

Bureaucrats and bureaucratic organizations are at the center of political and economic institutions of state socialism. This study examines the link between political dynamics and bureaucratic career patterns in the People's Republic of China to shed light on the evolution of state socialist bureaucracy. The author argues that political dynamics induced by shifting state policies and tensions between state and bureaucratic interests led to the recruitment and promotion of separate cohorts of bureaucrats with distinctive characteristics and divided loyalties. Using the life histories of a representative sample drawn in 20 cities in China, the author examines patterns of access to the Chinese bureaucracy and promotion patterns during the period from 1949 through 1994. The evidence shows varying selection criteria over time and two distinct patterns of promotion between national bureaucratic systems and within workplaces. These findings portray an image of bureaucrats as highly differentiated groups rather than a homogeneous ruling class.

POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND BUREAUCRATIC CAREER PATTERNS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, 1949-1994

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Bureaucrats and bureaucratic organizations are at the center of the political institutions in state socialist societies, as the “organizational weapons” of the communist state (Selznick, 1952) and as a “new class” with the monopoly of power and privileges (Djilas, 1957). They are the institutional basis for accomplishing economic goals in the command economy and

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major channels through which the state redistributes manifest and latent economic benefits. Ultimately, it is through bureaucrats and bureaucratic organizations that the socialist states govern in these societies. Since the 1980s, the political and economic transformation of former state socialist societies has led to significant changes in the institutional arrangements of bureaucratic organizations, but their importance has not diminished. Shirk (1993) showed that in the People's Republic of China, the path of change during the reform era has been largely structured by bureaucratic politics and bureaucratic bargaining in the Chinese political institutions. As the role of the central authority declines, local governments and bureaucratic initiatives are gaining importance, and industrial organizations and government agencies are increasingly more assertive in governance (Lieberthal & Lampton, 1992).

Given the central role of the bureaucracy in state socialist societies, it is an important theoretical and empirical task to examine and explain bureaucratic career patterns—how individuals are selected into the bureaucracy and how they are promoted within the organizational hierarchy. In China, the economic reform since the 1980s has been accompanied by a series of bureaucratic reforms, especially in the areas of cadre selection and promotion. Old cadres were forced to retire from their positions; a large number of young cadres were recruited and promoted based on new cadre policies (Manion, 1985). These changes raise a series of issues about the role of bureaucrats in China's ongoing transformation: To what extent has the Chinese bureaucracy changed? How has the evolution of the Chinese bureaucracy been reflected in changes in bureaucratic career patterns?

Scholars who study Chinese politics have long been interested in issues related to bureaucratic career patterns (Barnett, 1967, 1969; Lee, 1991; Li & Bachman, 1989; Oksenberg, 1968; Scalapino, 1972; Vogel, 1967). Most studies have focused on national or provincial-level political elites. Until recently, there has been no comprehensive study of bureaucratic career patterns at the grassroots levels due to the lack of individual-level data. With the availability of survey data in recent years, scholars began to conduct systematic examinations of bureaucratic career patterns in the Chinese context (Walder, 1995a; Walder, Li, & Treiman, 2000; Zhou, 1995). These studies have developed theoretical arguments about the institutional basis of bureaucratic career patterns and empirically examined different career lines and their associated redistributive benefits in the Chinese bureaucracy.

In this study, I report a systematic examination of the historical evolution of bureaucratic career patterns in China from 1949 to 1994. This research builds on early studies and makes two contributions to this literature. Theoretically, I go beyond the focus on the institutional structure of the communist bureaucracy in the earlier studies and emphasize the link between political dynam-

ics and bureaucratic career patterns, especially changes in bureaucratic career patterns over time. Empirically, I use detailed life history information of respondents drawn from 20 cities in China to examine (a) acquisition of political status—Communist Party membership, (b) patterns of entry into the Chinese bureaucracy, and (c) promotion patterns within the bureaucracy.

I define the concept of bureaucracy broadly to include both government agencies and work organizations such as nonprofit organizations and firms. I define bureaucrats to include both administrators and political cadres (e.g., heads of Communist Party branches in work organizations). In China, work organizations were under the dual authorities of both the heads of the local Communist Party branches and administrators in the workplace. Most work organizations were under the administrative apparatus of the state. Access to and promotion within these organizations as well as redistributive benefits have been regulated by central government agencies or appointed authorities.

BUREAUCRATIC CAREER PATTERNS IN STATE SOCIALIST CHINA: THEORETICAL ARGUMENTS

To develop a theoretical explanation of bureaucratic career patterns in China, I take as my starting point Walder's (1995a) observation that under state socialism, bureaucratic career patterns are governed by processes of allocating political opportunities. As Walder pointed out,

The power to offer career opportunities has long been recognized as a central pillar of Communist rule, either as a system of social control (rewards for loyalty) or as a means of fostering anticipatory socialization and (at least outward) ideological conformity. (p. 309)

The bureaucracy as an organizational weapon of the communist state gives rise to the most salient characteristic of bureaucratic career patterns: Entries into and promotions within the bureaucracy are tightly controlled by political processes and by political criteria of selection (Burns, 1987). The communist state uses privileges and status attached to bureaucratic positions as incentives to ensure political loyalty and compliance to state policies. Political loyalty and the adherence to the party line were the single most important criteria in recruitment and promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy, often at the expense of competence and efficiency (Harding, 1981; Lee, 1991; Walder, 1986).

It is remarkable that despite a series of political and bureaucratic reforms in the 50 years of state socialist China, the basic governance structure of the

Chinese bureaucracy has remained largely intact, especially with respect to the tight control of personnel management and the process of political selection. Even during the Cultural Revolution when the bureaucratic apparatus was paralyzed, the "rebellious leaders" could not hold onto their power unless they were formally recognized by the Maoist leaders at the top. In the recent reform era, despite substantive decentralizations in the bureaucratic decision-making processes, personnel appointment (e.g., the head of a work organization in the state sector) is still tightly controlled by the bureaucratic authority of the state.

