small community of communism." He said it served to "prevent people from comparing what they eat, wear and use with each other," which would lead to the "expansion of private interests at the expense of collective interests."[33]

The welfare provision provided to all native and honorary residents included:

- monthly supply of flour, rice, oil, meat, fish, eggs, fruits, condiments and beer since 1986. The list of supply increases to include festival food during the Chinese New Year;
- monthly supply of cash coupons to be used in the village grocery store since early 1990s;
- the collective arranges and pays for weddings, funerals and burials since early 1990s;

33 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* (1995).

- 891 households moved into 1,242 new apartments between 1989–1993. The assignment of apartments is based on family size. Every apartment is fully furnished with air-conditioners, filtration systems, refrigerators, telephones, televisions, wardrobes, chest of drawers, sofas, desks, tables, chairs, beds, shoe racks, bookshelves, cooking appliances, etc. The cost of electricity, gas, water, landline and broadband charges are paid by the collective;
- the tuition fees and book fees for all students, from kindergarten to postgraduate level, have been paid by the collective since 1990. A monthly stipend is also provided to support their living expenses;
- miscellaneous fees for schools were paid by the collective in 1997; and
- Full reimbursement of medical expenses incurred since 1995.

Since 1991, the welfare entitlements for residents have been linked to their personal conduct. Every two months, the local Party Committee assesses the behaviour of all residents according to ten criteria under the "Ten Stars Civilised Household" scheme (*shi xing ji wenming hu*). The ten criteria are, namely, allegiance to communism, conscientiousness at work, willingness to endure hardship and sacrifice, eagerness to learn, compliance to village rules, abstinence from unhealthy activities, respect for science, plain style of living, caring for family members, and good personal hygiene. If a resident is considered to have fallen short of one criterion, one welfare entitlement will be suspended for his/her household until he/she demonstrates improvement.[34]

34 *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 284-285.

3.2 Egalitarian remuneration

Nanjie implements a "low wage/high welfare" policy, in which only 30% of the residents' total income comes from salary, while the remaining 70% is calculated on the basis of collective welfare provision.[35] Moreover, cadres and workers are mobilised to work mainly through appeals to their commitment to collectivism, instead of material rewards. Here, workers refer to migrant workers who come from other villages, and are excluded from collective welfare distribution. In 1989, Wang set an example of voluntarily reducing his salary to a meagre 250 *yuan* per month, the value of which has remained unchanged to date.[36] In 1993, the 21-membered village Party leadership requested pay cuts following Wang's example. In 2011, after an intensive mobilisation campaign, 171 model workers of NJVG were "honourably enlisted" into the "Team of 250."[37] Nanjie's egalitarian remuneration system obviously deviated from the central Party line, which emphasised personal initiatives and payment according to work.

Under the banner of "destroying the private and building the public," Nanjie's workers have been paid very low wages, and are denied compensation for overtime work. In addition, they are required to perform community service that was arranged for them by their supervisors on a roster basis, such as street cleaning and rubbish collection.[38] Every month, the NJVG publishes a list of

35 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, *Lixiang zhiguang: Nanjie ren tan gongchan zhuyi xiao shequ jianshe* (1995).

36 "Two hundred fifty" (*erbaiwu)* is a slang for fools in northern China.

37 Lei Xiujuan, Zhang Ling, Zang Zhanfeng et. al., "Nanjie Cun erbaiwu zai zhuangda" [Nanjie Village's 'Team of 250' is growing], *NJCB,* 10 November 2011, p. 1; Lei Xiujuan, Han Zhiwei, Li Chunyang et. al., "Nanjie Cun erbaiwu zai jixu zhuangda" [Nanjie Village's 'Team of 250' continues to grow], *NJCB,* 17 November 2011, p. 1.

38 See, for example, Zhu Jing, "Tiaoweipin gongsi: Zhengzhi wei tongshuai, quan yuan ganjing gao" [Condiment factory: Putting politics in command, everyone is high in spirit], *NJCB,* 16 July 2009, p. 2.

model workers, who are commended for having acted selflessly. Some reportedly used their personal savings to fund the repair of work tools, some took up work shifts for their sick colleagues cheerfully in lieu of compensation, others worked overnight to exceed production quotas, etc.[39]

3.3 Personality cult of Mao

Wang openly criticised the Party centre for "handing down too few documents and supplementary materials concerning spiritual civilisation," and the social trend of repudiating Mao Zedong Thought as "obsolete."[40] The village Party Committee claimed that Mao Zedong Thought was their "spiritual nourishment," being both "timeless" and "fully compatible to the concrete circumstances of the country." It maintained that the "denial of Mao" was the crux of China' problems today. To resurrect Mao's legitimacy at the local level, the village leader defended his role in the Cultural Revolution unashamedly. This was obviously in tension with the spirit of the historic Party resolution in 1981, which attributed the "principal responsibility" of the Cultural Revolution to Mao. The Nanjie leadership claimed that blaming Mao for the Cultural Revolution was "absurd and grossly unfair" because the culpability should fall on "everyone in that period."[41] It was written on a large red billboard at the centre of the village:

39 See, for example, "Nanjie Cun 2008 nian 6 yuefen zui jia zhigong" [The best workers of Nanjie Village in June 2008], *NJCB*, 17 July 2008, p. 3.
40 CCP Committee of Nanjie Village, "Dangwei shuji Wang Hongbin huibao cailiao" [CCP secretary Wang Hongbin's presentation materials], video recording, 2004, 04:40-04:50.
41 "Tuoni. Saiqi: Fouding Mao Zedong shi dangdai zhongguo kunju de zhengjie" [Tony Saich: The denial of Mao Zedong is the crux of the dilemma of contemporary China], *NJCB*, 4 November 2010, p. 3.

> He [Mao] was the one who was worried about revisionism in the Party. He was the one who was afraid of capitalist revival in China. He was the one who feared that the masses had to suffer in the old society. As a result, he started the Cultural Revolution and offended some former revolutionaries!

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Mao's birthday on 24 December 1993, a 10-metre statue of Mao made entirely of white jade was erected at the centre of Nanjie's East is Red Square, which was opened on the same day. The statue stands on a cubic plinth, which was also made purely of white jade, and bears a facsimile of Mao's handwritings.[42] Since its establishment, the East is Red Square has become the centre of social and political life in the village. Nanjie's residents gather in the square for relaxation after taking dinner at home. The adults sit around the statue to relax, while the children run around and ride bicycles. The "collective wedding ceremony," which is held at the square annually on the New Year's Day, is a major event of the village's social calendar. During the ceremony, couples bow before the statue of Mao, solemnise their vows to each other, and receive from Wang a copy of the "little red book" and matching Mao badges. Other annual events that are held at the square include ceremonies to commemorate the birth and death of Mao, as well as the establishment of the Party and the People's Republic.[43]

Mao Xiaoqing, niece of Mao, dubbed herself the "volunteer propagandist" for Nanjie. She led delegations from the two organisations she founded — the Beijing Great Red Accomplishment Company (*Beijing hongse weiye gongsi*) and China Red Culture Association (*Zhongguo hongse wenhua lianhehui*) — to pay respect

42 *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), pp. 11, 98.
43 *Nanjie Cun zhi* (2010), p. 82; Liu Qian, *Nanjie shehui* [Nanjie society] (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 2004), pp. 271-276.

to the Mao statue at the square regularly. On 16 May 2011, the China Red Culture Association even staged a gala performance at the square to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Party's establishment. A major highlight of the ceremony saw Wang awarding the status of "honorary residents" to 22 members from Mao Xiaoqing's delegation, including General Chen Zhenyan, former political commissar of the August First Film Studio of the PLA. Other members of the China Red Culture Association present at the event included six ranking military officers (see Table 4.3) and 13 of Mao's former personal assistants (see Table 4.4).[44]

3.4 Is Nanjie a fake socialist model?

The apparent Maoist revival in Nanjie has raised many eyebrows. Feng Shizheng, sociologist of Renmin University, decried Nanjie's collective model for lacking in intrinsic merits on the basis of classified economic data. He reported that the level of efficiency of Nanjie's enterprises was significantly lower than that of the average rural enterprise in Henan and China as a whole. In addition, Feng and collaborator Su Yang showed that the pace of GDP growth of Nanjie's enterprises was far behind that of debts from 1985–1998 and in 2007. They concluded that the banks were lending to NJVG purely out of political motivations — that of "supporting a model," "carrying a red flag" — that defied commercial reasoning. Feng also criticised what he viewed to be the mistreatment of migrant workers in

44 Lei Xiuquan, Duan Dahai and Jie Li, "Zhongguo hongse wenhua lianhehui dao Nanjie Cun weiwen yanchu" [The China Red Culture Association performed at Nanjie Village], *NJCB*, May 19, 2011, p. 1.

Nanjie, especially the enforcement of a "negative incentive system" that deducted a worker's salary if he/she was found to have made a mistake. Finally, he saw the three-fold movement as a coercive tool of "mass surveillance" that had no place in China today. He claimed to have discovered from the village Party Committee's classified records that there was in fact general resistance to recollectivisation, and the village leadership used intimidation to complete the process.[45]

In what became a national sensation, Feng's economic analysis, coupled with new sources, were used by some newspapers to debunk the "myth" of Nanjie's success. In 2008, *Southern Metropolis Daily* (*Nanfang dushi bao*) stated that the debt incurred by NJVG exceeded that of their assets by a large margin. It was such that among all the banks that had provided assistance to Nanjie previously, all but one was still willing to consider its application for loans. The dwindling bank loans allegedly resulted in the default on payment of wages for workers and suspension of many production lines in 2004. The article also accused Nanjie's leaders of being corrupt "red capitalists." First, it was reported that when Wang Jinzhong, the highest-ranking cadre in the village after Wang Hongbin, died of a heart attack in 2003, two million *yuan* of cash was discovered among his personal effects along with the deeds to several homes. It was soon revealed that Wang used the money and property to support several families, in addition to his legal wife living in the village. Second, it detailed a paper trail demonstrating the covert privatisation of collective assets in 2004, in which 60% of the net worth of the village's collective holdings were distributed among 12 of the most senior cadres in the village collective, including Wang Hongbin. This article went viral on

45 Feng Shizheng and Su Yang (2013); Feng Shizheng (2007).

China's social media sites, and was reprinted in full by many newspapers.[46]

Wang Hongbin challenged the credibility of these reports. In particular, he strongly denied that NJVG had been privatised, claiming that the distribution of collective assets took place on a strictly "on paper" basis to comply with legal requirements. However, the bulk of his rebuttal only appeared in the form of internal speeches delivered to selected delegations during their visit to Nanjie. Many media agencies stated that they were unable to obtain any response from Wang. They said, even if they managed to get hold of another member of the village Party Committee, their reply was brief and dismissive. Lei Dequan, deputy manager of the village Party Committee said, "many veteran generals telephoned to ask what happened."[47] The "veteran generals" he spoke of likely referred to the Party's patrons in the early 1990s. After the media storm, the adult descendants of the Party's Left — who are commonly known as the "red second generation" (*hong er dai*) or "princelings" (*tai zi dang*) — visited the village to express support on behalf of their elderly or deceased parents. Some visited on an individual basis, while others came as delegations of their exclusive societies: the CCP Central Committee's Yu Ying School Alumni Association and/or Beijing Friendship Association of the Sons and Daughters of Yan'an (see Table 4.5).[48]

46 Shangguan Jiaoming (2008).

47 He Zhongzhou, "Jiti jingshen yu shichang liyi chongtu, Nanjie Cun de diaogui 'gaizhi'" [Conflict between collective spirit and market interest, the paradox of Nanjie Village's "institutional reform"], *Zhongguo xinwenshe* [China News Service], February 25, 2008.

48 For more background information on these groupings, see Germie R. Barmé, "Red Allure and the Crimson Blindford," *China Perspectives*, No. 2 (2012), pp. 29-40.

Table 4.3: Veteran generals who visited Nanjie with Mao Xiaoqing in 2011

Name	Former position in the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)
Chen Baoding	Director of PLA General Armaments Department
Chen Zhenyan	Political commissar of PLA August First Film Studio
Guo Jincai	Political commissar of PLA Rocket Force Armaments Department
Lin Yaxi	Political commissar of PLA Rocket Force Logistics Department
Wang Yihan	Vice president of PLA Academy of Art
Xu Tongye	Political commissar of PLA Navy Logistics Department

Source: Lei Xiuquan, Duan Dahai and Jie Li (2011).

Table 4.4: Mao Zedong's former personal assistants who visited Nanjie with Mao Xiaoqing in 2011

Name	Former relationship to Mao Zedong
Ceng Wen	Bodyguard
Chen Changjiang	Bodyguard
Chen Shouxin	Bodyguard
Li Jiakuan	Bodyguard
Li Zhifen	Waiting staff at 118 Hall of the Great Hall of the People. Mao used 118 Hall for temporary residence for some time in 1973.
Li Zhongxin	Bodyguard
Liu Xueqian	Secondman of Mao's personal train (*zhuanlie fu lieche zhang*)
Sun Zhenfa	Bodyguard
Tian Yunyu	Bodyguard
Wang Mingfu	Bodyguard
Wu Liandeng	Mao's last butler (*shenghuo guanli yuan*)
Zhang Muqi	Bodyguard
Zhou Fuming	Barber, Bodyguard and pallbearer of Mao's coffin

Source: Lei Xiuquan, Duan Dahai and Jie Li (2011).

Table 4.5: Individuals representing the "red second generation" who visited Nanjie in 2009

Name	Ties to Party veteran
Chen Kunyu	Son-in-law of General Fu Qiutao, Director of the People's Armed Force of the Central Military Commission
Chen Weihua	Daughter of Chen Yun, one of the Party's "Eight Elders"
Dong Lianglui	Daughter of Dong Biwu, Acting President of the State (1972–1975), Vice President of the State (1959–1972)
Guo Shuying	Daughter of Guo Morou, founding president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences
Su Tiesan	Son of General Su Jin, Red Army General
Sun Xiaolin	Daughter of Lin Mohan, long-time propaganda leader
Yang Xiaoping	Son of General Yang Yong, Red Army General
Yu Dajiang	Son-in-law of Tan Zhenlin, Vice Premier of State Council (1959–1975)
Zheng Jingsheng	Son of Zheng Tianxiang, President of the Supreme People's Court (1983–1988)
Zhu Erjin	Son-in-law of Ren Bishi, Red Army General

Sources: Wang Yanming, "Bufen jiangshuai zinu cheng: 'Nanjie zhilu shi zhongguo nongcun de fazhan fangxiang'" [Some of the sons and daughters of generals said: "Nanjie's path is the development direction for China's villages in the future"], *NJCB*, January 8, 2009, p. 1; Lei Xiujuan and Li Xiang, "Chen Yun zhi nu Chen Weihua laidao Nanjiecun" [Chen Yun daughter's Chen Weihua came to Nanjie Village], *NJCB*, January 20, 2009, p. 2; and Lei Xiuquan, "Zhongzhi yuying tongxuehui ii Yan'an ernu xunfangtuan chengzan Nanjiecun: "Zhongguo de xiwang, Zhongguo nongmin de shuguang'" [The inspection and visitation delegation formed of the CCP Central Committee's Yu Ying School Alumni Association and the Sons and Daughters of Yan'an praised Nanjie Village: "The hope for China, the light for China's farmers"], *NJCB*, May 7, 2009, p. 1.

4. Failing to trigger large-scale recollectivisation

Given the prevalence of the market reform, it was not surprising that the Nanjie Model has failed to trigger recollectivisation in the Chinese countryside on a large-scale. However, this is not to say that the Nanjie Model has been completely rejected by the regime or other villages. I find that the Party centre has chosen not

to repudiate the Nanjie Model, but to co-opt it to the Party line instead. Moreover, the regime even upheld Henan's Liu Zhuang, a collective village, as a national model in 1989, and tolerated the high-profile recollectivisation and subsequent decollectivisation of Longtang and Beixuzhuang, the once self-professed "clones" of Nanjie.

4.1 Party centre co-opted the Nanjie Model to the Party line

How could the central Party-state react to the Nanjie Model, being sponsored by public money to undermine the legitimacy of the market reform? On the one hand, if it was to ignore the model, some might view it as a tacit recognition of the rightfulness of Nanjie's leftist ideational agenda and the collective model of development. On the other hand, if it was to discredit the model, it would certainly be perceived as an attack to the Party's veteran leftist leaders, which would go against the Party's norms on seniority. This is especially because the Party glorifies the role played by the veteran cadres, especially those from the military, in the war and revolution. Instead of engaging Nanjie's ideational agenda directly, the Party centre co-opted Nanjie to the Party line. This could be seen from the 75 articles about Nanjie in the *People's Daily* from 1990, the year that the Party's Left sided with Nanjie for the first time, to 2016, the last year of analysis.[49] These articles shared three characteristics. First, all articles gave an impression of political neutrality. On the one hand, there was no mention of any of Nanjie's patrons. On the other hand, nothing negative or controversial about the village was ever reported. Second, they reported only the relatively

49 The articles were available at the *People's Daily* digital archive, which was accessible at the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford.

uncontroversial ideas that were represented by the model. For example, Nanjie was commended for simultaneously grasping "material civilisation" and "spiritual civilisation," and for the selfless behaviour of their cadres. But Nanjie's goal of "building a small community of communism" was never reported.

Third, the Nanjie Model was recast within the discourse of the market reform. The top three themes of the articles on the model were Nanjie's flour milling plant, its drama school, and Wang's selfless deeds (see Table 4.6). The plant was said to be successful in increasing the added value of China's agricultural output, which was described as a major goal of the post-Mao regime. The drama school was said to be not inferior to any drama schools in the cities, thereby reflecting the potential success for rural development. Wang was hailed as a "model cadre" who cared for the masses capably. In the 1990s, Nanjie's residents were reportedly enthusiastic in studying the *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*,[50] while "the great power of Deng Xiaoping Theory" was said to be the driver behind the village's "earthshaking transformation."[51] In 2003, Wang was quoted saying that Nanjie could only make progress by persistently relying on the "Important Thought of the Three Represents."[52] There was not a single mention of Mao in any of the articles.

50 Zhang Yaxin, untitled article, *RMRB*, March 14, 1995, p. 11.

51 Dong Hongliang, "Qingchun zai tianye shanguang: Quanguo da zhong xuesheng shuqi 'san xiaxiang' huodong zongshu" [The fields are glittering with youthfulness: A report of the "three sent-down" activities of university and secondary school students this summer], *RMRB*, September 30, 1998, p. 5.

52 "Gedi ganbu qunzhong renzhen xuexi Hu Jintao tongzhi zhongyao jianghua, biaoshi yi 'sange daibiao' zhongyao sixiang wei genben, zhizhen tuidong gexiang gongzuo qude xin chengxiao" [Cadres and masses from all places conscientiously studied comrade Hu Jintao's important speech and said that, new progress has been achieved by making use of the important thought of the "Three Represents" as the foundational principle to carry out all works], *RMRB*, July 3, 2003, p. 1.

Table 4.6: Thematic frames of Nanjie Model in the *People's Daily*, 1990–2016

Thematic frames	Total number of articles	Total percentage
Strong flour processing industry	23	30.7
High quality drama school	10	13.3
Wang Hongbin is a model Party cadre	10	13.3
Strong Party Committee	9	12
Moderately well-off (*xiaokang*) level of development	7	9.3
Simultaneous progress in material and spiritual civilisation	6	8
High quality of education for residents	3	4
Agricultural Bank of China supplies funds for flagship enterprises	2	2.67
Cherish the military	2	2.67
Red tourism	2	2.67
Green environment	1	1.33

4.2 Liu Zhuang: A collective model upheld by the Centre

The above analysis demonstrates that the state-run press, and therefore the elements of the central Party apparatus that control it, co-opted the Nanjie narrative as a demonstration of the Party line in practice. While Nanjie may appear to be an isolated case, many of China's richest and most famous villages today, such as Jiangsu Province's Huaxi Xinshi Village and Shanghai's Jiuxing Village, also maintain the collective usage of land, as well as the collective ownership and management of factories. The private sector in these villages is small, if it exists at all. Some of these villages also profess loyalty to Mao, but they do not promote the cult of Mao to any level even approximating Nanjie's

efforts in this regard. In 2016, 33 out of the first 50 villages in the league table of China's "Top 300 Villages" boasted a collective model of development (see Table 4.7). The league table purportedly measured the level of economic growth, sense of belonging of residents, quality of their living conditions, environmental quality and etc. of the villages. It was published by the China Association for the Promotion of Village Development. As mentioned in Chapter 1, while there are no reliable statistics on collective villages, they are not exactly few in number. *Xinxi ribao* claimed that they totalled 2,000 in 2006.[53] Li Changping, a former village Party secretary who became a prominent rural advocate, estimated in 2009 that China had about 7,000 collective villages (he confirmed this number in 2016), the average annual per capita income of which was 10,000 *yuan*.[54] These developments make the Party's official position on recollectivisation, or the collective model of development — as some of these villages have never decollectivised at all — relevant. I argue that the Party's approval of Liu Zhuang, a collective village in Henan, indicates the acceptance of the collective model as a local development strategy, insofar as the village in question is not critical of the post-Mao Party's ideology.

Liu Zhuang was a model production brigade during Mao's times. It was known for achieving high yields in cotton production, which consistently surpassed that of the national average. Its long-serving Party secretary, Shi Laihe, was granted a personal audience with Mao on nine occasions. In the early 1980s, Shi lost the

53 He Zhongzhou, "Henan 'hongse yi yuan cun' de sheng yu shuai" [The rise and fall of Henan's "red billionaire village"], *Xinxin ribao* [Information Daily], April 9, 2006, p. 4.

54 Li Changping, *Daqihou: Li Changping zhiyan "sannong"* [Macro-climate: Li Changping's account of the "three rural problems"] (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 2009), pp. 80-81; Li Changping, April 27, 2016.

favour of the Centre because he chose not implement *dabaogan,* insisting that the collective model suited the village best. However, in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989, just as the Party's leftists upheld Nanjie as a model, the Party Central Committee affirmed Liu Zhuang as a national model, and extolled Shi an "exemplary representative of the Party who enjoys high prestige among the masses since the establishment of the state." This honour had only been conferred to four other Chinese citizens at that time — Lei Feng, Jiao Yulu, Wang Jinxin and Qian Xuesen — all being textbook examples of model cadres. The reason that Liu Zhuang and Shi came into the limelight was principally ideological. The Tiananmen Square protests were seen as anti-socialist, while collective villages symbolised loyalty to socialism. In 1990, a *People's Daily* editorial wrote:

> He [Shi Laihe, Party secretary of Liu Zhuang from 1952 to his death in 2013] forcefully wrote down eight large Chinese characters for Liu Zhuang without any hesitation: "To preserve in the path of socialism," while by that time, at Beijing, the capital, a backwash against socialism was amassing....In the past forty years, the path of which he had led Liu Zhuang's over 1400 masses to walk on was exactly the path of socialism.[55]

The reason why the Party centre and the leftists sponsored separate collective villages as models (Liu Zhuang vis-a-vis Nanjie) was probably because Liu Zhuang was more compatible to the post-Mao Party line, while Nanjie much lesser so. Despite preserving a collective structure, Liu Zhuang did not carry out any political activity that was reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution, while

55 Jin Weijun, Zhao Jinde, Zhang Shantao et al, "Zou zai shehui zhuyi dadao shang: ji Henan sheng Xinxiang xian Liuzhuang dang zong zhi shuji Shi Laihe" [Walking on the grand path of socialism: An account of Shi Laihe, Party secretary of the Party Committee of Liu Zhuang of Xinxiang County, Henan Province], *RMRB,* February 2, 1990, p. 1.

