

Communist Party Membership and Regime Dynamics in China*

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Abstract

This article uses event history analyses to examine how the criteria of political screening and educational credentials evolve in the attainment of Chinese Communist Party membership during the period between 1949 and 1993 and how party membership, in turn, influences individual mobility into elite political and managerial positions. We argue that political screening is a persistent feature and a survival strategy of all Communist parties and that the mechanisms of ensuring political screening are affected by the regime's agendas in different historical periods. Using data from surveys conducted in Shanghai and Tianjin in 1993, we found that measures of political screening were persistently significant predictors of party membership attainment in all post-1949 periods and that party membership is positively associated with mobility into positions of political and managerial authority during the post-1978 reform era. Education emerged to be a significant predictor of Communist party membership in the post-1978 period. These findings indicate that China has made historical shifts to recruit among the educated to create a technocratic elite that is both occupationally competent and politically screened.

Communist regimes live and die with Communist parties. All ruling Communist parties select and reward a class of loyalists through whom to maintain their control of state and society, a point that has been amply developed since its

**An earlier version of this article was presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August 21-25, 1998. We are grateful to the Shanghai and Tianjin Academies of Social Sciences for their collaboration on the 1993 Shanghai and Tianjin surveys and to Jack Goldstone, Andrew Walder, and Social Forces reviewers for their helpful comments. Funding for this research comes from a National Science Foundation grant (SES-9209214) and a grant-in-aid from the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota. Direct correspondence to Yanjie Bian, Department of Sociology, 909 Social Sciences Building, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0412.*

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Social Forces, March 2001, 79(3):805-841

enunciation by Djilas (1957). Therefore Communist party membership is a key component of the Communist political order. Recent research has examined the nature of party membership and the effects of party membership on individual career mobility (Walder 1995). In this article, we address these questions using data from China, asking how the patterns of party and elite recruitment have evolved with the dynamics of China's Communist regime.

After a 28-year fight for a revolution, the Chinese Communist Party came to state power in 1949. During its first 17 years, the postrevolution regime established a new social order, then engaged in a decade of the Cultural Revolution that greatly altered that order. Since 1978, the regime has become committed to a development-oriented goal through a market-driven economic system. Although the Communist party has remained the only ruling party in power throughout China's postrevolution history, the regime's overarching agendas changed from one historical period to another. To what extent has the shift in the regime's agendas resulted in shifts in the criteria used in the recruitment of party and elite members who become political actors to carry out those agendas?

Conventional wisdom in political sociology has it that during the shift in regime agenda from making a revolution to developing a modern economy, the Communist party shifted its priority from rewarding political loyalty to rewarding educational credentials and occupational competence (Lee 1991). Thus, early studies of Communist countries pointed to the importance of political loyalty, as evinced by people's social class origins, in party and elite recruitment (Conner 1979; Feldmesser 1960; Inkeles & Bauer 1959; Parkin 1969; Sorokin 1959; Walder 1985; Whyte & Parish 1984). Researchers studying postrevolutionary Communist regimes, on the other hand, have noted the increasingly important role played by education in the attainment of party membership and elite status (Bian 1994; Konrad & Szelenyi 1979; Lin & Bian 1991; Rigby 1968; S. Szelenyi 1987).¹ This evolution was captured earlier in Djilas's (1957) "new class theory," which anticipated that party memberships would be conferred on intellectuals who had been specially trained to take on authority positions in party and state bureaucracies. Consistent with this proposition, there was evidence that in East Europe in the 1970s, "intellectuals were on the road to class power" (Konrad & Szelenyi 1979). Similar transformation also occurred in China, although at a much later time. Not until the early 1990s was it argued that an educated, technocratic elite-class replace the old Communist ideologists (Lee 1991).

This conventional wisdom about the evolution of Communist regimes is, in principle, consistent with the theories of societal convergence and modernization. These theories suggest that economic development entails a transition from particularistic to universalistic criteria in the allocation of social roles (Blau & Duncan 1967; Parsons 1945; Treiman 1970). For example, agrarian societies rested on particular, patron-client relationships between entrusted landlords and loyal tenants, but industrialized societies call for a labor force with generalized

educational credentials and occupational competence, thus creating a career mobility pattern dependent largely on universal qualifications (Featherman & Hauser 1978; Levy 1966). Therefore, theories of convergence and modernization imply that different political economies, Communist and capitalist alike, would ultimately converge into one system of social stratification where education and occupational competence are the common criteria in determining who occupies what position. This process of convergence depends on whether the countries have reached the same level of industrialization or urbanization (Treiman & Yip 1989).

Differing from this line of analysis, Walder (1995) has recently redirected research attention to the political character of Communist regimes. He argues that a ruling Communist party can increasingly recruit from the more educated and can increasingly promote intellectuals to elite positions in state bureaucracies, but that the party as a political organization still can and will screen and reward political loyalists. "Party membership signifies that the party organization at some point has examined the individual's background and behavior, and certified that the person meets the organization's standards for political trustworthiness; it also signifies that the person has not violated that trust in the period since admission" (Walder 1995:313). Educational credentials, Walder contends, is qualitatively different for party and nonparty members, and therefore the highly educated with party membership and the highly educated without party membership would be rewarded differently under Communist rule. Indeed, his 1986 survey of Tianjin, China, indicates that two separate routes led to two elite-classes: Individuals with education credentials moved into a professional elite of high social prestige, while individuals with both education credentials and party membership entered an administrative elite with social prestige, authority, and material privileges (Walder 1995).

In this article we study how the criteria of political loyalty and educational credentials simultaneously evolve over time in the process of attaining party membership and elite status. If education has become increasingly important in party and elite recruitment while standards of political loyalty have declined accordingly, this is evidence for growing credentialism in party and elite recruitment. If standards of political loyalty have remained significant regardless of the role of education in party and elite recruitment, this is evidence for the persistence of political screening. If both education credentials and political loyalty are determinants of attainment of party membership and elite positions, there is evidence that the regime has incorporated both particularistic and universalistic criteria in its political order.

A Dynamic Model of Persistent Political Screening

Zhou, Tuma, and Moen (1996) have analyzed the changing opportunity structures across historical periods of post-1949 China. Based on survey data from 17 cities, they argued and showed that stratification under state socialism was constructed through a top-down process and that shifts in state policies across different periods had tremendous implications for individual life chances in terms of educational and occupational attainment. While family class origin (a measure of political capital in their model) had varying effects on educational and occupational attainment over time, these effects on Communist party membership were less decisive in any period under study. We follow Zhou, Tuma, and Moen's event history approach but focus our attention on roles of political loyalty and educational credentials in the attainment of Communist party membership from 1949 to 1993.

Our model is based on the assumption that loyalty from its members is imperative for any political party. Loyalty can come from members' understanding that they must pursue their individual interests through the political party of which they are members. From the party's perspective, it must necessarily encourage and reward loyalty in order to maintain a long-lasting membership base for its own survival.

It is evident in the history of the Communist parties that, as a survival imperative, the parties place special importance on membership loyalty. Because disloyal members can do fatal damage to their organization, underground Communist parties consider membership loyalty to be the lifeblood of their organization, and disloyal members are often severely punished (Zhang 1998).² Ruling Communist parties continue to view membership loyalty in this way, not simply out of tradition, but because the Communist parties can maintain their ruling status through loyal members even when the parties themselves might have lost the support of the people they rule. For this reason alone, we argue that ruling Communist parties must persistently screen political loyalty in membership recruitment, must persistently reward the politically loyal with power and privileges, and must persistently punish politically disloyal members.

The view about the imperativeness and persistence of political loyalty in maintaining Communist rule does not mean that political loyalty is ensured in the same way in all historical periods. On the contrary, criteria and measures of political loyalty must be politically adjusted in different historical periods in order to meet the requirements of the regime's agenda and to reflect the interests of the social groups that are mobilized to carry out the agenda. This means that the mode of political screening will change in accordance with the changes in the regime's agenda and class bases across historical periods. This also means that the role of education in party and elite recruitment will change in different historical periods as educational credentials are considered more important in some regime agendas but not in others. With China as a case of illustration, Table 1 sketches

TABLE 1: A Conceptual Model of Communist Regime Dynamics: China as an Illustration

Historical Period and Important Events in China	Regime's Overarching and Concurrent Goal	Social Class Bases/ Youths to Recruit	Dominant Modes of Political Screening	Role of Educational Credentials
Pre-1949				
Communist party underground Military confrontation with the Nationalist government	Fight a revolution	Workers and peasants/ Revolutionary youths	Class origin Political attitude	Irrelevant
1949-65				
CCP in state power Socialist institutions established	Establish a new political-economic order	Liberated classes/ Inspired youths	Class origin Political participation	Becoming positive
1966-78				
Cultural Revolution Death of Mao (1976)	Maintain the power of a political segment	Powerless groups/ Rebellion youths	Class origin Party clientelism	Becoming negative
1979-				
Economic reforms Old Communists gradually out of power	Develop a modern economy	Professionals/ Educated youths	Political attitude, participation, and clientelism	Becoming important

a conceptual model that accounts for historical variations in and interrelationships among a Communist regime's agenda, social class bases, modes of political screening, and the role of education. Based on this model, we have identified for China four historical periods: (1) the prerevolutionary period before 1949; (2) the 1949-65 period, (3) the 1966-78 period, and (4) the post-1978 period.³ With a focus on the mode of political screening, we now describe the important features of each period.