Given the apparent stability in personnel management and political control, has the Chinese bureaucracy changed? I submit that the Chinese bureaucracy has evolved considerably over time and that these changes are closely associated with and reflected in bureaucratic career patterns. My theoretical arguments focus on two underlying political processes, both of which are rooted in the inherent tensions within the institutional arrangements of state socialism. The first is the political dynamics reflected in state policy shifts. These dynamics affect bureaucratic career patterns through shifting selection criteria in bureaucratic recruitment and promotion. The second is embedded in the inherent contention between the centralized state and bureaucratic interests, which often resulted in frequent bureaucratic reforms and political campaigns that disrupted career patterns and reshaped the life chances of the bureaucrats.

POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND BUREAUCRATIC CAREER PATTERNS

A major source of changes in bureaucratic career patterns is the marked political dynamics, in the form of shifting state policies, that coexist with stable bureaucratic organizations. Because of the concentration of power in the hands of the top leaders, significant fluctuations in state policies are often induced by changes in the top leadership's priorities (e.g., economic development versus political control, decentralization versus centralization), by leadership succession, or by changes in state-society relationships (Perry, 1989; Zhou, 1993). Scholars have long recognized that fluctuations and shifts in state policies have characterized the political dynamics in state socialist China (Parish, 1984; Tsou, 1986; Whyte, 1985; Zhou, Tuma, & Moen, 1996).

These political dynamics have enormous impacts on bureaucratic career patterns over time. First, state policy shifts imply changes in policy priorities and in patterns of resource allocation across economic sectors. Thus they lead to dramatic shifts in the distribution of opportunities among bureaucrats in different economic sectors, localities, and work organizations. For instance,

when the top leaders emphasized political compliance, as in the Mao era, political bureaucrats (*zhenggong ganbu*, such as party secretaries) were given the highest authority in the work organizations. In contrast, when the post-Mao leaders shifted their agenda to economic development, the new "manager-in-charge" policy (*Changzhang fuzezhi*) gave managers more authority over political bureaucrats in the work organizations. Thus policy shifts alter the life chances of different types of bureaucrats with regard to their status, promotion, and economic rewards.

Second, the communist state relies on bureaucratic organizations, especially the personnel quality of the bureaucrats and their identification with the top leaders' political cause, to ensure effective policy implementation. As Lampton (1987) observed, "A principal task of political leadership is to create an institutional and personnel context hospitable to the regime's specific policy initiatives" (p. 9). This characteristic is also captured in Walder's (1986) model of neotraditionalism in communist China in which "the impersonal standards dictate preferential treatment in return for loyalty and ideological adherence, and standard party leadership practices require the cultivation of stable networks of such activists in all social settings" (p. 6).

Ironically, the importance of bureaucratic allegiance implies that when state policies and priorities shift, the loyalty and competence of the bureaucrats identified with the "old cause" become a political liability. Along with state policy shift or leadership succession, the top leaders often seek to recruit and promote those who are identified with the new policies by promulgating new selection and promotion criteria. As a result, the life chances of the bureaucrats in different cohorts are altered as a secondary consequence of the political dynamics.

"ORGANIZATIONAL WEAPON" AND BUREAUCRATIC INTERESTS: THE DILEMMA

The second major source of changes in bureaucratic career patterns lies in the inherent dilemma of the bureaucracy as the "organizational weapon" and the bureaucrats as a social class. A well-established finding in the studies of bureaucratic politics in China is that, because of the monopoly power of bureaucratic organizations, bureaucratic interests emerge and prevail based on economic sectors, regions, and work organizations (Harding, 1981; Lieberthal & Lampton, 1992; Shirk, 1993; Shue, 1988). Stable bureaucratic institutions foster institution-based bureaucratic interests and patterns of bureaucratic bargaining and factional conflicts in the political process. These interests undermine the authority of the top leaders and threaten the effective implementation of state policies.

As a result, the relationship between state and bureaucratic organizations has often been a contentious one. Indeed, as Whyte (1980) argued, the political history of communist China can be seen as a process in which the central government searches for a model of effective bureaucratic administration and at the same time combats bureaucratic interests. The most dramatic episode occurred during the Cultural Revolution when Mao Zedong attempted to dismantle the existing bureaucracy and replace it with a radical governance structure in line with his "revolutionary" vision. During this period, a large proportion of bureaucrats at various levels of government agencies and work organizations were purged and their bureaucratic careers disrupted.

To sum up, the political dynamics induced by shifting state policies and by the dilemma of bureaucracy in the communist political order have led to evolving opportunities for bureaucratic careers. In this sense, the evolution of the Chinese bureaucracy is partly reflected in the changing composition of bureaucrats through shifting policies on entry into and promotion within the bureaucracy. China is not alone in this regard: Similar policy cycles and political dynamics were also documented in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Bunce, 1980; Hankiss, 1989). In the political history of the Soviet Union, top leaders frequently used mass mobilization to challenge the bureaucratic apparatus "as a way of stirring up mass enthusiasm, deflecting criticism from the central authorities, and making one leadership faction's policy preference into a *fait accompli*" (Van Atta, 1989, p. 135; see also Viola, 1987). The notorious political purges in China and the Soviet Union give testimony to the impacts of political processes on bureaucratic careers.

To illustrate my arguments, I now highlight three periods associated with distinctive criteria of political selection in China.

1949-1965. In the early years of communist rule in China, the Communist Party emphasized "following the party line" (*ting dang de hua*) as the main criterion in recruitment into the Communist Party and bureaucracy. For instance, after the antirightist campaign in 1957 that purged nearly 33,000 party members (mostly intellectuals), the Communist Party also recruited a significant number of the senior intellectuals who "had good performance during the campaign" (Zhao, 1987). As Harding (1981) put it, "A stifling level of conformity among officials, a reluctance to take independent initiatives, a low level of technical and managerial skills, and disillusionment and cynicism at the frequent shift in official line" (p. ix) characterized the Chinese bureaucrats in this political environment.

1966-1979. In the Cultural Revolution, the Maoist leaders purged a large number of old cadres and actively recruited and promoted their political loy-

alists to ensure the implementation of the radical policies. Accordingly, the selection criteria were shifted to emphasize the recruitment and promotion of those who had "the rebellious spirits." Between 1967 and 1971, all local party and administrative organizations were reorganized, and the followers of the radical policies were promoted into the leadership. The party constitution adopted in 1973 advocated, "All party members should have the rebellious revolutionary spirits." As a result, "those who were actively involved in the 'rebellions' during the Cultural Revolution were recruited into the party, which became the sources of instability within the Communist Party" (Zhao, 1987, p. 387).