Nanjie implemented the three-fold movement. Liu Zhuang also did not promote the personality cult of Mao or attack the legitimacy of private ownership, which Nanjie did. While the Party Committee of Liu Zhuang, like its counterpart in Nanjie, frequently spoke of achieving common prosperity, the former interpreted it as "increasing the bank deposit of every family" (which was in line with the regime's interpretation thereof), while the latter defined it in the terms of the goal of "building a small community of communism." Moreover, the residents of Liu Zhuang were paid a monthly bonus and year-end dividend, which were calculated depending on the performance of the collectively-owned enterprise they were assigned to work for. However, in Nanjie, bonus and dividend are prohibited and a system of minimal income differentiation is enforced.[56] These discrepancies likely explain why Liu Zhuang was selected as a model of the Party centre, while Nanjie became the model favoured by the Left to attack the market reform.

56 Zhao Zhikui, *Shi Laihe jingshen yu Liu Zhuang Cun zhi lu* [The spirit of Shi Laihe and the path of Liu Zhuang Village] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2013), pp. 59, 70.

Table 4.7: Collective villages in the first 50 of the "Top 300 Villages" of 2016 league table

Province (no. of collective villages in the first 50 ranks of the league table)	Collective village	Village's ranking in league table
Beijing (2)	Hancunhe Village	17
	Zhenggezhuang Village	13
Henan (3)	Ganhechen Village	39
	Liu Zhuang Village	44
	Nanjie Village	29
Hubei (1)	Fuxing Village	36
Jiangsu (8)	Changjiang Village	12
	Doushan Village	26
	Huaxi Xinshi Village	1
	Jiangxiang Village	24
	Kangbo Village	31
	Yonglian Village	10
	Menglan Village	28
	Sanfangxiang Village	21
Jiangxi (1)	Jinshun Village	11
Jilin (1)	Hongzui Village	19
Liaoning (1)	Xiyang Village	32
Shaanxi (1)	Dongling Village	7
Shandong (7)	Delisi Village	27
	Fushan Village	25
	Nanshang Village	2
	Shenquanzhuang Village	15
	Xishuimo Village	42
	Xiwang Village	16
	Xixiakou Village	20
Shanghai (2)	Jiuxing Village	6
	Yangwang Village	30
Shanxi (2)	Dazhai Village	4
	Huangcheng Village	9
Sichuan (1)	Baoshan Village	14
Yunnan (1)	Fubao Village	18

Zhejiang (2)	Hangmin Village	8
	Tengtou Village	5

Sources: Baidu and CNKI's China Academic Journals Full-text Database.

4.3 Nanjie's satellite models: Longtang and Beixuzhuang

Henan's Longtang and Beixuzhuang were the only villages in China that had ever claimed to have emulated Nanjie. Following Nanjie's example, they recollectivised the farmland contracted to households, and started establishing collective enterprises in 1993 and 1994 respectively. In 1995, as the annual production value of their enterprises reached one billion *yuan*, they were dubbed Linying County's second and third "red billionaire villages" after Nanjie. In the same year, they began to provide cradle-to-grave welfare benefits to all members of the collective without charge. By 1999, they had each developed 21 collective enterprises, with production portfolios overlapping to a large extent with Nanjie's own. In regard to local governance, at least until the late 1990s, Longtang and Beixuzhuang carried out rigorous social programmes to cultivate community spirit and strict discipline, including transplanting Nanjie's "Ten Stars Civilised Household" scheme, a personal conduct assessment scheme, a night school teaching the works of Mao and Deng, etc.[57] Furthermore, Guo Zi'an, Party secretary of Longtang, and Xu Dequan, Party secretary of Beixuzhuang, cultivated personas similar to Wang. From the beginning of recollectivisation until the mid-2000s, Guo implemented a three-point wage scale for local Party

57 Zuo Peng, "Linying sancun xing" [A trip to three Linying villages], *Beijing keji daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* [Journal of University of Science and Technology Beijing (social science edition)], Vol. 15, No. 2 (1999), pp. 86-90.

cadres that topped their salaries at 360 *yuan*, 380 *yuan* and 400 *yuan*,[58] while Xu simply transplanted Nanjie's wage system, capping the wages of all cadres, including himself, at 250 *yuan* per month.[59]

Despite branding themselves as Nanjie's satellite models, however, the collective model of development of Longtang and Beixuzhuang retrograded early on, which caused them to gradually distance themselves from Nanjie since the mid-2000s. In 1998, the collective farmland in Longtang was contracted out to resident households again. In 1999, during her field research at Beixuzhuang, sociologist Liu Qian discovered that, contrary to the claims made by the collective, every household in the village had actually retained a "private plot" during the recollectivisation drive in 1994.[60] In 2004, as Beixuzhuang failed to secure any bank loans or funds from Nanjie to support its failing pig farm, Xu resorted to selling private shares to raise funds. By 2005, Beixuzhuang had sold 70% of the pig farm's shares to a private company for 10 million *yuan*. The private share-holding system was gradually extended to its other enterprises, thus altering the nature of unified ownership and management by the village collective.[61] By 2012, Beixuzhuang had already reinstated *dabaogan* completely, and even became one of the earliest villages in Henan to decentralise more land rights to farmers, in a manner which Zhang Yusong, deputy director of the provincial agricultural commission, described as "highly reminiscent of the spirit of the *baochan daohu*."

58 Liu Qian (2004), p. 333.
59 Zuo Peng (1999), p. 90.
60 Liu Qian (2004), pp. 328-334.
61 Wang Haisheng, "Caogen Beixu" [Grassroots Beixu], *Xinhua*, November 10, 2005, http://news.xinhuanet.com/newmedia/2005-11/10/content_3758993.htm (accessed on 1 April 2015); "Ruo zhipin jutou Luohe yanyi xin 'sanguo'" [Luohe's flagship meat products companies become the new "three kingdoms"], *Henan ribao* [Henan Daily], April 7, 2006, p. 13.

Members of the village collective in Beixuzhuang are allowed to, on the basis of households, use the residential land they contracted from the collective as collateral to obtain bank loans, and to let or sell properties built on the plot to urban *hukou* holders in the region.[62] In regard to Longtang, by 2006, most households had transferred the usage rights of the farmland they contracted from the collective to a private contractor from outside the village in exchange for rental income, and if they labour in the field, wages as well. By 2008, all of Longtang's enterprises had transitioned from collective ownership to a private shareholding system. Zhang Junde, deputy secretary of the local Party committee, told reporters:

> In the past, we had a pure collective economy...now various forms of ownership are adopted, the enterprises make their own decisions and exercise autonomous management, both efficiency and effectiveness have improved.[63]

While Longtang and Beixuzhuang have abandoned the collective model of production and distribution in both the agricultural and industrial sectors, they have nonetheless retained the collective redistribution system. The collective earns payment in the form of dividends generated from the stocks they hold in the enterprises, which is used for welfare provision for members of the collective, and for funding other non-operating assets in the village, such as building recreational amenities and infrastructure. A main reason why retaining the collective redistribution system was possible was that, at the time of decollectivisation in the

62 Ma Haoliang, "Nongjia zhufang ke rushi liutong" [Rural residential properties can now be circulated in the market], *Ta kung pao* [Ta Kung Daily], April 26, 2012, p. A08.

63 Zhou Jian, "Longyun gaizhi: yipian jinxiu haishi yi di jimao?" [Longyun's institutional reform: Does it lead to a bright future or is it a mess?], *Dahe bao* [Dahe Daily], August 15, 2008, p. 1.

mid-2000s, the operating assets accumulated by the enterprises were relatively large, hence the dividend payment resulting from the collectively-held stocks could well have been substantial.[64]

In retrospect, it seemed that the main motivator for Longtang and Beixuzhuang to emulate Nanjie was simply to secure funding to rejuvenate the declining local economy. As a result of being Nanjie's satellite models, Longtang and Beixuzhuang were able to benefit from easy credit access. For example, in 1999, the Agricultural Bank of China (Luohe branch) reported that, over the previous few years, it had made massive investments in seven collective enterprises in the municipality, including the NJVG, Longtang's Longyun Group (LYG) and Beixuzhuang's Beixuzhuang Group (BXZG), the collectively-owned companies that owned the enterprises of the respective villages, in order to turn them into "flagship enterprises.[65] Between 2000 to 2004, the state level Agricultural Bank of China extended NJVG, LYG and BXZG loans of 14 million *yuan,* 60 million *yuan* and 50 million *yuan*, respectively, to support the expansion of their flour milling factories.[66] Nanjie transferred a paper mill and a biscuit factory to Beixuzhuang in 1991 and 1993. The 1993 transfer included the cost-free supply of a 500,000-*yuan* production line, the production formulas and technological skills. The production value of these two factories combined with Beixuzhuang's

64 Wang Haisheng, November 10, 2005; Ma Haoliang, April 26, 2012; Zhou Jian, August 15, 2008.

65 "Zhong jiaoyu yan guanli zheng hang feng chuang yiliu: Luohe nongxing wenming jianshe qiu shixiao" [Emphasise education, tighten discipline, make proper the work style and create excellence: Luohe agricultural bank achieves practical results in civilization construction], *RMRB*, December 23, 1999, p. 11.

66 Tian Yongqiang and Zhang Jinhe, "Luohe shi fenhang jiji fahui zhineng, zhichi liangshi longtou qiye fazhan" [Luohe branch plays an active role in supporting the development of food flagship enterprises], *Nongye fazhan yu jinrong* [Agricultural development and finance], No. 10 (2004), pp. 38-40.

indigenous carpet-making factory amounted to 25.6 million *yuan* by the end of 1993.[67] In 1999, Xu Faqing, propaganda chief of Beixuzhuang, admitted that the village strategically branded itself as Nanjie's emulator in the early 1990s in order to enhance publicity.[68]

5. Conclusion

Similar to what happened to Dazhai and Anhui in the late Mao and early post-Mao eras respectively, central-level faction groomed Nanjie into a model for the sake of retabling and redeeming leftist ideas that had been formally jettisoned in the official Party line. These ideas — such as the spirit of self-sacrifice, a large collective economy, egalitarianism, strict political discipline, the personality cult of Mao, etc. — were used by the Party's Left to challenge the infallibility of the market reform, and to promote nostalgia for the Mao era. Nanjie was akin to a modernised version of Dazhai. Previously little-known even within its home province, Nanjie rose to fame thanks to the patronage of the Party's Left following the crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests; just as Dazhai, an obscure village, was handpicked by Mao after the showdown of the Great Leap Forward. Whereas the radical and conservative factions competed to control the Party line by advancing their opposite definitions of the "Dazhai experience," the post-Mao Party centre attributed Nanjie's prosperity to technocratic competence, instead of allegiance to socialism or Mao Zedong Thought, as alleged by Nanjie and its leftist patrons. Notwithstanding the similarities, the making of Nanjie into

67 Wang Haisheng (2005).
68 Liu Qian (2004), p. 330.

a model differed from that of the Dazhai Model in multiple fronts. Not only was Nanjie never named a national model — which indicated that the Party's Left failed to displace the pro-market faction in the post-Mao era — the embedding factional dynamics evolved. Whereas the rise and fall of the Dazhai Model was dictated solely by power holders at the Centre, a diverse set of actors from various ranks of the polity and even within society were actively involved in making and unmaking the Nanjie Model. The profusion of actors suggested that more interests were at stake in model-making. Models were transformed from "pet projects" tightly controlled by some top-level Party leaders into magnates providing an open platform for the coordination and mobilisation of political interests.

CHAPTER FIVE

Shenzhen and Shekou: Two political visions in one special economic zone, 1979–mid-2000s

This chapter teases out the complex and often latent interplay of ideas, interests, and factions that were at heart in the making and unmaking of Shenzhen as a model special economic zone (SEZ). It consists of three parts, each of which addresses the ideational conflicts distinctive to the time period and probes into the question of what the limit of special treatments for the SEZs should be, or put more generally, the extent to which models should be special, as asked and answered at that time. The first part covers the period from the establishment of the Shekou Industrial Zone in 1979 (it was included by the Centre as part of the Shenzhen SEZ since the SEZ was founded in 1980) to August 1984, when the internal border separating the Shenzhen SEZ from the rest of Shenzhen came into operation for the first time. The second part covers the period of 1979–1989 for Shekou, and 1987–1989 for Shenzhen (here, and where used to distinguish from Shekou, Shenzhen refers to the whole of the Shenzhen SEZ minus Shekou), during which they experimented with political reforms respectively, until their abrupt termination following the crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989. The third part covers the period from the mid-1990s to the present, which has seen the Shenzhen SEZ gradually losing its special status, culminating to high-level mentions of the "end" of the SEZ. The findings of this chapter demonstrate that, contrary to the hitherto largely unquestioned official narrative,

the Shenzhen SEZ was not only, or even primarily, a technocratic or economic model. It has in fact mainly been a political and heavily politicised model at all times.

1. From establishment of SEZs to extension of SEZ policy, 1979–1984

In July 1979, as a result of successful petition from the leaders of Guangdong Province and Fujian Province, the central government approved of the establishment of SEZs within specially set apart territories in Guangdong's Shenzhen and Zhuhai with immediate effect, and in Shantou of the same province and Fujian's Xiamen provisionally. These four cities were located along China's southern coast, in close proximity to Hong Kong and Taiwan, both targeted as the primary sources for foreign investment in light of their ethnic Chinese demography, and social and kinship ties with PRC citizens.[1] The Shenzhen and Zhuhai SEZs were established in 1980, while the Xiamen and Shantou SEZs were created in 1981 and 1982 respectively. Included within the Shenzhen SEZ (327.5 km^2) was the Shekou Industrial Zone (2.14 km^2), which was founded in the middle of 1979, one step ahead of all SEZs. Unlike the SEZs, the petition to the Centre for forming the Shekou Industrial Zone, as well as the actual creation and

1 CCP Central Committee and State Council. "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan pizhuan Guangdong shengwei, Fujian shengwei guanyu duiwai jingji huodong shixing teshu zhengce he linghuo cuoshi de liang ge baogao (1979 nian 50 hao wenjian)" [The approval and transmittal of the "two reports of the Guangdong and Fujian provincial Party committees concerning the implementation of special policies and flexible measures in foreign economic activities"] (document no. 50 of 1979)], July 15, 1979, in *Chinese Law & Government*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 1994, pp. 19-44.

administration of it thereafter, were performed by neither the Guangdong nor Shenzhen government, but the Hong Kong-based China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company (hereafter referred to as "CMSN"), a subsidiary of the Ministry of Transportation.[2] The existence of two independent authorities within the Shenzhen SEZ — the Shenzhen Party-state for Shenzhen and CMSN for Shekou — is often glossed over in the existing literature, despite them serving as a key variable explaining the emergence of two distinctive models within the SEZ until 1987. In this section, I examine how the SEZs apparently failed to achieve its purposes and prospered at the expense of national interest. I subsequently consider how this central-local conflict became a factional struggle as the conservative faction strategically resorted to ideational arguments in attempt to sabotage the SEZ policy unsuccessfully.

1.1 Special policies and flexible measures

The central government made it explicit at the outset that "special policies" (*teshu zhengce*) and "flexible measures" (*linghuo cuoshi*) would be applied to SEZs in order to speed up their economic development, and to help them fulfil centrally-assigned goals, that is, to develop export processing industry, and to attract overseas capital, technology, knowledge and management skills.[3] The main

2 *Zhongguo jingji tequ nianjian* [Yearbook of China's special economic zones] (Hong Kong: Zhongguo jingji tequ nianjian chubanshe, 1983), pp. 145, 155.

3 See CCP Central Committee and State Council, "Guanyu Guangdong, Fujian liang sheng huiyi jiyao de pishi" [Instructions regarding the "minutes of the joint conference of the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian"], July 19, 1979, in Gu Mu, *Gu Mu hui yi lu* [Memoir of Gu Mu] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2009), pp. 325-326; [Deng Xiaoping].

"special policies" and "flexible measures" for SEZs included tax incentives, flexible labour policies, and private land use rights. The enterprise income tax rate for firms in SEZs was 15%, which was lower by 50% than that levied on private firms elsewhere in China. In addition, exemption and generous discounts on enterprise income tax rate were available for firms established in SEZs before September 1982, with an investment of U.S. $5 million or more, involved higher technology, had a longer capital turnover period, or reinvested their SEZ-generated profits within the SEZs. In addition, raw and semi-processed materials imported into the SEZs for production were exempted from import duties. Tax incentives aside, firms in SEZs were allowed to administer a contract-based labour system, giving them close to full autonomy in hiring and firing workers, and setting their own terms and conditions of employment. Moreover, while all land is state-owned in China, foreign SEZ firms were allowed, for the first time in the PRC, private land use right. This was purchasable by a state-prescribed land use fee, waiver and discounts of which were offered not only to high-technology firms, but also firms invested by overseas Chinese.[4] Jonathan Bach observes that, given that the "special policies" and "flexible measures" resulted in selective application of domestic laws in SEZs, they held an "intermediate status between home and abroad," and participated in "the logic of sovereign exception."[5]

Deng Xiaoping wenxuan III [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping III] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993), pp. 51-52.

4 For a comprehensive list of special policies and flexible measures for SEZs, see Xing Fenglin, ed., *Shenzhen chengshi shi* [History of the city of Shenzhen] (Beijing: Tuanjie chubanshe, 1996), pp. 57-80.

5 Jonathan Bach, "'Shenzhen: From Exception to Rule," Mary Ann O'Donnell, Winnie Wong and Jonathan Bach, eds., *Learning from Shenzhen* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), pp. 23-38, at 28.

Similarly, Aihwa Ong characterises SEZs as "zones of exception" allowing for "a measure of sovereign flexibility in ways that both fragment and extend the space of the nation-state."[6]

1.2 Was Shenzhen SEZ becoming "Dazhai 2.0"?

The central government emphasised that the preferential treatments were given to SEZs in lieu of money. When Li Xiannian, Vice Premier of the State Council, gave approval to the establishment of the Shekou Industrial Zone in January 1979, he told Yuan Geng, director of CMSN, "I do not want to give you money to buy ships and build ports. You are in charge of the survival [of the zone]. You have to strive to make it work." Deng similarly stressed the importance of self-sufficiency and local initiative when he spoke with SEZ officials in the early 1980s. He said, "The Centre has no money. It depends on you to make it work. Make the road with your blood."[7]

However, in only a few years after its establishment, Shenzhen had already been criticised for draining state resources, having failed to attract enough foreign capital to achieve self-sufficiency. This led to critics alluding Shenzhen as "Dazhai 2.0," where success was primarily cultivated from above, instead of generated from within. *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong),* being the CCP's mouthpiece in Hong Kong, reported that contrary to the Centre's insistence of Shenzhen's

6 Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press, 2006), p. 7.

7 Wang Jingsheng, ed., *Shenzhen shi da guan nian* [Top 10 concepts of Shenzhen] (Shenzhen: Shenzhen baoye jituan chubanshe, 2011), pp. 19-20.

financial independence, the SEZ had in fact received 16 billion *yuan* of investment from various central authorities by mid-1984.[8] Moreover, while the "special policies" and "flexible measures" were designed to ensure that the SEZ's development would be primarily funded by foreign investment. In reality, however, foreign investment contributed only around one-third of the cost of Shenzhen's basic infrastructure, while the rest was borne by state investment, investment from other provinces, bank loans and local government finance (see Table 5.1). Hong Kong scholar Chen Wenhong concluded from this data and other sources that the value of domestic capital spent in Shenzhen to attract foreign investment was twice the actual value of the foreign capital attracted.[9]

In addition to failing to attract enough foreign investment, a compilation of fragmented official statistics indicated that, while Shenzhen was tasked to develop "export processing industry," it was far from achieving that goal by the mid-1980s. Most of the products manufactured in Shenzhen were not exported overseas, but sold to the mainland market. This was not only because the quality of products was too low to be internationally competitive, but also due to high profit margins and easy accessibility of the mainland market (black and legal), in light of its shortage of consumables, rising purchasing powers and protectionist policies against foreign imports. Table 5.2 demonstrates that the value of Shenzhen's retail sale of consumables to the mainland market was consistently higher than the combined value of agricultural and industrial outputs, and the ratio between the

8 *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong)* [Wen Wei Daily (Hong Kong)], November 9, 1984, p. 3, in Chen Wenhong, "Shenzhen de wenti zai nali?" [What are the problems of Shenzhen?], *Guang jiao jing* [Wide Angle], Vol. 149, No. 2, 1985, pp. 48-55, at 51.

9 Chen Wenhong (1985), p. 54.

two indices kept on increasing from 1979 to the first half of 1984.

Excessive dependence on the domestic market aside, Shenzhen had also failed to develop manufacturing industry as the mainstay of the economy. Chen Wenhong reports that Shenzhen underwent three stages of industrial development from 1979 to the mid-1980s. In the first stage from 1979–1980, the rate of industrial growth and industrial structure of Shenzhen was very similar to the pre-SEZ years. In the second stage from 1981–1982, Shenzhen's industrial output more than quadrupled that of the previous stage, but the source of growth mainly came from the real estate sector, not manufacturing. As a result of massive increase in basic infrastructure construction in 1982, Shenzhen's industrial output took off in 1983. However, the manufacturing sector was still underdeveloped. Of Shenzhen's over 7 billion *yuan* of industrial output in 1983, the construction sector accounted for the lion's share of 86%, while the manufacturing industry contributed only a meagre 14% (see Table 5.2).