THE PRE-1949 PERIOD

The first historical period was when the Communist party was fighting a social and political revolution. Because the revolution was to liberate workers and poor peasants, these classes were the basic class forces of the party. Naturally, working class origins were the most important criteria and most convenient measures of political loyalty in party and elite recruitment. Because few workers and peasants could attend schools, education played no role in one's joining Communist forces. There appeared to be exceptions for youths with middle- or upper-class backgrounds, who were educated, and many of whom were highly educated. Some in this group were unhappy about the regime that the Communist party was trying to overthrow. Consequently, they became revolutionaries and chose to join the cause of the Communist party. One must note, however, that it was not their education but their pro-Communism political attitude and behavior that made these educated, revolutionary youths pass through the party's screening of political loyalty. In short, class origin and political attitude were the dominant modes of political screening.

THE 1949-1965 PERIOD

When the Communist party came to state power, its immediate agenda was to establish a new political and economic order. It took 17 years for the Chinese Communist Party to set up this order. During this period, a large number of party members were needed to carry out this long historical task; thus party membership grew from 4.5 million in 1949 to 18 million in 1965 (Lee 1991), or from 1% of China's total population to 2.4%.⁴ Liberated classes — workers and peasants — were the main sources of party membership supply, and in principle the class bases on which the party relied did not change from the prerevolution period. However, because of the shift of party work from the countryside to the cities (Hu 1991), new party members were largely recruited from urban youths, whose education was generally better than that of their rural counterparts. This better-educated urban pool was also to supply young bloods into a bureaucratic elite-class, making education and occupational competence important factors in

party and elite recruitment in this period. Lee (1991) documented that the party selectively recruited among "model workers, advanced workers, and pioneers in technology," most of whom also eventually landed cadre positions in their work organizations.

Nevertheless, the role of education in party and elite recruitment during this period should not be overstated, because education alone did not appear to increase an individual's chances of joining the party or the elite. Instead, political loyalty was carefully screened when the party granted party memberships and examined cadre promotions. For example, in the early 1950s, the party's central committee issued orders to ensure that all party members, new and old, go through new screening measures, which included stringent requirements related to family class origin and political participation.⁵ Thus, in this period family class background and personal political participation seem to have been the dominant modes of political screening.

THE 1966-1978 PERIOD

Political screening in party and elite recruitment was intensified during the decade of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) and shortly thereafter (1977-78). During this period, loyalty criteria and measures were greatly altered by the party's new political agenda. The Cultural Revolution was ignited by ideological and power struggles among different segments of the party, and the agenda was set by Chairman Mao to overturn much of the previous political order. Mao mobilized powerless masses (young workers and especially young students) to rebel and seize power from elite bureaucrats, who had obtained important positions in the party, state, and economic hierarchies and were suspected to have formed anti-Mao political coalitions.

The agenda of ideological and power struggles nurtured a culture of political labeling throughout China. By family class origin or political virtue, people were identified with "red" labels (workers, poor peasants, and revolutionary cadres) or with "black" labels (landlords, rich peasants, antirevolutionaries, rightist intellectuals, capitalists, and "capitalist roaders" — party and administrative officials who were being criticized for their anti-Maoist values). Persons with a black class label were generally excluded from party membership, while those with red labels got ahead more easily (Whyte & Parish 1984). The new agenda also created a political culture of party clientelism in the workplace (Walder 1986). This political culture defined political loyalty as personal loyalty to immediate authorities. Under these circumstances, educational credentials negatively affected one's chances of joining the Communist party and of attaining career promotion. Intellectuals became a suspicious social class, and schooling was deemphasized in job assignments and career promotion (Parish 1984; Shirk 1982).

THE POST-1978 PERIOD

The political agenda of the post-1978 reform era was to build a modern economy through a pro-market system. Because their knowledge and expertise were much needed in this agenda, professional classes began to be praised as the most important force for China's modernization. So one of the first moves of the reformists was to credit education and knowledge (Broaded 1983), and there was a rise of meritocracy in school and college admissions (Shirk 1984). The same trend started to appear in party recruitment after 1980, when the party began to make special efforts to attract young intellectuals into its organization. To justify this policy change at the ideological level, Deng Xiaoping declared intellectuals to be the members of the working class, rather than the capitalist class (Deng 1978).⁶ The party also explicitly deemphasized family class origin as a necessary indicator of political loyalty. The party further revised its promotion policy by providing greater opportunities to individuals with educational credentials for managerial and administrative positions (Chamberlain 1987).

In this period, along with exhibiting a preference for educated persons, the party continued to look for indicators of loyalty, but not so much from class labels as from a history of performance, such as in the Communist Youth League (only a minority were CYL members in the 1980s). In addition, the party screened people by the extent to which they accepted and were able to contribute to the political cause of the current order; therefore, political participation and attitudes were relevant and important. Finally, at least by the early 1990s party clientelism had still been effective in state organizations, because the party secretary continued to be influential in personnel control and management (Bian & Logan 1996; Naughton 1995; Walder 1989). This means that family class origin might have given way to a mixture of behavioral criteria used to screen the political loyalty in the process of recruitment into the party or the elite during the reform period.

In summary, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has used a lengthy and extended procedure to ensure political loyalty from applicants. Although in different historical periods the CCP emphasized different aspects of this screening process, the procedure as a "loyalty filter" has been ensured from the early period through the reform era. Parallel to this persistence in loyalty screening has been a new desire to recruit members from the highly educated during the reform era. To this end, the CCP redefined the class category of intellectuals and deemphasized family class origin as a membership prerequisite, but at the same time insisted on other aspects of the political screening process to recruit loyalists.

The Processes of Political Screening in China

In China today, as in the past, not everyone can apply for Chinese Communist Party membership. Those who do apply are subjected to a lengthy screening process involving five stages: (1) self-selection, (2) political participation, (3) daily monitoring, (4) closed-door evaluation, and (5) probationary examination. Individuals must pass through these "loyalty filters" (Walder 1995) to achieve CCP membership.

This formal process typically requires several years to complete. In practice, many party members — perhaps a majority — would have already served a prior period of apprenticeship in the Communist Youth League, which is the party's training-camp organization for a select group of youths (ages 15-25). The CYL provides an opportunity for the party to begin screening potential applicants at an early age for both political loyalty and competence. From the young person's perspective, CYL participation can be a first step toward applying for membership. In our sample (described below), about one in five respondents became party members. Of these, three-fifths had first participated in the CYL. Consequently, recruitment into the CYL is itself a key part of recruitment into the party, and we will examine both of these processes together.

THE SCREENING PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE YOUTH LEAGUE

The Communist Youth League grants memberships to youths aged 15-25. As part of the Communist party organization, the CYL has been used as a training camp to select and nurture young Communists for the party. Many CYL members move on to join the party, and many CYL leaders become leaders of the party (the top ranks include Ren Bishi in the 1940s and 1950s, Hu Yaobang in the 1980s, and Li Ruihuan in the 1990s).⁷ Because of the political significance of the CYL, political screening is a necessary procedure in allocating CYL memberships.

The political screening is carried out through several steps, the first of which is self-screening in the application process. The most active youths by political or public standards would be among the first to apply. Having applied, the youths would be subject to monitoring by the CYL organization. Because all schools and other organizations have CYL offices, the monitoring is not just a procedural design but an everyday reality. The CYL offices monitor applicants' attendance at the CYL study sessions, their participation in public and especially political activities organized through the CYL, and their political behaviors as observed in classes or work groups to which they belong. Having survived the day-to-day monitoring, applicants will face a closed-door evaluation in which the CYL office of their school or work organization examines the applicants' political background as well as that of their parents and other important kin. The information collected through applicants and through the channels of the party organization is examined

and compared, and in so doing the applicants' political trustworthiness is tested. Survivors of this test will usually be admitted into the CYL.⁸

THE SCREENING PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

A similar but more lengthy and rigorous screening process applies to the allocation of Chinese Communist Party memberships. The process begins with self-selection when an adult individual (18 years of age or older) expresses in writing to the party organization in his or her school or work unit the desire to become a member. The applicant must declare loyalty to the CCP and actively participate in political activities, including lectures conducted by the CCP branch secretary, off-work sessions to study the CCP constitution and current policies, and voluntary activities and community service organized by the party. An activist would regularly report his or her self-assessments to the party branch authority. The party branch authority, in turn, will assign each selected activist one or two members as liaisons (*lian xi ren*), who regularly report to the party branch authority about their observations and evaluations of the applicant's progress toward the standards of party membership.

