

Leninist Reforms, Workplace Cleavages, and Teachers in the Chinese Cultural Revolution

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Andrew Walder's "neo-traditional" image of Chinese socialism has profoundly shaped understanding of China before market reform. It has also influenced the broader debate on the nature of 'actually existing socialisms.'¹ Walder argues that the Communist state dominated the industrial workforce through the institutionalization of organized dependence and clientelism in the workplace. State-appointed management tightly controlled access to goods, services, and positions and used these resources to reward cooperative workers and activists. Their actions created webs of clientelist relations but also a chasm on the shop floor, as ordinary workers resented the activists for acting against workers' general interest. But since ordinary workers could rarely obtain what they wanted beyond the factory, they, too, curried favors from factory officials. Walder observes that the growth of clientelist relations and personal ties within the industrial enterprise dampened workers' capacity for collective resistance and their pursuit of their personal welfare further depoliticized the working class. As a result, workers exhibited "a stable pattern of tacit acceptance and active cooperation" toward Communist political rule.²

Drawn from the shop floor, Walder's findings have been accepted as a close representation of the Chinese workplace or *danwei* system before market reform. They have been used as yardsticks for gauging ongoing changes at various levels of work and within different sectors of the reform economy.³ This

Acknowledgments: I thank Peter B. Evans, Neil Fligstein, Thomas B. Gold, and Wen-hsin Yeh for advice. Daniel Buck, Linus Huang, Ching Kwan Lee, Steve Lopez, Rana Mitter, Frank Pieke, and S. A. Smith offered me invaluable suggestions. I am grateful to Timothy Cheek, David Priestland, Eileen Otis, and the *CSSH* reviewers of this article. The Shanghai Municipal Archives, East China Normal University, and Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences provided research assistance. The University of California at Berkeley, Oxford University, and the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of British Columbia provided financial support.

¹ Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

² *Ibid.*, 249.

³ See Margaret Pearson, "Breaking the Bonds of 'Organized Dependence': Managers in China's Foreign Sector," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 25 (1992):57–77; Corinna-Barbara Francis, "Reproduction of Danwei Institutional Features in the Context of China's Market Econo-

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extension of Walder's argument is partly traceable to his engagement in theoretical debates. His research is presented as a critique of pluralist analyses of socialist societies that suggest post-Stalin development in the Soviet bloc can be explained by the competition and cooperation among different groups and organizations (e.g., state ministries, technical specialists, and factory workers).⁴ Pluralist analyses are an improvement over totalitarian theory of communism since they highlight the configuration of interests whose presence within state and society the latter theory has denied. Walder, however, argues that the pluralist approach further obscures the basis of conflict and cooperation in socialist societies. For the reproduction of organized dependence and clientelism in the workplace precisely weakened the solidarity of social groups and therefore their capacity as political actors. He has offered his neo-traditional analysis as a theoretical alternative to the totalitarian and pluralist approaches to studying socialist societies.

This article considers the secondary school faculty in Shanghai. Compared to the industrial enterprise, this professional workplace occupied a different position in the socialist political economy. I suggest that the neo-traditional image of the Chinese workplace does not sufficiently capture life in this or other professional settings during the Mao era (1949–1976) because professionals encountered changes quite different from those on the shop floor. In particular, reforms in hiring, supervision, compensation, and discipline, whose origins are traceable to Lenin's thinking, deepened the social cleavages among professional workers, leading to their intense conflicts and struggles within the workplace and their resentments against the state. The reforms thus weakened the state's capacity to create a compliant or cooperative professional workforce via organized dependence and clientelism.

There are also theoretical assumptions in the neo-traditional model that must be unpacked to explain why professional workers and factory workers acted differently under Communist political rule. The Communist revolution ushered in fundamental social changes. One should not assume a priori that because organized dependence and clientelism shaped the conditions on the shop floor, these institutions also most critically affected professional workers' relations to colleagues and to the state. Other major changes in professional settings should

my: The Case of Haidan District's High-Tech Sector," *China Quarterly* 147 (1996):839–959; Doug Guthrie, *Dragons in a Three-Piece Suit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Ching Kwan Lee, "From Organized Dependence to Disorganized Despotism: Changing Labor Regimes in Chinese Factories," *China Quarterly* 157 (1999):44–71.

⁴ See Gordon Skilling, "Interest Groups and Communist Politics," *World Politics* 18 (1966): 435–51; Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, *Interest Group in Soviet Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); Jerry Hough, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977); and Gordon Skilling, "Interest Groups and Communist Politics Revisited," *World Politics* 36 (1983):1–27. In Chinese studies, see David Bachman, *Bureaucracy, Economy, and Leadership in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

be analyzed separately as well as in relation to organized dependence and clientelism. There are issues of history and human interest that Walder has downplayed in his theoretical model. These issues must be restored to explain professional workers' political and social behavior.

In other words, professional and industrial workers experienced the workplace differently after the 1949 revolution. The activist/non-activist divide that marked the shop floor was but one—and not the most consequential—cleavage within professional settings. Leninist-style reforms in hiring, supervision, remuneration, and discipline produced new social identities and interests that intensified the tensions, frictions, and struggles among professional workers who shared the same workplace. Furthermore, these people tended to blame the ruling regime for the difficulties, inequities, and injustice they experienced. Such resentments did not disappear with the reproduction of organized dependence and clientelism, but instead undercut the regime's capacity to elicit political consent within the professional workforce.

A secondary argument of this article deals with schoolteachers' participation in the Cultural Revolution. Research on the student Red Guard movement has largely bracketed the role of teachers; other analyses have portrayed them as victims of students' assaults on authority. In general, teachers were not regarded as makers of violence.⁵ With my findings from Shanghai secondary schools, I propose to correct this view: Leninist reforms of the schools had exacerbated faculty relations and disaffection to the extent that the Cultural Revolution provided teachers an opportunity to attack their colleagues, including school Party officials. Some teachers were virtually leaders in the student movement. Faculty activism was not a rarity, and indeed was a catalyst of student violence.

The next section outlines the Leninist origin of the post-1949 reforms in professional hiring, supervision, compensation, and discipline in China and how they engendered social cleavages and political resentments among professional workers. I will then examine the reorganization of Shanghai secondary schools as workplaces to shed light on how the reforms divided and alienated the faculty as well as promoted faculty activism during the Cultural Revolution. In the conclusion, I address the relevance of my findings for other professional settings, and probe deeper into theoretical and empirical reasons for the different conditions in the professional and the industrial workplaces during the

⁵ See Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Jonathan Unger, *Education under Mao: Class and Competition in Canton Schools, 1960–1980* (New York: Columbia Press, 1982); Jing Lin, *The Red Guards' Path to Violence: Political, Educational, and Psychological Factors* (New York: Praeger, 1991); and Anne Thurston, *Enemies of the People: The Ordeals of the Intellectuals in China's Great Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987). Exceptions are Neale Hunter, *Shanghai Journal: An Eyewitness Account of the Cultural Revolution* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969); Victor Nee, *The Cultural Revolution at Peking University* (New York: Monthly Review, 1969); William Hinton, *Hundred Day War: The Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972); and Daiyun Yue and Carolyn Wakeman, *To the Storm: The Odyssey of a Revolutionary Chinese Woman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

Mao era. I end by suggesting that the neo-traditional image of Chinese socialism does illuminate conditions in professional settings in the wake of the Mao era, but not during it.

LENINIST REFORMS OF PROFESSIONAL WORK

The political principles of working-class dictatorship, communist political control, and central planning compelled victorious Marxist-Leninist regimes to reorganize the workplace. After the 1917 Russian Revolution, Lenin proposed a wholesale reorganization of professional settings. His ideas replaced his own famous argument for workers' direct rule contained in *The State and Revolution*, written before the revolution. Besides a complete state involvement in professional work, Lenin argued for the rapid expansion of the professional workforce, Party control in professional settings, two-pronged remuneration for professional workers, and the retention of wrongdoers to help build socialism. Because Lenin insisted on these reforms against opposition from both inside and outside of the Party, I call them Leninist reforms.⁶

To build a modern socialist polity, Lenin believed that the Bolsheviks had to vastly expand the professional workforce. This should be done by keeping existing professionals in their posts and turning the former political, cultural, and economic elite into professional workers hired by the state. For Lenin, the Bolsheviks had "no other bricks" with which to build socialism except "bourgeois experts." They should therefore fully utilize "petty-bourgeois intellectuals," "set them definite tasks," and "put every one of them to work." Few educated people were unusable, even among those who had opposed the revolution or were guilty of wrongdoing. As long as "cultured capitalists" were cooperative, Lenin suggested that they should assume "executive functions" to help improve production.⁷ To strengthen the Red Army, he accepted the service of "old military experts, tsarist generals and officers," including those who had committed "bloody acts of repression against workers and peasants."⁸

Fearing professional workers would engage in sabotage once given responsibilities, Lenin called for tight political control. The Party would assign "workers' representatives" to professional settings and impose "a proletarian discipline" to compel bourgeois experts and intellectuals to heed orders. He expected the workers' representatives to learn the knowledge and skills of the former elite until the Party could produce enough well-educated, socialist-minded people to run the political economy.⁹ As he put it, "Our job is to attract, by way of experiment, large numbers of specialists, then replace them by training a new officers' corps, a new body of specialists who will have to learn the extremely difficult, new and complicated business of administration."¹⁰

⁶ Lenin proposed these measures in 1918 and 1919. See *Lenin: Collected Works*, vols. 27–29 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1965).

