

## **Battling over political and cultural power during the Chinese Cultural Revolution**

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Konrad and Szelenyi's seminal work, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, provoked readers to rethink the nature of the communist project. Their fundamental thesis was that the entire project, including efforts to organize a planned economy, was an endeavor by intellectuals to enhance the power of those who possessed cultural capital (knowledge that provides access to advantageous class positions). They predicted that the rule of one part of the intelligentsia, the communist political elite, was giving way to the rule of the wider intelligentsia as a class. Their thesis was a powerful antidote to the common one-sided conception that understands the socialist order as fundamentally organized around a single hierarchy – political capital (association with the ruling communist party).<sup>1</sup> It, however, is also problematic. Proceeding from Konrad and Szelenyi's assumption that the essential aim of the communist project was to empower the intellectual strata, it is difficult to explain the profound and violent hostility communist parties displayed toward intellectuals and cultural capital during the early period of communist rule in Russia, China, and elsewhere. *Somehow communist parties were transformed from antagonists into champions of cultural capital.* Understanding this transformation is key to understanding how a new class order emerged in socialist societies.

The tortuousness of this process was violently displayed during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution opened in 1966 with Mao Zedong mobilizing the masses to do away with the domination of "bourgeois intellectuals" over the education system. It closed a decade later with the Communist Party completely renouncing the goals of the Cultural Revolution and decisively affirming the value of cultural capital. This article explores the dynamics underlying this political transformation by analyzing student factional conflict at two

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elite Beijing schools, Tsinghua University, China's leading school of technology, and its attached middle school, during the first years of the Cultural Revolution.

After Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, Party control was paralyzed and contending factions mushroomed at every school and workplace. The ensuing factional confrontation has no parallel in the brief history of socialism. Animated by a political discourse that focused on power and privilege in the new socialist order, this factional conflict provides a unique window into contradictions in the social systems that emerged following communist revolutions. The upheaval began in China's elite schools and previous scholarship has demonstrated that student factional struggles at these schools revealed conflicts over the social foundations of privilege and power in post-revolutionary China in particularly sharp relief. The prevailing explanation of these factional confrontations has highlighted conflict between the children of intellectual and political elites.<sup>2</sup>

This image of children of intellectuals battling children of communist cadres fits readily into the familiar narrative of intellectuals leading resistance against communist officialdom. The subjugated experts, in this narrative, chafe at the fetters of socialism, longing for a system based on merit, rather than political monopoly. There is substantial truth in this narrative, as conflict between intellectual and political elites have marked the entire trajectory of communist power. Yet it is one-sided. It fails to recognize fully the important role of educational qualifications as a mechanism of class differentiation in socialist societies and the stake educated elites had in maintaining the social order that was taking shape under communist rule. The emphasis on inter-elite conflict obscures the convergence of political and intellectual elites, a convergence that fundamentally transformed the communist program and laid the foundations for a new class order.

I argue that while the Chinese Cultural Revolution initially produced an explosion of antagonisms between political and intellectual elites in 1966, it also ended up forging inter-elite unity based on common hostility to the Cultural Revolution's radical egalitarianism. Political and cultural capital were the key axes of contention that defined the student political tendencies at both Tsinghua University and at its attached middle school, although the battle lines over these axes were drawn differently at the two schools. While student conflict at Tsinghua Attached Middle School followed the pattern predicted by the prevail-

ing model (children of intellectuals battled children of veteran communist cadres), at Tsinghua University a very different factional alignment developed. Children of workers and peasants led the radical faction, bent on fundamentally changing the existing order, while many children of intellectuals flocked to the moderate faction, uniting with the political establishment to defend the status quo.

On one level, this article endeavors to solve the puzzle presented by the distinct factional alignments at the two schools. I suggest ways of rethinking group interests and identities produced by the socialist experiment in China and analyze the causes of shifting alliances. On another level, I interpret the factional confrontations at the two schools as part of larger processes of class transformation following the Chinese Revolution. Both the inter-elite violence at the middle school and the inter-elite unity at the university were, I argue, manifestations of a contentious process of convergence between a new political elite, most of whom were peasant revolutionaries, and an old educated elite, composed largely of members of the former propertied classes. These case studies offer a detailed look at the complex dynamics of this protracted process, collapsed into a few months of factional polemics and violence. Going beyond the temporal confines of these case studies, I suggest that the Cultural Revolution, an assault on both the old intellectual elite and the new political elite, ultimately served as a catalyst that facilitated the merger of these elites, laying the foundations for a new dominant class in China. It was only *after* the decisive defeat of Cultural Revolution radicalism that the Chinese Communist Party came to embrace cultural capital fully and the communist agenda began to resemble the technocratic “new class” project described by Konrad and Szelenyi.

#### *Research sites and sources*

Tsinghua University (TU), located in Beijing, has aptly been called the “cradle of China’s technocracy,” because so many of the country’s current top leadership studied at the university. Tsinghua Attached Middle School (TAMS) is located next to the university. TAMS was the birthplace of the first student Red Guard organization at the outset of the Cultural Revolution and both schools became key battlefields in the factional conflict. Organizations at the two schools became models for student factions around the country and events at Tsinghua marked several of the major turning points in the countrywide conflict. Chi-

nese scholars have described the factions at TU as representative of student factions during the Cultural Revolution.<sup>3</sup>

This investigation is based on interviews with leaders and participants in the factions at both schools and analysis of debates carried out in the pages of student publications. In depth interviews with forty-four former students were used to reconstruct the composition of the leadership and social base of the factions and participants' understanding of the key events and issues involved in the conflict.<sup>4</sup> Both of the main factions at the university published newspapers<sup>5</sup> as well as pamphlets containing collections of reprinted big-character posters.<sup>6</sup>

### **Political and cultural capital as axes of contention**

Bourdieu developed a three-dimensional framework for analyzing class differentiation in which an individual's class position is determined by possession of economic capital (private wealth that provides access to advantageous class positions), cultural capital (knowledge that provides such access) and social capital (group membership and social connections that provide such access).<sup>7</sup> A particular form of social capital – political capital (association with the ruling party) – took on central importance in China and other socialist societies.<sup>8</sup> Like economic capital, political and cultural capital structure and reproduce social inequality, but the mechanisms are different in each case. Class systems can be distinguished in terms of the relative power provided by each of these forms of capital and by the way the transmission and conversion of different forms of capital are institutionalized. Bourdieu's three-dimensional framework lends itself well to analysis of class transformation following socialist revolutions, in which private property in the means of production (economic capital) was eliminated.

Although the analytic categories central to this article, political and cultural capital, refer to resources that are widely recognized as key elements of class differentiation in socialist societies, terminology and conceptualization vary considerably. It is, therefore, necessary to spell out concretely what is meant by these concepts. On the one hand, individuals can inherit political and cultural capital from their parents. For instance, the daughter of a party official inherits political capital (association with the Communist Party) and the son of an intellectual inherits cultural capital (knowledge required to obtain educational

qualifications). On the other hand, individuals can also accumulate both forms of capital themselves. The daughter of the party official and the son of the intellectual can both accumulate political capital by joining first the Communist Youth League and then the Party, by assuming leadership positions in these organizations and by cultivating ties with people who have substantial political capital based on personal networks structured by the Party. They can also accumulate cultural capital by obtaining knowledge and certificates conferred by the educational system. The daughter of an ordinary peasant inherits little of either form of capital at home, but she may have an opportunity to accumulate both on her own.

*The new political and old cultural elites*

After the 1949 Revolution, a new political elite, largely made up of peasant revolutionaries, confronted an old educated elite, largely composed of members of the propertied classes. The first group held the reins of political power. While members of the second group were dispossessed of their productive property, they continued to hold a monopoly on cultural resources, which had long been a salient component of class distinction in China<sup>9</sup> and which remained a resilient basis of class power.<sup>10</sup> Neither group, of course, was homogeneous and there was overlap between the two. Many party leaders, especially those assigned to leadership positions in the education sphere, were from privileged families and enjoyed cultural as well as political capital. However, even among upper-level communist cadres, the great majority were from peasant families.<sup>11</sup>

While effective governance and economic reconstruction required accommodation, the relations between the new communist political elite and the old educated elite were sharply contentious. Nevertheless, a protracted process of elite convergence began as soon as the communists achieved power. Party officials took up positions of authority beside members of the old educated elite, while members of the old educated elite joined the Party. More important, children of party leaders began attending elite schools and gaining intellectual credentials, while children of intellectuals at these same schools were being recruited into the Youth League and then the Party.

Table 1. Class designations in the family origin system

Laboring classes	Revolutionary cadre, soldier and martyr <sup>14</sup> Worker Poor or lower-middle peasant
Other	Upper-middle peasant Small proprietor “White collar” employee ( <i>zhiyuan</i> ) <sup>15</sup> Independent professional
Exploiting classes	Capitalist Rich peasant Landlord

### *Class line vs. meritocracy*

The conflict inherent in the convergence of old and new elites was complicated by the doctrinal commitment of the Communist Party to elevate the status of workers and peasants and gradually do away with class distinctions. The declared aim of eliminating the “three great differences,” those between mental and manual labor, peasant and worker, and city and countryside, was the rationale behind “class line” (*jieji luxian*) policies, which were institutionalized in various ways including a system of preferences based on class origin. Implementation of class line was based on the family origin (*chushen*) system.<sup>12</sup> All families were assigned a designation based on the status of the family head between 1946 and 1949 according to the party’s taxonomy of class (see Table 1). These class designations were inherited patrilineally during the first three decades that followed the 1949 Revolution.<sup>13</sup>

Class designations were used in tandem with evaluations of a family’s political relationship to the communist project. Those who had joined the communist movement before 1949 were recognized as revolutionary cadres, soldiers, or martyrs; members of their families shared these esteemed designations. On the other hand, individuals judged to be counterrevolutionaries or criticized as “Rightists” in the late 1950s (see below), as well as their close relatives, were stigmatized. (For the sake of simplicity, I often use shorthand terms in this article to refer to family origin designations: “revolutionary cadres” is used to refer to revolutionary cadres, soldiers, and martyrs; “peasants” is used to refer to poor and lower-middle peasants; “intellectuals” is used to refer to class categories such as white collar employees and independent professionals characterized by higher levels of education.)

The family origin system turned the hierarchy of cultural capital on its head, and class line was intended to counter advantages the old educated elites continued to derive from cultural capital. Class line policies limited opportunities, sometimes severely, for those deemed to be members of the former exploiting classes or from politically hostile families. At the same time, class line policies provided opportunities for those who had “good” family backgrounds (workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, and revolutionary cadres, soldiers, and martyrs), a category that encompassed nine tenths of the population and included the new communist political elite. (While children of ordinary workers and peasants enjoyed the advantage of “good” class origin, this should not be confused with the analytic category of political capital, as it is used in this article, which refers exclusively to association with the Communist Party.)