Even Premier Zhao Ziyang, the main purveyor of the SEZ policy, acknowledged behind closed doors that Shenzhen had fallen short of achieving its mission in 1984. In a report submitted to the central government, which was leaked by *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong)*, Zhao described the SEZ economic model as importing raw materials from abroad, and selling finished products to the mainland, which he criticised as a main cause for China's foreign currency shortage and lively black market.[10] While Zhao and his allies never portrayed the SEZs negatively in public, a *People's Daily* article in December 1984 nonetheless

10 "Zhao zongli shicha yue su de baogao (shang)" [Premier Zhao's inspection report of Guangdong and Jiangsu (part 1)], *Wen Wei Po (Hong Kong)* [Wen Wei Daily (Hong Kong)], January 15, 1985, p. 2, in Chen Wenhong (1985), p. 55.

urged all SEZs — with Shenzhen singled out by name — to accelerate the transition into an outward-oriented economy by vigorously developing "industrial strength" (*gongye shili*) instead of being content with "prosperity on the surface" (*biaomian fanrong*).[11]

Table 5.1: Fund sources for basic infrastructure construction in Shenzhen, 1982–1984

Fund source / Amount invested in basic infrastructure construction (in billion *yuan* and/or %)	1982 (Actual)	1983 (Actual)	1984 (As planned by the Shenzhen government in 1983)
Fund from foreign investment	1.91 (30.17%)	31%	3.7 (30.83%)
Fund from sources other than foreign investment	4.42 (69.83%)	69%	96.3%
State investment	–	8.7%	0.2 (1.67%)
Specially allocated funds from central government units, provincial government units, and the Shenzhen government	–	17.3%	–
Shenzhen government	–		3.6 (30%)
Bank loan	–	29.3%	4.5 (37.5%)
Total investment in basic infrastructure construction	6.33	19.6	12

Note: The real numbers in 1983 are missing in this table because they were not provided in official publications.

Sources: Various official sources of Shenzhen, as collected and tabulated (in Chinese) by Chen Wenhong (1985), p. 51.

11 Ou Qinglin, "Tequ ren zai xiang mou xie shenme?" [What is it that people in the special zone are thinking?], *RMRB*, December 29, 1984, p. 2.

Table 5.2: Major economic indices of Shenzhen, 1978 to the first half of 1984

Major economic index of Shenzhen (in billion *yuan*)	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	First half of 1984
Total value of industrial and agricultural outputs	1.47	1.46	1.89	3.4–3.7	–	8.7	–
Total value of industrial output	0.6	0.61	0.84	2.43	3.62	7.2	5.55
Total value of agricultural output	0.87	0.86	1.05	–	1.35/1.41	1.5	–
Total value invested in basic infrastructure construction	–	0.5	1.25	2.7	6.33	19.6	6.03
Total value of foreign investment (in Hong Kong dollars)	–	1.2	2.5	5.9	8.8	11.3	5.9
Total value of foreign exchange revenue of Shenzhen government	–	0.28	0.47	0.4–0.61	0.56	0.67	1.05
Total value of revenue of Shenzhen government from sources other than foreign exchange revenue	0.2	0.35	0.55	1.18/1.3	1.63	2.96	1.9
Total value of retail sale of consumables to mainland market	1.17	1.48	2.2	3.5	5.54	12.51	8.61

Sources: Various official sources of Shenzhen, *People's Daily* articles, and articles published in academic journals and periodicals in China, as collected and tabulated (in Chinese) by Chen Wenhong (1985), p. 49.

1.3 Decrying and defending the SEZ policy

While the central leadership evidently did not dispute the underperformance of SEZs, conflicting views emerged as to what should be done with the SEZ policy.

On the one hand, Chen Yun, Yao Yilin and Deng Liqun strongly suggested that the SEZ policy should be aborted, and explicitly opposed to its extension to other parts of China. Their hostility against SEZs was a main reason for which they were later identified by Western scholars as the "conservative faction." On the other hand, Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, Hu Yaobang and Gu Mu were sympathetic to the failings of SEZs, and argued that the SEZ policy, as formulated in the relevant central documents in 1979, should not be amended. While the political outlook of these four leaders were different in important ways, they were collectively referred to in the literature as the "reformist faction," which is due in no small part to their favourable attitude for the SEZ policy.[12] In this section, I examine how the conservative faction attempted to delegitimate the SEZ policy by tactically couching their arguments on ideational grounds and deploying Maoist discourse. I subsequently analyse how the reformist faction successfully defended the SEZ policy, which I argue was due in part to the willingness of the factions to reach compromise, and in part to Deng Xiaoping's high-profile intervention.

The conservative faction led by Chen made their first strike against the SEZ policy at the meeting for first provincial Party secretaries held in Beijing in December 1981. With his prestige and influence in the Party second only to Deng Xiaoping, Chen took the prerogative to reset the meeting's agenda from rural issues to SEZ policy. He stated pre-emptively that no more SEZs could be added to the pre-existing four, and ruled out the establishment of SEZ in Jiangsu and

12 These factional labels were used in many classic works that studied the early reform period in the 1980s to 1990s. See, for example, Richard Baum, *Buryuing Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Shanghai specifically, on the ground that the region was historically infamous for its "profiteering activities" by "bad elements" of society. He went on to urge the leaders of Guangdong and Fujian to "conscientiously sum up the experience" of the SEZ policy as a matter of urgency, in order to develop "full appreciation of its side effects." In the time around this meeting, the Central Party Secretariat Research Office chaired by Deng Liqun circulated materials asserting that SEZs were in danger of degenerating into "colonial treaty ports" (*zujie*), territorial concessions forced onto China after its humiliating defeat at the Opium War in the 1800s.[13] The special policies and flexible measures for SEZs, though introduced by the state at its own volition to further national interest, and could be rescinded by the state at will, were compared to extraterritorial rights claimed by foreigners in colonial treaty ports.[14] Despite the obvious fallacies in the analogy, the propagation of this idea by a central government unit close to Chen instilled widespread fear that the SEZ policy might be aborted.[15]

As it turned out, such fear was not unwarranted. Some time between December 1982 and January 1982, a notice was sent in the name of the Central Party Secretariat to summon leaders of Guangdong and Fujian to Beijing. Zhao recounted that although Hu Yaobang and himself were heads of the Party and government respectively at that time, they were "completely passive" in this

13 [Chen Yun], *Chen Yun wenxuan III* [Selected works of Chen Yun III] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1995), pp. 306-307, and Zhao Ziyang, *Gaige licheng* [The secret journal of Zhao Ziyang] (Hong Kong: New Century Press, 2009), pp. 118-119.

14 See Chen Yushan and Lei Wei, "Xiwang zhi chuang: Shekou gongye qu gaige kaifang jishi" [Window of hope: an account of the reform and openness of Shekou industrial zone], *RMRB*, September 15, 1987, p. 1.

15 Ezra F. Vogel, *One Step Ahead in China: Guangdong under Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 128-129.

matter, which he said was masterminded by Chen Yun. However, having said that, the passivity of the duo might have been driven by the strategic calculation of appeasing Chen more than a lack of agency. Soon after the notice was issued, Chen suggested replacing Ren Zhongyi, Guangdong's first Party secretary, with a specific protégée of his. However, he eventually agreed to back down after Zhao and Hu lobbied him against this idea persistently. In light of the deep-seated norms of deference to Party elders in Chinese politics, the duo's previous conciliatory attitude might well have helped their cause on this occasion.[16] It followed that Chen arranged for various central leaders, including Zhao and Hu, to address representatives of Guangdong and Fujian in February 1982. Thereafter, he arranged for his version of the summary of the meeting to be circulated to all provincial level governments. Vice Premier Gu Mu, who directly oversaw the SEZ policy since 1979, tried to append to the summary an article that affirmed the correctness of China's opening up policy. His efforts were counteracted by Yao Yilin, a fellow Vice Premier, who suggested appending an alternative article, which was titled "The Origin of Treaty Ports in Shanghai." In the end, Gu and Yao agreed to withdraw their respective articles on the condition that neither article could be appended. This was yet another instance of compromise between factions that deescalated a possible outburst of political conflict over the SEZ policy.[17]

Chen's version of the summary, as circulated to provincial level governments in March 1982, attacked the SEZ policy with an overtly Maoist

16 Zhao Ziyang (2009), p. 122.
17 Wang Jingsheng (2011), p. 23; Gu Mu (2009), p. 336.

discourse. The proliferation of illicit trade and corruption pursuant to the creation of SEZs was decried as “class struggle under new historical circumstances,” where “foreign class enemies” used SEZs as bases to spread “corrosive capitalist thoughts” into China. Cadres, those working in SEZs in particular, were reminded of their duty to be firm and vigilant Marxists and maintain their “communist purity.” It is noteworthy that the SEZs' weakness in developing export processing industry and attracting foreign investment, as detailed in the section above, was not mentioned in the summary at all. The omission was likely intentional, as it was consistent with Chen's scepticism of foreign trade.[18] The summary concluded with a call for local governments to strengthen economic planning in their jurisdictions. Specifically, it required provinces, including Guangdong and Fujian, to centrally coordinate all economic activities involving foreigners, and to strictly prohibit any organisations or individuals to trade with foreigners independently of the local government. It also stipulated that, among other things, the bonus for workers in SEZs be capped at a level only slightly higher than that of the mainland.[19] These new orders represented a reversal to the guiding principle of the SEZ policy as laid out in the central Party-state's document no. 41 of 1980 mentioned earlier, which stated clearly: “SEZs should mainly practice market adjustments.”

18 Zhao (2009, p. 19) recalled that Chen had reread Lenin's *Theory of Imperialism* specifically for the purpose of gaining insights on China's SEZ policy. In the context of discussions of the SEZ policy, Chen told Zhao that the features of imperialism as summarized by Lenin, which were linked to foreign trade, were still the same to this day.

19 CCP Central Committee and State Council. “Pizhuan 'Guangdong, Fujian liang sheng zuotanhui jiyao' de tongzhi” [Circular promulgating the “summary of the Guangdong, Fujian Provincial Conference”], March 1, 1982, in *Renmin wang* [People's Web], http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64184/64186/67029/4519157.html (accessed 17 September 2017).

Zhao recalled the net effect of Chen's summary was to significantly cut back on the "special policies" and "flexible measures" given to SEZs.[20] This perception was prevalent in the political circle at that time.[21] However, thanks in part to the norm of factional compromise, and in part to Deng Xiaoping's high-profile intervention in 1984, the SEZ policy remained intact. In Guangdong, Ren commanded his subordinates to step up efforts in cracking down economic crimes, and at the same time to ignore the new restrictions on the SEZ policy laid down in the summary. This act of defiance, however, was carried out under pretence of compliance. Ren submitted to the Centre a self-criticism report and no less than seven drafts that translated the policy guidelines written in the summary into local regulations.[22] In January 1984, Deng, who had been quiet on the SEZ policy since giving it the green light in 1979, visited Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Xiamen SEZs. During the trip, Deng told local officials that the SEZ policy was "not about taking back, but about letting lose" (*bushi shou, ershi fang*), and praised the SEZ policy as a great success.[23] Chen's summary was rendered obsolete as Deng lent his prestige to the controversial SEZ policy. In only three months after Deng's southern tour, the SEZ policy was extended to 14 coastal cities, and in 1985, even to Jiangsu and Zhejiang, where Chen had ruled out establishing a SEZ specifically in 1981.

The expansion of the SEZ policy should not be mistaken as a winner-takes-all outcome for the reformist faction. This was because both factions agreed to an

20 Zhao Ziyang (2009), pp. 120-121.
21 Yang Jisheng (2014), pp. 194-195.
22 Yang Jisheng (2014), p. 196.
23 [Deng Xiaoping], *Deng Xiaoping wenxuan III* [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping III] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993), pp. 51-52.

important common ground, that is, the implementation of a "containment policy" to limit the side-effects of the SEZ from affecting the mainland. This featured an internal border — the so-called "management line" (*guanli xian*) — to separate the Shenzhen SEZ, which was seen as the worst for economic crimes among all the SEZs, from the remainder of Bao'an County. The management line was a barbed wire fence of 2.8 metres tall and 84.6 kilometres wide, and complete with 18 checkpoints and 163 watchtowers. The construction of the border began in 1982, and pilot implementation started in August 1984. Only special permit holders, registered Shenzhen SEZ residents and Hong Kong residents were allowed entry into the Shenzhen SEZ.[24] The border served to make it more difficult for Shenzhen to trade with the mainland (both legally and illicitly), a point that both factions considered to be important, and gave the SEZ more incentives to develop a truly outward-facing economy.

2. Shenzhen SEZ as a special political zone, 1979–1989

While the reformist faction stood united in fending the SEZ policy from conservatives' sabotage, there were in fact major disagreements on the SEZ policy among themselves. The more liberal-minded reformists, notably Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and Shekou's Yuan Geng, were supportive of SEZs to liberalise the political system in tandem with experimenting with economic reforms. On the

24 Xu Dixin, "Guanyu jingji tequ de ji ge lilun wenti" [Several theoretical questions concerning special economic zones], eds., *Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian* [Yearbook of China's special economic zones] (Hong Kong: Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian chubanshe, 1983), pp. 573-578, at 575.

contrary, the more cautious and/or less liberal-minded reformists, such as Deng Xiaoping and Liang Xiang, Shenzhen's mayor and first Party secretary, ruled out political institution reforms for the SEZs. They did not consider systemic changes to the political system to be a requisite for the success of economic reforms, and feared that it would undermine the authority of the Party-state. I argue that the Shenzhen SEZ provided a platform for these two sub-divisions of the reformist faction to turn their ideas into policies, which led to the emergence of a Shekou Model as distinct from the Shenzhen Model inside one SEZ. I find this intra-factional ideational conflict to be different in kind than that between the reformists and conservatives as examined in Section 1.3. In the latter context, Chen and his allies used ideas strongly linked to political abuse ("colonial treaty ports," "class struggle" and "corrosive capitalist thoughts") to legitimate restrictions of the SEZ policy. It demonstrated mainly the use of political discourse in agenda setting and intimidation, but not so much the merits of those ideas as truth claims. In contrast, in the dispute between Shenzhen and Shekou, it was the substantive content of ideas — being the relationship of economic and political modernisation — that came under challenge. Ideas were the very reason for conflict (what was fought for), not simply the medium for conflict (what was fought with).

In this section, I first analyse why and how Yuan stepped out of his mandate, as laid out in the central documents on SEZs in 1979, to turn Shekou into a de facto special political zone, or in his words, a "special zone of special status" (*tedeng tequ*). I contrast his approach to that of Liang, who sought to develop Shenzhen into a technocratic model instead. I subsequently traced the process

through which Li Hao, Liang's successor, made efforts to align Shenzhen closer to Shekou by making concrete plans for legislative reforms that would "have Shenzhen jump out from the pre-existing system of our country completely."[25] Shenzhen's complete change of course took place since 1987 around the time of the 13th Party Congress, where political reforms went onto the national agenda for the first time, though they reflected strongly the cautious reformists' preference for modernising the bureaucracy, and little of the liberal-minded reformists' vision of political liberalisation. I conclude with a discussion of the convergence of Shenzhen and Shekou into one technocratic model following the regime's suppression on the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989.

2.1 Shekou: The de facto special political zone, 1979–1989

Yuan Geng, founder and leader of the Shekou Industrial Zone, had an ambitious political vision for the port town on top of the centrally-assigned economic itinerary. He did not want to turn Shekou simply into the world's factory or logistical hub — which was a huge undertaking already given that it consisted mostly of farmland and wasteland by 1979 — but also an open society with a more democratic political system. However, having said that, political reform was a taboo topic before the 13th Party Congress in 1987. Moreover, even before the Shekou Industrial Zone was established, Gu Mu told Yuan specifically that, while Shekou's economic structure "should become special," it ought to "follow the

25 *Shenzhen tequ bao* [Shenzhen Special Zone Daily], hereafter referred to as "*SZTQB*", "Banyue tan zai wen renwei Shenzhen yao chedi tiaochu xianxing tizhi" [Banyue tan article states that Shenzhen should leap out from the pre-existing system completely], October 6, 1988, p. 1.

ways of the mainland" in the area of local administration.[26] In light of these restrictions, Yuan was careful to use "social reform" as a codeword when referring to Shekou's political reform to avoid controversy. That said, his preference for political liberalisation was obvious in some of his speeches in the early 1980s.

On one occasion, he said:

> It is not difficult to transplant or transfer advanced technology and equipment from abroad. What is difficult is to create a social environment that can accommodate with the kind of openness to the outside and economic reform.[27]

On another occasion, he said:

> The progress of society depends largely on the creativity and free will of humankind, the development of which rests on deepening social reforms. The reform of Shekou is, with respect to its nature, an experiment of social reform.[28]

Based on these ideas, Shekou under Yuan's governance became the first place in China to implement an open system of cadre recruitment in 1980, which completely broke away from the *fenpei* system of centralised job allocation by the government. It also developed a relatively free press and became home to many profession-based associations, some of which were active in using the local official newspaper, *Shekou News* (*Shekou tongxun bao*) as a platform to comment

26 Wang Jingsheng, ed. (2011), p. 20.
27 Chen Yihao, "Yuan Geng he Shekou shiyan" [Yuan Geng and the Shekou experiment], *RMRB*, February 28, 1989, p. 5.
28 Chen Yihao, February 28, 1989, p. 5.

on politics and policies, often quite critically, and published uncensored.[29] In addition to cultivating a culture of political openness, Yuan went as far as to introduce direct election and vote of confidence, both by secret ballot, for the Shekou Industrial Zone Management Committee, which served as the de facto government of Shekou. Unlike the Shenzhen government, it was independent of the local government hierarchy, and was directly accountable to CMSN, a central government ministry. The electoral reform enfranchised Shekou's cadres of all ranks, which numbered around 400 (the "cadre electorate") and the nearly 1,600 employees who were not cadres but held long-term employment (the "non-cadre electorate"). The middle- and upper-level cadres of Shekou, which were around 130 in number, were eligible to stand for election for a seat at the management committee, which had nine seats.[30]

A trial election and vote of confidence for the management committee, which limited participation to Shekou's cadres, were piloted in 1983 and 1984 respectively; after which, beginning 1985, all of Shekou's electorate were eligible to elect the management committee every two years, and cast a vote of confidence the year after the election. The election had two rounds. In the first round, Shekou's cadres of all ranks were eligible to participate. They were to elect 15 candidates from the pool of candidates for the management committee. Those who were chosen had to appear at an election forum that was open to the non-cadre electorate in addition to the cadre electorate. There, they had to present their

29 Tam Siu-mi Maria, *The Structuation of Chinese Modernisation: Women Workers of Shekou Industrial Zone*. Ph.D. dissertation (University of Hawaii, 1992).

30 Ju Tianxing, *Zhengyi yu qishi: Yuan Geng zai Shekou jishi* [Controversies and insights: An account of Yuan Geng in Shekou] (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1998), pp. 160-182.

respective policy manifestos, comment on the policy manifestos of contenders, and answer questions from the full electorate. In the second round, nine candidates were to be elected to join the management committee. The full electorate were eligible to vote in this round. The result of the election was subjected to confirmation by CMSN. In the year after the election, beginning 1986, a vote of confidence would be in order for the management committee, which the full electorate was eligible to vote. They were to cast two types of votes: one vote for the management committee as a whole, and one vote for each member of the management committee. If the number of votes of confidence for the management committee was less than 50% of the total number of votes it received, it would have to be dissolved and re-elected. If the number of votes of confidence for a management committee member was less than 50% of the total number of votes he/she received, he/she would lose office.[31]

In effect, the election and motion of confidence replaced the life tenure for Shekou's local leadership with an accountability system. While the electorate excluded the majority of Shekou's residents, the election results and the political pressure this reform came under from the Party centre suggested that it should not be dismissed as a façade of democracy. While Yuan won the highest number of votes in the second round of election in 1985, and thus held onto his previously appointed position as head of the management committee, 14% of voters did not vote for him. To make matters worse, 15% of voters did not cast a vote of confidence for him in 1986. Despite what might have been a personal

31 Ju Tianxing (1998), pp. 160-182.

embarrassment (and potential loss of legitimacy) for him, Yuan was broad-minded enough to hail the elections as a success and called for the results to be disseminated widely.[32] In January 1987, following the purge of Hu Yaobang, who had, in 1984, given personal assurance for Yuan to implement the elections and even asked Shantou and Xiamen to learn from Shekou,[33] Yuan was forced to step up government control of the election and motion of confidence in order to pre-empt a crackdown from above. First of all, he incorporated the Shekou Industrial Zone Management Committee as a limited company to give the impression that the election and vote of confidence were business procedures, rather than political mechanisms to effectively select and remove the local government from office. Second, he increased the seats of the management committee to eleven. The number of elected seats was reduced from nine to seven, and the remaining four seats were appointed by CMSN. Third, voters were no longer permitted to cast a vote of confidence for each member of the management committee, but only the management committee as a whole. The modified system of election and vote of confidence were implemented in 1987 and 1988 respectively. Apparently, many voters were upset with the changes, as reflected in the letters to editors published in *Shekou News* and the fact that the management committee only obtained 51% of votes of confidence in 1988.[34]

32 Chen Yihao, "Minzhu de shengdong shili, gaige de fengshuo chengguo: Shekou xuanju jiexiao, Yuan Geng depiao zuiduo" [A vivid demonstration of democracy, the fruitful results of reform: Shekou elections announced, Yuan Geng obtained the most votes], *SZTQB*, April 26, 1985, p. 1.

33 [Hu Yaobang], "Zhonggong zhongyang zong shuji Hu Yaobang tan jingji tequ" [CCP general secretary Hu Yaobang talks about special economic zones], eds., *Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian* [Yearbook of China's special economic zones] (Hong Kong: Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian chubanshe, 1983), p. 89.

34 Ju Tianxing (1998), pp. 160-182.

Notwithstanding the setbacks in the election in 1987, the culture of political openness cultivated by Yuan since the creation of the Shekou Industrial Zone eight years earlier seemed to have taken root, and contributed to the nationally known "Shekou Storm" (*Shekou fengbo*). Three senior thought work experts from Beijing visited Shekou and clashed with its youthful migrant workers in January 1988. One of the experts praised the workers for their attitude of self-sacrifice, saying that they were builders of the SEZ who were not chasing after high wages or comfortable living. The expert went on to say that those who were motivated by material gains were "gold diggers," and were "not welcome by SEZs." To the shock of the experts, a worker spoke up to criticise his comment as "hollow preaching." This precipitated a heated discussion during which the workers said two things that enraged the experts. First, they were all "gold diggers." It was said that if it were not because of money, they would not have come to Shekou. Second, one worker ridiculed the post-Mao regime's official ideology: "socialism with Chinese characteristics." He said:

> We feel very disgusted by the publicity about us on newspapers. It said something like the path walked by Shenzhen is the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. But really, what Chinese characteristics are there? The characteristics of Shenzhen are the characteristics of foreign countries! Its architecture, streets, city planning and enterprise management are completely identical to those of foreign countries. If there are Chinese characteristics, then say that there are Chinese characteristics. If there are no Chinese characteristics, then do not fabricate "Chinese characteristics."[35]

In retaliation, the experts launched a smear campaign against the workers, and thought work in Shekou as a whole, culminating to a barrage of negative press

35 Ceng Xianbin, "'Shekou fengbo' da wen lu" [A collection of questions and answers of the "Shekou storm"], *RMRB*, August 6, 1988, p. 1.

against Shekou nationwide until the *People's Daily*, which was under the auspices of Zhao Ziyang, Hu's replacement as CCP general Party Secretary, who intervened to turn the tide to Shekou's favour. The *People's Daily* published a series of articles that gave a more factual account of the events and included excerpts of an interview with Yuan, who defended the workers and Shekou's political openness. Yuan was quoted saying that freedom of speech was a "sacred constitutional right" and Shekou did not enforce "speech crime."[36]

2.2 Shenzhen: Becoming a special political zone, 1987–1989

In contrast to Shekou, Shenzhen under Liang Xiang strictly followed the central mandate, and did not carry out any political reform. Liang said time and again:

> The special zones in our country are economic special zones, not political special zones...The reason why our special zone is "special" is because of liberalisation in economic policies. There must not be anything special in politics and culture.[37]

Zhou Erkang, Secretary-General of the Shenzhen Party Committee, stated that although the large volume and complexity of foreign trade necessitated more legislations in Shenzhen, "it shall not develop into an independent judiciary system, passing any law at will."[38] In an overtly explicit fashion, the Guangdong

36 Ceng Xianbin, August 6, 1988, p. 1.

37 Liang Xiang, "Shezhi jingji tequ shi woguo shixing duiwai kaifang zhengce de yi da chuangju" [The establishment of special economic zones is a major initiative for implementing the reform and openness policy for my country], in eds., *Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian* (1983), pp. 104-108.