⁷ *Collected Works*, vol. 27, 344–45; vol. 28, 215, 380–81; vol. 29, 70.

⁸ *Collected Works*, vol. 29, 69. ⁹ *Ibid.*, 73 ¹⁰ *Collected Works*, vol. 30, 248.

Lenin espoused a two-tiered system of professional remuneration. To safeguard technical progress during the building of socialism, the new regime should ensure the cooperation of bourgeois experts, especially “stars of the first magnitude,” by paying them high salaries. It should “give them an incentive to work no worse, or even better, than they have worked before.” Lenin considered this “tribute” to the experts “necessary and theoretically indispensable.” At the same time, he argued that other professional workers should receive “workmen’s wages” because professional salaries had been improperly inflated before the revolution due to class exploitation.¹¹ He thus endorsed cutting other professional workers’ salaries to further class struggle.

After the 1949 revolution, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) adopted Lenin’s ideas to reform professional work, which led to basic changes in professional hiring, supervision, remuneration, and discipline. The reforms, however, deepened the social cleavages within professional settings. Analytically, each of the Leninist reforms engendered a specific consequence: (1) the rapid expansion of the professional workforce produced new workplace cleavages based on class, gender, and culture; (2) the installation of Party control in professional settings created a schism between Communist Party members and ordinary professional workers; (3) the new salary practice divided professional workers economically; and (4) the retention of wrongdoers created pariahs in the professional workforce. Put differently, the institutionalization of organized dependence and clientelism in the post-revolutionary economy did not prevent the Leninist reforms from splitting the professional workplace politically, culturally, economically, and morally.

On an everyday basis, the reforms compelled individuals of widely different social backgrounds to share the professional workplace and subjected these people to different political and economic treatments. They constituted a treacherous foundation on which tensions, conflicts, and struggles among professional workers would emerge. Professional workers who shared the same workplace tended to distance from, disagree with, or even fight against one another. This argument is built on research that shows that soon after both the 1917 and the 1949 revolutions distinct patterns of conflict and association developed in professional settings based on individual background, technical qualification, and other personal characteristics, and that this was a result of state intervention in professional work.¹²

¹¹ *Collected Works*, vol. 25, 426–27; vol. 27, 246; vol. 29, 114, 154.

¹² In the Soviet case, see Kendall Bailes, *Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin: Origins of the Soviet Technical Intelligentsia, 1917–1941* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Nicholas Lampert, *The Technical Intelligentsia and the Soviet State* (London: MacMillan Press, 1979); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press); and Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin’s Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers 1928–1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). In the Chinese case, Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); Ezra Vogel, *Canton under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provin-*

German sociologist Max Weber once suggested that when the state becomes the primary organizer of the workplace, it “would have to share the burden of the worker’s hatred, which is otherwise directed against private entrepreneurs.”¹³ We will see that as the Leninist reforms transformed China’s professional workplace, the professional workers who endured what they considered to be hardship, inequities, or injustice in their professional lives tended to resent the Communist regime. This political development must be contrasted with Walder’s finding that the CCP produced a cooperative and compliant industrial workforce. Within professional settings, the capacity of organized dependence and clientelism to elicit political consent was weakened by individual anger, displeasure, and disaffection toward the state.

SOCIAL CLEAVAGES AND POLITICAL DISAFFECTION IN SHANGHAI SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Leninist reforms in hiring, supervision, remuneration, and discipline penetrated the Chinese professional workplace after 1949. This section draws on two forms of eyewitness accounts—recently declassified government documents and interviews with retired teachers—to illustrate how the reforms transformed Shanghai secondary schools as a professional setting.¹⁴ Although the CCP deployed specific practices to reorganize the campuses due to their functions and locations in the political economy, what occurred was instructive for understanding changes in other professional establishments. When the Communist authorities penetrated the schools, they encountered, as in publishing houses or other professional settings, workplace practices that needed to be discontinued. Because the remaking of schools was critical to the remaking of China into a modern socialist polity, their reconstitution should shed light on the broader reforms of the professional workplace. I first discuss the Leninist reforms in the schools as well as faculty cleavages and resentment before the Cultural Revolution, and then turn to faculty activism during the mass movement.

cial Capital 1949–1948 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969); and Lynn White, *Policies of Chaos: The Organizational Causes of Violence in China’s Cultural Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

¹³ Max Weber: *Selections in Translation*, W. G. Runciman, ed., E. Matthews, trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 255.

¹⁴ The government documents are catalogued at the Shanghai Municipal Archives (SMA). I use documents compiled by the Shanghai Party Committee on Education and Health (A23), Shanghai Municipal Government (B1), Office of Culture and Education (B3), Education Bureau (B105), Labor Bureau (B127), and Education Bureau under the Nationalist Government (Q1). I provide reference numbers on first citation, with an abbreviated title, and the year of the document set containing the data. The interviews were based on formal introduction and snowball sampling. My interviewees were between ages fifty-eight and eighty-four, the male/female ratio is 33/27, and eighteen were Communist Party members. I collected data on interviewees’ class, family, and educational backgrounds as well as their occupational history, political affiliation, and faculty experience.

Faculty Expansion and Cultural Cleavage

Because the CCP pursued a rapid expansion of the professional workforce, the secondary school faculty in Shanghai saw historical growth after 1949. The state compelled individuals who had been physically separated by class, education, or lifestyle to work together as teachers. As cultural boundaries reinforced by the labor market were compressed, individual values, expectations, and habits clashed, creating what can be called cultural cleavages in the faculty.

Having fewer than 6,000 faculty and staff members before 1949, Shanghai secondary schools housed 35,000 when the Cultural Revolution began in 1966.¹⁵ The expansion completely changed faculty composition. During the 1930s and 1940s, the Nationalist Party (KMT) headed an “embryonic developmental state” that wanted to remake China with “international technology” and “homegrown scientific and technical talent.”¹⁶ It regulated teachers’ quality, politics, and associational life. Beset by warfare, however, the KMT could not tightly control the profession. Because most schools in Shanghai were privately owned, hiring privileges mostly remained within the faculty. Well-educated individuals from well-to-do families formed the majority of secondary school instructors. When one Daxia Secondary School hired nineteen teachers in 1928, three had a doctoral degree, five a Master’s degree, and seven a Bachelor’s degree.¹⁷ In 1947, 60 percent of the secondary school faculty and staff in Shanghai were university graduates.¹⁸ Often, faculty hiring was conducted informally through teachers’ recommendations, but this precisely reinforced the values and lifestyles shared by existing faculty members.¹⁹

After taking over faculty recruitment in Shanghai, the CCP hired secondary school teachers from unconventional sources. The majority of recruits were “unemployed intellectuals.” Others included “transferred cadres” and primary school teachers (Table 1). Compared to the pre-revolutionary hires, these teachers were undereducated. Only 30 percent of some 5,000 teachers recruited between 1952 and 1956 were university graduates. By contrast, almost 40 percent had not attended college. Not until the late 1950s did college graduates return as the major source of new instructors. Most of these graduates, however, had only two rather four years of higher education.²⁰ Moreover, the Antirightist

¹⁵ These figures include Western-style secondary schools in urban and rural Shanghai but not technical schools, adult schools, or community-run schools, SMA B105-2-967 (Education Data, 1966), 1.

¹⁶ William Kirby, “Engineering China: Birth of the Development State, 1928–1937,” in Wenhsin Yeh, ed., *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 152.

¹⁷ Xu Xiaoqun, *Chinese Professionals and the Republican State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 70.

¹⁸ SMA Q1-18-250 (Education Reports, 1947), 36.

¹⁹ Informant #6: started teaching in the late 1940s and joined the CCP in the mid-1950s.

²⁰ Between 1957 and 1960, 38 percent of teacher recruits had spent two years in college, and 21 percent four years, SMA B105-2-425 (School Statistics, 1961), 8.

