PATHS TO POWER:

SPONSORED MOBILITY INTO SOCIALIST BUREAUCRATIC ELITE

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PATHS TO POWER:

SPONSORED MOBILITY INTO THE CHINESE BUREAUCRATIC ELITE ABSTRACT

Turner's (1960) distinction between sponsored and contest mobility provides a new perspective on elite recruitment in socialist states. Recent research has shown that in urban China, career mobility has long been organized into two distinct paths. A professional path heavily emphasizes college education but not party membership; a cadre path the reverse. If mobility is "sponsored", however, individuals are selected early in their lives for cultivation of elite loyalties and capabilities. Careful investigation of the timing of career events reveals such qualitative differences between these two paths, and shows a more nuanced interaction between political and educational credentials over the life course. Those who joined the party early in life rarely had attended college, but they enjoyed enhanced opportunities for further education and advancement into leadership positions. Those who joined the party late in life, on the other hand, were more likely to be college educated or an elite professional. While early party membership led to further education and to positions of power, later party membership was a symbolic reward for college educated professionals. Recruitment into the cadre elite therefore is a form of sponsored mobility for people who join the party while still young, while recruitment into the professional elite is a form of contest mobility based on educational attainment. These sharp distinctions between types of elite careers over the life course run directly counter to onceprevalent speculations about the merger of professional and political elites under state socialism.

Ralph Turner's classic distinction between sponsored and contest mobility has long been neglected in comparative research. *Contest mobility* denotes an open pattern of long-term meritocratic competition of the kind most often associated, at least in theory, with modern school systems and competitive market economies. Sponsored mobility, on the other hand, denotes the early selection of individuals according to explicit particularistic criteria (for example, family ties), to progress along a separate path of advancement, in effect being groomed for eventual elite status. Although the distinction was originally coined to capture differences between the American and British school systems, it has potentially broader implications that could readily be applied to a variety of comparative problems (Turner 1960:855). Unfortunately, follow-up research has been limited largely to the cross-national comparison of educational systems (e.g., Kinloch 1969; Turner 1975; Kerckhoff and Everet 1986; Tang 1992;), with only a few exceptions focusing on mobility patterns (e.g., Winfield et al. 1989). The concept would appear to be relevant to career mobility in state socialist regimes, where party members have long been thought to have distinct advantages in their careers. Are party members "sponsored" by the state socialist political elite in a manner analogous to the offspring of aristocratic families in England? Or is party membership simply one credential to be earned and evaluated, along with educational credentials, in a life-long competitive process of career advancement? In this paper, we investigate the utility of Turner's distinction for resolving a long-standing puzzle about relative importance of education and political loyalty in career advancement under communism.

The puzzle, briefly stated, is this. Ruling communist parties historically have demanded political loyalty from candidates for elite positions, and have exercised the kind of institutionalized control over personnel decisions that permitted them to enforce their

preferences. The strong association of party membership with elite status has led successive generations of researchers to conclude that these ruling parties have operated as political machines that allocate career opportunities on a particularistic basis (e.g., Feldmesser 1960, Parkin 1969; Connor 1979; Shirk 1982; Unger 1982; Walder 1986). On the other hand, decades of mobility research have shown that education plays just as increasingly important a role in upward mobility in the planned economies of communist party-states as they have in market economies with multi-party political systems (e.g., Inkeles 1950; Parkin 1971; Giddens 1973; Meyer, Tuma, and Zagórski 1979; Simkus 1981; Blau & Ruan 1990). How have these conflicting particularistic and meritocratic principles been reconciled in practice?

The presumptive answer to this question, which prevailed during the decades before survey data including information about party membership became available, was that the particularistic standards, through time, were made to conform with the meritocratic ones. Empirically, this implied that the party would recruit so heavily from among the college educated that the conflict between party loyalty and educational attainment diminishes. This change was understood to have taken place gradually over a period of decades. It was just as central to the thinking of modernization and convergence theorists as it was to Konrád and Szelényi (1979), famous for their prediction that intellectuals were "on the road to class power." The thesis has two eminently testable implications. First, party membership should become so highly correlated with higher education that it should have no independent effect on entry into the elite, and any independent effect of party membership should decline to a modest magnitude through time. Second, the dominant career sequence should be from higher education to party membership to elite position, if indeed party membership simply mediates the relationship between higher education and elite occupation.

The first studies to estimate the simultaneous effects of party membership and college education showed (for China and the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s), that controls for higher education did *not* reduce the independent impact of party membership (Blau and Ruan,1990; Lin and Bian,1991;Massey, Hodson and Sekulic 1992). *Both* party membership and educational attainment contributed independently to the attainment of positions with high occupational prestige. This meant that, at least for these countries, the long presumed answer to the question of how political particularism and meritocratic principles were reconciled in practice was not valid, and that therefore another answer must be sought.

Walder (1995) asked whether these results masked the existence of two separate career paths into qualitatively different types of elite positions. Konrád and Szelényi, after all, had speculated that the highly educated professional elite and the indifferently educated political elite of past years were in the process of merging. Perhaps there were two separate, qualitatively different career paths: one based on political credentials (party membership) and leading into executive positions in urban organizations, and another based on higher education, and leading into elite professions. Employing cross sectional data from one Chinese city, Walder found evidence that these two separate career paths did indeed exist. A later study based on a national longitudinal survey demonstrated even stronger distinctions between the two career paths and showed that the boundaries between them were just as strong in the Mao and post-Mao periods (Walder, Li, and Treiman 1999).

This paper focuses specifically on the features of the "cadre" career path that leads to positions of decision-making authority in China. Prior research has established that one consequence of the socialist dual career pattern is that college educated professionals who have not joined the party are generally excluded from positions of decision-making authority. The

common U.S. corporate career pattern of college education to professional position to executive posts has not been prevalent in China since 1949. "Executive" positions of authority in urban organizations requires prior screening for party membership, and only secondarily for college education (college education increases the odds of becoming a professional many times more than it increases the odds of becoming a cadre).