During the closed-door evaluation, the party branch organization to which applications have been submitted engages its full members to examine thoroughly the applicants' political performance, personal and parental histories, and kinship and marriage connections. Like CYL evaluations, the information is collected through applicants and through the formal channels of the party organization and is compared in order to test the applicants' political trustworthiness.⁹ Less work is required if the applicants are CYL members, for they already have an established record. After deliberations among party members of the branch organization, the closed-door evaluation ends with a vote on whether the applicant should be admitted into the party. If the applicant receives sufficient support, and after the applicant goes through a formal recruitment meeting and membership registration in the next higher level of the party organization, the applicant will begin a one-year probation, in which he or she is monitored within the party organization. Probationary members can take part in all party meetings and activities, but they are not given voting power in the party, nor can they become candidates for any position within the organization.

The higher standards and the lengthier screening process (usually several years) determine that fewer CCP memberships are allocated than CYL memberships. For example, of the 1,783 adult respondents in our 1993 Shanghai and Tianjin survey (to be analyzed shortly), 17.8 percent had been admitted into the CCP, as compared with 31.4 percent who were once CYL members. Communist Youth League members have great advantages in their efforts to join the CCP, as their continuous loyalty to the party can be more easily ensured and checked from

within the organization. In the 1993 Shanghai and Tianjin survey, more than three-fifths of party members had been members of the CYL.

THE SCREENING PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE POWER ELITE

In a Communist regime, the power elite refers to high-ranking cadres with political or managerial authority. Ivan Szelenyi (1978, 1983) uses the terms "socialist elite" and "redistribute elite" to tap into the sources of power of the elite as the capacities of the socialist economies to control and redistribute resources through cadres. Walder (1995), exploring his interest in career mobility under Communist rule, identifies a dual elite, separating elite professionals (no authority of any kind) from elite administrators (having political or managerial authority). In this article we study what Walder calls the administrative elite, which is where the power lies, so we call it the power elite. Empirically, the power elite consists of three elite groups with political or managerial authority: elite cadres with political authority in the party and state hierarchy, managerial elite in the state sector, and managerial elite in the nonstate sector.

In China, securing cadre positions with political or managerial authority involves more than just being an able individual; the attainment of these positions is subject to screening by the Communist party. Throughout the country, party committees are established at all levels of the state hierarchy, and the personnel offices of these committees are responsible for screening and managing rank-and-file cadres under their jurisdiction. Dossiers for all these cadres are stored in the personnel offices, and the cadres' career achievements and mistakes are recorded in their dossiers by the party authorities. These dossiers are consulted when cadres are evaluated for job reallocation, promotion, or demotion.

In screening a cadre for a party and government position at a certain level of the state hierarchy, party authorities at the next higher level have the authority to select and examine the candidates and to make the choice. In screening managerial promotions in state-run organizations, the party authorities of government jurisdictions are often responsible for selecting and examining the candidates and making the final choices. From the mid-1980s onward, managerial positions of some state-run organizations were filled through elections by employees (Naughton 1995), but in these cases the party authorities of government jurisdictions closely participated in the selection of candidates and had the authority to approve or disapprove the results. For managerial positions in nonstate organizations (collective enterprises, joint ventures, stock-sharing companies, etc.), party authorities are less involved in the selection process, although they can influence the process informally. In sum, one does not have to be a party member to hold an elite position in China, but we expect party membership to be a benefit because the party itself has historically had a voice in who gets the job. The extent to which this is true during the reform period is an empirical question.¹⁰

Research Design

GENERAL GUIDANCE

While specific research hypotheses are presented below in the sections addressing data analysis, the two general hypotheses that guide our research design are the *persistent screening of political loyalty* and *changing educational effects* in the attainment of Communist party membership and elite positions. Political loyalty is an elusive concept, pointing to a person's attitudes of commitment and behaviors of devotion to the Communist party. In our analyses designed to test the persistent political screening hypothesis, we emphasize signs or indicators of perceived political commitment or educability of individuals.¹¹ Thus, in our analysis of the attainment of Communist Youth League membership, we include parents' party membership and family class origin as signs of screened political commitment,¹² and we view CYL membership as a sign of screened political commitment in the attainment of Communist party membership. We will consider Communist party membership as an indicator of screened political commitment in our analysis of mobility into elite positions. We expect these indicators to have persistent effects on, respectively, CYL membership, party membership, and movement into elite positions across different historical periods of post-1949 China.

For the changing educational effect hypothesis, we will estimate the effects of education on Communist party membership and movement into elite positions across different historical periods. Following Zhou, Tuma, and Moen (1996, 1997) and our discussion earlier in this article, we hypothesize that the educational effects are significant in the post-1979 reform period, but not earlier.

DATA SOURCE

Our data come from surveys conducted in 1993 in Shanghai ($N = 1,054$) and Tianjin ($N = 1,042$), organized through the municipal academies of social science in the two cities. The two surveys followed a similar multistage probability sampling strategy. The sample included all subdistricts in both Shanghai (a total of 127) and Tianjin (124). In the first stage, we randomly sampled one neighborhood committee (a residential block of plus or minus 1,000 households) from each subdistrict as the base location for selecting households. In the second stage, households were randomly selected from each sampled neighborhood committee. Finally, one adult person 18 years of age or older per household was chosen to be a respondent. The selection of respondents was based on a random procedure in Shanghai; in Tianjin, by following the custom of municipal government surveys, two-thirds of the questionnaires were filled out by male heads of households.¹³ The response rate was close to 100%, which is typical in Chinese surveys with official authorization (Blau & Ruan 1990; Lin & Bian 1991; Walder 1992, 1995).

Shanghai and Tianjin are the largest (12 million) and third-largest (9 million) cities in China, respectively. They are also two of the only four municipalities that are granted equal status as a province and are directly under the jurisdiction of the central government (the other two cities are Beijing and, since 1997, Chongqing). Because of their close administrative relationship with the central government and their size and strategic importance to China, Shanghai and Tianjin are on top of the country's political and economic order — they may have more closely followed the central orders than other cities in all historical periods. This tendency benefits our study, because our interest here is to understand the dynamics of a Communist political order that is determined largely by the center of the party-state. Although during the 1978-93 period Shanghai and Tianjin were behind southern cities in the pace of economic reforms, the gradual nature of change in the two cities is consistent with the character of China's market reforms (Naughton 1995).

MEASURES

Table 2 displays the variables and descriptive information for the sample used in estimating Communist Youth League membership, and Table 3 displays the variables and descriptive information for the sample used in estimating Chinese Communist Party membership. Following are notes about how these variables meet the requirements of the event history models we present.

Communist Youth League Membership

Respondents were asked whether they were ever members of the Communist Youth League and, if so, when they joined the organization. These two pieces of information help us situate the event of joining the CYL in time. We thus constructed dependent variables for an event history analysis of joining the CYL. Next, we use CYL membership as a covariate in predicting the likelihood of joining the Chinese Communist Party. In this later process, we consider CYL membership to be an indicator of screened political commitment.

Communist Party Membership

Like CYL membership, membership in the Chinese Communist Party is both a dependent (in party membership models) and an independent (in models about paths to elite positions) variable in our event history models. The respondents were asked whether they were ever members of the CCP and, if so, when they joined. In our sample 17.8% reported that they were party members at the time of the survey (no one withdrew from the party once admitted). This percentage is lower than a reported 19.3% in a 1988 Tianjin sample (Bian 1994) and 19.9%

TABLE 2: Descriptive Characteristics of the Respondents in Models Estimating the Likelihood of Joining the Communist Youth League during 1949-1993, by Historical Periods

	Total	1949-65	1966-78	1979-93
Became CYL member ^a	29.9	25.7	30.2	21.2
Parents CCP member	11.3	3.0	16.0	20.2
Parents' education				
College	2.8	1.0	4.0	5.1
High school	7.0	3.4	9.2	13.9
Female	41.9	42.6	41.9	40.8
Cohort				
Pre-1949	23.6	33.9		
1949-65	30.9	66.1	27.9	
1966-78	40.0		72.1	81.0
1979-93	5.5			19.0
Shanghai sample	42.3	35.5	45.5	48.6
N	1,763	822	979	510

Note: Descriptive characteristics are expressed as percentages.

^a For the subperiods, the figures show the percentage of respondents who joined the CCP out of all the eligible individuals ($15 \leq \text{age} \leq 25$).

in a 1993 Beijing and Shanghai sample (Zhou, Tuma & Moen 1996), but it still may be higher than the nation's average level. Generally more members are recruited in larger cities than in smaller cities and especially rural villages. In an event history analysis of CCP membership, we estimate the antecedents of joining the CCP. As an indicator of screened political commitment, CCP membership is a predictor of one's movement into elite positions.

