

Age: 37                      Sex: Male

Sex: Male

Total Years Relevant Experience: 5

Initial Immigration Status: Illegal (overland at Shenzhen)

Class Background/Political Designation: Capitalist

Positions Held: 1) Research worker, Electronics Research Institute, Canton,  
1967-71

1) Municipal/(80)

PAGES TEXT 2

Occupational History (5/23/80, 2 hrs.)

The informant graduated from upper middle school in 1962, and had a spotty career as a teacher, a staff worker in a taxation bureau under the finance bureau of Canton, and finally as a member of a research institute. He is now 37 years old. He changed jobs so frequently because he did not feel very happy living in China. He says he had a 'thought' (sixiang) problem which made it impossible for him to be happy. He had a capitalist class background. His father was a capitalist. So he often left jobs voluntarily because he didn't feel right in his heart. He was unemployed for a while after quitting his first two jobs, then in 1967 he was sent to an industrial research institute. He worked there until 1970 when he was sent down to a rural village. He came to Hong Kong illegally after 4 unsuccessful tries in 1973. He came across at Shenzhen.

The research institute he worked in from 1967-70 was under the Canton Municipal Light Industry Bureau. It did research on semi-conductors and the electrical properties of metals and alloys. They had no factory connected with the institute, but they had fixed relations with a number of radio factories in the bureau.

He says he was unhappy because people with capitalist backgrounds are 'cheated' (qisi) at every turn--in job assignments, in university entrance, in wages. Things were made very difficult for them. Also, he points out, "opportunities for manual labor were just excellent". They were, he says, the objects of each political movement in every unit they were in. During the CR, all the things in their Canton home were taken away by Red Guards.

The Cultural Revolution in the Institute

They had about 80 employees in the institute, divided into many groups for experimental work, divided by topic. When he first came to the institute, he was sent to study with the technicians who taught him the basics of laboratory technique. Most of what they had to do was to make alloys with different metals, purifying the metals to a certain percentage. He worked in a laboratory, and the lab had very strict controls on entering and leaving, and on one's dress. It was air-conditioned. They had to wear lab coats and special shoes. He was a laboratory worker, and was paid the basic starting wage, 36¥. He says there were no wage grades.

He didn't really do much work during this period. Soon after he got to the institute the cultural revolution had started. Since he had a capitalist chushen he was forced to sweep the floors. He wasn't allowed to speak directly to people, or to look into their eyes when he spoke with them. If someone came by they could push or slap him and say, "That floor's not clean yet!" They were like the 'untouchables' (jian min) he hears they have in India. This went on for almost two years.

There were two engineers, and both had been capitalists. Their treatment was even worse. They were put into cowsheds, forced to write confessions and self-examinations. They were dragged out periodically to be struggled. They knelt down, were denounced, their heads were pushed down, they were kicked, beaten, and cursed during these struggle sessions. He says this was nothing special, just an everyday occurrence during this period.

The institute was in the same building as the light industry bureau offices. The movement in the bureau was even more severe, they had two factions, and also went after all the capitalists there. They used large wooden staves to beat

them there. They beat some of them pretty badly. The two factions influenced the bureau and also spilled over to their institute. After a while one faction was defeated. In the process the institute director (suozhang), who was a grade 13 administrative cadre, was removed from office. They stopped research work entirely for almost 2 years, until 1969. Then the whole staff went to Hua Xian, a village outside of Canton, for a study group (xuexi ban). They studied Mao Thought and quotations. This was over half a year. After that they returned to the institute.

When they got back in 1969, they were saying there were too many people in the institute, and not enough work, so they sent down a large number of staff to work in a factory which produced radio speakers. It was a small factory, about 100-200 employees. It was under the bureau. He worked as a worker in the shops, stamping out parts according to a pattern. He worked in a small group of 5-6 people. The group leader didn't have any special responsibilities, he just relayed orders and attended leadership meetings at the shop that workers could not attend. He also held one or two production meetings a week. They also had a vice group head, who had no special powers. There was no quality inspector. In the production meetings the leader didn't really hold discussions very often--he just told what the output level had been, and what the situation was in quality of articles, waste of materials, and how many not up to standard articles there had been.

After about a year, he asked to be sent to the countryside, because he was planning to go to Hong Kong. At first they refused, he prevailed and later they permitted him to go. In 1971 or so he was sent to the countryside, then in 1973 after several attempts, he finally made it to Hong Kong.