What is the nature of career advancement within this "cadre" path? Is it an openly competitive process where individuals strive for both educational credentials (early in the career) and party membership (throughout their careers) in a contest for attainment of elite administrative posts? Can a long-serving college educated professional obtain party membership in mid-career in order to secure the career-capping promotion to an executive post? Or are the politically loyal somehow selected early in their career, and put on a separate track of advancement? In other words, is the process of mobility into the socialist adminstrative elite a "sponsored" one in which the politically loyal distinguish themselves early in their careers and are groomed by the party for eventual advancement? This requires a closer examination of the timing of party membership and college education in the life course, and specifically the effects of joining the party early rather than late in one's career—questions that have not heretofore been examined. Turner's conception of sponsored mobility puts this question on the agenda.

SPONSORED MOBILITY IN A STATE SOCIALIST SETTING

Turner expressed his memorable distinction between the ideal-types of *sponsored* and *contest* mobility in the following way:

Contest mobility is a system in which elite status is the prize in an open contest and is taken by the aspirants' own efforts. While the 'contest' is governed by

some rules of fair play, the contestants have wide latitude in the strategies they may employ. Since the 'prize' of successful upward mobility is not in the hands of an established elite to give out, the latter can not determine who shall attain it and who shall not. Under *sponsored* mobility elite recruits are chosen by established elite or their agents, and elite status is *given* on the basis of some criterion of supposed merit and can not be *taken* by any amount of effort or strategy. Upward mobility is like entry into a private club where each candidate must be 'sponsored' by one or more of the members. Ultimately the members grant or deny upward mobility on the basis of whether they judge the candidate to have those qualities they wish to see in fellow members" (Turner 1960: 856).

Turner's distinction between sponsored and contest mobility is analogous to the distinction between *particularism* and *universalism*, commonly used to differentiate principles of stratification in mobility research.¹ A little-noticed implication of his conception, however, is that it sponsored mobility clearly involves a process that mingles particularistic principles with meritocratic ones. British boys who are selected by elite public schools according to family status are after all receiving an outstanding education. They continue to compete among themselves, not only in the cultivation of aristocratic attitudes and habits, but in academic subjects as well. What makes mobility *sponsored* is the *early* selection of candidates on particularistic grounds to be groomed for elite status—a grooming that does not rule out continued meritocratic competition with others enjoying similar sponsorship.

Party-Sponsored Mobility in Socialist States

According to Turner, sponsored mobility has four properties. First, elite status is granted by the established elite or their agents, and cannot be won or seized by individuals. This criterion fits state socialism better than it fits England: access to elite positions and occupational opportunities in a command economy is directly controlled by the party state and its agents. As Turner points out, "system[s] of sponsored mobility develop most readily in societies with but a single elite or with a recognized elite hierarchy" (1960: 858).

Second, elite recruitment is based on "some criterion of supposed merit", may it be intelligence, personality, parental status, or various kinds of ability pre-defined and judged by the elite and its agents. Under state socialism, such supposed merits are party loyalty, conformity, and political activism, as shown in research on workplaces and career advancement—criteria explicitly judged in the selection of party members. Loyalty and activism are attributes of a *relationship* between the individual and the party, and are therefore indicative of a particularistic standard typical of political machines. Merit may also accrue to the offspring of families headed by "revolutionary cadres, soldiers, or martyrs" who fought for the revolution before its victory, and who therefore might be presumed loyal by parentage (Kraus 1982, Unger 1982).

Thirdly, elite selection is made early for two reasons--to prepare recruits specifically for membership in the elite on the one hand (Turner 1960: 860, 866), and to cultivate a sense of "inferiority" among the "masses" on the other (859). Fourth, early selection into the sponsored group greatly increases the odds of attaining an elite position later in the career. The early recruits compete primarily among themselves for advancement into elite positions later in their careers, because they enjoy massive advantages over those not similarly sponsored.

The analogy of "sponsorship" with selection as a party member is direct and clear. Selection into the party is a recognized elite status in socialist states, and although it does not

itself imply an elite occupation, it is widely understood to yield potential career advantages. The mobility research on socialist states described above has already shown the large effects of party membership on the attainment of cadre elite positions. However, Turner's notion of sponsored mobility requires us to depart from the assumptions of prior research and draw sharp distinctions based on the timing of party membership in an individual's career. *Only those who enter the party early in their careers can be considered to enjoy the benefits of sponsorship*. If mobility into the cadre elite is sponsored, the causes and consequences of early versus late party membership should be different. Turner's conception has several clear empirical implications, all of them testable:

- 1) Selection into the party will occur disproportionately at individuals' early careers and will decline monotonically over time as individuals' careers proceed.
- 2) Selection criteria will differ among those who join the party early in their careers versus later in their careers. Those selected early in their careers will be chosen according to loyalty and political activism (or "red" parentage), while those selected later in their career will be selected according to prior educational or professional accomplishments.
- Only those who join the party early in their careers, and who thereby attain
 "sponsored" status, will increase their odds of advancement into administrative, or
 "cadre" positions. Those who join the party later in their careers will not increase
 their odds of becoming a cadre.
- 4) Those who join the party early in their work careers, and who have not already attended college, will greatly multiply their odds of returning to school to receive a college education—an important mechanism of sponsorship.

5) Those who receive a college education in this "sponsored" fashion will be much more likely to be promoted into cadre positions than those who receive a college education before entering the workforce.

DATA AND RESEARCH DESIGN

These four implications make evident the fact that any test for a "sponsored" pattern of mobility requires life history data and event history analysis. Cross-sectional data and conventional multivariate analyses will not do, because we need to make distinctions about the *timing* of career events in relation to one another, especially the attainment of higher education, party membership, and one or another type of elite occupation (ie., professional or cadre). The present analysis employs career and educational history data from a life history survey of a nationally representative sample of urban Chinese adults conducted in 1996. All regions of the People's Republic of China except Tibet were included in the sampling frame. The survey used a multi-stage sampling design and the primary sampling unit (PSU) was the county-level (*xian ji*) jurisdiction as defined by the Chinese Census Bureau. Through multi-stage sampling procedures, the survey obtained a representative sample of all adult residents (aged 20-69) registered as "urban" nation-wide. Field interviews were conducted for a total number of 3,087 cases (see Treiman 1998 for a detailed description of sample design and survey procedures).