When the Communist Party took over the highly exclusive Chinese education system,<sup>16</sup> it had two related but potentially contradictory goals: first, to produce educationally qualified administrative and technical personnel and, second, to extend and popularize education. While modernization required the accomplishment of both, the two goals led to the coexistence of two distinct orientations. The first, which I call meritocratic, stressed building a core of schools with high academic standards and sought the most qualified students from whatever class background by means of standardized examinations. Successful candidates were disproportionately from the old educated elites. The second orientation, class line, emphasized providing access to education for the great majority, who had been excluded, by extending basic education in rural and working class districts and giving preference to students of “good” class origin in admissions to higher education.<sup>17</sup>

While educational policies in China institutionalized both meritocratic and class line principles, the competing orientations were associated with increasingly distinct factions within the party leadership. Class line policies came to the fore during the education revolution promoted by Mao Zedong during the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) and would be seen in their purest form during the Cultural Revolution decade (1966–76). Meritocratic principles, championed by most of the educational establishment with the support of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, held sway during the early 1960s and would be seen in their purest form in the period following Mao Zedong’s death in 1976.

**The Tsinghua status quo: Political loyalty and meritocracy**

Tsinghua University and Tsinghua Attached Middle School, elite schools producing the next generation of intellectual, technical, and administrative leaders, were at the focal point of the contentious convergence of the old educated elite and the new political elite. Before the Cultural Revolution, an uneasy compromise was emerging at the schools based on the acceptance of two fundamental principles: loyalty to the party leadership and meritocracy. These two principles were twin pillars of the emerging post-revolutionary status quo at Tsinghua. They became the main targets of radical attacks during the Cultural Revolution.

The dominant figure at Tsinghua before the Cultural Revolution was Jiang Nanxiang, who served as both university president and party secretary. Jiang, the son of a landlord, had headed the communist-led patriotic student movement at TU that arose to resist the Japanese invasion in 1935.<sup>18</sup> When he returned to take over his alma mater in 1952, he worked for a cooperative relationship with the faculty and students, who were virtually all from the old educated elite. The terms of the relationship, however, were to be set by the Party. These terms were harshly demonstrated in the 1957 Anti-Rightist campaign during which 572 students and teachers were criticized and punished as Rightists, often for expressing hostility to party control in intellectual realms.<sup>19</sup>

Jiang, nevertheless, intended to “accelerate the process of convergence of two kinds of people,” referring to scholars and party cadres, and build what he called a “professors’ Party” at Tsinghua. The Anti-Rightist movement was followed by a drive to recruit faculty to join the Party and a number of prominent professors were invited to serve on the 15-member Standing Committee of the University Party Committee. The very top party leadership at the university, however, was distinguished first and foremost by political qualifications: In addition to Jiang, it included three veteran revolutionaries of rural origin and several leaders of the student communist underground at TU immediately prior to 1949. The “backbone” of the party organization, including the up-and-coming leadership in the departments, were members of a new generation of teachers and cadres, typically of old educated elite family origin, selected from among Tsinghua’s post-1949 graduates. By cultivating Tsinghua’s own graduates, Jiang built up an exceptionally loyal body of “Tsinghua-brand” cadres, who accepted his

challenge to become “double-load” (*shuang jian tiao*) cadres, meaning that they were capable of exercising both academic and political leadership.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to academic credentials, Tsinghua distributed political credentials, through the school Party and Youth League organizations. A required political asset for most careers to which Tsinghua students would aspire was membership in the Youth League. The doors of the League were, in principle, open to all students, although those of less-than-good family origin were subject to more stringent evaluation of their political commitment and loyalty. A few students, considered to be of very bad family origin or morally or politically unqualified, were excluded.<sup>21</sup> Students from the old educated elite could also aspire to attain positions of leadership in the League and even a few students from exploiting class backgrounds were selected as leaders, although a preference was shown for children of workers, peasants and revolutionary cadres. Academic accomplishment and political loyalty were both key criteria. “President Jiang handled this very carefully,” said a TU student, referring to the selection of student leaders. “He had two standards – this guy has got to be very good in academics and also very devoted to him.”<sup>22</sup>

The Party and Youth League organizations at Tsinghua brought together members of the new political and old educated elites and systematically promoted the convergence of possession of political and cultural capital, which were becoming the key foundations of an emerging “new class.” The school Party and Youth League organizations embodied a tenuous political coalition that defended the status quo at the school and its twin pillars of political loyalty and meritocracy.

While all schools were compelled to implement class line policies promoted by Mao Zedong, the Tsinghua administration under Jiang Nanxiang was committed to meritocratic principles. Jiang, who concurrently served as Minister of Higher Education, became one of the foremost champions of meritocratic education policies. While Jiang supported a strong and authoritative Party, his vision of Party leadership was technocratic. “Examination grades are not only the standard for measuring the degree of academic accomplishment,” a 1962 policy document formulated under his direction declared. “Through grades we can also discern the student’s political character.”<sup>23</sup> Jiang’s slogan, “Before grades, all are equal,” clearly expressed the principle he sought to implement.<sup>24</sup>

In 1960, Jiang reorganized Tsinghua Attached Middle School and quickly built it into one of the best middle schools in Beijing. TAMS was one of a number of elite middle schools that, beginning in the early 1960s as part of a high tide of meritocratic policies, were able to recruit the highest scoring students on citywide entrance exams and were provided with the best teachers and facilities. In 1964, TAMS organized two special classes in which the students took courses taught by Tsinghua professors. The best of these students, who were carefully screened for both academic achievement and political reliability, were to be directly admitted into TU.<sup>25</sup>

*Composition of the student bodies at TU and TAMS*

The composition of the student bodies at TU and at TAMS were markedly different, a distinction that became an important factor in determining the nature of factional conflict at the two schools during the Cultural Revolution. By the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the combination of class line and meritocratic policies had produced a diverse student body at TU. While most TU students still came from elite urban middle schools, the expansion of education into rural and poor urban communities had created middle schools that by the early 1960s were turning out large numbers of university applicants of working class and peasant origin. In 1964 and 1965, strong class line policies demanded by Mao further increased the number of students of peasant origin. Table 2 compiles estimates provided by students who attended TU on the eve of the Cultural Revolution of the composition of their classes in terms of family origin.<sup>26</sup> According to their estimates, which are corroborated by statistics published by a student faction during the Cultural Revolution, the majority of TU students were still from the old educated elites, but children of workers and peasants had come to make up a substantial part of the student population. While children of revolutionary cadres were over-represented, they made up only a small part of the student body.

In contrast, there were very few working class and peasant children at TAMS. Table 2 also compiles the estimates provided by TAMS students of the family origin of their classmates. Their estimates, which are also corroborated by statistical data released during the Cultural Revolution, indicate that almost all TAMS students were children of either the new political elite (25 percent) or the old educated elite (69 percent).

Table 2. Composition of TU and TAMS student bodies before the Cultural Revolution<sup>27</sup>

Family Origin	Middle school		University	
	Students' estimates	Red guard statistics <sup>28</sup>	Students' estimates	Rebel statistics <sup>29</sup>
Revolutionary cadre	25%	25%	7%	44%
Worker or peasant	6%	9%	37%	
Other (principally white-collar employee or independent professional)	59%	52%	43%	46%
Exploiting classes <sup>30</sup>	10%	14%	13%	10%

### Mao Zedong targets political and cultural capital

Mao Zedong launched the Cultural Revolution in 1966, encouraging a popular assault on both political and intellectual elites. “In this great cultural revolution,” the Party Central Committee declared at Mao’s insistence, “the phenomenon of our schools being dominated by bourgeois intellectuals must be completely changed.” The principal objects of attack, however, were party officials: “The main target of the present movement is those within the Party who are taking the capitalist road.”<sup>31</sup> On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong had described his target as a “bureaucratic class” in the process of formation:

The bureaucratic class is sharply opposed to the working class and the poor and the lower-middle peasants. These people have become or are in the process of becoming bourgeois elements sucking the blood of the workers.... These people are the targets of the struggle and the revolution.<sup>32</sup>

In May 1966, Mao launched a frontal attack on meritocratic education policies and education officials. President Liu Shaoqi dispatched party work teams to schools to guide the campaign, but Mao undermined this effort. Frustrated by previous efforts to implement class line education reforms through the party establishment, Mao tried an unprecedented strategy: mobilizing students to act *outside* the party structure. At Mao’s behest, a small coterie of radicals in the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group (CCRS) used the press and more direct

means to encourage students to defy work team control. In late July, Mao ordered the removal of the work teams, giving virtual free reign to fledgling student organizations.

While Mao established the general orientation of the Cultural Revolution, after the monopoly of the local party machinery in interpreting and carrying out policy was broken in the summer of 1966, the movement took on a life of its own. All of the actors were constrained by the direction and limits established by Mao, but these were often ambiguous and their meaning sharply contested. The formation of independent student organizations in the summer of 1966 turned students into factional leaders who put together coalitions based on distinct and contradictory interpretations of the goals of the Cultural Revolution.

#### *Four political tendencies*

Before examining the student factions that emerged at TU and TAMS, I review the prevailing explanation of student factional conflict, which I call the “competing elites model.” Based on detailed studies of the Cultural Revolution factions in elite Guangzhou middle schools, Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen, and Jonathan Unger concluded that children of intellectuals led the attack on the existing order, while children of veteran party cadres defended the status quo. Qualifications that they placed on generalizing from their explanation are often overlooked.<sup>33</sup> It has been widely interpreted by academics in the West as a general model for student factional conflict during the Cultural Revolution.<sup>34</sup>

The competing elites model advances a number of tenets that I re-examine here in my two case studies. First, the model describes two main types of political tendencies: a “conservative” camp led by children of revolutionary cadres and a “rebel” camp led by children of the old educated elites. These two groups of elite students set the political orientation of the opposing factions. Children of workers and peasants divided between the two camps, but played a leading role in neither. Second, it proposes that the central rift underlying student factional alignment was produced by class line school admissions policies that favored children of workers, peasants, and veteran party officials and hurt children of the old educated elites. Beneficiaries of class line policies tended to support the status quo, while those harmed by these policies tended to oppose it. Third, it proposes that rebel factions were more aggressive in attacking party authorities and less aggressive in

Table 3. Student political tendencies predicted by the competing elites model

Axis of contention		Political capital	
		Attack	Defend
Cultural capital	Attack		Conservatives
	Defend	Rebels	

attacking intellectuals, while conservative factions were more aggressive in attacking intellectuals and less aggressive in attacking party authorities.

Translated into the conceptual framework of political and cultural capital used in the present study, the competing elites model proposes that rebels, led by children of intellectual elites, attacked political capital (by targeting the party hierarchy) and defended cultural capital (by opposing class line), while conservatives, led by children of political elites, attacked cultural capital (by promoting class line and targeting the education hierarchy) and defended political capital (by protecting the larger party hierarchy) (see Table 3).

The present analysis of student factions at Tsinghua University and Tsinghua Attached Middle School demonstrates both the validity and the limitations of the explanatory power of the competing elites model. I found that conflict over political and cultural capital at the two schools produced four different types of political tendencies, presented in Table 4. Two of the tendencies (upper right and lower left) are those described by the competing elites model. These were the main tendencies at TAMS, an elite middle school like those at the center of Chan, Rosen, and Unger's studies, whose student body was made up largely of children of political and intellectual elites. The conflict pit political against cultural capital: children of veteran party cadres organized one faction; the other was made up largely of children of intellectuals.