TABLE I
Shanghai Secondary School Teachers, 1949–1963

<i>Source of Teachers</i>	<i>1949–1957 percent</i>	<i>1958–1963 percent</i>
<i>Junior High Schools</i>		
Unemployed intellectuals	53	15
Transferred cadres	20	17
Former primary school teachers	14	1
Teachers college graduates	13	67
TOTAL	100	100
<i>Senior High Schools</i>		
Unemployed intellectuals	67	4
College or teachers college graduates	23	95
Former junior high school teachers	10	1
TOTAL	100	100

SOURCE: Lü Xingwei, *Shanghai putong jiaoyushi 1949–1989* (The history of Shanghai education) (Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1994), p. 29.

Movement and the Great Leap Forward of this period disrupted college life, leaving many graduates less knowledgeable than expected.

Due to CCP cleansing of state establishments, urban economic transformation, and rural land reform, the ranks of unemployed intellectuals who became secondary school teachers contained a mix of people. There were former KMT officials, including political organizers, military officers, and special agents (*tewu*); former rural landlords and their relatives; former state employees who had been dismissed for sexual or economic offenses; and former white-collar workers from factories, banks, and other profit-oriented establishments. Responding to CCP propaganda or declining household income, some housewives also returned to work as secondary school instructors.²¹

As for the transferred cadres, they were officials or employees from state or quasi-state agencies who were reappointed to the schools as teachers. Before the Antirightist Movement, these agencies frequently exploited the transfers by sending staff members with poor records or “bad” political backgrounds to the schools.²² Subsequently, the campuses received CCP officials, state employees, and industrial workers with stronger political and work records.²³ Former workers who had gone to college under state sponsorship also began to assume teaching posts in the late 1950s.

²¹ Eddy U, “The Making of Zhishifenzi: The Critical Impact of the Registration of Unemployed Intellectuals in the Early PRC,” *China Quarterly* 173 (2003):100–21.

²² Eddy U, “The Hiring of Rejects: Teacher Recruitment and Crises of Socialism in the Early PRC Years,” *Modern China* 30 (2004):46–80.

²³ SMA B105-2-92 (School Leaderships, 1959); SMA A23-2-582 (School Leaderships, 1960).

As this variety of recruits entered the faculty, a schism developed between them and the pre-revolutionary generation of instructors. Well-educated, middle class, and still socially respectable, senior teachers looked down upon their new colleagues who had poor credentials or who had been pushed out or dismissed by previous employers. They considered the hiring of unemployed intellectuals and transferred cadres to be an affront to the teaching profession. In a series of “airing view” meetings with education officials in 1957 during the state-sponsored Hundred Flowers Campaign, they vented their status-based dissatisfactions, attacking the state and the recruits. One teacher captured the complaints: “Anyone can become a schoolteacher — people who were expelled from government organs, housewives, and politically dubious individuals — they are thrust into the profession. Consequently, people do not respect schoolteachers. They look down upon them.”²⁴ The officials heard a multitude of accusations: new teachers put up wrong characters on the blackboard; they recited notes from teacher-training classes; they could not control the classroom; some “had very low levels of education”; some academic certificates were forgeries; and the transferred cadres were “old, weak, and wounded troops” unsuitable for the profession.²⁵

Because of their traditional gender role, former housewives endured gender-specific disrespect. These women normally had little professional experience with which to impress their colleagues. Still bound by family responsibilities, they seldom became immersed in their newfound careers. They thus invited prejudices from a male-dominated and increasingly politicized profession. Lumping former housewives with transferred cadres (specifically those from the People’s Bank of China), a senior instructor who had become a CCP member after the revolution, recalls that “these people did not look like other teachers. They resembled petty urbanites. The housewives always made a hue and cry [when work was demanding].”²⁶ Another teacher of similar background, a woman herself, echoed this complaint: “Housewives were relatively naïve, not knowing much about politics and society, for they were not in full contact with society. They came to work on time and always tried to leave on time. Most of them did not really care about political activities. They liked to dress nicely and fashionably.”²⁷

Least educated among the new teachers, former workers became easy targets of senior as well as junior instructors. Former workers, one interviewee remembers, “could not keep their heads up. Even if they wanted to teach well, they could not do it . . . They themselves felt that they were unfit to be teachers.”²⁸ Another recalls that these workers “were loyal to the Party and diligent, doing whatever the Party branch secretary said. But they had no brains . . . They

²⁴ SMA B105-1-1685 (Blooming and Contending Conference, 1957), 1–2. ²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Informant #6.

²⁷ Informant #44 started teaching during the late 1940s and joined the CCP in the early 1950s.

²⁸ Informant #11 started teaching in the late 1940s.

did not teach well. They felt inferior themselves.”²⁹ Such evidence does not prove that former workers failed as teachers when compared to other new instructors, but it does suggest that their colleagues found them unsuitable for the profession.

Fearing punishment by state-controlled management, senior teachers seldom attacked their new colleagues openly. Instead, they avoided them and provided them with little assistance. A former housewife recalls her experience as a beginner teacher: “Other teachers had gone to college, but my cultural level was not adequate. At first, it was very difficult for me. Students did not listen to me. I did not get any help from other teachers. I did not want to ask for help either. I felt that those teachers who had a better education looked down upon me. Some of the teachers had opinions about my teaching. I worked on my own, and I was very busy.”³⁰

Valorized by what was officially a workers’ state, former workers received little direct challenge from their colleagues. But they, too, felt isolated and disliked. One worker recalls that “other teachers were polite on the surface, but what was in their hearts was not easy to tell.”³¹ Even those workers who had finished college felt rejected. As one explains: “If you were a worker or a peasant and you became a teacher, your position in the school was shaky if you lacked a bit of knowledge. Other people came from generations of scholar families, but our ancestors were laborers. On the surface, they looked up to you. But, in reality, they did not.”³² Because teacher recruitment parted with conventions, faculty tensions emerged based on values associated with class, education, gender, and work experience. The disdain and distance that teachers exhibited represented their intended or unintended efforts to re-segregate a professional workplace that had been desegregated by political power.

Communist Management and Political Schism

After taking power, the CCP used its Party members to manage the professional workplace. In Shanghai secondary schools, a divide between CCP members and the ordinary faculty appeared. The latter, unlike factory workers, did not exhibit stable acceptance or cooperation vis-à-vis management. Rather, they harbored strong resentments against both management and the state. An activist/non-activist divide did appear in the schools, but only adding to the fragmentation of the faculty.

By the mid-1950s, over 70 percent of Shanghai secondary schools had a CCP member as a school principal, and only 8 percent had no CCP members in their faculty.³³ Like the new teachers, these Party members came from a diversity of

²⁹ Informant #10, an unemployed intellectual, started teaching in the early 1950s.

³⁰ Informant #20, a housewife, started teaching in the mid-1950s.

³¹ Informant #8, a factory worker, started teaching in the early 1960s.

³² Informant #23, an office janitor and assistant, started teaching in the early 1960s.

³³ SMA B105-1-1504 (Teachers’ Political Status, 1956), 2.

places. There were revolutionary veterans and demobilized soldiers from rural areas, most of whom had no college education, and some no secondary education; some had been virtually dismissed from their previous workplaces.³⁴ There were former underground Party members who were quite educated or had even managed schools, as well as young college students and high school graduates with little work experience.³⁵

Regardless of their backgrounds or faculty positions, these Party members became the most powerful people on campus. Under official auspices, they reassigned the existing school principals to handle campus sanitation, meal provision, and other “insignificant” work. They stopped senior instructors from designing study plans, allocating resources, or organizing activities independently. From the CCP’s perspective, these teachers and administrators, who had grown up in privileged families or had supported the KMT, were no longer suitable to manage schools. To assist their takeovers, the CCP members cultivated activists, who were usually young teachers, for political and administrative support.

After the Hundred Flowers Campaign, the CCP transferred additional Party members from government and industry to the schools to tighten political control. These people, too, had various backgrounds, levels of education, and work experiences.³⁶ The CCP rewarded hundreds of teacher activists with Party membership.³⁷ Some college graduates who were then assigned to teach in the schools had already joined the Party. This mix of Party members quickly assumed administrative duties at the expense of the teachers hired earlier. By the early 1960s, every campus had a Party branch with three or more members, and some had ten Party members in the faculty and staff. Overall, 10 percent of the teachers had joined the Party.³⁸

From early on, the installation of Communist management created severe tensions among the faculty. Trained as revolutionaries, the Party members often regarded ordinary faculty members as threats to Communist political rule. They were rude, distrustful, and contemptuous toward their colleagues. A 1955 official report stated that:

1. School CCP cadres and Party branches primarily employ the concepts of closing the door [to the ordinary faculty] and stressing homogeneity [within management]. There is a lack of respect, trust, and delegation toward ordinary faculty members . . .

³⁴ SMA B105-5-752 (School Principals, 1953); SMA B105-1-462 (School Leaderships, 1952–1953).

³⁵ Yao Zhuangxing and Yuan Cai, ed., *Zai Jiaoyu Shiceshang* (On the annals of education) (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992); informants #6, 44, and 37 (#37 was a high school graduate and Party member who started teaching in the early 1950s).

