The Politics of Factional Conflict and Collective Violence: The Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou, 1966-1968

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A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

July 2014

Acknowledgement

The writing of this dissertation has been one of the most significant academic challenges I have ever had to face. Without the support, patience and guidance of the following people, this study would not have been completed. It is to them that I owe my deepest gratitude.

At Oxford, I am very lucky to receive supervision from Michael Biggs. His wisdom, knowledge and commitment to the highest standards inspire and motivate me. I also would like to thank my dissertation examiners Vivienne Shue, Tak Wing Chan, Rana Mitter, and Patricia Thornton. At Stanford, Andrew Walder has been a long-time mentor that guides me to the study of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. I also would like to thank Jean Oi, Doug McAdam, Tai-chun Kuo, Ramon Myers, Susan Olzak, and Xueguang Zhou.

I am also very grateful for critical and insightful comments from Sidney Tarrow, Roderick MacFarquhar, Yang Su, Guobin Yang, Dingxin Zhao, Joel Andreas, Yiching Wu, and Youyu Xu at various stages of the dissertation writing.

I thank Michelle Chen Jingxia, Annie Bentley, Kenneth Fok, and William Louey for their generous financial supports for my doctoral study at Oxford.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank my friends Shuming Ye, Zerong Xu, Xiaoguang Fan, Jun Han, Yao Liu, Rilly Chen, Tianjue Luo, and Xiaojun Li for their kind helps at various stages.

Finally, I thank my parents and dedicate this work to them.

Abstract

This thesis examines the nature of mass factionalism and rebellious alignment during the Chinese Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1968. This period in Chinese history presents an internecine mass conflict that boasts the largest political upheavals of the 20th century. The most puzzling question of the explosion of this intense rebellious rivalry lies in the mechanisms and processes of collective actors' political choices: why do mobilized groups adopt varied political orientations? How do collective identities form at a given historical circumstance and subsequently alter the orientations of mobilized groups and the contents of movements?

In conventional social structural analyses of contentious politics, mass actors' decisions are affected by functionally differentiated interests inherent in their pre-existing social positions. This model defines mass rebellion and factional alignment as a form of interest group politics, attributing political choices to collective agency's pre-existing sociopolitical status quo and thus pits different social groups against one another. As a result, similar occupational and status groups in the previous hierarchical structure would make *similar* political choices that lead them to form well-defined competing factions.

In contrast to this static structural interpretation, I propose a contextual process model to analyze processes of political division and factional contention within political movements. With a case study of Guangzhou, I argue that rebellious alignment was rooted in mobilized groups' political interactions in a rapidly evolving phase of the conflict, rather than rising from the tensions that existed between different socio-economic layers of society. During the times of radical instability such as the Chinese Cultural Revolution, political ambiguity and contingency were the defining characteristics. In such unstable political environment, the basic elements of the movement changed so many times: each phase of the rebel movement projected itself by means of different actors, agendas, targets, and so on. Consequently, collective actors observed their embedded local political environment, interpreted it, and subsequently chose a course of action in a dynamic process. In this regard, similar status groups in the previous hierarchical structure would make *different* political choices and tactically change their political alliance.

This research is made possible by sources unavailable to analysts in the 1970s and 1980s. The first are a huge quantity of internal source materials based on extensive primary research, including local newspapers, handbills, and red guard tabloids published by mass organizations. The second kind of source is a provincial dataset composed of 106 county annals (*xianzhi*). These local annals contain detailed narratives and statistical data on political events during the Cultural Revolution. The third type are personal memoirs of movement participants and former provincial party leaders, and field interviews from former rebel leaders who were deeply involved in key events. These new materials permit a more detailed and nuanced portrayal of how political divisions evolved during this turbulent period.

Contents

1.	Contextual Process Model of Contentious Conflicts	1
2.	Turning Point I: January Power Seizure	49
3.	Turning Point II: Under Military Control	101
4.	Factional Warfare and Violent Summer	142
5.	Turning Point III: Creation of Revolutionary Committees	177
6.	The Political Logic of Factional Killings	220
7.	Toward a Dynamic Analysis of Historical Episodes	239
	Bibliography	257
	Newspapers and Red Guards Tabloids	291

Figures and Tables

Figures

1.1	Social structural model	10
1.2	Contextual process model	19
1.3	The temporal distribution of major political events in Guangdong province	42
2.1	The pattern of Guangzhou January power seizure, 1967	99
2.2	Power supplies in Guangzhou, 1960-1970	69
3.1	Claimed membership of mass organizations in Guangzhou, Jan-Apr 1967	140
5.1	Formation of provincial-level Revolutionary Committees, 1967-68	216
6.1	Cross-province death density during the Cultural Revolution, 1966-68	236
6.2	Armed conflicts and reported death in Guangdong province, 1967	237
6.2	Association between factional killings and political vacuum in local government in Guangdong province, Jan-Sep 1968	238

Tables

2.1	Intra-factional splits and organizational changes within rebel organizations, Jan-Feb 1967	100
2.2	Establishment date of Revolutionary Committees at provincial level, 1967	86
3.1	Recruitment and demotion of cadre ranks in Guangdong province, 1950-1965 (in thousands)	121
3.2	Huang Yongsheng's speech to both factions in 1967	130
4.1	Zhou Enlai's meetings with representatives of Guangzhou factions, 1967-1968	176
5.1	Factional disputes for the composition in the revolutionary committee in Guangzhou, Oct 1967- Feb 1968	219
6.1	Average reported deaths in Guangdong, Guangxi, and Inner Mongolia	231
6.2	Descriptive statistics, Guangdong province, 1967-1968	232
6.3	Correlation matrix	233
6.4	Deaths in factional violence in Guangdong province, Jul 1967- Oct 1968	234
6.5	Association between factional killings and revolutionary committees in Guangdong province, Jul 1967- Oct 1968	235

Chapter 1

Contextual Process Model of Contentious Conflicts

"I come down on being a sociologist. If there is anything we have to offer, it is clarity about a complex and dynamic situation."[1]

(Collins 2012)

The most puzzling question of political movements lies in the mechanisms and processes of collective actors' political choice. This puzzle has also been conceived as the central question of almost every theory about political movements—why do mobilized groups adopt varied political orientations? How do political orientations form at a given historical circumstance? How does group identity shape and alter the orientations of mobilized groups and the contents of movements? What circumstances prompt the formation as well as division of different social movement organizations?

In the past decades, there has been extensive research on the relationship between social structure and collective behavior. Most social movement scholars abandon the traditional frustration-aggression accounts from earlier generation of scholarships and focus primarily on the structural force and long-term temporality. According to this perspective, the emergence and subsequent development of movement activities are premised on some given and pre-determined factors. Those

[1] Randall Collins, "C-escalation and d-escalation: A theory of the time-dynamics of conflict", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (2012), pp. 1-20.

determining factors are usually embedded in mass actors' pre-existing structural conditions and thus provide a fixed set of variable attributes for risky and unusual mobilizations. The existence of groups with conflict interests is also objective well before the onset of a movement crisis. In short, research on political movements "was deeply curious about the relationship between social structure and politics."[2] Scholars tend to agree that the direction of a group's political orientation is derived from collective actors' pre-existing occupational status, social positions, and political beliefs.

This dominant rhetoric of social movement has gradually changed over the past several years. A number of political sociologists, network researchers, and social contention theorists have come to reconceptualize the invariant structural model into a series of constituent processes and examine the dynamic processes of movement actors over short periods of time. The most pronounced version appears in McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly's work in which they emphasize the relational, interactional, and processual quality of contentious episodes.[3] Macro-historical contentious politics, according to this perspective, "does not simply activate pre-existing actors and their fixed attributes, but engages actors in a series of interactive performances that proceed through incessant improvisation."[4] Since then, scholars seek to search for the dynamic mechanisms and emergent processes for patterns of social movement activity. Building upon McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly's varied processual analytic work,

[2] Andrew Walder, "Political sociology and social movement", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35 (2009), pp. 393-412.
[3] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2007); Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow, "Dynamics of Contention ten years on", *Mobilization*, Vol. 16, No., 1 (2010), pp. 1-10.
[4] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, pp. 56-57.

Demetriou suggests a new field of "processual comparative sociology" and argues that "elucidating the possibilities of processual comparison is particularly important for comparative-historical sociology because the subfield rests upon processual presuppositions."[5] In his Presidential Address at 2011 American Sociological Association annual meeting, Randall Collins also remarks that "being a sociologist…if there is anything we have to offer, it is clarity about a complex and dynamic situation."[6]

Following these guidelines, this dissertation will take a further step towards a theory of movement dynamics by looking at factional contentions in highly centralized communist China from 1966 to 1968. I propose a contextual process model to analyze processes of conflict among collective actors. To dig into process, I will identify causal chains and mechanisms that change the content and direction of contentious episodes. In contrast to the static structural model which lays emphasis on mobilized social interests at different levels of society, I argue that the choices of mass actors are highly circumscribed by their entrenched local political contexts that force them into decisions largely dictated by the course of events. The prevailing paradigm tends to stress that mobilized groups strive to maintain their shared collective identities and group boundaries and differentiate themselves from other groups. Therefore, social conflicts are the result of an irreconcilable conflict of structural interests. However, I argue that in a rapidly changing and highly-staked political

[5] Chares Demetriou, "Processual comparative sociology: Building on the approach of Charles Tilly", *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2012), pp. 51-65.
[6] Randall Collins, "C-escalation and d-escalation: A theory of the time-dynamics of conflict", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (2012), pp. 1-20.

situation, pre-existing structural interests have less predictive power for people's action. Collective actors tend to cross the boundaries of their own social groups by tactically interpreting external political uncertainty in different paces of rhythms.

Structural Equilibrium

Structure can be conceived "in terms of categories such as status, class, gender, or occupation, or as relationships such as kinship, authority, social networks, community, or small-group interaction."[7] Admitting that "structure is one of the most important and most elusive terms in the vocabulary of current social science," Sewell also recognizes three problems. First, structuralists tend to assume a rigid causal determinism in social existence. Structure is hard and immutable, "like the girders of a building", while social processes are treated as secondary and superficial, "like the outer skin of a skyscraper". Second, structure is too impervious to change since it implies stability and consistency. "In structural discourse, change is commonly located outside of structure." Third, structure is too open to a variety of meanings and has been used in contradictory senses in different social scientific discourses.[8]

There is no doubt that the structural characteristics of society account for some of the variance in the political behavior of movement actors, and set limits on the range of possible political outcomes. Researches in related fields have largely retained an interest in framing political phenomena within features of social structure. For instance, students of revolution emphasize the structural conditions of state

[7] Andrew Walder, "Political sociology and social movement", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35 (2009), pp. 393-412.
[8] William H. Sewell, "A theory of structure: Duality, agency, and transformation", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (1992), pp. 1-29.

breakdown for revolutionary outcome,[9] and scholars of conflicts treat violence and atrocity as rooted inherently in longstanding ethnic and religious antagonism or ideological divisions.[10] However, Sewell's critique of structuralism highlights the need to rethink the current excessive emphasis on this theoretical paradigm.

The standard structural arguments have been focusing on background conditions and pre-existing motivational factors, and thus impart a static and fixed quality of social movements. To some scholars, pre-movement identities are critical.[11] Structural force is understood as those established, pre-existing conditions that confront mass actors and constrain or facilitate their personal choices, such as roles, social networks, formal organizations and social groups. Mass actors' decisions are structurally determined by their prior social positions. Therefore, collective actors who are categorized in the similar social and political arrangements are presumed to have common identity and shared interests. Snow and McAdam have used "structural proximity and network connections" to describe how "incumbents of the same or similar roles or members of the same ethnic, racial, or religious groups, life in the same neighborhood, work in a similar enterprise" become essentially isomorphic.[12]

Such isomorphic nature is a product of *structural similarities*. Similarity, in the structural sense, refers to "the degree to which actors have the same types of ties with

[9] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991); Jeff Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[10] Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Donald L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).
[11] Francesca Polletta and James M. Jasper, "Collective identity and social movements", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 27 (2001), pp.283-305.
[12] David A. Snow and Doug McAdam, "Identity work processes in the context of social movements: Clarifying the identity/movement nexus", in Sheldon Stryker and Robert W. White (eds.). *Self, Identity, and Social Movements* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 41-67, at p. 44.

the same types of others."[13] Structural similarities imply that when embedding in the similar elements of social structure, mass actors would formulate similar interests, exhibit similar behavioral patterns, and make similar choices within their group boundaries. In the American civil rights movement, Morris suggests that the black community organizations as political institutions with which people were affiliated heavily shaped their communal attitudes and activism.[14] Another example is from Paris Commune of 1871, the neighborhood organizational structure forged community solidarities for the mobilization of urban revolutionary insurgency.[15]

Structural similarities also produce *solidification of identities*. This term stresses solidified and consistent identities through the entire course of movement action. Solidification of identity highlights "fundamental sameness" across persons and over time, distinguishing group members from nonmembers, and insiders from outsiders.[16] The simplest definition of identity is "us versus them". Tilly characterizes identity as "an actor's experience of a category, tie, role, network, group or organization, coupled with a public representation of that experience."[17] Because actors are structurally positioned in the similar group memberships, status affiliations or network linkages, their core identities would be converged into the same or similar manner. This implies cohesive group boundedness and homogeneity. McAdam and Paulsen acknowledge that "prior ties provide the crucial social context in which identities may achieve

[13] Alaina Michaelson and Noshir S. Contractor, "Structural position and perceived similarity", *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 55, No. 3 (1992), pp. 300-310.
[14] Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1984), p. 96.
[15] Roger V. Gould, "Multiple networks and mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 56, No. 6 (1991), pp. 716-729; Roger V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities: Class, Community and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
[16] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond identity", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2000), pp. 1-47.
[17] Charles Tilly, *Citizenship, Identity and Social History* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 7.

salience and the linkage between identity and activism can be forged."[18] Such positional identity is fixed, stable, and constantly constitutes a strong predictive power for people to interpret political reality.

Solidification of identity leads to the factional alignment and polarization of political groups. I term this process as *partisan coalition*. Partisan coalition implies a clear-cut and consolidated factional identification, linking group-specific identity with movement coalition as a form of interest group politics. Once joining a certain group, the membership of that group is fixed. Collective identification engenders a common political goal for all the group members to pursue.[19] As Mische notes in her study of youth activism in Brazil, "partisan ties [are] often a source of backstage mediation that contributes to civic-coalition building."[20] Normally, actors identify themselves with highly-ranked groups in a hierarchical system to gain self-esteem. Likewise, actors will avoid identifying with low-ranked groups for the same reason. However, when people are trapped in a condition that exit from a low-ranked group is not possible, they will have a great interest in changing the attributes of their own group in a positive direction and requesting a redistribution of social recognition. By doing so, they have to depend on current low-ranked group identity for resources support and actions coordination.[21] In this way, occupational and status groups who are relatively underprivileged in a hierarchical social system seek to change their status

[18] Doug McAdam and Ronnelle Paulsen, "Social ties and recruitment: Toward a specification of the relationship", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 99, No. 3 (1993), pp. 640-667.
[19] Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (Third Edition) (London, UK: Routledge, 2008), p. 102.
[20] Ann Mische, *Partisan Publics: Communication and Contention across Brazilian Youth Activist Networks (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 348.
[21] Henri Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Brian Mullen, Rupert Brown and Colleen Smith, "Ingroup bias as a function of salience, relevance, and status: An integration", *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 22 (1992), pp. 103-122.

quo, and fight against the more privileged groups who wish to preserve it.

The partisan coalition of political groups provokes factional conflicts when groups use existing political opportunities to pursue their distinct interest. The prototypical conflict pattern is split between the two parties, in the name of the weaker side versus the stronger side,[22] the radical versus the conservative,[23] or the anti-faction versus the pro-faction.[24] Two-party conflict, by and large, sustains stable, non-flowing and equalizing tension, or *scale equilibrium* between opposites. Equilibrium indicates a state "in which people's plans are consistent with each other."[25] Equilibrium also ensures that the number of actors and range of coordinated contentious actions will not increase or decrease disproportionately. Under scale equilibrium, the level of conflict either ends in a long-term power balancing and compromise between the two sides with equivalent sources and manpower, or direct confrontations between the two sides does not occur, as the relatively weaker camp is thoroughly disintegrated and discredited by the stronger force. However, in some cases, "competition intensifies the evolution of the repertoire toward more radical forms, as movements try to show they are more daring than their opponents."[26] The point here is that scale equilibrium does not necessarily exclude a radicalization of tactics and themes. But when one party has lost or gained, or has been weakened or strengthened, the other party would respond in an accommodating way, converging on

[22] Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[23] Howard Kimeldorf, *Reds or Rackets? The Making of Radical and Conservative Unions on the Waterfront.* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).
[24] Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, "Nanjing's failed 'January Revolution' of 1967: The inner politics of a provincial power seizure", *The China Quarterly*, 203 (2010), pp. 675-692.
[25] Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 101.
[26] Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy 1965-1975* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 14.

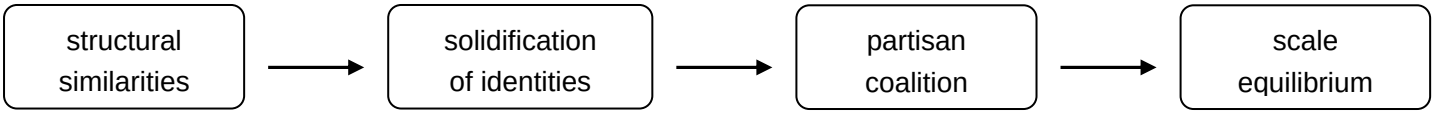
a new equilibrium "in which neither party can hope to make substantial gains by continuing to raise the stakes of contention…and to further alter the balance of power in their favor."[27]

Meanwhile, structuralists also tend to assume that long and medium run changes in political or economic circumstances rather than rapid fluctuations in short time periods facilitate collective action. Examples given of such occasions are urbanization, industrialization, prolonged unemployment, and widespread demographic changes.[28] The key point is that the impact of relatively *long-term* social transformation yields shifts in the political status quo, which in effect invokes changes in the political opportunity structure. Consequently, the expansion of political opportunities is the source of structural strain and therefore promotes movement vitality. Collective agency who are most affected by this disruption would form various kinds of social strain that make them more likely to join radical movements.[29] In studying agrarian revolution in the developing societies between 1948 and 1970, Paige demonstrates that the expanding economic transformation was one of the root causes of rural peasant rebellions, especially when a formerly closed market was incorporated into the global world economy.[30] Such long-term and gradual changes also include regular sequence or stage of cycles of contention.[31] For example, Beissinger catalogs cycles

[27] Ruud Koopmans, "Protest in time and space: The evolution of waves of contention", in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.). *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 2004), pp. 19-46.
[28] Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 41.
[29] Doug McAdam and William H. Sewell, "It's about time: Temporality in the study of contentious politics", in Ronald R. Aminzade and et al. (eds.). *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 89-125.
[30] Jeffery Paige, *Agrarian Revolution: Social Movements and Export Agriculture in the Underdeveloped World* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1975).
[31] Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy 1965-1975*.

of Russian nationalist mobilization in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet state.[32] Biggs observes that the circularity of positive feedback can incite further waves of protest.[33]

Figure 1.1 social structural model



In short, structural outlook tends to emphasize that mass actors' decisions are affected by functionally differentiated interests inherent in their pre-existing social positions. This model defines political movements and factional alignment as a form of interest group politics, attributing political choices to participants' orientations toward the pre-existing sociopolitical status quo and thus pits different social groups against one another. As shown in figure 1.1, based on structural similarities, occupational and status groups in the previous similar hierarchical structure will originate solidified group identities and make *similar* political choices that lead them to form well-defined competing factions. Identities are inherently stable and consistent, and factional coalition is structurally given and determined by participants' prior status positions and sociopolitical background. Therefore, long-term social processes with fixed and equalizing social outcomes would be expected under

[32] Mark R. Beissinger, "Event analysis in transitional societies: Protest mobilization in the former Soviet Union", in Dieter Rucht, Ruud Koopmans, and Friedhelm Neidhardt (eds.). *Acts of Dissent: New Developments in the Study of Protest* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), pp. 284-316; Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[33] Michael Biggs, "Positive feedback in collective mobilization: The American strike wave of 1886", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2003), pp. 217-254.

structural model.

Processual Dynamics

In contrast to this widely accepted social structural argument, I propose a contextual process model with quite different assumptions about group identity formation processes. This model emphasizes that mass actors observe their embedded political environments or local contexts, tactically interpret and respond to them, and subsequently undertake a course of action in a dynamic process. In this regard, mass actors from identical or similar social strata in the previous hierarchical structure will make *different* political choices and align themselves on opposite factional sides.

With McAdam and his collaborators' work on movement dynamics, we come to see that some process-oriented scholars begin to emphasize interactions, relations, and emergent processes in their study of contention. Van de Ven has conceptualized three meanings of process: (1) a logic that explains a causal relationship between independent and dependent variables, (2) a category of concepts or variables that refers to actions of individuals or organizations, and (3) a sequence of events that describes how things change over time.[34] Of these three definitions, only the third explicitly focuses on the constituents of incidents, activities, and stages that develop and change over time in context. Some of the key processes and concatenating performances, such as temporal sequence, tactical maneuvering, contingent improvisation, transformative repertoire, shifting participation, competitive escalation,

[34] Andrew H. Van de Ven, "Suggestions for studying strategy process: A research note", *Strategic Management Journal*, 13 (1992), pp. 169-188.

and strategic interplay have been constructed and analyzed in the midst of the social movement.[35]

Processual Logic

Firstly, similar structural interests formed by previously social institutions and status differences are not always the source of contentious conflict. In essence, those historically specific conditions, or in Jack Goldstone's term "initial conditions", are invariably transformed by decisions and events to produce various outcomes.[36] Social reality occurs rather than merely exists; it resides in an interactional or relational situation.[37] Actors are confronted with multiple aspects of the circumstances that might complicate their set of choices.[38] This is especially true in a highly uncertain and ambiguous political environment that some contingent events may break the bounds of these similar conditions and produce different sequence of changes channeled through existing structures. As a result, movement participants "rely both on past repertoires and situational improvisation,"[39] and "the decision they make is a

[35] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*; Charles Tilly, *Stories, Identities, and Political Change* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002); Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Mario Diani and Doug McAdam, *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003); Doug McAdam, "Beyond structural analysis: Toward a more dynamic understanding of social movements", in Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (eds.). *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 281-298; Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Donatella della Porta, "Competitive escalation during protest cycles: Comparing left-wing and religious conflicts", in Stefan Malthaner, Lorenzo Bosi and Chares Demetriou (eds.). *Dynamics of Political Violence: A Process-Oriented Perspective on Radicalization and the Escalation of Political Conflict* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2014), pp. 93-114.

[36] Jack Goldstone, "Initial conditions, general laws, path dependence, and explanation in historical sociology", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104, No. 3 (1998), pp. 829-845.

[37] Piotr Sztompka, *Society in Action: The Theory of Social Becoming* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[38] Jon Elster, "A plea for mechanisms", in Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg (eds.). *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 45-73, at p. 46.

[39] Randall Collins, "The contentious social interactionism of Charles Tilly", *Social Psychology Quarterly*, Vol. 73, No. 1 (2010), pp. 5-10, at p. 8.

strategic one."[40] They improvise within their political environments and carve out their lines of action by strategically responding to actions from other participants.

Secondly, contentious conflict is a processual development, stressing the fluid and emergent character of political struggle. Conflict is a dynamic flow of action and counter-action. They come into being "because of the time-dynamics of conflict itself."[41] In his classical social conflict theory, Coser points out that conflict leads to power centralization within each group and motivates group leaders to seek supporters in all the different sectors of society. He further adds that "struggle may bring together otherwise unrelated persons and groups. Coalitions and temporary associations, rather than more permanent and cohesive groups, will result from conflicts where primarily pragmatic interests of the participants are involved...Most coalitions between already existing groups...are formed by defensive purpose only...this very perception leads to the creation of new associations and coalition."[42] This statement captures the spiraling process in which conflict spurs the formation of opposed factional coalitions over time, which in turn further intensifies the conflict.

In studying strikes demanding for eight-hour days in Chicago in 1886, Biggs shows that interactional competition between rival players rather than exogenous variables such as gradual changes in political or economic circumstances were real factors which boosted the rapid mobilization of the workers' protest. Initially, craft unionists had no interests in mobilizing members because they feared class conflict,

[40] Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 18.
[41] Randall Collins, "C-escalation and d-escalation: A theory of the time-dynamics of conflict", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (2012), pp. 1-20.
[42] Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1956), pp. 148-149.

while revolutionary anarchists who controlled a rival council of trade unions dismissed shorter working hours as a delusion. However, a small number of committed worker activists did embrace the campaign. This unexpected enthusiasm quickly spread amongst ordinary workers and inspired them to join the eight-hour campaign. When the Union denounced the anarchists for opposing workers' action, the anarchists had no choice but to follow the masses. This in turn threatened the dominant position of unionists and forced them to hurriedly organize various mobilization meetings for fear of losing ground to their rival faction. Competition among separate organizations multiplied workers' participation in a positive direction and eventually brought about the massive upsurge of protests in May 1886. Apparently, the strike waves in Chicago were not based on workers' class solidarity, and certainly not related to their pre-existing structural influences, such as occupation, industry, location or ethnicity. Instead, the sudden explosion of movement was a reflection of rapid fluctuations among local competitors within a short course of protesting weeks.[43]

Thirdly, people's actions are patterned by local contexts and thus sensitive to local contexts. Local contexts have been defined as ambiguous and constantly shifting and these shifts are initiated by "changes in political institutions that originate outside the immediate context, they can be abrupt, and their impact can be felt in a short period."[44] The dynamics of local niches are crucial, because it "may constitute a

[43] Michael Biggs, "Strikes as sequences of interaction: The American strike wave of 1886", *Social Science History*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2002), pp. 583-617; Michael Biggs, "Positive feedback in collective mobilization: The American strike wave of 1886", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2003), pp. 217-254.
[44] Andrew Walder, "Ambiguity and choice in political movements: The origins of Beijing Red Guard factionalism", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 112, No. 3, (2006), pp. 710-750.

barrier that prevents [prejudiced] persons from acting on their prejudices or, conversely, local interactions can pull people into activity that they may not have previously been planning."[45] In the 1995 Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia-and-Herzegovina, Klusemann finds that atrocities and confrontational tension did not unfold from longstanding ideological divisions and rivalries between ethnic groups. Those pre-existing motivational factors to atrocities are insufficient to account for what actually happened locally. Pre-existing background conditions at the macro level still need to pass through a situational turning point at the micro local occasions.[46]

Short-run shifts within local contexts are another crucial variable. In the short run, a series of situational events produce sets of environmental constraints on actors' ability to make consistent decisions, and compel them to defect in a quick and unpredictable pace at various junctures of the movement process, or micro-situational turning points as "interactional-relational turn".[47] The accumulation of such short-run effects can rapidly redefine actors' connections with their prior structural position for political choice and eventually affect the drift of the situation as a whole.

For example, in Tilly's early study of the Vendee counterrevolution in western France in the 1790s, he concludes that political conflicts were shaped by a short-term process of mobilization than by the pre-existing social structure or by long-term economic changes during the Revolution. The insurgent groups participated in the

[45] Stefan Klusemann, "Micro-situational antecedents of violent atrocity", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2010), pp. 272-295.
[46] Stefan Klusemann, "Massacres as process: A micro-sociological theory of internal patterns of mass atrocities", *European Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 9, No. 5 (2012), pp. 468-480.
[47] Stefan Klusemann, *After State Breakdown: Dynamics of Multi-party Conflict, Violence, and Paramilitary Mobilization in Russia 1904–1920, Germany 1918–1934, and Japan 1853 –1877*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 2010.

counterrevolutionary uprising did not follow a consistent group pattern to the conflict. When the new authority required local priests to declare their loyalty by oath to the new revolutionary government and the new Constitution, each of the major social groups in the region was trapped into a very difficult choice: whether to take the oath and face stigmatization of betrayal from community members, or to refuse the oath and receive punishments from the newly-established authority. Consequently, the whole range of local priests, including local Catholic clergy, was split by this forced demand into a new political cleavage. Even those urban merchants who had been most openly identified with the bourgeois French revolution were encountered internal disputes and divided against one another in this process.[48] Paralleled with France case, when Lithuania was occupied by the Soviets in 1940, thousands of Lithuanians, including Lithuanian Jews, were confronted with a similar hard decision: whether to join their neighbors in support of a community-based rebellion organization, or to become a member of Soviet collaboration force whose mission was to pacify their local community. Individuals thus often moved across a set of multiple possible roles, including collaborator, neutral, and resister when the situations changed.[49]

When choices are made, new political identities emerge with new political interests and motivate participants to tactically accommodate themselves in the immediately ensuing political events. Those identities are no more than static and deep-rooted in pre-existing structural attributes such as social class or political

[48] Charles Tilly, *The Vendee* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 227-304.
[49] Roger D. Petersen, *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe*.

background. Instead, they are emergent and fluid properties. All identities change "continuously as a function of interaction with other parties."[50] Similarly, contentious performances appear as a processual, changeable, and ongoing product of incessant interactions rather than as emanating out of pre-determined identities.[51] An illustrative example comes from the French Revolution. McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly find that the polarization between Jacobins and their former comrades, the "Girondins", was a process that resulted from the interactive politics of the revolution itself rather than from enduring cleavages within French political structure. The two groups had previously united together in the fight against the monarchy and the feuillants who supported it in the early stage, but tactically altered their stances as political opponents over some concrete issues such as the arrest of the King, and Parisian Section assemblies through the process. In other words, their starkly opposite identities are sharpened only over the course of revolutionary conflict in relational space.[52]

In short, collective actors' behavioral patterns at the group level are not captured by structural framing that can be seen as exerting a causal effect on collective action in the traditional social movement literature. On the contrary, actors' fateful decisions are deeply embedded in and influenced by a constantly-changing political environment. During this dynamic process, new political identities are shaped and new political interests are continually redefined because of reconstitution of identity.

[50] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, p. 55.
[51] Craig Calhoun, "The problem of identity in collective action", in Joan Huber (ed.). *Macro-Micro Linkages in Sociology* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage. 1991), pp. 51-75, at p. 59.
[52] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, pp. 323-327.

New identities are subsequently served as a basis for group formation. Contentious conflict thus unfolds when rival groups observe each other and respond to each other, like a "form of cultural learning".[53] Because each side tries to undermine and discredit the other, repertoires therefore "proceed through intense coordination, contingent improvisation, tactical maneuvering, responses to signals from other participants, on-the-spot reinterpretations, and strings of unexpected outcomes inciting new improvisations."[54]

Contextual Process Model

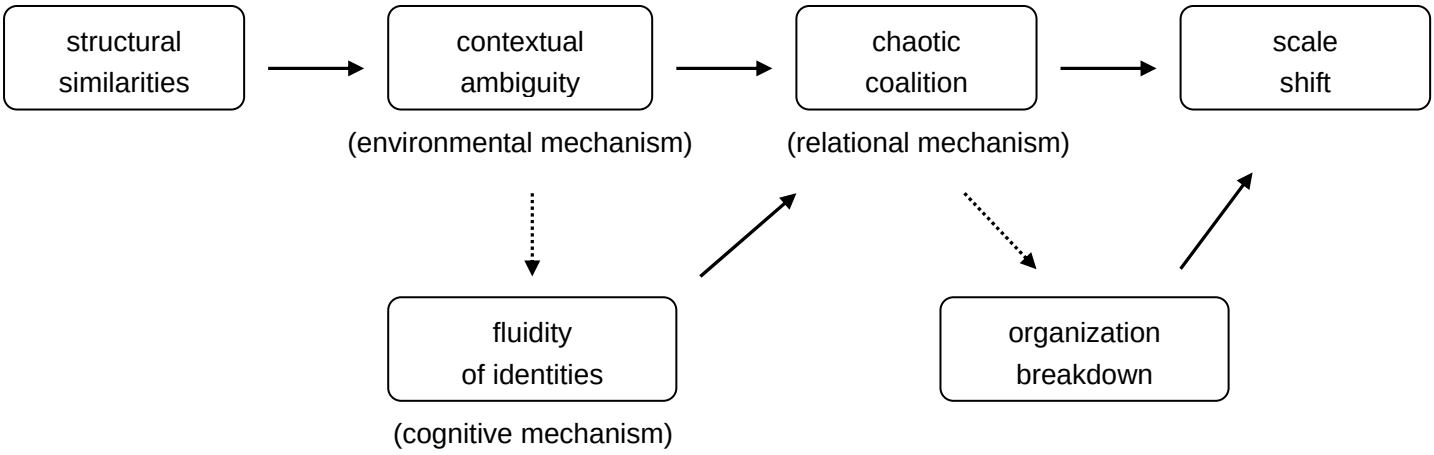
Based on this processual dynamic framework, I build a contextual process model to delineate how actors' actions and identities are sequentially shaped in the observed processes. I focus on environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms and their linking functions.[55] These mechanisms connect the occasions that mass actors confront with the choices.

Obviously, it is difficult to propose a mechanism definition that would be both informative and widely-accepted.[56] But it is possible to develop strategies for observing their presence.[57] Mechanism-based approach has been used to explore connections between structure and agency.[58] The core idea behind this approach has

[53] Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper, "Caught in a winding, snarling vine: The structural bias of political process theory", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1999), pp. 27-54; Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper, *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p. 28.
[54] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, p. 131.
[55] Ibid., p. 25-26; Charles Tilly, "The historical analysis of political processes", in Jonathan H. Turner (ed.). *Handbook of Sociological Theory* (New York, NY: Springer, 2001), pp. 567-588, at p. 572.
[56] Peter Hedström, and Petri Ylikoski, "Causal mechanisms in the social sciences", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36 (2010), pp. 49-67.
[57] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, "Methods for measuring mechanisms of contention", *Qualitative Sociology*, 31 (2008), pp. 307-331.
[58] Doug McAdam and Sidney Tarrow, "Dynamics of Contention ten years on", *Mobilization*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2010), pp. 1-10.

been expressed by Elster: “to explain an event is to give an account of why it happened. Usually…this takes the form of citing an earlier event as the cause of the event we want to explain…[But] to cite the cause is not enough: the causal mechanism must also be provided, or at least suggested.”[59] In this dissertation, I adopt Tilly’s definition of mechanisms as “a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations.”[60] Schematically, the mechanism can be presented as X→Y, where X denotes the initial condition, Y the outcome, and the arrow the series of events.[61] A mechanism is thus a nexus between a cause and an effect; it is also the pathway through which the cause brings about the effect.

Figure 1.2 contextual process model



[59] Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, pp. 3-4.
[60] Charles Tilly, “Mechanisms in political processes”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4 (2001), pp. 21-41; Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, p. 29; Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, p. 24.
[61] Chares Demetriou, “Processual comparative sociology: Building on the approach of Charles Tilly”, *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2012), pp. 51-65.

Structural similarities refers to the similarities of positional status quo among actors in the social and political order. Social positions are viewed as pre-existing conditions. Structurally, actors who occupy a similar social position in organizational hierarchies are thought to possess the similar level of social status, access to similar social resources, and play similar social roles. This is the exact same starting point as social structural model.

Contextual ambiguity designates a complex and ambivalent local context. It is an environmental mechanism to the extent that the wavering external signals generate political confusions to the local political environments, and thus affect the overall ability of actors who are embedded in the context to render solid judgments and to make consistent, level-headed decisions. Short-term fluctuations over relatively short time periods and rapid shifts in political institutions are not predicted by the pre-existing social structure or by long-term changes.

Fluidity of identities is an emergent, dynamic product of an ambiguous and constantly-changing political environment. It is a cognitive mechanism to the extent that new identities are forged in and out of a series of short-run political interactions rather than from interests inbuilt in the structural positions. Identities are not objectively fixed; instead, they are inherently fluid, elastic, malleable, and subject to remolding and transfer of loyalty to a new group or alliance when political surroundings, opportunities, and strategies shift quickly.

Chaotic coalition is formed based on identity shift. It is a relational mechanism to the extent that the emergent property of identity alters the connections between

social positions and group boundaries. Coalition formation does not follow a consistent pattern as structuralists have assumed. On the contrary, it is a nonlinear process where actors tactically reinterpret political reality in terms of their own understanding and subsequently switch themselves between movements or between factions inside a movement. At one certain point, people in set A will temporarily unite with people in set B in opposition to their common enemy. But in some other circumstances, people in set A will compete with their former alliance for power and resources. Such chaotic coalitional character of factional alliance clearly differs from the interest specificity in the structural arrangement.

Organizational breakdown involves a disintegration of cohesive capacities of a certain factional alliance. A cohesive organization is able to make successful tactical maneuvers by engendering collective feelings of group identification. On the other side, with chaotic group identification, a loosely coupled organization is unable to foster group solidarity to design and implement an effective organizational strategy. Essentially, groups which are known or distinguished by a unified name rarely in reality have anything resembling unified opinions. Their approaches are often more nebulous and divided, creating a competitive dynamism within social movement.

Scale shift refers to a process that McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly have defined as "a change in the number and level of coordinated contentious action leading to broader contention involving a wider range of actors and bridging their claims and identities."[62] New identities lead to the formation of new movement organizations and

[62] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, p. 331.

thus generate new sets of divisions. When each group strategically shifts their alignment in efforts to gain growth momentum, factional competitions become radicalized with more bloody violence and causalities. Meanwhile, casualties are more likely to increase by organizational breakdown. Collins finds that during the military combat, most casualties happen after an organization has lost their solidarity and broken down than by material force of assault firepower.[63]

Figure 1.2 portrays contextual mechanisms and causal chains of actors' choices and actions in a dynamic process. In a highly uncertain, chaotic and constantly changing political environment, subsequent change of events inevitably shapes people's positions, visions and beliefs. Therefore, collective actors in similar structural positions have to tactically choose their sides and define their factional alignment. During this process, new political identities emerge and clash with each other. These identities are certainly not expressions of prior social identities and irrespective of their structural contexts. They are formed in the course of the conflict itself. They are *endogenous* in essence. Yet, these newly-formed identities become so firmly entrenched very quickly that they shape a chaotic coalitional identification and eventually sustain quite violent conflicts with greater scale and larger influence. For example, those who are closely tied to power structures and who enjoy higher social prestige are likely to form a temporary or conditional alliance with those whose ties to power structures are weaker for a common political goal. But when political winds shift quickly, some members of privileged group have to defend their earlier choices

[63] Randall Collins, "A dynamic theory of battle victory and defeat", *Cliodynamics: The Journal of Theoretical and Mathematical History*, 1 (2010), pp. 3-25.

by continually uniting with underprivileged group, but some other members may adjust their political stances and re-band with political establishment. The internal split within group boundaries and external factional fragment across group boundaries are tactical in nature and processual in development. As such, contextual process model predicts short-term effects of social processes with dramatic social outcomes through dynamics. This prediction creates significant contrast with prevailing social structural agenda which emphasizes consistent identities during the entire course of action and these identities will lead to a clear-cut factional identification.

Factional Contention in Authoritarian Settings

To illustrate my arguments, I use a series of contentious episodes during the Chinese Cultural Revolution to explore the nature of political movements and mass factionalism in a dynamic process.

Institutional Control as the Chinese Polity

By the mid-1960s, China's revolutionary regime had consolidated its power by establishing a most carefully organized and repressive political hierarchy in the world. From the metropolis to rural areas, all aspects of citizens' lives were controlled by the Party and related state bureaucratic organizations.[64] Rural residents lived and worked in collective farms for work points and grain rations and could not change work or

[64] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1971).

residence.[65] Urban residents were frozen to collective "work units" (*danwei* 单位) networks and neighborhood communities, with little opportunity to change.[66] The Communist Party extended its organizational structures, surveillance and record-keeping deep into these grass roots communities, held regular small-group meetings, and they controlled virtually all opportunities for advancement and mobility reward.[67]

Economically, the communist state had effectively monopolized the distribution of all the goods and services that the Chinese people needed in their daily lives.[68] The party-state eliminated the commodification process of labor in the market and controlled all major public resources for social mobilization through a centralized allocation system.[69] The party-state also denied the legitimacy of any organized and autonomous interests outside its control. Factories, communes, and universities were inclusively integrated into state organizational apparatus whereby the party-state exercised its authority through political pressures and economic incentives on all aspects of economic activities, "from planning and financing to the circulation of a product and the allocation of labor."[70] For example, in state-owned factories, workers' wage grades, promotion opportunities, housing allocation, and even health insurance

[65] Jean C. Oi, *State and Peasant in Contemporary China: The Political Economy of Village Government* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989); William L. Parish and Martin K. Whyte, *Village and Family in Contemporary China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978).
[66] Martin K. Whyte and William L. Parish, *Urban Life in Contemporary China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986); Andrew Walder, "When states unravel: How China's cadres shaped Cultural Revolution politics", in Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Susan Young (eds.). *State Capacity in East Asia: Japan Taiwan China and Vietnam* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 157-184.
[67] Martin K. Whyte, *Small Groups and Political Rituals in China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974).
[68] Tsou Tang, *The Cultural Revolution and Post-Mao Reform* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 259-334.
[69] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, pp. 309-339.
[70] Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), p. 393.

were under complete administrative control of the state.[71] In communes, peasants' well-being was constrained by state policies on price regulation, tax collection and material supplies.[72] In universities, students' further educational opportunities and job assignments were subject to their records of political performances that were overseen by the Party committee in the schools.[73]

Politically, the communist state had been assigning each person ascribed political categories based on family origins on a scale of goodness to badness—from the "good" and "red" peasant, worker, revolutionary cadre, and revolutionary soldier, to the "bad" capitalist, landlord, petty bourgeois, and "rightist".[74] Patterns of labeling determined access to and allocation of jobs, promotions, wages, housing, migration to cities, social services, schooling, as well as political persecution and other life chances.[75] When this technique became an organizational tool over many successive years, it also created and fostered group consciousness and social identities, forcing people into personal dependence on unit leaders who controlled the privilege system and life chances.

Such all-encompassing institutional control of daily life in both economic and political domains presented every individual with the acute problem of whom to trust. Sometimes, a simple note in one's personal dossier (*dang'an* 档案) of being politically

[71] Lynn T. White, "Low power: Small enterprises in Shanghai, 1949-1967", *The China Quarterly*, 74(1978), pp. 45-76.
[72] Richard Curt Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1981).
[73] Jonathan Unger, *Education under Mao: Class and Competition in Canton Schools, 1960–1980* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1982).
[74] Gordon A. Bennett, "Political labels and popular tension", *Current Scene*, Vol. VII, No. 4 (1969), pp. 1-16; Lynn T. White, *Policies of Chaos: The Organizational Causes of Violence in China's Cultural Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).
[75] Richard Curt Kraus, *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*.

unreliable could destroy one's life chances and even those of one's family.[76] A personal dossier contained entries such as political attitudes and working performances from schooling to death. These summaries were viewed as very important to the future of each person, because the Party used these summaries along with other materials in arriving at its own annual evaluation of each person.[77] People usually never had a chance to see the contents of their personal records because those files were secretly kept in a locked room as a top confidential asset of the Party and the state.

Under this circumstance, a hierarchic network of loyalty had been effectively built as a "trellis"[78] where individuals' political loyalty was linked with rewards and opportunities. The criteria for selection had been people's compliant behaviors and close attitudinal conformity with the Party doctrine rather than functional expertise or level of education.[79] Through a "loyalty filter" screening process enforced by the Party organization,[80] those who actively participated in political campaigns and cultivated close ties to Party networks enjoyed general favoritism in their career prospects, material advantages, and social status, while those who detached themselves from Party's political networks were closely monitored and subject to purges in periodic campaigns designed to root out the insufficiently loyal.[81] A typical group that suffered from frequent political persecution was the intellectuals. The Party

[76] Xu Youyu, *Xingxing sese de zaofan: Hongweibing jingshen sushi de xingcheng ji yanbian* (*Rebellion of All Hues: The Formation and Evolution of Red Guard Mentalities*) (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1999), pp. 153-154.
[77] Martin K. Whyte, *Small Groups and Political Rituals in China*, p. 68.
[78] Andrew Nathan, "A factional model for CCP politics", *The China Quarterly*, 53 (1973), pp. 34-68.
[79] Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China.*
[80] Andrew Walder and Songhua Hu, "Revolution, reform, and status inheritance: Urban China, 1949-1996", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 114, No. 5 (2009), pp. 1395-1427.
[81] Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-traditionalism*, pp. 246-247.

characterized the intellectual class as a "right wing" threat to state because of their dubious loyalty and tendency to criticize the regime and the Party.[82] In the 1957 "Anti-Rightist Movement", somewhere between 300,000 and 700,000 skilled people and professionals were removed from their job posts and given the devastating title of "rightist" as enemy of the people,[83] and many of them, including intellectuals who had devoted their entire careers to the Party, were enforced to go to the Great Northern Wilderness to seek introspection and self-renewal.[84]

In mid-late 1966, when Mao Zedong personally called on students to rebel against local authorities, and later permitted workers and others to join in the snowballing movement through a "charismatic mobilization"[85] or "Mao cult,"[86] there was a sudden relaxation of state's political control, and individuals were encouraged to participate in the political process. In August 1966, the public security agencies and army units were warned not to restrict the activities of mobilized students. Officials at all levels were warned not to obstruct Mao's Cultural Revolution.[87] The mass media also encouraged rebellion, students and other rebels were permitted to travel for free on the railway networks, and housing and food ration coupons were provided for them by reception stations and liaison offices. In the first two months, more than two

[82] D. W. Fokkema, "Chinese criticism of humanism: Campaigns against the intellectuals 1964-1965", *The China Quarterly*, 26 (1966), pp. 68-72.
[83] John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 365.
[84] Frank Dikotter, *The Tragedy of Liberation: A History of the Chinese Revolution 1945-1957* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Press, 2013), pp. 294-295.
[85] Joel Andreas, "The structure of charismatic mobilization: A case study of rebellion during the Chinese Cultural Revolution", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (2007), pp. 434-458.
[86] Daniel Leese, "Mao the man and Mao the icon", in Timothy Cheek (ed.). *A Critical Introduction to Mao* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 219-239; Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[87] Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

millions of Red Guards took trains to Beijing, and more than four millions piled into Shanghai by the end of 1966.[88] In short, the state relaxed its policy of political control, and tolerated and even supported individual initiatives. The highest levels of the state openly facilitated rebellion against lower ranking authorities in state structures, and virtually all the resources necessary to sustain popular mobilization were provided at virtually no cost.

With the complete collapse of the public authority, Mao's Cultural Revolution provided an unprecedented "political opportunity" for ordinary people to make a relatively free choice to form and join all kinds of mass organizations. Insurgent students and workers formed various politically autonomous rebel groups in the late 1966, and took over local party-state organs in virtually each provincial-level unit in the January 1967.[89] Immediately afterwards, these insurgents broke into rival factions that violently fought with one another in schools, factories, and neighborhoods, leading to an anarchy in large parts of China until the imposition of military rule in late 1968.[90] For example, in Anyuan county, a place that nurtures Chinese communist revolutionary legacy, armed battles between rival rebels had claimed more than twenty-five lives and caused countless injuries.[91] Even in the periphery rural areas where the reach of the state was limited because of the existence of the "honeycomb

[88] Jin Dalu, *Zhengchang yu feichang: Shanghai wenge shiqi de shehui shenghuo* (*Normal and Abnormal: Social Life during the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai*) (Shanghai: Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House, 2011), pp. 65, 98; Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution*, p. 143.
[89] Bu Weihua, *Zalan jiu shijie: Wenhua da geming de dongluan yu haojie* (*Destroy the Old World: the Catastrophic Turmoil of the Cultural Revolution*) (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2008). Yang Guobing, "The liminal effects of social movements: Red Guards and the transformation of identity", *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2000), pp. 379-406.
[90] Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*; Qian Liqun, *Mao Zedong shidai he hou Mao Zedong shidai: Lingyizhong lishi shuxie* (*The Mao Zedong Era and Post Mao Era: An Alternative Writing of History*) (Taipei: Linking Books, 2012).
[91] Elizabeth J. Perry, *Anyuan: Mining China's Revolutionary Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), pp. 210-212.

polity,"[92] political impulses did not weaken. Village residents also extensively involved themselves in the local mass conflicts and many people were killed or wrongly persecuted in factional warfare.[93] Conservative estimates based on official sources suggest that up to 1.5 million people died in these factional conflicts and related repression, and some 36 million suffered arrest, imprisonment, lengthy interrogation, and often torture.[94]

Structural-based Interest Group Politics

The explosion of this political disaster has long been understood as a form of interest group politics that fits closely with structural analyses of contentious politics. In this view, mass conflict has been identified as a prototypical radical-conservative split: a "radical" faction, principally composed of underprivileged social groups who were disadvantaged and discriminated against by the regime (e.g., students from bourgeois families, non-Party members, temporary and part-time workers in smaller factories, and other members from less favored social class and those who had been treated as "backward elements"), sought to fundamentally challenge the legitimacy of existing order and to strip the privileged group of their advantages; a "conservative" faction, on the other hand, consisted mainly of members of socially-privileged groups who had intimate connections to the regime (e.g., students from revolutionary or proletarian families, permanent skilled and white-collar workers in larger state-owned

[92] Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).
[93] Jonathan Unger, "The Cultural Revolution at the grass roots", *The China Journal*, 57 (2007), pp. 110-137.
[94] Andrew Walder and Yang Su, "The Cultural Revolution in the countryside: Scope, timing, and human impact", *The China Quarterly*, 173 (2002), pp. 82-107; Su Yang, *Mass Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

factories, Party members, and other red class designations), had a vested interest in protecting the prevailing social order and conserving their status quo. While radicals were more violent and aggressive, the conservatives were more disciplined and associated with law and order. The two factions thus had divergent factional behaviors, different bases of support, attacked different levels of power structure, and employed different political strategies.