The conflict at Tsinghua University, however, where recently recruited students from peasant and working class families made up a large part of the student body, followed a very different course. The two main tendencies that evolved at the university (upper left and lower right) do not fit into the competing elites model. Students from working class and peasant families led the "radical" coalition at the university (upper left); these university radicals *attacked both* cultural and political capi-

Table 4. Student political tendencies at Tsinghua University and Middle School

Axis of contention		Political capital	
		Attack	Defend
Cultural capital	Attack	University radicals (Jinggangshan)	Middle school Old Red Guards
	Defend	Middle school radicals (Jinggangshan)	University moderates (April 14th)

tal. The “moderate” university faction (lower right) that coalesced in opposition to the radicals, on the other hand, *defended both* political and cultural capital. The moderate faction defended the political and intellectual establishment at the university, and had a wide base of support including many students of intellectual origin. Confronting a challenge to the hierarchies of political and cultural capital, a party of order emerged to defend both.

In the following sections, I examine the political positions, leadership, and social bases of each of these four political tendencies and advance an explanation of why the political battle lines at the two schools were drawn so differently. First, I analyze the factional confrontation at TAMS and then that at TU.

### **Middle school factions: Political vs. cultural capital**

Encouraged by a campaign initiated by Mao to instill class-consciousness, during the year or so preceding the Cultural Revolution, children of revolutionary cadres at Tsinghua Attached Middle School had accused the principal, Wan Bangru, of favoring children of the old educated elites. He had allowed the latter to gain undue positions in the Youth League, they complained, by failing to implement class line policies. Children of intellectuals fought back, at one point waging a wall poster campaign criticizing the principal for caving in to parental pressure by failing to punish the son of a high cadre for fighting. Fractures were appearing in the coalition of cultural and political capital, which had been fostered by the administration and embodied by the Youth League, fractures that would develop into violent factional antagonisms during the Cultural Revolution, organized largely along lines of class origin.

*Old Red Guards: Attacking cultural capital and defending political capital*

TAMS was the birthplace of the first Red Guard organization, formed by audacious teenage children of revolutionary cadres who popularized the slogan that became the motto of a generation of Cultural Revolution rebels: “It’s right to rebel!”<sup>35</sup> The semi-secret organization was inspired by Mao’s call to attack the old educated elites and eliminate their power within the education system. In May 1966, the fledgling Red Guards began posting big character posters accusing the principal of running the school like a “bourgeois academic authority” and denouncing his landlord family origin. Many children of intellectuals, led by student Youth League cadres, replied with wall posters defending the administration. The Red Guards denounced these students as “royalists” (*baohuang pai*). Under attack by the administration and its student defenders, the Red Guards retreated from the school on June 7. The next day, they returned, reinforced by scores of students from other elite Beijing middle schools, mostly other children of revolutionary cadres. The principal locked the gate. That evening, a work team dispatched from the center arrived and the Red Guards entered the school victoriously.

During the remainder of June and July, the work team ran the school and Red Guard leaders presided over meetings to criticize the old school administration. Behind closed doors, conflicts broke out over the work team’s insistence that some leaders of the now defunct Youth League who had not supported the Red Guards be included in the leadership of the movement. The Red Guards, however, did not openly criticize the work team. In late June, when university students challenged the work team at neighboring TU (see below), middle school Red Guards kept their distance. When a lone member of the Red Guards posted a big character poster at the middle school defending the anti-work team insurgents at the university, her comrades abandoned her to the retributions of the work team who branded her a “counter-revolutionary.” It was one thing to attack the principal of a middle school who, despite being a leader of the school party committee, was from a landlord family and could be identified as a “bourgeois academic authority.” It was quite another to attack members of a work team who had been dispatched by the highest party authorities and who personally had impeccable revolutionary credentials.

At the end of July, Mao demanded the removal of the work teams from schools and on August 1 he sent an open letter to the TAMS Red Guards praising their rebellious spirit.<sup>36</sup> Mao promoted the Red Guards as a new model for student organizations, outside of the Party and Youth League structure, and with his encouragement the Red Guard movement swept the country in August. The TAMS Red Guards and fraternal organizations at other schools became the vanguard of a violent campaign against members of the old elites, including students, teachers and administrators in their own schools. They led the campaign against the “four olds” (old ideas, culture, customs, and habits), searching the houses of the old bourgeoisie and well-to-do intellectuals and destroying or confiscating symbols of traditional elite or Western culture.<sup>37</sup>

### *Bloodline theory*

The TAMS Red Guards militantly championed class line, denouncing the prerogatives claimed by cultural capital. In a July 1966 flier, they wrote:

For seventeen years our school has been ruled by the bourgeois class. We shall not tolerate this any longer! We shall overthrow it, seize power, organize the revolution of the class troops, forward the class line according to social status.... Landlord and bourgeois class young gentlemen and ladies we know your feelings.... You thought you could make use of the temporarily existing bourgeois education to climb higher up the ladder to become white experts, get into the university, join up with “professors, experts.”... And perhaps you could even build up a little political capital and get a little power.... Truly you did not imagine that the class line that you hate would come and destroy these dreams.... Workers and peasants and the children of workers, peasants and revolutionary cadres, whom you despised, will fill the posts in culture science and technique; your monopolies are broken.<sup>38</sup>

The Red Guards developed their own peculiar interpretation of class line, known as “bloodline theory” (*xuetong lun*), which highlighted their own role as children of revolutionaries. The TAMS Red Guards were convinced that, as children of revolutionary cadres, they had a unique responsibility during the Cultural Revolution “to follow the footsteps of our revolutionary fathers.”<sup>39</sup> The bloodline principle was expressed concisely by the famous couplet, created by children of revolutionary cadres at another elite Beijing middle school, that became the Red Guards’ motto in late July: “The father’s a revolutionary, the son’s a hero; the father’s a reactionary, the son’s a bastard” (*laozi*

*geming, er haohan; laozi fandong, er hundan*). The bloodline principle was interpreted to exclude all those who did not have “good” family origins. At the height of their power in August, the TAMS Red Guards declared: “All those who are not children of workers, peasants or revolutionary cadres . . . had better lower their heads before us!”<sup>40</sup>

The rise of bloodline theory in the summer of 1966 forced out most of the few students of intellectual origin who had participated in the early Red Guard movement. Former TAMS Red Guard activists estimated that by August almost all revolutionary cadres’ children had joined the organization while, with few exceptions, children of intellectuals were excluded and remained on the sidelines of the Cultural Revolution for the time being. The rise of the Red Guards, thus, completely shattered the coalition of political and cultural capital and led to the demise of its organizational embodiment, the Youth League.

The bloodline couplet also implicitly excluded children of workers and peasants who, unlike revolutionary cadres’ children, were not children of revolutionaries. While the TAMS Red Guards attacked children of the old educated elite in the name of workers’ and peasants’ children, their organization was actually composed almost exclusively of revolutionary cadres’ children. There were, after all, very few children from working class and peasant families at the middle school and most of them were rejected or alienated by the Red Guards.<sup>41</sup>

#### *Rebels become conservatives*

The early Red Guard movement violently attacked the power and privileges associated with cultural capital and, in this sense, the Red Guards were, indeed, rebels. The conservative side of Red Guard politics, the defense of political capital, was already clearly expressed, however, in their bloodline motto. The essence of bloodline politics was to make inheritance of political capital the legitimate basis of power. But it was only after a different type of rebel movement, led by workers’ and peasants’ children, launched a concerted attack on political capital that the conservative side of the Red Guards came to the fore. A critical turning point was marked on August 24, 1966. On that day, TAMS Red Guards, angered by the appearance at Tsinghua University of big character posters that attacked President Liu Shaoqi, mobilized middle school Red Guards from around the city to converge on the university. After declaring at a mass rally that they would never

allow the new rebel tendency to “turn over the country” (*fan tian*), the Red Guards went on a rampage. Continuing their attack on the old educated elites and their symbols, they pulled down the famous university gate and beat up professors. At the same time they tore down the offensive wall posters and attacked university students who had targeted the political hierarchy.

In the fall of 1966, Mao gave increasing support to the new rebel tendency that had emerged in opposition to the work teams at Tsinghua University and elsewhere, encouraging them to attack the party hierarchy. As the student movement polarized, the conservative aspect of the Red Guard program, defense of political capital, increasingly became their *raison d'être*. (To distinguish the original Red Guard movement from the new rebels, who also called themselves Red Guards, the former were typically referred to as the “Old Red Guards.”) In December, the Old Red Guards at TAMS joined their counterparts at other elite middle schools in convening a meeting to establish a Capitol Red Guard United Action Committee. Hundreds of TAMS students, including Red Guard members and others who were curious, joined thousands of other middle school students at the meeting. A flier distributed in the name of the loose-knit United Action alliance pledged to defend “the Party organizations at all levels and the outstanding, loyal leading cadres.”<sup>42</sup>

By January 1967, after several months of sharp factional conflict between the Old Red Guards and their rebel opponents, bloodline theory had been de-legitimized and most of the Old Red Guard organizations had collapsed. Unlike their counterparts at other schools, however, the TAMS Red Guards, proud founders of the movement, survived as an organization, although their numbers were reduced.

*Middle school radicals: Attacking political capital and defending cultural capital*

In the late fall of 1966, children of intellectuals at TAMS, emboldened by the success of the new rebel movement hostile to the Old Red Guard, and especially the rebels at neighboring TU (see below), organized their own movement to challenge the domination of their middle school by the Old Red Guard. They took the name of the new TU rebel organization, Jinggangshan (see below), but their political orientation was somewhat different.

Complying with the norms of the Cultural Revolution, the two main leaders of the TAMS Jिंगgangshan rebels had unimpeachable class backgrounds. Both were children of revolutionary cadres; the key leader was the former Red Guard who had been abandoned by her erstwhile comrades after she supported the anti-work team rebels at TU. Nevertheless, the organization belonged to children of the old educated elite who made up virtually its entire social base. TAMS Jिंगgangshan activists, perhaps exaggerating, claim they had the support of 80 percent of the middle school's students when they challenged the Old Red Guards in late 1966.

Making use of the possibilities provided by Mao's attack on "revisionists"<sup>43</sup> and "capitalist roaders in the Party," the new middle school rebels hurled back epithets of privilege at the Old Red Guards. The revolutionary cadres' children had called intellectuals' children the scions of the old elite; now the latter called revolutionary cadres' children the scions of a new elite. They caustically denounced United Action, the loose coalition of Old Red Guards, as defenders of the new privileged strata:

United Action is composed of a group of cadres' children whose outlook has not yet been reformed.... Because they are in an advantageous political and economic position, [their parents], especially those revisionists, try to inculcate in them the idea that they deserve political and life-style privileges in order to train their children to be revisionist sprouts and later take over their positions. [These revisionists] allowed their children to be divorced from labor and from workers and peasants and inculcated in them the idea of being "born Red." They encouraged them to abandon thought reform and efforts to be sincere children of the people; instead they are climbing up above the people and becoming a spiritual aristocracy (*jingshen guizu*). These children are revisionist sprouts; they are the successors of the privileged strata.... All of United Action's actions are intended to maintain the interests of the privileged strata.<sup>44</sup>

Leaders of TAMS Jिंगgangshan and many of its supporters had been denounced by the Old Red Guards just a few months earlier as "royalists" for supporting the school administration. Now styling themselves as the genuine rebels, Jिंगgangshan activists hurled the "royalist" charge back at their adversaries, accusing them of defending the party hierarchy. The rebellion of these new rebels, largely of intellectual origin, was directed against the political hierarchy, not the meritocratic education system or the advantages of cultural capital. "Before we had supported the school leaders," said a rebel activist, recalling that several of the leaders of TAMS Jिंगgangshan had been particularly strong

defenders of the school principal against Red Guard attacks.<sup>45</sup> Even after the school administration fell and was widely denounced for following a “revisionist education line,” a Jinggangshan leader recalled, “we supported changes in education but we were not so violently opposed to the principal and the school leadership.”<sup>46</sup> Despite the fact that the political environment of the Cultural Revolution, defined by Mao’s radical class line politics, was extremely inhospitable to defense of meritocracy, the rebels of intellectual origin at TAMS sympathized with efforts to do so.