38 CCP Central Committee of Shenzhen Municipality, eds. *Shenzhen tequ fazhan di dao lu* [The road of development for Shenzhen special zone] (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 1984), p. 140.

Party-state issued a rather blanket statement some time in the early 1980s to ensure that there was no room for political imagination. It was stated:

> The political institutions, legal institutions and other administrative mechanisms of the special economic zone is a part of the national political regime of "people's democratic dictatorship."[39]

In 1987, under the leadership of Li Hao, who succeeded Liang as Shenzhen's mayor and first Party secretary in 1985 and 1986 respectively, Shenzhen completely changed course and started to make preparations for transitioning into a special political zone. This took place around the time of the 13th Party Congress in October 1987, which put political reforms onto the national agenda for the first time. It was largely unexpected as the liberal-minded Hu, who sheltered Shekou's elections, was sacked at the beginning of the year. Regime insiders had it that this was made possible mainly because Zhao, Hu's liberal-minded successor, successfully struck a deal with Deng Xiaoping. Deng made known of his impatience at the inefficiency of China's enterprises in 1986, and proposed separation of the Party from administration (*dangzheng fenkai*) in the management of enterprises as a possible resolution. It was intended to give enterprise managers, that is, the administration, more autonomy in making production-related decisions, while restricting enterprise-based Party apparatus to providing political guidance. So was Deng's vision of political reform, which concerned merely modernising the bureaucracy instead of political liberalisation, or more plainly put, democratisation. While Zhao tended to view political reform in the latter sense, he

39 *Zhongguo jingji tequ nianjian* [Yearbook of China's special economic zones] (Hong Kong: Zhongguo jing ji tequ nianjian chubanshe, 1983), pp. 630-633.

nonetheless yielded to Deng's narrower vision, in order to make changes on the political front possible. As a result, the national plan for political reforms, as announced by Zhao at the 13th Party Congress, was different in kind to Shekou's political reform. Deng's idea of enterprise reform emerged as the main theme for China's political reforms, while Zhao's idea of media freedom and engaging in "consultative dialogue with society" (*shehui xieshang duihua*) was rendered a secondary theme.[40]

In spite of the narrow vision of political reform adopted at the central level, Li nonetheless decided that Shenzhen should experiment with democratisation. He told local cadres, "As a special economic zone, Shenzhen should not only be one step ahead in the reform of economic institutions, but also the reform of political institutions."[41] He hoped that political reform would allow Shenzhen to "play basketball according to international rules under the conditions of socialism."[42] Shenzhen's radical change of vision from Liang to Li resulted in local officials praising the political institutions of Shekou,[43] and studying those of Hong Kong. In October 1988, the *Shenzhen SEZ Newspaper* (*Shenzhen tequ bao*) published excerpts from a hitherto classified document from the local authorities, which suggested Shenzhen's political reform would be modelled after the political system of Hong Kong:

40 Wu Guoguang, *Hard Politics with Soft Institutions: China's Political Reform, 1986-1989*, Ph.D. dissertation (Princeton University, 1995), pp. 62-73.

41 *SZTQB*, "Shiwei shuji, shizhang Li Hao shuo: Shenzhen tequ zhengzhi tizhi gaige yao xianxing yibu, dang zheng fenkai shi shiwei muqian mianlin de xin keti" [Municipal Party secretary and mayor Li Hao says: Political institution reforms of Shenzhen special zone should be one step ahead, separation of Party and administration is a new topic for the municipal Party committee at present], December 16, 1987, p. 1.

42 *SZTQB*, "Shiwei shuji, shizhang Li Hao shuo," December 16, 1987, p. 1.

43 Chen Yihao, November 17, 1987, p. 1; Chen Yihao, "Yuan Geng he Shekou de shiyan" [Yuan Geng and the experiment of Shekou], *SZTQB*, January 3, 1989, p. 1.

> The relevant Shenzhen authorities and central authorities are considering transplanting (*yizhi*) the economic laws and regulations, as well as management system of Hong Kong. The preliminary thinking is to have Shenzhen jump out from the pre-existing system of our country completely, and to establish a special zone government that is directly accountable to the central government and possesses genuine legislative and executive powers...[Shenzhen] is to follow (*fangzhao*) Hong Kong's methods to develop a decision-making system, consultation system, and implementation system..., [which serve] to radically alter the lack of separation between the government and capital, and excessive government interference...Henceforth, Shenzhen will become more special than it is now and more open. When the time comes for Hong Kong's handover, it will basically have in place economic laws and regulations, as well as a management system that can join with (*duijie*) Hong Kong, contain Chinese characteristics, and are compatible to international conventions.[44]

The Shenzhen Party-state viewed that the formidable task of "hav[ing] Shenzhen jump out from the pre-existing system of our country completely" should begin with legislative reform, which was seen as the "lowest cost" of all reform on political institutions, for it neither required reform of the Party apparatus, nor separation of the Party and government in local governance, both of which would almost certainty be marred by too much controversy. It was also thought that, since the legislative reform would empower people with more political right, it would enjoy a high degree of popularity. Moreover, legislative reform was seen as urgently needed to support Shenzhen's open door policy, because the Guangdong People's Congress, which undertook legislative functions for Shenzhen (in addition to the rest of the province), was deemed too inefficient to cope with the

44 *SZTQB*, October 6, 1988.

SEZ's large and growing demand for new laws.[45] Xu Jian, deputy minister of the Shenzhen judiciary, recalled that Zhao was the patron for Shenzhen's legislative reform. Qin Wenjun, deputy Party secretary of the Shenzhen SEZ, tasked Xu with drafting a proposal for legislative reform in 1988. He also told Xu that Zhao had "given us space for innovation," for he told Shenzhen's cadres in private: "I did not say that the Shenzhen SEZ shall establish a People's Congress. I also did not say that you shall not establish a People's Congress."[46]

Here, it is important to mention Liang Xiang again. While Liang and his government openly ruled out political reform for Shenzhen on multiple occasions, it might actually not be his true preference. Xu recalled that, when Liang was still head of Shenzhen, he actually displayed leaning for the SEZ to experiment with political reform, and even helped create conditions that made legislative reform under Li Hao possible. Liang told Xu in private in 1985:

> Marx said, economic foundation determines superstructure. We are a special economic zone. Why can't we become a special political zone? I do not want to establish [a local branch of the] People's Congress or Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which will make us look identical to the mainland.[47]

It appeared that Liang had deliberately delayed the establishment of the People's Congress and the Chinese People's Consultative Conference (CPPCC)

45 Xu Jian, "1988 nian Shenzhen tequ de zhenggai fang an" [Shenzhen special zone's political reform proposal in 1988], *Yanhuang chunqiu* (June 2013), pp. 32-33, at 32; Xu Tian, "Jiemi Shenzhen huo lifa quan xijie ceng you xuezhe piping shuyu 'weixian'" [Uncovering the details behind Shenzhen's achievement of legislative power. There were scholars who criticized it to be "unconstitutional"], *Zhongguo xinwen zhoukan* [China Newsweek], in *Fenghuang wang* [Ifeng.com], http://news.ifeng.com/history/zhongguoxiandaishi/detail_2013_07/28/27997762_0.shtml (accessed 6 October 2017).

46 Xu Jian (2013), p. 32.

47 Xu Jian (2013), p. 32.

during his time in Shenzhen. It was such that the Shenzhen Party-state only held its first ever meeting to prepare for the establishment of the People's Congress in July 1986, after Liang left Shenzhen upon finishing his five-year term.[48]

Thanks to the institutional void created by Liang, Shenzhen under Li Hao had the space to create a new legislature from scratch. Xu's proposal for a "legislative committee" (*lifa weiyuanhui*) with no resemblance to the People's Congress or CPPCC, but instead with some similarity with the colonial legislature of Hong Kong, was approved by the Shenzhen Party Committee in 1988.[49] While the proposal is still a classified document today, Xu revealed some of the characteristics of the legislative committee for the first time in 2013. He said, the legislative committee, as outlined in the approved proposal, was designed to have two types of members: 17 Party-state officials (*guanfang weiyuan*) and 34 non-Party-state officials (*minjian weiyuan*), both returned by election. While no additional information was provided for how the election of Party-state officials was to take place, Xu said that the non-Party-state officials were to be elected either from within various professions — an arrangement modelled after the election of "functional constituencies" (*gongneg zubi*) of the Hong Kong legislature — and/or from within non-CCP political parties that were approved by the CCP. Those who were elected were required to be full-time members of the legislative committee and set up an office to receive public petitions. The

48 Shenzhen Municipal People's Congress Standing Committee, "Lishi yange" [Historical origin], August 29, 2014, http://www.szrd.gov.cn/contenthtml/175/2015060910060.html (accessed 20 June 2017).

49 For the study of Hong Kong's colonial legislature, see Norman Miners, "The Transformation of the Hong Kong Legislative Council 1970-1994: From Consensus to Confrontation," *Asian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1994, pp. 224-248.

legislative committee should convene four times every year, with each meeting held in a debate format. Bills passed by the committee had to be signed by the Shenzhen mayor in order to become law. If the mayor refused to sign the bill, it would be returned to the committee for further deliberation. If a bill was passed unaltered by the committee the second time, the mayor would have to resign. In addition to mechanisms of checks and balances, Xu's proposal also allowed the legislative committee to pass bills containing content contravening national laws and regulations, as well as provisions of the state constitution, insofar as the spirit of the constitution was not violated.[50]

2.3 The end of political reform in Shekou and Shenzhen in 1989

Despite high hopes for legislative reform in Shenzhen, the proposal for setting up a legislative committee was eventually vetoed by the central government in December 1988, which required Shenzhen to establish a local branch of the People's Congress instead. The exact reason behind this decision remains the subject of speculation. The proposal would most certainly have been deemed unacceptable by the conservatives and cautious reformists, especially because they first learned of Shenzhen's intention to create a legislative committee not from the local authorities, but via a Hong Kong newspaper that leaked the news.[51] In April 1989, when Shenzhen had yet to establish a People's Congress, and hence was still relying on the Guangdong People's Congress as its de facto legislature,

50 Xu Jian (2013), p. 33.
51 Han Yong, "Shenzhen: gaige yu daole shenme?," *Zhongguo xinwen zhoukan* [China Newsweek], April 18, 2015, http://viewpoint.inewsweek.cn/detail-1646-1.html (accessed 13 June 2017).

Li petitioned the National People's Congress (NPC) to give the SEZ "legislative power" (*lifa quan*), citing that the SEZ faced pressing needs to pass many new laws as a result of increase in foreign trade. Many of the NPC delegates, who represented every Chinese province, were baffled at Li's request. They argued that the Shenzhen SEZ had already enjoyed many special privileges, and granting it legislative power in addition to the other exceptional benefits it enjoyed would be too unjust to other provinces. In fact, the Guangdong delegates, who were responsible for making laws for Shenzhen at that time, were among the delegates who raised the strongest objections.[52] While the NPC motion to delegate Shenzhen legislative power was eventually passed with 60% of votes of support, the NPC decided that Shenzhen would only obtain legislative power after it had established its own People's Congress.[53] Shenzhen did so in 1990, but as a result of political centralisation after the purge of Zhao and crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989, Shenzhen only obtained legislative power in 1992. In the NPC resolution that gave Shenzhen legislative power, it was stated that the laws passed by the local People's Congress must not contravene national laws, regulations, or provisions of the state constitution. This implicitly referred to the provisions that appeared in Xu's earlier proposal, which suggested granting the Shenzhen legislative committee those rights explicitly.

As Shenzhen's legislative reform was derailed, Shekou's elections were also

52 *Zhongguo xinwen zhoukan* [China Newsweek], "Jiemi Shenzhen huo lifa quan xijie: xing renda zhiyi yao fa shi jia yao quan shi zhen" [Disclosure of the secret details of Shenzhen's attainment of legislative power: provincial people's congress suspects the need for legislation is fake, the want for power is real], in *Ta Kung Pao*, June 8, 2013, http://news.takungpao.com/mainland/focus/2013-06/1677844_3.html (accessed 24 June 2017).

53 Li Yanhua, "Biaojue Shenzhen lifa quan yian de shike" [Time to vote on Shenzhen's legislative power], *SZTQB*, April 5, 1989, p. 1.

halted in 1989. After the removal of Zhao, the Centre quickly brought Shekou, which was seen as too free-wheeling, back under the strict control of the then-hardening Party line. Not only did it remove Yuan as head of Shekou and opened an investigation of his role in the "Shekou Storm," it also took Shekou away from the control of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company (CMSN) by integrating it into the government hierarchy of Shenzhen, as a subdistrict of the Nanshan District.[54]

3. Conclusion

As the political reforms of both Shenzhen and Shekou were abruptly ended in 1989, the Shenzhen SEZ was united as a single technocratic model. At that time, given that the conservative faction won the upper hand following Zhao's purge, it attacked the SEZ policy once again using Maoist concepts and discourse, as it had in the period before Deng's southern tour in 1984. This time around, the conservative elders even labelled Deng a "rightist" and issued an injunction in December 1991 calling on Party members mainly to "oppose the right, while guarding against the left."[55] Eventually, Deng visited the SEZs for the second time in Spring 1992, hoping to protect them from being eliminated. There, he made several important speeches rebutting the conservatives by appealing to pragmatism in evaluating the SEZ policy. He insisted there should only be three

54 Mary O'Donnell, "'Heroes of the Special Zone: Modeling Reform and Its Limits," Mary Ann O'Donnell, Winnie Wong and Jonathan Bach, eds., *Learning from Shenzhen* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), pp. 39-64, at 58.
55 See Richard Baum (1996), p. 334.

criteria by which to judge whether the SEZ policy was capitalist or socialist: whether it could increase productivity, comprehensive national strength, and the people's living standard.[56]

Deng's new set of criteria successfully silenced conservative slurs against the SEZs as "colonial treaty ports," or sites of "class struggle" and manifestations of "corrosive capitalist thought." However, the ban on these ideas did not legitimate the SEZ policy automatically. It simply shifted the grounds for criticising the SEZ policy. In March 1994, Hu Angang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences made an open appeal to the Centre to abolish the SEZ policy on the grounds of promoting divisive localist interests. Hu accused the SEZs, and in particular Shenzhen, being the richest of all, for having grown into rent-seeking "interest groups" (*liyi jituan*) that compromised the economic growth and development of the rest of China. This was primarily because, he reasoned, the corporate income tax rate in SEZs (15%) was less than half of that for other parts of China (33%). While the Shenzhen government rebutted Hu by stressing how much the SEZ had paid into the national coffers,[57] their pleas fell on deaf ears, and the State Council announced in 1995 that the tax structure of SEZs ought to be brought into line with that of the national standard in the long term.[58]

In 2001, then premier Zhu Rongji told the press that "special zones are not special any more" because most of their "special policies" and "flexible measures" had been extended to the rest of the country, such that "the whole country has

56 For a detailed analysis of Deng's southern tour in 1992, including his speeches, see Richard Baum (1996), pp. 341-368.
57 Jin Ruizhi (2011), pp. 258-259.
58 Han Yong, April 18, 2015.

become the same."[59] At that time, the only policy setting SEZs apart from the rest of the country was the corporate income tax rate. However, this was also the special exemption that had provoked the most rancour, as evidenced by Hu Angang's critique. It was only until 2007 that the NPC unified the corporate income tax rate at 25% for all companies in China, while granting the SEZs a grace period of five years in order to gradually implement the higher tax rate.[60] This officially brought the special status for SEZs to an end. However, this by no means spelled an end to model-making. As we will see in the next chapter, at the 30th anniversary of the SEZ policy in 2008, these issues resurfaced in Guangdong, home to three out of four SEZs, as it struggled to introduce political reform. Yet, with the more conservative forces against the effort continuing to amass at the Centre, Guangdong was forced to settle instead for mere administrative reforms, just as Zhao Ziyang, a long-term patron of the province, was forced to do at the 13th Party Congress in 1987.

59 Huang Weiping, "Jingji tequ ying zai xu zhengzhi shiming" [Special economic zones should continue political mission again], *Zhongguo jingying bao* [China Business Journal], September 6, 2010, p. A15.

60 *South China Morning Post*, "Shenzhen Not Special Now Tax Rate Unified," March 26, 2017, http://www.scmp.com/article/586520/shenzhen-not-special-now-tax-rate-unified (accessed 21 September 2017).

CHAPTER SIX

Debating the Guangdong and Chongqing Models, 2008–2012

As two local models promoting distinctive and opposite ideas on governance, the co-existence of Wang Yang's Guangdong Model and Bo Xilai's Chongqing Model between 2008–2012 invited much speculation about the future of China's reform, as well as the political future of these two local Party secretaries. In this chapter, I argue that ideational conflicts over what constituted proper state-society relationships were played out in Guangdong and Chongqing. Guangdong maintained that structural reforms of the state apparatus were needed to scale down and scale back the state, and to advance the society, both as a watchdog to hold power to account, and a more friendly space for social groups to operate. By contrast, Chongqing promoted an all-out expansion of the state and its reach into society in order to foster powerful clientelist ties with people at the grass-roots level. I demonstrate that the models were fraught with their respective sub-sets of ideational conflicts. The Guangdong Model had to address the question of whether adjustments in state-society relations should lean towards democratisation/political liberalisation, or to remain confined within the institutional parameters of China’s authoritarian system. The legitimacy of the Chongqing Model depended largely on the place of populism in post-Mao politics, in particular, whether this shift in course constituted a historical retrogression, or a new form of development progress. I conclude with a discussion of the fate of the

two models after the 18th Party Congress in March 2012, and the extent to which they went on to shape Xi Jinping's China Model.

1. Pre-existing analyses of the Guangdong and Chongqing Models

There is a broad consensus in the literature that the Guangdong Model prioritised rapid economic growth, or market efficiency, above improving people's livelihood, or equitable redistribution, while the Chongqing Model did exactly the opposite. Two mainstream analyses have emerged on this basis. The first analysis maintains that these differences reflected two opposite visions for China's reform, with Guangdong clinging to Deng's neoliberal market reform, and Chongqing branching off in order to focus on expanding the welfare state. Those who advance this perspective often cite the now famous "cake analogy." In two statements broadcast only seven days apart, Bo Xilai was recorded as having said at a television interview that "Chongqing's development follows the exact opposite path to that of other regions...we are trying to cut the cake well before making more cakes," while Wang Yang told Guangdong cadres that the government should "focus on making the cake while cutting the cake well is only a secondary issue."[1] By contrast, the second, equally popular analysis has it that the models were complementary, rather than in competition with each other. Proponents of this position view the models as products of different local conditions, chiefly the different levels of socio-economic development. Moreover, it is said that China's sheer size and diversity makes it capacious enough to

1 Yang Chan, "Chongqing and Guangdong: two Conflicting Models," *China Analysis* (November 2011), pp. 3-8.

accommodate both models simultaneously.[2]

My research finds that both accounts miss the gist of the models. At the most basic level, both Guangdong and Chongqing were livelihood-oriented models. Chongqing's claim of having spent over 50% of its GDP on people's livelihood (*yongyu minsheng*) in 2010 was well-publicised,[3] but what was lesser known was that Guangdong's expenditure on livelihood were in fact even higher than that of Chongqing. According to the official *Guangdong Yearbook*, over two-thirds of all provincial expenditure was spent on livelihood in 2012. Furthermore, the provincial livelihood budget increased from 53.1% in 2008 to 65.8% in 2012.[4] To take another example, both Chongqing and Guangdong introduced their respective "Ten Livelihood Projects" (*minsheng shishi*), but only the former received extensive media coverage. Rhetorically, notwithstanding the "cake analogy," Guangdong's official discourse consistently called for a shift from the single-minded pursuit of GDP growth to the goal of achieving common prosperity, which was identified as a bedrock of building "Happy Guangdong" (*xingfu Guangdong*) and a main thrust of Wang's "thought emancipation" campaign. These findings suggest that the Guangdong Model could also be viewed as livelihood-oriented.

This leaves us with the question of whether the models were competitive or complementary. I argue that while they represented competing visions of state-society relationship — "small state, big society" for Guangdong and "big state,

2 Lance L. P. Gore, "China in Search of a New Development Model: Guangdong or Chongqing?," *EAI Background Brief*, No. 701, February 21, 2012, pp. 1-16.
3 *Chongqing nianjian* [Chongqing yearbook] (Chongqing: Chongqing nianjianshe, 2011), p. 13.
4 *Guangdong nianjian* [Guangdong yearbook] (Guangdong: Guangdong nianjianshe, 2013), p. 115.

small society" for Chongqing — they were nonetheless complementary models of governance. However, unlike what is suggested in the pre-existing analysis, this is not because China is large and diverse enough to accommodate both models. As I explain in the rest of the chapter, notwithstanding the local origins of the models, they were not meant to be templates for regional economic development, but instead templates for China's state-society relationship. The Guangdong Model was premised on the development of a "big Party" capable of penetrating the grassroots effectively. It updates the mass line for contemporary Chinese society. Both Guangdong and Chongqing shared the vision of strengthening the regime's control over China's more sophisticated, porous, polarised and demanding society, despite proposing different methods. As I discuss in the final section, Xi subsequently merged the two models to create his own China Model. He adopted the core elements of the Guangdong Model to increase the institutional capacity of the Party and to cultivate legal legitimacy for the regime. At the same time, he drew from the Chongqing Model, which is essentially the old Maoist mass line, to prevail over the bureaucracy, centralise political power for himself, and establish charismatic authority.

2. Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign

Wang launched a Thought Emancipation Campaign (*sixiang jiefang yundong*) through the Guangdong Party-state between January to May 2008, before introducing actual reform policies in June that year. I use the term the

"Guangdong Model" in line with common usage to include both the campaign and policies. Wang said this campaign was intended to provide new theoretical underpinnings and prepare cadres for new policies, which were to be understood as products of the campaign.[5] While the campaign sent out strong signals that the policies to follow would feature significant "political structural reforms" (*zhengzhi tizhi gaige*) consistent with the Western understanding of democracy, as well as significant SOE reforms, neither were actually implemented. These might have been hindered by the State Council's four trillion *yuan* stimulus plan introduced in response of the global financial crisis in November that year. Since over 80% of the bank loans in the plan went to SOEs,[6] the downsizing of SOEs and political liberalisation — which would require cutting back the power of the political class, being the de facto owners of the SOEs — were rendered more difficult than it otherwise might have been. It could also be due to internal resistance within the Party-state — which Wang singled out as the greatest hurdle for his reform programme between 2008–2012.[7] Some may view that radical political and SOE reforms were never on Wang's agenda despite the campaign. The same has been said of Premier Wen Jiabao, Wang's patron by all counts, who spoke passionately of radical political reforms during the last three years of his premiership between 2010–2012 but did not introduce corresponding policies.[8]

5 *Guangdong nianjian* [Guangdong yearbook] (Guangdong: Guangdong nianjianshe, 2009), p. 816.
6 See Zhang Jialin, "China Backpedals," *Hoover Digest* (January 2011).
7 See Wang Ping, "Wang Yang miaoda jizhe redian wenti" [Wang Yang cleverly answers reporters' hot questions], *Beijing chenbao* [Beijing Morning Post], March 6, 2012, p. A10.
8 Alice Miller, "Splits in the Politburo Leadership?," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 34, February 22, 2011; Joseph Fewsmith, "Political Reform was Never on the Agenda," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 34, February 22, 2011.

While signalling falsely about political reform was a possibility, it was unlikely. Even with the benefit of hindsight, there was no plausible reason to explain why both Wang and Wen were sending such false signals. Moreover, so doing would be foolhardy given that the political stakes has remained so high since the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989.

At the outset, Wang stated explicitly that he anticipated the Thought Emancipation Campaign to be contentious, given that it took over ten years for China's Reform and Openness policy to become national consensus. He further laid out several ground rules to encourage open discussion. First, do not exaggerate or stir up, which Wang expressed colloquially as "*chaozuo*," alternative viewpoints. Second, he warned against attaching "Left" or "Right" labels to viewpoints. Third, do not feel compelled, or compel others, to express support for a particular viewpoint because it is professed by upper-level cadres. Fourth, do not make casual remarks about which viewpoint is either correct or erroneous.[9]

The Guangdong Party Committee started the Thought Emancipation Campaign by hosting two Thought Emancipation Fora in March 2008, first in Beijing when the annual "Two Sessions" were in progress, and subsequently in Guangdong. The fora brought together a total of 22 public intellectuals (see Table 6.1), who were nationally known for being liberal-minded, to discuss the limitations of China's reform and brainstorm possible solutions. Since the speakers were like-minded, it came at little surprise that a strong consensus was reached at the fora.

9 *Guangdong nianjian* (2009), p. 818.

First, it was agreed that the main hindrance to China's reform was none other than the government, which was criticised as having grown into an anti-reformist "vested interest." Second, it was agreed that the solutions were to significantly reduce the preferential treatments for SOEs, and to carry out some degree of political liberalisation, in order to restrain government power and facilitate further marketisation. Significantly, the speakers also agreed that Guangdong, being home to three of China's first batch of four SEZs, should put itself forward to pioneer reforms in these two areas.

Speaking of the SOE reform, Wang Zhanyang of the Central Institute of Socialism criticised the state policy of privileging the public sector for turning SOEs into "monopoly interest groups" and stifling the development of the private sector. He said, what needed "emancipation" was the ideology that the public sector was the main entity of the economy, which was inherited from the Maoist era of planned economy, and had inhibited China from becoming a fully-fledged market economy. Zheng Yanchao, former director of Guangdong Social Sciences Academy's economic research institute, said that, although the private sector contributed over 60% of China's GDP in 2007, China's constitution and basic economic system still defined the public sector as the "main entity" [of the market]. This, Cheng reasoned, led to the monopoly of the state sector in many industries, making it extremely difficult for private enterprises to obtain loans and get listed on the stock market. Zhou Weimin, editor-in-chief of *Xuexi shibao*, periodical of the Central Party School, similarly spoke of the urgency of SOE reforms, and identified the monopoly of the public sector as a reason for

corruption, rent-seeking and the formation of special interest groups that hurt public interest. Dang Guoying of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences said that China's economic reforms should no longer be focused on the marketisation of commodities, but rather, the marketisation of factors of production, especially land and bank loans, which SOEs were given preferential access. To summarise, Yang Qixian from the think tank China Society of Economic Reform (CSER), stated that state policy on SOEs should be based purely on economic considerations, instead of ideological considerations. The CSER is best-known for its president, the elderly Gao Shangqun, who participated in the drafting of major central-level resolutions that provided theoretical justifications for the market reform, when serving as deputy director for the State Council's economic institution reform committee between 1985 and 1993. In fact, in January that year, just two months before Guangdong's first forum, Gao accepted Wang's invitation to deliver a lecture for 300 Guangdong cadres ranked at the deputy department level and higher. At the lecture, Gao called upon the Guangdong government to transform from "direct management" to "indirect management" over the society and economy, and from "running the economy" to "providing services."[10]

Regarding political liberalisation, Guan Shan of Guangdong's propaganda department called for the expansion of political, economic and cultural freedoms for individuals, arguing that more freedom is conducive to development. The

10 Ifeng.com, "Poju: Guangdong jiefang sixiang luntan" [Breakthrough: Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Forum], March 18, 2008, http://news.ifeng.com/opinion/detail_2008_03/18/1357134_1.shtml (accessed 5 June 2017); Ma Guochuan, *Zouchu weiwen niandai: 2008-2013 nian Zhongguo shehui sixiang jiaofeng* [Stepping out of the period of stability maintenance: ideational clashes in Chinese society from 2008 to 2013] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Open Page Publishing, 2013), pp. 62-64.

aforementioned Zheng Yanchao, who called for SOE reforms, also stated that China needed to cultivate an atmosphere for "free and critical thinking," such that it could truly learn from other countries, and be emancipated from "obsolete theories and obsolete thinking." He also said that China should use "universal values" as the yardstick to assess its theoretical innovations on the economy, society and culture. This was quite a daring comment because it rejected the notion of Chinese exceptionalism, which had been used by the Party-state to justify the lack of political reforms time and again. Wu Si, former editor-in-chief of China's most influential liberal-leaning periodical, *Yanhuang chunqiu*, said that it was time for the CCP to give the Chinese people a "new and higher promise," by "merging tracks" (*jiegui*) with a set of "international and mainstream concepts," namely, democracy, constitutional governance (*xianzheng*) and human rights. Cai Dingjian of China University of Political Science and Law said that democracy, the rule of law, constitutional governance and human rights protection were necessary for social stability and sustainable economic growth. He even proposed making Shenzhen a "special administrative zone" to experiment with political reforms a step ahead of the country.

Shortly after the two fora, on 7 April 2008, Guangdong's *Southern Metropolis Daily* quoted Wu Nansheng, the founding Party secretary of the Shenzhen SEZ, who called "market economy" and "democratic politics" the "common wealth of humankind." He was also quoted saying that economic reforms should be followed by political reforms in order to restrain the ever-expanding power of the government. He said, what China should do now, was to open up the space for

public discussion regarding what democratisation should look like, including its goals, benefits, problems, procedures and timetable, in order to reach some basic consensus.[11]

11 Ma Guochuan (2013), pp. 68-69; *Nanfang dushi bao* [Southern Metropolis Daily], "Minzhu zhengzhi shi renlei de gongtong caifu" [Democracy is the common wealth of humankind], April 7, 2008, p. A08.

Table 6.1: Speakers at Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Fora in March 2008

Name of speaker	Affiliation(s) of speaker
Bao Yujun	President of Chinese Private Economy Research Institute (*Zhongguo minying jingji yanjiu hui*)
Cai Dingjian	Director of Constitutional Governance Research Centre (*xianzheng yanjiu zhongxin*) of China University of Political Science and Law
Chen Baoxiang	Professor of Central Party School
Dang Guoying	Researcher of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Du Gangjian	Dean of Shantou University Law School
Gao Shangquan	President of China Society of Economic Reform
Guan Shan	Researcher of the Propaganda Department of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee
Jin Xinyi	Famous blogger
Qin Hui	Professor of History of Tsinghua University
Ren Jiantao	Dean of School of Government of Sun Yat-Sen University
Shi Xiaomin	Vice President of China Society of Economic Reform
Sun Liping	Professor of Sociology of Tsinghua University
Wang Shaoguang	Professor of Political Science of Chinese University of Hong Kong
Wang Zhanyang	Professor of Central Institute of Socialism
Wu Si	Executive editor (*zhixing zhubian*) of *Yanhuang chunqiu*
Xiao Jincheng	Vice President of Academy of Macroeconomic Research of National Development and Reform Commission
Yang Qixian	Vice President of China Society of Economic Reform
Ying Songnian	Dean of Department of Law of Chinese Academy of Governance
Zheng Yanchao	Former Director of Economic Research Centre (*jingji yanjiu suo*) of Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences
Zhou Ruijin	Former Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *People's Daily*
Zhou Weimin	Editor-in-Chief of *Xuexi shibao*
Zhu Xueqin	Professor of History of Shanghai University

Sources:
Ifeng.com, "Poju: Guangdong jiefang sixiang luntan [Breakthrough: Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Forum], March 18, 2008, http://news.ifeng.com/opinion/detail_2008_03/18/1357134_1.shtml (accessed 5 June 2017); Wang Yishu, "'Jiefang sixiang xuyao yongqi juexin xianshen jingshen': Nanfang zhoumo sixiang

jiefang luntan guandian ji na" ['Thought emancipation requires courage, determination and spirit of self-sacrifice': A collection of perspectives expressed in Nanfang zhoumo's thought emancipation forum], *Nanfang zhoumo* [Southern Weekend] March 27, 2008, http://www.infzm.com/content/trs/raw/41255 (accessed 3 September 2017).

Leftist backlash and the unexpected four trillion *yuan* stimulus plan

The ideas of SOE reforms and political liberalisation emanating from Guangdong soon came under fire by the Party's leftist forces. On 30 May 2008, a day before the official ending of Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign, *Qian xian*, periodical of the Beijing Party Committee, printed an article by Shi Zhongquan of the central-level CCP History Research Office. Shi maintained that China had only ever have two Thought Emancipation Campaigns, being the "truth criterion debate" in 1978 and the campaign following Deng's southern tour in 1992. He dismissed the recent Thought Emancipation Campaign in Guangdong on the ground that the purpose of the campaign, and the problems it wanted to resolve were both ambiguous.[12] In July 2008, a speech of Liu Guoguang, former president of the China Social Sciences Academy, which attacked Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign even more fiercely, was published in *Xuexi canyue*, the central Party-state's periodical for internal circulation only. According to Ma Guocun, who had access to the article, Liu wrote that some of the speakers at Guangdong's fora were trying to bring socialist economic institutions and socialism to a halt, and underplay the difference between socialist and capitalist institutions. Moreover, he said, those advocating political reforms were in fact calling for privatisation, Westernisation, and an end to the CCP's leadership and China's socialist institutions. He concluded:

12 Ma Guochuan (2013), pp. 69-70; Shi Zhongquan, "Di san ci sixiang jiefang gaochao bing wei xingcheng" [The third thought emancipation did not reach its climax], May 30, 2008, http://www.dgdyqq.com/n11317c814.aspx http://www.dgdyqq.com/n11317c814.aspx (accessed 18 July 2017).

> We should stay vigilant that some people maybe using "thought emancipation" to mislead the direction of the Reform and Openness. There ought to be limits to thought emancipation...and the limit is Marxism and scientific socialism.[13]

To make matters worse for Guangdong, by September 2008, the financial crisis in the United States deteriorated into a global financial meltdown after investment bank Lehman Brothers filed bankruptcy, and was not bailed out by the US government.[14] This obviously affected China given its export driven economy. In order to maintain the annual GDP growth rate at 8%, the State Council introduced a four trillion *yuan* stimulus plan to increase domestic consumption in November. The lion share of funds (many estimated to be around 80%) went to SOEs for carrying out infrastructure construction, rural development and technological innovation, while the private sector received only very little state support. Many described the stimulus plan to have strengthened the public sector at the expense of the private sector.[15] It clearly went against the spirit of Guangdong's earlier call for bringing SOEs and private companies to a more equal footing. Moreover, by greatly enlarging the purse strings, and thus power, of local governments — which oversaw large local SOEs — as a matter of national emergency, the stimulus plan increased the obstacles for political liberalisation in Guangdong.

13 Ma Guochuan (2013), pp. 70-72
14 Kimberly Amadeo, "2008 Financial Crisis Timeline," *The Balance*, March 14, 2017, https://www.thebalance.com/2008-financial-crisis-timeline-3305540 (accessed 6 September 2015).
15 For a detailed analysis of the debate, see Sarah Eaton (2016).

3. Guangdong settling on a limited vision for reform

In light of criticisms by the Party's left and the four trillion *yuan* stimulus plan, Wang Yang pursued a much more limited vision for reform than what was suggested during the Thought Emancipation Campaign. The aim of the Guangdong Model was to strengthen the government's institutional capacity and lawfulness by modernising the use of power. Having said that, Wang still toed some of the Campaign's rhetoric, such as by identifying Guangdong Model's goals as the development of a "big and large society" and a "small and strong government," and calling for the government to stop "micro-managing" the market and society. However, he did not carry out the SOE reforms that the Campaign envisioned at all. As I explain below, while he engaged in both political reform and government downsizing, neither were aimed at either political liberalisation or enlarging the scope for social freedom. Wang's political reforms and downsizing sought only to increase administrative efficiency, much like Deng Xiaoping's rather limited political reform goals. Moreover, as explained below, even Wang's most liberal sounding reform, that pertaining to civil society organisations (CSOs), in fact expanded the Party's reach over society, and did not create room for autonomous social organisation.

The Guangdong Model was comprised of four main policy reforms. Four sub-divisions within the province were upheld as models within the Guangdong Model, for having carried out one of these reforms successfully. They were, in chronological order: Shunde City for administrative streamlining; the provincial capital, Guangzhou, for information openness; the Pearl River Delta (PRD)

Region for legal reform; and Zhuhai City for innovating social management. These four reforms, and their model experiences, are discussed in turn below. The main takeaway is that, while these reforms incorporated selective governance mechanisms of democratic systems, such as transparency and accountability, they were aimed only at increasing the administrative efficiency of the bureaucracy, rather than at political liberalisation, whether defined as a higher level of political inclusion, representation or participation among the citizenry. Therefore, the Guangdong Model reflected Deng Xiaoping's limited vision for political reform, being aimed solely at modernising China's authoritarian system. It in no way approached Hu Yaobang's or Zhao Ziyang's broader and more liberal vision of political reform — though that was the vision coming out of Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign — which could possibly pave the way for regime change from authoritarianism to (semi-)democracy.

3.1 Administrative streamlining

First, the groundwork for Guangdong's administrative streamlining was laid between 2008–2010, which also saw significant power decentralisation within the province taking place at two levels. At the first level was decentralisation from the provincial government to prefectural governments. For example, Wang authorised the province's 19 prefectural governments to approve foreign investment up to one billion US dollars independently; whereas previously, joint approval from the

central and provincial governments was necessary.[16] At the second level was decentralisation from the county to township governments. Wang decided that counties should "decentralise whatever decentralisable" (*nengfang zefang*) to townships, and promoted the decentralisation of 319 administrative powers (*shiquan*) from Shunde District (county level government) to Yonggui Subdistrict (*Ronggui jiedao*) (township level government) as a successful example. Shunde also spearheaded the formation of a "super-department," in which several departments discharging similar functions were merged into one "super-department" for the sake of raising efficiency. For example, Shunde created a Market Safety Monitoring Department by merging eight departments with overlapping responsibilities. It also reduced its number of government departments and their parallel Party structures from 41 to 16. Outside of Shunde, also for the sake of administrative streamlining, six prefectural governments — Dongguang, Jiangmen, Shaoguan, Zhaoqing, Yangjiang and Meizhou — each set up a "one-stop" government office giving citizens access to nearly 90% of its services. In addition, over 50% of the services provided by all of Guangdong's 19 prefectural governments were made accessible online.[17]

3.2 Information openness

Second, the Guangdong Party-state introduced a series of new measures to

16 David Ferguson, *Cong Guangdong zhizao dao Guangdong chuangzao* [From made in Guangdong to created in Guangdong] (Beijing: Waiwen chubanshe, 2012), p. 61.
17 *Guangdong nianjian* [Guangdong yearbook] (Guangdong: Guangdong nianjianshe, 2011), p. 109.

increase government transparency since 2010, such that "power is exercised under sunlight" (*yangguang yongquan*).[18] In that year, Guangzhou became the first territorial administrative authority in China to publish all its budgets,[19] and 28 legislative proposals were uploaded to the provincial government's website for public consultation. In November 2011, Guangdong became China's first provincial government to publicise the three main types of work-related expenses claimable by officials: expenses for business trips, the purchase of vehicles for work purposes, and the hosting of official guests.[20] The provincial government also established an online platform for citizens to apply for the disclosure of government information.[21]

3.3 Rule of law reforms

Third, the Guangdong Party-state carried out legal reform in 2011 with an aim to achieve "rule of law" in the province (*yifa zhisheng*). In January, the provincial government introduced a five-year plan (2011–2015) for legal reform, which aimed to enhance the transparency of court hearings and the consultation of expert witnesses, and to increase the trustworthiness of law enforcement agencies and the courts to the public.[22] Two major legal reforms were implemented in 2011. First, Guangdong became the first provincial government in China to announce the criteria for legal aid applications for individuals with economic difficulties.

18 *Guangdong nianjian* (2009), p. 815.
19 Lance Gore (2012), p. 18
20 *Guangdong nianjian* [Guangdong yearbook] (Guangdong: Guangdong nianjianshe, 2012), p. 138.
21 *Guangdong nianjian* (2011), p. 156.
22 *Guangdong nianjian* (2009), p. 815.

According to the criteria, 20% of the province's population were eligible to apply for legal aid. A certain proportion of the provincial public expenditure was also set aside for legal aid. By the end of 2011, 85,663,000 *yuan* worth of legal aid was approved for those with economic difficulties, setting a new national record. Second, in attempt to curb the arbitrary exercise of power, the provincial government passed a regulation that expressly forbade local governments in the PRD region to act in contravention to the law, or to make decisions in which relevant legal provisions are lacking. This is to bring an end to the long-standing practice of "first, reform; second, legislation," which had been in place since the early days of the Reform and Openness policy.[23] At that time, given that Chinese legislations were written for a planned economy, and that the early post-Mao regime lacked experience in foreign trade, the central government gave local governments in the four SEZs (two were in the PRD) wide discretionary powers, in order to facilitate the intake of foreign direct investment (FDI) quickly and in large amount. However, it had also led to systemic corruption and power abuse, and was inconsistent with the spirit of the "rule of law," which Wang claimed to be a "core element" of the Guangdong Model.[24]

3.4 Social management reforms

The final element of the Guangdong Model, which many saw as a sign of political liberalisation, was four social management reforms. The professed goals of these

23 *Guangdong nianjian* (2012), p. 200.
24 *Guangdong nianjian* (2011), p. 154.

reforms were to "separate the government and society" (*zhengshe fenkai*), "give power to society" (*xiang shehui fangquan*), and achieve "democratic self-governance" (*minzhu zizhi*) at the grass-roots level. The official discourse had it that China's state-society relationship should change from the "control and domination" mode, which belonged to the era of planned economy, to one involving "consultation and dialogue." However, as will be seen below in the case of Zhuhai City, while the state (government units) technically retreated from society, the reach of the Party was simultaneously increased. As a result, these reforms did not facilitate the development of civil society in China, because social groups remained highly dependant on the authorities.

The first social management reform concerned Residents' Committees and Village Committees, being the most basic level of organisations in urban and rural China respectively. Members of both committees are elected of and by local residents every three years to act as their representatives in dealing with the government, property managers and other third parties, as well as to mediate local disputes. The performance of these duties is known collectively as "democratic self-governance." The Zhuhai reform aimed to strengthen the ability of these two committees to discharge democratic self-governance, but by using different means. First, the Zhuhai government reduced the number of administrative duties delegated by the local government to Residents' Committees by nearly 80%, so that they could have more time to handle issues arising from the local community. The administrative duties removed from Residents' Committees were transferred to various local government departments, a newly expanded government "one-

stop" service centre, or contracted out to social service organisations.[25] The Guangdong Party-state hailed the "de-administratisation" of Residents' Committee as a case of "giving power to society." However, although the Residents' Committees were freed from performing most government functions — which was described as "separation of administration and society" — the Party greatly expanded its reach over society. Following the reform of Residents' Committee, a three-tier Party structure was established within every residential community, so that there was a Party cell down to the level of every single building. The purpose of the Party cells was to provide "supervision" to the Residents' Committee for carrying out "self-governance," and for Party members to actively participate in local affairs.[26]

Second, Wang introduced the scheme of "ten households mutual protection" (*shihu lianbao*), in which a leader was elected from every ten neighbouring households to contract out a host of government duties like patrolling the community, registering tenants from outside the village, drug prevention, family planning, dispute resolution, introducing government regulations, etc.[27] The position was envisioned as a training stint for would-be Party members and aspiring village cadres.[28] Old cadres, old Party members, old workers, old peasants, as well as Party cells and branches, were identified as the backbone for the scheme.[29] The scheme was celebrated as a non-coercive mechanism for

25 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* [The "Zhuhai experience" that innovates social management] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2011), p. 19.
26 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), pp. 22, 27.
27 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 42.
28 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 51.
29 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), pp. 44, 52.