This structural-based divergence had been recognized as "some sort of law of the political sphere as universal as Boyle's law in chemistry or Newton's law in physics."[95] It is also very similar with Dahrendorf's accounts of class conflict, in which splits are between "order-givers", who have an interest in maintaining the status quo, and "order-takers", who have an interest in changing it.[96] For example, in studying the popular uprisings in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province, Wang observes that:

> "It was one's position in the pre-Cultural Revolution society that was the most crucial factor in determining which side one took in the Cultural Revolution… Generally speaking, those who had enjoyed comparatively close relations with the authorities tended to be conservatives. This was the case not only in schools but also in factories, not only in Wuhan but also in other parts of China."[97]

[95] William Hinton, *Shenfan* (London, UK: Picador Books, 1983), p. 611.
[96] Ralf Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1959).
[97] Wang Shaoguang, "The structural sources of the Cultural Revolution", in Kam-yee Law (ed.). *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered: Beyond Purge and Holocaust* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 58-91. This point is also elaborated in Wang Shaoguang, *Failure of Charisma: The Cultural Revolution in Wuhan* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Lee's analysis of "the politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution" reveals a similar picture:

> "Factional conflict was due to the structural conditions of the system that the Party-state had been building up prior to the Cultural Revolution…Structure also indirectly narrows freedom of choice by shaping actors' preferences, belief systems, will and even characters…The mass organizations split into two opposing groups broadly labeled as the radical and conservative factions depending on the social characteristics of their separate memberships, and their positions on such crucial questions as what should be the movement's ultimate objectives and main targets."[98]

Qian's recent accounts of Mao's communist China adopt the same narratives in discussing factional divisions during the Cultural Revolution:

> "The masses are divided by their differing group interests to themselves. Every strata of society interprets and explains the Cultural Revolution along the lines of these inherent interests, and participate in the movement accordingly to these paradigms. It is around the mutual acknowledgement of certain interest points that groups begin to form and the result was a plethora of different mass organizations during the Cultural Revolution…It is this clash of interests and

[98] Hong Yung Lee, "Historical reflections on the Cultural Revolution as a political movement", in Kam-yee Law (ed.). *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered: Beyond Purge and Holocaust* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 92-112.

complicated paradigm of differences all tangled together that eventually led to first regional, and then national mayhem of disorder."[99]

Obviously, scholars tend to trace mass conflicts to the institutional structure of the Chinese polity before the Cultural Revolution, attributing political actions of the activists to their identifiably different orientations toward predisposed sociopolitical status quo. Political networks and formal organizations were viewed as pre-existing physical structures, rather than a dynamic element in creation of movement emergence. Identities were treated as static and pre-existent, and personal interests that motivate actors were already reified with an organized express.

One of the themes focuses on the discriminatory practice of political labeling by the state political control system. The assigned political labels created two self-conscious status groups and drove people to acquire concrete interests in seeing these labels used in their favor and not to their harm.[100] Once the social control was loosened, the negatively labeled group intrinsically had a strong interest to attack against particular authority and privileged sector.[101] They rebelled earlier and called for more fundamental change, while the positively labeled group rebelled later, demanded less fundamental change, and fought to preserve their established

[99] Qian Liqun, *The Mao Zedong Era and Post Mao Era*, Vol. II, p. 16.
[100] Michel Oksenberg, "Occupational groups in Chinese society and the Cultural Revolution", in *The Cultural Revolution: 1967 in Review*, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies No. 2 (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1968), pp.1-44.
[101] Wu Yiching, "How state enumeration spoiled Mao's last revolution", *Journal of Modern Chinese History*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2013), pp. 200-217; Joel Andreas, "Battling over political and cultural power during the Chinese Cultural Revolution", *Theory and Society*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2002), pp. 463-519; Joel Andreas, *Rise of the Red Engineers: The Cultural Revolution and the Origins of China's New Class* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

interests.[102]

Another notable theme concerns the dependency of the individuals on socialist economic institutions. Mass conflicts had been fought between those who benefited from the Party networks and those who excluded from them, and successive efforts to defend and attack the networks led to escalating cycles of violence. In urban factories, factional struggles were heavily shaped by divisions between politically favored employees, who had been the trusted clients of a factory's Party branch prior to the Cultural Revolution and the many co-workers who resented the factory's political favoritism and formed an anti faction.[103] Factional divisions, in this sense, developed upon the degree of connections to local bureaucrats of higher status and power in the state hierarchy.

Structural Critique and Alternative Explanations

Social structural explanation sheds great light on the underlying practices of how the revolutionary rebel groups were confronted with each other. However, this outlook largely focuses on categorical groups with specific group-interest articulations and

[102] Oded Shenkar, "The Cultural Revolution against the Chinese bureaucracy: An ideological structural Analysis", *Asian Profile*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1983), pp. 323-338; Yin Hongbiao, "Ideological and political tendencies of factions in the Red Guard movement", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 5, No. 13 (1996), pp. 269-281; Wang Shaoguang, "'New trends of thought' on the Cultural Revolution", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 8, No. 21 (1999), pp. 197-217; Qian Liqun, *The Mao Zedong Era and Post Mao Era*, Vol. II, pp. 37-44; Hua Linshan, "Wen'ge qijian qunzhongxing paixi chengyin" ("Causes of mass factionalism in the Cultural Revolution"), in Liu Qingfeng (ed.). *Wenhua da geming: shishi yu yanjiu* (*The Cultural Revolution: Evidence and Analysis*) (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1996), pp. 191-208.

[103] Andrew Walder, "The Chinese Cultural Revolution in the factories: Party-state structures and patterns of conflict", in Elizabeth Perry (ed.). *Putting Class in its Place: Worker Identities in East Asia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Institute of East Asian Studies, 1996), pp. 167-198; Elizabeth J. Perry and Xun Li, *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 71-95; Elizabeth J. Perry and Xun Li, "Revolutionary rudeness: The language of Red Guards and rebel workers in China's Cultural Revolution", in Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (ed.). *Twenties-Century China: New Approaches* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), pp. 221-236; Liu Guokai, *A Brief Analysis of the Cultural Revolution* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1987).

assumes that people would instinctively act on shared interests while ignoring the strategic interactions and complexities between collectivities. Accordingly, it has received wide challenges in recent years.

The biggest problem with characterizing factional choices as "radical" and "conservative" is that these political labels did not mean the same thing in 1966 and 1967. When the political scene changed in the course of the Cultural Revolution, their meanings would also undergo changes to reflect new political realities. Xu Youyu has pointedly argued that "interest group" interpretations of mass factions incorrectly assume that the divisions between the opponents and supporters of the incumbent authorities in 1966 carried over into the factional divisions that emerged after the authorities' fall from power. Xu views this as a fundamental flaw in the "radical-conservative" interpretation: in most provinces, he argues, the 1967 rivalries were between rebel groups that overthrew the authorities, and that the issues that divided them were no longer about the nature of the status quo.[104] Xu's viewpoint has been largely supported by Bu Weihua's detailed survey of factional conflicts across twenty-seven provinces.[105]

Secondly, actors from the same social category were likely to join different mass groups. A case documented that a twin brother, who had exactly the same political background, joined rival rebel alliance with quite opposite political perspective.[106] Moreover, there might be no discernable ideological differences among insurgents in

[104] Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, pp. 18-21, 81-109; Xu Youyu, *Zhimian lishi: Laosanjie fansilu* (*Face History: The Reflection of Laosanjie*) (Beijing: China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing Corporation, 2000), pp. 252-257, 274-283.
[105] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 383-428.
[106] Han Shaogong, *Geming houji* (*After Revolution*) (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 132-133.

spited of their varied social composition within a specific rebel organization. It is not unlikely that the members of rebel organizations were recruited from diversified social and political bases. For example, Ken Ling's description of his group in Fujian Province strongly suggests such a case:

> "In time the 8-29 [Revolutionary Rebellion-Making General Headquarters] would include children of Party cadres and children of enemies of the Party, Communist Party and Youth League members and counterrevolutionaries, good students and bad students, and plain gangsters and hoodlums. Factional loyalty would override everything else, and differences in class composition would no longer matter."[107]

Thirdly, when the political landscape was rapidly transformed into a more chaotic and uncontrollable scenery, factions cut across pre-existing identities, interests, and networks, and emerged out of choices participants made in unpredictable ways. As Oksenberg observes at that time:

> "As the conflicts between rebel groups intensified from January to August 1967, it apparently became possible for other students to form their own, unaffiliated organizations. The students accustomed to a highly structured environment suddenly found themselves in a near-chaotic situation. Previously, students were

[107] Ken Ling, *The Revenge of Heaven: Journal of a Young Chinese* (New York, NY: Putnam's Sons, 1972), p. 129.

> told which organizations were good, which were bad; they had little choice in organizational affiliations. Now, they had to choose among virtually indistinguishable organizations, recognizing that the wrong affiliation could ruin their careers. Little wonder, then, that in such an environment, with little previous experience in forming associations, the students failed miserably. They rapidly degenerated into quarreling, disruptive groups."[108]

A vivid example for this point comes from Walder's study of conflicts among Beijing Red Guards. Walder argues that political decisions and factional identities "can only be understood by tracing the sequence of events through time."[109] He further characterizes students' factional divisions as based on their choices at each of a series of political crossroads, beginning with their adaptive responses when the work teams entered the movement at Beijing universities in June 1966.[110] Initially, "the social profiles of both factions were very similar, whether in terms of positions in school political networks or of social categories like household labels."[111] However, since political impulses emanating from the central leadership were ambiguous and frequently changing, work teams abruptly withdrew their external interventions and quickly altered their political targets from a conservative to a radical course. This rapid shift in local context created an atmosphere of confusion and panic and thereby

[108] Michel Oksenberg, "Occupational groups in Chinese society and the Cultural Revolution", pp.19-20.
[109] Andrew Walder, "Beijing Red Guard factionalism: Social interpretations reconsidered", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (2002), pp. 437-471.
[110] Andrew Walder, "Ambiguity and choice in political movements: The origins of Beijing Red Guard factionalism", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 112, No. 3 (2006), pp. 710-750; Andrew Walder, "Factional conflict at Beijing University, 1966-1968", *The China Quarterly*, 188 (2006), pp. 1023-1047; Andrew Walder, *Fractured Rebellion: The Beijing Red Guard Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[111] Andrew Walder, *Fractured Rebellion*, p. 11.

disrupted the ability of students to make consistent decisions. Students had to decide for themselves "whether to accept the work team's apparent change of heart, or whether to consider it discredited by its earlier behavior and demand its withdrawal," and thus had been forced into consequential choices, which "in turn generate new divisions, new interest, and new identities, and subsequently form two sides of an antagonistic conflict."[112]

Other scholars further confirm this finding that there were no political differences between two contending factions. Instead, a complex interplay of bureaucratic politics in the Center and transitory government policies exacerbated and eventually shaped a split between two wings of the local rebel movement. For example, in Zhejiang Province, the formation of two mass factional organizations in 1966-67 was not merely the product of social cleavages which had emerged in China in the 1950s and early 1960s, but was more importantly a political response to the collapse of the provincial Party and government leadership from later 1966 to early 1967. The leaders of two principal factions had rebelled together against workplace authority figures. The key tipping point dividing them was the ambivalence among central leaders towards the status and revolutionary credentials of provincial First Party Secretary Jiang Hua (江华). Both factions claimed that they were protecting and upholding Mao's revolutionary line, on the basis of either defending or attacking Jiang Hua. It was only when Mao abandoned Jiang Hua on the eve of the 12th Plenum of the 8th Central Committee in October 1968 that the pro faction was finally

[112] Andrew Walder, "Ambiguity and choice in political movements: The origins of Beijing Red Guard factionalism", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 112, No. 3 (2006), pp. 710-750, at p. 737.

disbanded.[113]

Similarly in Nanjing, the capital city of Jiangsu Province, the rebels split into two big factions on the basis of either protecting or overthrowing Jiangsu First Party Secretary Jiang Weiqing (江渭清). The Nanjing rebels initially divided over the issue of power seizure in January 1967, and this minor political dispute had been hastily pushed into intensified factional struggles by a series of political negotiations on the status of Jiang Weiqing among several key central leaders in Beijing, in particular Premier Zhou Enlai and the Maoist officials in the Central Cultural Revolution Group (CCRG). Zhou tried to restore Jiang Weiqing to head the new government, but his endeavors were obstructed by the CCRG. Meanwhile, Mao's position on this issue was not immediately clear. This political deadlock eventually forced the central authority to put Nanjing under military control and suppress rather than resolving the local factional conflict.[114]

Guangzhou: A City Most Worth Reevaluating

Guangzhou, as the capital city of Guangdong, is a case that has been enormously influential as the best documented case of mass factionalism. Due to the strict

[113] Keith Forster, "Repudiation of the Cultural Revolution in China: The case of Zhejiang", *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (1986), pp. 5-27; Keith Forster, *Rebellion and Factionalism in a Chinese Province: Zhejiang, 1966–1976* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990); Keith Forster, "The Cultural Revolution in Zhejiang revisited: The paradox of rebellion and factionalism, and violence and social conflict amidst economic growth", in Kam-yee Law (ed.). *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered: Beyond Purge and Holocaust* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. 2003), pp. 133-157.

[114] Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, "Nanjing's failed 'January Revolution' of 1967: The inner politics of a provincial power seizure", *The China Quarterly*, 203 (2010), pp. 675-692; Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, "Local politics in the Chinese Cultural Revolution: Nanjing under military control", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (2011), pp. 425-447; Dong Guoqiang, "Shehuishi shiye xia de wenhua dageming yanjiu" ("Studies on the Cultural Revolution from the perspective of social history"), *Zhonggong Dangshi Yanjiu* (*Research on CCP History*), 2 (2012), pp. 65-74; Dong Guoqiang, "Paixing shenfen, geren chujing yu zhengzhi jueze: Cong difang shijiao fansi wenhua dageming" ("Factional identity, individual context, and political choice: Reflecting the Cultural Revolution from the local perspective"), *Ershiyi Shiji* (*The Twenty-First Century*), 143 (2014), pp. 44-54.

research restrictions that communist China imposed upon Western scholars before 1980, previous students of Cultural Revolution could only rely on a small collection of local newspapers from 1960s and supplemented it by interviews from ex-cadres and local residents who took refuge from Guangdong Province in nearby Hong Kong.[115] As a result, Guangzhou is become the forefront of the studies of the Cultural Revolution and Chinese politics.[116] Analysts focus heavily on political episodes in Guangzhou and implicitly identify rebel rivalry there as an ideal microcosm for their social structural explanations.

Hong Yung Lee's pioneering interest group analysis of Cultural Revolution factionalism paid close attention to the Guangzhou case. He argued that the alliances known as Red Flag (*Hongqi pai* 红旗派) and East Wind (*Dongfeng pai* 东风派) were in fact interest groups that had different orientations toward the status quo ante, and that had different social foundations. Lee reasoned that Red Flag was more radical because it was the first to seize power from the provincial authorities, and that it fought aggressively against the imposition of military control well into 1968. In line with virtually all analysts at the time, Lee viewed the army as an inherently conservative force that sought to restore order and preserve the core of the communist system. Therefore to oppose the armed forces was itself an inherently radical stance. In contrast, East Wind opposed the initial power seizure and subsequently aligned itself with armed forces dispatched to "support the left" in Guangzhou in early 1967—

[115] Michel Oksenberg, "Sources and methodological problems in the study of contemporary China", in Doak Barnett (ed.). *Chinese Communist Politics in Action* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1972), pp. 577-606

[116] Ezra F. Vogel, *Canton under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969).

stances that identified them as "conservative" in relation to the status quo ante. Based on a content analysis of forty-seven Red Guard newspapers from each faction, Lee further claimed that Red Flag tended to attack the real locus of power (i.e., high-ranking cadres and cadres in political position) while East Wind tended to attack persons without real power (i.e., low-ranking cadres, anti-military cadres and cadres in functional position).[117]

With this interpretation of the factions' political orientations, Lee made two further claims. The first was that the two factions were composed of different social groups that differed according to their stake in the status quo ante. The second follows logically from the first: that the Red Flag faction had its roots in the rebel movement that sought to overthrow the Guangzhou authorities in late 1966, while the East Wind faction had its roots in the factions that defended the municipal and provincial Party committees in 1966. This research will not address the first of these claims, but will show that the second is no longer plausible, given the much richer documentation available to researchers today.

Lee's characterization of the nature of mass factionalism during this period of Chinese history became highly influential. Detailed research on high school Red Guards in Guangzhou, based on extensive interviews with former activists in Hong Kong, appeared to provide hard evidence for this view. It accepted Lee's political characterizations of the two sides that their political stances were expressions of pre-

[117] Hong Yung Lee, 1975. "The radical students in Kwangtung during the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, 64 (1975), pp. 645-683; Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 1-10, 229-243, 340-343.

existing social or class interests.[118] Students from "red" class backgrounds, such as revolutionary cadre and revolutionary military, reportedly aligned themselves with East Wind at very high rates, while students from other backgrounds, such as intellectual middle class, workers, and peasants, appeared to be strongly inclined toward Red Flag.[119] These micro-level studies suggested that the "pattern of factional formation and factional participation grew directly out of the contradictions and conflicts which had already divided the students before the Cultural Revolution,"[120] though it is not known whether informants in this survey switched factional affiliation at some point in time or whether political orientations of the two factions could be indeed characterized as "radical" or "conservative" in a meaningful sense. Moreover, there were loose ends: in his criticism of Lee, Rosen noted that this pattern was much less clear among college students, which raises the question of why this was so.[121] Moreover, both Lee and Rosen's analyses over-generalize the reasons for the divisions among factions at the *city* level: they tended to view the factional battles in the provinces as lining up according to vested interests and that they were consistent over time.

In this dissertation, I will place the problem of political choice at the group level in a highly uncertain and ambiguous political environment at the center of analysis. This

[118] Stanley Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou (Canton)* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982); Anita Chan, "Images of China's social structure: The changing perspectives of Canton students", *World Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1982), pp. 295-323; Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen and Jonathan Unger, "Students and class warfare: The social roots of the Red Guard conflict in Guangzhou (Canton)", *The China Quarterly*, 83 (1980), pp. 397–446.
[119] Stanley Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou*, p. 147; Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen and Jonathan Unger, "Students and class warfare: The social roots of the Red Guard conflict in Guangzhou (Canton)", p. 433; Jonathan Unger, *Education under Mao*, pp. 130-133.
[120] Stanley Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou*, p. 2.
[121] Stanley Rosen and Hong Yung Lee, "The radical students in Kwangtung during the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, 70 (1977), pp. 390-406.

raises questions about whether the two factions were indeed interest groups that exhibited different political orientations toward the status quo. It is the central contention of this research that they did not, and a detailed examination of how the rival group identities originated and evolved into an intense and violent factional conflict in a dynamic process makes this point clear.

Figure 1.3 The temporal distribution of major political events in Guangdong province

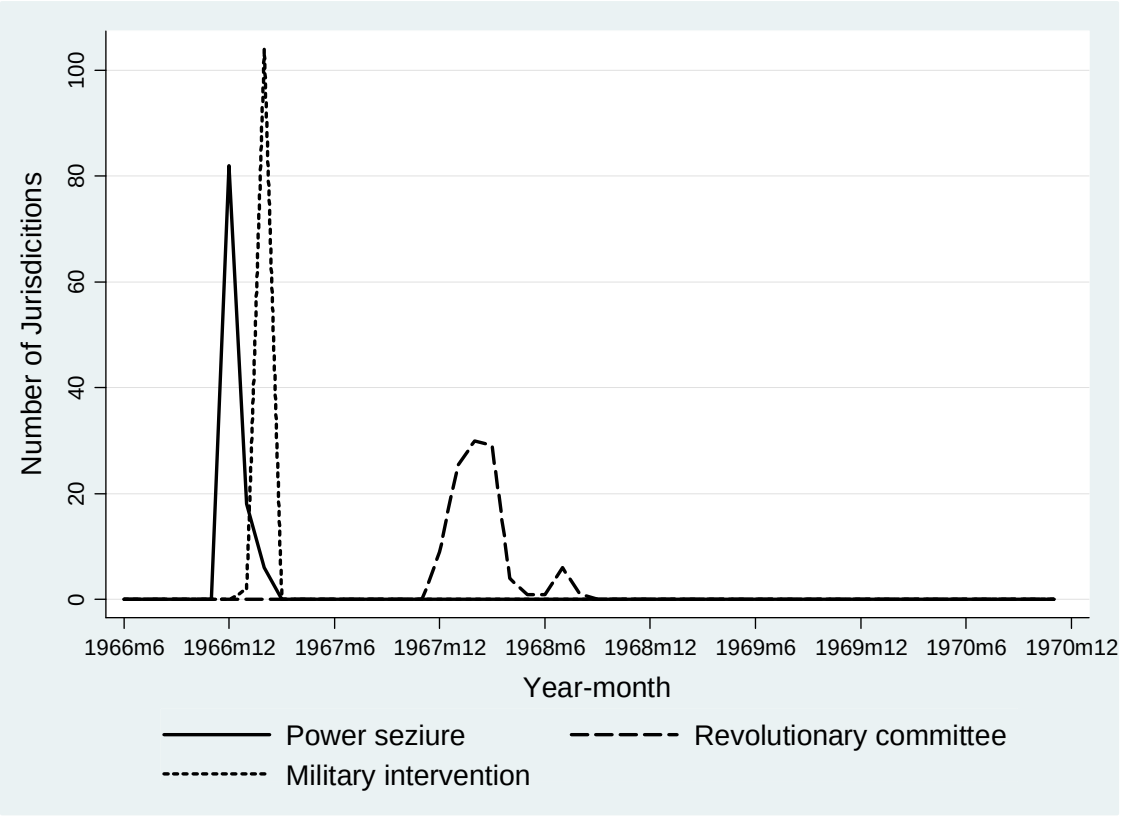


Figure 1.3 displays the temporal distribution of major political events in Guangdong province. It clearly illustrates three critical turning points that significantly changed the trajectory of factional contest in Guangdong during the first two years of the Cultural Revolution: power seizure in January 1967 (chapter 2), military intervention in February and March 1967 (chapter 3), and the establishment of the revolutionary committee in early 1968 (chapter 5). This figure provides a clear

evidence that these three turning points are not only valid in Guangzhou, but also penetrate the vast majority of local governments in the province/across the whole country. In the following chapters, I will trace the sequences of events at each turning points to identify the origins and escalations of rebel rivalry in the absence of different standpoints on the status quo ante.

An important issue of this dissertation is the generalizability of the theoretical model. Like most studies in the social movement field focusing on single movements within specified times and spaces, this research also uses a single case of Communist China to develop a "contextual process model" of political choice and contentious conflict. The main intention of this research, however, is to identify the underlying mechanisms to explain other similar occurrences across various forms of contention and regime types.

Methodology

This research project is made possible by sources unavailable to analysts in the 1970s and 1980s, when the reigning interpretation of factional politics was established. These new materials permit a more detailed and nuanced portrayal of how political divisions evolved during this chaotic period.

The first are a huge quantity of internal source materials based on extensive primary research, including local newspapers and gazettes, Red Guards tabloids and handbills, organization's public meeting minutes, political campaign posters, pamphlets, and Party organizational history records. These were the primary sources relied upon by

the previous students of Cultural Revolution, but many more are now available in a 52-volume compilation of provincial Red Guard tabloids.[122]

Due to the strict research restrictions that Communist China imposed upon scholars before 1980, previous students of Cultural Revolution could only rely on a small collection of local newspapers from 1960s and supplemented it by interviews from ex-cadres and refugees conducted in Hong Kong, which are clearly suspectable for their emotional and ideological bias against the regime.[123] Since China gradually loosens such research restrictions after 1979, the next generation of Cultural Revolution scholarship is able to collect data and conduct substantive first-hand field work inside China. Ordinary people are often willing to discuss social and political issues more openly than ever before, and many once-scarce unofficial documents and data now increasingly become available for researchers.

However, the Party authority still imposes very tight controls over scholarly research on the Cultural Revolution at present. The access to both state and local archives is strictly prohibited and media outlets have orders from Propaganda Department to remain quiet on the matter. Sensitivity about re-examining the movement's history reflects official fears that doing so could undermine the legitimacy of Party rule and the current leadership. Scholarship on the Cultural Revolution has to keep a low profile and organize their field investigation in an underground manner. But still, their research has great possibilities to receive

[122] Song Yongyi (ed.), *A New Collection of Red Guard Publications, Part III: A Comprehensive Compilation of Red Guard Tabloids from the Provinces*, 52 Vols (Oakton, VA.: Center for Chinese Research Materials, 2005).
[123] Michel Oksenberg, "Sources and methodological problems in the study of contemporary China".

aggressive suppression.[124] For example, a PhD student from Chicago University had been detained secretly by the local police for several days and nights while he was in the midst of conducting archival research on this subject in Changsha, the provincial capital city of Hunan. The police officer emphasized that "the study of Cultural Revolution is a matter of state security" and intensively interrogated about this student's research project, its aim, conceptual framework, findings, and institutional support.[125]

A good alternative is University Service Centre for China Studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. University Service Centre was established in the middle of 1960s and since then, it has become a key research base and provided the best possible sources for scholars working on any particular topic relating to contemporary China. It has also built a rich documentary collection on Cultural Revolution and Chinese politics.[126] Another good research base is East Asian Library and Hoover Institute Library and Archives at Stanford University. Stanford East Asian Library has been built on the original East Asian Collection of the Hoover Institution. Since then, it has built one of the largest documentary collections on the Cultural Revolution and Chinese politics in the world.

Red Guard documents are particularly important as source materials for my data collection, for two reasons. First, Red Guard newspapers and handbills are often more

[124] I do not deny the fact that contemporary scholars enjoy the extraordinary opportunity to conduct substantive first-hand research within China. Indeed, people today are often willing to discuss social and political issues more openly than ever before.
[125] Wu Yiching, *The Other Cultural Revolution: Politics and Practice of Class in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1966-1969*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, 2007, pp. 8-9.
[126] Ezra F. Vogel, "The first forty years of the Universities Service Centre for China Studies", *The China Journal*, 53 (2005), pp. 1-7.

informative about local politics than citations solely from official press and publications. Some contain detailed records about organizational enrollment figures and membership, while some others often chronicle events and trends in a detailed way.[127] Sometimes, day-by-day and even hour-by-hour chronologies are available. Second, these materials compose a main identification of organizational affiliation. Different camps used their own publications to express their positions and refute those of their rivals. One should still be cautioned that, however, heavy reliance on newspaper sources has certain limitations because the micro-mobilization dimensions of political division and collective violence and the ways in which it was penetrated are difficult to document. Moreover, the use of Red Guard newspapers concerns the reliability of their information. Since their unabashed purpose was to persuade the amount of distortion is considerable. A measure of care must be used in interpreting these sources, especially in comparing rival Red Guard tabloid accounts of the same event.

The second kind of source is a national dataset composed of more than 2,240 county annals (*xianzhi* 县志) and Party annals. More than two thousand county annals have been systemically published since the mid-1980s. Each of the local annals has a "chronology of major events" (*dashi ji* 大事记) at the beginning of the volume, recounting all events of note since 1949—political events, health campaigns, industrial accidents, and so forth. Some local annals, in addition, include a separate section containing detailed narratives and statistical data on political events during the Cultural Revolution. Recently, these treasures began to attract attention in the scholarly

[127] Hong Yung Lee, "Utility and limitation of the Red Guard publications as source publications: A bibliographical survey", *Journal of Asian Studies*, 3 (1975), pp. 779-793.

community. Students of Cultural Revolution use county annals data to study political movement and organized violence within a specific region,[128] or in a comparative framework.[129]

Obviously, local annals vary greatly in quality and detail in their account of the Cultural Revolution. Due to the sensitivity nature of the topic itself, some local annals do not report or under-report an event or casualties during this period. There are also many accounts that only mention "large numbers" of deaths or victims but do not give specific figures. Walder and Su find that the degree of precision of local annals (e.g., number of reported deaths and political victims) is positively correlated with the number of words devoted to the section of the Cultural Revolution.[130] The average length of words devoted to these matters is 4,066. The province that devoted the least detail averages 2,700 words (Anhui), while the province that devoted the most detail averages more than 11,200 words (Shaanxi). Guangdong province devotes considerable coverage to local political events, providing 5,198 average length of words.

This feature of the dataset provides leverage over the problem of coverage that has always plagued event data in the study of political movements and collective violence. The most common dataset of this sort employs newspaper data from one or more localities about events over a much larger universe of localities in which events

[128] Tanigawa Shinichi, *Dynamics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the Countryside, Shaanxi 1966-1971*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 2007.
[129] Su Yang, "Mass killings in the Cultural Revolution: A study of three provinces", in Joseph Esherick, Paul Pickowicz and Andrew Walder (eds.). *The Chinese Cultural Revolution as History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 96-123; Su Yang, *Mass Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution.*
[130] Andrew Walder and Yang Su, "The Cultural Revolution in the countryside: Scope, timing, and human impact".

could possibly occur.[131] However, social movement scholars have questioned the use of newspaper data in authoritarian regimes because of substantial state-sponsored repression and political censorship.[132] The problem of assessing the completeness of coverage and bias in reporting has generated serious thought but there is no standard solution to correct for potential biases and underreporting.[133] This county annals dataset uses a uniform source for virtually the entire universe of localities, and each locality has a score for completeness of coverage that provides an estimate of the probability that events are reported. The variable "length" can therefore be used as a control variable in equations that estimate the impact of variables of interest.

The third type is recently written memoirs and personal recollections, both published and unpublished, by movement participants, former provincial Party leaders and military top officers, and in-depth field interviews from former rebel leaders who were deeply involved in some key events. However, retrospective narratives might be inaccurate or fully distorted because informants find it difficult to recall specific dates of events now distant in time, and their accounts about certain event are invariably shaped by self-reflection in subsequent years of cognitive development. Therefore, the veracity of these claims and counter-claims will be tested by finding several people to report about a single same event. Meanwhile, these accounts will also be testified by the documented sources.

[131] Susan Olzak, "Analysis of events in the study of collective action", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 15 (1989), pp. 119-141.
[132] Jennifer Earl, "Political repression: Iron fists, velvet gloves, and diffuse control", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37 (2011), pp. 261-284.
[133] Jennifer Earl, Andrew Martin, John D. McCarthy and Sarah A. Soule, "The use of newspaper data in the study of collective action", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30 (2004), pp. 65-80.

Chapter 2

Turning Point I:
January Power Seizure

"The same set of people fight at one another's side through a series of engagements, while displaying a cavalier disregard for the ideological consistency of the causes they support. If Faction A in an Indian village supports the Congress then that in itself is sufficient reason for Faction B proclaiming themselves Communists."[1]

(Bailey 1969: 52)

To illustrate the theoretical statements from chapter 1, in the following chapters, I will reconstruct the origins and evolution of factional conflict by tracing specific historical sequences at each critical *turning point* of the movement that changes the content and direction of factional contentions. During the times of radical instability such as the Chinese Cultural Revolution, political ambiguity and contingency were the defining characteristics. In such unstable political environment, the basic elements of the movement changed so many times: each phase of the rebel movement projected itself by means of different actors, agendas, targets, and so on. Consequently, identities and interests are not structurally fixed beforehand, nor do they stay constant; instead, they evolve through time through dynamic interactions.

In each chapter, I will lay out the historical chronology of the process that led to the formation of two contending factions in Guangzhou in great details, and then

[1] Frederick G. Bailey, *Stratagems and Spoils: A Social Anthropology of Politics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), p. 52.

devote the conclusion part to a sociological explanation. In particular, I will focus on the mechanisms to examine two issues: (1) how contextually local factors split movement actors and override the previous structural considerations, and (2) why mass actors would act in a certain way. By identifying these underlying mechanisms, I intend to offer a more nuanced understanding of temporal processes and contingent factors in driving factional dynamics.

The first turning point for the emergence of factional spit is January power seizure in 1967. On January 22, 1967, rebel groups invaded the Guangzhou provincial government offices and declared a power seizure. They permitted all of the top provincial officials to remain in their posts, including First Party secretary Zhao Ziyang. Zhao and his colleagues agreed to perform their duties under "the supervision of the masses", enforced by the rebel leaders who occupied their offices. Rebel groups who had been left out of the office invasion charged that this was a "fake" power seizure, because incumbent officials remained at their posts. They seized on this alleged flaw to justify their opposition to a rebel power seizure that left them on the sidelines. The rebels who seized power, on the other hand, turned this argument on its head, and charged that the rebels who opposed the power seizure were in fact "conservatives" who opposed the seizure of power by the "revolutionary left". This was the opening wedge of a rebel rivalry in which both sides claimed the exclusive mantle of the "revolutionary left", charging that the other was inherently conservative.

By tracing the sequence of events at this critical movement juncture, this chapter reveals that mass factionalism in Guangzhou, which has conventionally understood as

rooted in the structural division between the “radicals” and “conservatives”—with the former challenging the political status quo and the latter protecting the existing structure of power, in fact resulted from tactical conflicts between rival rebel factions in the power seizure of early 1967. The conflicts progressively hardened and eventually erupted into full battles. These rival factions, however, did not display consistently identifiable differences in their political orientations toward the Chinese social and political structure.

On the Eve of Planned Takeover

When the Cultural Revolution swept through Guangzhou in the summer of 1966, various Red Guards organizations and fighting teams were formed and rebelled against local authorities. These groups were of different sizes, ranging from as small as a couple of members to large groups consisting of thousand of members. The most active rebel organizations were Zhongshan University Red Flag (*Zhongda Hongqi* 中大红旗), Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps[2] (*Zhongda Basanyi* 中大八三一), Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag (*Guangyi Hongqi* 广医红旗), and Jinan University East Is Red (*Jida Dongfanghong* 暨大东方红) , which were all formed in late August 1966 and had played a leading role in opposing “work team” sent to the schools to bring the situation under control and preserve the party organization.[3] The primary leader of Zhongshan University Red Flag was Wu Chuanbin (武传斌), an

[2] Zhongshan University August 31 is an affiliated vanguard group of Zhongshan University Red Flag.
[3] Work Teams were a batch of outside delegations of Party officials sending into schools during June and July of 1966. In particular, “they tended to act in much the same way as the Party committees they had come to rescue, and suppressed students who had opposed these committees.” See Barbara Barnouin and Yu Changgen, *Ten Years of Turbulence: The Chinese Cultural Revolution* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1993), p. 75.

active member of Communist Youth League and a senior in the Biology Department at Zhongshan University.

Later in 1966, three large citywide Red Guards Student Headquarters were established: the First Headquarters (*Yisi* 一司), Second Headquarters (*Ersi* 二司), and Third Headquarters (*Sansi* 三司). The First and Third Headquarters had called for an overthrow of local Party leadership. The First Headquarters was founded on 28 October 1966. Its key members were the Guangzhou Engineering Institute Red Guards (*Gongxueyuan Hongweibing* 广州工学院红卫兵), Zhongshan Medical Institute East is Red (*Zhongyi Dongfanghong* 中山医学院东方红), and Chinese College of Medicine 301 (*Zhongyi 301* 中医 301). Their primary leader was Yi Zuocai (易作才), a Party member and model activist in the study of Mao Zedong Thought. Yi was very aggressive in attacking the Guangdong provincial Party committee and propagated the First Headquarters as the earliest rebel organization to criticize Zhao Ziyang (赵紫阳) and local political leaders. The Third Headquarters, mainly led by South China Engineering College Red Flag (*Huagong Hongqi* 华工红旗), was founded on November 11, 1966 and adopted a very similar stance with the First Headquarters. Their primary leader was Gao Xiang (高翔), a Communist Youth League branch secretary who was from revolutionary family background. His father was a leading cadre in the foreign trade field. The First Headquarters and Third Headquarters fought together to overthrow the local Party authorities. They were opposed by the Second Headquarters, which supported the provincial Party committee. The Second Headquarters disintegrated at the end of 1966, after it became clear that Mao

supported the overthrow of local Party authorities.[4]

The student rebellion quickly spread to industrial workers and other urban employees in late December of that year. Four city-wide rebel workers' organizations, the Workers Alliance (*Gong Lian* 工联), Red Flag Workers (*Hongqi Gongren* 红旗工人), the Earth General Headquarters (*Di Zong* 地总) and the Red General Headquarters (*Hong Zong* 红总), had emerged during the struggle to criticize capitalist roaders in the provincial Party committee, and gradually played a larger role in the movement.. These were all rebel organizations that challenged Party rule. On January 9, the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters held a public struggle session to bombard the provincial labor union, the first attack on the Party committee by rebel workers.[5]

The Origins of the Split in the Rebel Ranks

The factional cleavage within the rebel ranks began as a disagreement over the timing of the power seizure. Internal arguments about whether to move ahead to take power right away divided the rebel ranks. These political differences on the eve of a planned power takeover became the harbinger of a deeper factional division in the months that followed, rather than from prior group interests between different social

[4] Hai Feng, *Guangzhou diqu wenge licheng shulue* (*An Account of the Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*) (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1971), pp. 54-64.
[5] Ye Shuming, *Bainian jidang: 20 shiji Guangdong shilu* (*The Exciting History of Guangdong in Twentieth Century*) (Guangzhou: Guangdong Education Press, 2002), pp. 1580-1581. The Earth General Headquarters and The Red General Headquarters were formalized during the struggle to shutdown *Hongweibao* on December 1966, see Ye, Shuming. 2002. "1966 nian fengbi hongweibao shijian" ("The incidence of shutdown of Hongweibao in 1966"). *Guangdong shizhi* (*Guangdong Historical Chronicles*), no. 4, pp. 18-22. The Workers Alliance was also formalized on December 1966, with the direct help from Zhongshan University Red Flag, see Xue Shengqin, *Shinian renshengmeng: Wenge qinliji* (*Ten Years of Dream: A Personal Account of the Cultural Revolution*) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2007), p. 54.

divisions.

On January 19, a *People's Daily* editorial urged the Red Guards to band together and to seize power. On that day, Lin Jie (林杰), a senior member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group (CCRG) and Red Flag (*Hongqi* 红旗) deputy editor-in-chief, instructed the Beijing liaison station of Zhongshan University Red Flag on how to seize power in Guangzhou by uniting with other factions, relying on working class participation and leadership, and by cooperating with selected cadres who had administrative experience.[6]

Zhongshan Red Flag's effort to achieve rebel unity was not particularly successful. On January 21, they convened a power seizure preparation meeting. According to Huang Yijian (黄意坚), the leader of Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, only around thirty representatives attended the evening meeting and the majority of the participants were Red Guards from other provinces. Huang Yijian was candidate Party member and a senior in the Mathematics Department at Zhongshan University.[7] During the meeting, a controversy over procedures surfaced. Rebel leaders from the First Headquarters, Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag as well as the Third Headquarters headed by South China Engineering College Red Flag, protested that it "was not yet ripe for action" because a broad-based great alliance like those in Shanghai, Heilongjiang, and other places, had not yet formed.[8] They were

[6] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 76; Xue Shengqin, *A Personal Account of the Cultural Revolution*, p. 60.
[7] "Huang Yijian: yige lixiang zhuyizhe de jingshen manyou" ("Haung Yijian: Spiritual journey of an idealist"), *Laoren Bao* (*Elders Newspaper*), 26 April 2009.
[8] Liu Guokai, *Guangzhou hongqipai de xingwang* (*The Rise and Fall of Guangzhou's Red Flag Faction*) (New York: Broad Press Publisher, 2006), pp. 55-56.

thus opposed to immediate action.[9]

Other rebel organizations, mainly from the Zhongshan University Red Flag, Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps and Workers Alliance were on the other side of the argument. They contended that "the time was ripe" since the great alliance would be formed in the course of the struggle for power. They said that this was particularly true in Guangdong where a "great disorder" (*daluan* 大乱) still had not occurred.[10] Negotiations continued until the eve of the power seizure, but agreement was impossible. Finally, the Third Headquarters, Red Flag Workers, and Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag and others quit the meeting and declined to join the proposed power seizure.[11]

January 22 Power Seizure

After the withdrawal of these rebel factions, the remaining groups at the preparatory meeting formed themselves into the "Provincial Revolutionary Alliance" (PRA, or *Shenggelian* 省革联). Zhongshan University Red Flag was its main force, and it included eight local rebel groups and nine from outside of the province.[12] The First and Third Headquarters were excluded, among other prominent rebel groups. But the PRA did receive support from the Guangzhou liaison offices of nationally renowned rebel organizations like Qinghua Jinggangshan, Beijing Aviation Institute

[9] "Dui muqian Guangzhou diqu wuchan jieji wenhuadageming xingshi de yixie kanfa" ("Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area"), *Guangzhou Hongweibing* (*Guangzhou Red Guard*), 10 February 1967.
[10] *Guangdong Zhanbao* (*Guangdong Battle News*), 22 February 1967.
[11] *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.
[12] The eight local groups of PRA were: Workers: Workers' Alliance, Red Flag Workers; Cadres/Office employees: South-Central Liaison Headquarters (中南局联络总部), Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red Commune; Students: Zhongshan University Red Flag, Jinan University East Is Red, Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag, Guangzhou Physical Education College Revolutionary Rebel General Headquarters (广州体育学院革命造反总部).

Red Flag, and Harbin Military Engineering Institute Red Rebels. The groups who remained at the meeting moved immediately to seize power from the provincial authorities.

While this meeting was underway, Zhao Ziyang and other provincial leaders were at Zhongshan University, where they had been escorted by Red Guards who supported the power seizure.[13] Zhao and other secretaries were interrogated there until midnight. According to the memoir of a major participant in the power seizure that evening, Wu Chuanbin, the head of Zhongshang University Red Flag, questioned Zhao, "How many mistakes have you made in the Great Cultural Revolution? What's to be done with them?" Having thought a few minutes, Zhao answered, "Power seizure, it is your right granted by Chairman Mao. Regarding this matter, I think there are two ways to put forward, one is that you supervise our work, and the other is a thorough seizure of power by the revolutionary forces."[14] After Zhao's answer, the Red Guards forced other detained secretaries and members of the provincial Standing Committee to express their individual opinions. All shared Zhao's views. In fear of being unable to manage the whole Guangdong province, the representatives of Red Guards finally chose the first suggestion by Zhao, and announced, "All right. From now on, you all listen to our orders, while we all follow Chairman Mao's instructions."[15]

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[13] Zhao Wei, *Zhao Ziyang zhuan* (*The Biography of Zhao Ziyang*) (Beijing: China Press and Publication, 1989), pp. 155-156.

[14] Yang Xiaocun, *Wo yu yige shidai de woshou* (*A Biography of Yang Xiaocun*) (Hong Kong: Wide Code Wah Shui Press Ltd., 2010), p. 131. Yang Xiaocun (杨小村) is a high school student at The Affiliated High School of South China Normal College. His father, Yang Yingbin (杨应彬), was Deputy Secretary General of the Guangdong Provincial Government during that time.

[15] "Zhao Ziyang's two proposals," confession made on 7 January 1969, by Kou Qingyan (寇庆延), former member of the Standing Committee of Guangdong Provincial Party Committee and vice governor of Guangdong

At six o'clock in the morning on January 22, the PRA presented a "Declaration on Power Seizure" (*duoquan gonggao* 夺权公告) to Zhao Ziyang, claiming that "revolutionary rebels have today seized the great power from a handful of capitalist roaders in power in the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee."[16] They further demanded that Zhao immediately turn over the seals of the Guangdong Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Committee, the General Office, and the Cultural Revolution Office to the PRA.[17]

Zhao declared his support for the rebels revolutionary action and wrote a note to Lin Liming (林李明), the secretary in charge of the seals, instructing him to turn them over.[18] The rebels then proceeded to the provincial CCP committee headquarters to find Lin Liming.[19] Lin hesitated to do so, claiming that he lacked authority, leading the Red Guards to charge that he opposed the rebel power seizure. Lin called the General Office of the CCP Central Committee in Beijing for instructions. He was told that "the responsible comrade was not in the office," and that he would be called back. Lin was then taken to Zhongshan University to join Zhao Ziyang and the other leaders, where he informed Zhao of his call to Beijng and suggested that the party center be

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Province. Also see "Ou Mengjue tan shenggelian wenti" ("Ou Mengjue's account on Provincial Revolutionary Alliance"), *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebellion*), 27 February 1967.

[16] *Nanfang Ribao* (*Southern Daily*), 22 January 1967.

[17] This description of the power seizure process does not correspond to Dai Hsiao-ai's accounts in Gordon A. Bennett and Ronald N. Montaperto, *Red Guard: The Political Biography of Dai Hsiao-ai*. (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1972), pp. 148-149. Dai claims that when representatives of PRA went to provincial CCP headquarters to demand Zhao Ziyang turn over the seals of the committee, Zhao was not there. They found him later in the day at the Agricultural and Forestry Bureau, and then took him to Zhongshan University. A similar account appears in Zhao Cong, *Wenge yundong licheng shulue* (*An Account of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*) (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1974), pp. 579-580.

[18] The note said, "Comrade Lin Liming, the local and outside revolutionary rebellions united together to seize the power from provincial Party committee. We shall support such revolutionary action. Please hand over the seals of the Guangdong CCP Committee, the General Office, and the Cultural Revolution Office." see "Zhao Ziyang tan shenggelian" ("Zhao Ziyang's account on Provincial Revolutionary Alliance"), *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebellion*), 27 February 1967.

[19] "1.22 duoquan de jiben shishi" ("Facts of the January 22 seizure of power"), *Guangzhou Hongweibing* (*Guangzhou Red Guard*), 10 February 1967. Also see Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 85.

asked for approval before turning over the seals.[20]

After lengthy discussion, the officials decided that since a reply from Beijing might not be immediately forthcoming, the seals should be turned over pending Beijing's approval.[21] An "Agreement of the Use of Seals" (*yinzhang shiyong xieyue* 印章使用协约) was drafted and signed, specifying that "the seals can be used only with the approval of supervisors designated by the PRA."

Agreement of the Use of Seals[22]

The Secretariat of the provincial committee (some comrades are absent) decides that the Great Seal of the provincial committee should be frozen (temporarily), that the seals of the General Office and the Office for the Cultural Revolution should be used under the supervision of the Alliance, that the Great Seal of the provincial committee should be supervised by the Alliance, and that they should be removed to another place. The above-mentioned seals can be used only with the approval of the supervisors designated by the Alliance. The key (to the receptacle holding the seals) shall be in the hands of the persons designated by the Alliance.

(Singed) Zhao Ziyang Lin Liming

Qu Mengjue Zhang Yun

[20] "Lin Liming tan jiaoquan gei shenggelian de qinshen jingli" ("Lin Liming's account on handing over the power to Provincial Revolutionary Alliance"), *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebellion*), 27 February 1967.
[21] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 85-6; David L. Shambaugh, *The Making of a Premier: Zhao Ziyang's Provincial Career* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), p. 55.
[22] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1589.

Under this agreement, Party and government officials were to continue carry out their duties under the supervision of the PRA. The PRA issued an order that requests, directives, and reports should be handled in Party and government offices in the same way as before, except that now "one additional procedure approval by the Red Guards of Party Committee actions is required."[23] As one Red Guard from Zhongshan University Red Flag said, "confiscating the seals does not mean we are taking away the seals. Instead, you [the Party apparatus] should continue to work under our supervision."[24]

For the PRA, however, obtaining the government's official seal was always a goal in seizing power, even though it was a symbolic act. A core leader from Zhongshan University Red Flag thereby had to carry the seals and hide himself from place to place every day, so as the seals would not be grabbed by other mass organizations.[25]

In order to assure the smooth operation of the bureaucracy, the PRA set up a Service Group (*qinwu xiaozu* 勤务小组) and two Supervisory Group (*jiandu xiaozu* 监督小组), composed of representatives from the Workers' Alliance, Red Flag Workers, Red Peasants (*Hong Nongyou* 红农友[26]), and six other rebel groups, including Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag, Zhongshan University Red Flag and Jinan

[23] *Xiao Bing* (*Little Solider*), 25 February 1967, p.3.
[24] Ding Wang, *Zhonggong wenhua dageming ziliao huibian, di liu juan, Zhongnan Diqu wenhua dageming yundong* (*A Collection of Materials on Chinese Cultural Revolution, Vol. 6, Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*) (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Monthly Press, 1972), p. 112.
[25] Yang Xiaocun, *A Biography of Yang Xiaocun*, p. 132.
[26] Red Peasants was formed in the summer of 1966 and developed into a major rebel force with more than 7,000 members in Guangzhou's rural areas. For a detailed account on rural rebel movement in Guangzhou, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 136-140.

University East Is Red, respectively (see figure 1).

On the afternoon of January 22 Zhao Ziyang convened an enlarged Standing Committee meeting. He announced that "the [relationship between the] PRA and the provincial Party committee is a relationship between the supervisor and the supervised", and "the seizure of power is merely a symbolic one."[27] The next day a public message declared with emphasis on such supervisor-subordinate relationships, "now that the provincial Party committee is placed under the supervision of revolutionary rebels, this is more helpful to our resolute implementation of Chairman Mao's proletarian line… the provincial Party committee solemnly expresses: under the supervision of revolutionary rebels and the broad masses of revolutionary people, we shall work more actively and never be slack in work nor perform the duties in a perfunctory manner."[28] Zhao and his colleagues were permitted to work in their offices, but their decisions were subject to final approval by the PRA's "Supervisory Group".[29]

The Rebel Opposition

The January 23 proclamation by the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee made clear that the incumbent officials continued in their posts. They were not required to stand aside from office, nor was the top leadership punished for political

[27] "Yin Linping tan shenggelian ji qita" ("Yin Linping's account on Provincial Revolutionary Alliance and other issues"), *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebellion*), 27 February 1967. Also see Zhao Wei, *The Biography of Zhao Ziyang*, p. 156.
[28] "Zhonggong Guangdong shengwei gao quansheng dangyuan, ganbu, renmin shu" ("Message from the Guangdong CCP Committee to all party members, cadres, and people of the province"), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Southern Daily*), 23 January 1967.
[29] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 86.

errors. It operated just as before, but under rebel supervision. The rebel groups who had withdrawn from the negotiations were already unhappy that their colleagues had gone forward immediately without them, but now they were highly critical of the idea that the provincial party leadership remained in their posts.

The rebel opposition who were excluded from the power seizure made three criticisms of the power seizure. First, it was "a fake power seizure that protected the emperors in reality" (*jia duoquan, zhen baohuang* 假夺权真保皇), and was essentially a conservative restoration.[30] These rebels suspected that the PRA had struck a secret bargain with the Guangdong authorities for a "peaceful transition of power", with Zhao Ziyang falsely giving up power but actually engaging in a counteroffensive.[31] They refused to recognize the power seizure as legitimate. Some put up wall posters claiming that "a supervised power seizure is not complete power seizure but revisionism",[32] with some proclaiming, "kick out the PRA", "smash the PRA", and "sentence the PRA to death".[33]

Under severe criticism from dissented rebels, Zhao Ziyang personally put up a confession post in the courtyard of the provincial Party committee.[34] The confession stated:

"Seizing power was an inevitable trend and a call of the Central Committee and

[30] "Shengwei jiaoquan shi ge da yinmou" ("Handing over the power from the Provincial Party Committee is a big conspiracy"), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Southern Daily*), 16 February 1967.
[31] "Ping Zhonggong Guangdong shengwei gao quansheng dangyuan, ganbu, renmin shu" ("Criticism on 'message from the Guangdong CCP Committee to all party members, cadres, and people of the province'"), *Guangzhou Hongweibing* (*Guangzhou Red Guard*), 10 February 1967.
[32] *Little Solider*, 25 February 1967, p.3.
[33] *Guangdong Battle News*, 22 February 1967.
[34] The title of Zhao Ziyang's confession was "A Statement on the Matter of 'PRA'" (对于省革联问题的声明).

