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# Anti-Inland nuclear power plant stakeholders as strategic deliberators

## A case study on Jiangxi Pengze project and Wang Jiang Si Lao 江西彭澤核電項目“望江四老”的個案研究

DENG, Lifeng 鄧理峰  
School of Communication  
Sun Yat-sen University  
Guangzhou, China  
[dlfeng@sysu.edu.cn](mailto:dlfeng@sysu.edu.cn)

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## Outline

- Background: The inland nuclear power debate
- The Case: Wang Jiang Si Lao and the Jiangxi Pengze Project (2012-now)
- My research: methods and some preliminary findings





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# Background: The inland nuclear power debate and Anti-nuclear activists in China Mainland





# The inland nuclear debates in China

- After the Fukushima accident, there also has been fierce debates on whether or not to construct inland nuclear power plants after 2011 in China. These are called “inland nuclear debates” in China.
  - Nuclear expert: It’s nonsense to use the term “inland nuclear” since there is no difference between inland nuclear and costal nuclear projects in terms of technology and safety concerns.
  - Activist: it’s significant! More than 400 million Chinese lived in Yangtze River Basin, which is one of the most densely populated area in China.
- And the debate centering on the Pengze Project was regarded as the starting point of this debate, which has been going on till now since 2012.
- The inland nuclear debates regarded as one of the main reasons for the current stagnation of the proposed three inland nuclear power projects since 2012

## Three types of Anti-Inland NPP activists in Mainland China

Based on their distance from the decision power, I try to differentiate three types of activists:

Activist type	Representative figure or organizations
<b>TYPE 1</b> <b>In-system political, cultural, and technology elites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science 何祚麻院士 He Zuoxiu ;</li> <li>Wang Yinan 王亦楠, Researcher in Energy Policy, State Council's Think Tank, Development Research Center (highly productive in writing anti-nuclear articles) ;</li> <li>全國政協委員(NPPCC)、河北遠洋運輸集團董事長高彥明 (核電行業的批評者) ;</li> <li>-安邦諮詢董事長陳功, Cheng Gong, Chairman, Anbound Consulting</li> <li>Former Vice Minister of Nuclear Industry Ministry 李玉侖 (核電非清潔能源, 2015) ;</li> <li>北京大學物理學院副教授雷奕安 (核電行業的長期批評者) ;</li> <li>原中核集團總工程師溫鴻鈞/核電專家張祿慶 (AP1000技術的批評者) ;</li> </ul>
<b>TYPE 2</b> <b>Stakeholders of Nuclear Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>安徽望江縣民意代表“望江四老” (江西彭澤核電項目利益方) ;</li> <li>廣西防城港及北海市人大常委會 (防城港/北海核電項目利益方, suspended) ;</li> <li>山東濱州市人大和政協 (河北海興核電專案利益方, under construction, another nuclear project located on the inter provincial boundary)</li> </ul>
<b>TYPE 3</b> <b>Citizen Activists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blog post “Nuclear Power will ruin China” authored by 吳輝 (soil chemistry engineer by training, Teacher, Hunan Loudi Vocation College) viewed more than 1 million times.</li> <li>湖北武漢“百湖之友” 張承建, NGO President, Friends of Hundred Lakes</li> <li>網友“太極驢老董” (董毅, Retired civil servant, Shenzhen Environment Protection Bureau)</li> <li>李兆民 (湖南益陽, Retired Engineer, CNNC, now lived in Hunan Yiyang, where is close to Taohuajiang Nuclear Project)</li> </ul>



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# The Case: Wang Jiang Si Lao and the Jiangxi Pengze Project (2012-now)



# Brief intro to the Jiangxi Pengze Project



- Jiangxi Pengze Project is an inland nuclear power plant located on the inter provincial boundary between Jiangxi and Anhui Province.
- the Project is one of the three pioneer inland NPPs in China, sited in 1980s and its construction started in late 2010, but it has been suspended after the Fukushima incident in 2011.

The most disputed one among the three pioneer inland projects, and Pengze Project became the benchmark and bottleneck for inland NPPs in China, which undoubtedly will impact the strategic structure and layout of NPP in China.