A graduate of the prestigious No. 4 Middle School in Beijing named Yu Luoke penned an eloquent condemnation of class line policies, “Origin Theory” (“*Chushen Lun*”), which was printed in a rebel newspaper published by students at the No. 4 Middle School in January 1967 at the height of the campaign to criticize bloodline theory. Yu joined the widespread condemnation of bloodline theory, but he went beyond the mainstream rebel critique, which condemned the claims made by revolutionary cadres’ children regarding their “natural Redness.” Instead of differentiating between bloodline theory and class line, as most rebels were doing, Yu condemned the entire family origin system, which he likened to a caste system. While those of “good” class origin claimed they were discriminated against before the Cultural Revolution, he wrote, they had actually received special treatment. The people who really faced discrimination were those of “bad” class origin, he claimed, providing a host of egregious examples.<sup>47</sup> Yu condemned the entire system of class preferences. “We do not recognize any right,” he wrote, “that cannot be attained through individual effort.”<sup>48</sup>

Over one million copies of Yu’s article were distributed around the country during the winter and spring of 1967 and the article was debated in the pages of Beijing middle school Red Guard newspapers.<sup>49</sup> It was very popular among members of the TAMS radical faction. A leader of the faction, who knew Yu Luoke personally, said that although they could not openly endorse the article for political reasons, “we thought everyone should read it.”<sup>50</sup>

This polarized factional alignment at TAMS was complicated in the winter of 1967 with the emergence of a third, “moderate” faction that called itself the Mao Zedong Thought Red Guards. These students hadn’t joined the attack by the Old Red Guards on cultural capital in June of 1966 and they were reluctant to join the attack by the Jinggang-

shan rebels on political capital later that year. They preferred the status quo. The moderates were, in the words of a former Jinggangshan rebel, “fundamentally royalist.”<sup>51</sup>

While children of intellectuals made up most of the moderate faction, their ranks were joined by children of revolutionary cadres who had abandoned the Old Red Guards after bloodline theory came under widespread disrepute. Thus, the moderate faction might be said to represent the reemergence of the coalition of political and cultural capital previously embodied in the Youth League. Indeed, the moderate faction counted among its activists several members of the former school-wide Youth League committee. The moderates, however, did not play an important role in the conflict at TAMS. Despised as spineless by combatants in the rival Old Red Guards and Jinggangshan alike, they were not very active and their pleas for reconciliation largely fell on deaf ears.

*Middle school factional alignment and collective interests and identities*

Thus, despite the emergence of a moderate faction, TAMS remained largely polarized into the two family origin camps predicted by the competing elites model: On one side, children of the political elite attacked cultural capital and defended political capital while, on the other side, children of the intellectual elite attacked political capital and defended cultural capital. This factional alignment clearly reflected pre-existing collective interests and identities, as the authors of the competing elites model proposed. The hierarchies underlying political and cultural capital not only provided concrete, calculable advantages for children of the political and intellectual elites; they were also imbued with great moral significance. Revolutionary cadres’ children enjoyed distinct advantages provided by their intimate connections to the ruling Party, but even more important, their moral conceptions of the world and their place in it were defined by their understanding of the revolutionary legacy they had inherited. At the same time, the education hierarchy and the examination system not only provided intellectuals’ children with obvious advantages; attacks on these institutions violated fundamental meritocratic conceptions of right and wrong long cherished by Chinese intellectuals. It is quite understandable, therefore, that TAMS students split along the lines they did.

Nevertheless, this polarization of elites was not inevitable. After all, the revolutionary cadres' children at TAMS had, with few exceptions, all tested into the school and had fared well under the meritocratic system. Many of the intellectuals' children had joined the Youth League and even risen to positions of leadership. During the early 1960s, the school administration had been fostering accommodation between members of the old and new elites. This tenuous alliance was strained by the increasing emphasis on class line in the years immediately preceding the Cultural Revolution and then was violently fractured in the spring and summer of 1966 by bloodline theory, the revolutionary cadres' children's interpretation of Mao's class line policies. It was bloodline theory that caused students at TAMS to coalesce around two polarized sets of interests and identities. Even under the conditions of the Cultural Revolution, however, it was not inevitable that students would split into camps that pit political against cultural capital. Students at TU, including many who shared very similar elite backgrounds with TAMS students, divided along significantly different lines.

#### **University factions: Attacking and defending the status quo**

An important reason that the dynamics of the factional conflict at Tsinghua University were different from those at the attached middle school was the large number of university students who came from working class and peasant families. Contrary to the prediction of the competing elites model, working class and peasant students did not simply join factions led by students of elite origins. Instead, they played the decisive role. I argue below that the large-scale participation of students of working class and peasant origin, and the leading role they played, was a key factor in the way battle lines were drawn at the university – where a “radical” faction (*jijin pai*) that *attacked both* political and cultural capital confronted a “moderate” faction (*wenhe pai*) that *defended both*. Before arriving at this factional alignment in the spring of 1967, however, the campus first divided along different lines. The first months of the Cultural Revolution were marked, first, by an offensive against cultural capital led by the party work team and high cadres' children and, then, by an offensive against political capital led by a new rebel movement under the direction of students of working class and peasant origin.

*Challenging the work team*

The work team dispatched by central authorities to take over TU in June 1966 condemned the entire TU administration and the Party and Youth League organizations at the school as instruments of Jiang Nanxiang's "black gang" and its "revisionist education line." Revolutionary cadres' children at the university mobilized early to denounce the university administration and were poised to take the lead in attacking the education establishment, as their counterparts in the TAMS Red Guards had.<sup>52</sup> They, however, never displayed the independent, rebellious spirit of the early middle school Red Guards. Their movement was, from the beginning, more a creature of the work team. Moreover, before they could establish their "rebel" credentials in the struggle against cultural capital, other students challenged the leadership of the work team over the movement, immediately making the political hierarchy the central issue.

Kuai Dafu, author of the first big character poster attacking the work team at TU, was a student of poor peasant origin who was rising rapidly in the political establishment when he chose to take the first fateful step on a path that would make him into its implacable enemy.<sup>53</sup> Soon after the work team arrived in June 1966, Kuai wrote a series of wall posters accusing the work team of trying to control the student movement and of protecting Jiang Nanxiang and other top university cadres by refusing to bring them before mass "criticism and struggle meetings." On June 24, the work team hauled the insubordinate Kuai before a mass criticism meeting, denouncing him as a "counterrevolutionary." Two students, President Liu Shaoqi's daughter, Liu Tao, and Marshall He Long's son, He Pengfei, both future leaders of the Old Red Guard organization at TU, were selected to preside over the meeting. An unrepentant Kuai denounced the work team, winning loud applause from perhaps half of the thousands of students crowded into the school's main auditorium. From that point, the campus was split into two incipient factions, one supporting and one opposing the work team. The central issue became whether the work team, and by extension the party hierarchy, should control the student movement. With the political agenda arranged in this fashion, the high cadres' children were immediately cast in the role of conservatives.

Although the work team was initially able to suppress their critics, after Mao Zedong removed the work team in late July, two contending factions quickly formed. On one side were the Old Red Guards, asso-

ciated with the work team and led by children of high party officials.<sup>54</sup> On the other side was a loose coalition of students opposed to the work team and the high cadres' children. While the TU Old Red Guard was universally regarded as the organization of high cadres' children, it made appeals to a wider group of students on the basis of defending the Party's authority and attacking the old educated elites. They had only limited success, however, in rallying other students behind them. Their harsh class line rhetoric and hostility to meritocratic education traditions alienated students of intellectual origin. At the same time, the Old Red Guards' success in rallying students of working class and peasant origin under the bloodline banner was limited because many of these students had already chosen to oppose the work team and were not inclined to follow the high cadres' children.

The opposition coalition, known as the August 8th faction after the day of its founding rally, united a broad range of students who were alienated by the high-handed practices of the work team and the Old Red Guards it had left in charge of the university. This coalition would later split, but in the autumn of 1966, an opposition activist related, "We *all* didn't like the high cadres' children."<sup>55</sup> Students from lower-level revolutionary cadre families and working class and peasant families led the opposition coalition. At this point, at the height of bloodline theory, it was difficult for children of intellectuals even to speak in meetings. Students of working class and peasant origin, however, had the class credentials to challenge the pretensions of the high cadres' children to leadership over the movement.

In September, Kuai Dafu and several of his associates established their own "fighting group," Jinggangshan, named after the mountain stronghold from which Mao launched his guerrilla strategy in 1927. With the support of radicals in the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group, Jinggangshan became the dominant organization in the opposition camp. On October 6, Jinggangshan together with organizations that had emerged in opposition to the Old Red Guards at other Beijing universities organized a rally attended by some 100,000 people to combat the "bourgeois reactionary line." This rally marked a fundamental shift in the direction of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>56</sup> The "bourgeois reactionary line" referred to repression of students by party authorities, the work teams and the Old Red Guards. This new offensive was, thus, directed against the political hierarchy. Bloodline theory was denounced as a cover for defending political privilege. By mid-December 1966, the Old Red Guard at TU had collapsed and Jing-

gangshan took control of the entire campus. Riding the tide of the movement against the “bourgeois reactionary line,” it had become the most prominent rebel organization in the country.