Chairman Mao. So it was a revolutionary move and it should be supported; second, the participations were all revolutionary rebels that I could only give them support instead of rejection; third, I was not very clear about the situation of great alliance in Guangzhou. I could by no means look into the state of their alliance before deciding on whether or not to accept their seizure of power; fourth, before January 22, *Hongqi* and *People's Daily* had published several important editorials and power seizure experiences from other provinces, but none of them had mentioned how to seize power. As such, I had no idea in my heart [on how to do it]." [35]

However, Zhao's statement irritated more severe attack on the PRA. The dissented rebels believed that Zhao Ziyang was only "giving up power in words, counter-attacking in reality"[36] (*jia rangquan, zhen fanpu* 假让权真反扑), and the so-called "you all listen to our orders, while we all follow Chairman Mao's instructions" was merely a secret conspiracy between the PRA and Zhao.[37] In this sense, these rebels further accused the PRA as only a tool and a puppet of the provincial Party committee.

Second, the opponents criticized the power seizure for lacking the support of workers and peasants, and that the PRA was a "intellectuals' power seizure (*xiucai*

[35] Zhao Wei, *The Biography of Zhao Ziyang*, p. 162; Yuan Huizhang, *Zhao Ziyang zuihou de jihui* (*Zhao Ziyang's Last Chance*) (Hong Kong: Mirror Books, 1997), p. 295.
[36] Ding Wang, *Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*, pp. 138-146.
[37] "Dadao Zhao Ziyang, tikai shenggelian, daluan guangdong sheng, chedi nao geming" ("Overthrow Zhao Ziyang, kick out PRA, disrupt Guangdong Province, and thoroughly carry out revolution"), *Hongse Fengbao* (*Red Storm*), 27 February 1967.

duoquan 秀才夺权)."[38] This violated Mao's instructions that the revolutionary forces should be led by the workers and peasants. While the PRA's "Supervisory Group" was heavily weighted in favor of workers and peasants, in practice the students dominated decision-making and use of the official seals.[39] All three members assigned to supervise the work of the Provincial Party Secretariat were students.[40] Workers and peasants were added only to provide legitimacy when the center was stressing workers as the main force for revolution. Such student monopoly of power seizure made the PRA could not fully take control of the province and thus produced another crack within rebels.

The third criticism was that the January 22 power seizure was mainly planned and organized by rebel organizations from outside the province. This referred to the important role of representatives from Qinghua Jinggangshan and Beijing Aviation Institute Red Flag, prominent rebel organizations from Beijing who pushed for a rapid power seizure in Guangdong. In fact, the role of the outside Red Guards was extremely important as catalysts to the local movement. They normally maintained ten and twenty-five liaison men in Guangzhou,[41] with a very strong and disproportionate influence on the local Red Guards forces. Since those outsiders usually kept a very close connection to the figures in CCRG, they were strongly behind the power seizure by continually providing inside messages from the CCRG

[38] "Guanjian zaiyu dalianhe" ("The key is the great alliance"), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Southern Daily*), 30 January 1967; "Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.
[39] *Xin Beida, Guangzhou Ban* (*New Beida, Guangzhou Edition*), 9 February 1967.
[40] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 80.
[41] Despite the essentially local nature of mass factionalism, factional organizations usually established a network of "liaison stations" in other major cities in much the same way as governments set up diplomatic missions in other countries. Through these "stations", faction members would keep their headquarters informed about developments of interest and provide support and assistance for any of their own members active in the area. See "Mass factionalism in Communist China", *Current Scene*, Vol. VI, No. 8 (1968), pp. 1-13.

and other important information on power seizure preparations in the rest of the country. They had set up liaison stations on the campus of Zhongshan University and were closely aligned with Zhongshan University Red Flag in December 1966.[42] As a result, both the First and Third Headquarters accused the outside Red Guards of "befriending some organizations while dealing blows at others (*la yipi, da yipi* 拉一派打一派)," to complain about the close ties of these organizations to Zhongshan University Red Flag.[43]

Shortly after the power seizure declaration, vociferous arguments broke out between local rebel groups and outsiders over the question of who shall lead the rebel movement in Guangzhou.[44] Both sides cited the central directives and precedents to prove that their own claims of preeminence. On January 30, encouraged by a statement issued by Premier Zhou Enlai that the bulk of political activity had to be conducted by natives to a given locale and that outside groups could only play a "supplementary role",[45] several local rebel groups, by South China Engineering College Red Flag and Zhongshan Medical Institute East Is Red, ransacked the liaison stations of Beijing Aviation Institute Red Flag, Harbin Military Engineering Institute Red Rebels, and Wuhan Third Headquarters, all key members of the PRA.[46] This

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[42] Gordon Bennett and Ronald N. Montaperto, *Red Guard: The Political Biography of Dai Hsiao-ai* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1972), p. 148.
[43] Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, p. 105.
[44] "Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967; Ding Wang, *Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*, pp. 235-41. In fact, some outside Red Guards considered themselves as the orthodoxy and tried to push the local organizations to emulate their upsurge model. These Red Guards self-labeled themselves as "from the side of Chairman Mao" and repeatedly put it to any who doubted their authority. Their arrogance and pretension arouse the discontent and anti-outsiders sentiments among the locals. For example, Hai (1971: 50) records that when several outside Red Guards cut the narrow leg trousers of a local Red Guard and wound his companions in later 1966, the whole local university was mobilized by such slogan as: "our people had been beaten by rude Northerners; we have to unite together to fight against them!" Then the two sides broke out in a fight.
[45] This statement was probably made on 22 January 1967, see *Hongse Zhigong* (*Red Workers*), 29 January 1967.
[46] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 81.

attack further exacerbated factional splits within the rebels.

Origins of the Factional Splits

Was the coalition that carried out the power seizure "radical" because they sought to overturn the regional Party Committee, or were they "conservative" because they only played a supervisory role and left incumbent officials in their offices? Were the rebel opponents of the power seizure "conservative" because they had not taken part in it, or were they more "radical" because they felt that too much power was still exercised by incumbent officials? Each side had a legitimate claim to the "radical" label, and both advanced dubious claims that the other side was "conservative" in reality. Their split at this point in time was about tactical issues in the course of the rebel movement, not the features inherent in political and social status quo ante before the Cultural Revolution. The split over this tactical question, however, quickly deepened into a more enduring split.

The Third Headquarters complained that Zhongshan University Red Flag had monopolized the whole process and occupied the key leadership positions.[47] They charged that the power seizure reflected the political ambitions of individual rebel leaders rather than the wishes of the broad revolutionary masses in Guangzhou.[48] This, they charged, amounted to a "serious error in line" and an "absolutely mistaken orientation."[49]

[47] Ibid., 77.
[48] "Criticism on 'message from the Guangdong CCP Committee to all party members, cadres, and people of the province'", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.
[49] "Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.

The First Headquarters itself split into three separate parts, each of which adopted a different position on the power seizure and allied with either PRA or anti faction: the New First Headquarters (*Xin Yisi* 新一司) led by Zhongshan Medical Institute East Is Red, which took a mixed position on the power seizure, recognizing the serious mistakes that PRA had been made; the Red First Headquarters (*Hong Yisi* 红一司) led by Guangzhou Engineering Institute Red Guards, which firmly opposed the power seizure and allied with the Third Headquarters; and a third group, Chinese College of Medicine 301, which participated in the power seizure but withdraw from the PRA and maintained neutrality afterwards.[50]

The pro power seizure alliance also experienced splits. The Red Flag Workers was among the first to join the PRA after it was formed. On the eve of planned takeover, they opposed the early power seizure and left the preparatory meeting. But they took part in the January 22 power seizure anyway, while withdrawing from the PRA the next day. It returned to the PRA on January 28 and sent two representatives to the committee of the Supervisory Group.[51] Subsequently, the Red Flag Workers tangled with other organizations about their relative influence in the Supervisory Group, and when it became clear that they would not win the argument, they withdrew from the power seizure altogether and joined the opposition. This led to splits within the organization itself, as some of the constituent organizations within the Red Flag Workers disagreed with the decision and besieged the group's main

[50] Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, pp. 104-105.
[51] "Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.

headquarters and detained some of its leaders.[52]

To blur factional lines even further, some of the former defenders of the Party authorities decided to support the power seizure. South China Engineering Institute August 18 Combat Corps, a group that had earned the conservative label by staunchly defending the school's work teams and Party leadership in the summer of 1966, had opposed the Third Headquarters in late 1966. Because the Third Headquarters declared themselves opposed to the power seizure, this organization decided to defend it, denounced the Third Headquarters as "royalist" defenders of the provincial Party committee.[53]

The power seizure instigated a realignment of rebel forces into two new groups (see table 1). The issue, unlike the factionalism of 1966, was no longer about whether the provincial authorities should be overthrown. Now the issue was about the power seizure itself, the form that it took, and which groups held what position in the new structure of power. This had the effect of fragmenting previously united groups and blurring the previous factional distinctions. When support or opposition to the provincial authorities was the core issue, as in 1966, labels like conservative and radical made some sense. Now, however, these labels became fundamentally ambiguous, and contested.

Zhou Enlai's Initial Stance

Soon after Guangzhou's rebels fell into disagreements about the January 22

[52] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 82-83, 96, 194-195.
[53] Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, p. 80.

power seizure, Premier Zhou Enlai immediately intervened to express his support. On the morning of January 22, Huang Yijian received a call from Zhou Enlai's liaison office approving their actions.[54] On January 24, Zhou personally telephoned Huang, confirmed Guangzhou's power transfer model once again and ordered the PRA to unite with other rebel groups. Zhou also instructed the PRA to maintain good relations with the Guangzhou Military Region and earn the support of commander Huang Yongsheng (黄永胜). Zhou also telephoned to express his approval of the power seizure to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Military District Command, and instructed them to maintain order if necessary.[55]

Zhou approved the power seizure because he evidently saw it as a means to restore normal production and rebuild authority, both of which deteriorated badly at the end of 1966. Guangzhou's economy was deeply disrupted by the Red Guards campaign at the end of the previous year.[56] Electricity, water supply and transportation were sharply curtailed (figure 2). This was known as the "three stops" (*san ting* 三停).[57] Consumer staples were in short supply in the market.[58] Coal and grain stores were running short, and several major factories had ceased production due to coal shortages.[59]

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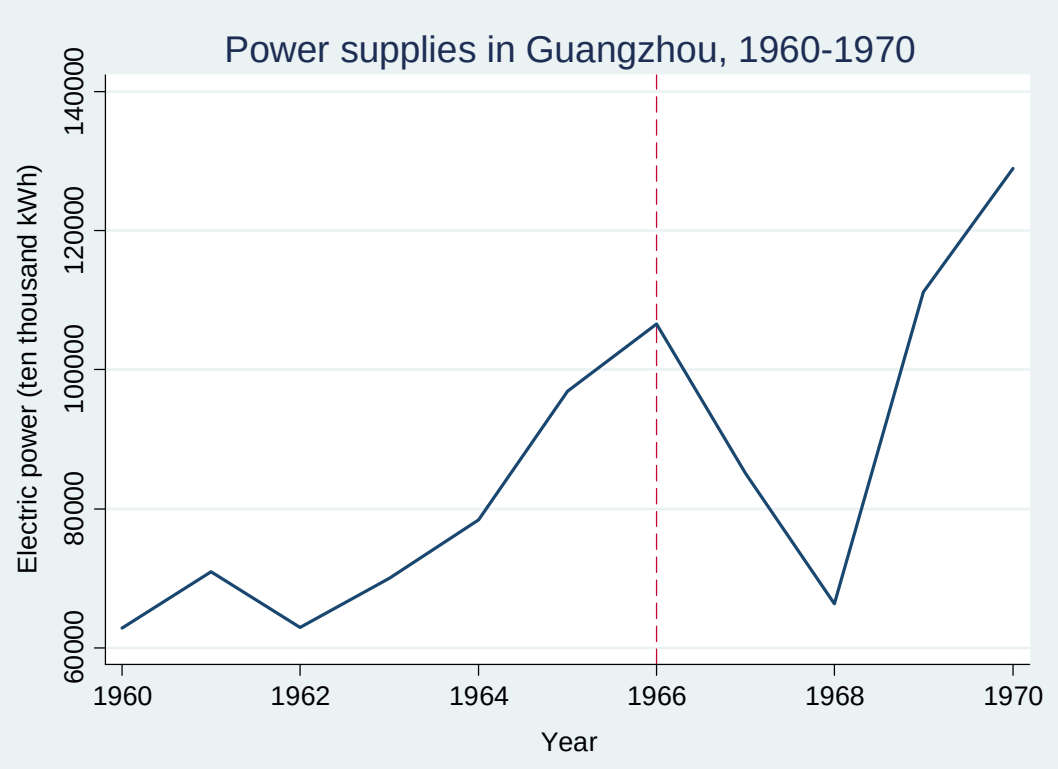
[54] "Haung Yijian: spiritual journey of an idealist", *Elders Newspaper*, 26 April 2009.
[55] David Shambaugh, *The Making of a Premier*, p. 55, also see Zhao Cong, *An Account of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, p. 581.
[56] Guangzhou shiwei dangshi yanjiushi (Party History Research Centre of CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee), *Zhonggong Guangzhou dangshi dashiji* (*Guangzhou Party History Annals*) (Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Press, 1991), p. 287.
[57] Yi Fan, *Wenge xia de zhonggong jingji* (*Communist Chinese Economy under the Cultural Revolution*) (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1968).
[58] *Wenge Pinglun* (*Cultural Revolution Review*), January 1968.
[59] Ye Shuming, "1967 nian jundui shi ruhe jieru guangzhou defang wenge" ("How the army got involved into Guangzhou's Cultural Revolution in 1967"), *Dayoo News*, 3 August 2010.

Figure 2.2 power supplies in Guangzhou, 1960-1970



Source: Statistics Bureau of Guangzhou, *Guangzhou sishi nian* (*Guangzhou Forty Years*) (Beijing: China Statistics Publishing House, 1989), p. 523.

Zhou also had stressed the importance of continued leadership by experienced officials. In a January 10 conversation with Mao Zedong about Shanghai's power seizure, Zhou suggested that "local political leaders could remain at their posts and staff government functions while continuing receiving public struggle and criticism."[60] The Premier adopted a "mass supervision and cadre work" formula,[61] encouraging government and Party cadres to stay on the job after takeovers in order to avoid the breakdown of regular services that had occurred in Shanghai in early

[60] Guanyu duoquan wenti de tanhua (A talk on power seizure), 10 January 1967, in Song Yongyi (ed.), *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*, CD ROM (Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2002). Zhou distinguished four types of power holders and suggested to treat them differently while taking over the power: (1) those who should be completely purged; (2) those who should be suspended but not dismissed. After six months of probation it would be possible for them to gain reinstatement; (3) those who should be demoted but retain a post under surveillance. Future reinstatement would depend entirely on the progress made over a specified period of time; (4) those who should retain their posts under supervision. Although Zhou made it clear that some cadres would continue to hold power after the seizure, he provided no clue as to the ratios between these four categories.

[61] Thomas Robinson, "Chou En-lai and the Cultural Revolution in China", in Thomas Robinson (ed.), *The Cultural Revolution in China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 165-312.

January. After all, the revolutionary rebels in Shanghai had gone too far, "opposing, excluding and overthrowing all cadres indiscriminately."[62]

This was Zhou's consistent stance at the time. On January 25, Zhou met with rebels from Central Government Finance Department and suggested that the masses took over only the "power to supervise production" and relied on the "chiefs and those who understand the business." In Nanjing's January 26 power seizure, when the insurgents felt that they were technically unable to manage the province after power seizure, Zhou told them they would not actually run the government, but would supervise officials in conducting their normal work.[63] On January 28 Zhou told rebels from Zhejiang Province that the existing personnel of state organs and government apparatus should "carry on their work as usual, but under the supervision of the revolutionary mass organizations."[64] The Premier believed that "without a power seizure, it is impossible to uphold revolution and production," and that the power seizure was a "new stage of grasping revolution, stimulating production, opposing economism, and smashing the new counterattack of the bourgeois reactionary line."[65]

The Counter Power Seizure

Zhou's stance did nothing to weaken the building rebel opposition to the power seizure. The rebel opposition soon mounted several attempts to seize power

[62] Philip Bridgham, "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The struggle to seize power," *The China Quarterly*, No. 34 (1968), pp. 6-37.
[63] Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, "Nanjing's failed 'January Revolution' of 1967: The inner politics of a provincial power seizure", *The China Quarterly*, No. 203 (2010), pp. 675-92, at p. 681.
[64] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Central Party Literature Research Center), *Zhou Enlai nianpu* (*xiajuan*) (*Zhou Enlai Chronology* [Vol. 3]) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), p. 118.
[65] *Red Battle News*, 17 February 1967.

themselves. This rapid evolution of seizure and counter-seizure conflicts shows how factional split arose according to different situations as time went on. The formation of divisions referred not primarily to pre-existing political belief but to a practical or situational orientation with regard to concrete issues in a specific work unit.

The most important such instance was at Guangdong's Public Security Bureau. Rebel groups seized power there on January 22, but rebels within the Bureau dissented from the act, arguing that only rebels within the bureau itself had the right to seize power in their own unit.[66] On January 25 the opponents organized to expel the PRA's "supervision group" from the Bureau and take power themselves.[67] The Third Headquarters sent forces to participate in the counter-power seizure, and the Earth General Headquarters expressed their support at this point.[68]

Aware of the attempt, the PRA mobilized thousands of their members to rush to the Public Security Bureau, leading to a violent melee in which more than ten people were injured in an extensive fist fight. Several people even broke their legs when rebels forced into the Bureau.[69] This was the first violent conflict between factions over the power seizure. In the early morning hours of January 26 the Guangzhou Military Region intervened, occupying the Bureau and exercising military control.[70]

Facing continued criticism and counter power seizure threat, the PRA mobilized

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[66] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 83.

[67] Those leftover participants who did not participate in power seizure formed a rivalry organization—"Revolutionary Rebel Committee of Guangdong Political and Law System (广东省政法革命造反委员会)", attempting to kick out PRA's "supervision group" stationed at the Municipal Public Security Bureau and retake the power into their own hands. See Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1596; Guangzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Guangzhou City Annals Editorial Board), *Guangzhou shizhi* (*Guangzhou City Annals*) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Publish House, 1999), p. 466.

[68] Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 56.

[69] *Guangzhou Yi Erwu Zhanbao* (*Guangzhou January 25 Battle News*), 16 March 1967; Also see Yang Xiaocun, *A Biography of Yang Xiaocun*, p. 132.

[70] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 84; Ye Shuming, "1967 nian da dongluan (shang)" ("Great turbulence in 1967, part one"), *Guangzhou Wenyi* (*Guangzhou Literature and Art*), No. 8 (1998).

to fight back. On the afternoon of January 26 they held an accusation rally to criticize the counter power seizure and called the attacking faction a "counter-revolutionary organization". They subjected several opposition leaders to a struggle session and charged that "to oppose the PRA is counter-revolutionary," and paraded their captives through the streets.[71] On February 2 the PRA held another accusation rally and declared that "whoever supports the January 25 incident is royalist (*baohuang pai* 保皇派), while those who oppose the January 25 incident are true revolutionary rebels."[72] Utilizing its control of *Guangzhou Daily* as a propaganda mouthpiece against all the dissenting voices, they charged that members of the First Headquarters had bad class backgrounds, and that the Third Headquarters was carrying out a "conservative" policy to "protect the emperor."[73] It also heavily promoted its image and glorified their power seizure acts as "very good (*hao de hen* 好的很) with absolutely correct direction,"[74] and "new-born thing is unconquerable."[75]

Meanwhile, with the stimulus of "seizing power" victory itself, the pro power seizure alliance continued to recruit new allies. New groups linked up with the PRA, and more individual entered affiliate groups.[76] On February 3, the PRA announced a member list with 84 affiliated mass organizations in total. However, this announcement immediately received criticisms by opponents that the PRA at most

[71] For example, the leader of Revolutionary Rebel Committee of Guangdong Political and Law System, Wu Lizhi (邬力志). See Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 56.
[72] "Several views of the present situation in Guangzhou area", *Guangzhou Red Guard*, 10 February 1967.
[73] Ibid.
[74] "Guanyu jiaqiang wuchan jieji zhuanzheng zhenya fageming huodong de tonggao" ("A message on enhance Proletarian dictatorship to suppress counter-revolutionary activities"), *Guangzhou Ribao* (*Guangzhou Daily*), 7 February 1967.
[75] "Xinsheng shiwu shi buke zhansheng de" ("New-born thing is unconquerable"), *Guangzhou Ribao* (*Guangzhou Daily*), 16 February 1967.
[76] Bennett and Montaperto, *Red Guard: The Political Biography of Dai Hsiao-ai*, p. 150.

time was not much more than hollow shells rather than unified command structures.[77]

The February Raid of the Military Region Headquarters

Initially, the Guangzhou Military Region adopted a neutral stance toward the January 22 power seizure, neither supporting nor opposing the PRA. However, when they subsequently acted to carry out Beijing's order to "support the left" by maintaining order after the mass power seizure, they clashed repeatedly with the PRA. A series of such incidents led to increasing resistance by the PRA forces, which culminated in their raid on the offices of the Guangzhou Military Region in early February.

There were three levels of military authority in Guangzhou: the Guangzhou Garrison Command, the Guangdong Military District and the Guangzhou Military Region. The Guangzhou Military Region controlled the Garrison Command as well as the Military District.[78] Huang Yongsheng, commander of Guangzhou Military Region, was actually only the third-ranking political commissar. The first and second political commissars were Tao Zhu (陶铸) and Zhao Ziyang. Tao Zhu had disappeared from the political stage in early January, and Zhao Ziyang was under rebel's supervision.[79] This meant that the top official in the military region was Huang Yongsheng. Orders to "support the left" by maintaining order inadvertently pushed the Huang Yongsheng into a confrontation with the PRA.

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[77] Hai Feng, *An Account of the Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 82.
[78] Harvey Nelsen, "Military forces in the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, No. 51 (1972), pp. 444-474.
[79] Tao Zhu had been struck down on January 8 in Beijing, see Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 361-367. Zhao Ziyang further disappeared from public view on 25 February until 16 October 1967. See *Guangdong Keji Zhanbao* (Guangdong Science and Technology Battle News), 25 October 1967.

During the January power seizure by the PRA, four PLA officers were dispatched to the Party and government offices, but they only "stood in the doorway and watched the proceedings without saying a word."[80] This neutral stance began to change after the PRA's invasion of the Public Security Bureau and the subsequent violent clash with more than 10 were wounded there, and a similar incident at the Guangzhou Radio Station. The next day, the Military Region withdrew the four representatives.[81]

On January 23 the Beijing authorities reversed their policy of non-involvement by the PLA and directed the armed forces to actively support "the broad masses of revolutionary leftists.[82] On January 28, the Military Affairs Commission further issued an eight-point directive which gave the army authority to defend itself against mass attacks.[83]

However, the center's order did not explicitly explain how military officers were to determine which mass organizations merited the "leftists" label. In Guangzhou, as in many other regions, two opposed factions both claimed the mantle of the revolutionary left, providing military forces with a serious dilemma.[84] If the army backed one group, it drew fire from the others. If it withheld support from all the

[80] Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism*, p.132.
[81] Ye Shuming, "How the army got involved into Guangzhou's Cultural Revolution in 1967", *Dayoo News*, 3 August 2010.
[82] "Guanyu renmin jiefangjun jianjue zhichi geming zuopai qunzhong de jueding" ("Decision to provide the revolutionary masses of the left with firm support from the People's Liberation Army"), 23 January 1967, in Chen Donglin and Du Pu, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shilu, Wenhua dageming de shinian, di san juan* (*The History of the People's Republic of China, Ten Years of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Vol. 3*) (Jilin: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 1994), pp. 219-220.
[83] "Batiao mingling" ("Eight-point order"), 28 January 1967, in Chen Donglin and Du Pu, *The History of the People's Republic of China*, p. 223.
[84] Chien Yu-shen, *China's Fading Revolution: Army Dissent and Military Divisions, 1967-68* (Hong Kong: Centre of Contemporary Chinese Studies, 1969), pp. 64-68; Ellis Joffe, "The Chinese army in the Cultural Revolution: The politics of intervention", *Current Scene*, Vol. VIII, No. 18 (1970), pp. 1-24.

groups, it was accused of failing to support the revolutionary masses. The order to "support the left" thus became an ambiguous task for the army at this point in time.

A key component of supporting the left was to occupy strategically important state facilities, in particular the mass media, power stations, transportation depots, and telecommunication offices.[85] In practice, this meant that they took control of these sites without dislodging the rebel groups that had seized power there. When the power seizure movement in Guangzhou began to spread beyond government organs, the local army moved quickly to take control of the municipal broadcasting station and announced support for a group of rebels from the Earth General Headquarters who had initially proclaimed a control there. This soon created problems with the PRA. On February 2, groups affiliated with the PRA attempted to dislodge these rebels from the radio station, the troops guarded the station and they helped the Earth General Headquarters repel the invaders.[86]

This led the leadership of the PRA to conclude that the armed forces did not support their claims to power strongly enough, and on February 6 they held a mass meeting to denounce Guangzhou Military Region, claiming that "the Military Region is now the biggest *baohuang pai* in Guangdong, and we thus have to strike them down," and "the local army was the tool and loyal representatives of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu, and thus have to strike them down to the death."[87]

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[85] Zheng Qian and Zhang Hua, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shi 1966-1976* (*The History of People's Republic of China, 1966-1976*) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2010), p. 103. Mass medium, especially the radio network, was a vital channel of communication that Mao used to mobilize mass groups all over the nation. Therefore the radio network had to be kept open so that the messages from Beijing could be transmitted through the county. See Alan Liu, "Mass media in the Cultural Revolution: Problems of mass mobilization in Communist China", *Current Scene*, Vol. VII, No. 8 (1969), pp. 1-8.

[86] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 84.

[87] Ye Shuming, "Great turbulence in 1967", *Guangzhou Wenyi* (*Guangzhou Literature and Art*), No. 8. For the

Late in the evening on February 7 several squads from the PRA arrived at the Military Region Headquarters to confront Huang Yongsheng with their charges.[88] The first group to arrive staged a demonstration and pasted up big-character posters that contained slogans like "overthrow Huang Yongsheng, liberate the Guangzhou Military Region", and "bombard the Guangzhou Military Region's Party Secretary". As the demonstration continued, some rebels forced their way into the compound, occupied the command headquarters and logistics department, cut the telegraph lines, put up more posters, and detained several officers.[89]

The telegraph was repaired after three or four hours, and the affair was reported to Beijing. At 5:30pm of February 8, the Central Military Affairs Committee responded, denouncing the action in no uncertain terms:

> "Last evening some comrades raided leading organs of the Guangzhou Military Region and arrested people wantonly without authorization; this is a direct violation of the Eight Point Order of the Military Affairs Committee approved for distribution by Chairman Mao, and is therefore erroneous conduct. The Guangzhou Military Region command resolutely maintained the order of the Military Affairs Committee and is therefore completely right. It is hoped that you will distinguish right and wrong and leave the areas of the organs of the Military Region immediately."

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command structure of Guangzhou Military Region, see Ding Wang, *Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*, pp. 697-698.

[88] Guangzhou City Annals Editorial Board, *Guangzhou City Annals*, p. 467.

[89] According to a report from the Military Region, a total of 33 mass organizations with more than 1,000 rebels participated in the February raid of the military headquarters. See Qingkuang fanyin (Situation Briefing 情况反映), 8 February 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Military Region Joint Office 广州军区联合办公室).

However, the rebels initially refused to heed the order, and left only after a second, more strongly worded directive arrived later that evening. Only then did they withdraw and release their hostages.[90] This was the beginning of a process that ended with open conflict between the armed forces and the PRA.

The pro power seizure faction charged that the army did not support the true "revolutionary left" but only attempted to reverse a genuine mass power seizure. On the other side, felt a direct threat to its own power interest and organizational integrity, Huang Yongsheng abandoned his ostensible neutrality and started taking actions against the PRA. The military accused the January power seizure as a "fake" one because it was Zhao Ziyang and provincial Party committee who readily gave up their power. The military also did not recognize the form of supervision team. In other regions, all the Party committee had been paralyzed and ceased function. The Military Region thus denied the legitimacy of the PRA and denounced it as "representatives who enforced the bourgeois reactionary line."[91]

Zhou Enlai's Shifting Stance

Zhou Enlai had initially encouraged the Guangzhou power seizure, hoping that it would usher in a period of relative order, as it had earlier in Shanghai. The February 8 raid of the Military Region Headquarters, however, led Zhou Enlai to reconsider his position. Zhou viewed PLA as the mainstay of the dictatorship of the proletariat and

[90] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 91-92.
[91] Ye shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong in Twentieth Century*, p. 1602.

thereby the masses' attitude toward the PLA was actually the attitude toward the dictatorship of the proletariat. A power seizure could not survive without the backing of the armed forces, and it was inconceivable that the masses could seize power from the army.[92] This would ultimately be Mao Zedong's clear position as well, but Mao would not state this unambiguously until later in the year. Zhou viewed the PRA's attack on the Guangzhou military as a seriously mistaken political orientation.[93]

Moreover, Zhou consistently stressed that a power seizure could only succeed on the basis of broad rebel unity. According to Zhou, any mass organization "taking the socialist road in accordance with Mao Zedong's thought"[94] was eligible to join the great alliance, because "it is possible to have rightists, middle roaders, and leftists in a power seizure."[95] He insisted that regional power seizures be based on broad unity, and "in the absence of a great alliance the seizure of power from those in authority taking the capitalist road remains empty talk."[96]

However, Guangzhou's situation obviously violated these principles. The PRA represented only a minority of the city's rebel movement, and its precipitous action and subsequent behavior had split the rebel forces in the city. Indeed, the failure of the PRA to achieve "great unity and to seize power based on great unity" was denounced in a series of statements at this time, not only by those who were excluded from

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[92] "Zhou Enlai jiejian ha'erbing hongse zaofanzhe lianhe zongbu daibiao de jianghua" ("The speeches of Zhou Enlai during the meeting with representatives from Ha'erbing Red Rebels United Headquarters"), in *Zhongyang shouzhang jianghua II* (*Central Leaders' Speeches*, Vol. 2) (Beijing Boli Zongchang Hongweibing Lianluozhan, 1967), pp. 100-104.
[93] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, pp. 130-131.
[94] *Hongse Zhigong* (*Red Workers*), 29 January 1967.
[95] *Hongse Zhanbao* (*Red Battle News*), 17 February 1967.
[96] *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*), 22 January 1967, p. 1.

power seizure, but also by Zhou himself.[97] Statements decrying the PRA as "anarchism," "departmentalism," "sectarianism," "splitting," and "small-group mentality" were generally throughout the city in the February.[98] Moreover, the PRA had fallen into conflict with the only institution that could stabilize a power seizure. Instead of creating the foundations for a restoration of production and social order, the power seizure had precipitated a new round of factional conflict, this time among former allies.

More seriously, there was no acceptable senior cadre to occupy the leadership stands in the new power structure. The most crucial factor for a central-recognizable power seizure was the availability of an alternative leadership with sufficient rank to exercise power effectively. In Shanghai's January storm, it had a strong civilian leader in the person of Zhang Chunqiao (张春桥) that backed by the center. Zhang Chunqiao, the deputy head of the CCRG who was also a senior member of Shanghai's Party committee, successfully headed himself in Shanghai's mass rebel movement. He also rebuilt and consolidated the new power structure after taking control of municipal government, and thus quickly won Mao's unwavering support. To the centre, Zhang's credentials as a revolutionary leader were impressive, in which he exercised his leadership and power correctly while obeying to the central authority.[99]

Unlike Shanghai, neither Zhao Ziyang nor any other local official could play this role after the contested power seizure in Guangzhou. The revolutionary rebels also did

[97] "The key is the great alliance", *Nanfang Ribao* (*Nanfang Daily*), 30 January 1967.
[98] Ye Shuming, "Great turbulence in 1967," *Guangzhou Wenyi* (*Guangzhou Literature and Art*), No. 8; Philip Bridgham, "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967", p. 11.
[99] Elizabeth Perry and Li Xun, *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 119-144; Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, p. 61.

not attain essential authority to manage the province for the purpose of restoring normal production as Zhou Enlai required. Instead, the endless factional confrontations and counter-seizure of power created more chaos, and eventually led to split organizationally. Again, this was also quite different from the model experience of Shanghai. Confrontations between Shanghai rebel camps did not occur, as the anti faction was thoroughly suppressed by Zhang Chunqiao.

On February 19 more than 50,000 rebels held a rally to denounce the PRA's "sham power seizure", declaring the rebels' intention to seize power back from the PRA.[100] Three days later more than fifty rebel organizations, including Red Flag Workers, Third Headquarters, Revolutionary Rebel Committee of Guangdong Political and Law System, jointly established a "United Headquarters of Revolutionary Rebels of Guangdong Province (*Guangdongsheng geming zaofan lianhe zhihuibu* 广东省革命造反联合指挥部)", and began their offensive against the PRA. The PRA announced that "the new-born thing is unconquerable" and declared their intention to fight to the death.[101] Now two city-wide rebel headquarters, unalterably opposed to one another, had officially formed.[102] In response, Zhou Enlai withdrew his support for the PRA's claim to have seized power. Obviously, the issues that divided the two groups at each step of the way were about the terms of power seizure, not the features of the prior political and social status quo ante.

The CCRG's Involvement

[100] Zhao Wei, *The Biography of Zhao Ziyang*, p. 161.
[101] "New-born thing is unconquerable", *Guangzhou Ribao* (*Guangzhou Daily*), 16 February 1967.
[102] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 86.

Another major political actor at the center was the CCRG. Zhou's primary concern in the movement had been to ensure that it would not disrupt the economy and social order, while the CCRG consistently pushed for greater mass mobilization, culminating in a mass power seizure from regional bureaucrats.[103] They viewed the power seizure as "the overthrowing of one class by another"[104] and thus consistently championed mass revolt. As an ultimate expression of the revolutionary class struggle, the scope of power seizure should be broad, the impact should be disruptive, and the whole process should be carried out thoroughly and unconditionally in a bottom-to-top fashion. As a result, there was a deep tension between these two agendas and political strategies.

Initially, members of the CCRG had instigated Guangzhou's January 22 power seizure.[105] Lin Jie had given instructions to Zhongshan University Red Flag on seizing power in Guangzhou immediately before the act. The Beijing student rebels who stationed representatives in Guangzhou were closely connected with the CCRG, and they also played a major role in preparations for the power seizure. The CCRG displayed little concern with organizational continuity or the preservation of production and social order. Their clear priority was to promote a thorough and wholesale power seizure: "all power monopolized by the bourgeoisie should be taken over."[106]

For example, Wang Li (王力), the most radical member of the CCRG,

[103] Zheng Qian and Zhang Hua, *The History of People's Republic of China, 1966-1976*, pp. 85-86.
[104] *Hongse Zaofanzhe* (*Red Rebels*), 18 January 1967.
[105] Zhao Cong, *An Account of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, p. 583.
[106] *Red Guards Battle News*, 23 February 1967.

manipulated the masses to take the power into their own hands and occupy the leadership stands in the new power structure, since that was the surest way to ensure the political safety of the rebels:

> "if we had power in the hands, then our comrades labeled as counterrevolutionary could vindicate themselves…if we don't seize power and we don't hold power, the circumstances force them [capitalist roaders] to rehabilitate us today, but they will revoke it in the future. Therefore, we must be concerned with the essential thing, power. When we have power, we can dispose of the black materials by ourselves. If we don't have power, and if we don't take firmly hold of power, in the future they will reverse verdicts and collect black materials on us. Therefore, the most important and essential thing is power seizure."[107]

With considerable justification, members of the CCRG viewed Zhou as working consistently to blunt the more destructive implications of their movement. In their view, he too readily compromised political principle, and promoted a spirit of moderation. Zhou's open encouragement of the Guangzhou power seizure, and the model of "mass supervision" of officials who remained in their posts, led them to suspect his motives. They deeply distrusted Zhou, and when they saw him take actions to blunt the movement's destructive impact, their suspicions were confirmed.

[107] *Youdian Fenglei* (*Thunderstorm in the Postal and Telecommunications Services*), 10 February 1967.

A turning point in the development of factional alignments in Guangzhou occurred as a result of a February 16 Beijing meeting at which seven Politburo-level vice premiers and PLA marshals, including Tan Zhenlin (谭震林), Chen Yi (陈毅) and Xu Xiangqian (徐向前), vented their anger at CCRG members. Tan Zhenlin allegedly urged an end to the Cultural Revolution and attempted to reinstate senior officials who had been overthrown during in January. Mao was furious at criticisms expressed at the meeting, which he considered to be a repudiation of his personal leadership.[108] Aware of Mao's anger, the CCRG condemned these meetings as the "February Adverse Current" (*eryue niliu* 二月逆流) and used it to attack Tan Zhenlin and other senior military officers at the end of February for opposition to the Cultural Revolution, the CCRG, and more importantly, Mao's leadership.[109]

Before this development, it was by no means clear which side of the Guangzhou conflict should receive the CCRG's support. The January 22 power seizure, after all, had been strongly supported by Zhou Enlai, but it was under attack by rebel forces who declared that it was too moderate, a "fake" power seizure that left the entire party leadership in their posts. One could easily imagine the CCRG siding with the rebel opposition to institute a more thoroughgoing overthrow of the political establishment.

The "February Adverse Current", however, pushed the CCRG in another

[108] Tan Zhenlin even wrote several written reports to Mao and the Central Committee, in one of which he called Jiang Qing a "latter-day Empress Wu Zetian", see Roderick MacFarquhar and John Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 15, The People's Republic, Part 2, Revolutions within the Chinese Revolution, 1966-1982* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 178. On Mao's hypersensitivity to the February Adverse Current, Kang Sheng claimed that he had never seen Mao so furious. See Zeng Tao, "Zhengyi de Kangsheng: Suowei eryue niliu de qiangqiang houhou" ("Righteous resistance of Kangsheng: Before and after the so-called Februray Adverse Current"), in Zhang Hua and Su Caiqing (eds.), *Huishou Wenge: Zhongguo shinian wenge fengxi yu fansi* (*Recalling the Cultural Revolution: Analysis and Rethinking of China's Ten Years of Cultural Revolution*) (Beijing: Zhongguo dangshi chubanshe, 2000), vol. 2, p. 821.

[109] Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng* (2nd ed.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 209-12; Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 191-194.

direction. The counter-attack against perceived opposition to the Cultural Revolution in the army took precedence, and sanctioned criticism of the PLA by the PRA forces in Guangzhou. As part of their deepening conflict with the local military, the PRA began to label Huang Yongsheng as the "Tan Zhenlin of Guangzhou (*Guang Lao Tan* 广老谭)" and were emboldened in their opposition to the military.[110] The CCRG thus moved into an alliance with the PRA as a way to push back against the PLA.

Mao's Intervention

During the same period that factional divisions were forming and intensifying in Guangzhou, Mao began to advocate a "three-in-one" system of government, based on developments in Heilongjiang province.[111] On January 31 Heilongjiang rebels seized Party and government power. They collaborated with former senior cadres on the provincial Party committee and senior officers of PLA units to form a "three-in-one combination" of shared civilian and military rule.[112]

The Heilongjiang model was immediately propagated as official policy and promoted as an example to follow nationwide.[113] If Mao had anticipated rebel unity in the course of a power seizure, he was disappointed by subsequent events. Having succeeded in the destructive task of overthrowing the party and government apparatus,

[110] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 143.
[111] Frederick Teiwes, "Mao Zedong in power, 1949-1976", in William A. Joseph (ed.), *Politics in China: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 63-102.
[112] For the power seizure in Heilongjiang, see Margie Sargent, "The Cultural Revolution in Heilungkiang", in *The Cultural Revolution in the Provinces* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 16-66; Parris Chang, "The Revolutionary Committee in China: Two case studies Heilungkiang and Honan", *Current Scene*, Vol. VI, No. 9 (1968), pp. 1-37; Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 390-392.
[113] Huang Shaorong, "Power to move the masses in a mass movement: An analysis of Mao's rhetorical strategies during China's Cultural Revolution Movement", in Ray Heisey (ed.), *Chinese Perspectives in Rhetoric and Communication* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000), pp. 207-223.

the revolutionary rebels had failed in the constructive task of establishing a "new revolutionary order".[114] In Guangzhou and many other provinces, rebels split in the course of seizing power. Realizing that rebels lacked the capability to unite all local forces and run the state machinery, Mao began to promote a power structure that emphasized the contributions of the armed forces and veteran civilian officials. Mao gave instructions that in those places and organizations where power needed to be seized, the policy of the revolutionary "three-in-one" combination must be carried out in establishing a provisional organ of power that was revolutionary and representative with proletarian authority. For Mao's intention, "three-in-one" model should be served as the basis for seizure of power.[115] Now the policy was, "without the three-in-one combination, it is impossible to obtain victory."[116]

The "three-in-one" model was a marked change from the existing political structure. Provincial administrations were previously composed of three separate bureaucratic systems: departments under the Party committee, departments under the provincial government, and the legal apparatus of the people's court and procuracy.[117] These were now to be replaced by a single bureaucracy under a revolutionary committee that included representation by military officers, rebel leaders, and veteran cadres.

Revolutionary committees, it turned out, were by no means easy to establish,

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[114] Philip Bridgham, "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The Struggle to Seize Power", *The China Quarterly*, No. 34 (1968), pp. 6-37.
[115] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Central Party Literature Research Center), *Mao Zedong nianpu 1949-1976* (*di liu juan*) (*Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976* [Vol. 6]) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), pp. 60-61.
[116] *Hongqi* (*Red Flag*), "Lun geming de sanjiehe" ("On the Revolutionary 'Three-In-One' Combination"), 31 March 1967, pp. 12-14.
[117] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 239.

especially when local rebel forces were deeply divided and in conflict with military units. Through February 1967, only four provincial-level power seizures outside the capital were ratified by the formation of a revolutionary committee approved by Beijing: Heilongjiang, Shandong, Shanghai, and Guizhou (table 2).[118]

Table 2.2 Establishment date of Revolutionary Committees at provincial level, 1967[119]

Date	Province
Jan 31	Heilongjiang
Feb 3	Shandong
Feb 5	Shanghai
Feb 13	Guizhou
Mar 18	Shanxi
Apr 20	Beijing
Aug 12	Qinghai
Nov 1	Inner Mongolia
Dec 6	Tianjin

Like many other regions, Guangzhou was unable to implement this model: rebel factions were deeply split, they had already fallen into conflict with the armed forces, and there was no ranking civilian official with recognized "rebel" sympathies that were acceptable to rebel factions and the CCRG in Beijing. Unlike Shanghai and the other successful cases of revolutionary committee formation, there was no group of civilian officials who broke ranks with their colleagues to express support for the

[118] Ibid., 170.

[119] On 31 January, Heilongjiang Province Red Rebels Revolutionary Committee (黑龙江省红色造反者革命委员会) was established. It later changed its name into Heilongjiang Province Revolutionary Committee on 23 March; On 3 February, Shandong Province the Grand Alliance of Proletariat Revolutionary Rebels Revolutionary Committee (山东省无产阶级革命造反派大联合革命委员会) was established. It later changed its name into Shandong Province Revolutionary Committee on 23 February; On 5 February, Shanghai established Shanghai People's Commune Provisional Revolutionary Committee (上海人民公社临时委员会). It later changed its name into Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee on 23 February; On 13 February, Mao Zedong Thoughts Guizhou Province Revolutionary Committee (毛泽东思想贵州省革命委员会) was established. It later changed its name into Guizhou Province Revolutionary Committee on 1 August .

rebellion. There was a cadre group in the Guangdong administration that openly stood with the January 22 power seizure: "localist" officials with Guangdong roots who had long existed in tension with officials that had come south with PLA forces that conquered the province in 1949-50. These officials were not fully trusted in Beijing due to their class backgrounds and past affiliations with Nationalist government, during their years as underground communist agents.[120]

Given the lack of a clear path toward a revolutionary committee and the deepening factional conflict that was already affecting the local military, Zhou advised Mao on February 27 to implement military control as a path toward the creation of the "three-in-one" combination. [121] Mao approved Zhou's suggestion.[122] Over the next few days Zhou convened a series of military conferences and proposed a three-step road map for the establishment of revolutionary committee: all power should be handed to the army; the army would eventually hand over power to a "three-in-one" interim power body of mass organizations, military officers and senior cadres; and a permanent power structure would thereafter be established.[123] Zhou also

[120] There were factional confrontations and conflicts between local officials and "cadres sent to south" by the central authority ("southbound cadres", or non-Guangdong cadres) in Guangdong. In the early 1950s, Tao Zhu implemented harsh land reform policies by rejecting the modest and progressed land reform proposals advocated by local cadres. As the two sides contradicted with each other over the implementation of central policies, the central Party decided to appoint non-Guangdong cadres, such as Tao Zhu and Zhao Ziyang, to the highest positions. As a result, many local officials were replaced by non-Guangdong cadres. Guangdong local officials and non-Guangdong cadres were then subsequently split into two competing factions, struggling for the political power in the Party and government apparatus. During the 1950s and 1960s, Tao Zhu and Huang Yongsheng became the leaders of the province and occupied the political and military power respectively. They criticized the localism standpoint and launched several political campaigns to strike against local officials and cadres. See Ezra F. Vogel, *Canton under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Chen Hua-sheng, "Guangdong's 'anti-localism' campaigns and factional conflict (1949-1975)", *Mainland China Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (2008), pp. 1-36; Zheng Yongnian, *De Facto Federalism in China: Reforms and Dynamics of Central-Local Relations* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2007), ch. 6; Su Yang, *Mass Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 138-141.

[121] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Central Party Literature Research Center) (ed.), *Mao Zedong zhuan* (*Bibliography of Mao Zedong*) (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2003), pp. 1476-1477.

[122] *Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976*, p. 60.

[123] "Junji yishang ganbu huiyi jingshen chuanda" ("Transmission of the spirit of the meeting of officers at the army level and above"), March 1967, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

informed Guangzhou Military Region that the military takeover had been Chairman Mao's personal decision and instructed them to take charge of the local Cultural Revolution.[124]

Summary

New Reflections

January 1967 was undoubtedly a crucial juncture in the course of the Cultural Revolution. In the Guangzhou context, the January power seizure marked the beginning of a factional split among former rebel allies. Guangzhou's rebels were initially divided over the timing of power seizure on the eve of a planned takeover. The PRA asserted that it was essential to seize power immediately and then construct an alliance later, while the other rebel leaders were suspicious of an early seizure of power and insisted that broader rebel unity had to come first. After the PRA immediately went forward with their power seizure, the rebels who had held back refused to accept their exclusion from the new organs of power. They dug in further when their former allies accused them of forming a "reactionary organization". They countered that the PRA was conspiring with former power holders to let them continue to rule under the fiction of "rebel supervision". Thus the power seizure itself—its timing as well as its format—split the rebel movement of Guangzhou into two opposed camps in the absence of different viewpoints towards the status quo ante.

One reason why the pro power seizure faction has been characterized in past

[124] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, Vol. 3, p. 132.

scholarship as “radical” is the simple act of seizing power. Those who held back from this action are implicitly viewed as more moderate, if not actually conservative. But we have seen that the rebels who opted out of the action were by no means opposed to seizing power—they were simply unhappy about the negotiations with allied rebel factions and walked out of the meeting. Their complaint about “broader rebel unity” was essentially about participation in the leading group. Those who remained at the meeting proceeded with their power seizure within hours of the walkout. The rebels who held back, after all, had long been allied with those who seized power in the long conflict with the Guangzhou authorities in late 1966. Moreover, their criticism of the power seizure was that it was “fake”—insufficiently radical because it permitted virtually all of the leaders they had targeted to remain in their posts.

Organizational Characteristics

The most characterizing structural feature of the rebel movement was its composition of various self-organized local groups. Made up of college students, factory workers, and other urban employees, those involved organized themselves into small fighting groups ranging from a few members to thousands of members. As the movement progressed, these groups combined into larger contending factions but retained the individual identity of the units. Due to the ad hoc origin of the self-organized groups, the large factions were usually loosely structured without a single driving agenda rather than a cohesive force with a hierarchical chain of command.

This decentralized and segmented organizational network has two levels of implications. First, although the large factions issued guidelines to follow, it was ultimately to the discretion of the individual constituent groups whether they would be followed through. In the case of Guangzhou, we have observed that when Red Flag Workers realized that they were unable to acquire the expected leading role after power seizure, they quitted from the alliance and this decision received strong objections from its constituent units based at Zhongshan University. Immediately afterwards, the constituent Branch besieged the headquarters of Red Flag Workers and arrested several leaders.

Second, minor strife within a specified unit was likely to be interpreted as part of a large organization's intended plot to attack its opponent. In this sense, a little spark could ignite a prairie fire. For example, at Guangdong's Public Security Bureau, an initial small political dispute on who were eligible to seize power from the agency burst into a heated friction within the Bureau. This soon put both the pro and anti faction into the dispute, and eventually developed into two lines of revolutionary struggle and two sides of an antagonistic conflict.

One important reason why the umbrella organizations were loosely linked was their tendency to recruit a larger number of followers to expand organizational size. The rebels recognized the utility of holding onto political power. Organizational size reflected relative strength of each organization and could be manipulated to attract public support and resources. A rebel leader recalled how pathetic his small group looked in comparison to its stronger rival:

> "We were a small group with only 50 members; our rival numbered 800. It was funny when we paraded in the street, beating drums and cymbals. We were so few and the noise we made so small; when the two groups crossed paths, the sound of their drums and cymbals deafened our ears and drowned whatever sound we made."[125]

Large size may also provide more legitimate bases of power and therefore more potential contests for control in the future power organs. In this regard, new recruits' loyalty and commitment was secondary to the sheer number of memberships. Zhongshan University Red Flag is such an example. It adopted the "doctrine of only considering one's viewpoint" and thus was willing to accept any person into their organization as long as they shared common political views.[126] In order to obtain a better bargaining position, large organizations also intentionally inflated the numbers of their registered members. For example, after the January power seizure, the PRA claimed that they had 84 affiliated mass groups in total, whereas the anti-PRA side was able to mobilize more than 50,000 rebels to demonstrate against their opponent. However, some subgroups only affiliated with one faction or another in name and might never take part in the collective actions, while some other units fluctuated and left one faction to join another when political scenarios changed. We will observe this

[125] Julia Kwong, *Cultural Revolution in China's Schools, May 1966-April 1969* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Press, 1988), p. 89.
[126] *Zhongda Zhanbao* (*Zhongshan University Battle News*), 6 March, 1967 (Guangzhou: Zhongshan University Revolutionary Rebel Committee).

phenomenon further in chapter 3.