In the following analyses, we first use duration-dependence event-history models to find answers to two broad questions. The first is about the pattern of recruitment into the Chinese Communist Party, specifically about the age of party membership, and whether different different kinds of people join at different ages. The second broad question is whether early and late recruitments into the party have qualitatively different implications for an elite cadre career.

ANALYSES

General Patterns of Political Incorporation

In previous studies, party membership was the single indicator of political loyalty. However, party membership is also a political status (or credential) that must be earned through individual effort. The acquisition of this credential should itself be analyzed. This is especially important because, as past studies have emphasized, party membership affects career opportunities. Understanding access to party membership therefore may reveal one mechanism whereby political control over mobility processes may be exercised (S. Szelenyi 1987; Lin and Bian 1991; Bian 1994, Chp. 6). In Turner's discussion of sponsored mobility, elite recruitment involves two steps --- first the acquisition early in life of elite credentials and later in life the attainment of elite positions. Party membership, in our analyses, is treated as an elite credential that has to be obtained before entering the cadre elite. Thus, we start with the question of how people are selected for sponsorship in the early career, and how these people may differ from those who enter the party later in their career.

Career-Stage Dependence. The first question is about the overall pattern of the recruitment of party members: are members recruited systematically at certain career stage(s) or is recruitment distributed evenly across careers of eventual party members? Figure 1 displays the hazard rate of joining the party along two time-dimensions --- age and labor force experience. The line of age dependence, which is hazard function against respondents' natural age, shows a left-skewed bell-shaped pattern, with the hazard rate increasing first with age and then declining after reaching its peak in the early 20s. When we re-set the time clock to individuals' labor force experience (The initial time, i.e., time=0, begins at the time when individuals entered into the

labor force), the patterns becomes clearer. The hazard rate is the highest at the very early career but declines almost monotonically over time. It is obvious that the chance of joining the party has not been evenly distributed through individuals' career course. Young adults are much more likely to join the party than their older counterparts. In other words, the party has been systematically recruiting members at their very early career.

[Figure 1 about here]

Table 1 statistically confirms the career-stage dependence pattern of party incorporation with the Gompertz models, which are suitable for the monotonic hazard function in Figure 1. The general form of the models is given as

$$h(t) = \exp(A \cdot \alpha + Bt \cdot \beta) \tag{E.1}$$

where h(t) is the hazard rate at time *t*, *A* is a vector of covariates with corresponding time constant effects α , *B* is a vector of covariates with corresponding time varying effects β . In its simplest specification (i.e., model without any covariate), if the intercept $\beta=0$, it becomes an exponential model with a constant log hazard rate of α ; if $\beta<0$, the log hazard rate is decreasing from the initial value α (*t*=0), with a rate of β ·*t*; the opposite is true if $\beta>0$.

[Table 1 about here]

The models in Table 1 require further clarification. In all models the observations start at the first time the individuals began their first job with two exceptions. First, for those who started working before age 18, the observation begins at 18. This is because in the workplace an individual has to be 18 or older in order to become a qualified candidate for party membership². Second, for individuals who went to college before entering the labor force, the observation begins at the time of college entrance. This is because college students have a non-trivial rate of joining the party (see S. Szeléyni 1987). Moreover, those who joined the party before the

observation started are not treated censored, but as joining immediately after the initial time (i.e., duration = .5 year).

Model 1 is the null Gompertz model with only two intercepts. As expected, this model provides a much better statistical fit over the null exponential model (χ^2 =69.6 with 1 d.f.), and the β term is significantly negative (β =-.038, p<.001). This result indicates that the rate of joining the party is the highest at the very early career and declines over time. The initial rate (i.e., the rate at time 0) is .014 ($e^{-4.252}$ =.014), with declining rate of about 4 percent (e^{-038} =.962) for every additional year of duration. This clearly confirms the pattern of career-stage dependence shown in Figure 1.

Class Origin vs. Educational Credentials in Party Recruitment. Although being young is advantageous, did all young adults have the same chance of joining the party, or did all of the older adults suffer the same disadvantages? What, in other words, are the main criteria of party incorporation, given the pattern of career-stage dependence, and did they vary across career stages? Two different kinds of background characteristics are particularly relevant here. The first is the level of prior educational attainment of people who join the party. Does the party recruit heavily from among college graduates, especially from young college graduates? The association of party membership with higher education has long been a subject of interest, but here we ask whether those who join early have different educations from those who join late. The second is whether certain categories in the population are shown preference in joining the party based on the status of their parents, as is the case in the sponsored pattern described by Turner. One clear analogue of this in post-1949 China is the party's explicit policy, from 1949 to 1978, of favoring people from "red" class backgrounds. These were families whose heads had joined the Party or Red Army before 1949, or who were from "exploited" classes (working class

or peasant) (See, e.g. Kraus 1982, Unger 1982, Lee 1978). Did these ascriptive characteristics influence recruitment into the party, and did they do so equally regardless of the timing of joining the party?

To answer these questions, we add two dummy variables --- good class origin³ and college education⁴ --- to the previous model. Model 2 in Table 1 is a proportional Gompertz model, which assumes that the covariates have constant effects over time. As we can see, Model 2 fits much better than Model 1 (χ^2 =100.2-69.6=30.6 with 2 d.f.), indicating that family class origin and education have significant effects on the odds of joining the party. A good family class origin increases the odds of joining the party by about 23 percent⁵ (e^{-210} =1.23, p<.05), while a college education increases the odds by a factor of 2.37 ($e^{.861}$ =2.37, p<.001). These suggest that both political loyalty and educational credentials are important overall in party recruitment, without considering differences between early and late recruitment.

When we allow effects of the two variables to vary over time, interesting differences emerge. Model 3 of Table 1 estimates a non-proportional Gompertz model by including the variables in Vector 2, which brings statistical improvement upon Model 2 (χ^2 =123.4-100.2=23.4 with 2 d.f.). Now the positive effect of good class origin is substantially more pronounced in the early career but declines over time. To the contrary, college education does not bring any advantages early in the career, and only improves the odds of party membership late in the career. To provide a visual illustration, we plot the predicted effects based on Model 3. In Figure 2, the black solid line and the black dash line are the change in net effects of good class origin and college education respectively. The gray solid line represents the baseline hazard function (i.e., for those who have neither a good class origin nor a college education). As we can see, the advantage of a "red" class origin disappears after 20 years of risk (.582-20×.029=0). A

college education, although bringing no advantage in joining the party early, increases through time to the point where it is quite substantial late in the career. It takes about 7 years of risk period ($.582-7\times.053-7\times.029\cong0$) to reverse the disadvantage associated with the absence of a good class, and about 19 years ($.582-19\times.053+7\times.020\cong0$) to reach the advantage attached to a good class origin at the very beginning. Late in the career, a college education becomes the paramount predictor of party membership.