In December 1966, members of all of the fighting teams that had made up the August 8th coalition had merged with Jinggangshan, but many former August 8th leaders chafed under what they considered the domineering leadership and extremist policies of Kuai Dafu and his comrades, especially their attacks on university and national leaders. In the spring of 1967, they organized a rival “moderate” organization. The Jinggangshan “radicals” became the standard bearers of the Cultural Revolution, demanding radical change, while the “moderates” questioned the goals of the movement and sought to defend the pre-Cultural Revolution status quo. Conflict between the “radical” and “moderate” camps gripped TU for the next fifteen months, growing increasingly violent and finally leading to a “hundred day war” in the spring and summer of 1968.<sup>57</sup>

*University radicals: Attacking both political and cultural capital*

From the beginning, Kuai Dafu was a symbol of resistance to political authority and Jinggangshan’s rise was associated with the offensive against the political hierarchy that began in October 1966. Although Jinggangshan’s main slogan, “thoroughly smash the old Tsinghua,” echoed the radical slogans of the Old Red Guard, none of those involved in the turmoil at Tsinghua would conflate the fundamental goals of the two organizations. The Old Red Guards had attacked the TU administration exclusively as purveyors of the “revisionist education line” and they had particularly targeted older professors with ties to the old regime and the former exploiting classes. They had defended the work team and the wider party organization that it represented. Jinggangshan, in contrast, was known, first and foremost, for challenging the political hierarchy not only at Tsinghua, but also throughout the country. A Jinggangshan leader summed up the organization’s orientation as follows:

Our primary target were those [party leaders] taking the capitalist road.... We thought they were the main source of capitalist restoration. Those who had already been overthrown – the so-called old Rightists, the old intellectuals, the old GMD – they were not the main problem. The problem of restoration came from within the Communist Party’s own ranks, from some of its own leaders.<sup>58</sup>

The Jiang administration, Jinggangshan leaders argued, had established a “bourgeois dictatorship” at Tsinghua in which bureaucratic leaders had monopolized power and suppressed the masses. The national campaign to criticize Liu Shaoqi’s book *How to be a Good Communist* (*Lun gongchandang yuan de xiuyang*) gave Jinggangshan publicists an opening to attack the *modus operandi* of the Party and Youth League at Tsinghua. They claimed that Jiang, like Liu, had encouraged Party and Youth League members to “be obedient tools of the Party (*zuo dang de xunfu gongfu*)” in order to climb up the party hierarchy. Tsinghua cadres had been trained to follow their superiors without question and suppress divergent opinions. The greatest gain of the Cultural Revolution, Jinggangshan declared, was the “destruction of the slave mentality” that had been encouraged by the capitalist roaders in the party leadership. The goal of the revolution was to do away with the existing “system of hierarchy, cadre privileges, the slave mentality, the overlord style of work, the bloated bureaucracy, etc.”<sup>59</sup>

In the view of Jinggangshan leaders, the problems at TU were not isolated. “Those taking the capitalist road,” they wrote, “have captured part of the state machinery in China (and it’s become capitalist state machinery).” What was required, therefore, was “a great revolution in which one class overthrows another.” This was the task of the Cultural Revolution, “an explosion of the long-accumulated class conflict in China” which was fundamentally the same kind of revolution as had taken place in 1949.<sup>60</sup>

Jinggangshan leaders maintained an intransigent attitude toward university cadres in general, contending that almost all had not yet fully broken with “the revisionist merchandise of the old Tsinghua.” Until they had, their self-criticisms could not be accepted and they could not be restored to power.<sup>61</sup> They reserved particular antagonism for the cadres who had graduated from Tsinghua and been retained and cultivated by the school’s party organization, the so-called “Tsinghua-brand cadres.” The vast majority of cadres fell into this category. A Jinggangshan activist explained that his faction opposed the great majority of cadres because they were intellectuals:

Whoever was a cadre, we opposed them – because they were all capitalist roaders in authority. Our faction at Tsinghua only supported one cadre, we felt he came from among the workers and peasants – Han Yinshan.<sup>62</sup> We thought he was OK, the rest were no good.... He didn’t originate from among the intellectual college graduates. Tsinghua University graduates, those people were no good ... they implemented Liu Shaoqi’s capitalist line.

In China, in the whole country, the overwhelming majority of people are workers and peasants, right? Intellectuals are a minority – a very small minority. Intellectuals, even if they are in the Communist Party, even if they are Communist Party cadres and ought to represent the workers, our faction believed that intellectuals couldn't represent the workers, there was no way they could represent the workers and peasants. Only worker/peasant origin cadres could represent them.<sup>63</sup>

Although Jinggangshan was implacably hostile to the party hierarchy at TU, which it described as a thoroughly rotten organization that would have to be rebuilt from scratch, it did not in principle oppose the idea of party leadership. Moreover, Jinggangshan leaders owed their fledgling power to the support they received from the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group. Jinggangshan was a key node in the network of rebel mass organizations that had become the CCRSG's base of support.<sup>64</sup> Although Jinggangshan depended on patrons at the center of the fractured Party, however, it was not part of the party establishment. It arose in opposition to this establishment and was its unyielding adversary.

Unlike their radical allies at TAMS, the Jinggangshan organization at TU did not in any way defend the old education establishment or the prerogatives of cultural capital. They attacked without reservation both the pillars of the status quo at Tsinghua: political loyalty and meritocracy. Kuai Dafu enthusiastically took up the radical agenda set forth by Mao Zedong: the main tasks of the Cultural Revolution, he wrote, were “to discredit and overthrow the authorities taking the capitalist road, to discredit and overthrow the bourgeois academic authorities, and to thoroughly reform the educational system and teaching methods.”<sup>65</sup>

The radical faction at TU did not provide a forum for expressing hostility to class line policies, as the radical faction at TAMS did. While Yu Luo's article opposing the family origin system was widely read and supported by members of the radical faction at the middle school, for instance, few copies reached the university and the university radicals condemned the article as a “big poisonous weed.”<sup>66</sup> Challenges to class line could not gain a foothold at the university.<sup>67</sup> “That kind of idea could not survive in China then,” a radical university activist recalled. “People still remembered the revolution against the landlords, so it just could not get much support.”<sup>68</sup>

Following Mao's lead, Jinggangshan condemned the “revisionist education line” of the “old Tsinghua” for promoting a system of class

differentiation. The national entrance exams and TU admissions policies, Jinggangshan argued, excluded workers' and peasants' children and recruited most students from China's biggest cities, neglecting the countryside and backward and minority areas. Even in big cities, workers were at a disadvantage. Among students recruited from Shanghai, *Jinggangshan* commentators noted, the number of bourgeois origin was twice the number of working class origin. They also denounced the practice of allowing children of high-level cadres in through the "back door."<sup>69</sup>

Jinggangshan proposed changes in university recruitment policies to emphasize class line further. A proposal advanced by a Jinggangshan committee established to study the problem of recruitment suggested that children of worker and peasant origin should make up 65 percent of all students admitted. No more than 5 percent of students should come from the former exploiting classes. Sixty percent of students should be selected through an open process of recommendation by the masses and entrance exams should be thoroughly reformed and only re-introduced in a supplemental role. In addition to these social criteria, they called for political criteria that favored Cultural Revolution radicals. Groups they believed should be barred from study included: children of counterrevolutionaries and capitalist roaders who had not broken with their families; students who had participated in reactionary organizations during the Cultural Revolution and had not reformed themselves; and "bookworms" and others who had not participated in the Cultural Revolution and did not care. The main purpose of universities was, in their view, to produce revolutionary successors.<sup>70</sup>

The "old Tsinghua," Jinggangshan leaders claimed, had been turned into a "breeding ground for capitalist successors." By recruiting students from privileged families, encouraging the isolation of students and teachers from workers and peasants, denigrating productive labor and neglecting political education, they charged, the university was creating "spiritual aristocrats." The hierarchical educational system promoted by Jiang Nanxiang would inevitably produce a class hierarchy. "The 'superior' would get more 'superior' and the 'inferior' would get more 'inferior,'" wrote the radicals, leading to a situation in which the "superior" would become an exploiting class standing above the "inferior" working people.<sup>71</sup>

While the Old Red Guards had particularly targeted the "old bourgeois intellectuals," the well-paid senior professors educated before

1949, the Jingtangshan radicals were more concerned about the emergence of a generation of “new bourgeois intellectuals.” The latter included post-1949 Tsinghua graduates who had been hired as teachers and cadres at the university. Mainly from non-laboring families, these “new bourgeois intellectuals,” Jingtangshan leaders maintained, had developed a bourgeois worldview due to Tsinghua’s elitist policies. They were actually more dangerous than the “old bourgeois intellectuals” because, unlike most of the former, many of them enjoyed the legitimacy and power associated with the Party.

Most of them have the outside appearance of being “red and expert,” some are also party members and have cadre titles, so they are adept at misusing the Party’s name to promote revisionist garbage; they have political capital and prestige and most things have to go through them to get done.<sup>72</sup>

Thus, this new generation was of particular concern to Jingtangshan leaders because they *combined* cultural and political capital. They were the main social base of the Jiang administration, Jingtangshan leaders charged, and had become part of a “privileged stratum” at the university that also included top university officials and sections of the old bourgeois intellectuals. The TU Party Committee, they wrote, “was certainly not the vanguard of the proletariat, but rather the agent of the new bourgeois intellectuals.”<sup>73</sup>

*University moderates: Defending both political and cultural capital*

The collapse of the Old Red Guards at the end of 1966 opened the way for the emergence of a new coalition to defend the status quo with a broader social base than bloodline politics had allowed. The Old Red Guards, led by children of high party officials, had defended the political hierarchy, protecting the authority of the Party, the work team, and veteran cadres. They had not defended the TU party organization, however, because they did not want to be tainted by association with Jiang Nanxiang’s “black gang” and the education establishment. The Old Red Guards denounced anyone suspected of supporting the old administration as “royalists.” They had, therefore, alienated many TU Party and Youth League members, particularly those of intellectual origin who made up a large part of both organizations. The moderate faction that emerged in the spring of 1967, in contrast, defended the embattled TU establishment. It represented an informal resurrection of the Party and Youth League organization at the school and the coalition of political and cultural capital that it embodied.

In March 1967, *Red Flag*, the most authoritative central party journal, published a key statement that called for the rehabilitation of most cadres.<sup>74</sup> Leading members of Jinggangshan responded by posting a big character poster that criticized the *Red Flag* article and hardened the radical position against rehabilitation. At that point, a number of former leaders of the August 8th faction decided to break openly with the radical leadership. A leader of the split, who had previously supported Kuai when he stood up to the work team, explained that after TU radical student leaders wrote the big character poster criticizing the *Red Flag* article, students began to sort out the issues of the Cultural Revolution for themselves.

I believe it was at that point that people in the rebel camp started to develop their own independent thinking. Before everyone just wanted to be revolutionaries, but they really didn't have their own thinking. After that incident [the poster], people began to think about what the Cultural Revolution was really all about. The central questions were: First, was Tsinghua under bourgeois or proletarian dictatorship? The second question was: were most cadres good or bad? Should they be overthrown or not?<sup>75</sup>

On April 14, 1967, the more moderate student leaders organized a meeting to demand that Jinggangshan rehabilitate university cadres. Participants included not only former members of the August 8th anti-work team opposition, but also many of their former opponents in the Old Red Guards. The meeting launched a new organization, popularly known as the April 14th faction, which soon grew to rival Jinggangshan in size.<sup>76</sup>

Those who rallied to the April 14th banner opposed Jinggangshan's wholesale condemnation of the leadership and policies of the "old Tsinghua." During the 17 years before the Cultural Revolution, they argued, mistakes may have been made, but the dominant line was always correct. April 14th leaders urged students to "courageously protect, enthusiastically help, and boldly employ" cadres who had made mistakes. "They have rich experience in revolutionary struggle, they have the ability to hold power for a proletarian country and understand how to manage and run academic activities," they declared in a front-page editorial in one of the first issues of their newspaper. "We must have the proletarian revolutionary guts to defend them." Former upper level cadres, they argued, should be allowed to join the movement and, in fact, should become the backbone of the Cultural Revolution. With individual exceptions, even the top leaders who had been deemed to be "capitalist roaders" should be rehabilitated as long

as they were willing to change. “We should drag them out from under the bed, give them work and let them make up for their mistakes.”<sup>77</sup> The former leaders, they contended, were more capable of running the university than radical students who only knew how to shout about tearing things down.