Ambition for Power

In essence, power cannot be equally shared by contenders unless there is a set of enforceable rules to regulate contenders' pursuit of power. Basically, such rules should contain at least three elements: a standard criteria for selecting candidates from potential competitors; a transparent procedure for choosing new power holders from the candidates; and a well-defined principle for distributing power among the selected power holders.

However, none of those rules was laid out when the rebels urgently took power in January 1967. All the rebel organizations labeled themselves the genuine revolutionary leftists, who were entrusted the task of power seizure. However, as soon as one group gained the upper hand, another group who did not get on the boat would challenge its takeover as a false and "conservative" seizure. The latter would conduct a counter-seizure of power from the former and thereby create more chaos. This eventually became a vicious circle. In other words, each rebel group would perform as a more "radical" opponent of the original "conservative" power seizure. As Huang Yijian, the head of Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, recalled:

> "If the PRA delayed the power seizure, other groups such as Third Headquarters and the Earth General Headquarters would take the lead and acquire political authority into their own hands. One can easily image that if it was Third

Headquarters who took control of the power, it would be then the turn of Zhongshan University Red Flag to act as the dissident faction and aggressively opposed the seizure at all costs."[127]

A similar development also occurred in Shanghai, where two sides of rebels competed to establish a new mode of power organ:

"In February 1967, after repeated meetings, the 38 organizations recognized by all were to announce the seizure of power…just as the 38 organizations were already to draft the document to establish the 'Shanghai Commune,' we discovered that another 25 organizations were also meeting to establish a 'New Shanghai Commune.' They said: you do not want us to join, so we establish a 'New Shanghai Commune.' Now we faced the problem of two opposing factions. The 38 organizations were the majority and were unified rebels. Those 25 organizations were the minority and were not unified. Each called the other conservative. How do you cope with this type of situation?"[128]

By this point, "ambition for power" was an underlying motive attributed to rebel leaders. When drawing into this dirty power politics, factions fought urgently to ensure that their enemies would not gain power and victimize them afterwards. The result was an intensification of the factional competition for power that often took

[127] "Haung Yijian: spiritual journey of an idealist," *Laoren Bao* (*Elders Newspaper*), 26 April 2009.
[128] Chao Tsung, *An Account of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1971), p. 32.

violent forms involving actual fatalities. As one scholar argues,

> "They [the rebels] hardly thought about structural ways to overcome the social maladies that existed in pre-CR China. they never questioned whether an old power structure with new power holders would be able to make any fundamental changes; and, they had no idea about what they would do with their power. Instead, they were interested in power for the sake of power."[129]

Interactional Dynamics

But why factional splits in Guangzhou gradually developed and intensified from a small crack into a prolonged conflict? The first reason is when a civilian power vacuum appeared in Guangzhou after January revolution, there was no such a strong and center-trusted civilian official to head the new government as well as disintegrate the anti faction, as Zhang Chunqiao did in Shanghai. Secondly, the evolution of Guangzhou's factions was the product of a complex interplay of bureaucratic politics between the CCRG, Premier Zhou Enlai, and the Guangzhou Military Region. These dramatic political interactions generated new grievances, new interests, and new cleavages that exacerbated and eventually shaped the divisions among rebels.

This analysis differs from traditional social structural interpretations that presume that political conflicts are defined by participants' prior social positions or political networks. According to this model, individuals from different social

[129] Wang Shaoguang,"'New trends of thought' on the Cultural Revolution," *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 8, No. 21 (1999), pp. 197-217.

categories are inherently tied to different or even opposite interests. These interests are fixed beforehand and stay consistently through the whole movement process. However, historical dynamism resides in an interactional status rather than merely exists in terms of prior structural arrangement. Social interactions can pull people into activities that they may not have previously been planning in the course of contention. As McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly famously argue,

> "Public representations of political identities and other forms of participation in struggle proceed through intense coordination, contingent improvisation, tactical maneuvering, responses to signals from other participants, on-the-spot reinterpretations of what is possible, desirable, or efficacious, and strings of unexpected outcomes inciting new improvisations."[130]

As a result, movement participants rely on situational interactions within their political environments and carve out their lines of action and reaction by tactically responding to changes in social settings. In this sense, the opposite political positions of competing groups are tactical in nature, and processual in development.

In the case of Guangzhou, we have observed that Zhou Enlai initially encouraged Guangzhou's model of a supervised power seizure, but later refused to ratify it because of factional splits. This changing and sometimes even contradictory stance toward power seizure became a bone of contention among rebels. On the one hand,

[130] Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 131.

Zhou was not willing to see the collapse of the entire civilian government and overthrow of all the senior cadres under a full power takeover. He was determined to minimize social and economic disruption by urging power seizure to production. For example, in the case of Nanjing where the political authority had already collapsed in January, Zhou initiated the power seizure process, instigating the local rebels to move quickly to seize power, for the purpose to restore public order.[131] In Zhejiang, the first task of rebels on taking over the seals of office was to try and resume normal production, since Zhou urged them to "grasp revolution and promote production."[132] In this sense, Zhou's major concern was that the seizure itself could ensure a normalization of routine production. But, on the other hand, Zhou forcefully denounced any radical actions took by the rebels and their inability to build an effective new organ of power authority.

Zhou's ambivalent and sometimes clearly conflicting attitudes toward the power seizure may have reflected his attempt to balance the tension between two contradictory positions: the need to revolutionize the ruling power structure of the state apparatus while maintaining a certain continuity of political institutions—sources of regime's legitimate authority—at the basic level, and upholding ideological principles while seeking moderate and practical solutions of implementing the principles.[133] It also reflects Zhou's conflicts with CCRG figures,

[131] Dong and Walder, "Nanjing's failed 'January Revolution' of 1967", pp. 675-692; Dong Guoqing, "The first uprising of the Cultural Revolution at Nanjing University: Dynamics, nature and interpretation", *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2010), pp. 30-49; Dong Guoqiang, "Jiangsu 'yi.erliu duoquan' qianhou de quanli juezhu" ("Power rivalries before and after Jiangsu's '26 January power seizure'"), *Ershiyi Shiji* (*The Twenty-First Century*), online edition, No. 63 (June 2007).

[132] Keith Forster, *Rebellion and Factionalism in a Chinese Province: Zhejiang, 1966–1976* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 25-29.

[133] Robinson describes Zhou's political style as "while moving quickly with the political tide, Chou at times tries

and his inability to predict and control events as he expected.[134]

In contrast to Zhou's moderate position, CCRG consistently pursued a radical political agenda. They advocated an uncontrolled rather than a controlled mass mobilization so that they were able to exploit the chaotic situation to aggrandize their own political power. Accordingly, CCRG instigated their client rebels in Guangzhou to carry on power seizure at first place. Because CCRG had a deep distrust of Zhou, when Zhou expressed his appraise of Guangzhou power seizure model, they became suspicious of Zhou's intention of preserving the established order in the city that would largely obstruct the destructive nature of a radical rebel movement. Zhou was, after all, a figure who had already earned their anger for acting repeatedly to blunt the more disruptive consequences of their policies.

More dramatic was the angry confrontation of CCRG members by China's top military officers at a series of high level meetings in Beijing in February. CCRG dubbed these confrontations the "February Adverse Current" and further depicted the military intervention as a negative reactionary regression aiming at sabotaging the Cultural Revolution movement. They thus took this occasion to purge military senior cadres at the top level, and to support groups that had suffered at the hands of the PLA, and to continue to support them as they challenged the PLA authority at the local level.

The military forces also played a key role in shaping local factional politics. The

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to swim against it if he thinks he can. [While] plan[ing] avenues of retreat, Chou always fights a series of delaying action." See Thomas Robinson, "Chou En-lai's political style", *Asian Survey*, Vol. 10, No. 12 (1970), pp. 441-471.

[134] Song Yongyi, "The role of Zhou Enlai in the Cultural Revolution: A contradictory image from diverse sources", *Issues & Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2001), pp. 1-28.

local army entered into the movement in February upon the central call of “support the left”, but only brought more confusions and created wider chasm between already-separated rebel groups. A series of large and small incidents which culminated in an assault on the Military Region’s headquarters on February 8 led to a steadily deteriorating relationship between the PRA, on the one hand, and the army backed by dissented mass organizations on the other. The axis of conflicts thus shifted in Guangzhou from a pro and anti power seizure split to a pro and anti PLA split in the coming months.

Figure 2.1 The pattern of Guangzhou January power seizure, 1967

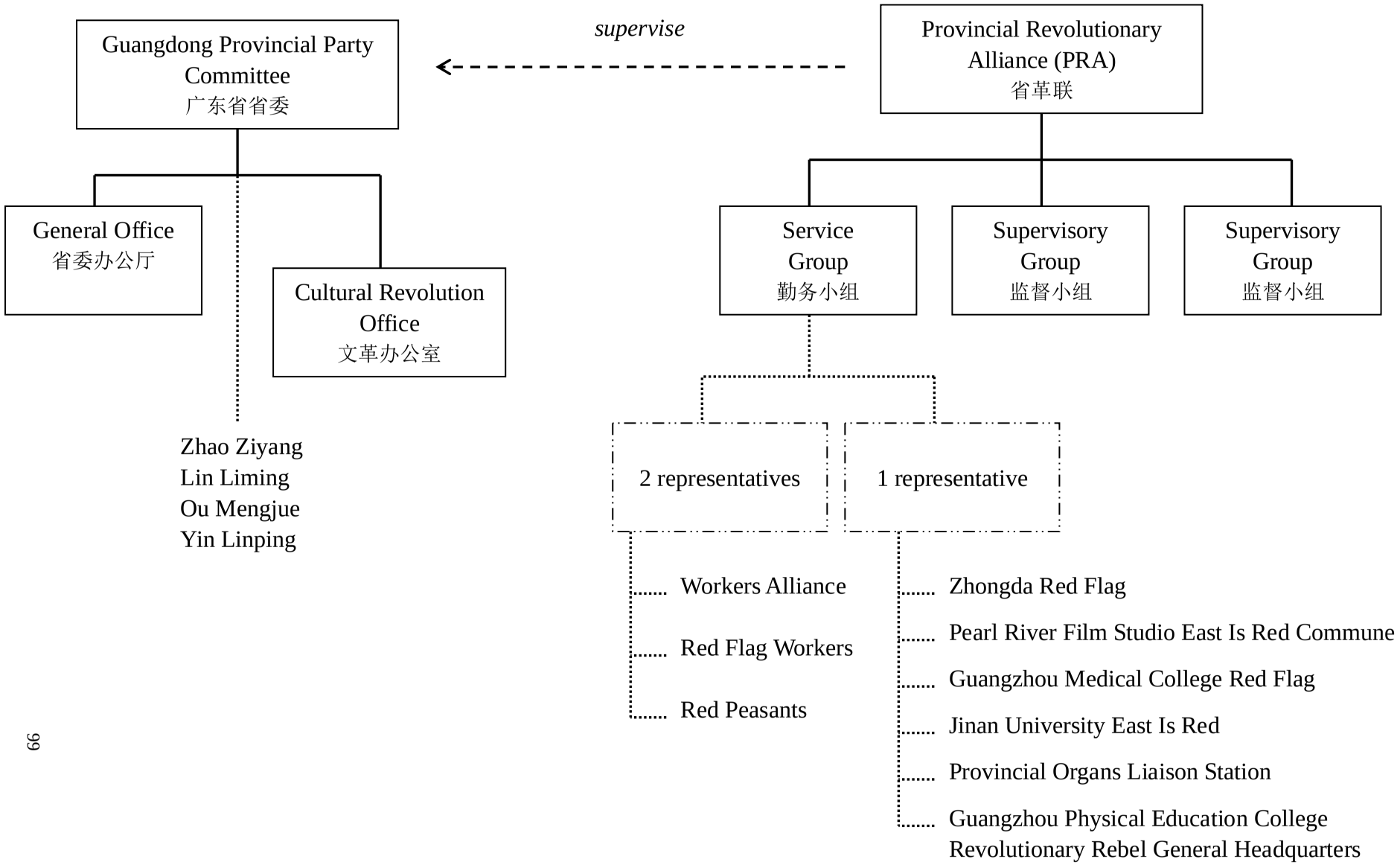

Table 2.1 Intra-factional splits and organizational changes within rebel organizations, Jan-Feb 1967

	Pro-faction	Anti-faction
Before power seizure	• Zhongshan University Red Flag • Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps • Workers Alliance • Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red	• District General Headquarters • South China Engineering College Red Flag • Red Flag Workers • Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag
Jan 22 Power seizure	• Zhongshan University Red Flag • Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps • Workers Alliance • Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red • Red Flag Workers • Chinese College of Medicine	• District General Headquarters • South China Engineering College Red Flag • Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag
After power seizure	• Zhongshan University Red Flag • Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps • Workers Alliance • Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red • Red Flag Workers Zhongshan University Branch • Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag	• District General Headquarters • South China Engineering College Red Flag • Red Flag Workers • the Red First Headquarters

Chapter 3

Turning Point II:
Under Military Control

"The fact needs to be stressed that once it is the state which is carrying out the revolution and those who are opposed to the state are the ones who are called counterrevolutionaries, it becomes very easy to understand that the ordinary person is confused and does not quite know where he is."[1]

Jacques Ellul (1973: 24)

The second critical turning point is the intervention of military forces in March 1967. By the time the army imposed Beijing's order to place military control in late February, Guangzhou's political forces were deeply fragmented. The January 22 power seizure had gradually divided local rebel groups into pro and anti factions. Their disagreements about the timing and form of the power seizure drove them to take different stances toward the military authority when they arrived to "support the left". These stances, in turn, entangled them in divisions in Beijing between the CCRG and the military leadership. By tracing through the process through which this split developed, it becomes clear that Guangzhou's famous factions were rival rebel groups, former allies in attacking the status quo that fell out over different stances that they adopted early in 1967, which subsequently deepened their antagonism toward one another and their relationships with local military authorities and actors in

[1] Jacques Ellul, *Hope in a Time of Abandonment* (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1973), p. 24.

Beijing.

By reconstructing the evolution of factional conflicts, this chapter shows how contingent and situational factors affect collective action. Specifically, the involvement of martial law forces and Premier Zhou Enlai's visit sharply changed the local political contexts and altered the balance of power between the emerging factions. The rapid shift of the exogenous conditions forced movement activists to make consequential choices and these varied choices during the course of the movement led to a major reshuffling of factional alignment in the spring of 1967. Factional identities were not an expression of the 1966 division between the supporters and opponents of the status quo, but constantly evolved through time through a series of political interactions.

Military Crackdown

As in Guangdong, in provinces across China, the intervention of the PLA authority in the spring of 1967 was the most immediate cause of factional divide. The severity of the local army's crackdown deepened and hardened rebel rivalries' mutual antagonisms, and eventually engendered a factional feud which dwarfed all other problems in the movement.

On March 15 the Guangdong Military Control Committee (MCC) was established as the highest authority at all levels of administration in the province, with Huang Yongsheng as Chairman.[2] General Huang, from a poor peasant household,[3]

[2] Party History Research Centre of CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee, *Guangzhou Party History Annals*, pp. 287-9.

participated in the Long March and became commander of a regiment in Lin Biao (林彪)'s Division in 1937. After the Communist takeover in 1949, Huang was named as a member of the Central-South Military Committee headed by Lin, and further promoted as the commander of the Guangzhou Military Region in 1955.[4] A close associate of his superior Lin Biao, Huang maintained firm authority in Guangzhou.[5] Lin Biao became the sole Party Vice Chairman and Mao's designated successor the previous year. With Lin's strong backing, Huang dealt with militant rebels sponsored by the CCRG with considerable confidence.[6] The central axis of conflict in Guangzhou would soon shift from divisions in the rebel ranks to conflicts between one wing of the rebel movement and the army.

At this point, the key issue that produced the new factional alignment was whether to oppose or support the army authorities. These military commanders typically sought to strike against those who openly confronted the army and promote others they considered to be most amenable to their task. Having already been attacked by the PRA forces in a series of offensive incidents, in particular the February raid of the military headquarters, the MCC started to pressure the PRA directly. The public campaign to discredit the PRA started with an anonymous letter from a PLA solider. The letter, which was published in the Nanfang Daily, stated that

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[3] Huang reportedly prides himself on his peasant origins and makes little attempt to assume the urbane manners of a national leader. He likes to brag about his lack of book learning, "even if you turn me inside out, you won't be able to find a drop of ink." See Time, "The army's man," 24 August 1970, Vol.97, No. 8, pp. 30-31.

[4] Huang Zheng, *Junren yongsheng* (*General Huang Yongsheng: A Biography*) (Hong Kong: New Century Media & Consulting Co. Ltd., 2011).

[5] Huang Yongsheng further became the first director of the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee on 21 February 1968 while continued commanding the Guangzhou Military Region. He remained in this position until reassigned to join Lin Biao in Beijing in July 1969. It was later widely rumored that Lin Biao's contingency plan was to establish a military base at the north of Guangzhou, where Huang would protect him, if his 1971 coup had failed but he had survived. See Ezra Vogel, *One Step Ahead in China: Guangdong under Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 31.

[6] Xu Youyu, *Rebellion of All Hues*, pp. 102-103.

"PLA did not, does not, and will not support the PRA."[7] Soon after this, the army ordered the arrest of the six top leaders from the PRA. Then the New Beida's Liaison Office to Guangdong published an article which denounced the January 22 power seizure as factional maneuver.[8] The Military Region distributed more than six million copies of the article for circulation throughout the province.[9]

In the meantime, the MCC moved swiftly to crack down on organizations aligned with the PRA, banning their power seizure committee. Chief among their targets was the August 1 Combat Corps (*Bayi Zhandou Bingtuan* 八一战斗兵团), which was primarily comprised of demobilized army veterans and factory workers with good political background.[10] For example, out of the 350 workers working in the Hair-dressing Tools factory, 75 of them were already Combat Corps members; of which 11 were Party members, making up more than one-thirds of the total Party membership in this factory. Nine of the 75 were also already Youth League members, making up two-thirds of the total league membership in this particular factory. Out of the 24 political propagandists in the factory, 15 were also already Combat Corps members, on top of this all activist on the production group and leaders of trade union groups were also part of the Combat Corps. Similarly, amongst the Postage and Telecommunications Factory units, only eight percent of the workers had "bad class" labels.[11] In general, in the August 1 Combat Corps, only a small number of participants had really comparatively complicated political backgrounds, but the

[7] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 93.
[8] *Zhongxue Hongweibing* (*Middle School Red Guard*), May 1968.
[9] "Lin Yun's letter to Canton Military Region command", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8, pp. 81-104, at. 93.
[10] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 62.
[11] *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebllion*), No. 12 & 13, 8 July 1967.

overwhelming majority was from better-off social groups.[12]

This fact clearly contrasts with structural analyses that attribute political actions to participants' pre-existing sociopolitical status quo. According to Hong Yung Lee and other previous scholars, the comparatively radial mass organizations were largely composed of underprivileged social sectors that sought to challenge Party and military establishment. If this claim is true, it would be very strange that the August 1 Combat Corps, mainly composing of people with good class background, would oppose the army. After all, in the Guangzhou context, this piece of evidence demonstrates that structural interpretations are in fact factually incorrect.

Even though the August 1 Combat Corps had not participated in the January 22 power seizure, it had a reputation as an outspoken and radical supporter of the PRA. It had attacked Guangzhou Military Region as a core anti-PLA unit on February 8. It was thereby declared "counterrevolutionary" by the Military Region. It was also accused of stealing state property and secrets, disrupting the city's transportation and production, and attacking the public security organs.[13] The rapid rate of growth of the August 1 Combat Corps was probably an important factor in the decision to ban it.[14] Formed in mid-January with 5,000 members, within three weeks it had expanded to approximately 70,000 in the Guangzhou area alone.[15] Accordingly, large groups of

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[12] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1* 钢八一), 15 October 1967, p. 2 (Guangzhou: Mao Zedong's Thought August 1 Combat Corps 毛泽东思想八一战斗兵团).

[13] Statement by the Guangdong Military District "'Bayi zhandou bingtuan' de fangeming zuixing" ("The Counterrevolutionary Crimes of the August 1 Combat Corps"), 1 March 1967, in Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 103-106.

[14] Ye Shuming, "Chi Zehou fangtan" ("Interview with Chi Zehou"), *Huaxia Wenzhai* (*China News Digest*) (Supplement), No. 466, 22 November 2005.

[15] Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 75. The August 1 Combat Corps claimed that those who joined their organization would be assigned a job with a monthly salary of 80 yuan, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 106.

personnel of the August 1 Combat Corps were arrested and detained. Organizations which had made contact with the Combat Corps were also persecuted in varying degrees.[16]

The second chief target was the Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red (*Zhuying Dongfanghong* 珠影东方红), a cadre organization, was declared "illegal" and banned from conducting any activities.[17] Like the August 1 Combat Corps, the most active supporters and all the core leaders of this particular mass organization were Party or Youth League members.[18] Moreover, the Harbin Military Engineering Liaison Station was taken over by the local military authorities and ceased to function.[19] The political activities of the Zhongshan University Red Flag and Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps virtually came to a halt.[20]

Although these harsh measures were taken, the Military Region claimed that during this period "not one student has been arrested."[21] According to a report, however, a total of 1,196 rebel leaders from various mass organizations were arrested and imprisoned in the dragnet, and more than 16,000 were forced to register as members of "reactionary organizations" and subjected to various forms of struggle sessions to confess their errors.[22] While in the prisons, those who were struggled against had to "work for an hour every morning, and write self-criticisms and

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[16] "The case of the 'August 1' Combat Corps in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 49, No. 21, pp. 279-288.
[17] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 108-109.
[18] "Zhujiang dianying zhipianchang liangtiao luxian douzheng gaishu" ("An account of two-line struggle in Pearl River Film Studio" 珠江电影制片厂两条路线斗争概述), *Cong Touyue* (*Cross the Summit* 从头越), April 1967. For a detailed account of the core leaders' political status and social background, see Wang Chao, *Guangzhou dianyingjie de zaofanzhe: Zhuying Dongfanghong* (*Rebels in the Guangzhou Film Industry: Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red* 广州电影届的造反者: 珠影东方红), (Hong Kong: Zhongbao Zhoukan, 1969), pp. 26-30.
[19] Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou (Canton)*, p.133.
[20] Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 73.
[21] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1* 钢八一), 15 October 1967, p. 2 (Guangzhou: Mao Zedong's Thought August 1 Combat Corps 毛泽东思想八一战斗兵团).
[22] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 458.

confessions to their many 'criminal activities' for the rest of the time."[23] A special investigation on those prisoners found that "many were put to tortures. Some were badly beaten up, and those who were sick could not get treatment."[24] Even those who were not arrested were subjected to various recriminations: they were attacked at the mass criticism meetings, forced to confess their crimes, and even dismissed from their job posts.[25] The month-long military crackdown was later referred to by the PRA forces as the "March Black Wind", and the feeing of the supporters was summed up by one participant: "We carefully recorded all debts we would someday collect from the [opponents]."[26]

Choosing Sides

Under military pressure, many rebel groups chose to change their allegiance in face of threat and their motives were clearly not rooted in their prior social statuses or political ties. They withdraw from the PRA, and the alliance fell into a steep decline.[27] Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag, a main supporter of the PRA, announced to quit the alliance.[28] The membership of Zhongshan University Red Flag declined from 1,110 to 300, and the Workers Alliance from around 30,000 to 3,000.[29]

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[23] "A letter to Premier Zhou" (qianjunbang zhanshi gei zhou zongli de xin 千钧棒战士给周总理的信), *Red Flag*, no. 11, 29 August 1967 (Guangzhou: New First Headquarters).
[24] "The case of the 'August 1' Combat Corps in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 49, No. 21, pp. 279-288, at p. 285. This investigation also recorded a specific case: "Huang XX, a demobilized soldier whose wife was dead, was arrested and imprisoned over 20 days, so that his three children were left alone. The young ones had no food and clothing and had to eat banana skins from garbage heaps."
[25] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1* 钢八一), 5 October 1967
[26] Bennett and Montaperto, *Red Guard: The Political Biography of Dai Hsiao-ai*, p. 165.
[27] Zhao Cong, *An Account of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, p. 582; Alan Liu, *Political Culture & Group Conflict in Communist China* (Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Books, 1976), p. 83.
[28] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 115.
[29] "Lin Yun's letter to Canton Military Region command", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8, pp. 81-104, at. 93.

The number of splinter groups joining the anti side also increased. In the case of Zhongshan University for example, some members of the Red Flag withdrew their membership to join the opponent group. The defectors formed a new organization and had built themselves as the only genuine revolutionary rebels within the campus.[30]

During this period, the other wing of the rebel movement, led primarily by the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters, gained growth momentum. According to an internal report, their membership skyrocketed to more than 500,000 in total.[31] This number was likely an exaggeration but obviously, the anti side grew rapidly and became the dominant rebel force in Guangzhou. They sided with the local army in its attacks on their rivals in the PRA. Their support of the army was due to its role in vanquishing their opponents. They became a staunch supporter of the army's actions, and referred to the March events not as a "Black Wind" but as a victory for the "East Wind", declaring that during March, "the East wind prevailed over the West wind."[32] The city-wide alliance that they built from that point forward became known as the East Wind faction.

Meanwhile, in response to Chairman Mao's to call to form a "three-in-one combination" government system, the MCC proceeded to establish a pilot revolutionary committee at the Guangdong Railway Bureau. Initially, the pro-PRA rebels declared a power seizure there on January 23. When the martial law was imposed, however, the Military Region supported a cadre organization, Spring

[30] This rebel organization was called "Zhongshan University Revolutionary Rebel Committee (中大革造会)", see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 102.
[31] Guangdong Military Control Committee, *Guangzhou shi shixing junshi guanzhi hou de fanying* (*The Situation after Military Control in Guangzhou* 广州市实行军事管制后的反映), 30 March 1967.
[32] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1608; also see Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, p. 239.

Thunder (*Chun Lei* 春雷), so that civilian officials would be admitted into a newly-established revolutionary committee.[33] With a clear support from the PLA, Spring Thunder rapidly expanded its membership from 70 to 13,000 within only twenty days, with majority participants coming from factory workers and office employees.[34]

The Guangzhou case indicates that the intervention of the army was a precipitating factor in polarizing the conflicting groups, and it had a nationwide validity. For example, the army in Fuzhou had arrested two thousand rebels and disbanded some eighty organizations in March. The result was a "further polarization of the two factions of the revolutionary masses."[35] The army in Guangxi also admitted that it had "supported one faction and suppressed another," disbanded militant groups and withheld material support. The result was "more mutual antagonism among the two factions in Guangxi and the armed struggles became more serious" after that.[36] Similarly, the military in Guizhou summed up its experiences by concluding that "if the military partially supported one wing of the rebels, then the situation in that area immediately became tense."[37]

Central's Intervention

The balance of power between contending factions quickly shifted again in April.

[33] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 112-113.
[34] *Guangtie Zongsi* (*Guangzhou Railway General Headquarters*), No. 1, 15 July 1967.
[35] *Zhonggong wenhua dageming zhongyao wenjian huibian* (*Important CCP Documents of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* 中共文化大革命重要文件汇编) (Taipei: The Publisher of Studies on Chinese Communism 中共研究杂志社, 1973), pp. 175-176.
[36] Ibid.
[37] *Zhongxue Fengbao* (*Middle School Storm*), Beijing: Tiger Brigade of the Beijing Architectural and Engineering Schools Red Guards, 27 May 1967.

Civilian radicals in Beijing viewed the military crackdown in Guangdong and other regions with alarm and pressed for a less assertive and repressive stance toward local rebels. As a result, on April 2, People's Daily published an editorial,[38] warning the military leaders of Wuhan, Chengdu, and other areas not to suppress the revolutionary actions of the rebels.

> "By seizing on the revolutionary young militants' minor mistakes and attacking them for trivial faults, some people have totally repudiated the revolutionary young militants' general orientation. Worse still, some have gone so far as to impose the label's 'counter-revolutionary' once again upon the revolutionary young militants and to help the conservatives to reconstruct their dead organizations. "[39]

On April 6, Military Affairs Commission further issued a ten-point directive to limit the army's authority to intervene in factional disputes. This directive explicitly called a halt to the military repressions of mass organizations, no matter whether they were "revolutionary or controlled by reactionary elements, or whether their position is clear or not." It ruled that the PLA had wrongly disbanded the mass organizations in provinces like Anhui, Fujian, Inner Mongolia, and Guangdong, and that the disbanded mass organizations should immediately be rehabilitated with "remedial measures".

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[38] This editorial was personally edited by Wang Li. See Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), pp. 232-233.

[39] "Zhengque duidai geming xiaojiang" ("Proper Treatment for the Little Revolutionary Soldiers"), *People's Daily*, 2 April 1967.

The order stipulated further that "no action shall be taken against the masses who intruded into or assaulted military organs in the past," and that before taking any important action on current events, "a report should be made to the CCRG and All Army Cultural Revolution Group."[40]

Noticeably, whereas the eight-point order issued on January 28 had favored the army's authority, the new ten-point order redressed the balance in favor of the local rebels. Anti-PLA riots thereby broke out everywhere in response to the new order.[41] In order to reconcile such contradictory orders and to restrain the militant rebels from retaliating against the PLA, the Centre further promoted a new slogan of "supporting the army and cherishing the people" (*yongjun aimin* 拥军爱民) in mid-April.[42] This slogan was broadcast in the media, written on billboards, embossed on Red Guards badges, and even painted on the weapons of the armed forces.[43] However, this ambiguous slogan was not very helpful in resolving the conflicts. The PLA and militant mass groups interpreted the slogan in terms of their own political interests: the military commanders stressing the part about supporting the army, while the rebels stressing the part about cherishing the people.[44]

Zhou Enlai's Visit

On April 14, Premier Zhou Enlai flew to Guangzhou and his visits brought about

[40] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 464-465.
[41] However, Jiang Qing insisted that "the spirit of the first document was in conformity with that of the second." She also declared that "anyone who tried to cite one against the other was either a 'bad person' or a comrade 'committing a mistake'." See MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, pp. 181-182.
[42] "Relie xiangying yongjun aimin de haozhao" ("Warmly respond to the call to support the army and cherish the people" 热烈响应拥军爱民的号召), *Hongqi*, 1967, No. 6.
[43] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 182.
[44] "The current campaign of 'Supporting the Army and Cherishing the People'", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 47, No. 15, 23 May 1967.

a sharp turn in the fortunes of the rebels. Obviously aware of the harsh treatment which the PRA forces had received, the Premier was anxious to keep the situation in Guangzhou under control. This intention was consistent with Zhou's moderate stance to maintain public order in the cities. The Guangzhou Trade Fair was just getting underway and the Beijing authorities were taking no chances of jeopardizing this important event.[45] The Military Region, in the central leadership's view, had not succeeded in healing the rift between the two factions, but had only reinforced and deepened the schism. If the grievances of the oppressed rebels had not redressed appropriately, this may have exacerbated their sense of alienation and thereby increased the probability of violence breaking out.

However, the conflicts Zhou came to settle were not so easily resolved. Contrary to his anticipation to avert a potential violent conflict, Zhou himself became a source of factional contention—his instructions sharply changed the content and trajectory of local group politics and eventually led to the split of two citywide factional camps.

In a speech given at a citywide mass rally on the evening of April 18, Zhou acknowledged that the local PLA had made mistakes, but he reaffirmed that military control in Guangdong was still necessary and instructed that Huang Yongsheng not be attacked.[46] Zhou specifically ordered the rehabilitation of the Pearl River Film Studio

[45] The Guangzhou Trade Fair was held biannually in Guangzhou during the first three decades of the Communist era, 1950s-1970s. The Communist Party recognized the Trade Fair as a major source of foreign exchange as well as their financial and trade connections with Hong Kong. They also regarded the Trade Fair as an important front for propagandizing Mao Zedong Thought. Therefore, the revolutionary leadership had to ensure the Fair remain relatively untouched by the chaos of the Cultural Revolution. See Daniel Tretiak, "The Canton Fair: An academic perspective," *The China Quarterly*, No. 56 (1973), pp. 740-748. Zhou Enlai personally was not willing to see that the rebels' activities would turn violent and he would like to ensure that the Guangzhou Fair could go forward smoothly. See "1967 nian guangjiaohui qinlizhe jiemi: Zhou Enlai shuofu zaofanpai" ("The testimony of participants of Spring 1967 Guangzhou Fair: How Zhou Enlai convinced the rebels"), *Yangcheng Wanbao* (*Yangcheng Evening News*), 30 October 2006.

[46] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, Vol. 3, pp. 145-146.

East Is Red.[47] At this point in time, however, he did not mention the decision to ban the August 1 Combat Corps nor did he say anything about the release of leaders arrested during the March, implicitly condoning the army's action.

In an effort to show a spirit of reconciliation, Zhou inadvertently stoked further factional conflict. The Premier first conceded that the January 22 power takers had made mistakes, but those mistakes were not errors of orientation. He also declared the main organizations under the besieged PRA, the "Three Red Flags" (*sanmian hongqi* 三面红旗) —Zhongshan University Red Flag, Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag, and South China Engineering College Red Flag, as well as Workers Alliance and Red Flag Workers—as "leftist organizations".[48] This had the effect of reversing the impact of the March military crackdown, and reviving the fortunes of the pro-power seizure PRA forces.

On the other side, Zhou affirmed the "revolutionary" character of anti-PRA groups. However, he subsequently termed two leading elements of the East Wind Faction—the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters—"conservative organizations" (*baoshou zuzhi* 保守组织) and criticized their close association with the PLA, though they were not "old conservatives" (*lao bao* 老保) as the PRA charged.[49]

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[47] *Zhuying Dongfanghong* (*Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*), No. 15, 31 October 1967 (Guangzhou: Pearl River Film Studio Editorial Department).

[48] "Zhou Enlai dui Guangzhoushi ge geming qunzhong zuzhi daibiao de jianghua" ("Zhou Enlai's speech to the representatives of Guangzhou mass organizations"), in Zhongyang Guanyu Jiejue Guangdong Wenhua Dageming Yundong Zhong Wenti De Zhishi Xuanji (*Central Party's Selected Directives on Guangdong Cultural Revolution*), edited by Guangzhou Pitao Lianwei Hongqi Lianluozhan (The Red Flag Liaison Station of the United Committee to Criticize Tao Zhu), 1 December 1967, pp. 13-40.

[49] "Old conservatives" first emerged in Beijing in June 1966. They were a staunch defender of the Party authority and had been virtually disintegrated at the end of 1966. See Yin Hongbiao, "Ideological and political tendencies of factions in the Red Guard movement", *The Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 5, No. 13 (1996), pp. 269-281.

The movement of the East Wind was now on the verge of complete collapse. Being labeled as the "conservative organization" meant the end of the anti-faction's political careers and a doomed political consequence. In the best possible scenario it was political demotion and a thwarted career prospect, at worst, it was imprisonment.[50] By this point, the fundamental dynamic was self-protection from political punishment if they lost this game. To avoid becoming political victims, the Earth General and Red General headquarters immediately held a protest rally after Zhou's speech, demanding a clear definition of how they were "conservative" and where exactly they drew this "conservative support" from.[51]

If Premier Zhou's directives had stopped with these, the political stature of the local forces in Guangzhou would have been the same as those in Shanghai—confrontations between rebel camps did not occur, as the anti faction was thoroughly disintegrated and suppressed after they had been labeled as "conservative organizations". However, political winds shifted abruptly overnight and led to a chaotic power balancing between the contending factions in Guangzhou.

On the early morning of April 19, Zhou Enlai flew back to Beijing.[52] On that evening, Chi Zehou (迟泽厚), the secretary of Huang Yongsheng, received a call from Zhou Enlai's liaison office instructing to amend Premier's previous speech. In this modified version, Zhou reaffirmed that both the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters were "revolutionary organizations" (*geming zuzhi* 革命组

[50] Andrew Walder, *Fractured Rebellion: The Beijing Red Guard Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 260.
[51] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1612.
[52] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, p. 146.

织) in Guangzhou. They cannot be arbitrarily categorized as “conservative organization”—they were only “inclined toward conservatism” (*pianyu baoshou* 偏于保守). Zhou also stressed the importance of broad rebel unity and insisted that “one factional group should not prevail over the other faction group.”[53]

With Zhou’s latest instructions and this more or less even-handed policy, the fate of East Wind instantaneously changed. The label of being “inclined toward conservatism” still placed East Wind on a lower political status than the “leftist organizations”. The reappraisal, however, was enough to guarantee the political continuity of the East Wind groups in the forthcoming factional struggles. Meanwhile, the political pressure of the Military Region was also lifted. According to Chi Zehou, the PLA now “no longer needed to suppress the second rebel alliance after already cracking down one wing of the rebels throughout the city.”[54]

New Identity

Political identities were not objectively fixed; instead, they were crystallized in an evolved process with interactional elements rather than merely existed in terms of prior structural arrangement. While a novel factional identity known as “East Wind” had emerged for the first time during the period of strict military control, the other

[53] Huang Zheng, *General Huang Yongsheng: A Biography*, p. 590. However, according to other sources, Premier Zhou called the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters as “inclined toward conservatism” on 14 April when he gave a public speech to the representatives of Guangzhou mass organizations, There were no subsequent telephone call and revisions of speech. See Zhou Enlai si yue shisi dui Guangzhoushi ge geming qunzhong zuzhi daibiao de jianghua (Zhou Enlai’s speech to the representatives of Guangzhou mass organizations, April 14), in Zhongyang Guanyu Jiejue Guangdong Wenhua Dageming Yundong Zhong Wenti De Zhishi Xuanji (*Central Party’s Selected Directives on Guangdong Cultural Revolution*), edited by Guangzhou Pitao Lianwei Hongqi Lianluozhan (The Red Flag Liaison Station of the United Committee to Criticize Tao Zhu), 1 December 1967, pp. 13-40. This paper adopts the piece of evidence from the memoir of Huang Yongsheng’s secretary.

[54] Ye Shuming, “Chi Zehou fangtan” (“Interview with Chi Zehou”), *Huaxia Wenzhai* (*China News Digest*) (Supplement), No. 466, 22 November 2005.

rebels united together and formed a new political identity in the names of “Red Flag” as a response to Premier Zhou’s instructions.

With clear encouragement from Beijing and Premier’s open endorsement for “leftist organizations”, the pro faction force came to revival. A rebel from the Harbin Military Engineering College who was in Guangzhou at the time observed:

> “When Premier Zhou came to Guangzhou, the Guangzhou movement began to be enlivened from the state of being under suppression. The rebels who had been put under pressure gained their liberty, again raised their flags and began to launch a new battle.”[55]

This immediately increased the political pressure on the Military Region. Over the next few weeks, close to one thousand imprisoned rebels were released from prison with a “Notice of Release”, which read: “X has gone through re-education, and since he was realized his mistakes, has produced a self-criticism, and has behaved well, he is released.”[56] The Guangzhou Military Region admitted that “in defining the character of the mass organizations…the boundary line between the left, the middle and the right was blurred and certain revolutionary organizations and revolutionary masses were attacked and suppressed.”[57] They even had to submit a self-criticism detailing their mistakes during the course of “supporting the left”. In the report,

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[55] “Lin Yun’s letter to Canton Military Region command”, *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8, pp. 81-104, at p. 95.
[56] Wang Chao, *Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*, p. 115.
[57] The Guangzhou Daily Red Flag Propaganda Departments 广州日报红旗宣传组, *Ziliao zhuanji* (*Special Reference Material Supplement*) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Gonggelian 广州工革联宣传部, 17 November 1967).

Guangzhou Military Region further confessed:

> "In March, we again mistakenly banned and disbanded some mass organizations such as the 'August 1 Combat Corps' both inside and outside the army, and wrongly arrested certain people. And in adjusting social order and strengthening public security arrangements in Guangzhou, we also expanded the scope of attack and arrested people who should not have been arrested. At the same time, we also suppressed the activities of such revolutionary mass organizations such as the 'Red Flag Commune' and the 'August 31 Combat Corps' of Zhongshan University."[58]

Apparently, political tide had now turned in favor of the anti martial law forces. Realizing this situation, local rebels had to reconsider their political alignments again in the hopes of riding favorably on a changing wave of political tides.

Amongst the first ones to change tunes were the Third Headquarters, South China Engineering College Red Flag, and Red Flag Workers. The Third Headquarters did not participate in the January 22 power seizure and subsequently charged that the PRA had made "serious error in line". South China Engineering College Red Flag was a leading unit member organization of the Third Headquarters and therefore held the same stand against the PRA. Red Flag Workers took part in the power seizure but

[58] "Zhonggong Guangzhou junqu weiyuanhui guanyu zai Guangzhou diqu zhizuo gongzuo zhong suofan cuowu de jiancha" ("Examinations of the mistakes by Guangzhou military commission made during the 'support the left' period"), in *Central Party's Selected Directives on Guangdong Cultural Revolution*, pp. 3-6. This self-examination report had been commented and approved by Mao himself, see Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Central Party Literature Research Center), *Mao Zedong nianpu 1949-1976* (*di liu juan*) (*Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976* [Vol. 6]) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), p. 81.

immediately withdrew their membership from the alliance once finding they were not able to acquire the expected leadership position in the new organs of power structure. After all, all of these rebels had opposed the PRA before Premier Zhou's visit to Guangzhou. Some even held mass struggle sessions against the PRA in February and March.

After Premier named "the three red flags" as "leftist organizations", South China Engineering College Red Flag—one of the "three red flags"—naturally identified itself as standing at the same camp with the other two "red flags" which both were the core units in the PRA forces. According to interview with Gao Xiang on 27 July 2012, the leader of South China Engineering College Red Flag, the reason for their changing position was because:

> "Though we had opposed the PRA in their January power seizure actions, in this situation when the PRA had been suppressed with great cruelty by the Guangzhou Military Region, we must stand out to give them support."[59]

This explanation sounded logically appealing on the surface, but finds little evidence in Guangzhou especially considering South China Engineering College Red Flag had been allying with the army in attacking the PRA forces in March.[60] The similar thing also happened in Red Flag Workers, who tactically chose to alter their stances after Premier Zhou appraised them, together with Workers Alliance, as two

[59] Interview with Gao Xiang, 27 July 2012.
[60] Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 76.

major leftist organizations in workers movement in Guangzhou. The Third Headquarters issued a public statement, declaring that it was the revolutionary rebels' spirit to "unite together, fight together, and triumph together."[61]

Nonetheless, because of the presence of what Zhou called "the three red flags", Third Headquarters, South China Engineering College Red Flag, and Red Flag Workers banded together with the PRA and they now christened as the Red Flag faction—a city-wide rebel alliance that had split over the power seizure and military control in the early months of 1967, but tactically re-coalesced in middle of April in efforts to end up on the winning side.

Conversely, it was now East Wind's turn to suffer badly from many defections in its ranks. The defectors either set up their own organizations, which retained their former names simply prefaced by "new", for example, the New Earth General Headquarters (*Xin Di Zong* 新地总),[62] or chose to joined the opposite Flag alliance.[63] According to the memoir of a major leader from Workers Alliance, in later April, several leaders from the Earth General and Red General Headquarters held private meetings with leaders of Workers Alliance and Zhongshan University Red Flag. In the meeting, they acknowledged their earlier mistaken challenges against the PRA and asked for potential cooperations.[64] But still, some other members chose to defend the legitimate status of their organization, hoping sooner or later their fate would be significantly changed—if Premier Zhou could rapidly adjust his instructions overnight,

[61] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1616.
[62] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 201.
[63] Xue Shengqin, *Shinian renshengmeng: Wenge qinliji* (*Ten Years of Dream: A Personal Account of the Cultural Revolution*) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2007), p. 86. Xue Shengqin was a leader in Workers Alliance at that time.
[64] Ibid., p. 87.

it is not unlikely that he might do it again in another occasion.[65]

After all, by this time, two contending factional coalitions had appeared in Guangzhou. The political identities that motivated this deep division were not expressions of prior identities (e.g., elites versus masses, revolutionaries versus capitalists), but only emerged and gradually developed through time.

Local Cadre's Choices

Another group participating in the January power seizure is government officials. Central-South Liaison Headquarters (*Zhongnanju Lianluo Zongbu* 中南局联络总部), a middle-level cadre organization closely associated with the top figures in CCRG, joined in the local rebellions in late January and continually provided important information on CCRG's attitudes and access to and information about the Guangzhou Military Region to the PRA forces.[66]

In traditional interest group interpretations, privileged political officials and underprivileged masses were two parties at opposite ends of the political spectrum. In particular, government bureaucrats were potential targets of a rebel movement that aimed to overthrow the Party authority. It is unlikely that an active insurgency inside the government bureaucracy would occur, as government cadres were innately tied to the common interest with the party-state, opposing to a destructive mass mobilization.

However, in contrast to the normal politics where there is still strong power

[65] Ye Shuming, "Chi Zehou fangtan" ("Interview with Chi Zehou"), *Huaxia Wenzhai* (*China News Digest*) (Supplement), No. 466, 22 November 2005.
[66] South-Central Liaison Headquarters was formed in December 1966, with direct support from Wang Li, Guan Feng (关锋), and Qi Benyu (戚本禹), all are leading figures in the CCRG. See Xu Youyu, "Wenge zhong de shehui zuzhi" ("Social organization during the Cultural Revolution"), unpublished manuscript.

structures functioned, a radical political change in the tumultuous Cultural Revolution period dissolved civilian state structures at virtually all cities and thereby presented a difficult scenario for the incumbent cadres. Basically, there were three stark choices for the cadres. The first was to defend the government functionaries and Party rules. In doing so, one would expect that government officials sided with opponent rebels with common interests in resisting attacking rebels. The second choice was to ally with the attacking rebels and participated in a mass rebellion against immediate superiors and state authority. The third course was to adopt a strategy of self-protection in which remaining both silent and out of the political fray would be the most effective way to ensure survival.

Table 3.1 Recruitment and demotion of cadre ranks in Guangdong Province, 1950-1965 (in thousands)[67]

Year	Total Number	Entering Rank (%)	Leaving Rank (%)	Major Political Campaign
1955	23.9	49.0	13.8	
1956	32.4	98.1	8.0	
1957	29.2	21.2	39.0	Anti-Rightists
1958	64.7	26.6	44.7	
1959	70.3	33.1	6.4	Great Leap Forward
1960	65.9	42.3	26.7	
1961	65.7	45.5	40.3	Reeducation of Party Members
1962	63.8	24.0	62.4	
1963	62.8	38.1	28.8	Five-Antis
1964	64.2	27.9	11.4	
1965	43.6	34.6	22.2	

Note: there is no data on 1966 and 1967.

As the movement unfolded, the viability of an “exit” option gradually became

[67] Zhonggong zhongyang zuzhi bu (Communist Party Central Committee’s Organization Department), *Zhongguo ganbu tongji wushi nian* (*China Cadre Statistics in 50 Years*) (Beijing: Dangjian duwu chubanshe, 1999), p. 469, 492.

unfeasible. The party-state often used mass campaigns to reorganize its local bureaucratic units. In previous years, the turnover rate of cadre ranks was usually higher during political campaigns (table 3-1), which means that purges became the main source to vacate bureaucratic positions in order to reward movement activists. Failure to participate in the movement could be interpreted as tacit support for "reactionary bourgeois authorities" and thereby lead to career demotion. To avoid the harsh fate of being political victims, state bureaucrats tended to respond sensitively and practically to the changing political signals.

In the case of Guangzhou, besides the Central-South Liaison Headquarters that overtly expressed their attitudes as early as in January, neither provincial nor municipal senior cadres publicly supported one faction or another before Zhou's speech. The majority of government officials chose to distance themselves from the movement. As one senior cadre recalled, most officers were unwilling to cooperate with either faction, thus adopting an "underground" working manner.[68]

However, in early 1967, Tao Zhu, the first secretary of the Provincial Committee and the first political commissar of the Guangzhou Military Region, was struck down by the Centre as the "biggest capitalist roader" in Guangdong.[69] Under this extraordinary circumstance, there were many more local cadres who wanted to make sure that they were not identified as part of a Tao Zhu clique.

Since a choice between two rival factions appeared inevitable, Zhou's speech

[68] Luo Peiyuan, *Luo Peiyuan wenji* (*A Collection of Articles from Luo Peiyuan*) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou chubanshe, 1999), p. 296. Luo was Director of Guangzhou United Front Work Department during the Cultural Revolution.
[69] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 361-367.

gave them a great opportunity to choose a side. Most of local cadres enthusiastically responded to this opportunity to "voice" their support for the "leftist organizations". From April 19 to late April, cadres in top positions as well as those in middle and lower positions publicly expressed their support to the Red Flag camp one after another. They followed Zhou's speech and acclaimed Flag alliances as Guanzhou's revolutionary leftists.[70] Local cadres' choices, in turn, inevitably put them at odds with the East Wind camp who originally opposed an early power seizure from the government officials.

Entangled Rivalry

In order to maintain the edge they had gained in March, the East Wind faction mobilized to fight back. By doing so, they held a series of city-wide mass rallies to struggle against provincial cadres as a way to demonstrate their genuine revolutionary mantle and to prove that they were not "conservative" organization.