³⁶ SMA B105-2-946 (Teachers’ Salaries, Ranks, and Work, 1960), 42; SMA B105-2-548 (Building the Teaching Profession, 1957–1959), 7.

³⁷ Between 1959 and 1960, over 800 school employees joined the Party, SMA A23-2-582 (Party Members, 1960), 37; SMA B105-2-256 (Party Members, 1960), 2–4.

³⁸ SMA A23-2-612, (Party Membership 1960–61), 33.

2. [School CCP members] exhibit impatience and subjectivity. They run things all by themselves, thinking they can represent everyone else in the schools. Some CCP members even resort to coercion, commands, and rude and brutal behavior [when dealing with teachers] . . .

2. A major cause of the above problems is that school CCP members are arrogant and complacent. They cannot see the strengths or functions of the masses or their improvements. They fail to patiently assist others to rectify their political weaknesses . . .³⁹

After brief resistance against the insertion of Communist management, ordinary faculty members were intimidated by the display of state violence against political opposition.⁴⁰ The original school principals and administrators dissociated themselves from everyday management. Rank-and-file teachers expected little advancement unless they became activists. Compliant on the outside, these people were seething inside. During the Hundred Flowers Campaign, they attacked the CCP, Party members, and teacher activists for ruining the profession and their careers. The following are examples of complaints documented by the government:

What the CCP means is one party commandeers the Celestial Empire; the CCP is a new nobility; the CCP manufactures a new class (Cao Xuesong, Hongkou Secondary School).

Party members have neither knowledge nor skills. They pretend to know what they don't know. They are villains who utterly disregard law and discipline, acting without care for anyone (Liu Fei, Teachers School Number Two, and Lu Huanxin, Teachers School Number Four).

Activists are eunuchs; eunuchs are worse than the emperor (that is, the Party branch secretary) (Jing Kening et al., Shidai Secondary School).⁴¹

Since most Party members were not qualified to manage schools by conventions, they were not seen as educators by the disgruntled faculty but as political functionaries or, derisively, people who “ate from the Party meal pot” (*chidangfan*).

The purge of intellectuals during the ensuing Antirightist Movement, their labor education during the Great Leap Forward, and Chairman Mao's reiteration of class struggle broadly harmed teachers' social status and reinforced the schism between the Communist and the ordinary faculty. In a 1961 survey of schools, the Shanghai government basically repeated its 1955 criticisms of Party members. They ignored the official guideline of “uniting, criticizing, and remolding intellectuals” and exhibited “antipathy” toward ordinary instructors, especially former KMT officials and members. Only two of eighteen original school prin-

³⁹ SMA B105-5-1352 (United-Front Work, 1955), 12–14.

⁴⁰ The 1951 Campaign against Counterrevolutionaries was instrumental in instilling fear. See Julia Strauss, “Paternalist Terror: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and Regime Consolidation in the People's Republic of China, 1950–1953,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44 (2002):80–105.

⁴¹ SMA A23-2-234 (Rectification, 1957), 3.

cipals and administrators surveyed in one district had “important” work; the rest looked after school maintenance and minor tasks.⁴² By the end of 1962, the government issued a less damning report on the work of school Party branches. Still, among 200 schools in urban Shanghai, only 20 percent of the Party branches had good relations with the ordinary faculty. Within a small number of schools, the CCP members were “brutal, tyrannical, and extremely conceited.”⁴³

Invited by the government, two original principals discussed their professional lives in the early 1960s, which appeared unbearable even after predictable self-censorship in the face of the authorities:

I feel like I am a toddler who wants to skip school. I am frightened to go through the front entrance of the school every morning when I arrive at work. I do not know what to do during the day. When I am home in the evening, I feel suffocated. I accomplish nothing and the days pass me by. But I also feel that I’d go to the school early in the morning and leave late in the evening. That is at least my responsibility.⁴⁴

After the Antirightist Movement, I am not involved in the work of the school, for it doesn’t need me. The more I do, the more mistakes I make. It’s better that I don’t do anything. I am not qualified professionally or politically to do any work. The government should transfer me to another job. That’s the way I think after the movement.⁴⁵

The use of Communist management also promoted conflict among Party members themselves. As traditional authority structures disappeared, these people were eager to use their individual assets (college education, teaching experience, revolutionary credentials, class background, and political activism) to legitimize or advance their positions. What occurred at Guoguang Secondary School, a well-regarded campus where I conducted multiple interviews, is instructive.⁴⁶ When the Party branch was established in 1954, it contained three young Party members: a former underground agent, a recent high school graduate, and a young teacher. In 1956 the former underground agent left the campus for additional training. The high school graduate acted as Party branch secretary. The CCP assigned a woman, a school principal elsewhere, to the campus. She had not graduated from high school but was a veteran Party member who had specialized in organizing rural women. Upon arrival, she acted as if she was the secretary despite the fact that she had not been appointed to that post, and the young Party members resisted. One of them later remembered that “she got here because her husband was a Party secretary in a nearby district.”⁴⁷ Another recalled that she “lacked knowledge and skills” but had “tricks and stratagems.”⁴⁸ The two badmouthed her and yelled at her during faculty meetings, and she responded by criticizing them.⁴⁹

⁴² SMA A23-2-752 (Rectification, 1961), 3–25.

⁴³ SMA A23-2-1703, (School Party Branches, 1960–1962), 31–38.

⁴⁴ SMA A23-2-737 (Intellectuals, 1961), 41. ⁴⁵ SMA A23-2-568 (Intellectuals, 1960), 65.

⁴⁶ Guoguang is a pseudonym. ⁴⁷ Informant #37. ⁴⁸ Informant #6.

⁴⁹ Informant #48 started teaching and joined the CCP in the 1940s, and investigated the campus in question during the Antirightist Movement.

Raised in urban Shanghai, both of these young Party members came from highly educated families. The family of one owned a large commercial press, and the other's father had taught English in the best schools. The woman did not have the education, refinement, or cosmopolitanism these men shared. If they displayed an urban, male, and elitist snobbery against her rural, female, and "crass" intrusion, she had revolutionary credentials beyond either of them, which turned out to be a more powerful political asset than they had expected. During the Antirightist Movement she organized the campus to attack her younger colleagues, and they lost their teaching positions and were branded as rightists. By the early 1960s, infighting among school Party members was still commonplace. The government reported that "leading Party cadres" in 25 of 205 schools "were not united." Some of them "looked down upon each other" or "could not coexist with each other."⁵⁰

In short, the establishment of Communist management led to its abuse of the ordinary faculty, whose daily compliance thinly disguised their anger toward teacher activists, school Party members, and the ruling regime. Because the Party members occupied a work environment in flux, they used their backgrounds to pursue their own interests. Their action created additional faculty tensions and struggles.

Salary Reform and Economic Conflict

After the 1949 revolution, the CCP gradually enforced its own salary practices by absorbing the labor force into state payrolls. Within the state sector, it rapidly introduced a policy of "no change to appointment and salary" (*yuanxin yuanzhi*) to help maintain production and employment. But it specified in the early 1950s that newly hired white-collar workers should receive lower salaries based on standardized scales.⁵¹ In Shanghai secondary schools, these reform measures normalized a two-tiered, Leninist system of remuneration that led to a faculty income divide.

The high-income faculty included standing members from the early 1950s, most of whom had taught before the revolution and had already lost their management authority or their opportunity to enter management. Others were revolutionary veterans, former unemployed intellectuals, or recent graduates who had arrived at the schools before the state standardized faculty salaries. Thanks to the market-based, elitist legacy of Shanghai secondary education, these people enjoyed comfortable incomes.⁵² In 1955, the year before the complete na-

⁵⁰ SMA A23-2-1703, 32

⁵¹ SMA B105-5-1416 (New Teachers' Salaries, 1955); SMA B127-1-968 (New Graduates' Salaries, 1956), 5; Zhuang Qidong et al., *Xinzhongguo gongzhishigao* (The salary history of new China) (Beijing: Zhongguo caizheng jingji chubanshe, 1986), 67–75.