1980-1994. In 1980, the new leadership initiated the reform of the party and the state, which signaled the beginning of major changes in the Chinese bureaucracy. The new selection criteria emphasized competence (educational credentials) and youth (age restriction). Political loyalty was also emphasized, but it now acquired a new meaning—adherence to the party's reform policies. Since then, the central government has made a series of institutional reforms to rationalize the Chinese bureaucracy. Policies have been adopted since 1980 to recruit and promote young and educated bureaucrats to replace the old generation of cadres who were forced to retire from their positions.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the theoretical considerations discussed above, I now develop hypotheses to guide my empirical study of the allocation of political opportunities over time in the Chinese bureaucracy. I measure the allocation of political opportunities in the following aspects: (a) recruitment into the Communist Party, (b) entry into administrative occupations, and (c) patterns of promotion within the Chinese bureaucracy. To examine the effects of political dynamics, I use historical periods to compare and contrast the effects of the key covariates over time.

State policy shifts and variations in opportunity structures over time. Because of the tight control of personnel management in the Chinese bureaucracy, the impact of policy shifts on political opportunities is often immediate and substantive. Shifts in state policies often led to dramatic changes in both the size and the structure of opportunities and inadvertently altered the life chances of bureaucrats in different historical periods. For instance, the Cultural Revolution period paralyzed the Chinese bureaucracy and stalled the career paths of many bureaucrats, whereas the expansion of higher education

in the post-Mao era greatly facilitated the young generation's mobility in the Chinese bureaucracy. This recognition leads to my first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: State policy shifts generate significant variations in the availability of political opportunities across historical periods, giving rise to marked differences in bureaucrats' life chances.

Variations in selection criteria. One important implication of the preceding discussion is that although the political selection processes and the institutional structure of personnel management have largely remained intact over time, specific criteria of political selection have changed in accordance with shifting state policies in distinctive periods. Education and seniority have been two salient and conflicting criteria of qualification used to allocate political opportunities in the Chinese bureaucracy. In Chinese politics, educational qualifications were seen as indicators of political loyalty and age as an indicator of cohorts with different political allegiances. As a result, education and age were often used as explicit selection criteria to target particular groups of political followers in different historical periods. In the Mao era, individuals with high educational credentials were often treated with suspicion. The Maoist leaders during the Cultural Revolution adopted policies of promoting young cadres that were identified with the radical policies to replace old ones. In contrast, the new cadre policies in the reform era especially emphasize educational credentials and youthfulness in bureaucratic recruitment and promotion. Therefore I propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The effects of education and seniority vary systematically with shifting state policies across historical periods.

Specifically, we expect to find that educational credentials were less important in gaining access to political opportunities in the Mao era than in the reform era and that seniority (e.g., age effect) had a more positive effect in the pre-Cultural Revolution period than in the Cultural Revolution and post-Mao eras.

Varying selection criteria should also have been reflected in changes in gender roles across historical periods. Although the communist ideology has long advocated gender equality, the radical Maoist leaders forcefully implemented this and other egalitarian policies during the Cultural Revolution. In contrast, the policy of promoting gender equality was considerably weakened as was the decline of the central authority in the reform era. Therefore, we expect to find the following:

Hypothesis 3: There are significant variations in gender inequality in access to political opportunities over time. In particular, gender inequality was least salient during the Cultural Revolution and most salient in the reform era.

Cohort effects in gaining political status. Changes in recruitment criteria over time led to the selection of different cohorts of bureaucrats into the Chinese bureaucracy. Because of the lifetime employment practice, once they entered the bureaucracy, most people tended to stay for the rest of their careers. Political purges that forced exits from the bureaucracy did occur, but they were less common in China. Preferential treatments were often accomplished through reallocating opportunities among different cohorts of bureaucrats. Those recruited in one period but disfavored in another period may have seen their careers stalled due to shifts in promotion criteria. For instance, the radical policies of the Cultural Revolution purged old cadres and rush-promoted young and rebellious cadres. Similarly, in the post-Mao era, the new policies promoted young and educated cadres and discriminated against the cohort of bureaucrats recruited during the Cultural Revolution (Zhao, 1987; Zhou, 1995). This consideration leads to the following proposition:

Hypothesis 4: Shifting selective criteria over time led to different probabilities of party membership and promotion for different cohorts of bureaucrats.

Empirically, I expect that cadre policies of a particular period favored the cohort recruited in that period relative to those in earlier cohort(s) and that, in the reform era, the cohort of cadres recruited in the Cultural Revolution was especially disfavored in their access to political opportunities than were other cohorts.

Bureaucratic resistance in implementation. As I argued earlier, one important source of political dynamics is the bureaucratic resistance to those state policies that threaten their own interests. The prevalence of paternalist-clientele relationships implies that the implementation of these state policies, such as shifting selection criteria, may have been resisted by the current bureaucrats whose rise to power was associated with different state policies in earlier periods. Therefore, the implementation of current policies may have been delayed, distorted, or rendered ineffective. By comparing the intended official policies and the empirical patterns of allocation of political opportunities, we are in a unique position to assess the effectiveness of policy implementation.

One interesting comparison is between formal promotion patterns along the national-level bureaucratic ladders and those within work organizations. The former is based on the official bureaucratic rank system in the Chinese bureaucracy, and its promotion has been more centralized through personnel offices of the central government. In contrast, promotion events within work organizations tend to be more decentralized and to vary across organizations and places. Thus these two types of promotion events may be regulated by different bureaucratic processes. One speculation is that given the central control of formal bureaucratic promotions, we would expect such events to be more sensitive to changes in state policies. On the other hand, bureaucratic interests are best organized along these formal bureaucratic administrations; thus bureaucratic resistance, if effective, is more likely to succeed in promotion patterns in the formal bureaucratic apparatus. Therefore the following hypothesis is more speculative:

Hypothesis 5: If state policies exert a strong effect, we expect to find significant changes in formal bureaucratic promotions relative to changes in the promotion patterns in workplaces across periods; if institution-based bureaucratic resistance is effective, we expect to find fewer changes in promotion patterns along formal bureaucratic positions than those in workplaces.