Immediately after Zhou's departure on April 19, the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters organized mass struggle sessions to criticize Zhao Ziyang, among other provincial political leaders for six consecutive days.[71] Several days later, Zhao Ziyang, Ou Mengjue, Lin Liming and others were paraded through the streets with dunce caps on their heads and placards around their necks.[72] In the meantime, the East Wind unit groups raided the homes of several senior cadres and

[70] Xue Shengqin, *A Personal Account of the Cultural Revolution*, p. 86.
[71] *Doupi Dongtai* (*Reports on Mass Struggles* 斗批动态), No. 3, 24 April, 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Military Control Committee Cultural Revolution Small Group).
[72] David Shambaugh, *The Making of a Premier: Zhao Ziyang's Provincial Career*, p. 55.

published charges of their "counterrevolutionary speeches". On May 18, they issued a public declaration to the center, demanding "to pull Tao Zhu back to Guangzhou to receive thorough mass criticism". On May 30, the Earth General and the Red General Headquarters assembled more than 80,000 people at Yuexiushan Square to purge Zhao Ziyang and Ou Mengjue.[73]

On the other side, the Red Flag faction fought aggressively to rehabilitate and recover their statuses lost earlier in the year. They intensified their assaults on the regional military authorities and demanded the release of all those arrested in March and a clearing of their records. On May 3, more than 2,000 Red Flaggers staged a hunger strike in front of the Guangzhou Uprising Martyrs Cemetery Park, declaring the release of one of their leaders in military detention. It ended only after Premier Zhou in Beijing ordered the release on May 6.[74] On May 7, Zhongshan University Red Flag, Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, and Workers Alliance jointly organized a mass rally to bombard "Tan Zhenlin of Guangzhou". At a similar action on May 10, several hundred demonstrated at public security station and called for the "overthrow of Huang Yongsheng" and "liberation of revolutionary rebels."[75] On May 15, a unit group of Red Flag raided the Guangzhou Daily office and shut down the newspaper, which was controlled under the military control committee.[76] At the end of May, the Flag rebels attacked the public security organs to seize "black

[73] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1615-1616.
[74] *Sanjun Lianwei Zhanbao (Three Services Joint Committee Battle News* 三军联委战报), 14 September 1968 (Guangzhou: Three Services Joint Committee of the Guanzghou District).
[75] "Jiu Guangzhou Tan Zhenlin dongyuan dahui dongtai" ("Mobilization Meeting for Struggling against Tan Zhenlin of Guangzhou" 揪广州谭震林动员大会动态), Guangdong Military Control Committee, May 1967.
[76] "Guangzhou Ribao, Nanfang Ribao zuixing lu" ("An account of misdeeds of Guangzhou Daily and Nanfang Daily"), *Xin Yisi* (*New First Headquarters*), 24 May 1967.

materials" (*hei cailiao*) compiled by the army.[77]

The East Wind's swift and sudden turn on local cadres is a clear demonstration that there were no fundamental political differences between the two opposing organizations in Guangzhou identified as relatively "radical" and "conservative". The traditional arguments tend to claim that the two factions adopted identifiably different political orientations toward Party establishment. In particular, Red Flag sought to overturn the entire Party bureaucracy while East Wind wanted to maintain a large percentage of cadres in their original posts. A limited purge was necessary but it had to be implemented in an orderly and peaceful way.[78]

However, the extent and patterns of factional behavior in Guangzhou were essentially very similar. As the mass movement progressed, the so-called "radical" and "conservative" factions practiced essentially the same variety of radicalism. For the East Wind, their vehement attack on power holders was a political maneuver to remove their "conservative" label. The ultimate motivation was to ensure political survival in the ongoing local battle. As one participant from East Wind faction recalled, "If we did not struggle against top power holders at this critical moment, we would be treated like royalist *baohuang pai* and our forces would be eliminated in no uncertain terms."[79] Wu Chuangbin, the head of Zhongshang University Red Flag, also pointed out that "the most intense purge of Party and government cadres was

[77] Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, p. 1617. "Black materials" were a collection of "reference material" that was compiled by the communist Party-state. They were often used in the denunciation of individuals isolated as political campaign targets.
[78] Hong Yung Lee, "The radical students in Kwangtung during the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, No. 64 (1975), pp. 645-83; Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, pp.316-318.
[79] Interview with Liang Yanxin, 25 July 2012. Liang was a factory worker and joined the Red General Headquarters at that time.

implemented by East Wind groups during this phase of the Cultural Revolution."[80]

The consequence is that local governmental cadres were more even tightly connected to the Red Flag faction. Meanwhile, the Red Flag's attacks on the army further strained their relationship with the Military Region. By late spring of 1967 the rebel rivalry in Guangzhou became entangled further. This move resulted in an initially neutral local faction being divided increasingly into two camps, civilian cadres with the Red Flag alliance and military units under the East Wind movement.

Shifting Contexts

Soon after, external signals brought more confusion to the local political environments. On May 19, Kang Sheng (康生), advisor to the CCRG, secretly flew to Guangzhou. Kang stayed for only one night and met Huang Yongsheng among other senior military officers at the Military Region's headquarter.

The news of Kang Sheng's visit quickly spread among local rebels. As a radical power figure of the CCRG, Kang's arrival made the Red Flag faction believe that the main purpose of his trip was to further restrain the power of military authority. The key members of the Flag alliance, Zhongshan University Red Flag and Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, had regarded CCRG as their patronage in the top. Kang's visit thereby boosted their confidence that he would side with them and give harsher blows to their opponent. On the other side, East Wind faction viewed Kang's presence at the Military Region as a signal that the center would issue some

[80] Telephone interview with Wu Chuangbin, 16 March 2013.

new orders to curtail the acts of the Flag alliance. After all, the Red Flaggers' hunger strike on May 3 had been denounced by the leaders in Beijing. As such, rebels from East Wind side were eager to declare that "Kang had secretly interrogated several Red Flag rebel leaders in custody" and "the death sentence of Red Flag was approaching."[81]

According to the publicly available materials, during his visits, Kang had only given some brief instructions on the army's military training program at universities.[82] As early as in March, Mao issued a directive calling on the army to conduct military and political training in universities, middle schools, and higher classes of primary schools.[83] It would be difficult to believe that a senior figure in the Communist Party secretly visited a major city in political turmoil, but only to discuss military training program. However, at this point in time, without clear instructions from Mao, Kang would not take a decisive stand but had to remain silent on factional contention. Kang himself admitted this later when he met with delegations in Beijing from both sides on November 14, 1967:

> "I did go to Guangzhou, but had no important instructions to give. On that occasion when I went to Guangzhou, I was entrusted by the Central Committee with one task, that is, to hold talks with a brother party…before I got on my plane, I said a few words with Comrade Huang Yongsheng for the main purpose of

[81] Wang Chao, *Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*, p. 105.
[82] "Kang Sheng dui Guangzhou junqu Huang Yongsheng dengren de jianghua" ("Kang Sheng's speech to Huang Yongsheng and other military offices in the Guangzhou Military Region"), 19 May 1967, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.
[83] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 177.

exchanging information on the situation, not giving any important instruction."[84]

Kang's vague political stance deeply disappointed the Red Flag alliance, who interpreted Kang's silence as tacit support for the military authority and the East Wind. According to Huang Yijiang, the leader of Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, the Flag rebels were dissatisfied with Kang, because in their view, Kang intentionally begged some key questions and "played Tai Chi" in local issues.[85]

In fact, Kang's evasive stance reflected Mao's intended preference for a chaotic and perplexing situation. Mao always believed that great chaos was an ultimate pathway to achieve great order (*dazhi* 大治), and "without destruction there can be no construction" (*bupo buli* 不破不立). In a personal letter he wrote to Jiang Qing on July 8, 1966, he said, "there is great chaos under heaven, the situation is excellent" (*tianxia daluan, xingshi dahao* 天下大乱 形势大好)."[86] He developed this viewpoint further when he received leading military officers on July 13, 1967:

> "Don't fear chaos, the more chaos there is, and the longer it goes on, the better. No matter how chaotic, don't be afraid. The more afraid you are, the more demons will appear…The more [chaos] I see the happier I get. The more chaotic it gets the more there is a third faction that opposes civil war, opposes armed conflict, and that's great!"[87]

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[84] "Canton Red Guards dived themselves in two belligerent factions", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 50, No. 5, pp. 57-71, at p. 70.
[85] Interview with Huang Yijian, 23 March 2003, unpublished manuscript. This interview was conducted by Ye Shuming, the author of *The Exciting History of Guangdong in Twentieth Century*.
[86] Gao Wenqian, *Zhou Enlai: The Last Perfect Revolutionary* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2008), p. 121.
[87] Mao Zedong, "Jiejian jundui lingdao ganbu de tanhua" ("Talk with Leading Military Officers"), 13 July 1967, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

Kang's visit had no impact but only brought more confusion to the local politics. By this point, messages from Beijing were so ambiguous that both factions believed they had the support of Mao. After all, they all swore fealty to Mao, and charged their opponents with capitalist and bourgeois tendencies. Both side tended to tactically interpret the external signals to fit their best interest, and asserted unfavorable information as rumors or sheer fabrications.

Meanwhile, Kang's visit further discouraged the military forces from playing an active role in "supporting the left". After Zhou's speech, the Guangzhou Military Region had already stopped expressing overt support for one faction or another—once criticized, the military leaders were anxious to avoid further errors and were therefore more cautious in their local activities. Now with Kang's evasive instructions, the military was also attempting to strike a conciliatory posture, showing sympathy for arguments made by both sides. Huang Yongsheng began to frequently appear at mass meetings from both factions, where he admitted his earlier mistake of neglecting their revolutionary demands and blandly expressed his support for their revolutionary activities (table 3-2).[88] Huang's equivocal attitude toward both factions in Guangzhou contrasted sharply with his fellow comrade in Wuhan, where General Chen Zaidao (陈再道), the commander of the Wuhan Military Region, openly protected one wing of the rebel movement and disbanded another faction with great force.[89]

[88] Huang Zheng, *General Huang Yongsheng: A Biography*, p. 591.
[89] Thomas Robinson, "The Wuhan Incident: Local strife and provincial rebellion during the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, No. 47 (1971), pp. 413–438.

Table 3.2 Huang Yongsheng's speech to both factions in 1967[90]

Date	Speech to Red Flag	Speech to East Wind
5/10	"If the conservative faction comes they will not be received. They asked me where they are conservative and I did not respond." "Guangzhou's revolutionary situation in March was not so good, the revolutionary faction was suppressed."	
5/11		"In raising the question of why you [Earth General Headquarters and Red General Headquarters] were not received, our actions have already answered it. How can you be not received today?" "The so-called 'March black wind problem,' I have never termed it this way. We believe the revolutionary situation in March was good."
5/24	"At present, the Earth General Headquarters and the Red General Headquarters have come here and put up a poster saying they 'cannot be knocked down, cannot be suppressed.' They oppose us which means we have done it right."	
5/25		"The Premier has said of you [Earth General Headquarters and Red General Headquarters] that you have been inclined conservative. My understanding is that there is a fear that your revolutionary nature is a little inadequate. Your strength and political sensitivity is inadequate."
5/30		"The majority of Doctrine Guards are good…to strike down with the Earth General Headquarters, the Red General Headquarters and the Doctrine Guards is wrong."[91]
6/2	"I have never supported the Doctrine Guards and I shall never support the Doctrine Guards."	

[90] *Liuyue Tianbing* (*June Celestial Soldier* 六月天兵), No. 3, 29 June 1967, at p. 2 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Third Headquarters South China Engineering College East Is Red 广州三司华工东方红公社).

[91] Doctrine Guards (*zhuyi bing*) is an Red Guards organization led largely by middle school children of high-level cadre and military background. See "Maoism Red Guards in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 48, No. 24, pp. 335-336,

Initial Confrontation

With the PLA now hesitant to act decisively against either faction, starting in June, the divisions between the East Wind rebels and the revived Red Flag forces escalated into bloody street fighting.

Not long before, on May 5, Xie Fuzhi (谢富治), Minister of Public Security, had revealed in a speech to students at Peking University that "armed struggles at factories, schools and various organs" were taking place not only in Beijing but in many provinces as well.[92] On June 6, the CCP Central Committee and the Central Military Affairs Committee jointly issued an order to curb the nationwide factional violence and chaos. The order specifically prescribed seven rules to forbid mass organizations engaging in armed struggle.[93] However, the effect of the order in regulating the status of mass organizations turned out to be very limited in Guangzhou.

At the beginning, the violent clashes were sporadic and short-lived. The first relatively large-scale armed struggle took place on June 15. The Earth General Headquarters mobilized more than three thousands of their members to attack Workers Alliance and Red Flag Workers, leading to a violent melee in which more than twenty-seven people were injured.[94] The Red Flag rebels fought back immediately. On June 18, Workers Alliance and Zhongshan University Red Flag sent a force of more than one thousand to the Guangzhou Railway Bureau, destroying office equipments, loudspeakers, and megaphones. At least 59 people from the East

[92] Philip Bridgham, "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The struggle to seize power", *The China Quarterly*, No. 34 (1968), pp. 6-37.
[93] "Liuliu tongling" ("Six-point order"), 6 June 1967, in Chen Donglin and Du Pu, *The History of the People's Republic of China*, p. 281.
[94] Liu Guokai, *Red Flag Faction*, p. 99.

Wind were wounded, and more than 30 were kidnapped as hostages.[95] Another battle took place on June 23 when several squads from the Flag alliance attempted to force their way into the railway station. The attackers injured several defenders in this incident.[96]

At this initial stage, the common weapons used by both camps were still the traditional non-lethal weapons, such as iron clubs, chains, bars, and knives.[97] There were no gunfire shots, nor petrol bombs, nor reported deaths in these pitched battles. The first use of modern weapons occurred three days after the Wuhan incident, on July 23.[98] Immediately after seizing weapons from local armories, the East Wind used rifles to fire at the Red Flag at Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall and since then, the use of modern arms rapidly spread to all groups. In the summer of 1967, large armed battles with serious casualties between the warring camps broke out in and around Guangzhou, including a four-hour gun battle at a trade union building in mid-August and a two large battles at a shipyard and river warehouse complex fought with guns, bombs, and grenades. In one such battle the large Taigu Sugar Refinery warehouses burned, destroying all of the refined sugar. Factional warfare plagued Guangzhou persistently until mid-September when a more strict directive to stop the armed conflicts issued from the center.

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[95] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 145.

[96] Shengzhi baowei wenhua dageming qingkuang jianbao (省直保卫文化大革命情况简报), No. 12, 24 June 1967 (Guangzhou: The Second Office affiliated with Guangdong Public Security Department 广东省公安厅第二办公室).

[97] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 175.

[98] "7.23 Zhongshan Jiniantang daxuean jishu" ("A record of July 23 the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall Incident" 7.23 中山纪念堂大血案记述), *Guangyi Hongqi* (*Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag*), 5 August 1967.

Summary

New Reflections

The imposition of military control in Guangzhou during the spring of 1967 is another crucial juncture in the course of local rebel movement. Under military control, the army authority used a series of sweeping and repressive measures against the PRA groups. As a result, military forces quickly became entangled in the rivalries between the two rebel factions, which by March 1967 pitted the faction that carried out the January 22 power seizure against a dissident rebel faction that sought to revoke it.

One important reason why pro power seizure faction has been designated as the "radical" faction is that it also fought aggressively against the martial law forces. The previous analysts viewed the army as an inherently conservative force that sought to restore order and preserve the core of the communist system. Therefore to oppose the armed forces was itself an inherently radical stance. The dissident faction has earned the label "conservative" because it aligned with the armed forces in Guangzhou. On the surface, support for the PLA would appear to be a stance in favor of the forces of order, an orientation that appears to deserve the label "conservative" in relation to the status quo ante.

However, a closer look at this rivalry suggests a very different interpretation. The dissident faction supported Huang Yongsheng and the Military Control Committee. They did so not out of any desire to restore the status quo ante, and certainly not because they had more vested interests in the status quo than the PRA. They supported the local military solely because the army suppressed their factional

opponent, and that was the only way to weaken their opponent and give their political fortunes a great boost. The PRA alliance, on the other hand, accused the army as was trying to reverse a genuine mass power seizure, and that the anti faction as a "counter-revolutionary organization." They regarded themselves as true "revolutionary left" and thus were not willing to see their rebel rivals surpass them to lead the local movement. Moreover, as Chapter Two has pointed out, their attack on the PLA dovetailed with contemporaneous events in Beijing and nationwide that alarmed the CCRG over the actions of the army in February and March. In CCRG's view, the armed forces had been excessively harsh in suppressing mass organizations that resisted army authority. This led the CCRG to support those groups that had strong grievances to challenge PLA authority directly.

Exogenous Ambiguity

Biggs identifies four exogenous conditions that invoke collective action and mobilization: exacerbated grievance, widened opportunity, increased uncertainty, and tightened social integration.[99] Based on this line of analysis, I would further add one more external condition—exogenous ambiguity—to explain the driving forces for contentious dynamics.

Ambiguity is different from uncertainty. The notion of an uncertainty suggests that actors still have the ability to interpret the consequence. In contrast, ambiguity refers to a type of unpredictable situation where actors cannot make sense of the

[99] Michael Biggs, *Explaining the Dynamics of Collective Protest: The Strike Wave of 1886 in Chicago* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), chapter 2.

situation because the “meaning” of right and wrong is very unclear. In the context of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the official doctrines were frequently ambiguous and contradictory, and at key points they were reversed without any warning. In particular, the Maoist notion of the “new bourgeois elements” was considerably broader and more heterogeneous than a simple variant of class struggle categorization. Different interpretations are often interwoven and interlinked and each particular interpretation contrasts significantly in its respective understanding of the class dynamics of Chinese socialism, ranging from “analyses that stressed the remnant influence of prerevolutionary elites, to views that highlighted newly emerging socioeconomic inequalities in the socialist society and finally, to a focus on the possible emergence of a new bureaucratic class.”[100] Similarly, Walder points out:

> “Maoist doctrine had a distinguishing feature: ambiguity bordering on incoherence. Who were the enemies and traitors who sought to restore capitalism in China? Remnants of old exploiting classes and former associates of the Nationalists? Corrupt officials, regardless of their past? Past critics of Party policy? All who enjoyed a privileged lifestyle? In Mao’s writings and the official media one may find each of these criteria, with no logical ordering or priority. How does one recognize “capitalist roaders,” since by all outward appearances they may look like loyal Communists? There simply was no clear guide to be

[100] Wu Yiching, “How state enumeration spoiled Mao’s last revolution”, *Journal of Modern Chinese History*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2013), pp. 200-217.

found in the elusive doctrine itself."[101]

This ambiguity constrained the ability of movement activists to make level-headed decisions. Essentially, the rapid changes in political practices generated political confusions to the local environments, and thus constructed an obstacle for actors who were embedded in the context to render solid judgments. Such short-run exogenous shock delinked actors' connection with their prior structural positions and identities, pushing people who shared a common interest in the status quo to make *varied* political choices. Consequently, the process of group formation and the building of political identities can take on different forms as the movement progressed.

The exogenous ambiguity also projected a circumstantial effect in which political symbols were constantly and tactically manipulated. The Cultural Revolution, in Rana Mitter's term, was the period in twentieth-century history during which "language was most separated from meaning."[102] Since the central directives from Beijing was often ambiguous and frequently shifting, rebels were able to shape their own interpretations and political orientations out of the Maoist mélange. They championed different quotations from Mao's works and strategically employed them in different contexts. Especially after the civilian state apparatus was dissolved during the January power seizure, no one was in a position to claim that his or her interpretation of a

[101] Andrew Walder, "Cultural Revolution radicalism: Variations on a Stalinist theme", in William A. Joseph, Christine Wong, and David Zweig (eds.), *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 41-62.
[102] Rana Mitter, *A Bitter Revolution: China's Struggle with the Modern World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 209.

message from Beijing was more authoritative than others'. Without a hierarchical communication channel, each party in the movement tended to manipulate the most advantageous message to their best group interest. Borrowing Bruno Latour's words, actors are not just intermediaries who transmit inputs automatically into outputs, but rather mediators who "transform, translate, distort and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry."[103] The slogan of "supporting the army and cherishing the people" was such a case in which the army and the rebels placed their emphasis on quite different part. In some extreme cases, rival factions even faked telegrams and directives, claiming that they received from higher levels and used them to charge their opponents with capitalist characteristics.[104]

In Guangzhou, with military's continuous crackdown, one could easily imagine that the pro power seizure force would be eventually crashed by the armed forces. However, during the Cultural Revolution, the exogenous circumstances shifted rapidly from moment to moment and brought about ambiguous outcomes. We have observed that in early April, when the center restricted the hand of regional forces throughout the country, the grip of the Guangzhou Military Region was weakened. Two weeks later, Premier Zhou Enlai visited Guangzhou and his visits became an exceedingly important turning point in exacerbating the local factional contentions. During his short stay, Zhou publicly applauded five mass groups as "leftist organizations" while terming two leading elements of the anti faction as "inclined

[103] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 39.
[104] Ezra F. Vogel, "The structure of conflict: China in 1967," in *The Cultural Revolution: 1967 in Review*. Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies No. 2 (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1968), pp. 97-123, at p. 110.

toward conservatism" for their close association with the armed forces. His favoritism toward the Flag faction caused its ranks to swell and the balance of forces to become more equal. In May, Kang Sheng's secret visit and his vague political stance further complicated the already complex situation. This ambiguity tempted both sides to believe that what they failed to gain from Kang's visit could now be won in the streets with greater probability of success.

Contingent Choice

The structural models of political conflict tend to link specific structural positions and inherent interests within society to permanent cleavages, that in turn shape status-based alliance patterns and coalitions in fairly stable ways. The theory thus predicts that structural factors are more likely to be rigid and impermeable and actors' choices are more likely to be fixed and consistent through the entire course of movement.

However, more subtle, rapidly changing factors, while seemingly less consequential than broader structural explanations, are often critical determinants of collective action. Under a highly variable and often ambiguous circumstance, movement participants had to act quickly and to make immediate responses to the external political signals. Their "perception profiles" of potential opportunities and political threats may be convergent and divergent into different dimensions of the political landscape.[105] Consequently, mass actors' choices varied and were often

[105] Mohammad Ali Kadivar, "Alliances and perception profiles in the Iranian Reform Movement, 1997 to 2005", *American Sociological Review*, Vol.78, No. 6 (2013): 1063-1086.

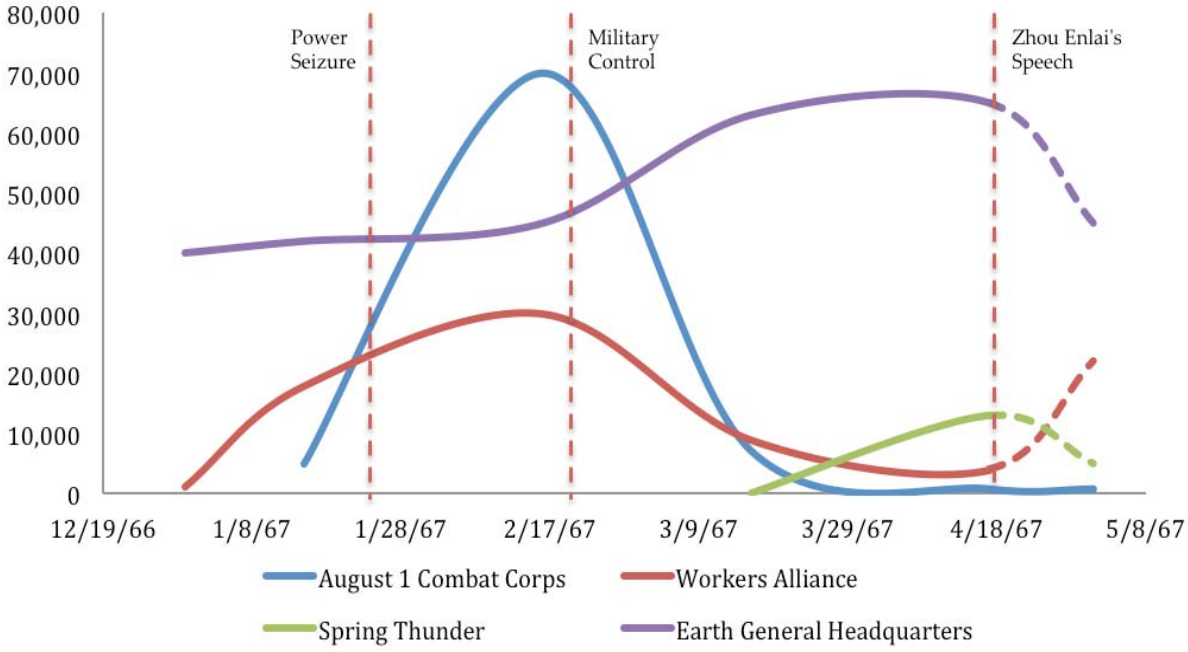
following an inconsistent pattern. Some regarded such political ambiguity as providing a lucrative opportunity to maximize their own share of power in the movement. Some took a selective maneuver according to the concrete and pressing political issues in question. They strategically shifted their organizational membership and chose to stand on the favorable side in the hopes that their affiliations would shield them from political victimization. Some others chose to stick to their original group, not because they had vested interests in defending their pre-existing social or political identities, but because their persistence would be highly rewarded when the political winds changed again in the next round should they be successful.

The factional splits therefore originated in those contingent choices made during the course of the movement, not in collective interests and identities that structurally existed before the movement began. We have observed that in Guangzhou, rebels repeatedly took sides and adopted different political stances at *each* unique turning point as the movement unfolded during the spring of 1967. This contingent and dynamic nature of political conflict led to opposition between the emerging factions. Figure 3.1 depicts such membership fluctuation in four mass organizations—two from Red Flag faction (Workers Alliance, August 1 Combat Corps), and two from East Wind faction (East General Headquarters, Spring Thunder)—as individuals joined and left and entire groups sometimes quit one coalition to join another.

Specifically, the ranks of August 1 Combat Corps and Workers Alliance had recorded the most membership growth after the January 22 power seizure, but badly depleted by mass defections under military suppression. After being declared as

"leftist organization", the Workers Alliance came back to life. On the contrary, Earth General Headquarters and Spring Thunder had gained strength when they sided with the military authority during February and March, but suffered great membership loss when Premier Zhou criticized their "conservative inclination" on April 18, though the Earth General Headquarters still numbered more than the Red Flag faction at the end of April.

Figure 3.1 Claimed membership of mass organizations in Guangzhou, Jan-Apr 1967[106]



Note:
1. the dotted line of the Workers Alliance, Earth General Headquarters, and Spring Thunder after 18 April 1967 is based on author's own estimation.
2. in some cases, mass organizations would deliberately overstate the numbers of their registered members, because people believed that power would be distributed roughly in accordance with the relative strength of each organization.

The divide between Red Flag and East Wind, in sum, was a rivalry between two

[106] The membership information of August 1 Combat Corps is from Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 106; Spring Thunder is from *Guangtie Zongsi* (*Guangzhou Railway General Headquarters*), No. 1, 15 July 1967; Workers Alliance is from Xue Shengqin, *A Personal Account of the Cultural Revolution*, p. 54, and "Lin Yun's letter to Canton Military Region command", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8, pp. 81-104, at. 93; Earth General Headquarters is from Ye Shuming, *The Exciting History of Guangdong*, pp. 1580-1581.

wings of Guangzhou's rebel organizations. When the movement took unpredictable turns within an ambiguous political context, each rebel group and constituent unit tactically chose their alignment and split and re-coalesced in efforts to end up on the winning side. Their choices created new identities ("Red Flag" and "East Wind"), new political motives, and new sets of allies. This was not a division between factions representing different fundamental orientations toward their prior status quo ante. This was a split that originated and intensified through a series of crucial political interactions among the local rebels, military forces and the central political figures.

Chapter 4

Factional Warfare and Violent Summer

"A security dilemma is said to occur when the breakdown of order creates a situation in which individuals coordinating around focal points resort to preemptive violence, or align with warmongering leaders who do so, because of security fears. Incentives for violence are compounded by uncertainty and the extremely high costs of not preempting: they must kill so as not to be killed."[1]

Stathis Kalyvas (2006: 61)

The summer of 1967 marked the apex of the armed collisions between the mass factions, and of rebel attacks against local military units. After the July 20th Incident in Wuhan, a provocative slogan, "pull out a handful of capitalist roaders in the army," gained wide publicity in China. As in Guangzhou and in other places, the rival rebels were motivated to raid military arsenals and to seize armed weapons. From this point onwards, the use of armaments grew increasingly lethal; including rifles, carbines, mortars, submachine guns, hand grenades, and even tanks and armed patrol boats. This led to the Cultural Revolution entering a new radical phase of armed struggle.

This political episode has long been interpreted as "class warfare" between two opposing interest groups, attributing the roots of factional conflict to participants' pre-existing sociopolitical status quo and thus pits different social groups against one another.[2] Contentious conflict, according to this argument, was the result of an irreconcilable conflict of some fixed structural interests embedded at different levels of

[1] Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 61.
[2] Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen and Jonathan Unger, "Students and class warfare: The social roots of the Red Guard conflict in Guangzhou (Canton)", *The China Quarterly*, No. 83 (1980), pp. 397–446.

society. Some other scholars also tend to explore the social-psychological determinants of participants' behavior. They argue that as the true believers of Mao's ideology, young actors were motivated by their bonds and emotional attachment to a charismatic leader.[3] They blindly engaged themselves in the name of "combating for Chairman Mao"[4] and thus prone to fanatical and violent behaviors as a "revolutionary sacrifice".[5]

By examining the rise and fall of the armed conflict in Guangzhou in the summer of 1967, this chapter argues that factional conflict during this period was not based on status difference but grew to gain its own momentum in a dynamic course. It emerged as a rhetorical warfare, turning into physical violence, and eventually culminated in an armed strife. Once the fighting started, it could not be stopped. In this process, no group could afford to compromise or to pull out, because to do so would mean the destructive end of that group's political life—at best it was organizational disintegration and at worst, it was personal imprisonment. Rival rebels were therefore trapped in a "to live or to die" dilemma. They fought bloody street battles not to defend their pre-existing status quo but to protect their own survival in a turbulent political storm.

Wuhan Incident

The July 20th incident in Wuhan sparked a radical turning point in the Cultural Revolution. Before mid-July of 1967, political divisions between the warring factions only resulted in sporadic conflicts. From mid-July to August, however, regional military

[3] For example, see Richard Solomon, *Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1971); Paul Hiniker, *Revolutionary Ideology and Chinese Reality: Dissonance under Mao* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1977); David M. Raddock, *Political Behavior of Adolescents in China: The Cultural Revolution in Kwangchow* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1977).
[4] He Shu, *Wei Mao Zhuxi erzhan: Wenge Chongqing da wudou shilu* (*Combating for Chairman Mao: A Factual History of Chongqing's Large-Scale Armed Fights*) (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Company, 2010).
[5] Everett Y. Zhang, "Grieving at Chongqing's Red Guard graveyard: In the name of life itself", *The China Journal*, No. 70 (2013), pp. 24-47.

commanders and army units became a central target of attack all across the China, exacerbated by the CCRG's message in early August that called on the masses to seize the military power from the handful of power holders within the army. This led the Cultural Revolution entering a new radical phase of armed struggle and factional warfare.

Like in Guangzhou, there were also two city-wide, highly factionalized rebel organizations in Wuhan: the Million Heroes (*Baiwan Xiongshi* 百万雄师), who closely tied to the Wuhan Military Region, and the Workers' Headquarters, (*Gongren Zongbu* 工人总部), a group of militant rebels who had lined up in opposition to local army forces. During the spring of 1967, Chen Zaidao, the commander of the Wuhan Military Region, ordered the disbanding of Workers' Headquarters and used a series of harsh repression to crackdown their affiliated organizations.

On July 16, Minister of Public Security Xie Fuzhi (谢富治) and CCRG member Wang Li (王力) were dispatched to Wuhan and declared that Chen Zaidao's Military Control Committee had serious erred in supporting the Million Heroes and charging another mass factions as counterrevolutionary. Xie and Wang also ordered General Chen to withdraw support from the Million Heroes and instead extend it to the Workers' Headquarters. Angered by this announcement, on July 20, a group of soldiers kidnapped Xie and Wang and took them into custody at the encouragement of the local military leaders. When the soldiers broke into the hotel where Xie and Wang was staying, Mao was secretly staying in a nearby villa to preside his subordinates' work, and the invasion of the compound by hostile soldiers raised alarms about his security. Mao was hustled out of Wuhan and retreated to Shanghai.[6]

[6] For a detailed account of Wuhan Incident, see Thomas Robinson, "The Wuhan Incident : Local strife and provincial rebellion during the Cultural Revolution", *The China Quarterly*, No. 47 (1971), pp. 413-438; Wang Shaoguang, *Failure*

The Wuhan events were immediately denounced as a "counterrevolutionary rebellion" by the Beijing authorities. Chen Zaidao and his subordinates were escorted to Beijing and blasted with charges that they had attempted a military coup. Chen himself was dismissed as military region commander; the Million Heroes was condemned as a "conservative" organization. Within days, the Million Heroes disintegrated and it soon disappeared from the political scene.[7] On July 28, the party center further issued an editorial in the People's Daily calling on the people of Wuhan to repudiate the "reactionaries" and "evil leaders" of the Wuhan Military Region and Million Heroes.[8]

The immediate consequence of the Wuhan Incident was the rise of attack on the regional armed forces, particularly from mass organizations that had suffered from military repression in the past few months. On July 31, the center's organ, People's Daily and Red Flag, jointly published an editorial that called for "dragging out a handful of capitalist roaders in the army".[9] The main threat to the Cultural Revolution at the moment no longer came from "a handful of capitalist roaders in the Party" but from "a handful in the army." The editorial signaled strong support for rebel forces to direct fires against the army.[10] As a matter of fact, Mao personally authorized the usage of this provocative slogan.[11] That there might be revisionists in the army was hardly a novel notice: this had been mentioned in a number of important Party documents since the Cultural Revolution was launched. But in the aftermath of the dramatic Wuhan Incident, Mao was more

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of Charisma: The Cultural Revolution in Wuhan (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 149-160; Xu Hailiang, *Wuhan 7.20 shijian shilu* (*An Account of Wuhan July 20 Incident*) (Hong Kong: China Cultural Communication Press, 2010).

[7] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, pp. 212-214.

[8] "Xiang Wuhan de guangda geming qunzhong zhijing" ("Salute the broad masses of Wuhan"), *People's Daily*, 28 July 1967.

[9] "Xiang renmin de zhuyao diren menglie kaihuo" ("Heavily fire against people's enemy"), *Hong Qi* (*Red Flag*), August 1967, no. 12.

[10] Wang Shaoguang, "'New trends of thought' on the Cultural Revolution", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol.8, No. 21 (1999): 197-217.

[11] Wang Li, *Wang Li Fansi Lu* (*Wang Li's Reflections*) (Hong Kong: Beixing chubanshe, 2001), Vol. 2, p. 1011.

concerned about a possible repudiation of his absolute leadership over the armed forces.[12] This intention became more clear in early August when Mao personally endorsed another instruction to arm the masses.

During the military control period in Guangzhou, the intervention of the local army forces pitted the Red Flag faction that had been suppressed by the army against the East Wind faction that stood on the same side with the army. Emboldened by Wuhan's development, Guangzhou's Red Flag faction intensified their offensive against Huang Yongsheng and Guangzhou military authority. Slogans and posters such as "Guangzhou may become another Wuhan," "In Guangzhou there may be a military coup," and "Guangzhou also has a Chen Zaidao" had become commonplace across the whole city.[13] The Flag rebels also staged a demonstration demanding the local army to thoroughly exonerate the August 1 Combat Corps.[14] Banned on March, even after Zhou Enlai's visit to Guangzhou, the August 1 Combat Corps still had not been allowed to resume its activities nor were its leaders released from jail. Zhongshan University Red Flag, Jinan University East Is Red, and Zhongshan Medical College East Is Red were in the forefront of this effort.[15]

As the Red Flag treated the Wuhan Incident as an opportunity to escalate, members of the East Wind faction perceived it as an unprecedented political hazard. Many precipitously withdraw. Those that remained took a strong stand against Chen Zaidao in

[12] He Shu, "Wenge zhong de 'jiu junnei yixiaocuo' wenti bianxi" ("An analysis of 'dragging out a handful of capitalist roaders in the army' during the Cultural Revolution"), *Modern China Studies*, No. 1 (2004).
[13] *Zhan Zhongnan* (*Fighting Central-South*), No.3, 1 September 1968.
[14] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1* 钢八一), 15 October 1967, p. 2 (Guangzhou: Mao Zedong's Thought August 1 Combat Corps 毛泽东思想八一战斗兵团).
[15] "The case of the 'August 1' Combat Corps in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 49, No. 21, pp. 279-288, at p. 281.

order to protect themselves from identification with his errors.[16] The defections from East Wind alliance tipped the balance numerically in favor of the Red Flag faction.[17] The ranks of the Doctrine Guards, a key unit of East Wind, were further eroded as parents, fearful of unprecedented violence, sent their children away from the city.[18]

In the face of these rapid policy shifts, the Guangzhou Military Region continued to choose an equivocal and even-handed position, either standing by with arms folded on key issues or offering only passive resistance under rebels' assault. It feared that the political price might be a sweeping purge of its ranks should it act mistakenly, like their fellow comrades in Wuhan.[19] The army soon released two leading figures in the core group of the August 1 Combat Corps from prison. At this point, however, without center's official approval, the Military Region still defended the decision to ban on their organization's activities.[20]

Tug of War

Factional fighting became more frequent and bloodier after the Wuhan Incident. Many schools, factories, and communities ended up as checkerboards of turf defended by heavily armed factions, with periodic skirmishes to capture buildings or territory. This rampant factional strife does not reflect fundamental underlying disagreements or ideological contradictions between different social divisions. Instead, factional struggles

[16] *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebllion*), No. 20, 22 August 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou South-Central Forestry College Red Rebels 广州中南林学院红色造反者).
[17] "Lin Yun's letter to Canton Military Region command", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8, pp. 81-104, at p. 96.
[18] *Hong Qi* (*Red Flag Newspaper)*, 10 September 1967 (Guangzhou: The New First Headquarter).
[19] According to the memoir of Chi Zehou (迟泽厚), the secretary of Huang Yongsheng, the Military Region took an non-committal and even-handed stance toward both factions after Wuhan Incidence. Chi called this position as *yiwanshui duanping* (一碗水端平). See Huang Zheng, *Junren yongsheng* (*General Huang Yongsheng: A Biography*) (Hong Kong: New Century Media & Consulting Co. Ltd., 2011), pp. 592.
[20] *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebellion*), No. 12 & 13, 8 July 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou South-Central Forestry College Red Rebels 广州中南林学院红色造反者).

progressively escalated from a war of "conflict talk"[21] to brawls, and eventually armed confrontations. When the first injuries or deaths took place, a second threshold was crossed, clashes between warring factions therefore took on a more ruthless character. If any group held back or exercised restraint from this process, they would be destroyed and dragged off the political stage. The leaders and rank-and-file members of that group would be denounced at various public struggle sessions or even put into prisons. To avoid the wretched fate of becoming political victims, combatants had to fight very hard to secure their political future. In short, this process generated its own dynamics and could not be stopped.

At first, there was an extensive rhetorical warfare waged between the factions. Contending groups imposed rhetorical posturing not only to gain public visibility, but also to enlist support from the top figures in Beijing. This was a propaganda competition to draw the center's sympathy to their distinctive interpretations of local events, with each claiming to be more loyal than the other to Mao and the party center. After all, words from Beijing officials would directly affect a group's fates and those of their followers.

The typical tools used were pens, ink, paper, paste, loudspeakers, vans, printing presses, and other publication materials. Rival groups accused one another in big-character wall posters and pamphlets and broadcasted the others' so-called counterrevolutionary crimes over loudspeakers. They also published their own bulletins and handbills to condemn the opponents' ferocity. On some occasions, when new government directives were announced, the rival rebels competed with each other to organize the first rally as a way to show their commitment to the revolution than

[21] Randall Collins, *Violence: A Micro-Sociological Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), p.412.

opponent group.[22] On other occasions, one side would demonstrate its strength by occupying and fortifying a building which was regarded by the other side as a threat and a challenge. The opposition then would respond in kind. On Zhongshan University campus, students of two rival groups occupying adjacent buildings turned on their loudspeakers, justifying the correctness of their claims and itemizing the other's crimes.[23] Still on another occasion, one rebel faction invoked Mao's dictum that "the basic truth of Marxism all goes back to one meaning: To rebel is justified." They performed songs and rhymes in praise of the Chairman in the vehicle. The leadership of the other faction placed a propaganda car on the opposite side of the road and blasted Mao's supreme directive, "return to study to make revolution," against their adversaries.[24]

In particular, each camp excessively quoted sections and passages from *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, or the Little Red Books, in a competition to defend dogmatically one's own interpretation and attack rival interpretations.[25] Intense verbal conflicts therefore occurred between opposite groups and rhetorical tactics were used to convert the unconvinced. However, since each side could mount sufficient authoritative instructions and considered themselves the legitimate revolutionary successor to Mao, the situation turned into a stalemate. When the opponents failed to be convinced and clung to their own views, tempers would get high and physical force such as fistfights would be resorted to assert one's opinion.

The war of words quickly gave way to the use of homemade weapons. Metal and wood were sharpened to make knives, daggers, and spears. Gasoline or sulphur was

[22] Alan Liu, *Political Culture & Group Conflict in Communist China* (Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Books, 1976), pp. 89-90.
[23] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 144.
[24] Yang Xiaocun, *A Biography of Yang Xiaocun*, p. 143.
[25] Yang Guobin, "Mao quotations in factional battles and their afterlives", in Alexander C. Cook (ed.), *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 61-75.

mixed with insecticide to make bombs. Hand grenades and cannons were also used. At some times, the rebels raided government departments for trucks and cars, and factories, stores, warehouses, and gas storage to get materials for manufacturing homemade weapons. At Zhongshan University, a professor in the Chemistry Department was invited to give advice on production of homemade chemical bombs. After several experiments, in late July, Zhongshan University Red Flag announced that they successfully made an explosive chemical bomb.[26]

With more lethal weapons stolen from local armories, factional fighting escalated and the amount of casualties grew. On July 21, the day after the Wuhan Incident, the first reported case of death occurred in a sugar refinery. On that day, the Red Flag rebels started posting wall posters inside the refinery and a scuffle ensued. A group of peasants was called in by the East Wind to attack the building where the Red Flag was housed. In the late night, shots were heard from the East Wind side. The Red Flag then called in reinforcements and violence spread throughout the factory as both factions began to use iron clubs, chains, and knives wherever they could find them.[27] According to a report from the Red Flag, eight fighters were killed and more than 30 people were wounded in this event.[28]

This incident further triggered a large-scale street battle. On July 23, several key units of Red Flag held a mass rally to mourn those who were dead on July 21 factional battles. In the rally, they accused the East Wind as "the small handful of Fascist hooligans," and some radical big-character posters were pasted everywhere, claiming that

[26] The Announcement of Zhongshan University Red Flag (Handbill), 1 August 1967.
[27] "7.21, 7.23 daxue'an jishi" ("A record of July 21 and July 23 Incident" 7.21, 7.23 大血案纪实), *Zhuying Dongfanghong* (*Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*), 1 August 1967.
[28] "Dizong Guangzhou tangchang fenbu kaiqiang daren yishi jingguo chubu diaocha" ("A preliminary investigation of the Earth General Headquarters' shooting incident in Guangzhou Sugar Refinery" 地总广州糖厂分部开枪打人一事经过初步调查), in *Hongse Zhenchabing* (*Red Scout* 红色侦察兵), 30 July 1967.

"avenge the Martyrs," "the Martyrs should not shed their blood in vain," "pay for blood with blood; pay for human life with human life," and "attack by peaceful means! Defend ourselves by means for force. It is justified to defend ourselves." Some rebels also aimed their target at the military authority, proclaiming that July 21 Incident was "the prelude to a repetition of the Wuhan Incident in Guangzhou that were plotted, planned, organized, and led by Chen Zaidao of Guangzhou." They held up slogans like "down with Chen Zaidao of Guangzhou," "settle the debt of blood with Chen Zaidao of Guangzhou," and "we will not stop until we have killed Chen Zaidao of Guangzhou!"[29]

When the memorial service commenced at noon at Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, the Red Flag rebels loudly recited in one voice *Quotations from Chairman Mao*:

> "Wherever there is struggle there is sacrifice, and death is a common occurrence. But we have the interests of the people and the sufferings of the great majority at heart, and when we die for the people it is a worth death."

Almost at the same time, the East Wind faction also staged a demonstration parade at the nearby Yue Xiushan Stadium. Several hundred members marched along the main street in the city, singing revolutionary war songs and shouting slogans: "Oppose struggles by violence," "we will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter-attack," and "history teaches us that whoever tries to stop the wheel of history will be crushed to bits." They also recited Mao's famous poem written in 1949 when PLA crossed Yangtze River and captured Nanjing, the capital of Nationalist (*Kuomintang*) government:

[29] "Armed conflicts in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 48, No. 11 (1967), pp. 152-162, at. 153.

Over Zhong Mountain swept a storm, headlong,

Our mighty army, a million strong, has crossed the Great River.

The City, a tiger crouching, a dragon curling, outshines its ancient glories;

In heroic triumph heaven and earth have been overturned.

With power and to spare we must pursue the tottering foe

And not ape Hsiang Yu the conqueror seeking idle fame.

Were Nature sentient, she too would pass from youth to age,

But Man's world is mutable, seas become mulberry fields.[30]

Around three o'clock, an extremely bloody fighting broke out when two parading groups crossed paths and the exchange of invectives turned to the exchange of blows. According to the Red Flag account, the East Wind groups had ambushed at selected points when they left Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall and attacked them with weapons such as spears, daggers, bricks, and air-guns. In self-defense, the Flaggers picked up some bricks and bamboo poles from the ground and fought back. According to figures compiled by the Red Flag, a total of 33 fighters were killed while more than 400 were lightly or seriously wounded and sent to the hospital.[31]

However, this account was discredited by the East Wind group according to the memoir of a major leader from the East Wind. They countered that the Flaggers were in

[30] "Guangzhou shi 7.23 zhongshan jiniantang wudou xianchang mudu ji" ("A witness's accounts of July 23 armed battle at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall" 广州市 7.23 中山纪念堂武斗现场目睹记), *Hanwei Zhenli* (*Defending the Truth* 捍卫真理), 25 July 1967.

[31] "7.23 Zhongshan Jiniantang daxue'an jishu" ("An account of July 23 the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall Incident" 7.23 中山纪念堂大血案记述), *Guangyi Hongqi* (*Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag*), 5 August 1967; "Guangzhou 7.23 da tusha can'an jishi" ("An account of 7.23 massacre" 广州 7.23 大屠杀惨案纪实), *Xin Nanfang* (*New South*), 28 July 1967.

fact the instigators of violent struggles—"a thief calling 'catch thief' is class enemies' usual trick." They claimed that the Red Flag mobilized more than 10,000 members to attack only 2,000 participants from the East Wind. The Red Flag group was stabbing and beating the crowd whilst shouting: "You come here today to be buried with your dead companions. It's good for you to die!" Facing these challenges, the East Wind immediately fought back, but still 9 members were killed and more than 100 were heavily injured by the attackers.[32]

Since both sides attempted to boast bravery of their own groups and condemn their opponents for their ferocity, the precise number of casualties is unknown. It is also unclear that why these two rival factions were able to convene a large gathering at nearby places. As Huang Yijiang, the head of Zhongshan University August 31 Combat Corps, recalled that all the mass rally had to be approved by Military Control Committee, "is it possible that the military neglected this situation and made a mistake?"[33] The answer is still unknown. A plausible explanation is that the military forces adopted an even-handed and non-committal stance on these occasions, tacitly giving consent to activities proposed by both sides. After all, without a clear instruction from the center, the military authority was hesitant to take a decisive position by this time.

Still, it is inevitable that Guangzhou became a battleground, with street fighting and violent clashes throughout the city. In particular, factional fighting took place on twelve

[32] Xu Zerong, 723 zhongshan jinian tang wudou (723 armed battle at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall 723 中山纪念堂武斗), unpublished manuscript. I got this manuscript during an interview with Xu Zerong on 20 July 2012. Xu was a major leader of Doctrine Guards during that time. He was born to a revolutionary family. His father was a People's Liberation Army general, a commissar with the Political Department of the Guangzhou Military Region and a subordinate of Marshal Ye Jianying, while his mother had been the head of the Communist Party at Zhongshan University.

[33] "Huang Yijian: yige lixiang zhuyizhe de jingshen manyou" ("Haung Yijian: Spiritual journey of an idealist"), *Laoren Bao* (*Elders Newspaper*), 26 April 2009.

days in July and almost every day in August.[34] This period generated its own momentum, making it virtually impossible for the movement activists not to take part. Once the violence started, it was difficult to call it to a halt. In other words, the rebels were trapped by their own rivalries.

Arming the Left

To push the attack against a handful of enemies within the army even more explosive, Mao's officials in CCRG, especially Jiang Qing, made inflammatory remarks on different occasions.

On July 22, Jiang Qing made a speech to revolutionary rebels from Henan and emphasized that to prepare for an inevitable military engagement with "the handful in the army," the rebels had to arm themselves and set up their own quasi-military groups. She also instructed that the rebels should not be too naive or romantic to put a stop to violent struggles. If attacked by force they should resist by force. She therefore urged masses to "attack with words, defend with weapons."[35] In late July, Red Flag magazine published a provocative editorial entitled "The proletariat must take a firm hold of the gun." The editorial invited the mass organizations to seize military power from "the handful of power holders in the army," on the ground that "the proletarian revolution cannot succeed without controlling guns." [36]

Jiang Qing's instigation had an immediate effect of legitimizing the armed race among mass organizations. In essence, the idea of "defend with weapons" actually meant

[34] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 171-175.
[35] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), p 392.
[36] "Wuchan jieji bixu naonao zhangwo qiangganzi" ("The proletariat must take a firm hold of the gun"), *Hong Qi* (*Red Flag*), August 1967, no. 12, pp. 43-37.

"attack with weapons," as each group found it politically advantageous to attack the other first. They therefore abandoned the previous propaganda campaigns and changed it to a new strategy of "if you have a sword, we must have a gun."[37] As one rebel organization in Guangzhou stated:

> "Without arms, we can hardly win the decisive battle. If we were to be defeated, all the past efforts and achievements would end up in empty. Nothing can be more terrible than that. Therefore, we rebels must organize ourselves, arm ourselves, and be prepared to put up a desperate fight."[38]

However, without Mao's tacit endorsement, Jiang Qing's instructions could not have a nationwide impact, as MacFarquhar and Schoenhals correctly argued, "post-Cultural Revolution Chinese historians put much blame on Jiang Qing for the summer of strife, but fail to emphasize the incendiary role of Mao himself."[39] As a matter of fact, Mao responded positively for the slogan "arming the left". In a letter to Jiang Qing on August 4, Mao highlighted the inevitable necessity to arm the left because according to his calculation, 75 percent of the PLA officers supported the right. As a response, "arms seizures are not a serious problem." On August 10, Mao signed off on a central document calling on the Jiangxi Revolutionary Committee Preparatory Group to arm the local revolutionary masses "in areas where conditions are ripe."[40] By this point, Mao's

[37] Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, p. 250.
[38] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 213.
[39] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, pp.214-215.
[40] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 576-577.

reaction to the Wuhan Incident was very clear—to strengthen the revolutionary masses, not to back down for fear of a PLA revolt as the political episode occurred in Wuhan.[41]

Thereafter, in August 1967, the Cultural Revolution was marked by a large wave of weapon seizures and pitched battles by heavily armed factions in nearly all provinces. This period was known as the chaotic period of "all-round civil war" in China.[42] By the month's end, some 1,175 cases of theft had been reported and the stolen items included 21,600 rifles, 4,600 submachine guns, 2,000 pistols, and 78 anti-aircraft guns.[43] Another source also reveals that during this period, 62 cannons, 61 bazookas, 16,300 grenades, and more than 4,200 detonators had been seized by the rebels.[44] In some cities, such as Chongqing, Xiamen, and Changchun, advanced tanks, modern armored vehicles, and new warships were all used in factional battles.[45] Internal investigation reports suggest that up to 237,000 people died in the factional conflicts, and another 730,000 permanently disabled in the armed struggles across the country.[46]

In Guangzhou, both factions armed themselves by raiding military depots and barracks, and even attacking trains carrying war munitions in transit to North Vietnam.[47] On August 5, rebels from both sides seized over 1,850 pistols and guns, tens of thousand of bullets, tens of trucks, and large quantities of military supplies from the public security bureau. On August 9, the rebels forced into Military Region Headquarters, raiding the military's arsenals. Between August 10 and 12, factional masses attacked Guangzhou

[41] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 215.
[42] Ibid., p. 199.
[43] Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 156.
[44] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 591.
[45] Song Yongyi, "Chronology of mass killings during the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)", Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, 2011.
[46] Chengmin Monthly, "1984 nian 5 yue de zhonggong neibu diaocha cailiao" ("The May 1984 internal statistics about the Cultural Revolution"), *Chengmin Monthly* (争鸣), No. 10 (1996), pp. 21-22.
[47] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 176.