⁵² One source suggests that Shanghai secondary school teachers earned 100 to 200 yuan per month during the mid-1930s, while workers (*gongren*) and clerical workers (*zhiyuan*) earned 14 to 30 yuan; Li Xinghua, ed. *Minguo Jiaoyushi* (The history of education in the Republican China) (Shanghai: Jiaoyu chubanshi, 1997), 530, fn. 1. Another source indicates that these teachers earned

tionalization of the schools, over 80 percent of the administrators in the private secondary schools, including those without management authority, received more than 100 yuan per month, and almost 30 percent earned 130 yuan or more.⁵³ As for teachers, they commonly earned 100 yuan per month, and in the best schools 140 yuan.⁵⁴ These teachers and administrators saw their salaries protected by the “no-change” policy when their schools were later nationalized. With the policy already in place, the public secondary schools paid comparable salaries to their management personnel, with or without authority, and 40 percent of these people received an average salary of 130 yuan per month.⁵⁵

Official reports show that high-income faculty members maintained a comfortable lifestyle. They lived in “opulently and splendidly” furnished modern apartments resembling “homes of the bourgeoisie.” They frequently went to the cinema and traveled outside of Shanghai. They dressed well and dined in nice restaurants. Those with a working spouse often had servants. Even those who had four or five dependents did better than making ends meet. Most high-income faculty members lived “comfortably” and “satisfyingly” in an “upper-middle level.”⁵⁶

In contrast, other faculty members fared poorly. After the state imposed standardized salaries, unemployed intellectuals started at 43 to 51 yuan per month in both public and private secondary schools.⁵⁷ Although they received a raise after probation, their salaries—46 to 64 yuan—mirrored factory workers’ incomes.⁵⁸ At the bottom of the scale, high school graduates, two-year college graduates, and four-year college graduates were eligible for 43, 51, and 59 yuan per month after probation.⁵⁹ To alleviate dissatisfaction due to job change, transferred cadres and demobilized soldiers were usually permitted to keep their original salaries. Sometimes, they even received a small raise. These people generally belonged to a medium-income group or were part of the low-income faculty.

In the mid-1950s, the Shanghai government reported that 23 percent of the faculty had “average” or “severe” financial difficulties. These people were mostly former unemployed intellectuals or young graduates with a large family to support. Those who had “average” trouble could barely balance their income and expenditure. Their family’s diet contained vegetables “occasionally” embellished by “inexpensive fish and a little bit of meat.” They bought winter

50 to 140 yuan, and that a family of five needed 66 yuan to maintain a “middle” lifestyle; Xing Ping, *Cong Shanghai faxian lishi* (Discovering history through Shanghai) (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1996), 320.

⁵³ SMA B105-1-1296 (Salary Statistics, 1955), 8.

⁵⁴ SMA B3-2-66 (Faculty Economic Life, 1956), 58.

⁵⁵ SMA B105-5-1537 (School Salaries, 1955).

⁵⁶ SMA B105-5-1182 (Faculty Economic Life, 1954), 34–35.

⁵⁷ SMA B105-5-1416 (Faculty Salary Standards, 1955).

⁵⁸ In 1955, production workers in factories overseen by the Central Ministry of Heavy Industry earned an average monthly salary of 70 yuan; production workers in private factories making matches earned 51 yuan; SMA B127-1-956 (Salaries, 1956), 1–2.

⁵⁹ SMA B105-5-1416.

clothing once every few years and could not afford books for their children. The “severely” poor cut expenditure on all fronts to buy food. They sold belongings or borrowed money to pay for rent and medicine. Their families were basically unable to survive on their incomes.⁶⁰

In 1956, the state undertook a salary reform to ease “a great disparity of earnings between old and new teachers” that had been harming “teachers’ unity” and enthusiasm.⁶¹ In Shanghai, young teachers had “excessively leftist sentiments.” They complained that they worked long hours enthusiastically, but the “old wily chaps” got “unreasonably big” salaries. Because the no-change policy had been abolished in government, transferred officials and demobilized soldiers wanted the same for the schools. Former unemployed intellectuals and housewives, too, showed “a definite degree of resentment” against the old faculty earning higher salaries.⁶²

The salary reform benefited two-thirds of the teaching staff and half of the management personnel, raising their earnings on average by 11 yuan and 9 yuan per month.⁶³ As the neo-traditional model predicts, management rewarded activists with disproportionate raises while teachers with “poor” backgrounds or poor relations to management received scant consideration. But some young teachers, activists and non-activists alike, were dissatisfied that the old faculty received no pay cut, and they questioned the “theory of seniority” (*zige lun*) that the state used to justify the higher salaries.⁶⁴ Because the reform did not benefit new recruits, these people continued to receive the worst salaries.

In the end, the reform barely improved teachers’ solidarity or helped the state’s image, as suggested by complaints aired during the Hundred Flowers Campaign, which took place shortly after the reform:

The salary reform has no standards. It is a show. The CCP uses an elastic tape to gauge teachers’ performance. It is a mystery how the measures are obtained (anonymous, Secondary School Number Fifty-Three).

What the salary reform means is that Communist Party and Youth League members split the spoils. Those who are close to the leaders get extraordinary raises (Wang Ruisi, Caoyang Secondary School).

Teacher salaries are too low, not even comparable to cooks or barbers. . . . A college graduate only earns 42.5 yuan. Nowhere else in the world can one find this kind of salary standards (Ni Tongren, Guangming Secondary School).⁶⁵

After the reform, the government received 400 letters of complaint and visits from teachers, charging wrongdoing in salary determinations.⁶⁶

In 1960 and 1963, the state organized further salary reforms that, likewise, failed to alleviate faculty dissatisfaction with income. Because of the economic failure of the Great Leap Forward, less than 4 percent of the workforce with-

⁶⁰ SMA B3-2-66, 5–7. ⁶¹ SMA B105-5-1816 (Salary Reform, 1956–1957), 82.

⁶² SMA B105-5-1415 (Salary Reform, 1955–1956), 35–36. ⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ SMA B105-5-1816, 85 ⁶⁵ SMA A23-2-234, 3 ⁶⁶ Ibid.

in Shanghai education received a raise in 1960.⁶⁷ Three years later, half of all secondary schools employees got a raise, but this was on average less than 4 yuan per month.⁶⁸ Like before, these reforms excluded new recruits from consideration and involved political discrimination, as management “added additional requirements” and “set their own limits” for older teachers.⁶⁹ On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the average salaries of teachers and administrators in Shanghai secondary schools were 70 and 76 yuan, respectively.⁷⁰ They had fallen sharply since the mid-1950s, but those who had been teaching before 1949 still enjoyed higher salaries; they were still paid according to their pre-revolutionary earnings. The rest of the faculty saw a “bunching” at low-income levels despite many of these people having acquired teaching experience.⁷¹

One group of teachers, those who were college graduates and who joined the faculty after the first salary reform, was hit especially hard. As they went through stages of building their families, their expenditures ballooned but their income stagnated. Some of them, mainly CCP members and activists, had become leaders of teacher groups or had entered management. Like CCP members and activists elsewhere, “their days were full of pressure and self-sacrifice, not just new power.” However, they had not received substantial raises. Overworked and underpaid, they tended to resent the comfort enjoyed by older faculty members. Like CCP members and activists elsewhere, they shared “a sense that the CCP owed them more than it was giving.”⁷²

To be sure, the state gradually controlled and distributed non-monetary benefits through the workplace,⁷³ and as organized dependence intensified, it could use them to reward young and supportive teachers. But throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the most precious of such benefits—housing—was in short supply.⁷⁴ By the early 1960s, housing for schoolteachers was “extremely limited” to the extent that some married teachers lived with another couple, and other teachers lived with three generations of their families.⁷⁵ Even Party members

⁶⁷ SMA B105-2-660 (Salary Reform, 1963), 41.

⁶⁸ SMA A23-2-911 (Salary Reform, 1964), 33; SMA B105-2-660, 42–44.

⁶⁹ SMA B105-2-1418 (Reports on Schools, 1963), 2.

⁷⁰ SMA B105-2-1919 (Salary Reports, 1965), 2.

⁷¹ Gordon White, *Party and Professionals: The Political Role of Teachers in Contemporary China* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1981), 57.

⁷² Lynn White, *Policies of Chaos*, 113.

⁷³ Lynn White, *Careers in Shanghai: The Social Guidance of Personal Energies in a Developing Chinese City, 1949–1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); and Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism*, 28–68.

⁷⁴ Housing development in post-revolutionary Shanghai was extremely slow, and the state privileged housing for factory workers to redress class inequalities. Only by the 1970s did the housing stock in Shanghai slightly exceed the level during 1952. See Christopher Howe, *China's Economy: A Basic Guide* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 173; Walder, *Communist Neo-traditionalism*, 226. The Shanghai government did not begin to build housing on a large scale for schoolteachers until 1980, Lü Xingwei, *Shanghai Putong Jiaoyushi 1949–1989* (The history of Shanghai education) (Shanghai: Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1994), 548.

⁷⁵ SMA B105-2-676 (Education Development, 1963), 15.

and activists had to endure long waiting periods before getting housing that could improve their lives.⁷⁶

On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the CCP had softened but not erased the income disparities in the faculty. Such disparities reinforced the schism between senior and junior teachers. Marginalized from management, the pre-revolutionary generation of faculty members earned privileged salaries. By contrast, young Party members and activists, a desirable group from the official perspective, earned significantly less. The virtual freezing of salaries after the mid-1950s also dashed teachers' expectations that salaries would increase along with teaching experience. The salary measures thus harmed faculty relations among colleagues as well as to the state.