DATA

The proposed analyses are based on a representative sample of 5,000 urban residents drawn from a multistage scheme in 20 cities in China in 1993 and 1994. We selected six provinces (Hebei, Heilongjiang, Gansu, Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Sichuan), each representing a conventional geographical region in China. Within each province, we selected the capital city of the province to represent large cities (population of more than 1 million) in that province. We randomly selected a medium-sized city (population between 200,000 and 1 million) and a small city (population of less than 200,000) based on the *Statistics Yearbook of the Chinese Cities, 1990* (State Statistics Bureau, 1990). In addition, we included Beijing, the political center, and Shanghai, the largest industrial city. The sample size in each city was proportional to the population in cities of similar size in the province. Within each targeted city, we selected residential blocks and households based on a systematic sampling procedure. In each household, a respondent aged 25 to 65 was chosen based on a random-number table.

Information about each respondent's life history was collected using a pretested questionnaire. We obtained retrospective information on the

respondent's level of education, type of workplace, and occupation as well as the timing of these events. If the respondent was a cadre or a professional, we inquired about his or her rank and changes along administrative or professional ranks over time. We also inquired about the respondent's position within his or her work organizations over time. From this information, we may construct the career patterns of those bureaucrats and professionals and analyze the underlying processes.

RESEARCH DESIGN

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Events of entry into the Communist Party. In the questionnaire survey, the respondent was asked whether he or she was a Communist Party member and, if yes, in which year he or she joined the party.¹

Events of entry into cadre occupation. I use information about changes in a respondent's occupational status to identify the timing and the event of becoming a cadre.²

Events of promotion. I use two measures of promotion events. First, formal promotion events in nationally promulgated bureaucratic ranks: I use information about changes in a respondent's administrative rank to identify the timing and the event of being promoted. The administrative ranks include, in ascending order, the following categories: below *ke* (head of a section), *ke*, *fu-chu* (associate director of a department), *chu* (director of a department), and *ju* (bureau) and above.

1. There is no information on party membership in the two southern provinces of Guangdong and Jiangsu in our sample (this portion of the sample are from the six cities in these two provinces, which consist of about 20% of the total sample). The analysis of entry into the party excluded samples from these two provinces. To include all respondents of the representative sample in our study, I did not include party membership as a covariate in the subsequent analyses of entry into and promotion in the bureaucracy. In my preliminary analysis, I estimated the same set of models with party membership using the sample of 14 cities where party member information is available. The results are similar to those reported in the text.

2. Until recent years, both administrators and professionals were labeled as *cadres* in China, and the distinction between the two was not strictly maintained. As a result, some respondents reported their own occupations as cadres but indicated that they had professional ranks, and vice versa. This study focuses on the cadre occupation only. If respondents reported themselves as cadres but reported their professional ranks, they were treated as a professional in this study.

Second, promotion within a workplace: For managerial positions within a workplace, the respondent was asked to identify whether and when his or her position in the work organization was an ordinary worker, lower level manager, mid-level manager, or higher level manager. In the analysis, the “manager” category included those tasks that involved administrative, political (party), or technical responsibilities.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Education. I measure education at three levels: junior high school or below (the reference category), senior high school, and college. I combined *zhongzhuan* (technical schools) with the category of senior high and *dazhuan* (community colleges and so forth) with the category of college.

Age and age². I use age and age² (centered at 25) to measure the first-order and second-order effects of age. Age is used to indicate the role of seniority in access to political opportunities.

Cadre cohorts. I distinguish three cohorts of cadres based on the historical periods in which they were recruited into the cadre occupation.

- The first cohort consists of those cadres recruited into their occupations between 1949 and 1965.
- The second cohort consists of those cadres recruited into their occupations during the Cultural Revolution, between 1966 and 1979.
- The third cohort includes those cadres recruited into their occupations after 1980.

Occupational origins. For the analysis of entry into the Communist Party and administrative occupations, I use a set of dummy variables to indicate respondent's occupational location at the time of experiencing such events. The occupational categories include professional, office worker, service worker, production worker, military, and in-college students (in addition to the cadre cohorts). Production workers are used as the reference category.

Historical periods. Based on my earlier discussion, I distinguish three historical periods: 1949-1965, 1966-1979, and 1980-1994.³ I use historical periods to examine variations in parameter estimates as a way to detect changes

3. There were more frequent shifts in state policies with regard to selection criteria and opportunities than were captured by the three-period scheme adopted here. Unfortunately, given the limited number of cases in the sample, it is not feasible to use more refined historical periods

in selection criteria, cohort effects, and patterns of promotion, as hypothesized in this study.

In the statistical analyses, I also included a set of dummy variables to indicate one's location in type of work organizations (government agencies, public organizations, state firms, and collective firms) and type of cities in which the residents are drawn (large cities, medium cities, and small cities). These variables are used mainly for the purpose of statistical control. I will not discuss these variables and their effects in any detail in this study due to space limitations. The descriptive statistics of the covariates are reported in Table 1. Note that most covariates may vary over time. Therefore, Table 1 reports only the distribution of the values of these variables in three selected years (1965, 1978, 1993).⁴

MODELS AND METHODS

To model bureaucratic career patterns, one needs to take into consideration several features of the data and the underlying processes. First, the composition of the sample evolved over time. For instance, because of the age restriction for Communist Party membership, only those aged 18 or older should be included in the analysis of the entry into the Communist Party. Second, the values of the covariates may also change over time. For instance, one's occupational status in the labor force may change over time, thus affecting the probability of experiencing certain events (e.g., becoming a cadre). These considerations call for a dynamic modeling of a continuous-time, discrete-event process (Tuma & Hannan, 1984) that allows the incorporation of time-varying covariates and evolving risk sets.