Garrison Command multiply times and seized many military equipments.[48] Sometimes, each side paraded its acquisition in a show of force and the other responded by parading its weapons.[49]

The raids for weapons were not random. On some occasions they were pre-arranged. In fact, the rebels would not have carried out the raid if the military had truly resisted. However, with the slogan "arming the left", the military command now had harbored fears about making mistakes akin to those it had committed earlier in the year. They therefore accorded mass organizations freedom to take arms. Sometimes, a faction in the local army units might support one group against another and be willing to stage a raid to reinforce the rebel group with supplies.[50] As a former participant recalled, the "raiding" in most cases was fake. Army units disclosed rebel leaders the information about the location of weapons; when the raid took place, soldiers simply remained standing by or even willingly transferred arms to the rebels:

> "We arrived at the arsenal in two trucks. The soldiers read us passages of Mao Zedong and tried to persuade us to abandon our mission. When this failed, they fired in the air and then got out of the way." [51]

The rebels also set up their own "garrison headquarters" to stand up to the army's garrison forces as an equal, if not as a substitute.[52] For example, the Red Flag set up the

[48] Guangzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Guangzhou City Annals Editorial Board), *Guangzhou shizhi* (*Guangzhou City Annals*) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Publish House, 2000), vol.11, p. 122.
[49] Alan Liu, *Political Culture & Group Conflict in Communist China* (Santa Barbara, CA: Clio Books, 1976), pp. 89-90.
[50] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 214.
[51] Li Xiaoying, "Qinli wudou" ("I experienced the armed battle"), *Yangcheng wanbao* (*Yangcheng Evening News*), 15 October 2011, B10.
[52] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 224.

Red Garrison Headquarters (*Hong Jingsi* 红警司), a martial armed detachment of the umbrella organization. Manned by 3,000 armed workers, the Red Garrison Headquarters pledged to seize the public security and some vital industrial factories under the jurisdictions of the Military Control Commission: "At present, the Red Garrison Headquarters will replace the public security bureau. In the future, it will replace the Military Control Commission and seize the power of the Military Garrison Command."[53]

The factional strife profoundly affected city's everyday life. As one local Red Guard tabloid described:

> "Recently, the strange fog has no bounds, Guangzhou is in the grip of an atmosphere of total terror! Under the manipulation of Tan Zhenlin of Guangzhou, the organs of government have died and the public security system has been paralyzed. Robbers steal at will, and there is theft, plunder, and murder without end. Each day the buses stop running earlier than the last, by two or three o'clock in the afternoon the shops are shut tight. Even before darkness, there are no pedestrians to be seen on the streets. At present water traffic has been interrupted and the shipment of goods has been seriously affected. The city is extremely tense…By day and by night Guangzhou is dangerous! It is on the verge of giving birth to a decisive battle."[54]

In order to protect themselves, city residents began to organized for the defense of their streets (*jietou lianfang* 街头联防). They joined together to build street gates and took

[53] *Sanjun Lianwei Zhanbao (Three Services Joint Committee Battle News* 三军联委战报), 3 September 1968 (Guangzhou: Three Services Joint Committee of the Guanzghou District).
[54] *Wuhan Xinhuagong-Guangzhou Hongsi Hekan* (*Wuhan New China Worker-Guangzhou Red Headquarters Joint Editorial*), No. 18, 21 August 1967.

other precautions to maintain order in their community and neighborhood. These associations tended to be apolitical and disbanded once order was restored in November.[55]

By this point, factional rebels were caught in a situation from which they could not extract themselves. They fought each other not because they had fundamentally opposite class interests derived from their prior political background. It is clear that there were no distinguishable disagreements about the nature of China's pre-Cultural Revolution status quo. Both faction declared their loyalty to Mao and Mao's revolution. Their split only originated and evolved over the terms of January power seizure and attitudes toward the military forces ordered by Beijing to "support the left". They fought so hard simply because if one mass organization had guns, its rival also needed them for self-protection. Both had to raid the neighborhood arsenals, and so the raids increased. As a result, the fights became more violent with countless deaths and injuries when weapons fell into the hands of the rebels, especially when machine guns and other heavy artillery were available to both sides.

Beijing Negotiations

The armed struggle multiplied rapidly and the situation of factional violence became increasingly serious in Guangzhou. The paralysis of normal production in locality motivated the center to take a strong stand against mass violence. In mid August of 1967, Premier Zhou Enlai asked the two opposing factions to send their representatives to Beijing and hold negotiation under his supervision. The aim was to achieve a peaceful settlement. Rounds of negotiations were held, but frustration ran high when no solution

[55] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 180-181.

was found, and such dissatisfaction over the efforts at mediation provoked new violence. All these twists and turns by the maneuverings of Beijing politicians, especially by Premier Zhou Enlai and Jiang Qing—with the former eager to cease the armed conflict and the latter encouraging the armed race, only created anxiety and confusion among the local factions. The end result was a prolonged and intensified factional warfare.

During this period, Premier Zhou had numerous meetings in Beijing with representatives from the feuding factions in every province, urging them to stop fighting, to return the arms they had seized, and not to block the routine production. In August 1967, Zhou met with nationwide local commanders 45 times, and met with delegations from rebel groups 50 times.[56]

Specifically, between August and November of 1967, Zhou and other central leaders met with representatives of Guangzhou rival factions at least ten times in Beijing (Table 4.1). Following his consistently moderate political stance, Zhou advocated a practical and balanced approach during these meetings. His primary concern in the Cultural Revolution had been to blunt the more disruptive consequences of political and social chaos. During these meetings, the Premier at first tried to pin the rampant violence across the city, insisting that it was still necessary to maintain the stability of the military control, although many of the center's policies seemed designed to encourage the abolition of military control in the provinces. For Zhou, the PLA was a vital force to preserve basic social and economic order in Guangzhou:

"At present we have entered the decisive stage of the battle. In some places conditions for a three-in-one alliance haven't matured and they have adopted

[56] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, p. 184.

military control for the transition. The goal of military control is to carry us through mass criticism and bring about a great alliance and three-in-one alliance. We should support the Military Control Commission…If individual people in the Military Control Commission make mistakes you can change them…We must not have work stoppages and armed struggle and stealing of weapons." (August 22 meeting)[57]

On the other hand, Zhou actively followed the center's call to "drag out the handful capitalists within the army." He raised this matter at a meeting with Red Flag delegations on August 14 and demanded Guangzhou Military Region to examine their errors in repressing revolutionary organizations. At this meeting, Zhou further reversed the military's ban against the famous August 1 Combat Corps[58]—during his visit in Guangzhou in mid April, he didn't order the rehabilitation of the August 1 Combat Corps nor did he say anything about the release of its leaders arrested by the armed forces. Obviously, Zhou changed his attitudes this time, attempting to balance the tension between the military forces and rebel groups that had been oppressed by local military commanders over the previous months.

Zhou's decisions directly changed the political fates of the contending groups and those of their followers in Guangzhou. After he exonerated the August 1 Combat Corps, Guangzhou Military Region expressed their willingness to thoroughly reverse the decision against the August 1 Combat Corps. On August 20, they submitted a "Examination of Mistakes" to the center and confessed to conscientiously examine and correct their mistakes in "supporting the left" work when they dissolved numerous rebel

[57] Speech by Zhou Enlai, 22 August 1967, see Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, p. 180.
[58] *Sansi Zhanbao* (*The Third Headquarters Battle News*), No. 38, 24 August 1967.

organizations and arrested persons.[59] Immediately afterwards, the August 1 Combat Corps was recovered and re-established 28 branches in various factories and working places.[60] Fueled by such developments, the East Wind faction escalated their attacks on Zhou and smeared Zhou as "China's second Khrushchev." They challenged that "The August 1 Combat Corps is a counterrevolutionary organization. Only monsters and demons would defend the August 1 Combat Corps."[61] In the East Wind's view, the Red Flag was apparently "monsters and demons" while Zhou was demons' accomplice. They therefore replied to the settlement in Beijing by retorting: "Premier Zhou always listened to the Red Flag; He would not let us speak. Chairman Mao was also deceived. Our opinion could not be transmitted to the above."[62]

More importantly, Zhou urged both sides to sign a cease-fire agreement. In order to justify the negotiation between two sides, Zhou asserted that both sides had committed mistakes and therefore should make self-criticism, instead of challenging the fault of their adversaries. In particular, Zhou concluded that the East Wind had displayed a tendency to protect the power holders while the Red Flag had seized power without the great alliance. Nonetheless, both sides had proven their revolutionary quality—their mistakes were tactically implemented and could be corrected through self-examination and self-reflections (August 16 meeting with delegations from both sides).[63]

On the surface, one could image that with Zhou's consistent mediation, armed struggles should abate somewhat as the contending groups were instructed to refrain from

[59] The full text of this Examination could be found at Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 240-244.
[60] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1* 钢八一), 15 October 1967, p. 2 (Guangzhou: Mao Zedong's Thought August 1 Combat Corps 毛泽东思想八一战斗兵团).
[61] *Zhuying Dongfanghong* (*Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*), No. 11, 13 September 1967 (Guangzhou: Pearl River Film Studio Editorial Department).
[62] *Dong Fanghong* (*The East Is Red*), No 27, 1 October 1967.
[63] Song Yongyi, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

further attacks. However, fighting was even more likely to occur when negotiation meetings were held among rival groups. Why Zhou's efforts to revolve factional tensions largely failed? The Beijing authority was urging the rebels to settle their difference. Both sides also recognized that Guangzhou's struggles could only be resolved through intervention by the central leadership. But in the absence of a clear decision from Chairman Mao by this time, armed struggles only escalated as each side strove to win the battle—to come out at the losing end was compounded by the tremendous political price that no one could ever afford. Ultimately, Mao himself would have to make the call, but for the time being he did not do so.

Consequently, rival rebels employed various tactics to increase their bargaining power in negotiations. One of the tactics was to compile materials to present their case to Zhou and other central leaders. A key issue during the meeting was how to evaluate the past actions of each group. Each delegation prepared documents to implicate the alleged "crimes" of the opponent and to defend their own actions. For example, when Zhou suggested that both groups were responsible for city-wide violence such as having burned down municipal buildings and destroyed trains at city stations (August 16 meeting), the Red Flag delegates insisted that blame for the arson and blood struggles lay not with their groups but with members of the East Wind itself. Fueled by such accusations, the East Wind offered another account, challenging that Red Flag violated central directives and spearheaded the attacks on the Military Region, actions which had thrown Guangzhou into chaos.[64] Hostilities at the negotiation table quickly turned into off-table factional

[64] Ibid.

fighting. On August 18, a major clash broke out at a trade union building, resulting in over a dozen fatalities.[65]

Another preferred tactic was to defeat rivals on the battlefield so as to advance one's own bargaining position in the next round of negotiations. This move only resulted in more bloody armed battles in Guangzhou in late August. Right after the second round of negotiation meeting, a deadly gunfire battle took place on August 20. On that day, a total of eleven batches of people from both factions raided a military's weapons depository. They seized heavy and light machine-guns, carbines, semi-automatic rifles, revolvers, hand grenades, and other heavy and light arms. According to a source, the Red Flag rebels took around 20 per cent of the total stock of ammunition but not a single rifle, while the East Wind rebels took 80 per cent of the ammunition and a large number of rifles.[66] Violent battles inevitably erupted among factional masses. The scene of severe fighting was bloody, "machine-gun shots showered like rain-drops."[67]

According to the Military Region's investigation report, during this battle, 4 of Red Flag were killed and 17 were injured while East Wind side had one death and nine injuries. The report also revealed that 135 of Red Flag were taken prisoner but were released later.[68] This report was immediately challenged by Red Flag as a false one because it "turned things upside down and confused right and wrong."[69] In terms of the Red Flag's own statement, at least 150 people were killed, while more than 100 were wounded, and more than 300 were illegally kidnapped. Among those who were captured,

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[65] *Dongfeng Zhanbao* (*East Wind Battle News*), No. 19, 29 February 1968.
[66] "A brief report on the 'August 20' massacre in the northern suburbs of Guangzhou", *820 Can'an Zhuankan (August 20 Incident, Special Issue)*, 4 September 1967.
[67] "The 'August 20' massacre will be remembered forever", *820 Can'an Zhuankan (August 20 Incident, Special Issue)*, 4 September 1967.
[68] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 160-161.
[69] "A brief report on the 'August 20' massacre in the northern suburbs of Guangzhou", *August 20 Tragedy Special Bulletin*, 4 September 1967.

many were badly beaten and kicked and were forced to write self-confessions.[70] In a case, a girl student who tried to retort was at once slapped heavily in the face by a Doctrine Guard rebel. The attacker grabbed the girl student by her chest and pushed her out of the room and beat her.[71] Incensed, militant rebels raided the Military Region a couple of days later intending to kidnap the Second Political Commissar, Liu Xingyuan (刘兴元).[72] In early September, nearly 10,000 participated in an another assault on the Military Region.[73]

Table 4.1 demonstrates that between mid August to mid September, violent confrontations continued when delegations of factions held negotiations in Beijing. Even after the tentative agreement reached on September 1 by both sides to "stop the armed battle and form a revolutionary great alliance," the ink was hardly dry on the agreement before armed struggle erupted again in Guangzhou, frustrating the center's attempt at mediation. During that evening, the East Wind used heavy artillery and armored vehicles to attack the Tai Gu Warehouse where the Red Flag stationed. The battle left 5 dead and 18 badly wounded. [74] Aside from these clashes which often involved thousands of participants and dozens of fatalities, there were also countless other smaller scale clashes.[75] Meanwhile, the severe factional battles spread along the Guangzhou-Shenzhen Railway to other counties and disrupted rail traffic for weeks.[76] According to one source,

[70] "The August 20 massacre in Canton", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 48, No. 22, 15 September 1967, pp. 303-318, at p. 306.
[71] *820 Can'an Zhuankan* (*August 20 Incident, Special Issue*), 4 Setepber 1967.
[72] *Sanjun Lianwei Zhanbao (Three Services Joint Committee Battle News* 三军联委战报), No. 10, 13 September 1968, at p. 2 (Guangzhou: Three Services Joint Committee of the Guanzghou District).
[73] *Zhidian Jiangshan* (*The Nation's Compass*), 1 October 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Red Rebel Headquarters 广州红司华工).
[74] *Zhuying Dongfanghong* (*Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red*), No. 11, 13 September 1967.
[75] For a detailed list of these small factional clashes, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 171-175.
[76] Di Jiu and Zhi Wu, *Xue yu huo de jiaoxun: Wenge zhongda wudou can'an jishi* (*The Major Armed Battles in the Cultural Revolution*) (Urumchi: Xinjiang University Press, 1993), p. 137.

by the end of August, armed battles in Guangzhou had claimed more than 318 lives, causing countless injuries.[77]

Mao's Second Thoughts

By the end of August, the unfolding of Mao's Cultural Revolution had brought the whole country to the verge of complete chaos. A damaged economy, a disturbed army, a fragmented revolutionary rebels, a breakdown of party and government machinery, and the consequent threat of nation-wide anarchy, all these circumstances forced Mao to call a halt to the destructive, mass civil-war phase of his Cultural Revolution and shift strategy into the construction of a new revolutionary government and party apparatus. The true intention, however, was to dissociate Mao from responsibility for the violence and lawlessness endemic in China.

Now that Mao had taken a stand to stop the factional battles. As a result, the national political wind underwent a sharp reversal in September. Mao himself issued a series of "supreme instructions" during the course of an extended tour in September through North, Central-South and East China. Among these instructions, the first one was to restrain the power of the CCRG. Formed in May 1966, the CCRG had played a central role in the Cultural Revolution's first few years. For a period of time the group replaced the Politburo Standing Committee as the *de facto* top power organ of China.[78] However, its fate was dramatically distorted under Mao's new mandates. In September, several of the CCRG's allegedly more radical members who had loyally carried out Mao's directives,

[77] This figure is calculated by author based on accounts from Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, chapter 6.
[78] Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic Since 1949* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1986), p. 351; also see Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 612-613.

including Wang Li, Guan Feng (关锋), and Qi Benyu (戚本禹), were arrested on the orders of Mao as a scapegoat for causing nation-wide disturbance in China.[79] They were soon charged as one of the "May Sixteenth Corps", a supposed group that exploited divisions in the Cultural Revolution to cause the anarchy and was plotting to seize power.[80] Moreover, *Red Flag*, the Party's theoretical journal and mouthpiece of the CCRG, was forced to suspend publication.[81]

Meanwhile, Mao demanded that all attacks against the army cease at once. In late August, Mao begun to have second thoughts about the role of the PLA in the Cultural Revolution. In Mao's view, the military forces were now a key element in forming a new organ of power structure and therefore the call for "dragging out a small handful in the army" was "tactically inappropriate".[82] Following Mao's instructions, on September 5, all four of the central authorities in China—the CCP Central Committee, the Central Military Affairs Commission, the State Council, and the CCRG—issued a joint directive attempting to revive the authority of the PLA and to end the disorder in the country.[83] The PLA was now allowed to use lethal force against mass organizations that resisted its attempts to restore order. Accordingly, the slogan "drag out a handful capitalist roaders in

[79] In a command to Yang Chengwu, Mao personally instructed that "Wang Li, Guan Feng and Qi Benyu are not good people; they are little bugs and should be immediately arrested." 王力、关锋、戚本禹是坏人，是小爬虫，立刻抓起来 See Xia Fei, "Wang Li chenfu lu" ("The rise and fall of Wang Li"), *Dangshi Bolan* (*General Review of the Communist Party of China*), No. 4 (2005), pp. 41-45. Also see Zhang Zisheng, *Yang Chengwu jiangjun fangtanlu* (*Interviews with General Yang Chengwu*) (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chuban gongsi, 1994), p. 44. The order to arrest Qi Benyu was delayed until January 1968.

[80] On the fall of May Sixteenth Corps, see Barry Burton, "The Cultural Revolution's ultra-left conspiracy: The May 16 Groups", *Asian Survey* Vol. 9, No. 11 (1971), pp. 1029-1053. Before arresting Wang Li and Guan Feng, Mao instructed that "we have as yet not fully identified most of its [May Sixteenth Corps] members and leaders, but things will shortly be made clear." See Barbara Barnouin and Yu Changgen, *Ten Years of Turbulence: The Chinese Cultural Revolution* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 192.

[81] Chang Man, *The People's Daily and the Red Flag Magazine During the Cultural Revolution* (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1969), pp. 45-63; Harry Harding, "The Chinese state in crisis, 1966-1969", in Roderick MacFarquhar (ed.), *The Politics of China: Sixty Years of The People's Republic of Chi*na (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp 107-217, at p. 213.

[82] Wang Li, *Wang Li's Reflections*, Vol. 2, p. 1014.

[83] Harry Harding, "The Chinese state in crisis, 1966-1969", p. 214.

the army" fell into oblivion. And such slogans as "the seizure of political power by armed forces" and "settlement of the issue by war" were denounced as reactionary.[84]

Realizing that the political tides had shifted into an opposite direction, Jiang Qing reversed her position and condemned the attacks on the military. In a speech on September 5, she repudiated her own slogan which had done much to encourage armed struggle in previous months:

> "I resolutely support Chairman Mao's call for 'peaceful struggle, not armed struggle'…this 'attack with words, defend with weapons' must not be deprived of its class content; it must not be viewed in isolation from definite circumstances and conditions. It would be bad if, on your return, you stir up fights…"

Jiang also began to repudiate the slogan "drag out a handful capitalist roaders in the army" which she herself had coined:

> "This slogan is wrong. Because the party, the government, and the army are all under the leadership of Chairman Mao. We can only talk about dragging out a handful in authority and nothing else…Even if some individual comrades in our army committed some serious mistakes, they need not be dealt with in such a way…the slogan [of seizing the small handful in the army] is wrong, and it has produced a series of undesirable consequences."[85]

[84] Wang Shaoguang, "'New trends of thought' on the Cultural Revolution", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol.8, No. 21 (1999): 197-217.
[85] Song Yongyi, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database.*

Moreover, the center ordered that all arms and equipments that had been seized be returned within a certain time limit. On September 8, the Workers Alliance, the August 1 Combat Corps, Zhongshan University Red Flag, and other rebel organizations from Red Flag handed over the guns in sealed storage to the Military Region. On the evening of September 9, the Spring Thunder, the Earth General Headquarters, and others of the East Wind faction delivered their arms to the army.[86]

The third and probably the most important stipulation was to set up a new "three-in-one" (mass representatives, veteran cadres, and military officers) governmental structure in all the 29 provinces and major cities by the end of January of 1968. For Mao's intention, it was crucial to promote a power structure that was revolutionary and representative and had proletarian authority. Since rebels alone was lacking sufficient authority to run the state machine, "three-in-one" model of shared civilian and military rule should be served as the base for reconstructing political system.[87] On the evening of September 9, Mao met Zhang Chunqiao and Yang Chengwu (杨成武), the Acting Chief of General Staff, among other senior party cadres in Shanghai. When talking about the development of the Cultural Revolution, Mao specifically pointed out:

> "There are two likely outcomes for the Cultural Revolution up until now; the first is it will succeed, and the second is the country will be split into two conflicting, irreconcilable factions, like the mass factionalism in Beijing and Nanjing. If we cannot unite China, will this result in the chaos of the 1911 revolution?"[88]

[86] "News in brief", *Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red News*, No. 11, 13 September 1967, p. 4.
[87] Huang Shaorong, "Power to move the masses in a mass movement: An analysis of Mao's rhetorical strategies during China's Cultural Revolution Movement", in Ray Heisey (ed.), *Chinese Perspectives in Rhetoric and Communication* (New York, NY: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000), pp. 207-223.
[88] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Central Party Literature Research Center), *Mao Zedong nianpu 1949-*

On September 13, Mao met with several senior military officers on a train to Hangzhou. Mao emphasized again that since factionalism had spread from the revolutionary rebels into the army, it was time to end violent factional conflict and establish a new government apparatus in the form of revolutionary committee, "the whole situation will get better by spring 1968 after we solve the problem [of establishing revolutionary committee] in another ten provinces. "[89] In mid-September, these instructions were distributed nationwide.

To meet this deadline, it was no longer possible to rely on the unsuccessful method of "seizure of power" from below. Instead, it was necessary to impose harsh authoritarian solutions from above, on the basis of Mao's directive to solve the problems of various provinces one by one. From that point forward, the central mission of the Cultural Revolution shifted from mass insurgency to establishment of revolutionary committees.

The End of Violent Summer

By the end of September through the joint efforts of the center and local army units, the factional violence in Guangzhou began to abate somewhat. By early November there were only occasional clashes between contending factions.[90] Yet the fact remains that both sides only handed over a small fraction of seized arms, or returned those outdated weapons or more sophisticated weapons that cannot be hidden. Many weapons still had been circulated among the rebels. Until October 19 when Premier Zhou met with

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1976 (*di liu juan*) (*Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976* [Vol. 6]) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), p. 115.

[89] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976*, p. 119.

[90] For example, October 19 armed struggle at the Guangzhou Labor Union Hall injuried 70 people, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 170-171.

representatives from both factions, around 20 per cent of seized arms were still controlled by the rebels.[91] For the contending groups, to turn in these weapons would put a group at the mercy of its rivals.[92] A Red Guard leader blamed the demise of his group precisely on making this wrong move:

> "Once I handed in the weapons, they [members of the rival group] surrounded our building. We defend ourselves as best as we could. Finally I had to abandon my men. I stole out of the building and swam across the river."[93]

On November 14, after the Beijing authority issued "the Central's Decision on Guangdong" and designated Huang Yongsheng as the director of the preparatory revolutionary committee, the representatives of the factions in Guangzhou finally reached a cease-fire agreement. The agreement specifically stipulated both sides to "promote revolutionary mass criticism and form a revolutionary great alliance" by "supporting the army and cherishing the people," and "prohibiting struggle, taking firm hold of the revolution, and prompting production."[94] This marked the end of prolonged and violent armed battles over the summer.

However, it was not an easy task to restore order from below by "establishing revolutionary great alliance" because of the refusal of mass organizations in many areas to comply voluntarily with this directive. The effort to speed up establishment of a new

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[91] Speech by Zhou Enali on October 19 (周总理接见广州旗派代表五位同志的讲话), in Ding Wang, *Zhonggong wenhua dageming ziliao huibian, di liu juan, Zhongnan Diqu wenhua dageming yundong* (*A Collection of Materials on Chinese Cultural Revolution, Vol. 6, Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*) (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Monthly Press, 1972), pp. 29-34.
[92] *Guangyi Hongqi* (*Guangzhou Medical College Red Flag*), 4 September 1967, no. 16.
[93] Julia Kwong, *Cultural Revolution in China's Schools, May 1966-April 1969* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Press, 1988), p. 97.
[94] *Nanfang Ribao* (*Nanfang Daily*), 18 November 1967, p. 2.

government structure had also fallen far short of the original goal simply because the tangling power distribution of representatives of the rival rebels in the new power organs. In the next few months, all rebel organizations were drawn into power politics, competing with each other to maximize their share of power in the new revolutionary committee. Both sides recruited junior and senior cadres of their own choice, strengthening their forces for the pending alliance. As a result, the Cultural Revolution entered into a new phase of factional conflicts in early 1968.

Summary

As in Guangdong, in provinces across China, the summer of 1967 was featured as intense waves of factional contention and internecine violence. The heavily armed rival factions engaged in pitched battles, with each accusing the other of being counterrevolutionary. The rampant factional violence was sufficiently severe to attract top-level concerns. In August, The center summoned to Beijing the representatives of the local groups, including the PLA, the cadres, and the representatives of the contending mass organizations, and told them to negotiate among themselves under the joint supervision of Premier Zhou Enlai and other central leaders. In particular, Zhou stipulated that both sides would cease stealing arms from the army, turn over those already in their possession, end violent struggles, and release all detainees. However, even after the rival factions agreed to settle their differences through negotiation, there was still a plethora of divisive issues. Factional conflicts continued to escalate and grew even more violent, as both sides competed with each other in the hopes of triumphing factional battles so as to gain the upper hand in negotiations in Beijing.

These developments had a critically destructive impact across the whole country, forcing Mao to pull back and initiate a series of measures to prevent even more chaotic violence and more open rebellion. As a result, the national policy executed another one of its rapid U-turns in September 1967. The PLA was now allowed to use lethal force against rebel organizations that resisted its attempts to restore order. The central strategy was reoriented into the construction of a new revolutionary government.

Fighting Not to Lose

By tracing the development of this political episode, this chapter reveals much about the nature of factional conflict and contentious violence in 1967. Rival factions were not fighting a class warfare based on their different standpoints on the status quo ante—with the conservative faction defending their vested interests and the radical faction challenging the status quo as well as gaining rights previously denied them. Rather, the core motive of each faction behind these armed battles was to fight for their survival. A fear of the consequences of defeat spurred the escalation of armed strife and death toll. If one faction had guns, its rival also had to take weapons; if they did not fight, they would be destroyed. They were simply caught in a circumstance from which they could not pull out themselves.

Did rebels have alternative choices not to fight? The answer is no. At least at this stage of the red guard movement, there was no exit option.[95] The authoritarian nature of the Chinese polity enclosed people in political institutions where they were closely

[95] Those who exited from the red guard movement were called "faction of wanderers", or "Xiaoyao Pai" (逍遥派). However, Xiaoyao Pai only emerged in 1968 when Mao decided to rebuild political order and deemphasized the role of mass rebels. For a good documentation of Xiaoyao Pai, see Yin Hongbiao, *Shizongzhe de zuji* (*Footprints of the Missing: Thoughts of the Youth during the Cultural Revolution*) (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2009).

monitored and periodically subjected to massive political campaigns that affected their welfare and career futures. This was a key invention of communist party-state to rule the entire population in the machinery of control. Any wrongdoings or deviations from this political system would be condemned with severe punishments, including deprivation of one's life chance and even those of one's family, public humiliation, arbitrary imprisonment, and even torture. In short, individuals were constrained in a web of tight political scrutiny.

Since the viability of "escape" was virtually impossible and the cost of ending up at the losing side was tremendously high, factional groups had to struggle against each other and kill each other to secure their own survival. In this sense, they were fighting not to lose.

Competitive Violence

Then there is the question of why factional fighting in the summer of 1967 was so hard to end? As the violence progressed it developed its own momentum and could not be stopped, leading the whole country into the brink of anarchy. Why?

First, the foundations for large-scale factional warfare were laid with the two opposed factions gaining comparable strength. If there was only one dominant rebel force, direct clashes between the two sides were not likely to occur and therefore the level of violence would be lower. A central feature of Guangzhou's factional contention, however, was that there were two city-wide rebel alliances with almost equivalent strength. The intensified antagonisms between the Red Flag and the East Wind—over both the power seizure and military control—escalated in the summer into renewed confrontations over

control of schools, factories, and neighborhood communities. Each determined to lead the local rebel movement and to avoid retribution if the opposing faction won. Factional boundaries therefore became highly salient. Since the two sides were so evenly matched that neither side could easily liquidate the other, rival groups began to take on more radical positions or use more militant forms of action. In short, competition triggered a radicalization process in which groups tried to outbid one another in winning the battle, leading to the increase of attacks and counter-attacks. It was inevitable that the levels of violence grew sharply in this process.

Another reason is the obvious reluctance of the Beijing authorities to send armed forces to stop street battles. The April directive already prohibited local army from using brute force against mass rebels. After Wuhan Incident, the authority of army was further constrained to curtail the increasingly widespread and violent clashes between the two sides. Premier Zhou Enlai tried to stop the rampant violence and restore the social order. However, the armed conflict reached new heights with Jiang Qing's provocative instigations on "arming the left", which clearly sabotaged Zhou's efforts to hold negotiations with the delegations of both factions in Beijing. In the absence of a clear order from Chairman Mao, the divisions among Beijing officials only raised the stakes of rebel rivalry and intensified the conflict. After all, since neither side could achieve an equalizing political compromise that was enforced by a neutral third party, bloody violence became more and more common method to resolve conflicts.

Table 4.1 Zhou Enlai's meetings with representatives of Guangzhou factions, 1967-1968

Date	Representatives	Instructions	Political Consequences
Aug 14, 1967	Red Flag	Exonerated August 1 Combat Corps Urged two sides to Beijing for negotiations	Meet rebel representatives on August 16
Aug 16, 1967	Red Flag, East Wind	Urged factional rebels to stop armed conflicts	August 18、20 armed battle
Aug 22, 1967	Red Flag, East Wind	August 22 Agreement：stop armed battle, stop weapon seizing, and release prisoners	August 22 armed battle
Aug 24, 1967	Red Flag Workers	Urged the rebel workers to unite together	August 26 armed battle
Sep 01, 1967	Red Flag (52), The Earth General Headquarters (58)	September 1 Agreement: stop armed battle, stop weapon seizing, and support military authority	September 2 armed battle
Sep 13, 1967	Peasants representatives	Urged peasants not to attend armed battles	
Oct 19, 1967	Red Flag (5)	Urged rival rebels to unite together and to return seized arms	Twelve Points Agreement: stop armed battle, cease stealing arms
Oct 31, 1967	Red Flag, The Earth General Headquarters	Sought advice on preparations for the provincial revolutionary committee	Preparations for the rebel workers' unification
Nov 08, 1967	Red Flag (10), East Wind (10)	Gave instructions on the establishment of provincial revolutionary committee	November 12, "the Central's Decision on Guangdong"
Nov 14, 1967	Red Flag, East Wind	Announced and confirmed "the Central's Decision on Guangdong"	Reached a final cease-fire agreement.

Sources: Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 235-301; Song Yongyi, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

Chapter 5

Turning Point III:
Creation of Revolutionary Committees

"When a minority sees that it will not get much of what it wants in any probable resolution of deadlock within some collective decision system, it has little incentive for breaking the deadlock. In these circumstances, one of the few rewards available to the minority is the feeling of righteousness associated with being for the right cause. Such a minority will have no reason to compromise or aggregate interests and thus will have little reason to see the process of aggregation as a useful and necessary one."[1]

Sidney Waldman (1972: 186-187)

The third crucial turning point in Guangzhou is the creation of the revolutionary committees in spring 1968. Following Mao's direct instructions, this new form of political institution was built on three-in-one combination of military officers, rebel leaders, and veteran cadres. The establishment of the revolutionary committees in every province made the process of re-stabilization easier, and above all, reaffirmed the control of the top leadership.

During this critical period, the principal debate which preoccupied mass organizations was the formation of great alliance and the composition of the new power organs. Civilian cadres now became potential targets for recruitment by rival factions. Each side attempted to put cadres they supported into the revolutionary committees and enhance their interests thereafter. The cadre question therefore became part of intensified conflict between opposing rebel groups.

[1] Sidney Waldman, *Foundations of Political Action: An Exchange Theory of Politics* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), pp. 186-187.

Why was there such a big fight over the cadres? The most common answer, and one that is consistent with the conventional structural analysis of contentious conflict, is that the cadre question potentially activated status-based conflicts between different social groups. The radical faction drew their bases from the ranks of the excluded and marginalized, such as low-ranking cadres, anti-military cadres, and cadres in functional positions. They therefore supported those who sought to challenge the existing establishment to change their political status quo as much as possible. On the other side, the conservative factions arose from networks of stalwart party members and political activists (i.e., high-ranking cadres and cadres in political positions), seeking to support those who held the same interest in defending the party organizations from offensive attacks. In short, the two factions adopted identifiably opposite political orientations toward the cadre issue.

So far, there are few studies on how the revolutionary committees were formed, not only in the basic level units, but also at the provincial and municipal levels. After examining factional conflicts across twenty-seven provinces, Bu points out that "the process through which the revolutionary committees of provinces, cities and autonomous regions were formed was very complex, and many circumstances are bewildering and unknowable."[2] In their case study of Nanjing, the capital city of Jiangsu province, Dong and Walder provide a detailed account of how the splits within the military forces and contentious negotiations between the contending factions delayed the establishment of the new government authority in Nanjing. Still,

[2] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 726.

they admit that, “These are intensely local issues, and it is unlikely that events unfolded in the same manner in the many other Chinese provinces...the task of characterizing the process as a whole would appear almost impossible.”[3]

Thus conceived, this chapter contributes to the existing literature by reconstructing the process that led to the formation of the revolutionary committees in Guangzhou. In particular, this chapter argues that the conflict over cadre issue was not based on rival faction’s pre-existing status differences before the onset of the Cultural Revolution. Each faction hardly factored their prior political status into thinking about structural ways to overcome the social maladies. They never questioned whether a new power structure with old power holders would be able to make any fundamental changes. Instead, the core motives behind extensive factional disputes were about their relative influence and power in the new government apparatus. Each side had strong incentives to denounce the cadres pledged to the other side, and this forced each faction to defend the cadres pledged to it. In the absence of substantive political differences between the two factions on the cadre question, status politics never developed in Guangzhou. After all, the famous Guangzhou factions had allied together to overthrow the old provincial party authorities in late 1966. They split only over the January power seizure and their different relationships with the military forces in spring 1967.

The Locus of Factional Debates

[3] Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, “From truce to dictatorship: Creating a revolutionary committee in Jiangsu”, *The China Journal*, No. 68 (2012), pp. 1-31, at p. 31.

Starting in October 1967, the development of Cultural Revolution took a different turn and the focus was to establish the rebel alliance under the leadership of revolutionary committees. Although it was Mao who inspired the masses to rebel against authority, by this time he was anxious to put an end to the "all-round civil war" through forging "great alliances" by all mass organizations and establish a new political organ in China.[4]

However, the effort to create the revolutionary committees only brought more collisions between rival factions. The locus of factional debates between Red Flag and East Wind crystallized over the revolutionary status of civilian cadres. The three-in-one formula offered some cadres opportunities to join the new power structure as "revolutionary cadres". But who was qualified to be a "revolutionary cadre" and who were to be purged were heatedly disputed. Their disagreements had little to do with their pre-Cultural Revolution status quo ante or their difference in political orientations toward China's political system. Instead, both factions endeavored to maximize its own power position in the new revolutionary committee by supporting the cadres of its own choice and denouncing those who pledged to the other side as "reactionary". This was a tactic maneuver to maintain organizational integrity in the new bureaucratic structure—the more supportive cadres taking key positions, the less likely that specific organization would be dissolved in the next round of radical shift in politics.

To facilitate the formation of the revolutionary committees, the first step was to

[4] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 239.

set up a Revolutionary Committee Preparatory Small Group as a forum wherein the representatives of the PLA, the cadres, and the masses worked together under leadership appointed by the center. In doing so, the central authority proposed four members: Huang Yongsheng, Chen De (陈德), Chen Yu (陈郁), and Wang Shoudao (王首道).[5] As the commander of Guangzhou Military Region, Beijing had already made clear that Huang Yongsheng would be Guangzhou's top official in the new government apparatus. Chen De was the Political Commissar of Guangzhou Military Region. Chen Yu was governor of Guangdong province and the third secretary of the Central-South Bureau. Wang Shoudao was the secretariat of the Central-South Bureau and member of the CCP Central Committee. Apparently, all of these four candidates were top political and military figures that backed by the center.

When it was announced that Huang Yongsheng and Chen De were two key members in the Preparatory Small Group, the Red Flag faction, especially those who had suffered from harsh repressions by the military forces in the past few months, resumed their attack on the army and accused Huang Yongsheng and Chen De as a representative of the reactionary line. They also charged that Huang was the "black backstage boss" of "counter-revolutionary massacres" committed during the violence of August. Alternatively, they proposed their own list and nominated Zhao Zhuoyun (赵卓云), the vice-governor of Guangdong province and Director of United Front Work Department, Ge Feng (戈枫), the Vice Director of Propaganda Department, and the other two leading local officials as the cadre representations.[6]

[5] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 263.
[6] Ibid., 318.

In response, the East Wind contended that Huang should not be attacked because he had been basically impartial. First, they claimed that Huang enjoyed Mao's personal endorsement and to strike at him was to attack Guangzhou's regional forces in general. Second, they charged that the anti-Huang forces were ultra-leftists bent on provoking armed struggle, so the army had little choice but to take a strong stand against them. In short, "Comrade Huang Yongsheng is a good comrade because he persists in the truth, rectifies errors and truly supports the revolutionary left!" "We can trust Comrade Huang Yongsheng!"[7]

Meanwhile, the East Wind faction also had their own favorable candidates. They opposed the nominations from Red Flag groups and challenged the nominations of Chen Yu and Wang Shoudao. They suspected that these two figures had been closely associated with the now repudiated Tao Zhu in the Central-South Bureau where Tao was the former first party secretary there. Their political loyalties were therefore questionable. As an alternative, they recommended Lin Liming (林李明), the secretariat of Guangdong Municipal Government, and Ma Fu (马甫), the deputy secretary general of Guangdong Municipal Government, to stand in the Preparatory Small Group.[8]

The revival of a debate over Huang Yongsheng also hastened splits within the ranks of Red Flag alliance. As for the campaign to overthrow Huang Yongsheng, some moderate groups, such as South China Engineering College Red Flag and Red Flag Workers, became more and more disenchanted with their comrades' obsessive

[7] *Hongse Baodong* (*Red Rebllion*), 14 June 1967 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou South-Central Forestry College Red Rebels 广州中南林学院红色造反者).
[8] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, 318.

concern with attacking the Guangzhou Military Region. They argued that although the military forces had made some mistakes, it was not beyond rehabilitation. After all, "Huang Yongsheng is a member of Chairman Mao's Headquarters!"[9] They therefore would have preferred to focus on the question of cadres and charged that the attackers were not paying attention to the "main orientation of struggle" when challenging Huang Yongsheng and the Military Region:

> "We made the proposal at the joint conference of revolutionary rebel organizations which had comparatively unified views that we should closely follow Chairman Mao's great strategic plan, carry out mainly the work of the revolutionary great alliance and the revolutionary mass criticism, mobilize the masses to liberate the revolutionary leading cadres, lift the lid on the black line of Tao Zhu and Zhao Ziyang and the class struggle in Guangdong, and at the same time, assist the Military Region to correct its wrong views on the work of supporting the left."[10]

At the basic level units, rival groups had more difficulties settling their differences and coming to an agreement on the cadre issues. One of such difficulties was the lack of consensus on the selection criteria for evaluating low-ranking cadres. Every participant agreed in principle that those cadres with clean political records

[9] "News in brief", *Zhuying Dongfanghong (Pearl River Film Studio East Is Red)*, No. 11, 13 September 1967, p. 4.
[10] "Lin Yun's letter to Canton Military Region command", *Union Research Service*, Vol. 52, No. 7 & 8 (1967), pp. 81-104, at p. 95.

before the Cultural Revolution had to be included in the committees. But the question was what counted as being "clean"? Were past critics of party policy the enemies, or were they simply loyal communists? Were followers of "dragging out a handful within the army" the revolutionaries, or were they making the mistake of carrying out the "bourgeois reactionary line"? These confusion and ambiguities were reflected in the attempt of some Red Guard newspapers to set up classification standards. One paper, in response to readers' letters, tried to answer basic questions such as "what is the difference between a 'capitalist roader' and a 'three-anti element'?[11] How does one distinguish between good and bad cadres? How can one tell a third category cadre from a fourth category cadre? With which cadres can we unite?"[12]

With no clear standards, the rebels made no real distinction between class enemies and comrades, protecting those who supported them and treating those who did not support them as enemies. In short, it all depended on whether the cadre in question could enhance the interests of that faction in the revolutionary committee. As an editorial in Nanfang Daily pointed out, the rampant factional strife over the cadre's issues was that

> "Those supporting 'us' are revolutionary leading cadres and must be help to mount the horse. Those not supporting 'us' should be put on labels like 'xx's gang', 'xx black-line elements' or 'black hands' without exception. They have to

[11] A "three-anti element" is someone who is allegedly anti-Party, anti-Mao Zedong Thought, and anti-socialist.

[12] *Shengzhi Hongqi* (*Provincial Office Red Flag* 省直红旗), January 1968. For all state and party personnel, ranks were assigned from 1st to 30th, with salaries varying from 560 yuan for the top grade to 18 yuan for the bottom grade. For a detailed documentation of rank and monthly salary scale of party and government cadres, see Wu Yiching, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins: Chinese Socialism in Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), pp. 26-28.

be struck down or at least struggled until they admitted their mistakes and could never be liberated. Cadres supported by us should be in the three-in-one combination. These nominated by others are all bad cadres and should get out of the way."[13]

For example at Zhongshan University, the rival factions had a fierce dispute as to whether the Deputy Secretary of the University's Party Committee, Ma Xiaoyun, should be allowed to become a member of the three-in-one combination of revolutionary masses, party cadres, and military officers. The East Wind faction at the campus, Zhongshan University Revolutionary Rebel Committee (*Zhongda gezaohui* 中大革造会) had initially regarded Ma as a "comparatively good" cadre and suggested that he should be included in the committee. However, when Ma put up a poster supporting their opponent, Zhongshan University Red Flag, the attitude of East Wind immediately changed. They not only objected to his gaining admission into the committee, but decided to strike him down by branding him as "the most vicious hidden class enemy." As a leader of the East Wind proclaimed:

"The problem of Ma Xiaoyun was not that serious at first...yet, he now supports the Red Flag. This is a very serious political mistake, much more serious than the mistakes he had committed in the past. It goes without saying that he should not

[13] "Dadao duidai ganbu wenti shang de paixing" (Striking down the factionalism over the cadre's issues), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Nanfang Daily*), 18 February 1968.

be allowed in the three-way-combination."[14]

Contending factions now seized every chance to denounce any cadres supported by their opponents. They found good justification in Mao's sayings, "Whatever is opposed by our enemy, we support it; whatever is supported by our enemy, we oppose it."[15] Obviously, such political stances were not based on status interests but situational and strategic in nature. According to an investigation report from the Military Region, by this time, rival factions had only agreed to allow 18 percent of the government and party cadres at the provincial level to retain their positions. Another 38 percent were to be overthrown while mass organizations still had not agreed what to do about the remaining 44 percent. In the schools, the situation was worse: "Very few cadres in the schools are able to come forward with the approval of both groups."[16]

The scrambling for seats in the revolutionary committees among the rebels further intensified factional struggles, making it difficult to achieve great unity. On October 19, a furious fighting left at least 70 persons injured, ten critically. Other incidents on a somewhat smaller scale than the heat of the summer's battles erupted from time to time. Because of these disturbance the central authority decided to postpone the opening of the Guangzhou Trade fair for a month to November 15.[17] At the same time, Zhou Enlai had to engage in efforts to another round of negotiations in

[14] *Zhongda Hongqi* (*Zhongshan University Red Flag*), 4 April 1968.
[15] Mao Zedong, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1975), Vol. II, p. 272.
[16] Speech by Huang Yongsheng on 12 December 1967 (黄永胜等同志12月12日在广州各群众组织负责人报告会上的讲话), in *Xinwen Zhanshi Ziliao Huibian* (*Collection of Materials of News Soldiers* 新闻战士资料汇编), Vol. III.
[17] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 170, 175.

Beijing among sharply opposed factions.

Beijing Negotiations, Second Stage

The second stage of the Beijing negotiations lasted from October to mid-November. Unlike the previous meetings which had been geared to cease the armed struggles, now, however, "the most important question is how to move forward the revolutionary great alliance through revolutionary criticism and repudiation and form revolutionary committees."[18]

On October 19, Zhou Enlai met with five representatives of Red Flag faction and asked them to support Huang Yongsheng and Chen Yu. Zhou stated that Huang Yongsheng was a close associate to Chairman Mao and Vice-Chairman Lin. Zhou specifically emphasized that the center had strong confidence in Huang's leadership, "We trust him, the Party Central Committee and the Central Military Committee trust him." This settled Huang Yongsheng's status. For Chen Yu, as a veteran comrade, the Premier appraised his good revolutionary records. Though Chen had followed the reactionary line in the past, he now stood on the side of the rebels after making his self-examination. Zhou also told Red Flag delegations that East Wind's nominee Lin Liming was not qualified to join Preparatory Small Group. Lin was urged to attend study class to further reflect his mistakes in the work of "supporting the left".[19] This meeting opened a prelude to a month-long negotiations in Beijing.

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[18] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, p. 199.

[19] Speech by Zhou Enali on 19 October 1967 (周总理接见广州旗派代表五位同志的讲话), in Ding Wang, *Zhonggong wenhua dageming ziliao huibian, di liu juan, Zhongnan Diqu wenhua dageming yundong* (*A Collection of Materials on Chinese Cultural Revolution, Vol. 6, Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*) (Hong Kong: Ming Pao Monthly Press, 1972), pp. 29-34.

On November 3, Zhou Enlai and Wu Faxian (吴法宪), the Commander in Chief of the PLA Air Force, met with another group of delegations from Red Flag faction. During this meeting, Zhou declared the center's support for Chen De and Guangdong Military Region and instructed the Red Flag rebels to assist Chen's work. Wu Faxian also reaffirmed the center's trust in Chen De. Wu conceded that Chen De had made certain mistakes in "supporting the left", but conducted his self-examination in the study class in Beijing. The center believed that Chen would make a successful work in Guangdong.[20] The message signaled from these two meetings was very clear: the military force now received unambiguous backing from the center. Red Flag faction had to make concessions to Chen De, but they still tried to put Zhao Zhuoyun and Ge Feng on the list as a way to strengthen their alliance.

On November 8, Zhou Enlai convened a larger mass meeting with representatives from both factions. Zhou conveyed the center's directive to appoint Kong Shiquan (孔石泉), the Third Political Commissar of Guangdong Military Region, into the Preparatory Small Group. This is another signal to the rebels that the center had stood firmly behind the military force. The East Wind faction immediately greeted this move, but quickly felt disappointed when Zhou revoked their nominee Ma Fu. Zhou pointed out that Ma Fu still needed some investigations before being assigned any specific position. On the other hand, Zhou also repudiated Zhao Zhuoyun and Ge Feng, two cadre representations suggested by the Red Flag. According to Zhou, Ge Feng was connected with bad renegade and attempted to

[20] Speech by Zhou Enlai on 3 November 1967 (周总理接见广州旗派代表的讲话), in Ding Wang, *Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*, pp. 35-42.

manipulate the civilian rebels to attack the Military Region. Zhao Zhuoyun also had dubious political records and needed more investigations. These two figures were not allowed to join the Preparatory Group. Zhou warned the rebels, “Don’t let the bad people fish in troubled waters (*hunshui moyu* 浑水摸鱼).” As for two local cadres from the Central-South Bureau, Wang Shoudao and Chen Yu, Zhou reaffirmed their revolutionary credentials and declared that these two veteran cadres had earned the party center’s trust and been allowed to direct the local work in Guangdong. Zhou concluded that, “They are perhaps more experienced than the comrades of the Military Region.”[21]

On the surface, Zhou Enlai’s mediations were not entirely satisfactory for both Red Flag and East Wind; neither faction’s favorite cadres were accepted by the center. But at least each group had supporters, if not allies, in the committee. Red Flag had connections with cadres in the Central-South Bureau, whereas East Wind had strong ties to military figures. After all, this was an acceptable result to which both factions acquiesced.

Pressured by the Beijing authority, Guangdong Revolutionary Committee Preparatory Small Group was finally established on November 12, with Huang Yongsheng, Kong Shiquan, Chen De, Wang Shoudao, and Chen Yu as the core members of leadership group (see table 5.1). Huang had been put in charge of this institution. Two days later, Guangzhou rebels reached an agreement in Beijing. Zhou Enlai and other central leaders, including Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, and

[21] Speech by Zhou Enlai on 8 November 1967 (周恩来接见广州地区双方部分赴京代表谈话纪实), in *Zhongda Hongqi* (*Zhongshan University Red Flag*), 2 March 1968.