Retention of Wrongdoers and Moral Divide

The CCP also went to great length to retain the teachers who had been guilty of wrongdoing. However, this effort, part of the mechanism for expanding the institution of education, intensified the tensions between management and the teaching staff. It also created a moral schism in the faculty.

The 1952 Thought Reform Campaign, in which the CCP compelled intellectuals to disclose their backgrounds and reform their consciousness, was a trendsetter in the retaining within the institution of education individuals regarded as lawbreakers or wrongdoers. In Shanghai, the government reported that there were former KMT officials, military officers, and special agents as well as landlords and criminals in the secondary school faculty. But it wanted these and others to stay in the schools: "Insist on not arresting those who could either be arrested or let go. Make sure those arrested have committed crimes deserving five years of imprisonment or more. For individuals whose crime warrant less than five years of imprisonment, suspend their sentences, put them under criminal control, or keep and monitor them in the schools."⁷⁷

Extra leniency was extended to the well-educated who had worked for the KMT, for they were permitted to "atone their guilt with contribution to the new government."⁷⁸ Punishment guidelines indicate that when those who had committed violence or killings confessed their action and were not "hated by the masses," they should be left in the schools. Others who were regarded as criminals were given a second chance: "Even objectionable elements, such as those who had raped female students or trafficked drugs, need not be handled at once. Only when it is absolutely necessary should we use the law against them. Whenever we can use some leniency, use it."⁷⁹ By the end of 1954 the government had

⁷⁶ Informant #13, an activist and teachers college graduate who started teaching in 1956, shared a campus room with a colleague, and after marriage continued to live on campus, where he received a small flat (6 to 7 square meters) in 1963.

⁷⁷ SMA B105-1-665 (Counterrevolutionaries, 1952–1953), 11–12.

⁷⁸ SMA B105-1-661 (Thought Reform, 1951–1953), 25–27.

⁷⁹ SMA B105-1-662 (Thought Reform, 1952), 15.

arrested 456 people from secondary schools, but its “incomplete statistics” show that 1,774 “counterrevolutionaries” and “key suspects” remained in primary and secondary schools.⁸⁰

The ensuing Campaign to Wipe Out Counterrevolutionaries had a similar impact on the faculty. Officially, it targeted individuals who faced new accusations of “counterrevolutionary crimes” committed before the revolution, and those who were suspected of current “counterrevolutionary activities,” who had not honestly confessed their backgrounds or who had been attacking the authorities despite having received leniency for wrongdoing.⁸¹ Not targeted were lawbreakers or wrongdoers who had been working properly.

In Shanghai, 600 counterrevolutionaries and “bad elements” were caught in primary and secondary schools. Because the campaign overlapped with the political thaw leading to the Hundred Flowers Campaign, only “a minority [of these people] were sentenced by law, while the overwhelming majority received lenient treatments and remained in the schools.”⁸² In the end, as official regulation indicated, even those “against whom there was great mass anger” were eligible for leniency.⁸³

Harsher penalties were meted out during the Antirightist Movement, but it, too, augmented the number of wrongdoers in the faculty. Table 2 summarizes the punishments received by rightists, counterrevolutionaries, and criminals caught in the secondary schools.⁸⁴ Most offenders were teachers. The government removed from the campuses permanently the individuals who were slapped with criminal sanction, labor reeducation, or agricultural labor or almost half of the wrongdoers. The other half remained in the schools or returned there after a labor sentence. Those who were sent to farms or factories usually spent one to three years there. The ones who performed well would return to the schools to teach; the rest would assume technical or clerical duties. The authorities reassigned others from teaching or management posts to technical, clerical, or library positions. These people could regain teaching privileges. The rest of the wrongdoers received no material punishment or a demotion or salary reduction.⁸⁵ By summer 1958, the government estimated that over 3,600 former counterrevolutionaries and wrongdoers remained in the primary and secondary schools. They made up 5.2 percent of the schools’ labor force.⁸⁶

To cope with rising student enrollments, the CCP also kept sex and economic offenders on the faculty. There were minor offenses such as petty theft and

⁸⁰ SMA B105-1-1423 (1955–1964), 1. ⁸¹ SMA B105-1-1428 (1955–1957), 3–4.

⁸² SMA B105-2-548 (Cleansing the Teaching Profession, 1957–1959), 2.

⁸³ Jerome Cohen, *The Criminal Process in the People’s Republic of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 303–4.

⁸⁴ The figures are from an undated document; they likely describe an on-going pattern of punishment.

⁸⁵ Informant #48, a school Party secretary and principal, helped to organize the Antirightist Movement in Shanghai’s schools; SMA B105-2-548, 3–8.

⁸⁶ SMA A23-1-156, 32.

TABLE 2

*Punishment of Rightists, Counterrevolutionaries, and Criminals in Shanghai Secondary Schools during the Antirightist Movement**

<i>Sentence</i>	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1. Criminal discipline [†]	244	19.6
2. Labor reeducation:		
a. Discharge from state employment	31	2.5
b. Suspension of state employment	42	3.4
3. Removal from office and supervised labor	151	12.1
4. Removal from office:		
a. Agricultural labor education	182	14.6
b. Labor education in school	63	5.0
5. Suspension of teaching position:		
a. Agricultural labor education	120	9.6
b. Labor education in school	158	12.7
6. Demotion and wage cut	193	15.5
7. Exemption from punishment	62	5.0
TOTAL	1246	100

*SMA A23-2-1398 (Punishments, n.d.).

[†]Criminal discipline includes execution, imprisonment, labor reform, and control.

egregious acts such as repeated child molestation. Sometimes, the offenders stayed in the same school or were simply transferred to another campus. Others were reassigned to different duties, expelled from the campus, or incarcerated. Table 3 summarizes the punishments in seventy-six cases of sex offenses and sixty cases of economic offenses committed by the secondary school faculty and staff in Shanghai between 1952 and 1957.⁸⁷ Because of official leniency during Thought Reform, the 1952 and 1953 cases resulted in light penalties. Harsh penalties followed until the onset of the Hundred Flowers Campaign. For instance, only one of the eight cases of child molestation in 1952 and 1953, and none of the five in 1956 and 1957 led to the perpetrator's expulsion from the campus. In fact, none of the nine perpetrators of rape or attempted rape caught in 1956 or 1957 was expelled.⁸⁸ By contrast, five of seven cases of child molestation in 1954 and 1955 saw the perpetrators expelled.

The keeping of counterrevolutionaries, criminals, or wrongdoers in the schools

⁸⁷ These are cases that I found in the archives. Documentation of similar cases before 1952 and after 1957 is not available. For further information, see Eddy U, "Professional Degeneration and Political Decay: Shanghai Schoolteachers and the Socialist State 1949–1968" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2001).

⁸⁸ Schools and municipal education officials only handled cases called "rape by enticement" (*youjian*). The perpetrators usually offered to the victims attention, extra lessons, money, or other forms of assistance to gain their trust and then sexual intercourse. Cases involving naked force or "rape by force" (*qiangjian*), were turned over to the police (informant #48).

TABLE 3
Punishments of Sexual and Economic Offenses in Shanghai Secondary Schools, 1952–1957

	<i>Warning or less</i>	<i>Record of error or demotion</i>	<i>Dismissal from current office</i>	<i>Expulsion from school</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sexual Offenses					
Sex with students	—	1	2	2	5
Harassment	1	3	1	—	5
Adultery	7	17	4	2	30
Molestation	4	7	3	6	20
Rape or attempted rape	—	1	12	3	16
Economic Offenses					
Theft	—	6	—	1	7
Corruption	—	7	2	4	13
Embezzlement	6	19	3	12	40
TOTAL	18	61	27	30	136

SOURCES: SMA B105-2-45; B105-2-46; B105-2-47; B105-5-44; B105-5-533; B105-5-732; B105-5-733; B105-5-1066; B105-5-1073; B105-5-1074; B105-5-1075; B105-5-1390; B105-5-1391; B105-5-1392; B105-5-1794; B105-5-1795; B105-5-1796; B105-5-1797; B105-5-1798; and B105-5-1799 (Punishments, 1952–1957).

intensified faculty tensions and political disaffection. From the official perspective, these people personified the dangers (political animosity, criminality, and moral degeneracy) confronting the building of socialism. Their presence encouraged management abuse of the faculty. Already divided among themselves, ordinary faculty members often shunned the child molesters, embezzlers, and thieves for harming the schools. Even when they felt that the wrongdoers had been wrongly accused, they tended to stay away from them to protect their own careers or livelihoods, for the CCP frowned upon any “budding friendship” with people who had “problems in their background.”⁸⁹

The wrongdoers’ social isolation is evidenced by the two Party members who were branded as rightists at Guoguang Secondary School. One compares his experience to “the untouchables in India.” He recalls that “friendship was broken overnight,” as his colleagues would not talk to him, and he would have risked further punishment by befriending other rightists. When his rightist label was removed fifteen years later, he married another ‘untouchable,’ a woman whose father had been condemned as a counterrevolutionary, whose sister was a rightist, and who had no legal residence in Shanghai.⁹⁰ The second rightist explains why people like him had trouble getting married: “When I was branded as a rightist,

⁸⁹ Ezra Vogel, “From Friendship to Comradeship: The Change in Personal Relations in Communist China,” *China Quarterly* 21 (1965), 58.