[Figure 2 about here]

Our analysis of the career-stage pattern of party recruitment leads to the following three observations. First, the party recruits heavily early in the career; much smaller numbers join the party late in the career. Second, early incorporation into the Party is affected significantly by such ascriptive standards as family history (specifically, membership of "red" households), but not by prior educational attainment. It also must be assumed that these effects are in addition to whatever behavior the individual displays in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the party— something that is unobserved in this analysis. Third, the relatively small number of people who join the party late in their career are much more likely to have a college education, and presumably also prior occupational attainment (a subject to which we shall return below). These results reveal an interesting story. The potential conflict between political loyalty and educational credentials is reduced by the fact that the party directs them toward different career stages. Demands for political loyalty (and ascriptive markers for the same) are emphasized when recruiting the young, while demands for educational attainment (and presumably professional competence) are directed primarily to those in mid- and late-career.

Party Incorporation and Elite Recruitment

The observed career-stage differences in party incorporation may be due either to the party's preferences, to individual preferences, or to a combination of both. On the one hand, party branches may consciously and intentionally try to recruit members early in their careers. On the other hand, young adults whose future careers are still far from determined may pursue party membership more assiduously than their older counterparts—or perhaps those who failed to join early may abandon their efforts through time. In either case, we already know from prior research that party membership is associated with promotion into (cadre) positions of authority. Is it *early* rather than later incorporation that brings such career advantages? How much of a difference, if any, does *early* incorporation bring to the subsequent career? If early incorporation brings sustantial career rewards, then mobility fits the sponsored pattern; if the advantages accrue regardless of timing, then party membership is simply another credential in a pattern of contest mobility.

To answer this question, we first examine the effect of early incorporation on entry into the cadre elite. Figure 3 shows the rate of entering cadre positions⁶ along two dimensions of time --- labor force experience for the whole sample and duration in the party among party members⁷. There are three points worth mentioning. First, the rate of becoming an elite cadre is much higher for party members than non-party members, as shown in previous research (e.g., Walder 1995, Walder, Li and Treiman 1999). Second, while party incorporation occurs mainly in the early career, cadre recruitment tends to occur at at mid-career. Thus, there may be a "waiting period" between joining the party and becoming a cadre. Third, the shapes of the two lines are not monotonic and thus will limit our choice to parametric or semi-parametric models.

[Figure 3 about here]

We use Cox models with partial likelihood estimation (Cox 1975) for our confirmatory analysis. The Cox models are preferred because 1) the hazard rate function, as Figure 1 shows, is not monotonic and 2) partial likelihood estimation is able to control for the fluctuations within the baseline hazard function. The standard Cox model is defined as

$$H(t) = h_0(t) \cdot \exp(A \cdot \alpha) \tag{E.2}$$

where H(t) is the predicted hazard rate at time *t*, $h_0(t)$ is the unspecified baseline hazard function, and *A* is a vector of covariates with corresponding time constant (i.e., proportional) effects α . Non-proportional Cox models can be estimated by adding interaction terms between the covariates and time,

$$H(t) = h(t) \cdot \exp(A \cdot \alpha + At \cdot \alpha_1)$$
(E.3)

This is a proxy of the Gompertz model if the time interval (t_i, t_{i+1}) is small enough, meaning that episodes are split into multiple sub-episodes with small time intervals (1 year in our models in Table 2). By doing so, the disadvantage of the Cox model in handling time varying effects will be off-set by its flexibility of allowing us to leave the baseline function unspecified.

Our estimates may be biased, however, if we use the natural time scale. The problem is that since the individuals joined the party at different ages, those who joined earlier would have a longer risk period given fixed timing of retirement. For instance, if the age of retirement is 60, a person who joined the party at age 20 will have up to 40 years of risk period, twice as another person who joined at age 40. To correct this problem, we re-scale of the time duration as

ND=OD*MRT/RT

Where ND is the normalized duration, OD is the natural (and original) duration, RT is the potential length of risk period (RT=60-initial age), and MRT is the mean RT of all observations

(MRT=32 years in our sample). This procedure, although may complicate the interpretations⁸, ensures unbiased estimations of the coefficients.

Table 2 estimates the Cox models for entry into cadre positions among party members. We limit our sample to party members because our purpose is to examine the effects of the *timing* of joining the party. In all models, the observations begin at the time of joining the party. Model 1 is a proportional Cox model with two essential variables, timing of joining the party⁹ and a college education¹⁰. We can see that the earlier the individual joins the party, the higher the chance of becoming a cadre --- each year that a person delays joining the party causes a 4 percent decline in the likelihood of eventually becoming a cadre ($e^{.038}$ =.962, p<.05). This confirms our suspicion that there are generic advantages attached to early selection into the party. Surprisingly, however, a college degree does not add any advantage of becoming a cadre among party members (the effect is even negative).

Model 2 adds an interaction term between the two variables. Although this model does not improve upon Model 1 and the interaction is not significant¹¹, there are two subtle points that deserve emphasis. On the one hand, the effect of college education now becomes positive. On the other hand, early incorporation into the party is substantially more important for the college educated than for others. These results in fact are a direct reflection of the findings of Model 3, Table 1 --- the college-educated do not show overall advantages *because they did not enter the party at higher rates early in their careers*.

Model 3 includes interaction terms between the two variables and time. The model shows substantial statistical improvement (χ^2 =270.1-9.2=260.9 with 2 d.f.). Note that the timing of joining the party is now significantly positive. This is intuitive for two reasons. The first is due to the effects of seniority. *At the time of joining the party*, someone who joins at 45 would

have a much higher chance of becoming a cadre than someone who joins at 20, simply because this promotion occurs most commonly at middle age. A second reason is that people under active consideration for promotion may be strongly encouraged to join the party in anticipation of their promotion, and these people tend to be older. Despite the high initial rate of promotion however, the chance of promotion for later recruits decreases rapidly over time, with a rate of .026 and becoming negative after 8 normalized years (.209/.026≅8, or the first quarter of the potential risk period). This is another way of saying that the advantage of early incorporation into the party becomes larger through the entire course of the career.