Zhang Chunqiao, met with the Guangzhou delegation at The Great Hall of the People. They announced "the Central's Decision on Guangdong" and hailed the rebels' agreement as "a great victory for Mao Zedong Thought."[22] Both factions enthusiastically responded by pledging their signatories to "support the Guangdong Military Region and the military control committees" and to "quickly bring about a revolutionary great alliance and revolutionary three-in-one combination." A "supervisory group," consisting of five representatives from each faction (two workers, one peasant, one student, and one cadre) and representatives from the provincial and municipal military control committees, was established to facilitate implementation.[23] This permitted the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou move to the next stage: the formation of revolutionary committees and the re-establishment of a regional government.

Toward Great Rebel Alliance

To construct the revolutionary committees, another prerequisite was to achieve great rebel alliance among competing factions. In December, the center organized a national campaign to study Mao Zedong Thought. In Guangzhou, the army was dispatched to colleges, factories, neighborhoods, offices, and rural communes to organize various "study classes". This organizational format had two functions.

First, it required all movement activists back into their work units to study Mao's

[22] Speech by Zhou Enlai and other central leaders on 14 November 1967 (中央首长在 11 月 14 日晚上接见广州赴京代表的讲话), 14 November 1967, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Databas*e.
[23] For full text see *Ziliao Zhuanji* (*Special Reference Material Supplement*), 17 November 1967 (Guangzhou: Propanda Department of Guangzhou Workers' Alliance and the Guangzhou Daily Red Flag).

writings and to make self-criticisms. The central theme was to "revolutionize one's ideology" and to resolve factional differences in the hope that a consensus would be reached.[24] Study classes were held literally every night and every participant was compelled to reflect their own deeds in light of Mao's directives. They were also asked to demonstrate their "three loyalties and four boundless loves"—loyalty to Chairman Mao, loyalty to Mao Zedong Thought, and loyalty to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line; boundless love for Chairman Mao, the Communist Party, Mao Zedong Thought, and Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line—in front of Mao's portrait.[25] The military officers took the lead in organizing and guiding the study progress. From time to time, they propagated model soldiers or activists to introduce their experiences. By March 1968, there were reportedly more than 13,000 study classes in operation in Guangzhou alone, with more than 1,400,000 participants.[26]

Second, it confined all mass organizations' activities to their unit and profession and thus effectively cut off cross-occupational coordination. At this point, the central authority urgently demanded civilian rebels to negotiate separately by city and by occupation, with workers and students in each city forging their own alliance within their group boundaries.

In universities, whereas student political groups operated primarily on a municipal-wide basis before September 1967, now most of their activities were

[24] Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult: Rhetoric and Ritual in China's Cultural Revolution* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 175.
[25] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, p. 262.
[26] Guangzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Guangzhou City Annals Editorial Board), *Guangzhou shizhi* (*Guangzhou City Annals*) (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Publish House, 2000), vol.11, p. 126.

confined to the individual campuses. The main task was to form a great alliance and revolutionary committees within their own schools and the army did not tolerate too much "exchanging of experience" during this period. The first such student alliance was formed at the Guangzhou Medical College.[27] It was soon followed by other schools such as Jinan University, South China Agricultural College, South-Central Forestry College, and Guangdong Industrial College. Zhongshan University did not, however, announce its great alliance until March 7. On December 30, 1967, a city-wide alliance representing Guangzhou's university and college students was set up. By January 1968, fifteen colleges and schools had achieved alliances and this represented more than 80 percent of the higher institutions in the city.[28]

In factories, workers, seamen, and railway personnel all started to form occupational alliances.[29] According to a report, by mid-December, 90 percent of the large factories, 71 percent of the medium-sized factories, 48 percent of the agencies had formed great alliances.[30] On January 26, 1968, a city-wide worker alliance was established.[31] By February 17, there was a peasant alliance as well.[32]

As more and more great rebel alliance came into being, one would expect factional conflicts over the nature of the new organs of power to diminish somewhat. As it turned out, despite the ostensible organizational unity, there was still substantial disagreement among opposing factions. Each rebel group still maintained its own

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[27] *Dongfeng Pinglun* (*East Wind Review* 东风评论), 1 January 1968.
[28] *Guangzhou Hongdaihui* (*Guangzhou Red Guard Congress*), 3 January 1968 (Guangzhou: Guangzhou Higher Schools Red Guard Congress), p. 3.
[29] For a detailed account on rebels' alliance in railway and seaman personnel, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 303-309.
[30] Speech by Huang Yongsheng, 12 December 1967, in *Xijiang Zhanban* (*West River Battle News*), No. 11, 18 December 1967.
[31] *Xinwen Bing* (*News Solider* 新闻兵), 9 November 1967.
[32] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 323.

organizational name and integrity. Take as an example Red Flag Workers and Workers Alliance from the Red Flag camp, and Earth General Headquarters and Red General Headquarters from East Wind camp. They all had separate routine operations under a unified city-wide great alliance.[33] In this regard, the coalition was only a nominal one while deep down there was still disunity. Moreover, some extremely dissenting voices also emerged in radical opposition to the rebel alliances. The establishment of the revolutionary committees still proved to be rather difficult.

The Ultra-left Tide

One of the most influential dissenting groups was the August 5 Tide (*Bawu sichao* 八五思潮). As part of the Red Flag camp, it constantly challenged Huang Yongsheng and the Military Region after the army entered into the movement. Soon after the Preparatory Small Group was established in mid-November, a cleavage formally emerged between the August 5 activists and their Red Flag allies over the question of coalition with the East Wind. As a result, two wings formed within the Red Flag groups: the moderate and the ultra-left. Essentially, their differences mainly revolved around concrete political issues developed during the course of the movement, rather than around opposed group interests of different social divisions formed before the Cultural Revolution.

The key leader of August 5 Tide was Yu Hong (予红), a senior student at

[33] Ye Shuming, "Sheng geweihui chengli, shang" ("The establishment of the provincial revolutionary committee, part I"), *Yangcheng Wanbao* (*Yangcheng Evening News*), 23 March 2013, B10.

Guangzhou Labor University.[34] Yu was born to a "black elements" family. Despite the academic excellence in high school performance, upon graduation he was assigned to Guangzhou Labor University, a school held in relatively low reputation in the region. After the Cultural Revolution started, Yu participated in the January 22 power seizure, February raid of the Guangdong Military Region and other political events organized by Red Flag faction, and had earned his reputation as an aggressive rebel leader due to his political vision and organizational capability.

In May 1967, Yu Hong and other Red Flag members travelled to Hunan. There they met Yang Xiguang (杨曦光), later a key member of the Hunan Provincial Proletarian Revolutionary Great Alliance Committee (*Shengwulian* 省无联) and a renowned author due to his well-distributed article "Whither China?"[35] After coming back from Hunan, Yu Hong actively involved in the summer's factional battles. In November he and some like-minded activists established the August 5 Tide and started to promote their political views. First, they questioned the optimistic views promulgated within the Red Flag groups. On the crucial issue of power sharing, they argued that the great alliance did not guarantee that the power was in the hands of the rebels:

"The Provincial Preparatory Small Group is trusted by the Central Committee,

[34] The following account is from Zuo Shiyi, "Hongweibing yundong zhong yige bei yiwang de ren he shi: Yu Hong yu Guangdong diyige malie zhuyi xiaozu" ("A forgotten man and his stories during the Red Guard Movement: Yu Hong and the first Marxism-Leninism group in Guangdong"), *Guancha Jia* (*The Observer*), No. 18 (1979), pp. 47-53.

[35] In this article, Yang Xiguang criticized Mao's communist regime and contended that the essential conflict in China was between the new "red capitalist class", consisting of party cadres and their families, and the masses of the Chinese people. This was a shocking and daring deviation from the traditional Maoist view that conflict in China was essentially between Mao and his class enemies. See Jonathan Unger, "Whither China?: Yang Xiguang, red capitalists, and the social turmoil of the Cultural Revolution", *Modern China*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1991), pp.3-37.

and of that there should be no doubt. However, it is still a preparatory group. What is there to prepare? Is it enough to rely on only two responsible comrades of the Central-South Bureau and five from the military region? Exceedingly few of the provincial and municipal leading cadres have been outstanding, and none of the principal leaders' character can be confirmed! Furthermore, power cannot be an empty framework. It should include the power of all districts and units at the basic levels and all the departments. This power should be seized from the bottom up. It is impossible for the Provincial Preparatory Small Group to give power to them one by one from the top down. Is power now entirely in the hands of proletarian revolutionaries in all units? You may count the great number of factories from the People's Brigade onward. Can you point out any one of them 'holding power in their hand?!'"[36]

They also rejected completely the speedy realization of a great alliance and instead insisted that the struggle still lay ahead. In their view, a great alliance with East Wind groups at this time was tantamount to "capitalist restoration" and "reformism":

"The present alliance between the two major factions is in fact merely a union for consultative and liaison purposes, far from playing the part of unified leadership. Only when the 'left' faction has greater superiority in the relative

[36] *Sansi Zhanbao* (*The Third Headquarters Battle News*), No. 38, 24 August 1968.

strength between the two major factions can the members of that faction play the role of unified leadership."[37]

The "August 5 Tide" caused serious concerns for many leaders from the Red Flag faction. Some moderate rebels feared that a drastic deviation from the center's great alliance policy might bring some serious destructions to their own fate. In order to develop a unified strategy, from December 9 to December 19, all major Red Flag units gathered at the city of Foshan for a conference. After much heated debate, the meeting issued a Foshan Declaration, claiming that "the general situation has already become fixed and power has been grasped" (*daju yiding, daquan zaiwo* 大局已定 大权在握) as well as reaffirming Red Flag's support for the regional army, the newly established Preparatory Small Group, and the politics of consolidation.[38]

The Foshan Declaration immediately received resistance and accusations by the August 5 dissidents. They charged that the conference "completely denied the two line struggles and blamed all the responsibilities to factionalism," and the interests of the Red Flag faction had been "sold out."[39] They also substituted the conclusion of Declaration as "the general situation is still undecided and power is still in dispute" (*daju weiding, daquan zaizheng* 大局未定 大权在争).[40]

At the same time, Huang Yongshen gave a speech to the local rebels, warning that the ultra-left tide "has grown tense and factionalism has become serious." He also

[37] *Bayi Zhanbao* (*August 1 Battle News*), January 1968, p. 2.
[38] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 324.
[39] *Zhongda Hongqi* (*Zhongshan University Red Flag*), No. 60, 15 March 1968, p. 4.
[40] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 328.

accused August 5 as not following Chairman Mao's instructions for great alliance.[41] However, Huang's speech only exacerbated the split within the rebel ranks. Big-character posters such as Huang Yongsheng's report "aimed at breaking up the rebels" and "was a huge poisonous weed" were posted all over Guangzhou's streets.[42]

Guangzhou's August 5 Tide had national sympathizers. In Changsha, the capital city of Hunan, *Shengwulian* declared a very similar, if not more radical, manifesto.[43] The dissenting insurgents criticized the revolutionary committees as "a collection of new names in front of old shadows," and called for "a thorough revolution" and "a dictatorship of masses." In their view, "The force of political power is superficially changed. The old party committee and military districts have become the revolutionary committee…old bureaucrats continue to play the leading role."[44]

With a dramatically increasing impact across the nation, the central leaders undoubtedly felt the pressure keenly. Originally the center had set the spring festival of February 1968 as the target date for the completion of all revolutionary committees at the provincial level, but from the perspective of January this appeared as an impossibility. Both the official press and central leaders lamented over the way the movement was developing. On January 1, 1968, the People's Daily pleaded with mass organizations to overcome factionalism and set up revolutionary committees so that the Cultural Revolution could move ahead. On January 22, Premier Zhou admitted

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[41] Speech by Huang Yongsheng, 12 December 1967, in *Xijiang Zhanban* (*West River Battle News*), No. 11, 18 December 1967.
[42] *Dongfeng Pinglun* (*East Wind Review*), March 1968.
[43] For a detailed account on Shengwulian episode and ultra-left tide in Hunan, see Wu Yiching, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, chapter 5; Wu Yiching, "The great retreat and its discontents: Reexamining the Shengwulian episode in the Cultural Revolution", *The China Journal*, No. 72 (2014), pp.1-28.
[44] Yang Xiguang, "Whither China?" in Harold Hinton, *The People's Republic of China, 1949-1979: A Documentary Survey* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1980), pp. 1853-1863.

that the center had underestimated the depth of factional division, as it turned out there was insufficient cohesion among rival rebels.[45] These signals indicated that now the center wanted results and they wanted them soon.

Accordingly, in order to speed up great unity and the formation of the new power organs, the central authority rejuvenated its campaign against the ultra-left organizations. On January 24, *Shengwulian* was charged with ultra-leftists activity and declared "counterrevolutionary." Its members were arrested and the theories articulated in article such as "Whither China?" were denounced. Massive rallies were convened in Changsha to eliminate all traces of its influence. The central leaders went to Hunan personally and not only condemned this group but also ultra-leftists in other regions.[46]

With the initiation of the nationwide attack against Hunan's *Shengwulian*, many of both the East Wind and the Red Flag factions united to oppose the August 5 Tide, even including Zhongshan University Red Flag, once one of the most militant Red Flag organizations. In response, the August 5 activists struck back with unbridled anger at its former allies. Yu Hong soon published an article "Stillness before a Fierce Combat," declaring that "if we don't fight back because we are afraid of being labeled as 'ultra-leftists', the rebels, in the end, will have to pay the price."[47] Yu Hong's warning, however, was only denounced as "pessimism" by his comrades and the

[45] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Zhou Enlai Chronology*, p. 214.
[46]. Wu Yiching, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, pp. 185-188.
[47] The full title of this article is "Jizhan qian de chenji: Lun muqian Guangzhou shiju de ruogan wenti" ("Stillness before a Fierce Combat: A Comment on Problems Concerning Guangzhou's Current Political Situation"). See Zuo Shiyi, "Yu Hong and the first Marxism-Leninism group in Guangdong."

influences of August 5 Tide had been significantly diminished by this point.[48] In February 1968, although factional disputes continued to simmer without real resolution in Guangzhou, the establishment of the revolutionary committees were already on the time table.

Creation of Revolutionary Committees

On February 21, 1968, the Provincial Revolutionary Committee was finally formed. It was the 15th new province-level government to be established in China. The core leadership of the Committee had 9 members. Huang Yongsheng was the chairman; his old ally and Political Commissar, Kong Shiquan, was appointed first vice-chairman. In addition, three of the remaining seven vice-chairman were also military figures. The Red Flag faction held one seat while the East Wind had no representation at the highest level. Inevitably, the most important posts on the provincial committee were occupied by military figures.

On the Standing Committee, the proportion of mass representatives significantly increased. Among the thirty-nine positions, the PLA occupied nine (23%), the cadres, ten (26%), and mass organization, eighteen (46%). Of the eighteen mass organization representatives, eight were members of the Red Flag faction, and seven were from East Wind. Moreover, Red Flag-nominated cadres also outnumbered East Wind-nominated cadres. Obviously, the Red Flag faction occupied a more advantageous position than its rival. At the base level, of the 180 members in the

[48] *Hongqi Pinglun* (*Red Flag Review*) and *Gang Bayi Zhanqi* (*Steel August 1 Fighting Banner*) joint issue, January 1968.

plenum, only 15 percent were cadres and military officers.[49] Mass representatives appeared to have a preponderant proportion, but in fact their membership in this body was largely honorary without substantive participation in the decision-making process. As a leader from the East Wind claimed, "The membership was largely ceremonial in which we [rebels] didn't exercised any real power. The committee only needed us when conducting the work at the local grassroots."[50] Chi Zehou, the secretary of Huang Yongsheng, also admitted that:

> "It was a strategy to offer revolutionary committee membership to the mass representatives at that time. They can keep their positions as long as they didn't play any tricks or engaged themselves in the mass factionalism. Without giving them real authority, their influence would gradually faded away and decay."[51]

The Guangzhou Municipal Revolutionary Committee was established at the same time as the provincial one. Once again, at the top level, military figures dominated the most significant positions, with the chairman and two of the five vice-chairman representing the army. On the standing committee, however, the allocation of seats revealed a different pattern. The East Wind faction enjoyed an advantage in terms of representation. Four of the five cadres chosen were supported by East Wind, while three of the five mass representatives also were East Wind

[49] For a detailed membership list, see Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 345-348.
[50] Interview with Mo Chaohai, 3 August 2012. Mo was a Communist Youth League member and a key leader of the Earth General Headquarters. He was selected into the Standing Committee in the Provincial Revolutionary Committee in February 1968.
[51] Ye Shuming, "Chi Zehou fangtan" ("Interview with Chi Zehou"), *Huaxia Wenzhai* (*China News Digest*) (Supplement), No. 466, 22 November 2005.

supporters. None of the cadres from the Central-South Bureau who had been nominated by the Red Flag was given a position. In contrast, Jiao Linyi (焦林义), the first party secretary of Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee and whom was opposed most strongly by Red Flag, was chosen as one of the committee's vice-chairman.[52] As the Red Flag rebels complained, "80 percent of the working personnel of the Guangzhou Municipal Revolutionary Committee was pro-East Wind and at the lower level, almost all working personnel of the revolutionary committee were the same groups of the old political department." [53]

The establishment of provincial and municipal revolutionary committees in Guangzhou was quickly endorsed by the center. On February 22, a joint editorial appeared in People's Daily and Liberation Army Daily, acclaiming the development as "a magnificent act in the struggle for all round victory in the revolution." From being a "provisional organ of power," the revolutionary committee now became "the wholly new creation of the revolutionary mass movement" and "met the needs of consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and preventing the restoration of capitalism."[54] On March 13, a revolutionary committee was established in the suburban district and by the end of March, a total of 234 units had set up committees in Guangzhou.[55]

While the revolutionary committees were being created, controversy over their composition still ensued between the two factions. This controversy was not a

[52] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 352.
[53] *Hong Dianxun* (*East is Red Telecommunication* 红电讯), 27 March 1968 (Guangzhou: The Steel Third Headquarters 钢三司).
[54] "Relie huanhu guangdong sheng geming weiyuanhui chengli" ("Warm welcome the establishment of revolutionary committees in Guangdong"), *People's Daily*, 22 February 1968.
[55] Guangzhou City Annals Editorial Board, *Guangzhou City Annals*, vol.11, p. 126.

consequence of prior class differences or ideological disagreements, but simply reflected the fundamental incentives of each faction to increase their influence in the prevailing power structure. Only weeks after the provincial committee was established, the Red Flag groups claimed that "it was formed on the basis of a temporary compromise with the old forces."[56] They demanded a change of personnel and the overturning of the arguments by which those representatives were chosen.[57]

Revival of Political Conflict

The nationwide crackdown on ultra-left activists as well as the repudiation of the power of several senior CCRG members, including Wang Li, Guan Feng, and Qi Benyu, inevitably led to conflict with CCRG leaders. Jiang Qing and her associates reported their concerns to Mao, declaring that there was now "a rightist wind of verdict reversals." Jiang also alerted Mao of the danger of a second "February Adverse Current" in which the goal of the Cultural Revolution would be sabotaged. [58] On her meeting with Zhejiang delegations on March 18, she warned that "rightists' splitism has now raised its head."[59] As a result, the center launched a new political campaign to attack the "rightist trends". Once again, the official line took another sharp U-turn at this point.

At the end of March, Mao openly blamed the emergence of the "rightist reversal of verdicts" to three high-ranking PLA officers: Yang Chengwu, the Acting Chief of

[56] *Zhongdan Zhanbao* (*Zhongshan University Battle News*), No. 63, 22 September 1968.
[57] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 357-358.
[58] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), p. 165.
[59] Speech by the central leaders for the delegation visiting Beijing from Zhejiang province on 18 March 1968 (中央首长接见浙江省赴京代表团时的重要讲话), in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

General Staff, Yu Lijin (余立金), Air Force Political Commissar and a second party secretary, and Fu Chongbi (傅崇碧), the commander of Beijing Garrison. Aside from being accused of promoting the adverse trends, they were charged with a long list of other political mistakes: Yang and Yu tried to seize power from Wu Faxian of PLA Air Force and Huang Yongsheng of Guangzhou Military Region; Yang was said to be the backstage boss of Wang Li and Guan Feng; and Fu allegedly led Garrison troops into the office of the CCRG to arrest people.[60]

With the purge of Yang Chengwu and his associates in Beijing, military commands at all levels now had been worrying about being associated with the Yang-Yu-Fu clique and the policies it represented. Meanwhile, the central leadership decided to accord the masses a larger role while imposing restraints on the local army's authority. From the center's perspective, the strengthening of the mass organizations was the key and the center was quick to refute any notion that they might be dissolved. As Xie Fuzhi, Vice Premier and Minister of Public Security, declared:

> "At the preceding stage of the high tide of the three-in-one combination, we overemphasized self-examination for cadres who were to join the three-in-on combination. Criticism of their mistakes was insufficient. It was thought that they could be liberated as long as they were not capitalist roaders. They

[60] Wu Faxian was a high level military figure. In 1967 he was appointed Chief of Staff and Commander in Chief of the PLA Air Force. For a detailed account of "Yang-Fu-Yu Incident", see Wu Faxian, *Suiyue jiannan: Wu Faxian huiyilu* (*Times of Hardship: Memoirs of Wu Faxian*) (Hong Kong: North Star Publishing Co., 2006), pp. 720-728.

encouraged rightist ideas of restoration of the old order...”[61]

The new ground rules laid down by the center had a great impact on Guangzhou’s movement. Even though a large portion of the Red Flag faction consented to the new organs of authority in late February, their loyalty to this arrangement was very tenuous. When the political winds changed, they did not hesitate to capitalize on this policy shift to strike at the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee in which the military figures had assumed predominant leadership roles.

Specifically, the rebels attacked the first vice-chairman of the committee, Kong Shiquan, labeling him “Guangzhou’s Yang Chengwu.” They charged that the “core group” was a “black core group” and its program was a “black program for reversal of verdicts and black signal for the restoration of capitalism.” They also accused army personnel of propagandizing against the Red Flag and excluding its members from the key decisions.[62] Moreover, in early March the committee set up a Worker’s Provost Corps (*gongren jiucha dui* 工人纠察队) whose ostensible purpose was to crack down on vagabonds, juvenile delinquents, and other anti-social elements,[63] but was interpreted by the Red Flag as a force to control and suppress their revolutionary acts, turning most supporters of the Foshan Declaration against the Guangzhou Military Region.[64] The rapidity with which the rebels abandoned the format of revolutionary

[61] Speech by Xie Fuzhi at the Beijing Revolutionary Committee plenary meeting on 25 March 1968 (谢富治在北京市革委会全体会议上的讲话), in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.
[62] *Zhongdan Zhanbao* (*Zhongshan University Battle News*), No. 63, 22 September 1968.
[63] *Guangzhou Gongren* (*Guangzhou Workers*), 16 July 1968.
[64] *Gang Bayi* (*Steel August 1*), June 1968; also see Ye Shuming, “Paixing huichao wudou zaiqi” (“Revival of

committee demonstrates its low level of institutionalization. After all, the singular goal of the mass rebels was to insure that the revolutionary committees acted on their behalf.

On the other side, the East Wind faction waged propaganda campaigns to defend their seats in the committee. They put up wall posters everywhere to detail the alleged "crimes" of Ge Feng and other local cadres supported by the Red Flag groups. They also published a special issue of its newspaper to promote their own cadre representatives, arguing that Kong Shiquan was trusted by the central leadership and Chairman Mao; any attacks on him were merely an effort to divert the main direction of struggle.[65]

As a result, the factional violence which marred Guangzhou's political scene earlier, welled up again in earnest. But the nature of fighting was different than before as they were bottled up within units. At first the clashes were of limited magnitude, but they rapidly escalated into large scale incidents. The first outbreak of armed struggle erupted at the Guangzhou Paper Factory on May 3 and more than 150 rebels had suffered injuries. This was followed by a sizeable battle on May 22 in which students and workers of both factions locked horns at the Electric Power Company. A fire brought army units to the scene and within a short time the fighting was halted, but still resulted in five deaths and another 27 wounded.[66] Strife between the rival factions continued to needle Guangzhou from the late spring to the early summer of

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factionalism and armed battle"), *Yangcheng Wanbao* (*Yangcheng Evening News*), 30 November 2013.

[65] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 358-359.

[66] *Sanjun Lianwei Zhanbao (Three Services Joint Committee Battle News* 三军联委战报), No. 3, 7 September 1968.

1968.

Although revolutionary committees had been established at the provincial and municipal level, this did not mean that a genuine mass consensus had been achieved. This newborn political institution itself remained as an extremely divisive issue and contributed to the high level of disorder. The rival factions debated one another and agreed to disagree over their respective interpretation of political events. After all, their political conflicts were not rooted in their fundamentally different orientations toward prior status quo ante, but originated and intensified as the movement unfolded.

Demobilizing the Red Guards

With the revival of armed collisions and the collapse of public order in most of the major cities across the country, the central leadership was forced to pull back. Once gain, the PLA was empowered to impose martial law and take stern measures against mass factionalism.

On July 3, the center distributed a national Notice to curb factional warfare in Guangxi. This directive reaffirmed that the army now had absolute authority to arrest those who instigate armed struggle. It also stressed that all the cross-regional network connections among rebel forces must cease immediately.[67] On July 24, the center issued a second, more strongly worded Notice, urging that mass organizations "formed specially for armed struggle must be disbanded."[68] This order authorized the

[67] "CCP Central Committee's New Directive on the Guangxi Problem", 3 July 1968, issued by the CCP Central Committee, the State Council, the Central Military Affairs Committee, and the Central Cultural Revolution Group, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.
[68] "Notice by the CCP Central Committee, State Council, Central Military Affairs Committee and the Central Cultural Revolution Group", 24 July 1968, in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*.

local army to usher in a new tide in suppression of rebel activities.

To respond to the center's policy, the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee quickly issued a ten-point directive. Particularly it echoed Beijing's demands for an immediate halt to armed struggle: "Toward those who refuse to comply, the PLA, the organs of Public Security Committees, and the broad revolutionary masses have the right to take forceful actions."[69] Under harsh military pressure, the rebel forces significantly lost their influence and power. Six liaison stations set up by outside mass organizations were abolished, and many rebel leaders were arrested and detained. They were denounced as "bad heads" (*huai toutou*) and forced to confess their errors at various forms of struggle sessions and mass rallies.[70] Moreover, the Central-South Bureau was put under military control and several civilian cadres supported by the Red Flag faction were removed from their posts.[71] By the end of July, public traffic had been restored to normal, fortifications in many places broken up, and large number of weapons collected.[72]

These dramatic developments let the leader of the Red Flag faction, Wu Chuanbin, meet in Beijing with other rebel leaders from all over the nation. On July 17, a gathering was held on the campus of Beijing Aviation College, with rebel delegates of more than 20 mass organizations from Guangzhou, Guizhou, Guangxi, Qinghai, and Beijing. The representatives discussed the establishment of a nationwide rebels correspondence network as a measure to leverage with the center's policy.

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[69] "Guangdong sheng geming weiyuanhui pugao" ("Notice of the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee"), 10 July 1968, passed by an enlarged session of the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee, in Union Research Institute Red Guard newspaper collection, Vol. 7 (1968), p. 2349.
[70] *Zhongda Zhanbao* (*Zhongshan University Battle News*), 4 August 1968.
[71] *Guangzhou Hongweibing (Guangzhou Red Guard)*, No. 2, 26 August 1968.
[72] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, p. 399.

However, the meeting was immediately denounced by the party authority as a "black meeting" and mass representatives were urged to return to their own province. [73] By then Mao was no longer interested in conflict mobilization. He had already made his final decision.

On July 28, Mao personally received the representatives of the Beijing Red Guards Congress and on that occasion, he openly criticized the well-known Beijing rebel leader, Kuai Dafu (蒯大富), for his insistence on carrying out violent factional struggles. Kuai was a key leader of the red guard nationally, and one closely associated with the radical and complete power takeover formula. Mao delivered a very harsh message to Kuai and others that his patience was now at the end:

> "The Cultural Revolution has gone on for two years now! Now the workers, peasants, soldiers, and residents are all unhappy, and the great majority of students are unhappy...you have become divorced from the masses; the masses cannot accept civil war...whoever violates the directive, striking at the army, sabotaging transportation, killing people, setting fires, is committing a crime. If there is a minority who will not listen to persuasion and refuses to change, then they are bandits. We will surround them, and if they are stubborn, we will wipe them out."[74]

This criticism essentially announced the end of Kuai's political life. He was soon

[73] *Gong Gelian* (*Workers' Revolutionary Alliance* 工革联), 3 August 1968.
[74] Central Party Literature Research Center, *Mao Zedong Chronology 1949-1976*, pp. 175-176.

struggled at mass meetings and was taken into custody several times in the remaining years of the Cultural Revolution. The other famous rebel leaders in Beijing all suffered a similar fate.[75]

At the same time, Wu Chuanbin was also accused for organizing a national meeting in Beijing with rebels from other provinces. On July 31, Wu was officially criticized at the Second Plenum of the Guangdong Provincial Revolutionary Committee.[76] Since then, more and more rebel leaders came under criticism. On August 9, the new government apparatus ordered the dissolution of all cross-unit mass organizations. Their bank accounts and materials assets were frozen. By late August, the Red Flag alliance had been largely dismantled and the East Wind groups had withdrawn their activities.[77] All students, teachers, and staff were required to go back to school within one month and anyone who failed to do so would be expelled.[78]

Under Mao's direct instructions, the demobilization of the red guard movement accelerated nationwide. In the middle of August, the center dispatched "Worker-Solider Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Teams" to all major universities and colleges to carry out struggle, criticism, and self-transformation work. Although on some campuses, workers and soldiers met with resistance with some students arguing that the teams represented neither the policy of the center nor the will of

[75] Andrew Walder, *Fractured Rebellion: The Beijing Red Guard Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), pp. 248-249.
[76] "Fan geming xiao chouchong Wu Chuanbin zuixing lu" ("The reactionary Wu Chuanbin"), in Ding Wang, *Cultural Revolution in Zhongnan Region*, pp. 268-273.
[77] Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism*, p. 243.
[78] "Guanyu jianjue guanche zhixing Mao zhuxi, anzhao xitong, anzhao hangye, anzhao banji, shixian geming dalianhe zhishi de jueding" ("Resolutely carry out Chairman Mao's instructions on cross-unit great alliance"), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Nanfang Daily*), 10 August 1968.

Chairman Mao,[79] the propaganda teams effectively restored order by arresting those young leaders which they considered inflammatory and sending their followers off to the countryside. By early November, around 60,000 graduates of junior and senior secondary schools had bee sent to the countryside to receive educations from the lower-middle peasants.[80] Moreover, the teams perfunctorily established revolutionary committees in those schools in which they had not yet formed. In Guangzhou, five major schools, including Zhongshan University, announced the establishment of revolutionary committees before October 21.[81] Encouraged by such progresses, Mao sent a gift of mangoes to the workers and soldiers stationed at Peking University to express his personal support for propaganda teams.[82]

Factional struggles finally came to an end. Starting in the summer of 1966, the mass movement deeply permeated into every corner of the nation over the next two years, plunging the whole country into complete chaos. The contending factions fought each other over concrete local issues at each step of the way as the movement unfolded. The divisive terms ranged from the conditions of the power seizure to the relationship with the military forces and the composition of the revolutionary committees. However, the rival rebels had largely been manipulated by elite conflicts in Beijing and the resultant policy shifting, raising the stakes of their rivalry and intensifying the conflict. In the end, Mao possessed the ultimate right to make a final

[79] *Guangzhou Hongdaihui* (*Guangzhou Red Guard Congress*), No. 11, 29 August 1968.
[80] "Guangzhoushi liuwanduo zhongxue biyesheng luxu benfu nongcun luohu" ("60,000 high school graduates went to the countryside"), *Nanfang Ribao* (*Nanfang Daily*), 6 November 1968.
[81] *Guangzhou Hongdaihui* (*Guangzhou Red Guard Congress*), No. 16, 28 October 1968.
[82] During the following weeks, the mangoes were distributed nationwide, where they were treated as though they were religious relics. The golden mango thus represented a powerful emblem of the power and respect to Chairman Mao. See Alfreda Murck, "Golden Mangoes: The life cycle of a Cultural Revolution symbol", *Archives of Asian Art*, No. 57 (2007), pp. 1-22; Alfreda Murck, *Mao's Golden Mangoes and the Cultural Revolution* (Zürich, Switzerland: Scheidegger and Spiess, 2013).

decision. He had mobilized an unprecedented popular insurgency in 1966 but immediately called it off when he wanted to stop any further armed struggles. While some of the unyielding elements continued to fight back, by the fall of 1968, it was all over.

Summary

In this final phase of mass conflict, controversies over the composition of the revolutionary committees were a source of contention among rebels. Differences between rival factions crystallized over the questions of which cadres should be purged and which ones should be allowed to sit on the committee. This issue plausibly resonated with individuals' pre-Cultural Revolution statuses, depending on how close they were tied to the former authorities—those who had formerly favored positions were more likely to support prominent party functionaries to defend their vested privilege in the status quo, whereas those from less favored positions sought to line up with marginalized cadres in attacking party authorities and hierarchy.

However, how to evaluate the cadres proved to be a very ambiguous and difficult task. In the Guangzhou context, this question was clearly not related with the pre-Cultural Revolution status quo. From the rank and file to the party leaders, many had carried political liabilities to some extent—for example, having been disciplined by the party organization in the past, closely associated with Tao Zhu, Zhao Ziyang, and other fallen leaders, and made the mistake of following the ultra-leftist line of attacking the PLA or following the reactionary line of suppressing the masses. As a

matter of fact, it was virtually impossible to find a perfect revolutionary without any errant deeds in his or her entire political life.

Since there was no consistent standards accepted by both factions at this critical turning point, each side strove to topple opponent by supporting those cadres who had stood on its side and abusing those who pledged to the other side. As rival factions wanted to secure more seats in the new political institution, competition among rebels was brought to a head. This pushed the Beijing negotiations entering into the second stage in which Premier Zhou Enlai mediated rival factions to reach an agreement on ground rules for the rebel alliance. After protracted meetings, the provincial and municipal revolutionary committees were finally set up in late February 1968. However, political tides changed quickly in Beijing from the attack against the "ultra-left trends" to against "rightist reversal of verdicts." The resultant swings in central policy have directly affected the growth of factions and the level of violence attending their conflicts. In turn, changes in the level of factional activities had sparked new heated debates on the subject, strengthened the hand of one side or the other, and directly affected the outcome of the next round of conflict.

What is clear in this local political episode is the almost complete absence of disagreement over China's political and social system. There were no substantive political differences among rival rebels. Instead, rebels displayed a complete lack of loyalty to anything other than the enrichment of their own parochial power. They were singularly concerned with installing in cadres supportive and representative of their own choice, strengthening their forces in order to gain overwhelming influence and

power in the new power organs. For the rebels, loyalty extended only to a drive for power.

One related question is about cadres' choice. Why could each cadre only be supported by one side? From the other side of the coin, we have observed that former provincial and municipal cadres joined different factions and adopted different political stances. Why? Under highly variable and often rapidly shifting political context, the primary consideration for cadres was to anticipate which side had a better chance of prevailing, or at least surviving the political turbulence. This choice was crucial because as soon as a cadre pledged support to one side, he or she was lauded as "revolutionary" by that side and immediately labeled as "counterrevolutionary" by the other side. After all, all political conflicts produce winners and losers, and movement participants invariably take these costs and benefits into account in hopes of standing on the winning end.

Another striking feature of this political development is the fluid and dynamic nature of factional identity. The political conflict between the contending factions only revolved around the divergent interpretations of political events developed during the course of the movement. In other words, the political identities that motivated these deep divisions were not fixed but were forged in and out of a series of complex and dynamic political interactions. Once formed, these identities continued to evolve and were subject to remolding when exogenous political surroundings and opportunities shifted quickly.

Organizational Characteristics of Revolutionary Committees

A Revolutionary Committee was based on the compromise formula of a triple alliance between the army, the party cadres, and the mass organizations. Generally, it was composed of a three-tiered hierarchy with a plenum, standing committee, and leadership core group.[83]

The base of the hierarchy was the plenum which comprised all the members of the revolutionary committee. These varied in size formally between approximately 100 and 250 members. For example Beijing's revolutionary committee had 97 members, Jiangsu 165, Henan 155, and Guangdong had a membership of 180.[84] However, these figures were relatively meaningless since the plenum of the revolutionary committee always met in open, enlarged sessions, including members of other departments, the army, and revolutionary committees at the various levels. Above the plenum was the standing committee, which included all the permanent staff of the revolutionary committee, including the core group, and was the real centre of administration. Each had about 30 permanent members. All of the administrative departments were directly under the control of the standing committee. The leading group, or the core group, was the most important decision-making body in the hierarchy. The central task of the leading group was to unite the revolutionary forces and "led them on to still greater victories."[85] Before 1968, it only consisted of few personnel. For example, Heilongjiang's core group consisted of only one chairman, one vice-chairman, and three members of the standing committee. After 1968,

[83] Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, p. 735.
[84] Ibid., p. 729.
[85] "Geming weiyuanhui hao" ("Revolutionary Committees are good"), *People's Daily*, 30 March 1968.

however, this leadership core group usually comprised a chairman and several vice-chairmen.[86]

From January 31, 1967 to September 5, 1968, revolutionary committees were established in all of the 29 provincial-level units (including 21 provinces, five autonomous regions, and three municipalities), replacing the previous organs of both party and state as a way to restore not only effective government but also central control of the administrative system.[87] Yet the process of the formation of these institutions has not been a continuous one.[88]

According to Jurgen Domes, there was three waves of formation of revolutionary committees at the provincial level.[89] The first wave was from January to July 1967. During the first four months of 1967, six administrative units were approved by Beijing to establish their provincial revolutionary committees. After that, there was an intermission of nearly four months and armed collisions between rival factions spread across the whole nation in July 1967.

The second wave was started by the remote western province of Qinghai on August 12, but after that it took another two and a half months until the Inner Mongolia organized its committee on November 1. Starting from 1968, the formation of revolutionary committees went on at a much quicker pace: there were three in January 1968, three in February, and three in March.

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[86] David Goodman, "The Provincial Revolutionary Committee in the People's Republic of China, 1967-1979: An obituary", *The China Quarterly*, No. 85 (1981), pp. 49-79.

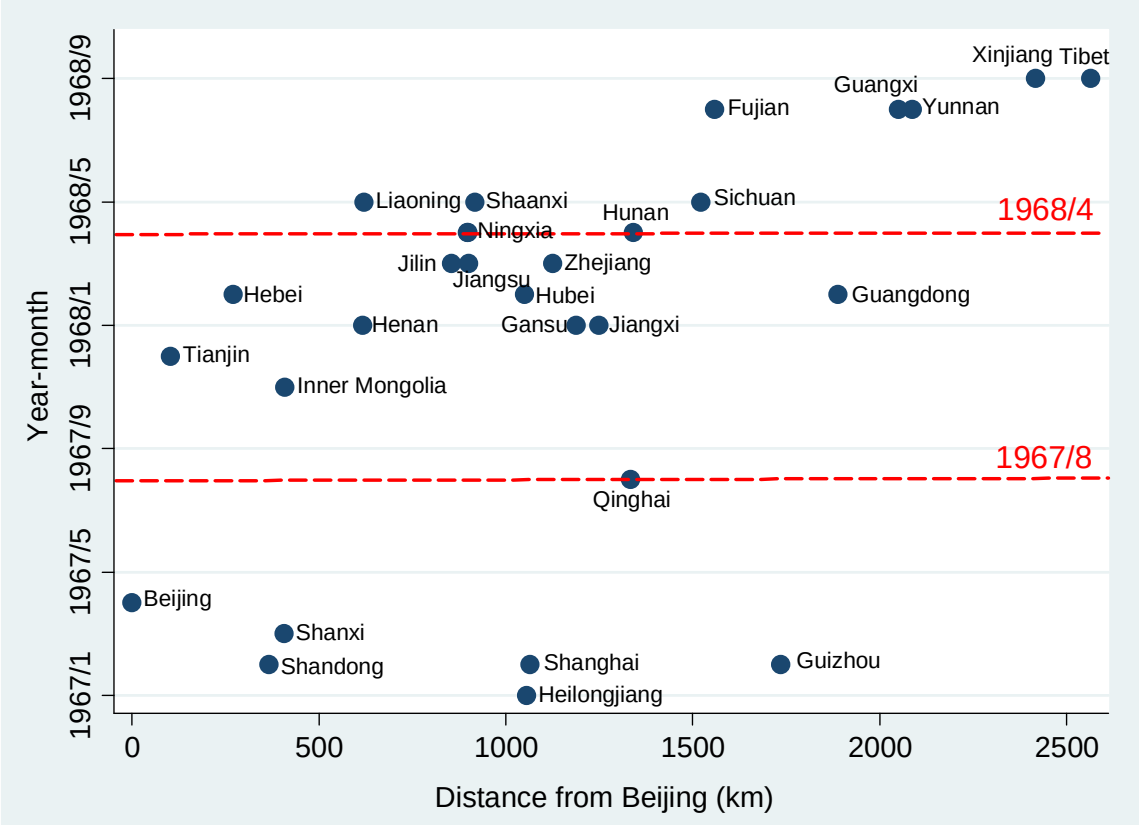
[87] "Wang shoudao tan Guangdong sheng gewenhui" ("Wang Shoudao talked about Guangdong's revolutionary committees" 王首道谈广东省革委会), *Ta Kung Pao*, 20 June 1968.

[88] Jurgen Domes, "The role of the military in the formation of Revolutionary Committees 1967-68", *The China Quarterly*, No. 44 (1970), pp. 112-145; David Goodman, "The Provincial Revolutionary Committee in the People's Republic of China, 1967-1979: An obituary", *The China Quarterly*, No. 85 (1981), pp. 49-79.

[89] Jurgen Domes, "The role of the military in the formation of Revolutionary Committees 1967-68", *The China Quarterly*, No. 44 (1970), pp. 112-145.

The third wave was started after Yang Chengwu, the Acting Chief of General Staff, was purged by the central leadership on March 27. Yang was accused of having attempted to create factionalism within the PLA by appointing his trusted lieutenants to command positions within five of the major Military Regions. After Yang's overthrow, six provinces further established committees in April and May. After a further intermission, three new committees was formed in August. On September 5, the last two were set up in Tibet and Xinjiang after Mao had called a halt to the Cultural Revolution. As such, the new type of government apparatus had finally been set up in all provincial-level administrative units.

Figure 5.1 Formation of provincial-level Revolutionary Committees, 1967-68[90]



[90] The establishment date of each provincial revolutionary committee is from Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 731-733; I choose provincial capital city as the benchmark to calculate its distance from Beijing. The data is from Ditu Chubanshe (China Map Press). 1972. *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Ditu Ji* (*A Collection of China Maps*). Beijing: China Map Press.

From figure 5.1, one can also tell that the longer the distance from Beijing, the more delayed the establishment of a revolutionary committee at the provincial level. This relationship is mostly applies to the second and third wave, as data points from the first wave are working against the proposed relationship. This raises a potential research question for the future study on how waves of events diffuse in the national political hierarchy, and how these waves vary across provincial jurisdictions.

Organizationally, the revolutionary committees established in the early stages were strikingly different in composition from those to be formed after 1967. The main difference was in the relatively higher level of military participation. The standing committees of revolutionary committees set up in the first half of 1967 were divided in roughly equal proportions between the military officers, the cadres, and the mass organizations. During the later wave, however, over a half of 53.3 percent of the members of the combined standing committees were military officers, while the share of representatives of the mass organizations was down to a miserly 21.1 percent.[91] At the top level, the most important posts were inevitably headed by the military figures. Of the twenty-nine provincial-level revolutionary committees, six were chaired by generals, six by lieutenant generals, and nine by major generals. The remaining ones were chaired by civilian officials who also served concurrently as PLA political commissars.[92] In Guangzhou. Huang Yongsheng and his deputy Kong Shiquan occupied the chairman and the first vice-chairman posts. In addition, three of the

[91] Livio Maitan, *Party, Army and Masses in China: A Marxist Interpretation of the Cultural Revolution and Its Aftermath* (London: New Left Books, 1976), pp. 183-184.
[92] Wu Yiching, *The Cultural Revolution at the Margins*, p. 200. For a detailed list, see Bu Weihua, *Destroy the Old World*, pp. 727-728

remaining seven vice-chairman in Guangzhou were also military figures, while mass organization only had been assigned one seat.[93] Obviously, there was now the distinct imbalance in favor of the army.

The second major difference was in the relatively lower acceptance rate of mass representatives at the base level. During the first stage, the plenum in the revolutionary committee could accommodate a larger number of members from competing factions. For example, Heilongjiang Revolutionary Committee consisted of a working staff of 1,470 members whereas the Hubei Revolutionary Committee established a year later received approval for only 200 of the proposed 1,500 members through the Beijing authority.[94] This development implicated a contested competition among rebels for a seat in the newborn bureaucratic structure.

[93] Hai Feng, *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 348-349.
[94] Daniel Leese, *Mao Cult*, p. 154.

Table 5.1 Factional disputes for the composition in the revolutionary committee in Guangzhou, Oct 1967- Feb 1968

	Status	Position	Supported By	Preparatory Small Group	Provincial Revolutionary Committee
Huang Yongsheng	Military	Commander of Guangzhou Military Region First Political Commissar of Guangzhou Military Region	Beijing East Wind	Core leadership	Chairman
Kong Shiquan	Military	Third Political Commissar of Guangzhou Military Region	Beijing East Wind	Core leadership	First Vice-chairman
Chen De	Military	Second Political Commissar of Guangzhou Military Region	Beijing East Wind	Core leadership	Standing committee
Chen Yu	Cadre	Governor of Guangdong province The Third Secretary of the Central-South Bureau	Beijing Red Flag	Core leadership	Vice-chairman
Wang Shoudao	Cadre	Secretariat of the Central-South Bureau	Beijing Red Flag	Core leadership	Vice-chairman
Zhao Zhuoyun	Cadre	Vice-governor of Guangdong province Director of United Front Work Department	Red Flag	Nomination declined	Standing committee
Ge Feng	Cadre	Vice Director of Propaganda Department	Red Flag	Nomination declined	Nomination declined
Lin Liming	Cadre	Secretariat of Guangdong Municipal Government	East Wind	Nomination declined	Standing committee
Ma Fu	Cadre	Deputy Secretary General of Guangdong Municipal Government	East Wind	Nomination declined	Nomination declined

Note: this is only a partial list showing factional competition for the representations in the Preparatory Small Group and Provincial Revolutionary Committee. Both factions also fought urgently for their seats at the municipal level as well as at the basic level units.

Chapter 6

The Political Logic of Factional Killings

"When the confrontation is not directly between the protesters and the authorities but between two hostile population groups…the casualties tend to be higher when the authorities either openly side with one group against the other, or refrain from intervening in the situation."[1]

Anthony Oberschall (1995: 178)

The spread of factional violence presents students of contentious politics with a remarkable intellectual puzzle: why do levels of contentious violence vary between regions? What are the political and social causes of violence? In particular in the case of the Cultural Revolution, why factional violence adopted different forms of political orientation? Why in some regions, large armed clashes and factional warfare broke out with huge waves of bloody violence, while in some other regions, factional conflict only developed in a peaceful manner with few bloody incidences and causalities? How did structural characteristics of the local contexts (e.g., level of urbanization, ethnic composition, non-agricultural employment, party membership, number of local officials) and procedural dynamics of the political movement (e.g., power seizure, military intervention, participation of outsiders) shape the different levels of violence between mass factions?

[1] Anthony Oberschall, *Social Movements: Ideologies, Interests, and Identities* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1995), p. 178.

From table 6.1 and figure 6.1, one can observe that Guangdong province has the third highest casualty rate in the nation right behind Guangxi and Inner Mongolia: the average deaths per million population in Guangdong is 728 while this figure in Guangxi and Inner Mongolia is 1,839 and 823, respectively.

[table 6.1 and figure 6.1 here]

To facilitate the present analysis, I adopt a different definition of collective violence from Gong Xiaoxia. In her study on politics of mass victimization in the Cultural Revolution, Gong defines collective violence as "violent actions committed collectively by a group of people, generally organized and sometimes armed, against individuals who lack a means of resistance of a way to defend themselves."[2] Thus, Gong excludes violent conflicts between two contending factions in the category of collective violence. However, armed conflicts and its related repression, imprisonment, lengthy interrogation, and torture are a main criterion of collective violence in my dissertation.

In particular, I categorize four types of events as armed conflicts: (1) conflicts of any kind between mass organizations, including street battles, executions, taking of prisoners, and etc.; (2) mass organization confronts military forces or public security, including weapon or ammunition seizure; (3) mass organization confronts government offices or public facilities (for example, train station or telegraph bureau); and (4) military or security forces action against mass organization or civilians, whether or not in cooperation with one mass faction.

[2] Gong Xiaoxia, "The logic of repressive collective action: A case study of violence in the Cultural Revolution", in Kam-yee Law (ed.). *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered: Beyond Purge and Holocaust* (New York, NJ: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 113-132.

I employ negative binomial regression analysis, as it estimates equations that predict the total number of deaths in a jurisdiction for the entire period in question. This approach has been used to model the intensity of violence across urban and rural areas in western India,[3] and occurrence of collective violence in post-conflict Guatemala.[4]

[table 6.2 and table 6.3 here]

The main independent variables in the provincial county annals dataset include social and political features of local jurisdictions as structural forces (exogenous variables), and processual variables which indicate timing of event at the turning points (endogenous variables). In particular, variables "military intervention" and "revolutionary committee" refers to two key events that changed the formation of group alliance at turning point II and III. The dependent variable is total deaths resulted from factional warfare and armed battles (table 6.2). Because of the effects of potential collinearity shown in table 6.3, I exclude variable "workers" in the regression analysis and analyze "party members" and "cadres population" in the separate models. Moreover, one should be cautioned that the number of events reported for a locality would vary greatly by the length of the accounts. Therefore, the variable "length" should be used as a control variable in equations that estimate the impact of the causal variables. However, since the present analysis is only based on data files from a single province, the quality of those materials is not significantly varied.

[3] Raheel Dhattiwala and Michael Biggs, "The political logic of ethnic violence: The anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat, 2002", *Politics and Society*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2012), pp. 481-514.
[4] Carlos A. Mendoza, "Structural causes and diffusion processes of collective violence: Understanding lynch mobs in post-conflict Guatemala", paper presented at the 2006 Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 15-18 March 2006.

Another modeling concern is that variables “military intervention” and “factional split” may be endogenous to factional violence. This concern can be attenuated, if not entirely eliminated, by two factors. First, the dependent variable measures factional violence in the period of July 1967-Oct 1968, while factional split and military intervention took place in January 1967 and March 1967 respectively. Hence, there can be no reverse causality. Second, both military intervention and factional split were orthogonal to local factional violence prior to July 1967.

The underlying assumptions are:

Hypothesis 1: factional killings were more likely to occur where the number of party members was lower.