## Who are Wang Jiang Si Lao (望江四老)?



from left to right:

Tao Guoqiang(陶國強),  
Wang Jinzhou (汪進舟),  
Fang Guangwen (方光文),  
Wang Nianze (王念澤)

- WJ Si Lao are four senior retired CCP cadres in Wangjiang County, who organized protests against the Pengze Project shortly after the Fukushima incident. Their respective former positions include Chairman of WJ People's Political Consultative Conference, President of WJ Court, Mayor, etc.
- As the “WJ Si Lao” label has been used for more than six years, it's already become a brand name and continues to be used despite the change in its membership
- Because of health problems, Tao Guoqiang and Wang Nianze were succeeded by another two senior retired cadres in 2016.

# Why research on Wang Jiang Si Lao?

- Four reasons:
  - a) The Pengze Project and WJ Si Lao's protest was seen as the inception of inland NPP policy disputes in China.
  - b) Compared to other anti-nuclear activists in China, the discourse and actions of WJ Si Lao were basically more rational and constructive, which are closer to rational public deliberation.
  - c) And over the past six years, they composed and left behind a large amount of articles, internet posts, and media coverage, which provided us with a sound basis for in-depth analysis.
  - d) WJ Si Lao are no ordinary people: they are local political and cultural elites. But they are relatively powerless, even disempowered by the powerful nuclear power corporations.
- There are thousands of different types of social protest taken place every year, but few public deliberation events happened in China. The WJSL case will be illuminating for us to explore into the potentials, possibilities, and challenges for strategic stakeholders to engage in public deliberation and deliberative governance.
- This case study will be valuable for us to explore into the important problem of inequality in public deliberation, in particular how WJ Si Lao as strategic deliberators had successfully changed the unequal conditions, and to identify the institutional and structural constraints that are to be overcome in the context of authoritarian deliberation such as in China.





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# Research questions





# Research questions

1

How WJ Si Lao as strategic deliberators had successfully changed the unequal conditions for deliberation? To what extent and under what conditions did they break up the organizational and institutional inequality and earn (possible) equal status in the deliberation process?

2

How do deliberation institutions function in China? Why the proposed empowering institutions, such as Social Stability Risk Assessment Act (2012), etc. (to name a few...), cannot empowering citizens like WJ Si Lao? On the contrary, these institutions were even used to disempower them?

3

What are the impacts of their protest? What are their contributions to deliberative governance? And what are the problems or challenges still to be overcome ?



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# Research methods



# Research Methods

## Case study

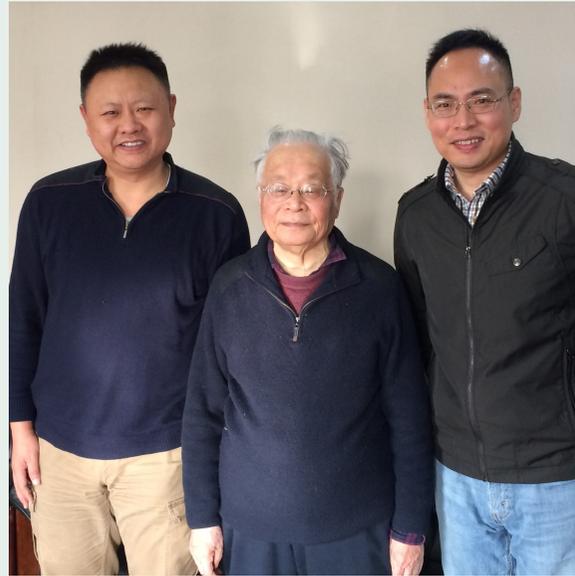
- 本論文將以彭澤核電項目中的利益方“望江四老”作為個案進行考察。之所以選擇“望江四老”，目前影響力比較大，是國家內陸核電政策爭議的發端。是相對理性、建設性的批評者。

## In-depth interview

- 對四老做深度訪談、電話訪談，瞭解他們的行動邏輯、過程、成效，以及成效的邊界與限制；
- 同時，也對內陸核電爭議中比較活躍且有影響力的其他反方異見群體做深度訪談，比如何祚庥及王亦楠、《核電將毀滅中國》作者吳輝等。
- 訪談核電工業界的相關人士，以瞭解反方異見群體的社會影響成效、邊界和限制；

## Content and textual analysis

- 為了考察四老作為彭澤核電專案之利益方身份、訴求及行動的合法性，重點分析四老關於彭澤核電專案的兩份陳情書、《核殤之鑒》等文獻，嘗試做內容及話語分析。
- 主要回答兩個問題：四老作為利益方其訴求的合法性、緊迫性，以及其抗爭行動的邏輯及合法性；



we did dozens of in-depth interviews, with anti-nuclear activists, nuclear industry managers, local government officials, and collected all kinds of printed stuff, visited the Pengze Project site, etc.