"cultivating a culture of citizenship," and a "covenant" formed by villagers on "equal footing" that embodied the spirit of self-governance and democracy.[30] However, given that the Party had a major role to play in the scheme, it could be said that it was a mechanism for the Party to penetrate into the grass-roots level more effectively, to the level of micro-managing the rural society. This was because the scheme gave members a duty to contact the local police if they anticipated mass incidents were about to take place, such that they would not spread, radicalise, or escalate; ultimately, it was predicted that such measures would lower the cost for the government to maintain stability, and diffuse the tension between citizens and the local authorities.[31]

In addition to social management reforms specific to urban and rural settlements, the Zhuhai government also carried out major reforms with respect to social organisations. First, to increase the political representation of social organisations, some seats in the local People's Congress and Party's Congress were set aside for representatives of social organisations.[32] Second, the local government established detailed provisions for transferring powers to social organisations, through purchasing their services, the open bidding for government service contracts, etc. 21 social organisations had signed contracts with the Zhuhai government to take over its functions.[33] In Guangdong as a whole, the provincial government pledged to outsource 17 types of government functions and 130 kinds of public or social services to CSOs in September 2011, and effectively

30 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), pp. 42, 45, 47.
31 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 52.
32 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 61.
33 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 61.

outsourced social functions to 11% of all of Guangdong's CSOs by the end of the year.[34]

Third, the registration requirements for the three types of social organisations — commerce and industry, social welfare and charities — were simplified. Previously, these had to be registered with both the Ministry of Civil Affairs and a "professional supervisor," usually a government department in their field. The difficulty of finding a government department willing to act as a professional supervisor prevented many social organisations from registration. After the new reform, they only had to register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Social organisations not of these three types were classed as "having very strong professional element" (*zhuanye xing ji qiang*), and the requirement of dual registration still applied to them.[35] However, all these served to increase the penetration of the Party into social organisations. First, the new rules required social organisations filing for registration to have already set up their own Party cells. Social organisations were also required to report their situation of Party-building during the annual audit to the Zhuhai government.[36] Moreover, the Zhuhai government also took the lead in transplanting Hong Kong's advisory committee system, where non-government officials who are experts in their field are appointed to sit in various government advisory committees, delineated per policy area. The Zhuhai government considered this to be a new channel for institutionalised political participation that could absorb elites and leaders of

34 Willy Lam, "Wang Yang: Future Torchbearer of Reform?," *Asia Times*, June 1, 2012, www.atimes.com/atimes/China/NF01Ad03.html (accessed 26 October 2013).
35 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 66.
36 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 61.

social organisations into the governance structure. It was described as an important means to control society and for stability maintenance.[37] As in Hong Kong, this was a major way for the government to co-opt elites.

All in all, these social management reforms should not be seen as government "releasing power" (*fang quan*) to social organisations, or as a form of political liberalisation, because of the increasing role of the Party in the grassroots. They were better understood as measures for modernising the stability maintenance system, rather than for encouraging autonomous organisation.

In conclusion, the actual reform policies of the Guangdong Model fell far short of the hopes for political liberalisation that the Thought Emancipation Campaign so strongly suggested. These instead created new institutions to improve the efficiency of governance and the effectiveness of stability maintenance, and to increase the Party's penetration at the grass-roots level. Therefore, the Guangdong Model was, in effect, that of an authoritarian system updating itself to modernise the Party-state apparatus, and to enlarge its web of co-optation in society. Wang said it was a reform to create a "big society" and a "small government," but as we can see, the downsizing of the government took place alongside a significant increase in the reach of the Party.

4. Chongqing Model: Sing Red, Smash Black

Developing concurrent and often in perceived competition with the Guangdong Model was the Chongqing Model. Central to the Chongqing Model was a host of

37 *Chuangxin shehui guanli de "Zhuhai jingyan"* (2011), p. 94.

government initiatives — the so-called "livelihood projects" (*minsheng gongcheng*) — aiming at improving the well-being of the lower classes. These included a large-scale social housing project, massive infrastructure construction to improve local transportation networks, providing vocational training and employment for jobless farmers, etc. These initiatives were all financed by one of the eight SOEs set up by the Chongqing Party-state, which were officially introduced as *badatou*, literally, the "eight large investment companies." Huang Qifan, Chongqing's mayor and Bo Xilai's right-hand man, said that the experience of Chongqing was one of *guojin, min ye jin*, meaning that the state and non-state sectors were advancing at the same time. His reasoning was that the massive expansion of the economic activities of *badatou* served to improve the investment environment of Chongqing, and to shoulder the expenses for public welfare.[38] The idea that Chongqing's livelihood projects was one of *guojin, min ye jin* was also touted by Tsinghua University's Cui Zhiyuan, who worked under Huang in his capacity as assistant manager of Chongqing's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC). Cui claimed that, thanks to the earnings of Chongqing's large SOEs, the income tax for Chongqing's private companies (15%) could be kept below that of the national standard (25%). He also stated that the government's loans and subsidies for small start-up private companies, which was introduced by Bo as one of the "livelihood projects," were funded by *badatou*.[39]

38 *Caixin*, "Huang Qifan cheng Chongqing 'guojin minyejin'" [Huang Qifan said Chongqing's "state sector and non-state sector advance at the same time"], January 25, 2011, http://china.caixin.com/2011-01-25/100220729.html (accessed 4 July 2017).

39 Cui Zhiyuan, "Cujin gongtong fuyu de Chongqing jinxing shi" [Chongqing's reforms to promote common prosperity are being carried out], August 4, 2011, in *360doc*, http://www.360doc.com/content/11/0804/15/2687579_138023964.shtml (accessed 4 July

The large involvement of *badatou* in Bo's policy programmes helped formed the popular perception that a defining feature of the Chongqing Model was upsizing the government, as opposed to downsizing the government, the professed goal of the Guangdong Model.

The most innovative of Chongqing's livelihood projects were two reforms relating to rural *hukou* holders, which were unheard of elsewhere in China. First, the Chongqing government allowed every rural migrant worker who had lived in Chongqing for five years to apply for an urban *hukou* (household registration). By the end of 2011, almost 3.5 million rural migrant workers had changed their household registration to urban status. An estimated 7 million more peasants were expected to become urbanites under the programme between 2012–2020.[40] Second, a "land certificate exchange" system (*dibiao*) was launched to support the *hukou* reform. Chinese law requires a rural *hukou* holder who wants to convert to urban *hukou* to relinquish their rural land rights. Chongqing's land certificate exchange system serves to compensate the rural-to-urban *hukou* switchers who relinquished their rural land rights. Under the system, a rural *hukou* holder who agreed to convert their residential rural land into arable land would receive a certificate for the area of the land that was destined for conversion. They could then auction the certificate on a specially created land exchange market to developers who could buy it in exchange for quota to develop urban areas. Half of these certificates were purchased by the Chongqing government, and the other

2017).

40 Lance Gore (2012), p. 5.

half by private developers.[41]

Chongqing's livelihood projects were carried out alongside the mass mobilisation campaign of "Sing Red, Smash Black" (*changhong dahei*), in which Chongqing's residents were called upon to participate. "Sing Red" referred to the promotion of red culture. Red song concerts of various scales were held across the municipality, from local schools, universities, work places, public parks, to sports stadiums, and even in the theatre of Beijing's Great Hall of the People. Besides singing red songs, local residents were also mobilised to study the selected works of ancient Chinese writers, including Confucius, Ying Yen, Sima Qian, Wang Xizhi, etc., and to report on what they read to their classmates, colleagues, and in specially created spaces in public parks. Local residents, in particular local cadres, were encouraged to send uplifting mobile phone messages to each other.

"Smash Black" referred to the eradication of organised crimes, including punishing local government officials who acted as "protective umbrellas" (*baohusan*) sheltering criminals. In a campaign fashion, from 25 June to 10 July 2008, the Chongqing government posted 20 million letters to invite citizens to report criminal suspects. 40,000 letters were returned from the public by 18 October 2009, 80% of which were signed rather than anonymous.[42] The Chongqing police claimed that based on evidence from these letters, 5,000 criminal suspects were arrested by the end of April 2012, and over 70 of them

41 Meg Rithmire, "The 'Chongqing Model' and the Future of China," Case Study of *Harvard Business Review*, December 5, 2012, pp. 1-36, at 13.

42 See Philip C. C. Huang, "Chongqing: Equitable Development Driven by a 'Third Hand'?," *Modern China*, Vol. 37, No. 6 (November 2011), pp. 569-622, at 603; Tan Xiao, *Bo Xilai poju: taizidang de Chongqing moshi* [Bo Xilai's breakthrough: the Chongqing Model of the princelings] (Carle Place, NY: Mingjing chubanshe, 2011), p. 163.

were executed.[43] Moreover, allegedly for the purpose of making the municipality safer, the Chongqing government stationed 5,600 police officers and 57,000 security guards in the over 10,000 local secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens. Furthermore, 300 police booths staffed by a total of 9,000 police officers were installed in the main streets of the municipality. The Chongqing government claimed that the locations of 200 of these booths were decided by a referendum that recorded a turnout of 100,000 citizens.[44] The "Sing Red, Smash Black" campaign was consistent with the livelihood projects, both depending heavily on an active role being played by the state, instead of the private sector or social organisations.

The Chongqing Model clearly won the favour of many central leaders. Apart from Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, all of the other seven PBSC members expressed their approval to Chongqing's livelihood projects and the "Sing Red, Smash Black" campaign. Among them, Liu Yandong and Li Changchun each attended one of the red concerts in Chongqing from start to finish in April and August 2010 respectively.[45] Beyond collecting personal commendations from individual leaders, the Chongqing Model also received recognitions by central organisations. In June 2010, the central level Ministry of Public Security awarded its first ever "certificate of endorsement" for a provincial-level public security bureau to the Chongqing Public Security Bureau, in recognition of its works in "smashing

43 Chris Buckley, "Pursuing Graft Cases at Higher Levels, Chinese Leader Risks Unsettling Elites," *The New York Times*, September 26, 2013, p. A6; Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "The Implications of the Chongqing Model for the Reform of China's Legal System," *China Analysis* (November 2011), pp. 8-11, at 9.
44 *Chongqing nianjian* (2011), p. 61.
45 *Chongqing nianjian* (2011), pp. xii, ix.

black." Furthermore, Chongqing's "Smash Black" campaign was cited to justify an increase in penalty for involving in organised crimes nationally, including acting as "protective umbrellas" for organised crimes, in the proposal for the eighth amendment to China's Criminal Law Code.[46] Compared to the Chongqing Model, the Guangdong Model seemed to be sidelined at the central level with Wen Jiabao as the only PBSC member who endorsed Guangdong's reform.

In addition to receiving a lot of support at the central level, the Chongqing Party-state also cultivated support from left-leaning public intellectuals after its February 2009 package of new policies and campaigns were described by *Asia Weekly* (*Yazhou zhoukan*), a periodical based in Hong Kong, as the "Chongqing Model."[47] Subsequently, the Chongqing Party-state organised a seminar that brought together Hu Angang, Cui Zhiyuan and other left-leaning Chinese intellectuals to heap praise on the so-called Chongqing Model, by then firmly associated with the leadership of Bo Xilai. The Chongqing Party-state sponsored other seminars and publications, which saw other left-leaning Chinese scholars praising the Chongqing Model as a revival of socialism in China, given that the Party-state appeared to be playing a larger role in looking after the welfare of citizens, especially those of the lower classes. For example, Tsinghua University's Li Xiguang wrote that Chongqing's simultaneous pursuit of GDP growth and livelihood improvement represented the "organic combination" of market economy and socialism. He also spoke of the importance of promoting the experience of Chongqing in the "international market of concepts" (*guoji*

46 *Chongqing nianjian* (2011), p. 60.
47 Ji Shuoming, "Chongqing moshi yu Zhongguo jingji fangong xin lujing" [The Chongqing Model and a new path for Chinese economy to rebound], *Yazhou zhoukan* [Asia Weekly], Vol. 23, No. 6 (February 15, 2009), pp. 24-25.

guannian shichang), in order to improve China's soft power. Li further lauded the Chongqing experience as an alternative superior to the "Washington Consensus" and the East Asian model of development, which had enriched the substance of the so-called "Beijing Consensus."[48] Wang Shaoguang of the Chinese University of Hong Kong praised the Chongqing Model in similar terms, and suggested that it was bringing China to the stage of "Socialism 3.0." Zhang Hongliang of Minzu University of China, Cui Zhiyuan of Tsinghua University, Wen Tiejun, a recognised expert on the "three rural problems" (*sannong wenti*), Zhang Weiwei and Yang Lujun of Fudan University were also vocal supporters of the Chongqing Model.[49]

5. Chongqing Model: From China's best to China's worst

By all accounts, it was obvious by 2010 that the Chongqing Model had been enjoying unrivalled popularity, and had overshadowed the Guangdong Model as the template for national reform. However, unexpectedly, the shocking "Wang Lijun Incident" took place in February 2012, eventually causing Wang Lijun and Bo Xilai, the respective masterminds of the "Smash Black" and "Sing Red" campaigns, to lose political office and be imprisoned. On 6 February 2012, allegedly out of fear for his life following a fallout with Bo, Wang, Chongqing's

48 Li Xiguang, et. al., "Chongqing meng yu Zhongguo moshi" [The Chongqing dream and China model], *Renmin wang*, September 6, 2010, theory.people.com.cn/GB/12648727.html (accessed 29 August 2017).

49 Rong Jian, "Ben xiang Chongqing de xuezhe men" [Scholars who ran towards Chongqing], in *Tanwailou*, October 21, 2012, https://www.letscorp.net/archives/38421 (accessed 5 September 2017).

police chief and vice mayor, escaped to the United States Consulate in Chengdu to apply for political asylum. On the next day, he was seen leaving the consulate, and was taken away by state security officials for custody in Beijing. As the events unfolded, Wang revealed that Gu Kailai, Bo's wife, had murdered British businessman Neil Heywood, and that Bo obstructed the police investigation into the case.[50]

Following the political purge of Bo in April 2012, Zhang Dejiang became the new Party secretary of Chongqing. He oversaw some major personnel reshuffles in the municipality, including the removal of Xu Ming and He Shizhong — both being strong proponents for singing red — from the local Party Committee, and Liu Guanglei, secretary of Chongqing's Politics and Law Commission, who had worked closely with Wang on the Smash Black Campaign. The removal of these local leaders definitively ended the Sing Red, Smash Black Campaign.[51] Apparently, some of the livelihood reforms Bo introduced in Chongqing also faced setbacks. For example, Wen Jiabao allegedly forbade other places to emulate Chongqing's land certificate exchange system.[52] At the same time, criticisms of the Chongqing Model began to surface in major news agencies in China; whereas previously, Chinese scholars who were critical of the Chongqing Model recalled that nearly no newspapers, periodicals or academic journals based

50 Scott Greene, "Wang Lijun: Tip of the Iceberg?," *China Digital Times*, February 13, 2012, http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2012/02/wang-lijun-tip-of-the-iceberg/ (accessed 5 September 2017).

51 Bo Zhiyue, "Chongqing after Bo Xilai," *EAI Background Brief*, No. 742, August 7, 2012, pp. 1-21, at 19.

52 Yang Fan, et. al., "Lixing pingshuo Guangdong moshi, Chongqing moshi" [A rational analysis of Guangdong Model and Chongqing Model], August 16, 2011, in *360doc*, http://www.360doc.com/content/11/0816/15/2687579_140803475.shtml

in China were willing to give them a platform.[53] He Bing of China University of Political Science and Law recalled speaking at a CCTV talk show that the evidence available to convict Li Zhuang, one of the high-profile suspects arrested during the Smash Black Campaign, was insufficient. He recounted that Bo had personally made a phone call to the CCTV management on the same day he made the comment, resulting in the removal of the producer and host of the talk show the next day.[54]

Once criticisms of the Chongqing Model were no longer a taboo subject (note that Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign was roundly criticised by state-sponsored media outlets), even the ostensibly apolitical HSBC Bank published a research report in May 2012 exposing the economic problems of the Chongqing Model. The report found that the cumulative bank loans incurred by *badatou* totalled 4,225 billion *yuan*, which accounted for more than 42% of Chongqing's GDP. Put differently, the debt to GDP ratio in Chongqing was twice that of the national average. Moreover, HSBC took issue with the view that in Chongqing, *guojin, min ye jin* (the state sector and the non-state sector advanced at the same time), on the grounds that government investment via the various livelihood projects accounted for as much as 76% of the local GDP. The report anticipated a rising level of bad loans for *badatou*, and thus warned that government-led GDP growth could not be sustainable in the long term. Interestingly, the same report recommended Guangdong's economic model as the

53 Ma Guochuan (2013), pp. 226, 233.
54 *Caixin*, "'Fansi Chongqing jiaoxun' zhuanjia fayan zhaiyao" ['Reflecting on the Chongqing lessons': a summary of remarks made by experts], December 7, 2012, http://china.caixin.com/2012-12-07/100470073.html

future model for the whole country. It was said to be based primarily on developing the domestic private sector, and have demonstrated a high level of sustainability.[55]

While the HSBC report criticised the Chongqing Model using ostensibly objective financial analysis, other critics attacked the model's leftist ideational foundation directly, even calling it a "mini Cultural Revolution."[56] However, in contrast to what is suggested in most English-language publications, this actually has relatively little to do with collective resentment over the singing of red songs and/or for romanticising the Mao era. Rather, the main reasons were twofold. First, the Chongqing Model was criticised as an arbitrary exercise of political power that undermined pre-existing laws and institutions. Some scholars, lawyers and journalists found that verdicts of cases that formed part of the Smash Black Campaign were jointly decided by the court and police before trial. There was also evidence demonstrating the systemic use of torture in secret locations to obtain confessions, and of the authorities blackmailing or prosecuting the defence lawyers of suspects. It was also found that many of the family members of the suspects had been held in police custody, and that they had furthermore been coerced into testifying against the suspects.[57] Journalists also uncovered evidence of power abuse surrounding the government's policy over Chongqing Satellite TV

55 Gu Gonglei, "Huifeng baogao: zengjia buliang daikuan shangsheng fengxian: 'Chongqing moshi' wufa changqi chixu" [HSBC report: an increase of risk for bad loans, "Chongqing Model" cannot sustain in the long-term], *Lianhe zaobao* [United Morning Post], May 4, 2012, p. 24.

56 See, for example, *Caixin*, "'Fansi Chongqing jiaoxun' zhuanjia fayan zhaiyao" ['Reflecting on the Chongqing lessons': a summary of remarks made by experts], December 7, 2012, http://china.caixin.com/2012-12-07/100470073.html

57 Tong Zhiwei, "Chongqing dahei xing shehui guanli fangshi yanjiu baogao" [A research report of Chongqing's smash black-styled social management model], in Blog of Xu Xin, February 16, 2012, http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_656952ec0100zsmv.html (accessed 17 July 2017).

(*Chongqing weishi*). Bo personally ordered the channel to stop the broadcast of all commercials in March 2011, thereby vetoing the objections from the management of the channel, as expressed by Li Xiaonan, CEO of Chongqing Broadcasting Group, who was subsequently arrested by the local police on bribery charges.

After removing all commercials, the channel was used exclusively for promoting the government's livelihood projects and the Sing Red, Smash Black Campaign, leading to a sharp decline in viewership. This was in fact anticipated by Huang Qifan, who calculated that, as a result of changes in content, the channel would lose 3 billion *yuan* of income, or 45% of the Chongqing Broadcasting Group's total revenue. The Chongqing government pledged to compensate the channel with 1.5 billion *yuan*, while asking the channel to raise the remaining funds in some other manner. Eventually, 35 staff members from the channel's TV commercial department were sacked, while the department's management grade staff got their salary slashed by 40%. Commercials began airing again on the channel on 15 March 2012, the day that Bo was removed from office.[58] In an article critical of the Chongqing Model published by Guangming Web, a mouthpiece of the CCP Central Committee, it was stated that the arbitrary use of power of the sort exercised by Bo prevailed during the Cultural Revolution. The argument was further made that Bo was cultivating a personality cult for himself by actively facilitating the circulation of articles and songs that magnified

58 Chen Cheng, et. al., "Chongqing weishi duibiao gonggong pindao yi nian" [Chongqing satellite TV became a public channel for one year], *21 shiji jingji baodao* [21st Century Business Herald], March 16, 2012, p. 2; Zhang Jialin, "Yu weishi jiejin bo shangye guanggao" [Chongqing Satellite TV ends ban on commercials], *Takung bao* [Ta Kung Pao], March 17, 2012, p. A06; Xianggang shangbao [Hong Kong Commercial Daily], "Zhongyang tongbao anjian xiangqing: Bo Xilai beijie zhishou nong hongchao" [The centre reveals case details: Bo Xilai found stirring red tides single-handedly], November 12, 2013, p. A15.

his deeds and importance, and brutally clearing obstructions to his political ambitions. The article concluded that "the ending of Bo Xilai once again proves that the political model of the 'Cultural Revolution' is a dead road."[59]

Second, the Smash Black Campaign was seen by many, in the words of Tong Zhiwei, law professor of East China University of Political Science and Law, to be a post-Mao iteration of Mao's preference for "one, big; two, public" (*yi da er gong*). This Maoist formulation referred to a big people's commune with a high level of public ownership, as discussed in Chapter 2 with respect to the Dazhai Model. The Chongqing version of "one big; two, public" referred to an expansion of the state sector and the redistribution of wealth obtained from robbing the rich.[60] Tong found that the campaign was specifically aimed at Chongqing's home-grown private entrepreneurs. They included Chongqing's top three billionaires: Peng Zhimin, Li Jun and Chen Mingliang, and a list of billionaires whose level of wealth was ranked just below the three, such as Li Qiang, Wang Tianlun, Ma Dang, Yue Cun, Gong Gangmo and others. These billionaires were either sentenced to life imprisonment or given the death penalty. All of their private property, including cash, bank savings, real estate, and their company's assets, were confiscated by the local state. While Chinese law requires state authorities to seek authorisation from the courts regarding the handling of private property, the judge presiding Ma Dang's case told reporters that the police was fully in charge of the matter, and the court was not involved at all. The Chongqing

59 Guangming wang commentator, September 29, 2012.
60 Tong Zhiwei, "Chongqing dahei xing shehui guanli fangshi yanjiu baogao" [A research report of Chongqing's smash black-styled social management model], in Blog of Xu Xin, February 16, 2012, http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_656952ec0100zsmv.html (accessed 17 July 2017).

government claimed that the total value of property confiscated during the Smash Black Campaign totalled 29 billion *yuan* by September 2010. However, most critics, including Qiu Jilie, Vice President of the Chongqing Private Sector Association (*Chongqing siying geti jingji xiehui*), disputed the figure. Qiu estimated that the actual figure was in excess of 1,000 billion *yuan*.

An investigative report published by *Caixin* magazine in December 2010 suggested that the confiscated property was funnelled to Chongqing's state sector. According to *Caixin*, Ma Dang's 600 *mu*-land in Hainan Province and Chen Mingliang's office at the Chongqing World Trade Centre were auctioned off by the Chongqing Finance Bureau. Furthermore, Chongqing's SASAC assumed ownership of Chen Mingliang's luxury five-star hotel, the Century Empire Grand Hotel, and renamed it Liangjiang Holiday Inn. The website of Chongqing's SASAC claimed that Liangjiang Holiday Inn was the largest state-owned hotel in southwestern China.[61] In addition to the property confiscated of billionaires who were convicted of masterminding organised crimes, Chongqing's private entrepreneurs were also asked by the local police to "donate" to the livelihood projects. Qiu Jilie recalled attending a meeting with Chongqing's officials together with other local private entrepreneurs. He said, Wang Lijun gave a speech saying that, "Many people have told us that the real estate sector is exploitatively rich (*baoli*), and is involved in criminal activities (*shehei*). But I believe that none of you in attendance belongs to either one of these situations."