Movement into Elite Positions

Confined to our data, we construct three categories of elite positions. The category for leading cadres in party and state hierarchies is used to measure elite positions with political authority. The category for general managers of state-run organizations is used to measure elite positions with managerial authority within the confines of state hierarchy. And the category for general managers of nonstate organizations is to measure elite positions with managerial authority outside the confines of state hierarchy. Movement into these elite positions is a time-dependent variable, as we collected information about when the respondents changed their jobs into the positions they held at the time of the survey. Expectedly, the job movements we measured concentrated in the period between 1979 and 1993.

TABLE 3: Descriptive Characteristics of the Respondents in Models Estimating the Likelihood of Joining the Communist Party during 1949-1993, by Historical Periods

	Total	1949-65	1966-78	1979-93
Became CCP member ^a	17.8	11.5	5.1	9.3
CYL member	31.4	21.8	27.9	28.8
Education				
College	7.7	10.4	7.0	7.2
High school	18.6	15.4	15.9	18.6
Parents CCP member	12.0	1.6	9.5	12.6
Parents' education				
College	3.0	.5	2.3	3.3
High school	7.2	2.4	5.6	7.8
Female	42.3	42.5	44.6	44.4
Cohort				
Pre-1949	18.3	39.5	19.5	16.8
1949-65	28.0	60.5	32.0	26.1
1966-78	42.5		48.5	44.8
1979-93	11.2			12.4
Job type				
High administrative	2.4	3.5	1.6	1.5
Low administrative	1.2	1.8	1.1	.7
High professional	.8	1.3	.8	.8
Low professional	12.9	16.5	13.0	12.3
High clerical	4.1	4.8	4.3	3.7
Low clerical	5.7	5.5	5.6	5.6
High manual	5.7	6.3	5.2	4.4
Low manual	67.3	60.2	68.5	71.0
Shanghai sample	42.4	37.2	42.8	42.7
N	1,783	825	1,417	1,616

Note: Descriptive characteristics are expressed as percentages.

^a For the subperiods, the figures show the percentage of respondents who joined the CYL out of all the eligible individuals (age ≥ 18).

Political Screening

Previous researchers have suggested the use of family class origin (Whyte & Parish 1984; Zhou, Tuma & Moen 1996) and personal relationships with party authorities (Walder 1986) as indicators of political screening. We use the first of these and measure it with parental education.¹⁴ In addition, we use parental party membership as a measure of political screening in the process of attaining CYL and CCP membership. Although personal relationships with party authorities are

an important dimension of the political screening process, it is extremely difficult to collect the necessary information through questionnaire surveys. As a result, we do not have this measure for our analysis. We do, however, use CYL membership and CCP membership as indicators of screened political commitment, the former in models about party recruitment, and the latter in models about paths to elite positions.

Educational Credentials

Respondents' education is measured at the time they entered the labor force, immediately before their last job change, and in 1993, the time of the survey. Based on these three time points, we are able to construct a time-varying variable of education. Because CYL memberships were obtained prior to the completion of schooling, we are unable to use education in the model estimating the likelihood of joining the CYL. We use a series of dichotomous variables to measure education, with less than high school education as the reference group. The other two dummy variables are (1) high school, technical school, or vocational school (1 = yes, 0 = no), and (2) college education or higher (1 = yes, 0 = no).

Control Variables

To estimate the independent effects of educational credentials and political loyalty on party and elite recruitment in our multivariate models, we introduce gender (female = 1), city dummy (Shanghai = 1), job type prior to joining the CCP (a time-varying variable), and cohort as control variables. Among the eight job types, skilled industrial workers are closest to capturing the meaning of working class.¹⁵ Cohorts are defined differently in different event analytical models, but all are confined to the following four periods: pre-1949, 1949-65, 1966-78, and 1979-93. In the model estimating the likelihood of joining the CYL, cohorts are defined as a series of dummy variables by the period in which the respondents reached the age of eligibility to join the CYL (15 years and older). In the model estimating the likelihood of joining the CCP, cohorts are defined as a series of dummy variables by the period in which the respondents reached the age of eligibility to join the CCP (18 years and older). And in the model estimating the likelihood of moving into elite positions, cohorts are defined as a series of dummy variables by the period in which the respondents first entered the labor force.

MODELS

We model the attainment of CYL membership using a proportional hazard model as follows:

$$\log h_{CYL,i}(t) = \alpha_{CYL}(t) + \beta_{CYL,ij} x_{ij}(t) \quad (1)$$

where $\log h_{CYL,i}(t)$ is the logarithm of the hazard rate of joining the CYL for person i at time t . The constant term $\alpha_{CYL}(t)$ is the logarithm of the baseline hazard function that represents dependence on time; $x_{CYL,ij}(t)$ is a vector of predictors of CYL membership for person i at time j , including a dummy of parental CCP membership (1 = at least one parent is a CCP member), two dummy variables (college and high school) for parental education (the parent with a higher level of education is used), and respondent's gender (female = 1), cohort, and place of residence. For analysis of CYL membership, respondents are included in the sample beginning at age 15 (as the time origin) and are right-censored at age 25 (the last age of eligibility) or the year that they actually joined the CYL. Models are estimated for each of the three periods — 1949-65, 1966-78, and 1979-93 — as well as for the total 1949-93 period.

The proportional hazard model is a semiparametric model, which does not require specification of some particular probability distribution to represent survival times. In our analysis, the coefficients were estimated by a partial likelihood function using the SAS PHREG procedure. The resulting estimates are asymptotically unbiased and normally distributed. The coefficients β_j can be interpreted in the following ways depending on the measurement scale of the covariate x_j : When x_j is an interval-scale variable, the coefficient β_j indicates that the hazard rate of an event occurring becomes e^{β_j} times as large for each unit increase in the covariate x_j , with the effects of other covariates and time controlled. When x_j is a dummy variable, the hazard rate of an event occurring for the state $x_j = 1$ is e^{β_j} times as large compared with the state $x_j = 0$, controlling for the effects of other covariates and time (Allison 1984, 1995; Tuma & Hannan 1984; Yamaguchi 1991).

Similarly, we model the attainment of CCP membership using a proportional hazard model as follows:

$$\log h_{CCP,i}(t) = \alpha_{CCP}(t) + \beta_{CCP,ij} x_{ij}(t) \quad (2)$$

where $\log h_{CCP,i}(t)$ is the logarithm of the hazard rate of joining the CCP for person i at time t . The constant term $\alpha_{CCP}(t)$ is the logarithm of the baseline hazard function that represents dependence on time; $x_{ij}(t)$ is a vector of predictors of CCP membership for person i at time t , including a dummy of parental CCP membership (1 = at least one parent is a CCP member); two dummy variables (college and high school) for parental education (the parent with a higher level of education is used); respondent's gender (female = 1), cohort, and place of residence; a time-varying variable of respondent's education (college and high school); respondent's CYL membership; and a series of time-varying dummy variables of respondent's job type. For analysis of CCP membership, respondents are included in the sample beginning at age 18 (as the time origin) and are right-censored at age 55 (beyond which we discovered no person joining the CCP) or the year that they actually joined. Models are estimated for each of the three

periods — 1949-65, 1966-78, and 1979-93 — as well as for the total 1949-93 period.

Last, analyses of the movement into elite positions are also based on a series of event analytical models, whose general form is again as follows:

$$\log h_{ELITE,i}(t) = \alpha_{ELITE}(t) + \beta_{ELITE,ij} x_{ij}(t) \quad (3)$$

where $\log h_{ELITE,i}(t)$ is the logarithm of the hazard rate of moving into an elite position for person i at time t . The constant term $\alpha_{ELITE}(t)$ is the logarithm of the baseline hazard function that represents dependence on time; $x_{ELITE,ij}(t)$ is a vector of predictors of moving into an elite position for person i at time t , including time-varying variables party membership and education; two static covariates, gender and city of residence; and a series of dummy variables representing labor cohorts according to the time at which the respondents entered their first job. In these event analytical models, the origins of the time axis are the labor force entry, and the time unit is the number of years following the respondent's first job entry.¹⁶

Attainment of Communist Youth League Membership

HYPOTHESES

To the extent that political screening has been persistent across historical periods, parental CCP membership is expected to have a positive effect on joining the CYL in all of the three periods, and parental education, as an indicator of parental social class, is expected to have a negative effect on joining the CYL in the first two periods. If political screening has been weakened in the post-1978 reform period, we would expect to observe a reduced or insignificant effect of parental CCP membership on joining the CYL and an insignificant effect of parental education on joining the CYL. To the extent that education emerged as a positive criterion in CYL recruitment after reform, parental education is expected to have a positive effect on joining the CYL in 1979-93.