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# Some preliminary findings





# Si Lao's protest: the process

## Phase 1 Try but failed to get noticed

2011.7  
四老將“停建陳情書”廣為發給國務院溫總理、副總理、環保部、安徽、江西、安慶等。無反響。僅有安慶市政協退休主席回饋。

2011.6.16  
方光文經過案頭準備，完成了“停建彭核陳情書”

2011.7  
方光文檢索到何祚庥“反對核電大躍進”的文章

## Phase 2 Striving for government support

2011.7.29  
Via WJ townsman association in Beijing, Mr. Fang got contact with HE Zuoxiu並電郵給何“停建陳情書”

2011.8.10  
何通過中科院領導上報給了溫家寶總理和李克強副總理

2011.8  
溫家寶批示了四老的“停建陳情書”  
**Premier Wen gave written instructions**

2011.8  
環保部、安徽省環保廳、安慶市、望江縣等各級政府紛紛回饋四老

2011.8.18  
江西省國防科工辦組團到望江調研，遭到冷遇

2011.11  
望江縣長王進簽發《關於請求停止江西彭澤核電廠專案建設的報告》（望政（2011）56號），上報上級政府。

## Phase 3 Increased media exposure

2011.12.20  
四老將陳情書投稿給中國青年報、南方週末等媒體。

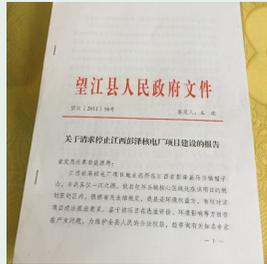
2012.1.12  
“停建陳情書”放上了“望江論壇”，後廣被轉發到國內熱門網站，迅速升溫。



# Si Lao's protest: the process

## Phase 3 Increased media exposure

## Phase 4 Inland nuclear policy adjustment



2012.3  
安徽省政協和人大會議，彭澤核電成為兩會代表熱議話題，並成為安徽省政協熱門提案。激發媒體關注。

2012.3  
安徽省長李斌表態，安徽是產煤大省，不著急上核電專案

2016.3  
十三五期間，積極開展內陸核電前期論證工作。內陸核電開工建設沒有明確時間表。

2012.2.2  
望江縣政府的紅頭公文，由縣科協幹部王志鴻上傳到新浪微博，**which igniting the Pengze nuclear Issue**引爆了彭澤核電議題。媒體採訪絡繹不絕。

2012.3  
全國兩會。雙方兩會交鋒。安慶2位兩會代表提交彭澤核電提案。

2012.10.24  
**國務院常務會議，決定“十二五”期間不安排內陸核電專案。**

executive meeting of State Council ruled that no inland nuclear power project will be approved in the 12th five-year-plan period. (2012-2016) It's later extended to the 13<sup>th</sup> 5-year-plan period.





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# An evaluative analysis to WJ Si Lao's protest strategies



# Stakeholder's Influence Strategies: An Integrative Analysis Framework

## Dimensions

### Power

- A relationship among social actors in which one social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not otherwise have done. (Pfeffer, 1981)

### Legitimacy

- A generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions. (Suchman, 1995)

### Urgency

- The degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention.

## Activities/Indicators

- Insider activities (inside the political process)
- Outsider activities (outside formal policy process)
- Network activities (actors networking)

- Insider activities
- Outsider activities
- Network activities

- Insider activities
- Outsider activities
- Network activities

No matter power, legitimacy, or urgency, they all are dynamic, not static attributes of stakeholders. Besides that, to the decision makers, stakeholder's attributes are to some extent a type of subjective perception, which means they are more of a social construction rather than a objective existence

# WJ Si Lao influence strategies: evaluative analysis

Seek for  
POWER  
and  
social  
influence

## **INSIDER ACTIVITIES---to gain endorsement and support from governmental officials (public power)**

- Use their networks and loyalties in different level governments to gain access to decision makers;
- Seek endorsement, support, even pressure for policy adjustment and change, usually in private;

## **OUTSIDER ACTIVITIES---to gain access to news media (media power)**

- After gaining feedbacks from local, provincial, and central government in Aug. 2011, Si Lao started to disseminate their petition letter originally written to the Premier to the news media, and even posted it online **in Nov. 2011.**
- Tell alternative story and try to sway public opinion to inland NPPs. In fact, Si Lao's social mobilization was successful since local resident's negative sentiment to Pengze Project transformed into a huge pressure on social stability, which always presented a serious challenge for local government officials (even keeping them up at night).

