Dalila Cekic

Outline Week 10

How did the Worker Rebel movement include women and how was their role depicted?

Theme 1: Women Aren’t Involved/ Encouraged

* Quotes
  + “both wings of the workers’ movement were overwhelmingly dominated by men. (This was in stark contrast to the student Red Guards, where, as Honig shows, female activism was pronounced.)” (270)
    - This movement was led by men and women weren’t encouraged to be a part of the cause. This is unlike the Red Guard in which women were mobilized, appreciated for their efforts, and respected.
  + “For the most part, the leaders of Shanghai’s worker rebels were young men on the lookout for excitement and self esteem in the heady new environment created by the Cultural Revolution” (271)
    - This movement appealed to men and worked to provide men an atmosphere that made them feel important and included.

Theme 2: Experiences of Wang Xiuzhen

* First was celebrated and idolized
  + Quotes
    - “Wang was later celebrated as an “advanced producer” and a “labor model” at city, provincial, and northeast district levels. These were high honors, indeed the highest to which an industrious worker might normally aspire” (276)
      * Women who worked hard and represented the work ethic of a communist worker were appreciated and praised. Wang experienced a rare form of support and empowerment.
* Was criticized for not keeping up with her work ethic for raising her kids
  + Quotes
    - “This promising career was threatened, however, when Wang was publicly criticized by the factory director for a deterioration in her work” (276)
      * Being a woman, there is much more room for scrutiny as they have expectations to be a hard worker and to be a mother and a wife as well. Women have a lot more to live up to and are more susceptible to scrutiny.
* Was again idolized but never used her platform to help other women
  + Quotes
    - “Forced into the double burden of child care and factory work, the lone woman among the top worker rebels was put at a disadvantage vis-a-vis her male coworkers” (276-277)
      * Despite her hard work and dedication, she was always still considered subordinate to her majority-male coworkers.
    - “There is no evidence to suggest that she used her substantial influence during the Cultural Revolution to articulate the special concerns of women workers” (277)
      * Despite her ability to make a position of power for herself, she didn't use this rare platform to change the circumstances she had experienced for other women.

Theme 3: Despite having barriers to power, there were ways

* Quotes
  + “At first glance, it may seem curious that a woman- Wang Xiuzhen- ruled over the band of brothers...though the rank-and- file worker rebels derisively dubbed her the “housekeeping mother-in-law” behind her back…” (281)
    - Even though Wang had gained a position over men in this movement, they still didn’t respect her and referenced her as a very disrespectful and deligitamizing name.
  + “While a single, powerful female leader -deriving her legitimacy from intimate association with a slain or absent male commander- may have long been a part of the gang model of organization, broader participation by women was less easily accommodated within this fraternal framework” (281)
    - The main way for Wang to get in a position of power and influence was developing a close relationship with a man in power. The only way she was given this position was because the male commander was no longer in his position and she had the ability to take some influence.

Conclusion:

During this movement, women weren’t given the best opportunities at power and influence and were excluded and unwanted in the process of the rebellion. Despite this, Wang was given a rare platform. She still experienced disrespect and scrutiny but she could have used this opportunity to change this for women in the future. Wang could have easily used her position to make a change and lead women and society towards equality and respect.

[https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/adelphi/reader.action?docID=224002&query=#\](https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/adelphi/reader.action?docID=224002&query=#%5C)