The April 14th faction’s newspaper, of course, also condemned the Tsinghua’s “revisionist education line,” in line with the general orientation of the Cultural Revolution established by Mao. Its defense of the Tsinghua establishment, however, clearly relayed another underling message. “We thought the education line that Tsinghua had carried out was mostly good,” said an April 14th activist.<sup>78</sup> “We didn’t dare say the old education system was good, but we thought part was good and you should reform the other part,” said another activist. “You shouldn’t just overthrow everything; the old intellectuals and cadres have a role to play.... So we protected the cadres, the teachers and the intellectuals.”<sup>79</sup> April 14th leaders did not agree that intellectuals trained since 1949 could be considered “new bourgeois intellectuals.”<sup>80</sup> The teachers and cadres being denounced by Jinggangshan as “new bourgeois intellectuals,” said an April 14th activist, were, after all, “educated by the proletariat.”<sup>81</sup>

April 14th leaders opposed Jinggangshan’s contention that a new privileged stratum was emerging in China. The “capitalist roaders in the Party” were dangerous because they represented the old overthrown exploiting classes, not because they represented a new privileged stratum. Jinggangshan’s “ultra-leftist” talk about a “new privileged stratum” and about “one class overthrowing another,” April 14th leaders charged, would only open the back door for the old exploiting classes to come back to power.<sup>82</sup>

The key practical issue at stake in the factional fighting was selecting former party cadres to rehabilitate and bring into a new administration. While the Jinggangshan radicals only supported a handful of previously marginalized “worker-peasant” cadres, the April 14th moderates demanded the rehabilitation of the vast majority of the “Tsinghua-brand cadres.” The debate between the two organizations came to focus on two young former high-level cadres who were active supporters of the April 14th faction. Lu Yinzhong was director of the school’s experimental nuclear reactor and Jiang Nanxiang had held him up as a model “red and expert” leader. Luo Zhengqi was the deputy head of propaganda for the school Party Committee. Both had come from old

elite families, had graduated from Tsinghua in the 1950s, and had rapidly climbed up the university party hierarchy. They were quintessential “Tsinghua-brand” cadres. For Jingtangshan they were representatives of the new privileged stratum taking the capitalist road who should be overthrown; for April 14th they were stalwarts of the socialist order who should be part of the core of the new university leadership.

### **Leadership and membership of the university factions**

#### *Peasants' and workers' children as leaders*

In contrast to the factions at TAMS, where leadership was in the hands of children of revolutionary cadres or intellectuals, at TU the leaders of both the radical and moderate factions were children of peasants and workers. Li Huan, the daughter of a research engineer, was a student at TAMS when the Cultural Revolution broke out, but she gravitated to the more sophisticated political environment at neighboring TU and became very active in the moderate university faction. Her experience gave her a unique perspective from which to evaluate the differences in the factional leadership at both schools. She explained why she thought children of cadres and intellectuals led the opposing factions at TAMS while children of workers and peasants led the opposing factions at TU:

At Tsinghua [University], there were a lot of worker and peasant kids, especially a lot who came from the south. In the schools they came from they were among the proud, the best, they were the ones who were student leaders, who studied well, that kind of people. The kind who could test into Tsinghua, they had self-confidence, so they wouldn't just follow the cadre kids. It was different than at Tsinghua Attached Middle School. The worker and peasant kids at the middle school trailed behind, they never – or very seldom – were in important positions in class; it was either cadre kids or intellectuals. But in Tsinghua [University] it was different.... The leading figures [in both factions] were not cadre kids ... most of them were that kind of very poor people from the village.<sup>83</sup>

Not only were there students of working class and peasant origin at TU who were prepared to lead student fighting groups, after the political turn in the fall of 1966 they were in the best political position to claim leadership positions. The children of high-level revolutionary cadres who had played a leading role in the Old Red Guards had been discredited and largely dropped out of political activity after their

parents came under attack and their own bloodline theory was denounced. Many children of lower-level revolutionary cadres continued to participate, but with the party hierarchy being questioned in an unprecedented way, their parentage no longer provided special qualification for leadership. While theories of “natural Redness” had been discredited, however, Cultural Revolution norms still expected that students of good (proletarian) class origin would lead the movement. This norm was reinforced by the fact that placing students of less-than-good family origin in prominent positions would subject not only the organization, but also the individual, to attack. “If you had a good background, it would help you stand up and be active,” said a Jinggangshan activist who got involved despite his bad background. “It was very dangerous to be against another group, you might get in trouble sooner or later, especially if your family background was not good, so many people did not want to be a leader.”<sup>84</sup>

Under these conditions, the leadership bodies of both the radical and moderate factions at the university were completely dominated by students of peasant and working class origin. Tables 5 and 6 list the top leaders of both factions along with their family origins and whether they had joined the Party before the Cultural Revolution.<sup>85</sup> The backgrounds of the two leading adversaries, Kuai Dafu of Jinggangshan and Shen Ruhuai of April 14th, were very similar. Both came from poor peasant families and had been accomplished activists in the political establishment at TU before the Cultural Revolution.

Kuai’s key lieutenants were all of worker or peasant origin. Chen Yuyan, the one member of Jinggangshan’s Headquarters’ Committee of revolutionary cadre origin, had been a leader of the August 8th faction but, according to Jinggangshan activists, he had more moderate views and enjoyed relatively little influence in Kuai’s organization. Students of worker and peasant origin also dominated the Standing Committee of the April 14th faction, although the two members from revolutionary cadres’ families, Ji Peng and Chen Chusan, were also influential.

There were students of old elite family origin, however, who played important roles in both organizations behind the scenes. A student of bourgeois origin named Meng Jiaju was a classmate and close confidant of Kuai Dafu, at least during the first part of the conflict. Radical activists surmised that Meng might have become a formal leader had his family origin been better. Another student whose family

Table 5. Leadership of the Jिंगgangshan (radical) faction at Tsinghua University

Leader	Family origin	Party member	Occupation
Kuai Dafu	Peasant	No	Student
Bao Changkang	Worker	No	Student
Ma Xiaozhuang	Peasant	Yes	Student
Liu Caitang	Peasant	No	Student
Chen Jifang	Worker	Yes	Student
Ren Chuanzhong	Worker	No	Student
Chen Yuyan	Revolutionary Cadre	Yes	Student
Wang Liangsheng	Peasant	No	Student
Cui Zhaoxi	Worker	No	Student
Han Yinshan	Peasant	Yes	University cadre

origin was less-than-good, Sun Yun, was in charge of investigating Jिंगgangshan's opponents. Zhou Quanying, the son of a high Nationalist Party official, was perhaps the April 14th faction's most important propagandist.<sup>86</sup>

Many of the leaders of both organizations had been active in the Tsinghua political establishment before the Cultural Revolution and several of them were already party members, a significant accomplishment for a college student. Nevertheless, these were not the typical "obedient and productive" activists cultivated by the Tsinghua Party and Youth League organizations. Even the leaders of the moderate faction had, at considerable risk, challenged the work team in the summer of 1966. Both factions selected members of their leadership bodies from among leaders of the most influential "fighting groups" on campus, who, by temperament, were not simply subservient "organization men."

The two organizations differed significantly in the extent to which they encouraged and depended on the support of Tsinghua cadres. An April 14th activist explained that university cadres were the "backbone" of the organization.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, former university officials played key roles in the formation of the April 14th faction. Luo Zhengqi, deputy head of propaganda for the Tsinghua Party Committee and editor of the school newspaper before the Cultural Revolution, played an important role in formulating the moderate platform and he helped write key political statements for the April 14th organization. Both Luo and Tan Haoqiang, deputy head of the school committee to the Youth League,

Table 6. Leadership of the April 14th (moderate) faction at Tsinghua University

Leader	Family origin	Party member	Occupation
Shen Ruhuai	Peasant	Yes	Student
Sun Nutao	Worker	No	Student
Chen Chusan	Revolutionary cadre	Yes	Student
Liu Wanzhang	Worker	No	Student
Ji Peng	Revolutionary cadre	Yes	Student
Su Changzhong	Peasant	No	Student
Zhang Xuemei	Worker	No	Student
Jiang Nanfeng	?	No	Student
Ren Yanshen	Peasant	No	Student
Li Xiufu	Intellectual	?	Teacher
Fu Zhengtai	Capitalist	?	Teacher
Tan Haoqiang	Intellectual	Yes	Teacher and cadre

were actively involved in the confrontations over cadre rehabilitation that precipitated the split in Jinggangshan in April 1967.<sup>88</sup> After the April 14th group formalized its separate existence, 150 university cadres published an open letter supporting the new organization.<sup>89</sup> “Most lower and middle-level cadres either participated in April 14th or sympathized with us,” a former April 14th leader declared.<sup>90</sup> Tan Haoqiang was invited to join the April 14th faction’s leadership, as were two teachers who were leaders of faculty “fighting groups.”

In contrast, Jinggangshan had staked out a position hostile toward the Tsinghua bureaucracy and, not surprisingly, it had much more limited support among university cadres. The university party organization had been monolithically loyal to Jiang Nanxiang before 1966 and only a small minority of party cadres sided with the insurgent Jinggangshan in 1967. Most of them were outsiders – “worker/peasant cadres” or demobilized soldiers who had been marginalized by the university party organization. Several top university officials formally endorsed Jinggangshan, but radical and moderate activists alike considered these endorsements no more than calculated moves to mitigate criticism as “capitalist roaders.” There were a few important university and department level cadres whom Jinggangshan activists considered to have genuinely repudiated the “revisionist education line” and accepted the ideas of the Cultural Revolution, but even these cadres were kept at a distance. The only cadre invited to join Jinggangshan’s Headquarters Committee was Han Yinshan, a peasant-origin veteran revolutionary

who had lost his position on the school party committee in the 1950s. No teachers were invited to join the Headquarters Committee.

### *Choosing sides*

TU students did not split along family origin lines. The former university students interviewed all agreed that both the radical and moderate camps counted among their supporters substantial numbers of students of working class, peasant, and intellectual origin. Small numbers of students from revolutionary cadre or exploiting class families could also be found on both sides.

In this article, I concentrate on analyzing the evolution of the lines of confrontation, contrasting the political positions of the contending factions. I have not and will not attempt to analyze systematically all the various reasons why individual students chose to stand on one side or the other. Nevertheless, because it is pertinent to understanding the class issues at the heart of this article, I do examine one aspect of this process: the ways students' positions in the hierarchies of political and cultural capital influenced their decisions to support one faction or the other.

Students' reasons for choosing sides were complicated, involving a mix of internalized social dispositions, evolving ideological commitments, individual ties and antagonisms, psychological temperament, and personal ambitions and fears. Students' individual positions in the hierarchies of political and cultural capital (and the internalized dispositions, durable identities, and calculation of interests connected with these positions) were only one among a number of factors that influenced their decision. Moreover, as I discuss below, their positions in either of these hierarchies often did not provide clear-cut guidance in making this choice.