RESULTS

As can be seen in Table 4, with several control variables included in the model, parental CCP membership is a positive predictor of children's joining the CYL in all three periods. The magnitudes of the coefficients are about the same in the three periods; the coefficient for 1949-65 is not statistically significant, but this is mainly because few respondents (25, or 3% of the 822 analyzed) had parents who were CCP members, causing a large standard error for the coefficient. Importantly, the effect of parental CCP is neither reduced nor insignificant in the 1979-93 period. These findings support the persistent political screening hypothesis.

TABLE 4: Partial Likelihood Estimates of the Hazard Rates of Joining the Chinese Communist Youth League in Tianjin and Shanghai, 1949-1993

	Total	1949-65	1966-78	1979-93
Parents CCP member	.55*** (.12)	.58 (.34)	.69*** (.15)	.59* (.23)
Parents' education				
College	.27 (.22)	-.45 (1.00)	.15 (.30)	.79* (.35)
High school	.02 (.16)	.26 (.36)	-.13 (.22)	.34 (.28)
Gender (female = 1)	-.25** (.09)	-.42* (.17)	-.09 (.14)	-.26 (.20)
Cohort				
Pre-1949	— ^a	—		
1949-65	1.22*** (.17)	.75*** (.19)	—	
1966-78	1.38*** (.17)		1.13*** (.20)	—
1979-93	1.66*** (.22)			1.41*** (.05)
City (Shanghai = 1)	-.40*** (.10)	-.51** (.18)	-.24 (.13)	-.70** (.21)
N of events	527	181	235	111
N	1,763	822	979	510
-2 Log-likelihood	7453.61	2298.79	3195.24	1296.61

^a Omitted category* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

Except for the 1979-93 period, the effect of parental education is not statistically significant. During all three periods, the hazard rate of joining the CYL is the same for persons whose parents had a high school education and for those whose parents had less than a high school education. Only during the 1979-93 period were respondents whose parents had a college education more likely to join the CYL than those whose parents had less than a high school education. In the two earlier periods, there is no evidence of any effect of parental education on joining the CYL. Taking parental education as a signal of class-based political screening, these findings indicate that the political screening of family class origin has been significantly altered to favor upper-class origins in the post-1979 reform era. Indeed, this is confirmed in an analysis in which parental occupation is used as an additional predictor of joining the CYL.¹⁷

Attainment of Communist Party Membership

HYPOTHESES

If political screening is persistent in party recruitment across all historical periods, persons with screened political commitment are more likely to be admitted into the CCP than are persons who show no such commitment. In our conceptualization, CYL membership is an indicator of screened political commitment. Thus, we expect that CYL members are more likely than non-CYL members to be admitted into the CCP in all three historical periods. We measure class-based political commitment by the occupational position the respondent had before joining the CCP. Previous research suggests that, as compared to other positions, administrative and managerial positions increase the likelihood of one's joining the CCP. Our final hypothesis concerns the changing effects of education. To the extent that educational credentials are important in party recruitment, persons with higher education are more likely to be admitted into the CCP than are persons with lower education. As reviewed in previous sections, we expect this positive effect of education to be true in the 1979-93 period.

RESULTS

As can be seen in Table 5, CYL membership significantly increases the rate of joining the CCP in all three historical periods. The positive coefficients for CYL membership indicate that if non-CYL members are given a rate of 1 in joining the CCP, then the rate for CYL members is 2.44 ($e^{.89}$) in the 1949-65 period, 6.96 ($e^{1.94}$) in the 1966-78 period, and 4.26 ($e^{1.45}$) in the 1979-93 period. These are all very large effects, although the effect is largest in the 1966-78 period. This indicates the highest intensity of political screening during the Cultural Revolution decade. Although the political intensity decreased during the subsequent reform era, the very large effect of CYL membership in the 1979-93 period suggests that political screening in party recruitment continued. On the whole, the findings about the effects of CYL membership on the attainment of CCP membership provide impressively strong support for the persistent political screening hypothesis.

Parental CCP membership and parental education do not have direct effects on joining the CCP. Because individuals who are CYL members are more likely to have parents who are CCP members, the net positive effects of parental CCP membership disappear once the effect of CYL membership is controlled for. This also indicates the mediating effect of CYL membership in the relationship between parental political influence and a child's party membership attainment.¹⁸

Our hypothesis about indications of class-based political commitment is tested with job types measuring individuals' occupation-class positions prior to joining the CCP. The job type of skilled industrial worker is the closest to the meaning

of working class and thus is used as the point of comparison. As shown in Table 5, during the 1949-65 period, as compared to skilled industrial workers, high administrators were given greater opportunity to join the CCP, low administrators were given about equal opportunity, and professionals, clerical workers, and nonindustrial and unskilled workers were given less opportunity. This pattern was partially altered during the 1966-78 period, in which high administrators (having a large negative coefficient, though statistically insignificant) lost their advantages to skilled industrial workers in the attainment of CCP membership. During the 1979-93 period, no job type variable is significantly different from the reference variable. This result appears to imply that class-based loyalty might have been eliminated as a basis of attaining party membership.

The effect of education also varies considerably across the three periods. In the 1949-65 period, education made little difference in one's joining the CCP. In the 1966-78 period, however, education had a significant negative effect on one's joining the CCP. Specifically, if the rate of joining the CCP is 1 for persons with less than a high school education, then the rate is .38 ($e^{-.97}$) for persons with a high school education and .35 ($e^{-1.06}$) for persons with a college or higher education. In the 1979-93 period, the educational effect became positive. During this period, if the rate of joining the CCP for persons with less than a high school education is 1, then the rate is 1.70 ($e^{.53}$) for persons with a high school education and 1.90 ($e^{.64}$) for persons with a college or higher education. The contrasting effects of education between the Cultural Revolution decade under Mao and the reform era under Deng lend support to the hypothesis about the rising role of education in party recruitment in the reform period.¹⁹

To more accurately capture the changing effects of the predictors of party membership attainment across years, Figure 1 graphs the Cox regression coefficients for CYL membership, college education, and high school education, which were estimated by using a moving-average technique (21 consecutive, overlapping five-year intervals).²⁰ The figure shows that from 1953 onward, CYL membership has had a consistently positive effect on CCP membership (the CYL curve is above the no-effect, zero line), especially during the Cultural Revolution years. The effects of high school and college education, on the other hand, followed a similar trajectory: declining from an initial positive effect in 1953, reaching a low point in the early 1970s, and turning positive after 1978. The CYL membership effect has always been greater than the education effects, and the relative importance of these effects — having become more similar around 1980 — is diverging again, as the effects of education appear to have diminished in more recent years.²¹

TABLE 5: Partial Likelihood Estimates of the Hazard Rates of Joining the Chinese Communist Party in Tianjin and Shanghai, 1949-1993

	Total	1949-65	1966-78	1979-93
CYL member	1.42*** (.13)	.89*** (.24)	1.94*** (.30)	1.45*** (.19)
Education				
College	-.09 (.17)	-.47 (.36)	-1.06** (.44)	.64* (.26)
High school	-.00 (.14)	-.24 (.31)	-.97** (.35)	.53* (.21)
Parents CCP member	.32 (.20)	-.42 (1.07)	.14 (.39)	.36 (.25)
Parents' education				
College	-.21 (.43)	— ^a	-.68 (1.02)	-.24 (.48)
High school	-.21 (.26)	-1.23 (1.07)	-.87 (.73)	.01 (.30)
Gender (female = 1)	-.56*** (.14)	-.84** (.29)	-.22 (.27)	-.59** (.20)
Cohort				
Pre-1949	— ^b	.90** (.23)	-.12 (.48)	
1949-65	-.12 (.08)	— ^b	.20 (.14)	.28* (.14)
1966-78	-.30*** (.06)		— ^b	.12 (.08)
1979-93	-.40*** (.09)			— ^b
Job type				
High administrative	.48* (.24)	.73* (.35)	-1.43 (1.05)	.65 (.42)
Low administrative	.27 (.35)	.16 (.49)	.22 (.60)	.62 (.61)
High professional	-.26 (.40)	-1.35 (1.04)	— ^a	.43 (.52)
Low professional	-.46* (.23)	-1.13** (.38)	-.51 (.42)	-.30 (.40)
High clerical	.06 (.26)	-.21 (.44)	-.32 (.52)	.47 (.42)
Low clerical	-.30 (.26)	-.95* (.48)	-1.08 (.55)	.29 (.42)
Low manual	-1.12*** (.21)	-1.78*** (.33)	-1.37*** (.37)	-.69 (.37)

TABLE 5: Partial Likelihood Estimates of the Hazard Rates of Joining the Chinese Communist Party in Tianjin and Shanghai, 1949-1993 (Continued)

	Total	1949-65	1966-78	1979-93
City (Shanghai = 1)	-.46** (.14)	-.48 (.27)	-.98** (.31)	-.58** (.21)
N of events	317	95	72	150
N	1,783	825	1,417	1,616
-2 Log-likelihood	4211.88	1123.10	922.70	1932.99

^a Covariable cannot be included in the model because the Newton-Raphson algorithm does not converge when the variable is dichotomous and all the observations are censored for one of the levels of the variable.