## **NETWORK ACTIVITIES---to get together online to share information and produce alternative knowledge and facts on nuclear power (communicative power)**

- Published their book 《核殤之鑒》 (literally, *Using Nuclear Disaster as Reference*), which is a collection of their articles, media reports, and supporting commentaries by their loyalties.
- Published 《禁核長江》, which is a newsletter launched by Wang Jiang County Environmental Protection Association. Through frame alignment, WJ Si Lao extend their protest against Pengze Project to protest against all inland nuclear power plants, aiming to gain broader social support and to align with other anti-nuclear activist to build up connective actions.

## WJ Si Lao influence strategies: evaluative analysis

Framing their  
identity,  
claims, and  
actions as  
LEGITIMATE

- **INSIDER ACTIVITIES**

- As representatives of Wang Jiang County, Wang Jiang Si Lao as moral and strategic stakeholders of Pengze Project.

- **OUTSIDER ACTIVITIES**

- **Moral legitimacy of their claims.** e.g. Yangtze river has 800 kilometer in Anhui province and Pengze Project located at the entrance of Yangtze River to Anhui, in sharply contrast to the Project position in Jiangxi Province, which is exactly at the exit of Yangtze River to Jiangxi Province;
- **Protest within the law (Regulatory legitimacy).** **Three NO rules:** No street demonstration (不上街), no crossing the Yangtze River to protest in Jiangxi Province (不過江), and no interview by foreign news media (不接受外媒採訪);

- **NETWORK ACTIVITIES**

- Established a non-governmental organization in 2014, Wang Jiang County Environment Protection Association, to receive financial support from the local government, and organized their actions, as well as discipline their members actions.
- Participate in building up a loosely connected network nationwide, but never established an organization. Never used the word “anti-nuclear activists”, and always refused the media to use this word to name them. Always refuse interview request from foreign news media (no connections with any western adversary forces)

# WJ Si Lao influence strategies: evaluative analysis

Bring their  
**URGENT**  
claims to  
policy  
makers and  
into public  
spotlight

- **INSIDER AND OUTSIDER ACTIVITIES**
- **Criticality.** 1)severe environment impacts. such as liquid pollutions, air pollutions (radiative materials, etc.); 2) safety concerns. The technology of AP 1000, which is to be used in Pengze Project, is a newly developed reactor design and there still no much experience worldwide. Scale up such a technology in inland China means a huge lurking threats, etc.
- **Timing.** After Fukushima accident; During the two sessions, NPC and CPPCC; feedbacking to the Legal Affairs Office of the State Council And NPC on the draft of Nuclear Law in 2016.
- **Sympathy arousing.** The label “望江四老 WJ Si Lao” implicitly implies and annotates rich emotional connotation, and indicates that their protest against Pengze Project will be like a fight between David and Goliath.
- **NETWORK ACTIVITIES**
- Collectively produce totally different nuclear power discourse and alternative knowledge, to break down the knowledge monopoly by the nuclear energy industry
- E.g. nuclear power is not clean energy, not safe, and not low carbon emission, which sharply criticize and deconstruct the narratives by the nuclear industry.



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# WJ Si Lao protest: impacts evaluation



# WJ Si Lao protest: impacts evaluation

Framework for evaluating the impacts of Si Lao's protest

Dimension	Indicators
Social impacts	Did their protest entail more news coverage, stimulate other actions, or shape local resident's cognition and attitudes to inland nuclear power plant?
Impacts on public deliberation	Did their protest stimulate any changes of actions among different levels of government and the owners of Pengze Project, such as instructions, feedbacks, visits, etc. Did their protest add into the public sphere more diversified ideas and issues? And any problems and limits?
Impacts on nuclear power policies	Did their protest contribute to policy changes? Specifically, if there are any changes related to policy changes or adjustment? Did they stimulate decision-makers to make new commitments on inland NPP?