⁹⁰ Informant #37.

my salary was cut from 107 to 44 yuan and my Party membership stripped. I didn't want to do harm to my girlfriend. It was very hard for anyone who had a rightist in the family, so I broke up with her. There were rightists who married other rightists, workers, and so on. But their families did not have pleasant experiences, anyway. When my rightist cap was removed, I still had trouble getting married. I was in my late forties but earning 44 yuan per month. It is not good for people of that age who are earning so little."⁹¹ The retention of wrongdoers not only heightened political tensions in the faculty; it created pariahs. These people had poor income and career prospect and were susceptible to repeated attacks. Unable to escape their lowly status, which was part of their punishment, they had strong reasons to resent their colleagues, management, and the state.

Faculty Activism in the Cultural Revolution

Existing research on the student uprising during the Cultural Revolution focuses on how the formation of top-down coalitions, opportunity structures, political socialization, and adolescent psychology affected the students' behaviors.⁹² In general, the faculty are not included in these analyses or they are depicted as victims of student violence. What occurred in Shanghai secondary schools and elsewhere suggests that faculty participation in the Cultural Revolution varied between active and passive. The Leninist reforms in hiring, supervision, remuneration, and discipline had created too much conflict and resentment to keep the faculty docile while students acted out. Under the state-fostered permissive climate, the existing set of faculty identities and interests influenced how faculty members attacked their colleagues, including school Party officials.

The small volume of research on the faculties during the Cultural Revolution suggests that they rapidly turned against one another. Different groups—highly and poorly educated CCP administrators, young Party members and activists, veteran instructors, and teachers of “poor” backgrounds—all attacked one another by assisting the students to rebel against the faculty. In particular, management rapidly targeted known wrongdoers or products of Leninist discipline. These were the most vulnerable and isolated people on campus. They included those within the “five black categories” of landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, rightists, and bad elements; also criticized were unpunished (*louwang*) rightists; and teachers who had been subject to criticism. Shortly afterward, management targeted “bourgeois academic authorities,” a politically marginal group that contained mainly veteran educators from the KMT era. In Shanghai, this episode coincided with “the working masses” pressing the government to cut the salaries of those who had been getting higher earnings because of Leninist compensation.⁹³ At Guoguang Secondary School, for example, management picked out nineteen people for campus-wide attacks.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Informant #6. ⁹² See note 5.

⁹³ SMA A22-2-1447 (Cutting Retained Salaries, 1966), 13. ⁹⁴ Informant #6.

As the CCP leadership pressured the management personnel to “set themselves on fire” or invite criticisms of their own political errors, the cleavages within management burst open. Senior Party members turned against those who had “poor” records or poor relations with management to placate increasingly agitated students. In a technical school in Shanghai, the veteran Party-member principal “stood up and rebelled” by tying up a young Party member in the school for struggling.⁹⁵ A retired teacher recalls that her colleagues played a key role in creating violence: “When the Cultural Revolution began, our students did not know what to do. They fumbled like they were blind. When teachers joined the rebellion, the situation changed. The targets of attack [on the campus] became clear . . . Some teachers had been close to certain students and told them who to attack and what to do. The students [not knowing what to do] were happy to know what they should do.”⁹⁶

The faculty-student nexus in making violence was also conspicuous when teachers turned against management. Prominent among these teacher rebels were those who had been disciplined before the Cultural Revolution, and the movement’s early victims. Both groups saw an opportunity for revenge, or for reversing the injustices that had befallen them. As another teacher indicates, the faculty rebels contained “many people who had voiced dissatisfaction in the past, and there were those who had political and other problems in their backgrounds.”⁹⁷

Within the first group, Nie Yuanzi of Beijing University was most notable. A longtime CCP member, but relatively uneducated, she had had disagreements with the university’s highly educated Party secretary and president. With Chairman Mao’s blessing, she and her colleagues shot the opening salvo of the Cultural Revolution by attacking the university’s management and the Beijing municipal authorities.⁹⁸ At Guoguang, the most violent and feared rebel was a former soldier who had been disciplined by the military and therefore failed to join the Party. Together with students, he attacked his colleagues physically and also harmed people outside of the campus.⁹⁹

A remarkable example of the second group was the Red Teachers Union at the prestigious Qinghua University. Led by a former KMT agent from a landlord family, this “questionable assortment of malcontents” propounded that “revolutionaries of today must be sought among the dissidents of yesterday.” Its members rampaged on an asylum, attacked the police headquarters, and worked with students to seize control of the university.¹⁰⁰ At Guoguang, a teacher who had been attacked for his “connections to Taiwan” when the Cultural Revolution began afterward became a rebel. He used “force and persuasion” on a female Party member to extract the “inner secrets” of the Party

⁹⁵ SMA B105-4-328 (Work Briefings, 1969), 134–35. ⁹⁶ Informant #1. ⁹⁷ Informant #6.

⁹⁸ Nee, *Cultural Revolution*, 42–53; Thurston, *Enemies*, 90; Yue and Wakeman, *To the Storm*, 155.

⁹⁹ Informants #6, 20, and 37. ¹⁰⁰ Hinton, *Hundred Day War*, 108–37.

branch, aiming to use the information against its members. Because of his “poor” background, he had difficulties allying with students, who deeply distrusted him.¹⁰¹ By contrast, at Sanlin Secondary School a former KMT Youth Corps member gained significant control of the “rebel brigade,” and some “teachers and workers” supported him while others tried to “ferret him out” by attacking his background.¹⁰²

In the end, all “leading cadres” in the primary and secondary schools in Shanghai, some 5,300 people who had represented the CCP regime, were “attacked and persecuted” by teacher and student rebels. They suffered confinement, segregation, and corporal punishment; seventy died, and so did 550 teachers.¹⁰³ A key factor that shaped the fate of these cadres was their leadership style before the Cultural Revolution. At Guoguang, multiple interviewees describe their Party-member principal as a “good old chap” who had not severely attacked the faculty and who then sought to limit the assaults when the Cultural Revolution started. As a result, he “got away pretty easy” without being beaten by the rebels.¹⁰⁴

Faculty attacks also occurred laterally among rank-and-file teachers, reflecting their mutual dislike. Compared to top-down or bottom-up assaults, these attacks were less open and vocal but required no less cooperation from students. A former school principal explains: “Ordinary teachers did not stand out and attack other teachers [except when attacking leading cadres]. They stayed back and provided ‘black’ [or incriminating] material to students. They did not stand out because the official target of the Cultural Revolution was not the masses [but rather leaders]. When you wanted to attack other teachers, it was better to encourage students to attack them [rather than doing it yourself!].¹⁰⁵

As the Cultural Revolution progressed, Shanghai schoolteachers, like other social groups, split into factions that reflected their identities or interests. At Luonan Secondary School, the majority of twenty-one employees joined a “teacher-worker rebel brigade.” Three teachers who had been assistants to the Party-member principal and had been “surrounded and attacked” by rebels wielded “substantive influence” in an opposing student rebel organization.¹⁰⁶ At Wenzhi Secondary School, the Party secretary and school principal, after struggling with rebels, returned to the campus to organize against the dominant rebel organization.¹⁰⁷ As the mass movement proceeded, Shanghai secondary school teachers joined rebel organizations outside of the campuses and formed their own citywide rebel headquarters.¹⁰⁸ Primary school teachers split into two major factions: one group recruited students to become “little red soldiers;” and the other, “red successors.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰¹ Informant #48. ¹⁰² SMA B104-4-322 (Rural Schools, 1969), 104.

¹⁰³ Lü, *Shanghai Putong Jiaoyushi*, 369–70. ¹⁰⁴ Informants #6, 31, and 37.

¹⁰⁵ Informant #60, a former worker and a teachers’ college graduate, started teaching in 1958.

¹⁰⁶ SMA B105-4-64 (Rural Schools, 1966–1967), 35.

¹⁰⁷ SMA B105-4-58 (Reopening Schools, 1967), 127. ¹⁰⁸ Lü, *Shanghai Putong Jiaoyushi*, 354.

¹⁰⁹ SMA B105-4-58, 3.