^b Omitted category

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

Movement into the Power Elite

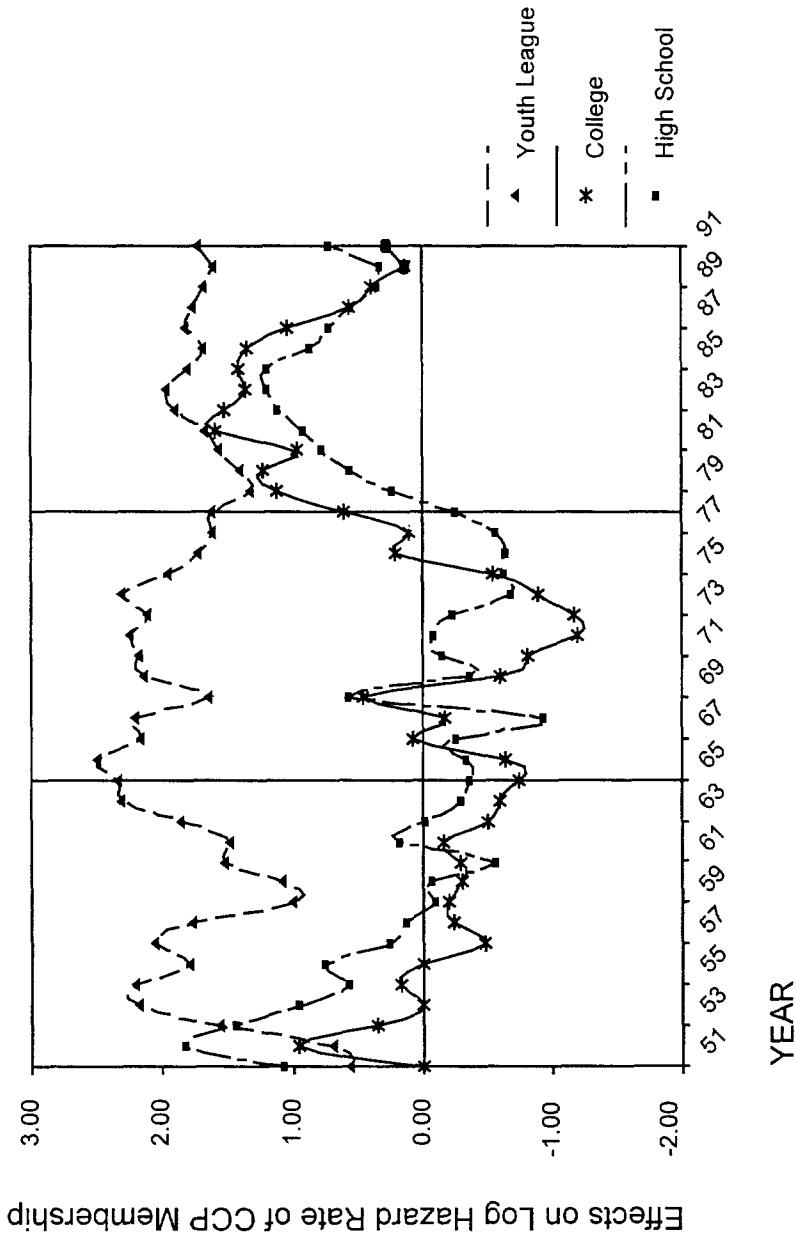
HYPOTHESES

In a Communist party-state, it is not surprising to have CCP members fill up elite positions of political authority. Yet according to the educational credential hypothesis, during the reform era CCP members with higher education should have a higher rate of movement into elite positions of political authority (leading cadres in party and state hierarchies) than CCP members with lower education. For movement into elite positions of managerial authority, the political screening hypothesis expects that, educational credentials being equal, CCP members should have a higher rate of movement into elite positions of managerial authority than non-CCP members. However, the educational credential hypothesis holds that able persons tend to take up elite positions of managerial authority, so persons with higher education should have a higher rate of movement into these positions than persons with lower education regardless of their party membership.

RESULTS

Confined to our data, we analyze the movement into three elite positions during the 1979-93 period, as shown in Table 6. For the movement into each elite position, two models are estimated. Model 1 estimates the independent effects of CCP membership and college education, along with statistical controls. This model is useful for testing the hypothesized effects of political screening and educational credentialism. Model 2 estimates the joint effects of CCP membership and college education.

FIGURE 1: The Effects of Communist Youth League Membership, College Education, and High School Education on the Log Hazard Rate of Chinese Communist Party Membership for Tianjin, 1951-1991



The results of model 1 show that CCP membership is a significant predictor of the movement into all three elite positions.²² The magnitudes of the three CCP membership coefficients are all very large. Specifically, given the rate of 1 for nonmembers, the rate for CCP members is 17.63 ($e^{2.87}$) for moving into a leading cadre position in party and state hierarchies, 14.58 ($e^{2.68}$) for moving into a general manager position in state-run organizations, and 5.87 ($e^{1.77}$) for moving into a general manager position in nonstate organizations. The considerable variation in the magnitudes of the CCP membership effects implies that the screening of political loyalty is the highest for elite positions of political authority, lower for elite positions of managerial authority within the confines of the state, and lowest for elite positions of managerial authority outside the confines of the state. Because CCP membership indicates screened political loyalty, and because it significantly increases the probability of moving into all three elite positions, the findings from model 1 lend support to the political screening hypothesis.

The effects of college education are inconsistent across the three dependent variables. College education has a positive and marginally significant effect on moving into a leading cadre position in party and state hierarchies. Given the rate of 1 for persons with less than a college education, the rate for persons with a college education is 2.72 ($e^{1.00}$) for moving into this position of political authority. This finding points to the rising educational credentialism in the recruitment into elite positions of political authority during the first 15 years of reform.

College education has no significant effect on moving into elite positions of managerial authority within or outside the confines of the state (models 1.2 and 1.3). Interestingly, the direction and magnitude of college education coefficients are different between the state and nonstate sectors. In the state sector, the coefficient is negative. For this reason alone, one can be certain that educational credentialism did not guide the mobility into leading managerial positions in the state sector through 1993. In the nonstate sector, on the other hand, the coefficient is positive and reasonably large (but statistically insignificant). This points to the possibility that educational credentialism might play a role in the mobility into general manager positions in the nonstate sector. We will explore this possibility in model 2.

Model 2 is designed to estimate the joint effects of party membership and education on mobility into elite positions, but the results remain mixed. In moving into a leading cadre position in party and state hierarchies (model 2.1), the CCP members with a college education have a significant advantage over the CCP members with less education; the difference in the rates of movement into this position is very large, 210% ($[e^{3.83} - e^{2.70}] / e^{2.70}$) in favor of the college educated. This is a clear indication of the rising educational credentialism in political mobility within the party apparatus. However, such a tendency is not evident in the recruitment into elite positions of managerial authority in the state sector. As shown in model 2.2, the rates of moving into a general manager position in state-

TABLE 6: Partial Likelihood Estimates of the Hazard Rates of Moving into Elite Positions, 1979-1993

	Model 1		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
CCP member	2.87*** (.69)	2.68*** (.50)	1.77*** (.47)
Education			
College	1.00 [†] (.60)	-.15 (.53)	.43 (.47)
Gender (female = 1)	.22 (.69)	-1.78 [†] (1.04)	-.49 (.48)
Labor cohort			
1949-65	— ^a	1.79 [†] (1.06)	— ^a
1966-78	.01 (.66)	1.47 (1.06)	2.65* (1.04)
1979-93	-.09 (.88)	— ^a	2.51* (1.07)
City (Shanghai = 1)	-.27 (.63)	.47 (.47)	-.06 (.40)
N of events	12	20	25
N	1,373	1,370	1,366
-2 Log-likelihood	144.54	237.83	333.40

run organizations are about the same between the CCP members with a college education and the CCP members with less education; the difference in the rates of movement is 22% ($[e^{2.60} - e^{2.40}] / e^{2.40}$). These findings imply that as of 1993 promotion into state managerial positions is guided by political principles rather than principles of credentialism.