61 *Caijing zazhi* [Caijing Magazine], "Chongqing 'shehei zichan' huizhang" [Chongqing's shady account of "crime-related assets"], December 7, 2010, http://misc.caijing.com.cn/chargeFullNews.jsp?id=110585895&time=2010-12-07&cl=106 (accessed 6 July 2017).

At the end of the meeting, every private entrepreneur in attendance agreed to donate at least 50,000,000 *yuan* to the Chongqing government.[62] After the downfall of Bo, it became public knowledge that more than 200 private entrepreneurs in Chongqing immigrated to Canada during the Smash Black Campaign out of fear for their lives and property.[63]

6. Calling for political reforms: A rehash of Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign?

The critique of the Chongqing Model eventually culminated to strong calls for political reform by a group of Party veterans, intellectuals, lawyers and journalists. While some expounded their views more extensively than others, all agreed that political reforms placing credible restraints on power were needed to prevent the Chongqing Model, which had become synonymous with power abuse, from recurring. The gesture of calling for political reforms, as well as the content of some of the reforms proposed, were almost identical to the critique of Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign in 2008. However, a main difference was that, on this occasion, that is, after Bo's removal from office in March 2012, the call for political reforms was spearheaded not by purveyors of the Guangdong Model, but by *Yanhuang chunqiu*, *Caixin* and Hu Yaobang Archival Materials Web (*Hu Yaobang shiliao xinxi wang*), three liberal-leaning media outlets in Beijing.

62 Fu Xin, “Chongqing minqi 'zaihou chongjian'” [Chongqing's private enterprises “rebuild after catastrophe”], *Zhongguo qiyejia* [China Entrepreneur] (May 2013), pp. 57-65, at 59.
63 Fu Xin, “Chongqing minqi 'zaihou chongjian'” (May 2013), p. 59.

Du Daozheng, editor-in-chief of *Yanhuang Chunqiu*, said that the periodical's call for political reforms was a response to an "emergency plea" (*jinji huyu*) issued by Wen Jiabao, then premier and the only PBSC member to have ever expressed support for Wang Yang's reforms in Guangdong. At the press conference marking the closure of the annual CPPCC and NPC sessions (the "two sessions") on 14 March 2012, after openly blaming the Chongqing Party-state for the Wang Lijun Incident, Wen caught his audience by surprise by saying apparently out of the blue:

> ….Without successful reforms in political institutions, reforms in economic institutions cannot be carried through to the end, the achievements made may be lost, the root cause of newly emerging social problems cannot be tackled, and historical tragedy such as the Cultural Revolution may take place again...[64]

Du interpreted Wen's remark above as "a plea for everyone to come out to participate in the making of political reforms, which should take place without delay." Du gathered 15 Party veterans (see Table 6.2), all members of the editorial board of *Yanhuang chunqiu*, to discuss the prospects of China's political reforms in April 2012. At the meeting, some attendees, such as Li Rui and Jiang Ping, advocated intra-Party democracy, including competitive elections for all ranks of Party organisations, and the separation of Party apparatus and state administration in governance (*dangzheng fenkai*). Other attendees, however, considered their proposals too restrictive, and urged for political reforms in the direction of political liberalisation and civil society empowerment, in the same spirit of the

64 *Xinhua*, "Zongli Wen Jiabao da zhongwai jizhe wen" [Premier Wen Jiabao answers questions from Chinese and foreign journalists], March 14, 2012, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012lh/zhibo/zongli/zfw_wz.htm (accessed 5 September 2017); Ma Guochuan (2013), p. 295.

liberal ideas that prevailed at Guangdong's Thought Emancipation fora. For example, He Fang explicitly said that political reforms should refer to democratisation (*minzhu hua*), not simply reforming the Party or state apparatus, and the first step of democratisation should be the encouragement of free speech. Similarly, Gu Xiang said that China's political reforms should be "constitutional democracy," which must be based upon upholding "universal values" (*pushi jiazhiguan*).[65]

Following *Yanhuang chunqiu*'s high-profile meeting, *Caixin* and Hu Yaobang Archival Materials Web jointly hosted a seminar that brought together over 30 intellectuals, lawyers and journalists (see Table 6.3), including Hu Deping, son of Hu Yaobang, lawyer Li Zhuang and Hu Shuli, *Caixin*'s editor-in-chief, to sum up the lessons to be learned from the Chongqing Model in November 2012. The seminar concluded that the next step for China's political reforms should be legal reforms, including reforms to safeguard judicial independence, with the aim of achieving the "rule of law" (*yifa zhiguo*). Legal reforms were considered the lowest cost and lowest risk of all political reforms, and crucial for avoiding personal dictatorship to emerge. In this seminar, many attendees stressed that, while the Chongqing Model demonstrated the worst of power abuse in post-Mao China, the occurrence of power abuse was by no means limited to Bo's Chongqing, because China's political institutions, as inherited from the Mao era, upheld the rule of man (*renzhi*), not rule of law.[66] The call for rule of law at this seminar

65 Du Mingming, "Shangxia hudong, cujin zhengzhi tizhi gaige: Ben kan zuotanhui zhaiyao" [The top and bottom interacts to facilitate political institution reforms: A summary of a forum held by this periodical], *Yanhuang chunqiu* (May 2012), pp. 1-7.

66 *Caixin*, "'Fansi Chongqing jiaoxun' zhuanjia fayan zhaiyao" ["Reflecting on the Chongqing

obviously found solid support from the Guangdong Model, given that it introduced several major legal reforms in the name of promoting the rule of law. In fact, if we are to juxtapose *Yanhuang chunqiu*'s April meeting with this November seminar, we could see the contrast between a wider and narrower vision of political reform, as could also be seen in the difference between the call for sweeping political liberalisation at Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign, and the retraction of this vision by increasing the Party's penetration into society in the reform policies that were introduced subsequently.

Table 6.2: Speakers at *Yanhuang chunqiu*'s editor seminar held on April 5, 2012

Name of speaker			
Du Daozheng	He Fang	Li Rui	Wang Yanjun
Feng Jian	Hu Dehua	Lu De	Wu Mingyu
Gu Xiang	Jiang Ping	Qian Liqun	Yuan Ying
Guo Daohui	Jiang Yanyong	Sun Xupei	Zhang Hongzun

Source: Du Mingming, "Shangxia hudong, cujin zhengzhi tizhi gaige: Ben kan zuotanhui zhaiyao" [The top and bottom interacts to facilitate political institution reforms: A summary of a forum held by this periodical], *Yanhuang chunqiu* (May 2012), pp. 1-7.

lessons": A summary of remarks made by experts], December 7, 2012, http://china.caixin.com/2012-12-07/100470073.html (accessed 7 July 2017).

Table 6.3: Speakers at seminar jointly held by *Caixin* and Hu Yaobang Archival Materials Web

Name of speaker	Affiliation(s) of speaker
Bao Yujun	President of Chinese Private Economy Research Institute (*Zhongguo minying jingji yanjiu hui*)
Chen Youxi	Defence lawyer for Li Zhuang
Guo Daohui	Professor of Human Rights Research and Education Centre (*renquan yanjiu yu jiaoyu zhongxin*) of Guangzhou University
He Bing	Vice Dean of Law School of China University of Political Science and Law
He Sanwei	Chief writer of *Southern People Weekly* (*Nanfang renwu zhoukan*)
Hu Deping	Eldest son of former CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang (1982–1987)
Hu Shuli	Editor-in-chief of *Caixin*
Lei Yi	Researcher of Institute of Modern History of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Li Dun	Professor of Sociology of Tsinghua University
Li Shengping	Unknown
Li Weidong	Former head of periodical *China's Reform* (*Zhongguo gaige*)
Li Xuan	Associate Professor of Law School of Central University of Finance and Economics
Li Zhuang	Defence lawyer arrested in 2009 as a part of Chongqing's Smash Black Campaign
Ma Xiaoli	Daughter of Ma Wenrui, former Vice Chairperson of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (1984–1993)
Rong Jian	Writer of article "Scholars who ran towards Chongqing"[a]
Sun Chao	Deputy Editor-in-chief of website Kaidi Web (*Kaidi wangluo*)
Tong Zhiwei	Professor of Law of East China University of Political Science and Law
Xu Xin	Professor of Law of Beijing Institute of Technology
Zhan Jiang	Professor of School of International Journalism and Communication of Beijing Foreign Studies University
Zhang Jianjing	Editor-in-chief of *China's Reform*
Zhang Qianfan	Professor of Law of Peking University

Note: The organisers of the event, *Caixin* and Hu Yaobang Archival Materials Web, did not publish a full list of the speakers. They only published the name of some speakers, which are listed above.

[a] Rong Jian, "Ben xiang Chongqing de xuezhe men" [Scholars who ran towards Chongqing], in *Tanwailou*, October 21, 2012, https://www.letscorp.net/archives/38421 (accessed 5 September 2017).

Sources: *Caixin*, "'Fansi Chongqing jiaoxun' zhuanjia fayan zhaiyao" ["Reflecting on the Chongqing lessons": a summary of remarks made by experts], December 7, 2012, http://china.caixin.com/2012-12-07/100470073.html (accessed 7 July 2017).
Hu Yaobang shiliao xinxi wang [Hu Yaobang Archival Materials Web], "Yifa zhiguo yu chong Chongqing jiaoxun yantaohui" [Rule the country according to law and lessons from Chongqing], date unspecified, http://www.hybsl.cn/zt/chongqing/ (accessed 5 September 2017).

7. Conclusion

To the surprise of many, the downfall of Bo did not seem to have benefited Wang Yang's political fortune. Wang became vice premier of the State Council after the 18th Party Congress, but only entered the PBSC at the 19th Party Congress five years later. While the reforms he introduced in Guangdong are still being carried out within the province, there is little evidence suggesting that they have contributed to national reforms under Xi. However, having said that, some of Xi's visions for national reforms are reminiscent of the policy content and/or spirit of the Guangdong Model. They include administrative streamlining of the government via greater power decentralisation, and systematic outsourcing of the provision of public services to social organisations. The details of both are yet to be specified.[67] Thus far, one of Xi's most fully developed reform proposals has been the "rule of law" reform.[68] While this has likely drawn inspirations from Guangdong's rule of law reforms, it looks as if it is more directly prompted by

67 *Renmin ribao haiwai ban* [People's Daily Overseas Edition], "Tuijin zhengqi zhengzi zhengshi zhengshe si fenkai" [To move forward the 'four separates' of administration and enterprise, administration and capital, administration and implementation, and administration and society], March 1, 2013, p. 1; Yang Guang, "Woguo zhengfu goumai gonggong fuwu de jingyan zongjie yu wenti fenxi" [A summary and analysis of our government's experience in purchasing public services], *Zhongguo zhengfu caigou* [Chinese Government Procurement], 4 (2014), pp. 30-38.

68 Renmin wang [People's Web], "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quanmian tuijin yifa zhiguo ruogan zhongda wenti de jueding" [CCP Central Committee Decision Concerning Some Major Questions in Comprehensively Moving Governing the Country According to the Law Forward], October 29, 2014, http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/1029/c64387-25927606.html (accessed 25 September 2017).

outcries for rule of law reform following the repudiation of the Chongqing Model.

Even if Xi might have selectively borrowed from the Guangdong Model, one element that he shares no sympathy for is the idea of political liberalisation, which was advocated vigorously by some intellectuals who attended Guangdong's Thought Emancipation fora, and was subsequently reiterated by editors of *Yanhuang chunqiu* when they summed up the lessons to be learned from the Chongqing Model. Xi banned the discussion of seven topics, all connected to ideas of political liberalisation one way or another, at universities in 2013, including universal values, freedom of media, civil society, civil rights, historical errors of the Party, crony capitalism and judicial independence.[69] As a major outlet of these ideas, *Yanhuang chunqiu* came under increasing political pressure, and saw its editorship completely taken over by the Party-state apparatus in 2016.[70] The trend of political tightening continued. More recently, in March 2017, Wang Qishan, Vice President of the PRC, said that, given the Party's leadership over the government, the separation of the Party and state administration was out of the question.[71]

In addition to suppressing calls for political liberalisation, Xi seems to be pursuing the political model of the Chongqing Model. First of all, he has

69 BBC Chinese Web, "Xi Jinping xinzheng: qi bu jiang hou you you shiliu tiao" [Xi Jinping's new deal: seven nos followed by sixteen articles], May 28, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/china/2013/05/130528_china_thought_control_youth (accessed 8 August 2015).

70 Jiang Xun and Yuan Weijing, "Dujia zhuanfang: *Yanhuang chunqiu* chuangban ren Du Daozheng" [Exclusive interview: *Yanhuang Chunqiu*'s founder Du Daozheng], *Yazhou zhoukan* [Asia Weekly], Vol. 31, No. 11 (March 19, 2017) pp. 62-63.

71 Yuan Gangong, "Wang Qishan fouding `dang zheng fenkai,' shuoming liao shenme?" [Wang Qishan denies 'separation of Party and state,' what does this tell us?], *Duan chuanmei* [Initium Media], March 21, 2017, https://theinitium.com/article/20170321-opinion-yuangangong-wangqishan/ (accessed 5 September 2017).

revitalised the Sing Red, Smash Black Campaign in all but name. In May 2016, the central propaganda department sponsored a large-scale concert in the People's Great Hall, where many red songs and songs that glorify Xi were performed. Critics noticed that the former category included the song "Not sure how to call you" (*buzhi gai zenme chenghu ni*), which celebrated Xi's intimacy to the people. It was produced under the auspices of the Hunan Party-state.[72] The popularity of songs such as this on the internet, suggested that the central Party-state was tacitly allowing, if not actively cultivating, a personality cult for Xi. Alongside this highly personalised rendition of the Sing Red Campaign, Xi has also been "smashing black" by carrying out the largest scale of anti-corruption campaign in China. Unlike Bo's Smash Black campaign, Xi's anti-corruption campaign does not seem to be specially targeted at private entrepreneurs. There is also no systematic evidence showing the use of torture or violation of due process. However, similar to Bo's campaign, Xi's campaign was widely viewed as a populist move with the ulterior motive of eliminating political rivals, and centralising powers to himself at the expense of undermining Party norms and institutions. Critics pointed to the abolition of the term limit for the state President in March 2018,[73] and how Xi appointed himself as the leader of the many "small groups" he newly created, which covered all major policy areas, and thus allowed him to bypass the relevant state bureaucracies in decision-making. In addition, the central propaganda department and the military have also been eagerly shoring up Xi's personal leadership, which may well result in the actual weakening of

72 *Taiwan shibao* [Taiwan Times], "Gesong wenge? Zhongxuanbu fouren" [Praising the Cultural Revolution? The central propaganda department denies], May 7, 2016, p. 7.

73 See "Guojia zhuxi zhi duo zai ying zhongda gaige: renqi bu xian liang jie," February 26, 2018.

collective leadership of the Party. To conclude, the uncanny parallels between Xi's and Bo's governance styles have led some to conclude that Wen's sombre warning have gone unheeded by Xi, and Chinese politics is still under the shadow of the Cultural Revolution.[74]

74 See Lin Tingyao, "Lei wenge huangdan ju chang shangyan" [Absurd dramas similar to the Cultural Revolution are always on stage], *Lianhe bao* [United Daily News], May 20, 2016, p. A12.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

This conclusion chapter consists of three sections. The first section summarises the main arguments with reference to each of the cases examined. The second section discusses the ways with which Xi's reforms have addressed the substantive content of the ideational conflicts discussed earlier, namely, rural (de/re)collectivisation, political liberalisation, and state sector reforms. The third section analyses whether the analytical framework of model-making is still useful to study how ideational conflicts influence policy change in China today.

1. Summary of main arguments

How do ideational conflicts influence policy change in China? I argue that officials make use of model-making to engage in ideational conflicts with rivalrous factions, legitimate the appropriateness of their ideas and corresponding policies, build coalitions and mobilise popular support. In so doing, the locales they cultivate as models pilot the implementation of new policies. Models serve as intellectual resources for China's policymakers. Where the Party centre’s attitude towards the model is favourable, large-scale horizontal dissemination of the model's policies and ideas takes place. Model dissemination is limited where the Centre’s attitude towards the model is ambivalent. If the Centre is hostile towards the model, the model will be discredited. The authority of the existing order will

be reinforced accordingly. Nonetheless, the seeds for change that were sowed by the model — the diagnosis of existing policies as legitimate "problems" that demand solutions, the promotion of new ideas, policies and discourse as credible "solutions," the formation of pro-change coalitions and etc. — facilitate policy change when new political opportunities arise in the future.

In the late Mao period, the radical faction made use of Dazhai, which was honoured the national agricultural model by Mao, to redeem the programme of radical agricultural collectivisation after it was discredited by the catastrophic failure of the Great Leap Forward. They legitimated it with the Maoist ideas of "putting politics in command" and "self-reliance." However, their efforts were resisted by the conservative faction, which altered the lessons to be learned from the Dazhai Model to the "faithful implementation of the Party's policies," that is, the moderate collectivisation programme stipulated in the Sixty Articles. The rapid oscillation of Dazhai's policy lessons between radicalism and conservatism demonstrated the intensity of ideational conflicts at the central level, with Dazhai serving as a ventriloquist's tool. Dazhai's politically attuned leaders reinterpreted the content of the "Dazhai experience" time and again following these shifts. The dissemination of the Dazhai Model throughout the countryside was clearly solicited by administrative pressures, notably the Learn from Dazhai Campaign. The repudiation of the model after 14 years of prominence aimed not only at radical collectivisation, ultra-leftist ideas and the radical faction, but also the use of public spectacles and heavy central input in model-making. Therefore, the downfall of Dazhai also marked an end of political theatre models as an

acceptable type of model to the regime.

In the transition out of state socialism, the Anhui Model served as a platform through which decollectivisation — the political taboo that was officially ruled out as a policy option — entered the political discourse under the guise of "production responsibility systems," beginning with *baochan daozu*, going through *baochan daohu* and soon sliding to *dabaogan daohu*, being decollectivisation in all but name. Anhui's leaders justified the "rightfulness" of these unlawful systems with reference to popular demands from peasants and the "practice" discourse of the survivor faction, which promoted pragmatism, policy flexibility and local diversity. The making of the Anhui Model was a powerful protest against collectivisation, the very symbol of Maoism that Hua's loyalist faction tried so hard to preserve. The Anhui Model successfully legitimated individualist ideas that were criticised during the Dazhai Campaign, leading to the collapse of the commune system nationwide. The success of the model was of course the direct result of favourable state policies introduced by the survivor faction at the Centre. That being said, these policies would have been unthinkable without Anhui's "rightful resistance" in the first place, which saw some central-level survivors facilitating quietly from the very beginning.

In the era of post-Mao market reform, the Nanjie Model of recollectivisation, which first appeared as a policy response to problems caused by decollectivisation, has been co-opted by the leftist faction to promote orthodox socialism and Maoism. The leftists viewed these ideas as welcome correctives to the prevalence of capitalist values in China, which they saw as the root cause of declining

morality and serious corruption. Nanjie was upheld as a model to demonstrate that in today's China, the collectivist model of production and organisation characteristic of the Mao era was still useful in generating economic growth. In the early 1990s, model-making privileged Nanjie with ordinarily hard to access resources. This was apparently the reason why some villages transplanted Nanjie's policies at that time. In the mid-2000s, where external resources were becoming exhausted, these satellite models distanced themselves from Nanjie and eventually decollectivised. With the help of the provincial and county authorities, Nanjie was branded as a site for red tourism in order to raise a stable source of revenue. Thereby, traditional socialist ideas and nostalgia for the Mao era were instrumentalised as economic capital, but collectivisation — that is, the corresponding traditional socialist policy — is still being sidelined officially.

In urban China and in policy areas other than (de/re)collectivisation, the practice of officials cultivating models in order to advance a controversial ideational agenda and to steer policy change was also found. The four models that I examined in two sets of pairs, being the Shenzhen Model and Shekou Model in the Shenzhen SEZ, and the Guangdong Model and Chongqing Model in the run-up to the 18th Party Congress, were all formally designated as experimental zones by the Centre. This status came with broad and ambiguously defined discretionary powers, which provided a shelter for radical policy changes to be carried out in the name of experimentation. Shekou pursued a political vision of the SEZ with the support of some liberal-minded patrons at the Centre. This was so despite explicit central regulations stipulating that the SEZ should only be a site for

absorbing foreign capital and technology. Initially, Shenzhen followed this technocratic mandate strictly. However, when political reforms were introduced in the central policy agenda under Zhao Ziyang, Shenzhen pursued and even expanded Shekou's vision of political liberalisation. It was therefore no surprise that the SEZ was forced to abandon its political reforms after the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. Thereafter, it was reduced to a purely economic model. Intense conflicts of interests between SEZs and non-SEZs forced the Centre to extend the privileges reserved for SEZs to the whole country, and subject the practice of model-making, which is based on unequal treatment between models and non-models, under criticisms.

Shekou and Shenzhen's pioneering efforts in political reforms were reflected in Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign nearly 20 years later, which advocated similarly liberal — as in leaning towards democratisation — political reforms in addition to downsizing the local state sector. However, political reforms were aborted again due to intense political pressure. Thereafter, the Guangdong Model gradually turned into a package of administrative reforms to enhance the Party-state's ability to govern and control without touching the political system. On the other hand, Chongqing, which was likewise a centrally-assigned experimental zone, was cultivated into a left-leaning model that greatly expanded the reach of the Party-state in the local economy and society. The municipality also hosted the “Sing Red, Smash Black” mass campaign, which was reminiscent of the Mao era, with great fanfare. After Bo was removed from political office unexpectedly, a central Party media outlet criticised the Chongqing

Model as a “Cultural Revolution model” of power abuse. Thereafter, outcries for political reforms that were quieted down after Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign resurfaced. However, the new Xi regime was uninterested in political liberalisation. He combined selective ideas and policies from both models to shape his China Model, including Guangdong's model of social management reforms and Chongqing's model of mass mobilisation campaigns centred on the charisma of the leader.