# Si Lao protest: impacts evaluation

dimension	indicators
social impacts	<p><b>Earn media coverage.</b> In the year, from December 2011 to December 2012, WJSL earned about 80 news report from more 50 news media across China.</p> <p><b>Set up an internet forum,</b> Focusing on Nuclear Power, at the Wang Jiang Forum (an internet site mainly for Wang Jiang County local residents), which is a very important online media for WJSL to mobilize local residents and public opinion.</p> <p><b>Build up a social network with other anti-nuclear activists nationwide.</b> Such as Wang Yinan, Wu Hui, etc. they cooperate and collaborate to publish articles and commentaries on the news media. They share information and encourage each other.</p>



# Si Lao protest: impacts evaluation

dimension	indicators
Impacts on public deliberation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Create necessary conditions for deliberation</b>, such as addressing the inequality and injustice. WJSL definitely are moral stakeholders of the Project but was intentionally overlooked before 2011.</li><li>• <b>Inject new ideas and issues on to the public agenda</b>. For example, the term “inland nuclear power” is such a type of new words which coined and used firstly by anti-inland nuclear activists. And right now, this word become very popular in the public debates on nuclear policy in China, though nuclear expert argue that this term makes no sense. Surely this term does not represent safety concerns from the technological perspective, but basically represents layperson’s concern on risk and safety from their perspective of experience knowledge.</li><li>• etc. (include problems, limits, and challenges to public deliberation)</li></ul>

# Si Lao protest: impacts evaluation

dimension	indicators
Impacts on nuclear power policies	<p>WJSL's protest might not directly impact on the outcome of the nuclear power policy making in China, but it's social impacts (shaping opinion formation and policy preferences among local residents) accumulated to an extent that it did add up the difficulties for the proposed nuclear power planning to come true.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2012年10月之後，包括彭澤核電在內的三個內陸核電專案全面停工。</li><li>• 2012年10月24日，國務院常務會議通過《能源發展“十二五”規劃》，以及《核電安全規劃（2011-2020）》和《核電中長期發展規劃（2011-2020）》，決定穩妥恢復沿海核電建設，但不開工內陸核電建設。</li><li>• 2016年11月7日，國家能源局通過《電力發展“十三五”規劃》，對於內陸核電的立場是“深入開展內陸核電研究論證和前期準備工作。認真做好核電廠址資源保護工作。”</li></ul>



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# **WJSL as strategic deliberators engaging in public deliberation: Contributions, Problems, and challenges**



## strategic deliberators engaging in public deliberation: Contributions, Problems, and challenges

- Contributions:
- **1) to an extent, WJSL's protest is instrumental to address the background inequalities and injustices** in the deliberative procedural and it enriched the public sphere by adding up new issues and opinions into public discussion. Or else which are usually silenced.
- **2) WJSL's protest works as a test to the deliberation institutions in China**, which were newly issued or had been issued for several years, but not much practiced in real situations. WJSL's protest is also valuable to identify those political institutions and practices that are opposed or even stifle deliberation.
- **3) WJSL's protest provided crucial sites for democracy schooling.** WJSL they themselves are retired cadres and know quite well most of political institutions and citizen rights. But, how to enact these institutions and rights, is still an experiment with high uncertainty for these local political elites. It's with their protest that they begin to experience and learn democracy and its values, such as rationality, public reasoning, etc.



## strategic deliberators engaging in public deliberation: Contributions, Problems, and challenges

- Problems and challenges:
- **First, the success or failure of Si Lao's protest very much depends on the endorsement and support from the government.** This could respond to Prof. He Baogang's view that the deliberation potential and benefits still dominated and controlled by government officials in the authoritarian deliberations settings.
- **Second, WJSL's protest still could not have a direct impact on the nuclear power policy process.** But since their protest shaped opinion formation, frames, and preferences among local residents, it did add up the difficulties to the proposed nuclear power planning that is to come.
- **Third, the unnational (disengage from deliberation) dimension of WJSL's influence strategies.** Use rumors or other unnational discourse to protest against the powerful, Reframe their message in order to sell their message to the media and the public. etc.
- **Fourth, WJSL as NIMBY activists and interest advocators positioned them to be more antagonistic to their counterpart in the government or corporations.** They are not quite open to alternative views and public deliberation seems hard, if not possible, to happen between them and their counterpart in the nuclear industry or local government.

# Thanks for your listening

**Anti-Inland nuclear power plant stakeholders as strategic deliberators**

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DENG, Lifeng 鄧理峰  
School of Communication  
Sun Yat-sen University  
Guangzhou, China  
[dlfeng@sysu.edu.cn](mailto:dlfeng@sysu.edu.cn)

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