To be sure, faculty activism depended on many factors such as local government reactions and student composition. Some attacks were rituals aimed at self-preservation; others stemmed from unavoidable clientelist obligations. Each campus uprising, too, had its own dynamics that shaped faculty activism. Nonetheless, the above evidence shows that the Leninist reforms of the faculty had precipitated faculty attacks against colleagues and school Party officials. That the profession splintered as soon as the Cultural Revolution began is perhaps the best evidence that the reforms had failed to promote faculty solidarity. As mass mobilization replaced the repressive state, faculty cleavages descended into internecine faculty attacks.

The evidence also suggests that research on the student uprising must consider the role of teachers. The latter, undoubtedly victims of student violence, also participated and even provided leadership in making such violence. Outside of the family, teachers had the most sustained and meaningful contact with students. Between the calls for rebellion at the top and the frenzied responses of the students at the bottom, they seemingly acted as catalysts in the making of revolutionary violence.

CONCLUSION: PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS AND THE FACTORY SHOP FLOOR

In his influential research on Chinese industry under Communist rule, Andrew Walder observes that as organized dependence and clientelism penetrated the shop floor, they weakened workers' solidarity while reproducing workers' political consent. Besides the activist/non-activist chasm, other divisions within the industrial workforce had "nothing sociologically distinctive" about them, compared to the informal association of workers globally.¹¹⁰ Walder's neo-traditional analysis has shaped understandings of both socialist and post-socialist China. It is a theoretical alternative to the totalitarian and pluralist approaches to studying state socialism.

The evidence from Shanghai secondary schools suggests that the neo-traditional image cannot be automatically extended to professional settings. Leninist reforms in hiring, supervision, remuneration, and discipline created multiple cleavages that cut through management and the teaching ranks. The divisions were not reducible to an activist/non-activist divide. Furthermore, even with the reproduction of organized dependence and clientelism, teachers did not exhibit stable cooperation toward state-controlled management. Instead, the Leninist reforms engendered teachers' resentment against the state that culminated in their assaults on school Party officials during the Cultural Revolution.

In this closing section, I address three questions: How representative are my findings for professional settings? Why are they different from conditions on

¹¹⁰ Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism*, 166, 175.

the shop floor? How should the neo-traditional model of Chinese communism be applied to professional settings? As workplaces that used professional labor, secondary schools occupied a lower-middle location within the socialist political economy. Better-placed establishments such as governments and universities consistently filled their vacancies at the management and staff levels with better-qualified people. However, it was impossible for establishments to obtain professional workforces that were well qualified both politically and professionally, as the CCP concurrently expanded government, industry, and other sectors after the 1949 revolution. For those establishments that did succeed in assembling a professionally competent workforce, it is unlikely that their members were all regarded as politically desirable. Well-qualified professionals were more likely to have studied under KMT rule or overseas, and they invited official suspicion and their own subordination to CCP members who were professional outsiders.

What happened in the schools suggests that the more knowledgeable that professional workers were, the less likely they were to be dismissed because of their expertise. It is possible that colleges, hospitals, and other professional settings sheltered as many counterrevolutionaries, rightists, and wrongdoers as did the schools. But before the revolution professors, engineers, and doctors had higher salaries than schoolteachers. During the 1950s, the CCP forcibly reduced some professional salaries that it considered excessive, but it did not force those individuals to accept the lower, standardized earnings. Different levels of income inequality thus existed in professional settings, but schools had a more equal salary structure than some. But schools likely supplied fewer non-monetary benefits than establishments better placed in the socialist political economy. In other words, the extent of organized dependence in the schools was probably weaker than in other professional settings.

In short, we would expect to find the social cleavages and political resentment that marked the schools in other professional settings, albeit taking different forms. For example, professional workers at one place, say in high-level Party and state offices, might be less divided or resentful than those elsewhere. Since these high-level offices had the best access to personnel, they could pick and retain those people who were best qualified both politically and professionally. They also tended to have better access to benefits that they could use to boost staff morale. Moreover, from the mid-1950s onward, standardized salary scales were imposed on the Party and the government in order to reduce income inequities in officialdom. Given these circumstances, it is possible that high-level Party and state offices were able to maintain higher levels of solidarity and consent within their professional staffs.

There are basic reasons why professional workers were more divided and less happy than industrial workers during the Mao era. From the CCP's perspective, professors, engineers, and white-collar workers were intellectuals (*zhishifenzi*) who warranted a short leash in the workplace. Most of them had

limited career prospects unless they became activists or CCP members. And almost every official campaign (e.g., Thought Reform, Anti-rightist Movement, and the Cultural Revolution) harmed intellectuals' social status. By contrast, factory workers belonged to the hallowed working class. In addition to bettering their livelihoods, the Communist revolution brought them opportunities for promotion within and beyond the factory. In particular, state-owned factories, Walder's research focus, received privileged supplies of goods and services for internal consumption, and this helped the CCP to gain the support of activists and non-activists alike. Secondary school teachers, even Party members and activists, did not have access to generous supplies. It is doubtful that many of the professional settings offered as much to their staffs as did state-owned factories. What happened on the shop floor and in professional settings may therefore reflect the reactions of different social groups to their respective advances and declines within the socialist political economy.

There are also theoretical reasons why my findings from the schools are different from Walder's findings on the shop floor. For Walder, organized dependence and clientelism were the major institutions that shaped factory workers' relations to colleagues and to the state. By contrast, I observe that because the CCP reconstituted hiring and other practices in the professional workplace, such changes must be analyzed in their own right. In the past, Elizabeth Perry noted that the pre-revolutionary history of the industrial enterprise is practically absent from Walder's analysis.¹¹¹ My research confirms that pre-revolutionary practices of hiring and so on did have a profound impact on teachers' reactions after the revolution. Although abolished by the CCP, these practices remained in teachers' consciousness as means for judging the practices that the ruling regime imposed on the faculty, and the ruling regime itself.

At its heart, the neo-traditional image of the industrial enterprise assumes that factory workers were primarily motivated by a rationalist calculus, participating in "the daily effort to improve" their livelihoods or otherwise get ahead.¹¹² It is no wonder that organized dependence and clientelism, which, respectively, restricted and improved workers' access to state-controlled resources, are portrayed as the main institutions that shaped workers' relations to colleagues and to the state. In this article, I have not privileged teachers' pursuit of their own material interests. Instead, I have sought to demonstrate that their rationalist calculations co-existed with their personal reactions based on their political and cultural backgrounds as well as their economic situations and moral beliefs. The Leninist reforms that I have described precisely reinforced such reactions.

Perhaps the applicability of the neo-traditional image of professional settings lies not within the Mao era but after it. The capacity of organized dependence

¹¹¹ Elizabeth Perry, "State and Society in Contemporary China," *World Politics* 41 (1989):586.

¹¹² Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism*, 60.

and clientelism to influence social behavior depends, above all, on individual inclinations to pursue material rather than other interests. Up until the Cultural Revolution, the Leninist reforms had prompted professional workers to pursue their political, cultural, and moral interests as much as material ones. It is doubtful that the reforms that followed, informed by radical Maoism, could lead professional workers to shift their focus to their own material interest. The ascent of rebels, workers, and soldiers in the professional workplace complicated the social cleavages there. Heightened state repression against professional workers intensified their political resentments (although it became hard to express them). The entire Mao era thus promoted social cleavages and political disaffection among professional workers rather than their acceptance of and cooperation toward state-controlled management.

After the Mao era, developments in the professional workplace redirected professional workers' attentions. The CCP began to rationalize hiring, supervision, and remuneration, stressing professional training while downplaying political loyalty, class background, and revolutionary fervor.¹¹³ In the schools that I studied, the teachers who taught poorly were reassigned or returned to their original workplaces. The government raised teachers' salaries four times within a short period to reduce income disparities, and actively built housing for teachers.¹¹⁴ Divisive measures of hiring, supervision, and remuneration gave way to budding rational arrangements. Nonetheless, as Walder noted, organized dependence continued unabated in the early post-Mao years, as the state retained tight control over access to goods, services, and positions through state-controlled management.¹¹⁵

In other words, post-Mao reforms weakened those practices that engendered political, cultural, economic, and moral inequalities in professional settings. But they kept professional workers dependent upon their superiors for raises, promotions, and benefits. Such an institutional order did not exist in the professional workplace until after the Mao era, at which time it promoted rationalist calculation among professional workers. This evolution can be seen as a transition of the professional workplace to a setting of neo-traditionalism in which professional workers concentrated on getting ahead rather than "getting at" one another. However, as a mode of social domination in professional settings, neo-traditionalism lasted for only about a decade before the rise of market mechanisms in the economy diluted the strength of organized dependence and forced a transformation of clientelism.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

¹¹⁴ Lü, *Shanghai Putong Jiaoyushi*, 546–48.

¹¹⁵ Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism*, 222–41. ¹¹⁶ See note 2.