For the analyses of entry into the Communist Party and the cadre occupation, I adopt the logistic discrete-time event history model (Allison, 1982) as follows:

$$\log [P_{it} / (1 - P_{it})] = \mathbf{x}(t)\beta, \quad (1)$$

and still retain the statistical power of hypothesis testing. Note that using the three-period scheme is more conservative in testing the proposed hypotheses. The aggregated data over the three periods make it more difficult to detect variations in selection criteria and opportunities and thus more difficult to find evidence supportive of my hypotheses.

4. Because of our sampling scheme, respondents from large cities (provincial capitals, Beijing, and Shanghai) are overrepresented in our data. As a result, the percentages of party members, cadres, and professionals are higher than the national average. This feature of the data was controlled for in statistical analyses by including indicator variables for the size of the cities from which the respondents were drawn.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Covariates in Selected Years

Covariates	1965	1978	1993
Age	27.1	32.0	39.1
Female	45.9	46.1	41.5
Party membership	17.8	18.9	22.6
Education			
Elementary or below	40.8	25.7	12.3
Junior high	26.7	36.9	32.9
Senior high	19.0	28.2	36.4
College	10.4	7.4	17.8
Occupation			
Cadre	11.5	11.4	15.3
Professional	18.4	15.1	20.4
Office worker	3.2	3.4	6.4
Service worker	7.7	9.0	12.5
Production worker	42.3	45.0	49.1
Soldier	5.2	2.6	0.6
Farmer	6.6	9.1	0.7
Student	0.7	0.3	0.8
No occupation	4.4	3.7	1.1
Work organization			
Government	13.8	9.7	10.2
Public organization	11.3	8.6	11.8
State-owned firm	40.5	42.4	45.3
Collective firm	19.3	21.9	22.1
Hybrid firm	2.0	2.8	8.7
Farm	8.4	10.8	0.7
No workplace	4.1	3.3	0.1
In school	0.6	0.3	0.8
City location			
Large city	61.3	62.6	61.2
Medium city	23.7	22.7	23.1
Small city	15.0	14.7	15.8
<i>N</i>	1,604	3,447	3,816

Note: Except for "age," all entries are percentages in that specific category.

where P refers to the conditional probability that individual i experiences an event at time t , given that an event has not occurred to him or her, \mathbf{x} is the set of time-varying covariates, and β is the estimate of the corresponding parameters. Because most covariates in the data are measured on an annual basis, a discrete-time event history model is appropriate.

For the analysis of promotion patterns, one needs to take into consideration the complication of repeated events. Because a bureaucrat may experi-

ence more than one promotion in his or her career, these repeated events are likely to be correlated over time. For this reason, I adopt the generalized estimation equation approach to model the repeated events. The generalized estimation equation approach has the advantage of not requiring parametric assumptions about the form of the covariance structures among multiple promotion events (Diggle, Liang, & Zeger 1994). The β is estimated by solving the estimation equation

$$U\beta = \sum (\partial \mu_i / \partial \beta)' [V_i(\alpha)]^{-1} (y_i - \mu_i) = 0, \quad (2)$$

where μ_i is the expectation of y_i (the promotion event), which is linked to a linear combination of the covariates and the corresponding estimates through the logit function. The estimated variance is robust for repeated measures.

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE PATTERNS ACROSS HISTORICAL PERIODS

I begin by describing the patterns of the main events under study over time as well as the distribution of cadre and professional cohorts in the sample.

As Table 1 shows, there were noticeable variations in the availability of opportunities as reflected in the composition of the labor force. By the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1978, for instance, the proportion of the labor force in high-status occupations (e.g., cadre, professional) and high-status organizations (e.g., government) was noticeably smaller than in 1965 or 1993. The descriptive statistics of our sample (not reported here) also show that there are parallel variations in the rates of entry into the Communist Party and the cadre occupation across the three periods. Specifically, the most recent period (1980-1994) experienced the highest promotion rates along formal bureaucratic ranks as well as within workplaces. In contrast, the second period witnessed a significantly lower rate of entry into or promotion in the bureaucracy, caused by the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. These patterns show significant variations in political opportunities across historical periods, as is consistent with my first hypothesis.

Given the variations in opportunities in access to and promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy across historical periods, what criteria were used in the selection processes? I will now analyze the processes underlying these entry and promotion events.

Table 2
Discrete Event History Model of Entry Into the Communist Party by Period

Covariates	1949-1965	1966-1979	1980-1994
Intercept	2.23	6.11**	4.59**
Female	-0.39*	-0.19	-0.63**
Age	-0.03	-0.00	0.09**
Age ² / 100	-0.93*	-0.16	-0.31**
Education			
Senior high	-0.13	0.20	0.59**
College	-0.20	-0.12	1.02**
Occupation			
Cadre cohort 49-65	1.81**	1.49**	1.45**
Cadre cohort 66-79		1.91**	0.92**
Cadre cohort 80-94			1.35**
Professional	0.24	0.54*	0.79**
Office worker	1.04**	0.70*	0.54
Service worker	0.71*	0.31	0.10
Military service	1.72**	2.55**	2.34**
In college	0.49	0.90*	1.07**
Farmer	0.52	0.47	0.19
Work organization			
Government	0.49	1.03**	0.50*
Public organization	-0.03	0.66*	-0.22
State firm	0.19	0.46*	0.04
City location			
Medium city	0.07	0.28	0.38**
Small city	0.02	0.36*	0.12
Number of events	205	293	307

Note: Junior high or below is the reference category for education, production worker is the category for occupation, collective firm is for work organization, and large city signifies city location.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

RECRUITMENT INTO THE COMMUNIST PARTY

It is well-known that membership in the Communist Party is an important political asset for social mobility in state socialist societies. Thus patterns of party membership recruitment capture the evolving processes of allocating political opportunities. My focus is on how the selection criteria affect the acquisition of this political status over time. Because 18 is the minimum age at which one can join the party, I included only those respondents who were 18 years or older in this analysis. Table 2 reports the parameter estimates of the covariates in the logistic model of becoming a party member.

Gender. Recall that I use the role of gender to measure the effects of varying state policies and political dynamics. There is clear evidence of varying gender roles across the three periods. A female employee had a lower rate of being recruited into the party throughout the three periods, but the gender gap was narrowest during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1979) when the difference between men and women was not statistically discernible, and it was largest in the reform era (1980-1994). These patterns are consistent with Hypothesis 3.