The effects of college education show the same pattern. While a college education increases the initial log odds by a factor of 2.8, this advantage disappears at an annual rate of .241 and becomes negative after 12 normalized years (2.800/.243 \cong 12, or after the first 1.5 quarter of the potential risk period). Despite these effects, the importance of early incorporation into the party is extremely pronounced for the college educated than the non-college educated, as indicated by the interaction between college education and the timing of joining the party (α =-.159, again not significant at the .05 level). This effect provides an important clue about the career paths of the highly educated. Early party incorporation is much more likely to lead to "technocratic" positions (that is, cadres with profesional competence), while non-incorporation and later incorporation confines one to the professional track. We will further explore this issue later in this paper.

Figures 4 and 5 display visually the effects reported in Model 3 for early party incorporation and college education respectively. Figure 4 plots the predicted hazard function for two hypothetical persons with the timing of joining the party at 5 and 20 years into the career. Someone who joins the party at year 20 enjoys higher odds of promotion early on, but these odds

decline rapidly to zero after 14 normalized years (for someone who joined at age 40, the number of real years is about 8). The person who joins at year 5 has lower initial odds of promotion, but remains at a higher risk after 8 normalized years (if s/he joined the party at age 25, the number of real year is about the same as that of normalized years).

[Figure 4 about here]

Figure 5 display the same contrast between the college and non-college educated, assuming the timing of joining the party is 5 years after beginning the first job. The college educated start with a much higher risk but end with an extremely low rate. The non-colleges educated begin with a lower rate but remain at a relatively higher risk throughout the remaining risk period.

[Figure 4 about here]

These results provide a strong answer to the question of whether early incorporation into the party brings substantial career advantages later in the career, especially for the college educated. Whether it is the party's preference or individuals' preferences that lead to such high rates of incorporation early in the career, early incorporation opens doors into the cadre elite.

Early Party Membership and Opportunites for Continuing Education

The analyses presented above show us that early incorporation opens doors into the cadre elite, while later incorporation does not. Because early party membership is associated with political loyalty and "red" family status, while later incorporation is based on educational credentials, this suggests that later party membership is a kind of symbolic reward in itself. Early party membership, however, appears to mark an individual for sponsorship into the cadre elite. This finding gives rise to another question. If the party-state has created a cadre elite by drawing on such a low proportion of the college educated, how has it been able to minimize the long-noted problems of having uneducated "reds" exercise authority over highly educated professionals? The solution is disarmingly simple. Those who join the party early are not simply "sponsored" for later promotion into the cadre elite. They are also "sponsored" for continuing higher education and professional training to overcome gaps in their preparation at the time they joined the party. The significance of continuing education on the redistribution of educational credentials is surprisingly large ---- in our sample, among 348 college-educated individuals, 169 persons, almost half, obtained their college schooling through continuing education. How were these people selected? Table 3 shows that opportunities for continuing education were allocated preferentially to those "sponsored" by the party.

[Table 3 about here]

The models in Table 3 are the piece-wise exponential models defined as

$$h_p(t) = \exp(A_p \cdot \alpha_p) \tag{E.4}$$

where $h_p(t)$ is the hazard rate of period p at time t, A_p is a vector of covariates (including a constant intercept) with corresponding coefficients α_p for period p. We provides estimates for the whole study period (1949-96) with a dummy controlling for period effects, and also estimates for two separate periods --- Mao Era (1949-78) and Reform Era (1979-96) --- respectively.

All models in Tables 3 include only those individuals without a college education before entering the labor force. Those who already had a college education are treated as censored and dropped out of the sample. The observation starts at the time of entering the labor force¹² and ends whenever the individual was sent to college for continuing education. Our main interests are the relative effects of party membership, cadre occupation, prior education, and age. We can see that the chance of continuing higher education is far from being equal. First, the negative effects of age strongly indicate that opportunities for continuing higher education are given predominately to young adults --- one year younger in age increases the odds by about 10 percent. Second, party members, elite cadres, and those who already had a high school education enjoy large advantages. Third, these effects are not restricted to the Mao period but persist in the reform era. In sum, the earlier a person joined the party, the more likely s/he would be sent back for further education.¹³ The same is true for elite cadres. Although the socialist party-states tried to equalize educational opportunities (see Deng and Treiman 1998), our results suggest that the equalizing efforts did not apply to continuing education. The party states have created substantial inequalities in the distribution of the opportunities for continuing education. Such inequalities are political in nature in that young party recruits have always been the beneficiaries of the communist continuing education system. Instead of recruiting highly educated individuals into the party while they are still young, the party-state has instead recruited young activists into the party and "sponsored" them for continuing education.

The Political Marginalization of the Educated Professionals

From the above analyses, we see clearly that the party-state has employed various subtle mechanisms to resolve the conflicting demands for political loyalty and educational credential in career mobility. What are the consequences of these discriminatory processes? In particular, what is the fate of the highly educated who finished college education before they enter the workforce? In this section, we further explore what appears to be a systematic political marginalization of college educated professionals.

The Two Career Paths of the College Educated. If the party recruits the politically loyal early in their careers and sponsors these young "activists" for later attainment of cadre

positions, it in fact would direct the college educated into two separate career paths. College educated individuals who join the party early would enter the cadre path into the bureaucratic elite, while those who did not join or who joined later would be confined to the professional path. The former would become "technocrats", while the latter would be excluded from positions of power in organizations. To investigate this possibility, we now select the college educated in our sample for a separate analysis.

Table 4 examines whether the college-educated are directed into two different career paths by looking at two types of events --- entry into a cadre position (see Note 6) and entry into a professional position (ie., middle and high professionals, see Walder, Li, and Treiman 1999). These are not competing-risk models because we allow for transitions between the two occupational categories. All those who received college-level education, whether through continuing education or not, are included and the observation period begins from the time the individuals finished their college education. Dummy variables for the reform era (1978-96), gender (male), and seniority are included as controls, and the key independent variables are continuing education ("re-education" in the table) (1 for college continuing education, 0 otherwise), party membership (1 for all party members), and early party members (dummy for those who joined the party in the early career) 14 . Our purpose is to see whether there are qualitative differences between two groups of college-educated and between early and late party recruits. In order to address possible changes through historical time, we also interact the dummy variable for the reform era with re-education and early party membership¹⁵. All the models are piece-wise exponential models as defined in (E.4), estimated by robust MLE.