### *Mobilizing discontent*

All students at TU had already "made it." They were all guaranteed positions at the top of Chinese society. Even students from poor illiterate rural families were now far from their social origins. They had overcome daunting odds to climb up the examination ladder to the very top. Even though their unrefined ways still identified them as

newcomers, simply calculating their individual interests, they had every reason to support the cultural hierarchy and to embrace its meritocratic ideology. Moreover, students of working class and peasant origin had somewhat privileged access to climb the political hierarchy. It should not be surprising, therefore, that many workers' and peasants' children supported the moderate faction.

From the perspective of individual interests, in fact, it is difficult to explain why any Tsinghua students would want to “thoroughly smash the old Tsinghua” and everything that it stood for. The explicit goal of the Cultural Revolution was to undermine the privileged position of the educated elite, including Tsinghua students, and eliminate the social distance between them and the masses of workers and peasants. A leader of the radical faction, himself from a poor peasant family, explained:

The way we understood Mao Zedong's basic aim – he wanted us students to be common people (*pingmin*), he wanted us to unite with the workers and peasants, not to be spiritual aristocrats isolated from the masses. We had come out of this environment; we had been separated from the workers and peasants for such a long time, so to try to represent their interests was very difficult. On this point we really believed Mao Zedong. We saw that we had become isolated from the workers and peasants, from the people, that we should go back to the workers and peasants, to unite with them.<sup>91</sup>

He recalled, however, that it was very difficult to get Tsinghua students to repudiate their elite status and the ideas and institutions underlying it:

To get someone to completely negate (*fouling*) himself is not easy. It was very difficult for students to admit they were spiritual aristocrats. The students were tied intimately to the old Tsinghua. We were ivory tower spiritual aristocrats. We had been trained as this kind of spiritual aristocrats, so to criticize the place that had trained you was very difficult.<sup>92</sup>

Jinggangshan could not convince students at an elite university to support their radical interpretation of the Cultural Revolution agenda simply by appealing to students' individual interests and identities as they were structured by the existing order. They had to appeal to discontent with the existing system and reinforce this discontent with a vision of a more democratic and egalitarian society. In making this appeal, the radicals styled themselves as champions of the lower strata of society. Following this understanding of the conflict, a leader of the radical camp presented a simple class analysis of factional alignment at TU:

More of those from the lower levels, children of common people supported us. Those from higher levels – mid-level and above cadres, high-level white-collar employees, including those from Tsinghua – their children supported them. Generally speaking, those from families who had a little more education, who had higher education, they would tend to support them, of course.<sup>93</sup>

Factional alignment at TU was not this simple, as I have noted. Nevertheless, there was agreement among many former students that the radicals enjoyed particular support among students from two social groups with stronger reasons to be discontented with the status quo – peasants and those of “bad” family origin (the former exploiting classes and the politically suspect), providing the radicals with supporters originating at the bottom and at the very top of the cultural capital hierarchy. An activist in the moderate faction linked Jingtangshan’s extreme political positions with the class backgrounds of its adherents. While the moderate faction had more students from the “ordinary” (largely urban educated) classes, he said, Jingtangshan “had more of the two extremes – very bad family background and extremely good.” Among those of “extremely good” background, he referred particularly to students of poor peasant origin, linking their radicalism to their families’ economic and social conditions. Unlike many of the urban students who came from relatively comfortable homes, many of the peasants who had arrived at Tsinghua over the last several years, he said sympathetically, came from very poor families. Many had no money except for the minimal stipend provided by the university and could not even afford to buy underwear.<sup>94</sup>

Many of the peasant-origin students I interviewed recalled the awe they felt when they first arrived at the Tsinghua campus in Beijing. They were all acutely aware of the tremendous social distance that separated their new life from that in the village. This common awareness, however, did not necessarily lead peasant-origin students either to the radical or the moderate camp during the Cultural Revolution. Some of them supported the status quo, grateful to the system that had given them the opportunity to study at the university, while others responded to the radicals’ rhetoric denouncing social injustice and inequality.<sup>95</sup>

Many former students agreed that more students of “bad” family origin supported Jingtangshan than supported April 14th. While most of these students stayed on the sidelines, acutely aware of their vulnerability, some enthusiastically joined Jingtangshan’s attack on the polit-

ical hierarchy that had excluded or persecuted them because of their family origin. “I worked so hard,” said one student of “bad” family origin, “but they didn’t allow me to join the Communist Youth League.” He sympathized with Jinggangshan, he explained, because “I just didn’t like the cadres, I didn’t like the system.”<sup>96</sup>

Because students from old educated elite families had less reason than peasant-origin students to identify with Cultural Revolution promises to level the hierarchy of cultural capital, the key motivation that led many of them to join the radicals was hostility to the political hierarchy. Such hostility, however, was not limited to students from old educated elite families. Jinggangshan clearly drew its strength from widespread discontent, among students of diverse social origin, with the stifling system of political control, the distribution of opportunities based on political loyalty, and the privileges enjoyed by top officials.

*Defense of political and cultural capital as bases of conservatism*

The moderate coalition garnered support among students who were not inclined to favor attacks on the status quo. Support for the status quo meant, first and foremost, support for the existing political hierarchy, which was under attack and was mobilizing to defend itself. An April 14th sympathizer recalled:

Jinggangshan was more radical. They supported the Central Cultural Revolution Small Group to oppose almost all the communist officials; they wanted to have a big change – down with this guy, down with that guy, down with as many as you want, including all the officials in Tsinghua University. And the ... April 14th people, many of them were more conservative, not so radical.<sup>97</sup>

When I asked interviewees what distinguished students who supported the moderates from those who supported the radicals, by far the most common answer was that those who had strong connections with the Party and Youth League hierarchy tended to support the moderates. “Ninety five percent of party members, league cadres and class cadres supported us,” an April 14th leader proudly claimed.<sup>98</sup> This estimate probably exaggerates the true proportion, but there was wide agreement among former students that league cadres and party members were a key base of support for the April 14th faction. A leader of the radical faction offered this explanation:

Party members at Tsinghua were favored (*de chong*), they were relied on (*zhong yong*), they had lots of opportunities, they were the base of Jiang Nanxiang's rule at Tsinghua. The ones who were recruited into the Party were the kind who were most obedient. They had a bright future. So it's not at all surprising that they would support restoring the old Tsinghua. That's what April 14th wanted to do.<sup>99</sup>

In other words, accumulation of and identification with political capital provided a powerful reason to support the moderates. The reasons some former students gave for joining the moderate camp, however, show that a disposition to defend meritocratic education policies was also an important motivation for protecting the status quo. The experience of one student provides an anecdotal description of how Jinggangshan's radical attacks on the education establishment drove intellectual-origin students into the April 14th camp. Li Weizhang, the son of a teacher, had won a leadership position in the Youth League before the Cultural Revolution in part because of his academic success.<sup>100</sup> He admired his professors and President Jiang Nanxiang; he was shocked when the work team removed Jiang. He was further alienated from the work team and the Old Red Guards because of their anti-democratic methods and their increasing stress on class background. There was little room for him and little support for meritocratic values in the bloodline camp. In the summer and fall of 1966, he even sympathized with Kuai Dafu because Kuai championed "big democracy." The "extreme class line" promoted by Kuai and the radicals, however, increasingly alienated Li. He gravitated to the April 14th faction because, unlike Jinggangshan, it was "not too extreme against the school officials." He saw the moderate faction as the natural home for students from intellectual family backgrounds:

I think normally that people that used to feel comfortable [with Jiang Nanxiang] before the Cultural Revolution naturally tended to the April 14th faction.... [By comfortable] I mean they used to get good academic achievement, or they used to be a member of the Youth League leadership, or they have a good relationship with the department leadership. [Jiang] said, "Everyone is equal under grades," so that's why people with my background felt comfortable with that emotionally.<sup>101</sup>

In Li's understanding, possession of political capital (leadership in the Youth League and a good relationship with the department leadership) motivated students to support the moderates and, as a Youth League leader, he had accumulated a certain amount of political capital. Possession of cultural capital, however, also motivated students to support the moderates. He and other students from intellectual backgrounds

defended the “old Tsinghua,” he explained, precisely because they appreciated Jiang’s meritocratic policies.

Wang Jiahong, another student of intellectual origin whose political credentials were much weaker than Li’s, confirmed this. His parents were both highly paid professors at the prestigious Peking University and both endured harrowing criticism and punishment during the Cultural Revolution. His father’s Harvard education cast a shadow over Wang’s own future; he was the last student in his class to be admitted to the Youth League. In 1966, he was a more enthusiastic rebel than Li, relishing the chance to weaken the system of political control at the university. Nevertheless, like Li, he joined the moderate April 14th faction in 1967. The main difference between the two factions, Wang figured, was their attitude towards Jiang Nanxiang’s policies. “Jinggangshan took a much more radical attitude towards everything Jiang Nanxiang had said prior to the Cultural Revolution,” he recalled. “Their slogan was ‘Smash to the ground everything of the old Tsinghua.’” In contrast, “April 14th would preserve more of Jiang Nanxiang’s policies.”

[Jiang’s] class line was more moderate than the other. Because he had been dealing with educated people, intellectuals, and he knew in order to achieve something academically or in the economy or construction you need knowledge and a lot of the people at that time who possessed the knowledge ... were not from the correct background. So if you deny these people the opportunity to serve your regime, then you lose the knowledge.... In his policy, if you are academically outstanding and your family was not bad enough not to dare to admit you, then when he took you in he would give you the proper conditions for you to academically achieve something.<sup>102</sup>

Wang resented Jiang’s rigid political control and the discrimination he encountered in trying to enter the Youth League. His reason for joining the April 14th faction was certainly not to defend the political regime at the university. But he found Jiang’s meritocratic policies more palatable than Jinggangshan’s radical attacks on the “old Tsinghua.”

Chen Xiaogang, a leader of the April 14th faction who was the son of a low-level revolutionary cadre, claimed that the majority of students from intellectual backgrounds supported the April 14th faction. “That very much has to do with the mild, moderate position of April 14th overall,” he figured.<sup>103</sup> Chen echoed a view expressed by other April 14th activists – that students from intellectual families were a key part of the social base of the moderate faction. These students were the largest group in the university; they came from relatively comfortable

homes, did well academically, and were integrated, to one extent or another, into the political hierarchy. All of this helped dispose many of them to defend the “old Tsinghua.”

In the factional alignment that developed at TU, to defend cultural capital was to defend political capital and vice versa. Both had been pillars of Jiang Nanxiang’s “old Tsinghua,” and the moderate faction that emerged to protect the status quo defended both. All students, regardless of the position of their own families in the hierarchies of political and cultural capital, were accumulating these assets at the university. It is not surprising therefore that the social base of the moderate faction was broad, including students of intellectual, working class, peasant, and revolutionary cadre origin.