Seniority and education. I suggested (Hypothesis 2) that age effects are likely to vary with shifting state policies across historical periods. The evidence is not clear on this account. Age (seniority) did not play a significant role in recruitment into the Communist Party in the Mao era (1949-1979). In the reform era, on the other hand, there is evidence that age effect shows an inverted U shape, with the peak at age 40. Thus state policies that emphasize age restrictions in allocating political opportunities are not reflected in the recruitment of party members, as this set of analyses shows.

I use respondents' formal education as an indicator of human capital, an indirect measure of competence. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, educational credential had no significant effects on entry into the Communist Party in the Mao era (1949-1979). In the post-Mao era, college graduates had the highest rate of being recruited into the Communist Party. These results are consistent with the state policies in the Mao era that discriminated against intellectuals. They also show that competence (educational qualification) became an important criterion in the post-Mao era. Here, we observed clear evidence of shifting selection criteria between the Mao and post-Mao regimes.

Cohort effects. I suggested (Hypothesis 4) that varying political selection criteria should be reflected in distinctive cohort effects for cadres recruited in different historical periods. The cadre cohort effects are consistent with this hypothesis. Compared with production workers (the reference category), being a cadre significantly improves one's access to party membership, as indicated by the significant, positive effects for all cadre cohorts over time. However, there are noticeable variations in the magnitude of effects among the three cohorts. During the Cultural Revolution, the cadres recruited in that period (1966-1979) had a higher probability of entering the Communist Party than did those in the first cohort. In contrast, in the reform era, the Cultural Revolution (1966-1979) cohort had the lowest probability of entering the Communist Party among the three cadre cohorts. This is consistent with the new cadre policies that discriminated against those recruited under the radical policies during the Cultural Revolution.

Other occupational locations. With respect to the effects of other occupational statuses, several findings are worth noting. First, although educational credential played no significant role in party enrollment during the Cultural Revolution, it is surprising to find that professionals and college students had a significant and higher rate of becoming party members. One plausible explanation is that during this period, the Maoist leaders actively promoted their political followers, many of whom were “red guards” in college or in the professional-concentrated sectors (i.e., media, education). Second, as is well known in China, the military service offered better opportunities for gaining party membership compared with the reference category of production workers. Finally, it is also noticeable that educational qualification was especially favored in the post-Mao era: A professional status and those in college had the largest gains in the third period relative to other occupations.

ENTRY INTO CADRE CAREERS

I now examine patterns of access to the Chinese bureaucracy—entry into the cadre occupation—across periods. These analyses allow us to identify the sources of personnel supply to the Chinese bureaucracy and the underlying recruitment processes. Only a small proportion of the labor force participants had access to these high-status occupations. In some instances, entry into a cadre career starts with the respondent’s first job; in others, such entries result from shifts from other occupations.

Table 3 reports the parameter estimates of the determinants of entry into the cadre occupation across the three periods.

Gender. Again, we find that there was persistent gender inequality in access to the Chinese bureaucracy. However, as in the patterns of access to party membership, gender inequality was lowest during the Cultural Revolution and highest in the reform era. These patterns reflect the strong impacts of shifting state policies in allocating political opportunities between men and women.

Seniority and education. Age had a significant and negative effect in the first period, probably reflecting the expansion of the bureaucracy in the early years when it recruited a large number of young cadres. During the Cultural Revolution, age did not play a significant role. In the reform era, we observed an inverted U shape. Because most events of entry into the cadre occupation took place early in people’s careers, it is likely that age effects are less important in this set of analyses.

Table 3
Discrete Event History Model of Entry Into the "Cadre" Occupation by Periods

Covariates	1949-1965	1966-1979	1980-1994
Intercept	-6.25**	-0.01	2.79*
Female	-0.65**	-0.54**	-0.73**
Age	-0.04**	0.01	0.10**
Age ² / 100	0.25*	0.04	-0.45**
Education			
Senior high	1.15**	0.74**	0.82**
College	0.85*	0.66**	1.40**
Occupation			
Professional	-1.00**	-0.35	-0.26
Office worker	-0.14	0.78**	1.08**
Service worker	-0.62	-0.15	0.07
Military service	-0.91**	0.67*	1.80**
In college	1.57**	2.43**	3.31**
Farmer	-1.21**	0.55*	1.24**
Work organization			
Government	0.93**	0.83**	0.43*
Public organization	0.05	0.30	0.08
State firm	0.93**	0.15	0.09
City location			
Medium city	-0.04	0.01	-0.13
Small city	-0.06	0.06	-0.24
Number of events	202	267	466

Note: Junior high or below is the reference category for education, production worker is the reference category for occupation, collective firm is for work organization, and large city signifies city location. This set of analyses also included indicators for those who had no prior job or work organizations experience for statistical control (this gives two additional degrees of freedom to the estimated model).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In contrast to the rate of entry into the Communist Party, education played a consistent and positive role in entering the cadre profession over time. Those with a high school diploma or a college degree had a significant and higher rate of entering the cadre occupation in all three periods. This pattern partly reflects the institutional practice in the Chinese bureaucracy whereby most college graduates were routinely placed in cadre jobs. But the impact of political dynamics was also evident: The effects of educational levels were noticeably smaller in the Cultural Revolution, and the effect of college education substantially increased in the post-Mao era. These patterns were consistent with the shifting cadre policies during and after the Cultural Revolution.

Other occupational locations. There are several salient patterns with regard to the supply of cadres from other occupations. First, professionals

had a lower rate of shifting to the cadre occupation, but it was statistically significant only in the first period. In other words, there were some boundaries between cadres and professionals, but the barriers were not sharply drawn and, as observed in practice, there were flows between cadre and professional occupations in both directions. Second, office workers, military personnel, and school graduates appeared to be the largest supply to Chinese bureaucracy, especially in the post-Mao era, as indicated by the significant and positive effects of these categories. Third, despite the ideological claim of the importance of the working class, except for the first period, neither service workers nor production workers appeared to have any advantage in becoming a cadre, relative to other occupations. Finally, although those from rural areas (farms) had higher rates of entering the cadre occupation in the last two periods, this was because those living in rural areas could migrate into the city mainly by obtaining college educations, which then channeled them into the cadre occupation. Thus this finding does not represent a general pattern for rural residents.