[Table 4 about here]

Model 1 shows that overall, party membership *per se* increases the odds of becoming a cadre by a factor of 2.2, but it does not affect the odds of becoming a professional. Moreover, there are important differences between two groups of college educated. Those who went to college through continuing education are 4 times more likely to become an elite cadre than those who finished college education before starting work. This is not surprising, given our earlier results, because we already know that those who receive continuing education are primarily early party entrants, and the party recruits elite cadres primarily from these early entrants. But it shows that past research, which found a small positive association between college education and cadre position, masked major differences in the *types* of college education associated with positions of power. Any observed association between education and elite occupations is largely due to the association of *party-sponsored* continuing education with cadre position. These are the people who were screened for political loyalty early in their career. This implies that those who finished college before working, presumably the intellectual elite of the population, are systematically discriminated against and politically marginalized.

When we add a dummy variable for early incorporation in Model 2, further relationships can be observed. The college educated who enter the party early in their careers are 3 times more likely to become cadres than those who have never joined the party, while party membership *per se*, net of the effects of early membership, does not increase the odds of becoming a cadre at all. At the same time, the early party members are some 75 percent *less* likely to become elite professionals, while the remaining party members (net of the effect of early entrants), are almost 3 times more likely to enter an elite professional position. Clearly, among the college educated, it is only early party membership and continuing education that

leads into the cadre elite. Those who join later and who finished college before working take the professional path—the only elite occupations open to them.

Model 3 tests for changes across historical periods by adding two interaction terms for the reform period. Only minor changes are observed, none statistically significant at the .05 level. For entry into cadre positions, the importance of early incorporation has declined, while the effect of re-education has increased. For entry into professional positions, the effect of reeducation remains largely the same, while early incorporation into the party makes if less likely still that one will become a professional.

These results show two clear career paths for the highly educated. Those screened for political loyalty early in their careers have a large advantage in becoming an elite cadre. By using the mechanisms of early incorporation and re-education, the party-state has indeed directed and finally divided the highly educated into two career paths and into two groups: bureaucratic technocrats and politically marginalized professionals. It is tempting to link the political marginalization of intellectuals to such historical episodes as the anti-rightist campaign of 1957-58 and the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69. But we have found that this marginalization is in fact deeply institutionalized in enduring career patterns shaped by party organizations.

Career Advancement among the Professionals. Because the highly educated were directed into two career paths, one might expect that the paths to professional positions would involve less political screening (e.g., Walder 1995; Walder, Li and Treiman 1999). However, if there were no political controls over the professional path, the tension between the politically loyal cadre elite and the college educated professionals could result in open conflict. Does the party not exercise some control over promotions in the professional path? Are politics as absent

from this kind of career as prior research seems to indicate? Table 5 provides some suggestive evidence that the party has not ceded control over professional advancement.

[Table 5 about here]

In Table 5, we examine the chances of career advancement (i.e., from lower level to higher level ranks) among the professionals, using the piecewise exponential models defined in (E.4). We model separately two types of promotions --- from low-level to middle-level and from middle-level to high-level. Only those who had already obtained a lower level rank are included in the risk set for the promotion for the next higher level, and the observation is treated as censored whenever a promotion occurred. Because there are only 24 events of the middle to high rank promotions and most of them occurred in the reform era, we are not able to estimate the changes over time. As we shall discuss below, however, the results still reveal clear political intervention.

The baseline model (Model 1) is completely in line with earlier studies. Party membership does not increase the odds of promotion, while a college degree increases the odds more than 4-fold. This fits with the conclusions of earlier studies, which have found that entry into professional positions requires screening primarily for educational credentials, but not for party membership. However, when we add interaction terms for college and continuing education and for party membership and college education, a somewhat different picture emerges. There are no changes for the low-to-middle rank promotions, but for promotions into the "high" rank, both interaction terms show substantial advantages for continuing education and for the college-educated party members. Now it appears that almost all of the advantage of a college degree is due to the interaction terms. Those who attend college through continuing education are about 3 times more likely to be promoted into the top professional rank than

others. And among all the college-educated, party members are about 5 times more likely to promoted than non-party-members. The message is clear: Although there is virtually no political screening in lower level promotions, to become a high-level professional, one needs, in addition to educational credentials, further screening for political loyalty. Politics intrudes into professional careers in ways not revealed in earlier research.

CONCLUSIONS

Mobility into the Chinese bureaucratic elite is "sponsored" in a way directly analogous to Turner's characterization of elite education in England. Those who exhibit the desired degree of political conformity, and to some extent those who come from "red" families, are selected preferentially early in their careers for entry into the party. This early entry has major consequences for the subsequent career, effectively placing these people on a separate path for promotion into positions of decision-making authority. If these early entrants have a prior college education, they are much more likely to become cadres, and much less likely to become elite professionals. If these early entrants lacked a college degree at the time of entry, they were far more likely to be sponsored by their workplaces for continuing adult education. The educational credentials earned in this way greatly increased the odds of entering into the bureaucratic elite, even over those who had earned regular college degrees. Much of the association observed in earlier research between higher education and cadre position turns out to be due to this phenomenon of "sponsored" continuing education.

The concept of sponsored mobility has led us to the discovery that is *early* entry into the party that has these effects on the subsequent career. Party membership *per se* does not have these consequences. Those who enter the party in mid-career do *not* enjoy the same subsequent

career advantages, and therefore party membership is *not* a credential, like higher education, that once earned can provide advantages in a contest for upward mobility. Those who enter the party late in their career do not have a greater chance of becoming a cadre than those who never join the party. These time-dependent effects have not been uncovered in prior research, and all future investigations of party membership and career mobility should be mindful of them.