The more surprising results are found in model 2.3, which considers movement into elite positions of managerial authority in the nonstate sector. Among CCP members, college education presents a negative effect; the rate of moving into a nonstate managerial position for the college educated is 5.47 ($e^{1.70}$), but the rate is much higher for those with less education, 9.87 ($e^{2.29}$), showing an 80% ($[e^{1.70} - e^{2.29}] / e^{1.70}$) *disadvantage* for the college educated. This disadvantage implies a tendency opposite to the expectation of the educational credentialism hypothesis. Among non-CCP members, however, college education shows a positive effect; if non-CCP members with less than a college education are given a rate of 1 for moving into an elite managerial position in the nonstate sector, the college-educated CCP member will have a rate of 2.80 ($e^{1.03}$). This is an

TABLE 6: Partial Likelihood Estimates of the Hazard Rates of Moving into Elite Positions, 1979-1993 (Continued)

	(1)	Model 2 (2)	(3)
CCP member			
College education	3.83*** (.78)	2.60*** (.60)	1.70* (.77)
Less than college education	2.70** (.87)	2.40*** (.54)	2.29*** (.52)
Non-CCP member			
College education	.70 (1.16)	— ^b	1.03 [†] (.53)
Less than college education	— ^a	— ^a	— ^a
Gender (female = 1)	.21 (.70)	-1.82 [†] (1.04)	-.43 (.48)
Labor cohort			
1949-65	— ^a	1.83 [†] (1.06)	— ^a
1966-78	-.01 (.66)	1.48 (1.06)	2.69** (1.04)
1979-93	-.09 (.88)	— ^a	2.56* (1.07)
City (Shanghai = 1)	-.27 (.63)	.49 (.47)	-.04 (.41)
N of events	12	20	25
N	1,373	1,370	1,366
-2 Log-likelihood	144.43	288.63	330.46

Note: The categories under each model are as follows: (1) cadres in party and state hierarchies, (2) managers of state-run organizations, and (3) managers of nonstate organizations in Tianjin and Shanghai.

^a Omitted category

^b Covariable cannot be included in the model because the Newton-Raphson algorithm does not converge when the variable is dichotomous and all the observations are censored for one of the levels of the variable.

[†] $p < .05$ (one-tailed tests) * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

indication of the significance of educational credentialism, but only among non-CCP members in the nonstate sector.

Conclusion and Discussion

We began by reviewing competing theoretical positions about the roles of political screening and educational credentials in maintaining the Communist political order. Inspired by Walder's (1995) call for paying attention to the political character of Communist regimes, we argued that the screening of political loyalty is a persistent feature and survival strategy of any Communist party. We moved on to propose a dynamic model that accounts for historical variations in and interrelationships among a Communist regime's concurrent agenda, mode of political screening, and view of the role of education in party and elite recruitment.

Our event history analyses of Shanghai and Tianjin surveys have provided an impressive set of new findings. First, there has been persistent political screening in Communist party membership and mobility into elite positions of political and managerial authority. Second, education had a negative effect on Communist party membership during the Cultural Revolution but a strong, positive effect during the reform period. Third, during the reform period through 1993, party membership had a significant effect on mobility into elite positions of political and managerial authority, and college education increased party members' chances of moving into positions of political authority but not into managerial positions within the state sector. Nonparty members with a college education, however, obtained managerial positions within the nonstate sector. We discuss the implications of these findings in turn.

PERSISTENT POLITICAL SCREENING

Prior research on party membership attainment has shown changing effects of family class origin across historical periods of China (Zhou, Tuma & Moen 1996, 1997). Our analysis explicitly reveals that people work their way through a long process of becoming a party member, first by obtaining membership in the Communist Youth League between the ages of 15 and 25. Parental party membership, which we interpret as a measure of political influence, affects the attainment of CYL membership over time and in so doing indirectly affects an individual's attainment of party membership. Indication of class-based political loyalty, as measured by occupational position prior to joining the party, was screened in party recruitment during the periods of 1949-65 and particularly 1966-78, in which Mao's political agenda of class struggle dictated China. In the subsequent period of economic reforms, Deng's agenda of modernizing China altered the country's political-economic life, and correspondingly we found no occupation-class position to be specifically favored by the party in membership recruitment. Political screening has, however, continued. In all three historical periods through 1993, membership in the Communist Youth League, which we consider as the indicator of screened political commitment, significantly and consistently increased an individual's opportunity of joining the party.

These findings about the persistence of screened political loyalty over time and about the changing significance of class-based loyalty in the process of party membership attainment provide strong support for the persistent political screening hypothesis. While earlier studies (S. Szelenyi 1987; Walder 1995) tested the hypothesis using cross-sectional data for Hungary and China, our event history analyses of Shanghai and Tianjin data allow us to verify more accurately the expectations derived from this important view. In China becoming a member of the party remains a good strategic choice for attaining an elite position in the party and state hierarchy, in state-run organizations, and in the nonstate, more marketlike economic sector.

RIISING EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALISM

Unlike in Hungary or the former Soviet Union, in China education did not become a criterion for party recruitment following the Communist revolution. Instead, only after the introduction of economic reforms in the late 1970s did individuals with higher education begin to be favored. This shift was consistent with the regime's new demands for human talents to modernize its economy. However, educational credentials are neither replacing nor reducing political criteria as of 1993. On the contrary, the increasing significance of educational credentials coexists with the continued screening for political loyalty, particularly within the state sector.

By emphasizing the persistence of political screening, we do not intend to suggest that no change has been made in party recruitment in China. One clear indication of change is that since the reform period began, youths with educated parents have become more likely to join the Communist Youth League. Furthermore, class-based political screening was minimized or perhaps even eliminated during the reform period. Finally, in a shift from its negative effect during the Cultural Revolution, higher education now increases one's chances of joining the Communist party. College education is clearly a valuable asset for individuals' political mobility in reform-era China.

POLITICAL MOBILITY AND REGIME DYNAMISM

There is evidence that the Communist party has adjusted to the reform era by successfully recruiting the highly educated into the ranks of political and managerial authority. This recruitment occurs within the party and state hierarchy and to a lesser extent within state-run organizations. We found that party members with a college education were more likely than party members with less education to move into leading cadre positions in party and state hierarchies and into leading managerial positions in state-run organizations during the reform era. Although there are no publicized political reforms in China, the fact that the more educated occupy key positions in the party and state hierarchy is evidence that a quiet

reform already exists. In the current Jiang Zemin regime, for example, all top ranks in the central party apparatus and state administration are occupied by cadres who have either obtained college degrees or received professional training at the college level.

Mobility into elite positions of managerial authority in the nonstate sector can be compared with that in the state sector. Party membership significantly increases the mobility into elite managerial positions in both sectors, but nonparty members have little chance of moving into such positions in the state sector and plenty of opportunities to do so in the nonstate sector. Furthermore, college education increases nonparty members' chances of moving into elite positions in the nonstate sector, but this effect never exists in the state sector. These findings reveal that screened loyalty (as measured by party membership) is not a necessary condition, as it appears to be in the state sector, for someone to gain managerial authority in the nonstate sector. Instead, college education has become a viable alternative path to authority positions within nonstate organizations. The nonstate managerial elite is a divided elite, however. One elite is composed of managers who have less education and therefore continue to depend on party patronage to retain authority positions even in the nonstate sector. The other elite consists of managers who are not screened by the party and who rely entirely on their credentials to exercise managerial authority in a market economy. The presence of a divided elite points to the nature of China's nonstate sector as an institutional mixture of political influences and market openness.

Throughout China's post-1949 history, the Chinese Communist Party has had some changing requirements for its members and cadres of political and managerial authority. There has been a tension in the system from the beginning, with an anti-elitist, revolutionary doctrine versus the utility of higher human capital and the ability of people at the top to establish themselves as an elite. The pendulum has swung back and forth more than once. But now there is a clear swing toward education as a criterion of ability in the party and state hierarchy as well as within business organizations in the nonstate sector. Party members with college educations find ways to cope with the transformation and are able to move into elite positions with political or managerial authority. This may imply that education serves as a capital-conversion mechanism to help the politically privileged obtain new forms of advantage during the transition from state socialism to market capitalism. This is true in Eastern Europe (Eyal, Szelenyi & Townsley 1998). Research about China along this line of analysis is much needed.