PROMOTION PATTERNS IN THE CHINESE BUREAUCRACY

In state socialist societies, political power is ultimately associated with one's bureaucratic position. Therefore, promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy is especially important regarding access to redistributive power and benefits. The following analyses examine patterns of promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy. Specifically, I consider two processes. First, I analyze patterns of formal promotion on the nationally established bureaucratic ladders for cadres, with comparable ranks across workplaces and localities. These promotions, although often made within a specific workplace, are promulgated by the central government and regulated by state policies. Only those already in the cadre occupations were included in the analyses.

Second, I examine patterns of promotion within workplaces, specifically promotion into low-, mid-, and high-ranking managerial positions in a workplace. Compared with formal bureaucratic promotion, promotion within a workplace is more decentralized and affected by local circumstances. For this analysis, I included all those who were employees in a work organization because employees in the workplace may be promoted into managerial positions regardless of whether they held nationally promulgated administrative ranks.

Table 4 reports the generalized estimation equation parameter estimates from these two sets of analyses. The first panel reports estimates for the formal promotion patterns across the historical periods, and the second panel reports estimates for promotions in work organizations. These analyses were

Table 4

Generalized Estimation Equation Estimates of the Determinants of Promotion Patterns in the Chinese Bureaucracy

Covariates	Promotion in Formal Bureaucratic Rank			Promotion in Workplace		
	1949- 1965	1966- 1979	1980- 1994	1949- 1965	1966- 1979	1980- 1994
Intercept	-2.58	-3.58**	-4.96**	-3.15**	-0.22	-0.13
Female	-0.33	-0.67**	-0.51**	-0.51**	-0.46**	-0.42**
Age	0.09	0.08*	0.09**	0.01	0.05**	0.08**
Age ² / 100	-1.69*	-0.31	-0.39**	-0.96*	0.12	-0.34**
Education						
Senior high	0.30	0.08	0.05	0.02	0.43**	0.63**
College	1.18**	0.69**	0.69**	0.70**	0.91**	1.10**
Cadre						
49-65 cohort	—	—	—	2.57**	1.47**	1.37**
66-79 cohort	—	0.11	-0.59**	—	2.77**	0.94**
80-94 cohort	—	—	-0.82**	—	—	2.00**
Work organization						
Government	0.44	0.41	0.69**	-0.34	-0.03	0.01
Public organization	0.91	0.47	0.06	0.15	0.40	0.30*
State firm	0.97	0.32	0.06	0.11	0.37*	0.03
City location						
Medium city	0.11	-0.22	-0.84**	-0.15	0.11	-0.53**
Small city	-1.64	-0.18	-0.19	-0.53	0.08	-0.19
Number of events	38	102	242	137	268	621

Note: Junior high or below is the reference category for education, production worker is the reference category for occupation, collective firm for work organization, and large city signifies city location. 49-65 cohort is the reference category for cadre cohorts in the first panel, and employees who were not cadres in the workplace is the reference category for cadre cohorts in the second panel of analysis.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

done separately, but I will interpret the findings together to facilitate comparisons between the two.

Gender. As with the gender effects on entry into the cadre occupation, female employees had a lower rate of being promoted in both formal bureaucratic ladders and work organizations. It is interesting that the gender gap over time was different than that observed in previous analyses. For instance, gender inequality in promotion seemed more salient during the Cultural Revolution than in the reform era, suggesting that the egalitarian policy during the Cultural Revolution did not help women gain access to positional power.

Seniority and education. For both processes of bureaucratic promotions, age effects showed similar patterns across periods. It appears that age decreased the rate of promotion in the first period (as indicated by the significant and negative second-order effect), increased promotion in the second period (indicated by the significant and positive first-order effect), and showed an inverted U shape in the third period. This pattern is consistent with the new cadre policies in the reform era, but it seems at odds with the emphasis on youth in promotion during the Cultural Revolution. Several factors may contribute to this anomaly. First, in the Cultural Revolution, promotion opportunities were very limited, especially compared with those in the reform era. Therefore, the Maoist leaders' efforts to promote young political followers may have not been very effective. Second, the political conflicts between the leftists and rightists in the Cultural Revolution (e.g., Deng Xiaoping's reemergence in the 1970s) may also have disrupted these policies and created more opportunities for old cadres.

With regard to educational qualifications, again the patterns are similar for both processes. Educational credentials (especially a college education) had a significant and positive effect on promotion throughout the three periods. It appears that despite discriminatory policies against college graduates as seen in their access to party membership and cadre careers, once they entered the bureaucracy, their educational credentials did contribute to a higher rate of promotion in all three periods. But again, it is noticeable that for promotions in workplaces, college education had a smaller effect in the Cultural Revolution than in the reform era.

Cadre cohorts. The most striking contrast between the two promotion processes is related to the effects of cadre cohorts. For promotions in formal bureaucratic ranks, the estimates of the cohort effects show that there were no significant cohort differences in the Cultural Revolution. In the post-Mao era, there were significant cohort effects, but the pattern is inconsistent with Hypothesis 4: The first cohort has the highest rate of promotion, whereas those in the third cohort had the lowest rate of promotion, net of the effects of other covariates. This finding suggests the importance of a seniority principle in promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy that is contradictory to the new policies in the post-Mao era.

In contrast, the importance of political selection mechanisms was evident in promotion patterns in work organizations. As consistent with Hypothesis 4, cadres recruited in that particular period had the highest promotion rate in work organizations. The first cohort of cadres was favored in the first period, compared with "other workers" (the reference category) in the work-

place. During the Cultural Revolution, those who entered the cadre occupations during the same period had a substantially higher probability of being promoted than those who entered the bureaucracy before the Cultural Revolution (the first cohort). In the post-Mao era, those cadres in the third cohort had the highest rate of promotion among the three cohorts. More important, the second cohort had the lowest rate among the three cohorts, as is consistent with the discriminatory cadre policies against this cohort.