Hypothesis 2: factional killings were more likely to occur where there was a larger urban or ethnic minority population.

The penetration of party organizational strength, measured as party membership per capita, would affect the occurrence and severity of factional conflict. The greater the number of party members per capita, the strength of local party-state would be stronger. Stronger party-state presence was more likely to weaken mass insurgencies and carry out a policy to curb the degree of factional fighting promoted by upper-level authority.

The size of the ethnic minority population presumably had a positive effect on factional killings. Regions that have significant ethnic minority populations were more likely to have larger insurgencies that developed into more protracted and violent conflicts. Some scholars attribute factional killings to ethnic groups’ vigilante culture. In

particular, they view Hakka minorities as having an intrinsic propensity to use violence.[5] In Hakka's tradition, all adult males are physically trained for a potential clan conflicts and the strongest fighter will receive the most respect in the community. Such tradition of clan competition provides a cultural basis to treat those outsiders as "others". Historically, Hakka often engaged in ethnic violence. During the late-Qing Dynasty between 1855 and 1867, Hakka were heavily involved in ethnic conflict with local inhabitants in Guangdong. The disastrous clan war lasted for twelve years and resulted in roughly a million dead with many more fleeing for their lives.

In 1966, fifteen counties in Guangdong were entirely Hakka; sixty-five counties had a significant Hakka presence. Based on a comparative study of collective killings in Guangdong and Guangxi, Su finds that the Hakka is positively associated with collective killing—the pure Hakka counties have a higher death rate than those with a mixed population.[6] He therefore argues that the level of severe violence in each county "is due to the differing saliency of clan institutions in rural communities and that class struggle conflict was exacerbated by the clan identities."[7]

Hypothesis 3: factional killings were more likely to occur where there was a military intervention.

The third parties entering locality can sway the balance of power between two camps and create more political confusion and chaos to the local politics. As Oberschall

[5] Hakka originally migrated from north central China as early as the fourth century A.D. and arrived in Fujian and Guangdong around the fourteenth century. Hakka literally means "guests" or "strangers" in which the locals of Guangdong despised them for their unfamiliar language and customs, see Daniel Bays, *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp 159-160.
[6] Su Yang, *Collective Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution*, p. 91-92.
[7] Ibid., p. 233.

argued, "when the confrontation is not directly between the protesters and the authorities but between two hostile population groups…the casualties tend to be higher when the authorities either openly side with one group against the other, or refrain from intervening in the situation."[8] The appearance of factional warfare was thus more likely to break out in some localities than others where there was military intervention and participation of outside forces. Meanwhile, if the opposing side had mobilized equivalent military resources (i.e., weapons), or outside military support was given to both sides due to the internal split within military forces, the competition among factions would be intensified and led to the escalation of violent conflicts.

Hypothesis 4: factional killings were more likely to occur where there were two organized mass factions with comparable strength.

Competitive violence is the fundamental dynamics when it results in sustained mobilization and protracted conflict.[9] In regions where the two sides were so evenly matched that neither side could destroy the other, violence would be high, as factions intensively competed with each other in order to dominate the movement. In those cases, "competition intensifies the evolution of the repertoire toward more radical forms, as movements try to show they are more daring than their opponents."[10] In some other cases, each side attempted to liquidate the adversary's supporters. Factions became radicalized to eliminate those individuals supposed to be helping the opponent. After all, since

[8] Anthony Oberschall, *Social Movements: Ideologies, Interest, and Identities* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1995), p. 178.
[9] Susan Olzak, *The Dynamics of Ethnic Competition and Conflict* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
[10] Sidney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy 1965-1975* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 8.

neither side could achieve an equalizing political compromise, bloody violence became a far more common placed method of resolving conflicts amongst the contending factions. In contrast, in regions where either one side or the other exercised total control, violence would be low, as the relatively weaker camp was thoroughly disintegrated by the stronger force and therefore direct confrontations between the two sides could not occur.

Hypothesis 5: factional killings were more likely to occur where there was a later establishment of revolutionary committee.

Variation in the timing of some certain key events, such as power seize and establishment of a revolutionary committee, would affect the severity of factional conflict across regions of different type. During the Cultural Revolution, a "power seizure" represents the fall of the civilian government, and a "revolutionary committee" represents the restoration of political authority that was recognized by higher levels of administration. Regions where the power seizure was followed quickly by central recognition and a rapidly formed revolutionary committee were likely to have higher degree of political control of the instruments of disorder than regions where there was a long delay before a revolutionary committee achieved central recognition. In other words, casualties were more likely to increase with a longer time lag between local power seizures and revolutionary committees.

[table 6.4 here]

Table 6.4 identifies factors associated with the intensity of local factional conflicts and mass violence. As model 1 shows, Hypothesis 1 is contradicted, as party members has no statistically significant effect. Hypothesis 2 is not supported, for the ethnic minority population has no discernible effect in both models. In fact, in most counties, non-Hakka population also heavily involved in the armed battles during this period.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 are strongly supported in both models (the corrected AIC for model 2 is lower which means that model 2 yields a better fit than model 1), as factional killings significantly increase with military intervention and factional split after the second turning point. Once the rival factions began fighting with one another, the wounds inflicted drove them even further apart. Violence therefore became the only justification for more violence. This pattern is also illustrated in figure 6.2, which depicts how the center's call to "arm the left" and to attack on local army units shaped the rebels' actions in the summer of 1967. Specifically, factional fighting was most intense in July and August 1967 and rapidly declined during September when the center shifted its radical policy to a moderate one. With the increased number of armed conflicts between rival factions and rebels' raids on military arsenals, the number of reported deaths reached to a peak in August 1967. The number of casualties in Guangdong increased a bit more than twofold between July and August 1967—this is slightly different to the national mode in which the number of deaths due to armed conflicts increased more than 5-fold during the same period.[11]

[figure 6.2 here]

[11] Andrew Walder, "Rebellion and repression in China, 1966-1971", *Social Science History*, in press.

Model 2 further shows that the larger the proportion of cadres, the greater the mass violence. This result has two plausible explanations. First, the government officials and cadres were themselves mobilized into “rebel” groups that contended for power within their state agencies, even before rebels arrived at their doorsteps. Even in localities remote from the city, government officials were among the most active participants in local rebellions against local political leaders, and in the factional struggles that followed. Second, during the establishment period of the revolutionary committees, the cadre question became a source of contention among rebels. Contending factions strove to topple opponent by putting civilian cadres they supported into the new political structures. As each side endeavored to grab more seats in the revolutionary committee, violent factionalism was inevitable.

Hypothesis 5 is testified in table 6.5. The impact of the time lags is also compared with that of local political characteristics—the number of party members, which has no statistically significant effect. The results indicate that timing variable has a positive impact on the level of mass violence—factional killings significantly increase with longer time lags in re-establishing local authority during the third turning point. In other words, the longer the hiatus in political authority, the greater the number of conflict deaths from factional battles. In his case study of mass factionalism in Wuhan, Wang specifically points out:

> “In normal times, organized violence is generally ruled out as a strategy, because the state that monopolizes the use of force threatens to punish groups or individuals who use force against others without authorization. Under anarchy, there is no law, and

no law enforcer, to mitigate conflicts. Consequently, there is the constant possibility that conflicts will be settled by force."[12]

Figure 6.3 further shows that a typical late establishment of a revolutionary committee in June 1968 had resulted five times more factional killings than revolutionary committees that were established in early 1968. The conflict intensity reached its peak around June 1968 and then declined immediately after the center issued the July 3rd Notice to the nation, demanding to "stop armed battles, dismantle forts and strongholds." Although the purpose of the notice was to solve the mass killings in Guangxi, it was distributed nationwide and required specific actions throughout the country. On July 24, 1968, the center issued another public notice and sternly urged mass factions to end the armed conflicts immediately.

There clearly remain issues of endogeneity. As predictors in this model, timing variables can also be examined as dependent variables. The length of time between local power seizures and the establishment of the revolutionary committees can be treated as a function of levels of local conflict—the greater the level of factional violence, the more delayed the establishment of the new political order. To examine such causal process requires a more robust and systematic analysis of the national event dataset. The present research, however, only raises this question as a limitation.

Overall, processual variables have a significant impact on the level of faction violence—the killings significantly increase in regions with competitive factions and military involvement and with longer political vacuum in local government. The structural variables such as the presence of party organizational strength or the ethnic

[12] Wang Shaoguang, *Failure of Charisma*, p. 272.

existence did not foment violence. However, one cannot simply conclude that the nature of factional violence in Guangdong was typical of the contentions in other localities. Variations in the local social and political structure may have led to different patterns of conflict. This calls for a systematic and a comparative analysis of the rebel movement nationwide, which should extend our knowledge of the contentious politics and factional conflicts in the Cultural Revolution.

Table 6.1 Average reported deaths in
Guangdong, Guangxi, and Inner Mongolia provinces

	Guangdong	Guangxi	Inner Mongolia	Mean	Total
Local social characteristics					
Total population (million) [1]	39.69	25.28	13.3		725.38
Total counties in province [2]	97	80	76		2,125
Intensity of factional conflict					
Number of deaths per county [3]	290	581	144	84	
Number of deaths per million population	709	1,839	823	246	
Quality and detail of source material					
Word count, Cultural Revolution section [3]	5,198	5,117	3,263	4,092	

Sources:
(1) Total population in 1965. See Guojia Tongji Ju (National Bureau of Statistics of China). 1999. *Xin Zhongguo Wushinian Tongji Ziliao Huibian* (*China Compendium of Statistics 1949-2004*). Beijing: China Statistics Press, p. 590, 675.
(2) There is no jurisdiction change between 1965 and 1970 in Guangdong and Sichuan. The total number of counties across the country is 2,125 in 1965 and increases to 2,130 in 1970. See Ditu Chubanshe (China Map Press). 1966. *Zhongguo Ditu Ce* (*China Maps*). Beijing: China Map Press; Ditu Chubanshe (China Map Press). 1972. *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Ditu Ji* (*A Collection of China Maps*). Beijing: China Map Press.
(3) Walder and Su 2002

Table 6.2 Descriptive statistics, Guangdong province, 1967-1968

Variables	Operationalization	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Dependent Measures					
Total death	Number of reported deaths resulted from factional violence and mass campaigns	282	556.6	0	3,900
Factional violence death	number of reported deaths resulted from armed battles	9.97	34.4	0	301
Independent Measures					
Total population	Total population in 1965	396,644	315,087	44,227	2514,032
Party members	Total number of party members in 1965	8,357	4,999	1,281	28,827
Cadres	Total number of cadres in 1965	2,858	2,120	547	13,993
Workers	Total number of state-owned workers in 1965	211,93	75,775	1,244	785,730
Han population	Total number of Han population in 1965	389,714	320,862	2,624	2503,909
Hakka minority	1=with significant Hakka minority (>30%); 0=without significant Hakka minority	0.434	0.498	0	1
Urban	1=urban; 0=rural	0.094	0.294	0	1
Military intervention	1=with military control committee; 0=without any military control committee	0.764	0.427	0	1
Factional split	1=having factional split after 1 Jan 1967 0=having no factional split after 1 Jan 1967	0.689	0.465	0	1
Revolutionary Committee	Establishment date of a local revolutionary committee			23Jan 1968	5Sep 1968
Lag days between power seizure to revolutionary committee	number of days from the time that a power seizure was declared to the time that a revolutionary committee received central approval	430	53.4	349	596

Table 6.3 Correlation matrix

Variables		Correlations (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
(1)	Deaths in factional battles									
(2)	Cadres as % of population	-0.11								
(3)	Party members as % of population	-0.11	0.55							
(4)	Workers as % of population	-0.04	0.50	0.05						
(5)	Han population as % of population	0.09	-0.25	-0.31	0.05					
(6)	Hakka minority	-0.05	-0.10	-0.18	-0.10	0.11				
(7)	Urban	0.07	0.49	0.08	0.79	0.09	-0.15			
(8)	Military intervention	0.12	-0.02	-0.06	0.14	0.18	-0.05	0.10		
(9)	Factional split	0.18	-0.01	-0.10	0.10	0.25	-0.23	0.15	0.01	
(10)	Revolutionary committee	0.20	-0.14	-0.10	-0.16	-0.06	-0.03	-0.13	-0.09	0.18

Table 6.4 Deaths in factional violence in Guangdong province,
Jul 1967- Oct 1968

	Model (1)			Model (2)		
Negative binomial regression	irr	se	p	irr	se	p
Party members as % of population	0.723	0.190	0.218			
Cadres as % of population				0.168	0.116	0.010*
Han population as % of population	1.021	0.030	0.485	1.018	0.031	0.551
Hakka minority	1.229	0.592	0.668	1.605	0.896	0.340
Urban	2.053	1.581	0.350	9.116	9.620	0.036*
Military intervention	8.822	6.311	0.002**	11.247	8.919	0.002**
Factional split	14.790	8.336	0.000***	21.404	12.972	0.000***
alpha (coefficient)	4.134	0.830		3.810	0.806	
AIC corrected		450.8			395.5	
Total Population	(exposure term)					
Number of observations	106					
Nonzero observations	105					

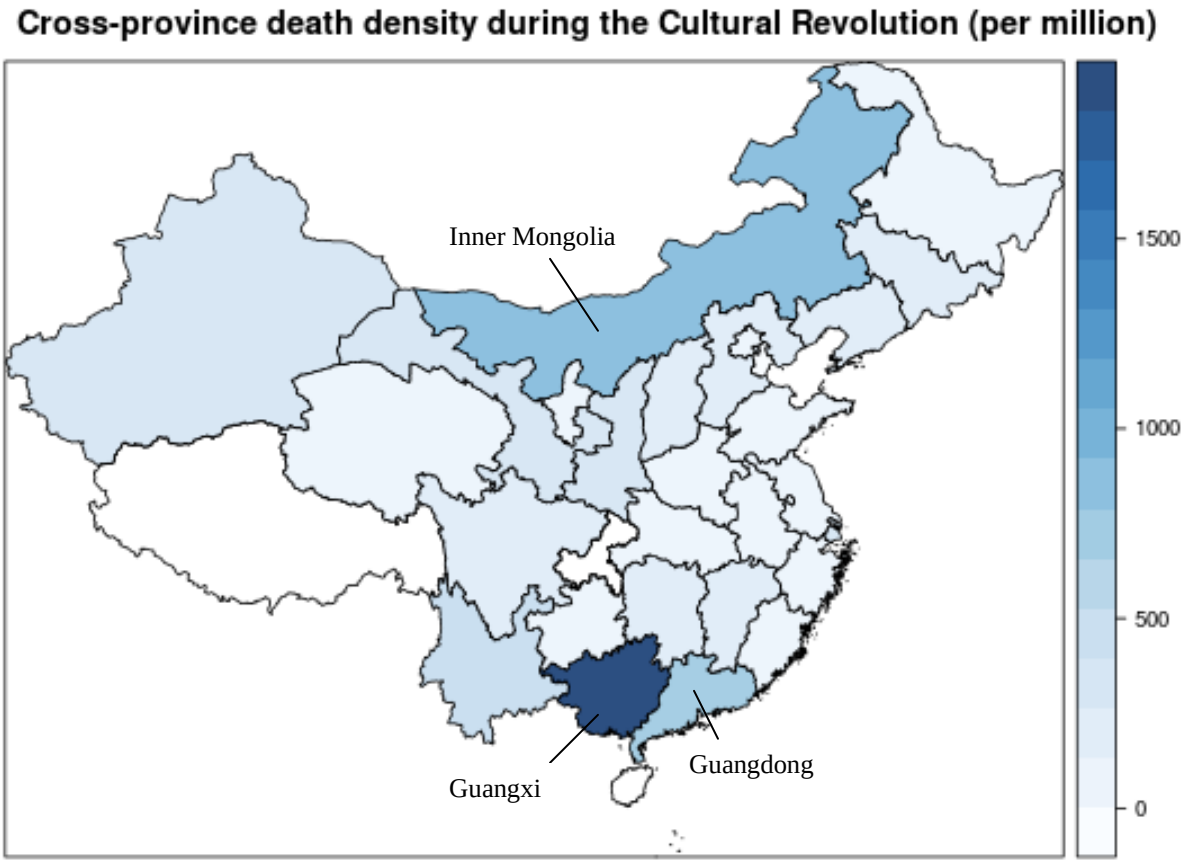
irr: incidence-rate ratio; se: standard error; p: p-value (two-tailed), *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 6.5 Association between factional killings and revolutionary committees in Guangdong province, Jul 1967- Oct 1968

Negative binomial regression	**Incidence-rate ratio**	**Standard error**	**Z ratio**	**P**
Party members as % of population	0.968	0.251	-0.13	0.900
Lag days between power seizure to revolutionary committee	1.201	0.073	3.01	0.003**
Lag days between power seizure to revolutionary committee ^2	1.000	0.000	-2.84	0.004**
alpha (coefficient)	5.113	0.981		
Total population	(exposure term)			
Number of observations	106			
Nonzero observations	105			

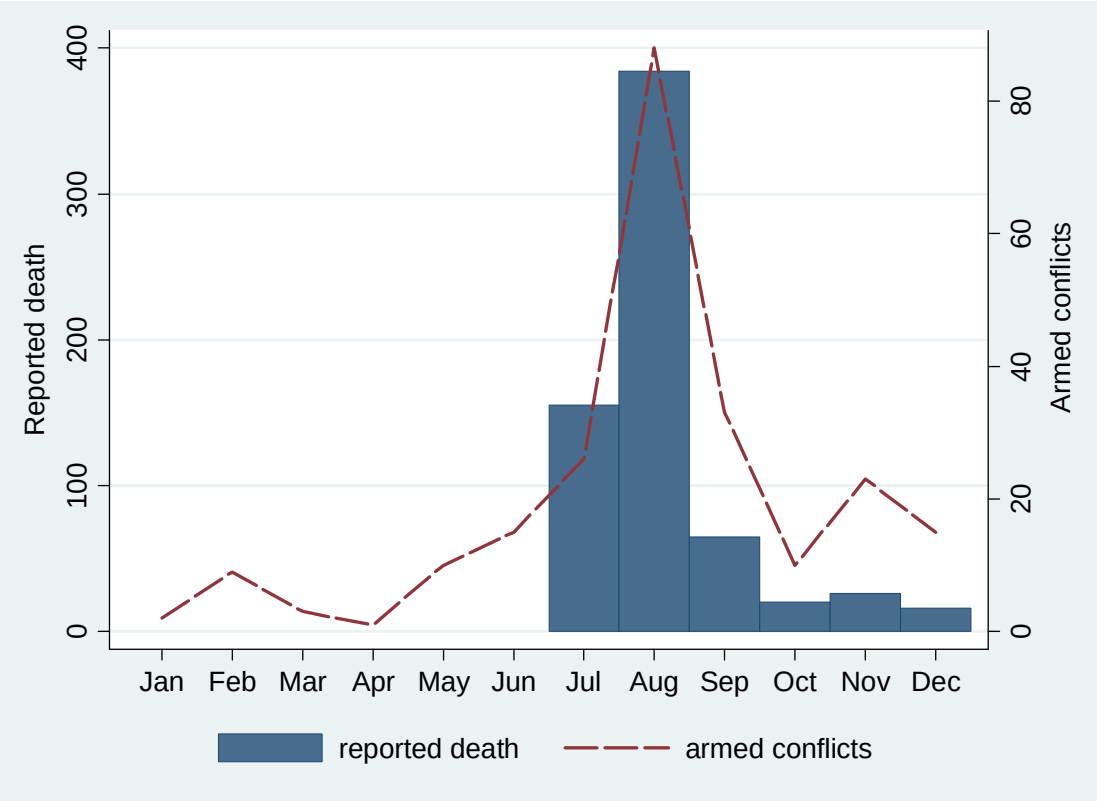
p-value (two-tailed): *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Figure 6.1 Cross-province death density during the Cultural Revolution, 1966-68 (per million population)



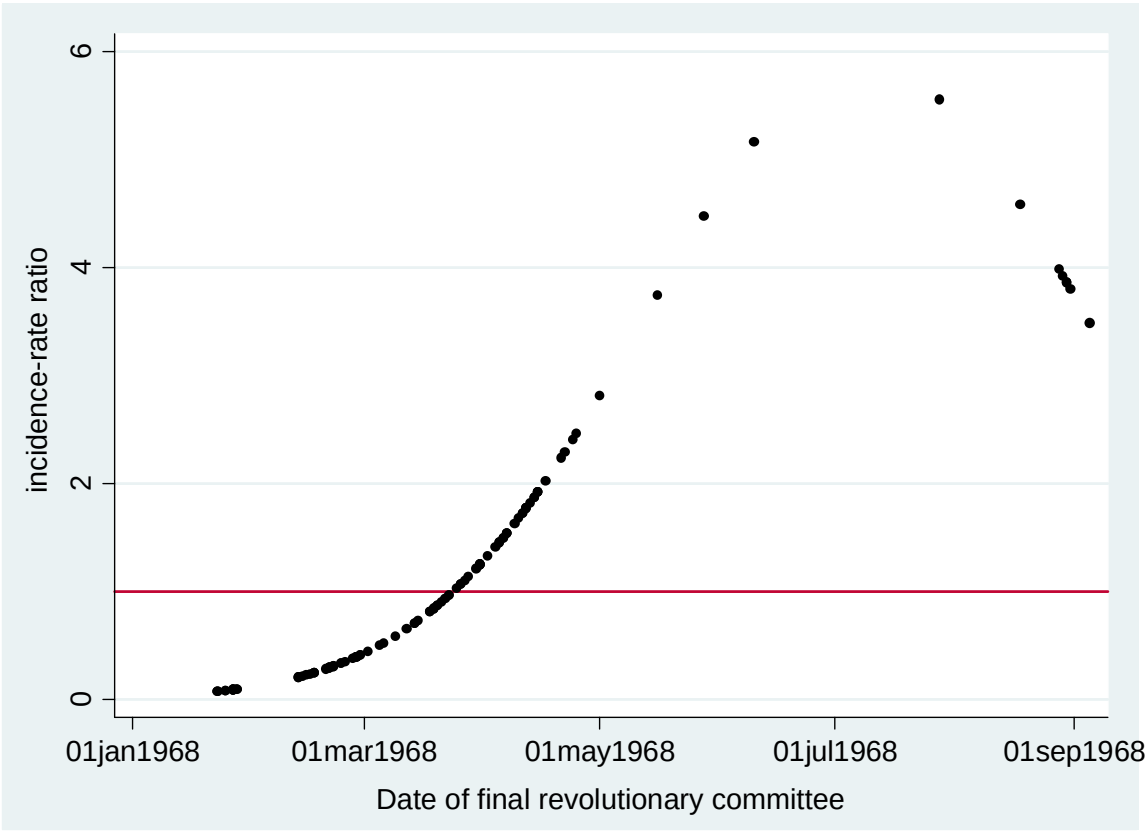
Source: China Compendium of Statistics 1949-2004, Walder and Su 2002
Note: there is no data available on Tibet

Figure 6.2 Armed conflicts and reported death in Guangdong province, 1967[13]



[13] For the city of Guangzhou, the original county annals dataset only contains 12 records of armed conflicts events in Guangzhou. I add another 42 records based on the account of Hai Feng's book *Cultural Revolution in the Canton Area*, pp. 150-180. The rest county data is from the county annals dataset.

Figure 6.3 Association between factional killings and political vacuum in local government in Guangdong province, Jan-Sep 1968



Chapter 7

Toward a Dynamic Analysis of Historical Episodes

"One does not apply theory to history; rather one uses history to develop theory."[1]

(Stinchcombe 1978: 1)

Drawing on a range of new local sources, I have attempted to demonstrate a dynamic, process-based account of political alliance and factional violence during the Chinese Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1968. I argue that the fundamental dynamics of contentious conflict during this phase of the Cultural Revolution is about mass actor's choice.

The structural narratives present a static image of social mobilization. This model defines factional alignment as a form of interest group politics, attributing political choices to participants' pre-existing sociopolitical status quo and thus pits different social groups against one another. As a result, mass actors in structurally similar positions would make *similar* political choices with fixed interests and consistent identities that lead them into two clearly-defined antagonistic sides. In contrast to this traditional interpretation, I argue that factional alignment was rooted in actors' political interactions in a rapidly evolving phase of the conflict, rather than rising from the tensions that pre-existed between different socio-economic layers of society. The choices of actors were highly circumscribed by their entrenched local

[1] Arthur Stinchcombe, *Theoretical Methods in Social History* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1978), p. 1.

political contexts that forced them into decisions largely dictated by the course of events. As a result, mass actors in structurally similar positions would make *different* political choices with fluid interests and flowing identities and tactically choose their factional camp.

The Turning Point

Since every issue that arose in the course of the Cultural Revolution was a source of dispute and every occasion an opportunity to fight, so the key is to identify those critical movement moments that significantly changed the formation of these rebel groups and their political alliance. In the case of Guangzhou, I have identified three such crucial turning points.

The first turning point for the emergence of factional spit is power seizure in January 1967 (chapter 2). Factional cleavage originally developed as a split between rebel groups that had been united in the effort to overthrow the provincial authorities in late 1966. Their split developed only gradually, over the timing and format of the January 22 power seizure, and in their varied relationships with military authorities ordered by Beijing to "support the left". The issues that divided the two groups at each step of the way were about the power seizure itself, not the features of the political and social status quo ante. By tracing through the process through which this split developed, it becomes clear that Guangzhou's famous factions were rival rebel groups, former allies in attacking the status quo that fell out over different stances that they adopted in early 1967, which subsequently deepened their antagonism toward

one another and their relationships with local military authorities and actors in Beijing.

The second turning point is the military intervention in spring 1967 (chapter 3). By the time the army entered into the movement, Guangzhou's political forces were deeply fragmented. Rebel groups formerly united in opposition to the Guangzhou authorities were now on opposite sides, and groups initially united in support of the power seizure had also divided against one another. Without clearly defined political objectives and targets in the task of "supporting the left", the local army quickly became entangled in the rivalries between the two rebel factions. Under tight military control, the movement participants were compelled to make adaptive choices. Accordingly, by March 1967, the central axis of political conflicts in Guangzhou essentially shifted from a pro and anti power seizure split to a pro and anti PLA split. In mid-April, Premier Zhou Enlai's visit in Guangzhou only brought more confusion to the local political circumstances and sharply changed the balance of power between the deeply fragmented factions. His mediations eventually instigated a major realignment of rebel forces into two city-wide political alliance know as Red Flag and East Wind.

The third one is the establishment of the revolutionary committees in early 1968 (chapter 5). As large-scale armed battles between rebel forces broke out across China in the summer of 1967 (chapter 4), the central leadership decided to pull back and impose revolutionary committees in every province. However, the process of rebuilding political order was prolonged and contentious. In Guangzhou, rival factions

were trapped in a fierce factional competition for their relative influence and positions in the new government apparatus. Particularly divisive was the issue of cadre representation. The questions of which cadres from the old government were to be purged and which ones were to be installed in the new government became intensely contested. The two rebel groups competed to attract cadres to their side. When a cadre joined one faction, he or she immediately became a target for repudiation by the other. Each side had powerful incentives to denounce the cadres stood on the other side and defend those who pledged to it. This bitter rivalry push the center to forge agreement about the leadership of the new revolutionary committee—or more accurately, force the local rebels to accept the candidates ultimately decided upon by Mao himself.

The Grand Picture

What larger implications does a local study contribute to the broader understanding of the Chinese Cultural Revolution? How does the factional behaviors of ordinary social actors in places like Guangzhou shape communist history?

First, this study reveals the fundamental nature of contentious conflict during this phase of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Factional alliance, which has conventionally been understood as rooted in the status difference between the supporters and opponents of the status quo—with the former protecting the political status quo and the latter challenging the existing structure of power, in fact resulted from tactical conflicts between rival rebel factions through a series of political interactions. Movement actors tactically manipulated political messages sending from

Beijing as well as Mao's quotations to shape their own interpretations. During this process, they developed their own "language" to legitimatize their actions and abuse the others as "reactionary". The conflicts progressively hardened and eventually erupted into full battles. These rival factions, however, did not display consistently identifiable differences in their political orientations toward the Chinese social and political structure. In his recent study of factional conflicts in Hunan, Wu reveals a similar political scenario:

> "The mass political activism characteristic of the Cultural Revolution was not necessarily the direct expression of preexisting social discontent and grievances. Rather, this activism was often the result of novel forms of political language and action in a turbulent process that few participants fully comprehended."[2]

Second, this study adds another facet to the current reevaluation of the red guard period at the *local* level. Like many recent micro-level studies,[3] the present research also breaks from totalitarianism,[4] two-line struggle,[5] and elite politics approaches[6] at

[2] Wu Yiching, The *Cultural Revolution at the Margins: Chinese Socialism in Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 51.
[3] For example, Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder's study on Nanjing, Wu Yiching's study on Changsha.
[4] This approach romanticizes the aim of the Cultural Revolution as Mao's policy to pursue the socialist idealism. It is Mao who asserted the absoluteness and infallibility of his leadership and provided the opportunity for and sanctioned the attacks on authority. Thus the nature of Mao's intervention and his political style were crucial in determining the form which the revolution assumed. See Stuart Schram, "The Party in Chinese communist ideology", *The China Quarterly*, No. 38 (1969), pp. 1-26; Leonard Schapiro and John Lewis, "The roles of the monolithic party under the totalitarian leader", *The China Quarterly*, No. 40 (1969), pp. 39-64.
[5] This approach portrays the Cultural Revolution as being involved a "line struggle" between the "proletarian revolutionary headquarters/line/road" led by Mao and the "bourgeois reactionary line" led by Liu and Deng. The "line struggle" could be understood as the factionalism model which focuses on the power-political machinations leading up to the event. See Lowell Dittmer, "'Line Struggle' in theory and practice: The origins of the Cultural Revolution reconsidered", *The China Quarterly*, No. 72 (1977), pp. 675-712.
[6] This approach posits a framework of inherent, informal elite factionalism centering on personal elite relations. Different groups of elites, whose power was based on clientelistic ties, were in a perpetual struggle for domination. See Andrew Nathan, "A factional model for CCP politics", *The China Quarterly*, No. 53 (1973), pp. 34-66.

the top level in studying the Cultural Revolution and extends our understanding of the Chinese politics at the grassroots level. If the communist regime is characterized by fragmented authoritarianism and policies are increasingly distorted as they are handed down from each level of government and across regions,[7] what did the Cultural Revolution look like from the bottom-up perspective? If we no longer believe in a monolithic state that can essentially fiat policies into being, how and in what form did local actors enact or resist the policies of the Cultural Revolution, and what motivated them to act?

Answering these questions need a detailed reconstruction of the process in a single locality. This study shows that the fundamental divide between Guangzhou's rival factions was over concrete political issues between 1967 to 1968. Hong Yung Lee was the first to describe the Guangzhou factional conflict. In a highly influential analysis he designated Red Flag "radical" and East Wind "conservative", apparently because of their differing stance toward the nature of power seizure and the role of the armed forces. The army had been viewed by Lee as an inherently conservative force for its institutional interests to preserve the basic social order and political structures, and thus whatever faction opposed the armed forces had to be "radical" by definition while the factions who supported the military earned the label "conservative".[8] The characterization of radical-conservative split attained common usage, but it should be clear from this account that the stances of the two factions were situational and

[7] Kenneth G. Lieberthal, "Introduction: The fragmented authoritarianism model and its limitations", in Kenneth G. Lieberthal and David M. Lampton (eds.). *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 1-30.
[8] Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution*, pp. 336-338.

strategic in nature—their splits originated in tactical disagreements within the rebel ranks, and evolved into an intense rivalry over the terms of power seizure, the attitudes toward military forces, and the composition of a new political system. In short, these were predominantly local issues which profoundly shaped the pattern of mass contention that grew out of Mao's mobilization of a nation-wide popular insurgency. Similar entangling splits and alliances could have occurred in other localities. As such, the grand narrative of Cultural Revolution is due for a thoroughly contextualized re-examination in regions with variant degrees of local conflict.

Finally, reconstructing the process of local political conflict provides insight into subsequent political developments in the final years of the Mao era. There were continuities with the mobilizational dynamics and both state cadres and popular insurgents continued to draw heavily upon this heritage in ways at once familiar and inventive. At the top level, the national leadership skillfully honed the art of divide-and-rule strategy: creating both coalitions and cleavages among various social organizations with uncanny precision, engineering social fragmentation and widespread dependence upon the state. Such practice of "controlled polarization"[9] made the party-state capable of selectively mobilizing various segments of society over time.

At the bottom level, because the viability of an "exit" option was not possible until the later stage of the red guard movement, local actors were more likely to move forward in efforts to ride favorably on a changing wave of political tides and end up

[9] Elizabeth J. Perry, "Studying Chinese politics: Farewell to revolution?" *The China Journal*, No. 57 (2007), pp. 1-22.

on the winning side. As a result, factions fought urgently to ensure that their opponents would not gain the upper hand and victimize them afterwards. If they lost the battle, it "would lead at best to drastically reduced career prospects and at worst to imprisonment or physical harm."[10] This was a key feature of the institutional logic of the Chinese polity in which the ordinary citizens were strictly monitored and labeled politically in ways that affected their welfare and futures. To avoid the harsh fate of being political victims, people tended to respond sensitively and practically to the politics. The more intense the politics became, the more sensitive the actors responded. In this regard, conducting tactical maneuver were the fundamental incentives to survive under conditions of limited information and uncertainty about future outcomes. This logic was evident during the "Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius" campaign in 1974 in Nanjing, where local veteran cadres directed the campaign against army officers who dominated the government apparatus. These ordinary cadres had suffered in the purges in the early phase of the Cultural Revolution, but when sensing a changing political opportunity, they tactically steered the campaign to attack military rivals in increasing their access to the halls of power as their preferred results.[11]

Theoretical Implications

Since social structural interpretation first appeared in the late 1970s, this model

[10] Andrew Walder, *Fractured Rebellion: The Beijing Red Guard Movement* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 260.
[11] Dong Guoqiang and Andrew Walder, "Nanjing's 'Second Cultural Revolution' of 1974", *The China Quarterly*, No. 212 (2012), pp. 893-918.

has been gradually established as the main research agenda and has been widely incorporated into standard histories of the Mao era.[12] Works inspired by this model continued to be constructed in the reform era, explaining the role of interest groups in both policy-making and policy implementation process,[13] in the context of long-term economic and social transformation bargaining among conservative bureaucrats and radical marketers,[14] among foreign investors and state agents,[15] among red capitalists and mass constituencies,[16] and among labor protestors and managerial elites,[17] or on a local level for towns and villages as solidary groups.[18] In short, scholars tend to agree that the direction of an individual's political action is a result of their position in previous social and political structures, and therefore social conflicts are derived from actors' preexisting occupational status, social positions, and political beliefs.

More contingent, process-based account has been developed only in the past several years and is just beginning to attract scholarly interest from political sociologists, network researchers, and social contention theorists. As Randall Collins

[12] For example, see Harry Harding, "The Chinese state in crisis", in Roderick MacFarquhar and John K. Fairbank (eds.). *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 15 (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 107-217; Yin Hongbiao, "Ideological and political tendencies of factions in the Red Guard movement", *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 5, No. 13 (1996), pp. 269-281; Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and after: A History of the People's Republic* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1999); Qian Liqun, *Mao Zedong shidai he hou Mao Zedong shidai: Lingyizhong lishi* shuxie *(The Mao Zedong Era and Post Mao Era: An Alternative Writing of History*) (Taipei: Linking Books, 2012).

[13] Victor C. Falkenheim, "Citizen and group politics in China: An introduction", in Victor Falkenheim (ed.). *Citizens and Groups in Contemporary China* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 1987), pp. 1-15; Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[14] Dorothy Solinger, *Chinese Business under Socialism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).

[15] Margaret M. Pearson, *Joint Ventures in the People's Republic of China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).

[16] Bruce J. Dickson, *Red Capitalists in China: The Party, Private Entrepreneurs, and Prospects for Political Change* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Jie Chen and Bruce J. Dickson, *Allies of the State: China's Private Entrepreneurs and Democratic Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[17] Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

[18] Lilly Tsai, "Solidary groups, informal accountability and local public goods provision in rural China", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 101, No. 2 (2007), pp. 355-372; Lilly Tsai, *Accountability Without Democracy: Solidary Groups and Public Goods Provision in Rural China* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

states: “A more advanced theory of conflict will tell us more about the process of emergent factionalization, that is, conflict creating its own identities as it goes along, based more on tactics than on ideologies and interests.”[19]

First, I take context as a prerequisite mechanism in generating political cleavages and identities. Social processes are deeply embedded in the local contexts, but *not* all the local contexts are equally able to sustain a processual development. Only sudden and swift *shifts* within local conditions can alter actors’ dependency on their prior structural positions, and present new and difficult scenarios enforcing actors to make inconsistent choices. Sudden shifts are often produced by rapid changes in the practices of political institutions or a complex interplay of bureaucratic politics that are not predicted by the pre-existing structural settings. These rapid changes disrupt continuity and coherence in circumstances when actors conceive the consequences of their actions. Consequently, complex series of shifts influence the process of group formation and the building of collective identities that can take on different forms under different circumstances. This contextual dynamism means that “social processes are inherently discontinuous and open-ended.”[20] Therefore, a series of short-run portraits “should integrate into a continuous account of the process by which collective action changes and flows.”[21]

Second, time matters.[22] Sztompka reminds us that while some of processes may

[19] Randall Collins, “C-escalation and d-escalation: A theory of the time-dynamics of conflict”, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (2012), pp. 1-20.
[20] Andrew M. Pettigrew, “What is a processual analysis?” *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (1997), pp. 337-348, at p. 339.
[21] Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 1978), p. 229.
[22] Andrew Abbott, *Time Matters: On Theory and Method* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Ronald A. Francisco, *Collective Action Theory and Empirical Evidence* (New York: Springer, 2010).

be linear, consecutive, and cumulative, the others may be non-linear, discrete and transformational.[23] Therefore, processual investigations should take time dimension into account in research of political contention and social movements. Timing is "the actors' adjustment to the changing rhythm or tempos of a process."[24] Starting from the same initial conditions, the basic elements (i.e., actors, agendas, targets, and so on) of a contentious episode invariably develop in different sequence, generate new identities and political divisions at different points in time, and eventually project varying circumstantial effects with different scales of influence.

Third, actors' choice could be made largely outside organizational networks, or not occurring despite the presence of organizational networks. In many strong authoritarian countries, intermediate associations and organizations are underdeveloped and autonomous civil associations beyond state control are strictly deconstructed. Individuals are usually directly attached with the state and all of the social groups are vertically subordinate to the state apparatus. This political arrangement has been most evident in the state socialism context, such as the Soviet Union and Eastern European politics.[25] As a result, formal organizational networks that affect participants' choice-sets for their political stances are not the primary base for movement mobilization. Instead, the institutional structure in a highly coercive and repressive regime that supposedly prevents organized interests may facilitate spontaneous collective action based on "unorganized interests", because "the

[23] Piotr Sztompka, *The Sociology of Social Change* (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1993).
[24] Chares Demetriou, "Processual comparative sociology: Building on the approach of Charles Tilly", *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2012), pp. 51-65.
[25] Roman Laba, "Worker roots of solidarity", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (1986), pp. 47-67.

institutional structure reduces the barriers to collective action by producing 'large numbers' of individuals that cut across the boundaries of organizations and social groups."[26]

Fourth, there are underlying rationality in actors' choice-sets and the subsequent course of actions. When actors are forced to make a decision at specific movement junctures, they are likely to seek protection from "the critical mass".[27] If a significant number of people behave in the same direction, individuals would be protected by the size of crowd from suffering a punishment. Therefore, each person's propensity to act is contingent on a threshold of others, and a certain level of threshold has to be crossed before making wise decisions.[28] However, in most occasions, rapid fluctuations in the local environments require actors to act quickly and to make immediate responses without considering other players' action. Since contextual shifts place limits on actors' ability to make level-headed choices, the safest strategy is to side with the winning side rather than sticking to one's structural sources of interests.

Another element in actors' rational calculus concerns the cost of failure to make choices in due time. As Hirschman famously argues, members of an organization are likely to tolerate the frustrations when the costs linked to "exit" are higher than any benefits of "voice".[29] Similarly, if the costs of not participating outweigh any benefits of refusing in collective action, actors may be propelled to move forward with few

[26] Zhou Xueguang, "Unorganized interests and collective action in Communist China", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (1993), pp. 54-73.
[27] Pamela Oliver, Gerald Marwell and Ruy Teixeira, "A theory of the critical mass. I. interdependence, group heterogeneity, and the production of collective action", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 91, No. 3 (1985), pp. 522-556.
[28] Mark Granovetter, "Threshold models of collective behavior", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 83, No. 6 (1978), pp. 1420-1443.
[29] Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

alternatives.[30] This is especially true in a closed political setting. If the viability of an "exit" or emigrate option is not possible as the case in the collapse of the East German in 1989,[31] individuals are more likely to choose to join struggles because they simply fear punishment if they deviate from an intended course as their bureaucratic superiors expect.

Parallel Narratives

The political movement during the Chinese Cultural Revolution is peculiar, but the underlying social logic is not very peculiar. While I place factional contentions of 1966-68 in communist China at the center of the analysis, the mechanisms and processes I have outlined in the contextual process model have direct implications for understanding contentious conflict in many other social contexts and political settings.

In China's reform era, a series of short-run developments turned 1989 Tiananmen movement into a sudden and severe political "perfect storm". Starting from a spontaneous wave of grievances for the reputed reformer, Hu Yaobang, on April 15, in the time frame of less more than two months, a student demonstration had transformed into a nationwide popular uprising, and ultimately a ruthless military crackdown on June 4 led by a government which was avowedly representative of its people. Such brutal conflict between the Communist Party and the students was not rooted inherently in their pre-existing contradictory political beliefs and

[30] Andrew Walder, "Collective behavior revisited: Ideology and politics in the Chinese Cultural Revolution", *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1994), pp. 400-421.
[31] Steve Pfaff and Hyojoung Kim, "Exit-voice dynamics in collective action: An analysis of emigration and protest in the East German revolution", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109, No. 2 (2003), pp. 401-444.

visions—whilst the students wanted more representation and democracy,[32] the government, cautious of the quickening pace of reform and a rising tide of political dissent, was innately opposed to the ideology of democracy.[33] Instead, the increasing conflict of their interests grew, developed and took on its own "honor-bound" identity as the process evolved.[34] Thereby, the only way for the government to stabilize and gain control of the situation was to usher in violence and repression.

In the early stages of the protests, none of the Party members had envisioned a solution of repressive crackdown for the protests. However, the political struggle among the top Party leaders led to conflicting verdicts and wavering responses from the government, leaving the public disoriented and bewildered. Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang thought that the correct handling of the movement "along the principles of democracy and law" may "boost China's reform, including political reform."[35] His political rivalry, Premier Li Peng, insisted crushing the movement to the ground as he viewed it as a direct threat to his political power.[36] On April 26, the publication of an editorial to "take a stand against student turmoil" had drastically changed the nature and pace of the movement into a political upheaval across all different social classes as a reaction to the editorial. The number of participants rose

[32] Andrew Walder, "The political sociology of the Beijing upheaval of 1989", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, No. 5 (1989), pp. 30-40; Xu Luo, "The 'Shekou Storm': Changes in the mentality of Chinese youth prior to Tiananmen", *The China Quarterly*, No. 142 (1995), pp. 541-572.
[33] Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 5-9.
[34] Craig Calhoun, "The problem of identity in collective action", in Joan Huber (ed.). *Macro-Micro Linkages in Sociology* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991), pp. 51-75.
[35] Zhao Ziyang's diary is a translation based on the thirty tapes Zhao had secretly recorded between 1999 and 2000, during his sixteen-year long house arrest. See Zhao Ziyang, *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Zhao Ziyang* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2009), p. 17.
[36] Li Peng's diary was known to have been ready for publishing around the time of 2004. However, due to blocks by the Chinese government, his diary was only able to be published in 2010 by a small publishing house in the United States. See Li Peng, *Guanjian shike: Li Peng liusi riji* (*Li Peng's Diary: A Critical Moment*) (Los Angeles, CA: Xi Dian Publishing House, 2010), pp. 23-27.

dramatically from 60,000 on April 24 to 250,000 on April 27.[37] Immediately afterwards, Zhao Ziyang gave a speech on May 4 and instructed the government to adopt a more lenient hand towards the students. Such quick shifts in Party's directive meant that the Party's approaches towards the student protests were never clear enough to be systematically carried through and implemented, and thereby divided the students' alliance from within.[38]

After Zhao's speech, the movement began to "lose steam".[39] Many of the moderate students had been persuaded and started returning to class. However, some more militant students decided to reignite the protests by taking a hunger strike as "the last fight for success".[40] On May 13, over 800 students were sitting in starvation on Tiananmen Square.[41] The consequence of this radical gesture of students has in turn signified the end of Zhao's political career as his liberal approach had proved to be unsuccessful.[42] Li Peng and other conservatives now had strong enough evidence to persuade Deng Xiaoping to their course of action that there was now no other alternative other than to crush the protests with military force.[43] The 1989 Tiananmen case evidently displays a dynamic ensemble of movement processes. A series of contingent events created an increasingly boisterous internal division both within the

[37] Deng Fang, "Information gaps and unintended outcomes of social movements: The 1989 Chinese student movement", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 102, No. 4 (1997), pp. 1085-1112.
[38] Zhao Dingxin, *The Power of Tiananmen: State-Society Relations and the 1989 Beijing Student Movement* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 159-161.
[39] Chai Ling, *A Heart for Freedom: The Remarkable Journey of a Young Dissident, Her Daring Escape, and Her Quest to Free China's Daughters* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011), p. 125.
[40] Feng Congde, *Liusi riji: Guangchang shang de gongheguo* (*A Tiananmen Journal*) (Hong Kong: Chen Zhong Publishing House, 2009), p. 269.
[41] Ibid., p. 283.
[42] Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 611-612.
[43] Li Peng, *Li Peng's Diary*, pp. 94-101; Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, pp. 616-619.

Communist Party and within the student movement itself, made them more susceptible to the other's responses, and eventually led to the June massacre that neither party had intended at the very beginning.

In other state socialist societies, for example in Poland, a Polish worker who identified himself as a member of the working class was presumed to have identical political interests with other workers.[44] However, the strikes of June 1976 in Poland also showed evidences of a fractured identity among members of the Polish working class.[45] Studies also find that interest-based cooperation in highly clustered networks is more prone to defections in a repressive regime.[46] For example, in East Germany in 1989-90 where "niche networks" of trustworthy relationships nurtured the emergence of revolutionary mass mobilization,[47] such dense clusters of strong social network were also highly vulnerable to local erosion, leading to divisions and re-alignments among movement contenders.[48]

In transitional economies, Beissinger records a very similar movement process during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine paralleled with the Chinese case in the Cultural Revolution. According to Beissinger, the Orange protests in November 2004 represented more a short-term fluctuation in activism than a long-term general

[44] As Friedman and McAdam argue, a Polisher worker's identity would "give sufficient cues to the receiver of this message that he was committed to advancing the cause of Polish workers." See Debra Friedman and Doug McAdam, "Identity incentives and activism: Networks, choices and the life of a social movement", in Carol Mueller and Aldon Morris (eds.). *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 156-173.

[45] Michael Bernhard, "The strikes of June 1976 in Poland", *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol.1, No.3 (1987), pp. 363-392.

[46] Michael D. Cohen, Rick L. Riolo and Robert Axelrod, "The role of social structure in the maintenance of cooperative regimes", *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2001), pp. 5-32.

[47] Beate Volker and Henk Flap, "Weak ties as a liability: The case of East Germany", *Rationality and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (2001), pp. 397–428.

[48] Steve Pfaff, "Collective identity and informal groups in revolutionary mobilization: East Germany in 1989", *Social Forces*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (1996), pp. 91-118; Steve Pfaff and Hyojoung Kim, "Exit-voice dynamics in collective action: An analysis of emigration and protest in the East German revolution", *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 109, No. 2 (2003), pp. 401-444.

transformation in societal values due to generational change or the economic transition. In the pre-revolutionary years, Ukrainian politics was deeply dominated by regional divisions and the competing visions of national identity associated with them. However, the so-called "Miracle on the Maidan"—an extraordinary high level of demonstration at Maidan and similar mobilizations that occurred in other cities across Ukrainian—was not just a reflection of those pre-existing structural conditions, but was connected in multiple ways to a set of contingencies evolved during the movement. A diverse coalition of participants was motivated in the context of a stolen election, "through the emotional reactions that these incite, the shifting opportunities they afford, or the heightened uncertainties they involve."[49]

Final Remarks

Yet, contextual process model still needs further theoretical refinement of how the movements develop in a dynamic process in open political regimes. Students of social movements have often suspected that models drawn from cases in North America and Western Europe might not hold true in less liberal political settings.[50] Likewise, scholars have also doubted that models developed through analysis of movements in authoritarian regimes might not be applicable to a Western open

[49] Mark R. Beissinger, "Mechanisms of Maidan: The structure of contingency in the making of the Orange Revolution", *Mobilization*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2011), pp. 25-43.

[50] For example, see Vincent Boudreau, "Northern theory, southern protest: Opportunity structure analysis in cross-national perspective", *Mobilization*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1996), pp. 175-189; Doug McAdam, "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (eds.). *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 23-40; Doug McAdam and Hilary Boudet, *Putting Social Movements in their Place: Explaining Opposition to Energy Projects in the United States, 2000–2005* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

political context.[51] In particular, the scholarships on the study of Chinese politics tend to ignore the creativity and functionality of the China's own home-grown institutions. Being "theoretically impoverished,"[52] China is more like a testing ground for Western theories rather than fertile soil for the formulation of new analytical approaches.

This point has obvious surface plausibility because there are identifiably opposite logic of institutional arrangements between the two political systems. Authoritarian regimes usually employ a closed and coercive political structure, and thus offer narrow political opportunities that can shift along with elite coalitions, or the interactions of contenders with authorities.[53] On the contrary, democratic regimes are typically associated with open mobilization, normalized political participation, multiple choices with "exit" option, and decreased levels of violent contentions.[54] Thus conceived, more subtle process-sensitive analyses of collective action across varied kinds of political contexts will help scholars better understand the processual dynamics of contentious conflict.

[51] Zhou Xueguang, "Unorganized interests and collective action in Communist China", *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (1993), pp. 54-73; Zhao Dingxin, "Authoritarian state and contentious politics", in Kevin T. Leicht and J. Craig Jenkins (eds.). *Handbook of Politics: State and Society in Global Perspective* (New York, NY: Springer 2009), pp. 459-476.
[52] Harry Harding, "The study of Chinese politics: Toward a third generation of scholarship", *World Politics*, 36 (1984), pp. 284-307, at p. 294.
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