The obverse of this pattern of sponsorship for the politically loyal is a pattern of political marginalization of those who move from high school directly into college, and who move from college directly into professional occupations. College graduates are not more likely to enter the party early in their careers than are those without college education—although those from "red" familes *are*. *If* someone with a college education *does* join the party early, they greatly multiply their chances of obtaining an elite cadre position than if they had not joined the party, and they become much less likely to become a professional. Those with a college education who fail to enter the party early are directed almost exclusively into professional positions. Those who enter the party in mid-career will increase their odds of promotion into the highest professional ranks, but there is a clear barrier between professional and cadre positions. Early incorporation into the party largely determines the subsequent career patterns for the college educated; if you have not entered the party early, you are highly unlikely ever to hold a position of decision-making authority.

In short, it is political sponsorship of those who exhibit loyalty early in their careers, not college education, that drives the attainment of elite decision-making positions. To the extent that college education is associated with cadre position in China, it is largely due to continuing education, access to which is in turn due to political sponsorship.

These results are precisely the opposite of what we would observe if intellectuals were, as Konrád and Szelényi phrased it, "on the road to class power". The homogenization of the state socialist elite, the merging of educational and political credentials into a single "redistributive" class, appears not to have begun in China. Instead, we see a pervasive and long-institutionalized pattern of party-sponsored mobility that divides aspirants for elite positions into two separate and segregated career paths. Young party loyalists are put on the road to continuing education, while the intellectuals are predominantly put on the road to politially marginal professions. And the paths are segregated: once the career path is set early on, crossover into the other path is very rare.

These findings raise broader comparative---and for eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union---historical questions. There are strong reasons to suspect that China may be different than its counterpart regimes. The regime's suspicion of the college educated and of elite professionals was much stronger and longer lasting in China than in the other state socialist regimes at any time in the post-1950 period. True, Szelényi (1986) subsequently judged his earlier speculations about elites in Hungary to be premature, but it would still be surprising to find that the Soviet and European regimes, most of which had much higher average levels of education, exhibited the same patterns of mobility into the elite. Was mobility into the political elite "sponsored" in the same fashion as in China? Were the divisions between career paths and types of elites so clear as in China? Are these generic patterns of state socialism, or particular outcomes of China's Maoist past? We no longer need to speculate; data ideally suited for investigating these questions are now at hand (Treiman and Szelényi 1994).

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	Mode	<u>el 1</u>	Mode	12	Mode	3
Variables	Vector 1 (α)	Vector 2 (β)	Vector 1 (<i>a</i>)	Vector 2 (<i>β</i>)	Vector 1 (α)	Vector 2 (β)
Constant	-4.252*** (.066)	038*** (.005)	-4.500*** (.112)	035*** (.005)	-4.731*** (.160)	020* (.010)
Good-Class Origin	1	I	.210* (.106)	ł	.582*** (.173)	029** (.011)
College Education	1	ł	.861*** (.145)	1	.317 (.222)	.053*** (.014)
Chi-Squared (χ^2) Degree of Freedom	69. 1	Q	100	2	123 5	4
* $p<.05$ ** $p<.01$ Notes: All models are estimated in our data. But given our purpos	*** <i>p</i> <.001 (Two-tai by TDA (Rohwer 1997) ses and the robustness of	led test); Numbers) which only allows ? the estimation, we	in parentheses are star us to adjust for case v believe that the subsec	Indard errors. N=308 eights but not other puent bias would be	7; Number of event = effects of the multi-st moderate.	533. age sampling desigr

Table 1. Career-Stage Dependence of Party Incorporation from Gompertz Models

Variables	Proportional	Proportional	Non-Proportional
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Timing of Joining (V1)	038*	033*	.209***
	(-2.467)	(-2.110)	(8.672)
College (V2)	312	.344	2.800**
	(634)	(.651)	(3.205)
College(V2)*Timing(V1)		083 (-1.256)	151 (-1.481)
Time Varying Effect ^b of V1			026*** (-5.454)
Time Varying Effect of V2			241** (-3.443)
Chi-Squared (χ^2)	7.0	9.2	270.1
Degree of Freedom	2	3	5

Table 2. Robust Partial Maximum Likelihood Estimates of the Cox Models for the Attainment of Cadre Positions among Party Members.^a

* *p*<.05 ** *p*<.01 *** *p*<.001 (Two-tailed test);

Numbers in parentheses are z-scores. Unweighted N=468; Number of event =131.

Notes:

a) All models use the method of robust estimate of variance to account for the effects of the special sampling design (including case weight and cluster effects). The duration has been normalized (See Note X)

b) Time varying effects are defined as (covariate)*(normalized duration).

Variable	<u>Overall</u>	<u>Mao Era</u>	<u>Reform Era</u>
Reform Era (1979-96)	2.31*** (4.52)		
Gender (Male)	1.45	1.94*	1.29
	(1.93)	(2.11)	(1.19)
Seniority (Age)	.91***	.89***	.90***
	(-9.35)	(-4.42)	(-9.77)
High School Degree	7.21***	5.81**	9.47***
	(7.45)	(4.47)	(6.20)
Party Member	6.28***	5.71**	7.85***
	(4.58)	(3.14)	(4.53)
Cadre	10.96***	12.81*	14.05***
	(5.17)	(2.53)	(5.68)
Interaction Terms			
Cadre*Party	.55	.11	.70
	(96)	(-1.46)	(15)
Cadre*High School	.38*	.16	.33**
	(-2.55)	(-1.39)	(-2.72)
Party*High School	.39*	.44	.30*
	(-2.30)	(-1.18)	(-2.50)
Number of Events	164	53	111
Chi-Squared (χ^2)	213.1	36.7	247.1
Degree of Freedom	12	11	11

 Table 3. Robust MLE of the Relative Hazard Ratios for the Attainment of College Degrees through Continuing Education.

* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001 (two-tailed test); Numbers in parentheses are *z*-scores; Notes: All models use the method of robust estimate of variance to account for the effects of the special sampling design (including case weight and cluster effects).