The persistence of ideational conflicts involving factions indicated that the level of elite cohesion within the regime was shallow. Behind the façade of unity was intense disagreements over the goals, directions, priorities and content for reform. As seen from the case studies, ideational conflicts that were pursued through model-making disclosed crucial and credible political information pertaining to patronage networks within the regime. The making of the Dazhai Model revealed that the radical faction was unwilling to compromise on their ideational agenda. At the same time, the conservative faction was too weak to protect the Sixty Articles — the official Party line on agricultural policy —from the radicals’ sabotage. Hua Guofeng, Mao’s protégé, though radical-leaning, demonstrated his willingness to reach a compromise between the radicals and conservatives. Nonetheless, as seen from the making of the Anhui Model, after Mao’s death, the conservatives — who formed into a coalition with other ruling elites who survived the political purges of the Cultural Revolution — were determined to sideline Hua in order to consolidate a more pro-market post-Mao political order.

The making of the Nanjie Model revealed the identity of the loose coalition of left-leaning Party elites. By co-opting the model into the official narrative (instead of criticising it for deviating from the Party line), the Centre made political concessions to the Left. The making of the Shenzhen vis-à-vis Shekou models within the Shenzhen SEZ revealed that Zhao Ziyang was in fact open to political reforms that were significantly more liberal than what he announced at the 13th Party Congress. This anticipated the purge of Zhao and the leaders of Shenzhen and Shekou following the crackdown of the Tiananmen Square protests. Nearly twenty years, the making of the Guangdong and Chongqing models concurrently revealed the identity of Party elites and intellectuals receptive to/hostile against liberal political reforms. In the light of recurring demands for political liberalisation, whether Xi's suppression thereof would backfire on regime resilience in the long term is to be closely watched.

2. Xi's reforms wade in ideational conflicts

After the downfall of Bo Xilai and his Chongqing Model, perceptions of authoritarian resilience of the CCP-state have been replaced by observations of regime fragility and predictions of the collapse of the regime. Andrew Nathan, who coined the term "authoritarian resilience" to describe the CCP-state in 2003, writes that "the consensus is stronger than at any time since the 1989 Tiananmen crisis that the resilience of the authoritarian regime in the PRC is approaching its limits." He observes that "expectations of dramatic change" prevail in the country,

imparting a type of "meta-instability" to the regime that is absent in mature political systems.[1] David Shambaugh, also a veteran China watcher, even argues that the "endgame of Chinese communist rule has begun," and "has progressed further than many think."[2] These negative perceptions of regime durability echo Pei Minxin's arguments in *China's Trapped Transitions*. Pei argues that the regime is in decay because the gradualist nature of the post-Mao reforms has built distortions into the reform process. These distortions, such as the predatory behaviour of local governments (for example, illegal land seizures), the lack of effective regulatory institutions, a large gap between central-level policy announcement and local-level implementation, etc., have created conditions for the ruling elites to oppose to reforms. These, he argues, trap the regime in a "partial reform equilibrium" in which the political and economic systems deteriorate and become stagnant.[3]

Xi appears to be deeply concerned about the longevity of the regime. Shortly after he assumed office, the propaganda department of the Party organised cadres at all levels to study the causes of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In a video that was for internal circulation only and was jointly produced by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Mikhail Gorbachev was criticised for introducing democratic reforms, relaxing the Party's ideological monopoly, and Boris Yeltsin was blamed for hasty

1 Andrew J. Nathan, "China at the Tipping Point? Foresseing the Unforeseeable," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 20-25.
2 David Shambaugh, "The Coming Chinese Crackup," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 6, 2015, https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coming-chinese-crack-up-1425659198 (accessed 7 July 2018).
3 Pei Minxin, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

privatisation of SOEs. In an internal Party meeting, Xi told cadres that the Soviet Communist Party (SCP) collapsed because "its ideals and convictions wavered."[4] Xi is trying hard to strengthen the regime's ruling capacity, so that the CCP would not follow the footsteps of the SCP. This involves decisively wading in the ideational conflicts that are discussed in this thesis, all of which touch on pressing problems requiring resolution. By trying to settle these conflicts once and for all, Xi fulfils the "expectations of dramatic change" that Nathan finds prevail in China, and issues powerful signals that it is the prerogative of the Party centre — with Xi as the "core" — to define what changes are acceptable. In regard to the long-standing debate on rural (de/re)collectivisation, Xi decided to facilitate market transactions of farmland usage rights, but ruled out privatisation. In response to the aspirations for political liberalisation, Xi made it clear that it was not on his agenda, but China would develop the "socialist rule of law" in lieu of political reforms. Finally, concerning the relationship between the state sector and private sector in the economy, the Third Plenum of the 18th Party Congress in November 2013 decided to let the market plays a decisive role in resource allocation, which would undercut the privileges enjoyed by SOEs significantly.

4 Cary Huang, "Paranoia from Soviet Union Collapse Haunts China's Communist Party, 22 Years On," *South China Morning Post*, November 18, 2013, https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1359350/paranoia-soviet-union-collapse-haunts-chinas-communist-party-22-years (accessed 7 July 2018).

2.1 Rural land system: Marketisation without privatisation

The Anhui Model created a dual-track rural land system, where the ownership rights belong to the collective, and individual peasant households contract the usage rights from the former on a long-term basis. As detailed in Chapter 3, this was lauded for freeing peasants from the "bondage" of the people's communes in the early 1980s. However, the weaknesses of this system have become apparent since the 1990s, and increasingly so at present, in the context of rapidly growing rural-to-urban migration. It is now widely blamed for perpetuating discrimination against rural-registered citizens. In 2016, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences reported that, of the nearly 110,000 rural-registered citizens living in cities it interviewed, over 80% are reluctant to convert to urban registration for fear of losing their rural land rights.[5] However, without urban registration, their access to social services and employment options are severely limited. Moreover, the dual-track system gives rural-registered citizens little protection against the expropriation of their rural land usage rights by local governments.[6]

Market advocates, including the now elderly peasants of Anhui's Xiaogang Village (who pioneered *dabaogan* when they were in their 20s to 30s) argue for the complete privatisation of rural land rights. They claim that the main reason

5 See "Jiu cheng shoufang nongmin buyuan jiaode huan feinong hukou" [90% of interviewed peasants are reluctant to give up land in exchange for non-agricultural household registration], *Wenweipo*, August 1, 2014, http://news.wenweipo.com/2014/08/01/IN1408010053.htm (accessed 10 September 2017); Wang Mingfeng, "Nongmin weihe buyuan 'nong zhuan fei'" [Why are peasants reluctant to change to non-agricultural household registration], *Renmin ribao haiwai ban* [People's Daily Overseas Edition], April 30, 2016, http://society.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0430/c1008-28316200.html (accessed 10 September 2017).

6 See Sally Sargeson, "Violence as Development: Land Expropriation and China's Urbanization," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 40, Iss. 6 (2013), pp. 1063-1085.

why the Anhui Model settled on *dabaogan*, falling short of privatisation, was due to the "Maoist ideological shackles" at the time, which they believe is and should no longer be an issue.[7] On the other hand, left-leaning intellectuals campaign for the recollectivisation of rural land usage rights. They view it as a moral and socialist means to promote large-scale agricultural mechanisation, protect peasants from exploitation by commercial capital, and align the interests of local governments with peasants, similar to what Nanjie's patrons said about the Nanjie Model.[8] Xi's rural reforms reflect a tactical compromise between these two positions. They facilitate significant increase in the marketisation of farmland usage rights, which is favoured by the pro-market camp, while preserve the collective ownership of all rural land, which is considered to be an inviolable socialist tenant by the Left. Rural-registered citizens are now permitted and indeed encouraged to rent or mortgage their farmland usage rights, or to convert it into shares in an agricultural cooperative. This allowed them to capitalise on their land usage rights without detriment to their land contractual rights from the collective. To facilitate the development of the usage rights markets, local governments are required to survey and register the usage rights of all rural land by 2020. These marketisation initiatives should not be seen as privatising rural land in all but name because non-agricultural rural land, which has a higher market value than agricultural land, is excluded from reforms. In other words, it remains dead capital

7 See Wen Guanzhong, "Baozhang nongmin tuichu jiti suoyouzhi de ziyou" [Guarantee the rights of peasants to exit the system of collective ownership], *Ershiyi shiji* [Twenty-First Century], Vol. 111, February 2009, pp. 13-22.

8 See, for example, Hu Jing, Lu Xinyu, et al., "Xuezhe lianshu zhong gou jiti jingji de 'tongyi jingying' quan" [Scholars' joint proposal: Re-establishment of the "unified management" right of the collective economy], Novembe 19, 2016, http://www.szhgh.com/Article/gnzs/farmer/2016-11-19/125072.html (accessed 6 June 2017).

that cannot be traded by rural-registered citizens.[9]

2.2 Socialist rule of law instead of political liberalisation

The models of political liberalisation that were represented by Shekou, Shenzhen and Guangdong shared two ideas in common. The first idea was the protection of basic human rights, such as the freedom of press, freedom of association and universal values. Since the protection of most of these rights is already stipulated in the PRC constitution, supporters of these models have argued that "constitutionalism," that is, the constrain of government powers by the constitution, should be the way forward. Li Youwei, former Party secretary of Shenzhen, wrote an open letter to the Centre calling for constitutionalism in August 2012.[10] In January 2013, The Guangdong-based *Southern Weekend* (*Nanfang zhoumo*) wrote the new year's editorial describing Xi's China Dream the "dream of constitutional government." However, the editorial was completely rewritten by the provincial propaganda authorities before publication.[11] That being said, *Yanhuang chunqiu*, the liberal periodical run by Party influentials who were

9 CCP Central Office and State Council Office, "Guanyu yindao nongcun tudi jingying quan you xu liuzhuan fazhan nongye shidu guimo jingying de yijian" [Opinions on guiding the orderly transference of rural land management rights and developing appropriate scale management], *Xinhua*, November 20, 2014, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-11/20/c_1113339197.htm (accessed 10 September 2017).

10 Li Youwei, "Shijian jiushi shengming, gaige jiushi qiu cun — guanyu zhengzhi tizhi gaige ruogan wenti de sikao" [Time is life, reform is survival — reflections on several problems of political institution reforms], in Qiang wai lou, August 1, 2012, https://commondatastorage.googleapis.com/letscorp_archive/archives/39572 (accessed 3 February 2017).

11 "'Nanfang zhoumo' yuandan xianci liang banben bijiao" [Comparison of the two versions of the new year editorial of Nanfang Zhoumou], BBC Chinese, January 4, 2013, http://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/chinese_news/2013/01/130104_nanfangzhoumo_newyear.shtml?print=1 (accessed February 5, 2017).

close to Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, published its 2013 new year editorial on constitutionalism, which was described as "the consensus for political institution reforms."[12] As anticipated from the censorship of *Southern Weekend*'s editorial, the Xi regime was not supportive of constitutionalism. Between May and June 2013, various central level newspapers, including *Liberation Army Daily* (*Jiefangjun bao*) and *People's Daily*, published articles claiming that constitutionalism was a Western way of doing things that was not suitable for China.[13]

Constitutionalism aside, intra-Party democracy was the other idea that was touted by these three models. This was reflected in Shekou's elections, Shenzhen's election proposals and competitive elections for the Guangdong Party Committee. The idea also found favour with the Sons and Daughters of Yan'an, an association formed of Party elites from the "red second generation." As introduced in Chapter 4, this group is well-known for their left-leaning orientation. Nonetheless, it concurs with the liberals that intra-Party democracy is essential for improving the Party's "self-correcting ability." In February 2011, it submitted to the Party centre a detailed proposal on intra-Party democracy, which it hoped would be implemented on a trial basis within half a year after the 18th Party Congress. The main idea of the proposal was to increase the seats of the Party Committee at each level of territorial administration by 20%. The new seats are to be returned by

12 "'Yanhuang chunqiu' xinnian xianci: Xianfa shi zhengzhi tizhi gaige de gongshi" [Yanhuang chunqiu's new year editorial: Constitutionalism is the consensus for political institution reforms], in Caijin wang, January 4, 2013, http://comments.caijing.com.cn/2013-01-04/112406679.html (accessed February 5, 2017).

13 See Joseph Fewsmith, "Debating Constitutional Government," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 42, October 7, 2013.

direct election from among the Party members at that level.[14] This proposal is yet to be implemented. At present, it seems that enhancing intra-Party democracy is not on Xi's reform agenda. The 60-point "Decision Concerning Several Major Questions of Comprehensive Deepening of Reform" promulgated at the Third Plenum listed well over 300 policy initiatives, but made no single mention of intra-Party democracy.[15] Moreover, Xi might well have undermined what might be considered as "intra-Party democracy" at the highest level. In 2007, Central Committee members cast non-binding votes to recommend members for the Politburo for the first time. This practice was expanded to recommend members for the PBSC five years later. While the extent to which the polls affected the leadership that emerged out of the 18th Party Congress was unknown, it suggested legitimacy for ranking Party members to express their preference for the Party leadership. Ahead of the 19th Party Congress, the Central Committee did not cast ballots to express their preference for the new leadership. *Xinhua* explained that this method was not used because of voting irregularities in the last two occasions. Some Central Committee members were found to have voted "arbitrarily" based on "relationships" (*guanxi*) and "personal feelings" (*renqing*), which made the results an invalid expression of public opinion (*minyi shizhen*). In addition, it was reported that Zhou Yongkang, Sun Zhengcai, Ling Jihua and others — the "tigers"

14 "Women dui shiba da de jianyi — Yan'an ernu lianyi hui" [Our recommendations for the 18th Party Congress: Sons and Daughters of Yan'an Association], in Zhongguo wenge yanjiu wang [China Cultural Revolution Research Net], February 8, 2011, http://www.wengewang.org/read.php?tid=29304 (accessed 2 February 2017).

15 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quanmian shenhua gaige ruogan zhongda wenti de jueding" [CCP Central Committee decision concerning several major questions of comprehensive deepening of reform], *Xinhua*, November 12, 2013, http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/1115/c64094-23559163.html (accessed 5 February 2017).

who were removed by Xi's anti-corruption campaign — exploited the system to engage in "extra-organisational activities."[16]

While Xi rejected political liberalisation, both externally in society and internally within the Party, he did envision a more rule-based order with higher accountability and transparency. It was made clear at the Fourth Plenum of the 18th Party Congress in October 2014 that this would be achieved by promoting the "socialist rule of law" under the Party's leadership. The plenum decided that the authority and duties of Party institutions in the legal system, such as the political and legal affairs commission and Party cells in courts, had to be clarified. Reforms to evidential and procedural rules, public participation and consultation in law-making, access to justice, etc., would be implemented to make the system fairer and more efficient. Furthermore, the Party would invest in building a "socialist rule of law culture" to establish the authority of laws in the mind of citizens and cadres alike, in order to facilitate law enforcement.[17]

16 "Linghang xin shidai de jianqiang lingdao jiti — dang de xin yi jie zhongyang lingdao jigou chansheng jishi" [The strong leadership collective that guides the new age — an account of how the Party's new central leadership organs were produced], *Xinhua*, October 26, 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/19cpcnc/2017-10/26/c_1121860147.htm (accessed 4 February 2017).

17 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quanmian tuijin yifa zhiguo ruogan zhongda wenti de jueding" [CCP Central Committee decision concerning some major questions in comprehensively moving governing the country according to the law forward], *Renmin wang* [People.cn], October 23, 2014, http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/1029/c64387-25927606.html (accessed 5 February 2017).

2.3 Levelling the playing field for the private sector

Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign proposed SOE reforms to level the playing field for the private sector. On the opposite, the Chongqing Model bolstered the state sector, giving local SOEs monopoly contracts for large-scale livelihood projects. These two models emerged out of the context of heated debates on whether the state sector had advanced at the expense of the private sector (*guojin mintui*), thus reversing the direction of the post-Mao market reform. The debates were ignited by high-profile cases of poorly performing SOEs buying well-performing private companies at below market value and the State Council's four trillion *yuan* stimulus plan.[18] The Third Plenum Decision clearly indicated the Centre's endorsement for retreating the state sector that was proposed during Guangdong's Thought Emancipation Campaign. It was stated that the market should be allowed to "play a decisive role" in the allocation of key resources such as capital, energy and land, which had yet to be fully deregulated, and were mainly allocated by governments at all levels. This often resulted in SOEs being offered these resources at a very low price, which was to the disadvantage of private companies. The Decision proposed that the government should redirect its role from direct involvement in the market to market regulation and provision of public goods. In addition, the nationwide adoption of the "negative lists" (*fumian qingdan*) that had been trialled at the Shanghai Free Trade Zone was proposed. The "negative lists" contain activities and industrial sectors that are reserved for SOEs. Everything that is not on the list will be permitted for entry by the domestic

18 Sarah Eaton (2016), pp. 1-27.

private sector, thereby reversing the current situation where private companies cannot assume the right of entry to an industry unless explicitly authorised. The Decision decided that the monopoly of SOEs should be reduced as much as possible. This included even allowing private companies to take controlling stakes in SOEs in some circumstances. That being said, the Decision still preserves a large state sector that plays a "leading role" in the economy. It is only that it will be subjected to much more competition from the private sector.[19]

3. Review of the analytical framework

Certainly, there are still ideational conflicts in China today. But the extent to which they could affect policy change is more limited since Xi came into power. The 60-point Decision adopted at the Third Plenum did not only establish the direction for the reform in a clear language, but also specified the content of reform policies. This greatly narrows the room for policy change based on ideas dissimilar to those underpinning the Decision. For example, Alexander Day and Mindi Schneider find that Xi's rural reforms have greatly facilitated large commercial capital to takeover the countryside, making non-market-based alternatives of rural organisation, such as the cooperatives emerging out of the New Rural Reconstruction Movement, difficult to survive.[20] After the Third Plenum, the Leadership Small Group on the Comprehensive Deepening of

19 "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quanmian shenhua gaige ruogan zhongda wenti de jueding" [CCP Central Committee decision concerning several questions of comprehensive deepening of reform], *Xinhua*, November 12, 2013, http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/1115/c64094-23559163.html (accessed 5 February 2017).

20 See Alexander F. Day and Mindi Schneider, "The End of Alternatives? Capitalist Transformation, Rural Activism and the Politics of Possibility in China," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, November 15, 2017, pp. 1-25.

Reform was established and chaired by Xi. This again signalled increasing political centralisation in major policy changes and increasing predictability in policy outcomes, which is at odds with the informality of ideational conflicts and the indeterminacy of resultant policy outcomes. Moreover, the downfall of Bo and the controversies of the Chongqing Model have made it politically dangerous for officials to use model-making to engage in ideational conflicts openly. This is not to mention that Xi has tried hard to bring factions under control, from launching an ambitious anti-corruption campaign to asserting his eminence as the Party's "core" and "leader" — a title that was only used by Mao previously.[21] The emphasis on Party discipline implies that ideational differences should not be actionable by officials other than within internal Party meetings under democratic centralism.

In Xi's "new age," model-making continues at the local level, but is emptied of ideational conflicts. However, this does not automatically imply that it is conforming to Heilmann's account of technocratic experimentation. Recent research by Christian Göbel and Thomas Heberer has shown that under the new cadre evaluation system, local officials are being assessed on their ability to create context-specific policy innovations. This has led to the proliferation of new "best practices" being upheld as local models. But many of these models are short-lived and are actually not aimed at solving real problems. This is likely because officials produce new policies simply for the sake of receiving high evaluation scores, and pay little attention to advance planning or consultation with

21 See Joseph Fewsmith, "The 19th Party Congress: Ringing in Xi Jinping's New Age," *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 55, January 23, 2018.

stakeholders, thus leading to failure at the implementation stage. It is also because of the imperative of policy innovation itself: officials are required to come up with new policies even in the absence of pressing problems to be resolved. This means that existing well-performing policies are being aborted, and new policies are being installed and upheld as models to attract positive attention and funding from the higher-ups. These distortions suggest that model-making is still intensely politicised even where ideational conflicts are being put on hold in China today.[22]

22 Christian Göbel and Thomas Heberer, "The Policy Innovation Imperative: Changing Techniques for Governing China's Local Governors," in Vivienne Shue and Patricia M. Thornton, *To Govern China: Evolving Practices of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 279-304.

APPENDIX ONE

Extract of the provisions of the Sixty Articles that were violated by Dazhai

Provisions concerning the method of labour management

Article 1	...The people's commune must adhere to the principle of payment according to work.
Article 34	The production brigade should assist the production team in establishing a standard work-point for every piece of work. The following aspects of the piece of work should be factored into the value of the work-point: the level of skills required, the level of physical strength required and the level of importance to production. Every member of the people's commune should receive the same pay based on the piece-rate work-point system, regardless of whether they are man or woman, old or young, cadres or members.
Article 35	The production team must conscientiously implement the principle of payment according to work. The level of payment should commensurate with the level of work. It must avoid egalitarian income distribution among members of the people's commune.

Provisions concerning the accounting level

Article 2	The people's commune is comprised of three levels: the people's commune, production brigade and production team. This is a three-level system of ownership. The production team is the basic accounting level.
Article 28	In order to raise the incentives of members and cadres of the production team, the production team must be maintained as the basic accounting level.

Provisions concerning private plots, household sideline production and rural trade fairs

Article 38	Sideline production conducted by members of the people's commune form a supplementary part of the socialist economy that must be maintained. The people's commune should permit and encourage its members to make use of their leisure time to participate in sideline production in order to raise their own income and contribute to active rural trade fairs.
Article 39	Members of the people's commune are permitted to participate in the following sideline production: (1) The cultivation of “private plots” distributed by the collective. Each production team should separate 5–7% of the total arable land as “private plots.” Once the “private plots” are distributed to members of the people's commune, there should not be any change to it in the long term...

(5) Growing fruit trees and bamboo in the courtyard in front of their house.

Article 41 The produce of the private plot belongs to the members of the people's commune who are distributed with the plot. They have the right to sell their produce in the rural trade fair after handing in a quota of their produce to the state which has been agreed in contract.

Provisions concerning cadre participation in manual labour

Article 49 Cadres of the people's commune should participate in labour for no fewer than 60 days per year...Cadres of the production brigades and production teams should be rewarded with some bonus work-points, the total number of which should be approximately 2% of the total number of work-points for the production brigade.

Provisions concerning capital construction works

Article 11 Irrigation works and other capital construction works which are conducive to agricultural production should be undertaken in light of the constraints in manpower resources, material availability and the finances of the people's commune. Prior to the commencement of the works, approval should be sought from the upper-level authorities, and deliberation should be carried out within the people's commune, production brigade and production team. The works should not be undertaken in excess, and their undertaking

	should not diminish agricultural production or the level of income of members of the people's commune.
Article 25	…The time allocated for members of the people's commune to participate in capital construction works should be limited to approximately 3% of the total work-days required of the members in a given year.

Source: "Nongcun renmin gongshe gongzuo tiaoli (xiuzheng cao'an)" [Articles on the work of the rural people's communes (revised draft)], September 27, 1962, in Huang Daoxia, Yu Zhan and Wang Xiyu, *Jianguo yilai nongye hezuohua shiliao huibian* [Compilation of historical materials of agricultural collectivisation since the founding of the state] (Beijing: Zhongyang dangshi chubanshe, 1992), pp. 732-741.

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