These patterns imply that the composition of cadres in the bureaucratic positions differs between the national bureaucratic system and the workplace-centered system. Managerial positions in the formal bureaucratic system reflected more continuity with the past, whereas ordinary work organizations tended to be staffed by younger cohort of cadres. These findings have important implications for future political changes in China, as I will discuss in the next section.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Bureaucratic career patterns provide information about the political processes and institutions in state socialist societies and shed light on continuities and changes in the recent transformation of state socialism. In this study, I have reported a systematic examination of bureaucratic career patterns in China based on a national sample of urban residents from 1949 through 1994. My emphasis was on the link between political dynamics and bureaucratic career patterns, especially the impacts of varying state policies on bureaucratic careers. The empirical evidence shows some support for this line of argument. However, there are also marked continuities in institutional arrangements and political processes in the 45 years of communist rule in China.

There is evidence of the impacts of shifting state policies—varying opportunities and selection criteria—on bureaucratic career patterns across historical periods. First, our descriptive statistics show (see Table 1) that political opportunities varied significantly across historical periods, causing drastically different life chances for individuals who entered the labor force in different years. For instance, colleges were closed for many years during the Cultural Revolution, making it impossible for high school graduates of that period to gain human capital for future career advancement. Second, there is also evidence of changes in selection criteria over time. For instance, the importance of educational credentials varied significantly in the recruitment of Communist Party members between the Mao and the post-Mao eras. Although education (e.g., a college degree) played a significant and positive role in entry into and promotion in the Chinese bureaucracy, its magnitudes

of effect varied across periods in accordance with changes in state policies. A college education had a smaller effect during the Cultural Revolution than in other periods, reflecting the antiintellectual state policies of the time. Similar patterns are found in the varying gender roles over time. Third, the clearest evidence of the impacts of political dynamics is seen in the cohort effects. In entry into the Communist Party and promotions within the workplaces, we see a clear pattern of preferential treatment toward different cohorts of cadres in accordance with their presumed political allegiance. In particular, the relatively lower rate in the reform era of the second cohort's access to political opportunities indicates the strong influence of discriminatory state policies and political selection processes.

However, there is also evidence of continuities and stability in the institutional arrangements and political processes over time. For instance, despite pronounced state policies, education (especially a college degree) has been an important asset in entry into and promotion within the Chinese bureaucracy. That is, despite the deep mistrust of intellectuals in Mao's regime, college education, at an aggregate level, did contribute to upward mobility in the Chinese bureaucracy. Also notice that despite the observed variations in cadre cohort effects, all cadre cohorts had a higher rate of gaining political opportunities than other types of occupations, suggesting strong bureaucratic inertia or bureaucratic resistance to shifting state policies that protected the incumbents once they were in these positions. There are also other patterns that cannot be simply explained by the role of shifting state policies emphasized in this study. For instance, changes in gender gap in cadre promotions cannot be readily explained by either shifting state policies or bureaucratic politics. It is likely that these changes reflect broader institutional changes that are not captured in my theoretical arguments, such as the emergence of market economies that introduced competing processes of allocation of human as well as other resources in the last two decades. These continuities in bureaucratic practice over time may also be sustained by stable bureaucratic apparatus and bureaucratic interests that pursue their own agendas and self-interests, thereby undermining the effectiveness of shifting state policies.

Perhaps the most surprising and interesting finding in this study is the two distinctive patterns of bureaucratic promotions with regard to different cohorts of cadres. In formal bureaucratic promotions in the national bureaucratic system, the seniority principle seems to play a major role, as indicated by higher rates of promotion for earlier cohorts. Promotions within the workplace, however, show different patterns: The third cohort had the highest rate of promotion, whereas the second cohort had the lowest rate among the three cadre cohorts. How can we explain these two distinctive patterns? One specu-

lation is that the formal bureaucratic apparatus was effectively organized by bureaucratic interests, and implementation of the new cadre policies was resisted by those still in power in the bureaucracy. Because work organizations are more responsive to changing local environments, especially market competition introduced in the reform era, they are more likely to be active in promoting younger and talented personnel into managerial positions. Another plausible explanation is that formal bureaucratic promotions reflect processes of selection into high ranks of the bureaucracy, whereas promotions in workplaces are related to positions at the lower rank of the bureaucratic system. Thus the findings may suggest that there are two distinctive selection processes for high-ranked and low-ranked positions in the Chinese bureaucracy.

These findings have important implications for understanding the evolution of the Chinese bureaucracy in the reform era. They suggest that work organizations are staffed with more educated and younger cadres, whereas the national bureaucratic system (mostly governmental agencies) is lagging behind in promoting the new generation of cadres. In recent years, the role of the central government has declined and local bureaucracies and work organizations have become increasingly important (Lieberthal & Lampton, 1992; Oi, 1992; Shirk, 1993; Walder, 1995b). The findings in this study show that younger and more educated cadres recruited in the post-Mao era had the highest probability of being promoted within the work organization. These patterns may help explain the vitality of the local bureaucracies and work organizations in China's transformation.

Changes in bureaucratic career patterns also provide clues to potential political changes in the future: Although political criterion has been important in personnel management in the Chinese bureaucracy, the very notion of political loyalty has had distinctive meanings over time. Shifting state policies and time-varying political selection criteria in China have introduced distinctive cohorts of bureaucrats into the bureaucracy. Political activists identified with the party line at one time may become victims of political purges later when state policies shift or may lose favor in preferential treatment and promotion. Conversely, depending on how state policies affected their life chances, bureaucrats recruited in different cohorts are likely to have divided loyalties toward and identify themselves with different and conflicting state policies.

The recruitment and promotion practices in the post-Mao era signal the increasing presence of more competent bureaucrats who are unlikely to merely follow the party line. The rise of a young cohort of cadres within the workplaces, but not in the national bureaucratic ranks, may imply increasing tensions between local bureaucracies and the national bureaucratic system.

The increasing divide between central and local governments and the widespread deviations in the implementation of state policies, as shown in numerous studies, suggest that bureaucratic interests based on work organizations and local governments have become a critical factor in the political process. Thus, in addition to institution-based bureaucratic interests, the diversity of bureaucrats recruited and promoted in different historical periods, as revealed in this study, points to an important source of conflicting goals, divided loyalties, and political instability in China's future political transformation.

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