	Mo	<u>del 1</u>	Mc	odel 2	Mo	<u>del 3</u>
Variables	Cadre	Professional	Cadre	Professional	Cadre	Professional
Reform Era (1979-96)	1.10 (.38)	1.02 (.09)	1.17 (.62)	.98 (07)	1.10 (.87)	1.39 (.89)
Gender (Male)	2.83** (3.25)	1.44 (1.40)	2.77** (3.18)	1.46 (1.40)	3.02^{***} (3.54)	1.38 (1.19)
Seniority (Age)	.96 (-1.85)	.89*** (-5.98)	.97 (-1.61)	.88*** (-6.03)	.97 (-1.66)	.89*** (-1.85)
Re-Education	4.02*** (4.53)	1.16 (.58)	3.71^{***} (4.53)	1.12 (.82)	1.82 (.98)	2.26 (1.89)
Party Member	2.23** (2.75)	.95 (17)	.88 (20)	2.82** (2.75)	.76 (41)	3.01^{**} (2.93)
Early Party Member	1		3.11^{*} (1.99)	.27** (-2.68)	8.56* (2.12)	.25 (-1.80)
Reform*Re-Education	1	1	1	1	2.92 (1.50)	1.01 (.02)
Reform*Early Party	-	-			.27 (-1.81)	.36 (-1.83)
Number of Events	66	84	66	84	66	84
Chi-Squared (χ^2)	48.2	51.0	52.1	55.2	59.3	59.4
Degree of Freedom	5	S	9	9	×	×

	Model 1		Model 2	
Variables	Low-level	Middle-level	Low-level	Middle-level
	to	to	to	to
	Middle-level	High-level	Middle-level	High-level
Reform Era (1979-96)	1.68*	1.07	1.68*	1.32
	(1.98)	(.15)	(1.96)	(.55)
Gender (Male)	1.48	.38*	1.45	.47
	(1.40)	(-2.14)	(1.35)	(-1.54)
Seniority (Age)	.98	1.00	.98	1.00
	(-1.08)	(.29)	(-1.11)	(.29)
Party Member	1.24	1.70	1.56	.47
	(.70)	(1.14)	(1.01)	(70)
College Degree	4.20***	4.36**	4.36***	1.42
	(4.99)	(3.12)	(4.45)	(.44)
College Re-education			1.25 (.74)	2.92* (1.65)
Party*College			.63 (81)	4.72* (1.81)
Number of Events	77	24	77	24
Chi-Squared (χ^2)	36.0	17.8	37.0	24.0
Degree of Freedom	5	5	7	7

Table 5. Robust MLE of the Relative Hazard Ratios for Career Advancements among the Professionals, 1949-1996

* p<.05 ** p<.01 *** p<.001 (One-tailed test); Numbers in parentheses are z-scores; Notes: All models use the method of robust estimate of variance to account for the effects of the special sampling design (including case weight and cluster effects).











NOTES:

¹ Mobility research has generally neglected the principle of particularism, probably because the relationships that comprise it are not easily measured in large-scale survey research. Instead, *ascriptive* standards—such as parental status, race, or gender--are usually pitted against universalistic ones in mobility research.

² Some people did join the party before age 18; but this occurred largely in school and the army, rather than in workplaces.

³ This is a dummy variable in which good class origin is coded as 1 and others 0. Good class origin, also referred to as "five red kinds" ("*hongwulei*"). It includes (See Unger 1982: pp.13-14):

- A. Political red inheritance --- 1. Revolutionary cadres; 2. Revolutionary army men; 3.
 Revolutionary martyrs;
- B. Working class --- 4. Pre-Liberation industrial workers and their families; 5. Former poor and lower-middle peasant families.

⁴ College education here includes only those who went to college before entering the labor force; that is individuals who attained college education after working for a period of time were excluded. We chose to do so for two considerations. First, the Gompertz model can handle only time-constant covariates by default and thus it is necessary to define college education as a timeconstant variable. Secondly, as we will show later, there are qualitative differences between firsttime college education and continuing college education and thus it is necessary to separate these two categories of college education. ⁵ In this paper, good class origin is used as an indicator of political loyalty and reliability. This measure is less sensitive in that about 79% of our sample belong to good class categories. Thus, the actual effects of political consideration should be much greater than what this variable suggests.

⁶ Elite cadres in this and subsequent analyses are defined as the heads of work organizations, which include individuals with decision-making and managerial positions in public agencies and their first-level sub-units. The survey recorded 13 broad occupational categories defined by the Chinese Census Bureau, among which "middle level management" and "high level management or leader" are coded as elite cadre occupations. Under these measures, about 9.4 percent of our current urban sample had ever held elite cadre positions (See Walder 1995; Treiman 1998; Walder, Li, and Treiman 1999).

⁷ This hazard function includes only those who became an elite cadre after joining the party ---those who joined the party after being a cadre are treated as censored and excluded. This treatment also applies to the models in Table 2.

⁸ The normalized duration should be interpreted as a *fraction* of potential risk period. For example, given that the mean potential risk period is 32 years, 8 and 16 years of normalized duration should be understood as during the first quarter and the first half of the potential risk period respectively.

⁹ The timing of joining the party is measured with reference to the timing of labor force entry ---

(Timing of Joining) = (Year Joining the Party) – (Year Began First Job)

For those who started working before age 18, the *year began first job* is set to birth year plus 18. The timing of joining the party is set to 0 for those who joined the party before the first job or age 18.

¹⁰ College education here includes only those who went to college before the first job (see also Note 2)

¹¹ This may due to the fact that there are only 38 such cases in our sample.

¹² For individuals who started working before age 16, the initial time is set to age 16

¹³ The connection is more direct than the reader might assume. Throughout the first 3 decades after 1949, an individual could apply for such education only with the recommendation of their workplace supervisors. In effect, only those selected by their supervisors had any opportunity for further education.

¹⁴ Here we use a binary variable rather than a continuous one to measure the timing of joining the party for a specific purpose. Once a person obtained a college degree through continuing education, his or her career time clock should be re-set --- s/he may begin a relatively new career in which the prior career history may be less relevant. In this sense, using a continuous measure for the timing of joining the party may cause incomparability between the first-time and second-time college educated. In this particular analysis, we define early party recruits in terms of two different criteria: For the first-time college educated, early party recruits include those who joined the party in the first 10 years after finishing formal education; while for the second-time college educated, the deadline is in the first 2 years after the college continuing education.

¹⁵ We use interaction terms to address changes over time because the numbers of event are relatively small which do not allow us to estimate the models for two periods respectively.