Notes

1. Rigby (1968) noted a gradual upgrading in the educational attainments of party members in the former Soviet Union from the 1920s to the 1960s. Konrad and Szelenyi (1979) documented a similar tendency for Hungary from the 1950s to the 1970s. In Hungary in the 1980s, education significantly increased an individual's chance of becoming a member in the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (S. Szelenyi 1987). For China, Lin and Bian (1991) reported a positive correlation between education and party membership based on a 1985 Tianjin survey. Based on a 1988 survey of the same city, Bian (1994) found that education had a positive and significant regression coefficient on the attainment of party membership and cadre status.
2. In *My Recollections*, Zhang Guotao (1980), one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party, describes various measures utilized by the Communist party to punish disloyal party members. The ultimate measure was secret death penalty.
3. These periods are consistent with the ones suggested by Zhou, Tuma, and Moen (1996, 1997), although they emphasize policy shifts and their impacts on occupational mobility.
4. Since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came into power in 1949, its membership grew from 4.5 million to 18 million in 1965, prior to the Cultural Revolution (1950: 5.8 million; 1952: 6 million; 1954: 7.9 million; 1955: 9.4 million; 1956: 10.7 million; 1957: 12.7 million; 1959: 14 million; 1961: 17 million). During the Cultural Revolution, the party membership almost doubled from 18 million in 1966 to 35 million at the 11th Congress in 1977, although the membership shrunk in 1971 and 1972 (1969: 22 million; 1971: 17 million; 1972: 20 million; 1973: 28 million; 1976: 34 million) (Lee 1991). During the economic reform years, the party membership continued to grow, reaching 46 million at the time of the 13th Congress held in 1987 (Uhalley 1987). In early 1989, the membership grew to 48.3 million, with only 1% of the population in 1949 being a CCP member to 5% of the population being a CCP member in the late 1980s (Ch'i 1991). At the time of the 14th Congress held in October 1992, CCP memberships were 52 million (Day, German & Campbell 1996). At the time of the 15th Congress in September 1997, CCP memberships were 58 million (*China Daily*, September 13, 1997).
5. These requirements were (1) proper family origin (i.e., proletarian origin); (2) clean personal history (i.e., past fidelity to the party line); (3) "positiveness" in work and determination in class struggles; (4) progressive thinking and class consciousness (i.e., fidelity to the Marxist doctrine of the party); and (5) close connection with the masses and trust by the masses (Ladany 1988). These requirements were later expanded into "eight requisites," which were more stringent. The qualifications of each candidate were carefully checked against these official guidelines in the early 1950s.
6. This new policy was periodically challenged by the Anti-Bourgeoisie Movement in 1987 and the Pro-Democracy Movement in 1989. For example, a 1991 *People's Daily* article reminded the party and the general public that "intellectuals are mental workers who use their individual work to earn social status. So they [the intellectuals] are more susceptible to the influence of the concept of individual freedom, democracy, and human rights. . . . Those intellectuals who are not completely loyal to the cause of the proletariat become the first captives of the influences from the West" (Wang, Renzhi,

People's Daily, Feb. 22, 1990). This kind of voice represents a small segment of the party and has not been able to reverse the policy of recruiting among the educated and skilled labor force.

7. These three leaders were once secretaries of the central committee of the Communist Youth League. Ren Bishi later served as one of the five secretaries of the central committee of the Communist party, from 1943 to 1953 (the other four secretaries were Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De). Hu Yaobang was the party secretary general from 1982 to 1987, and Li Ruihuan has been one of the seven standing members of the politburo of the central committee of the Communist party since 1989.

8. According to an interview conducted by Yanjie Bian with a municipal official of the CYL organization in 1998, the rates of participation in the CYL varied across institutions and over time. In some key schools and colleges as well as military schools, most students may have obtained a CYL membership in the year of graduation, but in other types of schools and work organizations, only a small proportion of persons can obtain CYL memberships. Although CYL memberships grew in the 1990s (as of 1997 about 40% of students aged 15-25 were members of the CYL), our analysis applies to pre-1993 periods.

9. The personnel dossier consists of various files transferred from one's schools or previous work units. These files record information about political affiliations, prizes and criticisms received, and evaluations by earlier party authorities. Personnel dossiers also contain evaluations of the applicant's parents and other relatives. A negative record on relatives may include "bad" family origins (parents or grandparents were landlords, business owners, or Nationalist government officials before 1949), participation in the Nationalist armed forces and work in the Nationalist government before 1949, or anti-Communist party thoughts or behaviors. In such cases, confirmation is sought by contacting the party offices of the relatives' work organizations. The dossiers are not open to employees, so in principle no one knows what is included in one's personnel dossier. Dossiers for ordinary staff and workers are kept in the work unit's party office, and those for work unit party secretary and director are kept in the party office of the next higher level organization.

10. We only have information about when the respondents moved to the jobs they held at the time of the survey in 1993, so the job movements concentrated in the period between 1979 and 1993.

11. We owe this insight to an anonymous reviewer of an early submission.

12. We also have considered parental occupational categories as an alternative indicator of family class origin, but large numbers of missing values on this variable prevent us from seriously using it to estimate our models. We will note later that our parental education indicator may be good enough to meet our goals of analysis.

13. As a result, women and younger persons were slightly underrepresented in the Tianjin sample. Because the effects of gender and birth cohorts are controlled for in the analyses, we expect the effects of this sample selection bias to diminish, although we were not able to completely control for the bias. Because our major research interest in this article is to exam the change in the effects of political loyalty (parental education,

parental CCP membership, CYL membership, and CCP membership) and education (parental education and personal education) in recruitment into the CYL, CCP, and power elite positions.

14. We initially used both parental education and parental occupation as measures of family class origin. We found large numbers of missing values on the second variable and had to drop it from our analysis.

15. Walder (1995) distinguishes administrators, professionals, and clerical workers (or "elite" positions in his analysis) from manual workers and does not subdivide the clerical and manual workers. Because these two categories have large numbers of occupants, in-group variations might be important for examining the effects of party membership on entry into elite positions. In our measurement, administrators include people who hold decision-making positions in party, government, or work organizations. Positions at the division level (*chu*) or above are classified as high administrators, and those at the department level (*ke*) or lower are classified as low administrators. The two categories for professionals include scientists, engineers, technicians, medical workers, social scientists, lawyers, teachers, artists, and professional athletes. Those with a college education or higher are classified as high professionals, and others are classified as low professionals. The clerical categories include administrative staff, personnel workers, assistants to administrators, secretaries, and other supporting staff. High clerical workers are those assisting administrators at the division level or higher, and others are low clerical workers. Finally, manual workers are subdivided into skilled and unskilled groups.

16. Because of data limitations, we cannot examine possible effects of work environment on recruitment into the party or elite positions. Both Bian (1994) and Zhou, Tuma, and Moen (1996, 1997) show that rates of participation in the Communist party vary across types of organization.

17. Limited to the 631 respondents who provided valid information on their parents' occupations, we reestimated this model by including seven dummy variables for parental occupation. While no parental occupation significantly affects joining the CYL in any period, parent being a high professional is positive (statistically significant) for 1979-93. This result diminishes the significance level for the variable of parental college education, indicating that parental college education is basically measuring the high professional class. Similar results were obtained when all respondents were included in an estimation in which an additional dummy variable was constructed to code all missing values on parental occupation (missing = 1, nonmissing = 0). Results are available upon request.

A short note about the findings concerning control variables is required here. The only gender effect is found in the early period 1949-65, when girls had a lower probability of joining the CYL. The gender disparity in CYL membership attainment disappeared in the 1966-78 period and did not regain significance in the 1979-93 period. The significant cohort effects mean that for all periods the individuals who became eligible (15 years old) during a given period had a greater probability of joining the CYL than the individuals who turned 15 during the preceding period, indicating that

18. We reestimated this model by including parental occupation dummies as additional predictors with two strategies. One strategy was to use the 652 respondents who provided valid information about their parents' occupations. The alternative strategy was to use all respondents but to use an additional dummy variable to classify between missing values on parental occupation (= 1) and nonmissing values on this variable. No significant results need be mentioned except one: In the 1979-93 period, parent being a low professional has a significant positive effect and parent being a low-class worker has a significant negative effect on a child's joining the CCP. This appears to show the effects of denouncing family class origin as a basis for political screening during the post-1979 reform era.

19. We reestimated the models in Table 5 with interactive terms of CYL membership and education as predictors. The results confirm that when having the same level of education, CYL members have better chances of entering the CCP in all three periods. During the Cultural Revolution period, education had a negative effect for both CYL members and non-CYL members. During the reform period, the education effect became positive, but mostly for non-CYL members. Results are available upon request.

20. Specifically, we divided the period from 1949 to 1993 into 21 five-year intervals, in the following order: 1949-53, 1950-54, 1951-55, . . . , 1987-91, 1988-92, 1989-93. We then estimated the partial likelihood coefficients for the model expressed in equation 1 for each of the 21 five-year intervals.

21. The Communist party revised its recruitment policy and made a special effort to admit intellectuals and the highly educated into the party in the early 1980s. This policy was not followed uniformly over time, however. It was openly challenged during the Anti-Bourgeoisie Campaign in 1987 and once again shortly after the Student Movement in 1989 (Lee 1991). A more detailed analysis of our data (not presented) shows that between 1983 and 1987, 46% of new CCP members had a college education and 43% had a high school education, leaving only 11% of new CCP members coming from people with a lower education. In subsequent years through 1993, however, the share of new CCP members with a college degree or a high school education was reduced by 10% for each group, and 31% of the new CCP members during the period were recruited from the lower education groups. Hence, although the reform period overall appears to be associated with a turn toward credentialism, we should be cautious about tying this change to the inherent logic of marketization. As with other aspects of reform, the decision about how to recruit Party members remains essentially a political choice, subject to reversal on political grounds.

22. One might think that leading cadres in state hierarchies are necessarily party members, but in fact some are not party members when they are promoted into their positions. Another reason to use party membership as a predictor of movement into elite positions in state hierarchies, state-run organizations, and nonstate organizations is to contrast the effects of party membership, as compared to the effects of education, across these three institutional contexts.

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