### **Discussion**

My aim in this article has been to make sense of very complicated student factional conflicts, drawing out key lines of political confrontation that defined the contending factions. I have analyzed the factional debates in relation to the two outstanding hierarchies of class differentiation that were emerging in post-revolutionary China: political and cultural capital. I have shown how battle lines at both schools were drawn in relation to political and cultural capital, producing four political tendencies that can be defined by their stands towards these axes of contention:

1. Attacking cultural capital and defending political capital.
2. Attacking political capital and defending cultural capital.
3. Attacking both political and cultural capital.
4. Defending both political and cultural capital.

The first two tendencies were embodied in the main contending factions at TAMS, while the last two tendencies were embodied in the factions that ultimately faced each other at TU. While TAMS students polarized according to family origin, with children of revolutionary cadres confronting children of intellectuals, TU students did not split along family origin lines. The factional alignment at TAMS, pitting political against cultural capital, conformed to the competing elites model developed by Chan, Rosen, and Unger in their analysis of elite middle schools in Guangzhou. The political battle lines drawn at TU, however, cannot be explained within the confines of the competing

elites model, in which political and cultural capital are locked in mutual opposition. The radical faction at the university attacked the political hierarchy with passion, but they made cultural capital their target as well, while the moderate faction, in protecting the “old Tsinghua,” became a defender of both. In a society in which cultural capital remained a central mechanism of stratification, affinity for cultural capital offered reasons to defend the status quo rather than join a rebellion that promised to destroy the cultural hierarchy.

Why were the battle lines drawn differently at the middle school and the university? I have argued that distinct class composition at the two schools was a decisive factor. This is not to say that the political positions supported by individual students were completely determined by their family origin; this was emphatically *not* the case at TU. Nevertheless, the presence of a large number of students of working class and peasant origin at TU completely changed the factional dynamics and made the distinctive alignment at the university possible.

Mao Zedong’s program for the Cultural Revolution included attacking both China’s cultural and political hierarchies. The revolutionary cadres’ children at TAMS enthusiastically responded to Mao’s call to attack cultural capital, creating their own interpretation in bloodline theory. This theory polarized the student body, which was made up almost exclusively of children of the political and intellectual elites, along family origin lines. Constituted in this way, neither of the two main factions at TAMS could embrace Mao’s entire program. An organization made up almost entirely of cadres’ children, like the Old Red Guards, could not possibly fully embrace an assault on the political hierarchy, while an organization composed almost entirely of intellectuals’ children, like the middle school radicals, could not possibly fully embrace an assault on the cultural hierarchy. Bloodline theory produced factions so strongly defined by elite family origin that neither could easily violate principles so dear to their collective interests and identities. And within such a polarized environment, there was little room for a moderate faction that would defend both the political and cultural hierarchies.

Bloodline theory could not completely polarize TU students, as it did students at the middle school, because working class and peasant students at the university were neither completely accepted (as revolutionary cadres’ children were) not completely excluded (as intellectuals’ children were) by its propositions. Instead of indelibly defining the

battle lines at the university, bloodline theory, which focused fire on cultural capital and the old elites, was soon displaced by the radical agenda targeting both cultural and political hierarchies.

Because the radical faction at TU was led by children of workers and peasants and supported by students of diverse social origins, it was not collectively defined by family origin and was not bound to the collective interests and identities of either the political or intellectual elites. This made it possible for the radicals to embrace Mao's radical agenda against both the political and cultural hierarchies. The radicals' stand called into being an adversary that defended both. In the spring of 1967, with the battle lines redrawn in this fashion, individual students chose sides. The choice was not whether to attack political or cultural capital, as it was at TAMS, but rather whether to attack both or defend both. This opened the way for the restoration of a fledgling alliance of political and cultural capital. Facing a radical challenge to both, many students, including children of both the political and intellectual elites, found substantial grounds to unite in defense of the status quo.

*The Cultural Revolution and the coalescence of political and cultural elites*

Although the conflict at TU was not a struggle *between* classes, in the sense that one class lined up against another, it was nevertheless a struggle *about* class. At stake was the fate of the communist project to eliminate class distinctions and the shape of the institutional foundations of the emerging post-revolutionary class order. At the beginning of this paper, I suggested that, before communist parties could embrace the technocratic project described by Konrad and Szelenyi, they had to abandon their commitment to eliminating class distinctions. The new political elite, largely of proletarian origin, had to reconcile with the old educated elite, largely from the former propertied classes – a contentious process in which the communist party was transformed from an antagonist into a champion of cultural capital. In China, the Cultural Revolution was a decisive moment in the convergence of the new political elite and the old educated elite. In the factional conflicts at TAMS and TU we can see both the inter-elite antagonism and affinity that characterized this tumultuous process.

When Mao Zedong encouraged attacks on political and intellectual elites in 1966, one result was an explosion of mutual antagonisms

between members of these contending elites. Existing fractures within the elite coalition in the educational establishment were split wide open, and the school Party and Youth League organizations, which had embodied this tenuous coalition, collapsed. The rival elite camps produced by bloodline politics at TAMS were a dramatic manifestation of this split. On the other hand, the moderate coalition that emerged at Tsinghua University in opposition to the radical assault on the existing order was a new incarnation of the tenuous coalition of political and cultural capital in elite schools. Looking beyond the temporal confines of this study, the moderate coalition also presaged the consummation of the convergence of the political and cultural elites, which could only take place after the Cultural Revolution was repudiated a decade later.

Following the suppression of factional fighting at Tsinghua and around the country in 1968,<sup>104</sup> Mao imposed eight years of radical class line education policies and harsh controls on both political and intellectual elites. The academic hierarchy of middle schools in urban areas was leveled. Elite college preparation schools and special schools for the children of revolutionary cadres were turned into ordinary neighborhood schools; as a result, TAMS opened its doors to children from the neighboring villages. At the same time, primary and middle school education in rural areas was rapidly expanded. The college entrance examination was eliminated; middle school graduates were assigned to work units and a few were later sent to Tsinghua and other universities on the recommendation of their unit. The university cohorts in the first half of the 1970s were made up of these “worker-peasant-soldier” students. Reflecting Mao’s concerns about the emergence of a new “spiritual aristocracy,” curricula stressed practical application and manual labor in factories and farms.<sup>105</sup>

Cultural Revolution education policies were the apogee of communist efforts to level the hierarchy of cultural capital. The repudiation of the Cultural Revolution after Mao’s death in 1976 represented the unequivocal affirmation of the prerogatives of cultural capital and was followed by the systematic reconstruction of the educational hierarchy on which cultural capital was based. Class line policies and the family origin system were abolished, and entrance examinations were re-established at all levels in a new high tide of meritocracy. University funding was increased and elite college preparation middle schools were re-established. Many other middle schools, judged to be substandard, were shut down, and middle school enrollment declined sharply,

especially in rural areas. Finally, in a series of steps, tuition was increased sharply, further restricting access to cultural capital.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, education was emphasized as a criterion for admission into the Party and recruitment drives targeted intellectuals.<sup>107</sup> Conflicts between political and intellectual elites would continue, but the Communist Party had determined to make peace with cultural capital.

Over the decades following the 1949 Revolution, the capital structures of two quite distinct elites had substantially converged. In the 1950s, a band of peasant revolutionaries with newly acquired political power and a self-imposed mandate to level the existing class structure faced an old intellectual elite, who claimed the keys to both China's traditional high culture and modern technology. After three tumultuous decades, children of the peasant revolutionaries had established their own educational credentials, while children of the old intellectual elite were free to pursue political careers. Both had privileged access to elite schools that dispensed the educational and political credentials essential to pursue both professional and political careers. The claims of political and cultural capital on privileged positions had been firmly established along with the credentials that verified individual possession of these key class resources. Institutions had been created to systematize the means of attaining these political and cultural credentials, regulate the conversion of one into the other, and provide for their transfer across generations.

These fledgling institutions came under severe attack during the Cultural Revolution, but they weathered the storm and emerged with a new mission unencumbered by the language of class warfare. The new political and old educated elites found unprecedented unity in condemning the radical egalitarianism and turbulence of the Cultural Revolution. Thus, the violence of the Cultural Revolution can ultimately be seen as a key turning point in a protracted process that transformed two quite distinct elites into a "new class." By the 1980s, the uneasy marriage of political and cultural elites had given birth to a class that resembled the emerging political technocracy, with all of its internal contradictions, described by Konrad and Szelenyi.<sup>108</sup>

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## Notes

1. Djilas's *The New Class* was an influential exposition of this common understanding of the socialist order. Djilas portrayed a band of proletarian revolutionaries tearing down the existing class order and perching on top of society, their class positions derived exclusively from political power. Milovan Djilas, *The New Class* (New York: Praeger, 1957).
2. See Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen and Jonathan Unger, "Students and Class Warfare: The Roots of the Red Guard Conflict in Guangzhou," *China Quarterly* 3 (1980): 397–446; Hong Yung Lee, *The Politics of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: A Case Study* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Gordon White, "The Politics of Class and Class Origin: The Case of the Cultural Revolution," *Contemporary China Papers Number 9* (Canberra, Australia: Australian National University, 1976); and Hongbiao Yin, "Kangzhengzhe de Chongtu: Yu Luoke yu Lian-dong de Lunzheng." (Clash of Protesters: "The Theoretical Struggle Between Yu Luoke and United Action") *Zhongguo Qingnian Yanjiu (Chinese Youth Research)* 5 (1997): 30–3.
3. See Yongyi Song and Dajin Sun, *Wenhua Da Geming he ta de Yiduan Sichao (Heterodox Thinking During the Cultural Revolution)* (Hong Kong: Tianyuan Bookhouse, 1996): 365; and Shaojie Tang, "Qinghua Jingtangshan Bingtuan de Xingshuai" ("The Rise and Fall of Tsinghua Jingtangshan Regiment"), in Liu Qingfeng, editor, *Wenhua Da Geming: Shishi yu Yanjiu (Cultural Revolution: Facts and Analysis)* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1996), 49.
4. Individual recollections, particularly after several decades of profound social change, must be treated with caution. The accounts provided by former students reflected their particular vantage points at the time and have been filtered by thirty years of history and new conceptual understandings. It was essential to hear many different accounts of the same events and to hear from students from different backgrounds and from students who had participated in all of the different factions. The accounts that remained most partisan were particularly helpful in recreating the contending sides. I was able to corroborate and contextualize individual students' accounts, and adjudicate between conflicting accounts, by comparing them to one another, as well as to newspaper and other textual accounts produced at the time and memoirs written by former students and administrators. Characteristics of the former students interviewed are provided in an appendix.
5. The two newspapers were: *Jingtangshan*, published from December 1966 to August 1968 by TU Jingtangshan Regiment (the "radical" faction), and *Jingtangshan Bao*, published from June 1967 to April 1968 by TU Jingtangshan/April 14th (the "moderate" faction). Both newspapers are reproduced in *A New Collection of Red*

*Guard Publications, Part I: Newspapers* (Oakton, Va.: Center for Chinese Research Materials, 1999).

6. Big character posters, hand-written by individuals and small groups and posted in public places, played a central role in the political debates of the Cultural Revolution. Collections of posters reprinted by one faction often included posters written by both sides in a fashion designed to highlight polemical arguments.
7. See Pierre Bourdieu, "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction," in Jerome Karabel and A. H. Halsey, editors, *Power and Ideology in Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 487–511; and Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in John Richardson, editor, *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1983).
8. For discussion of political association as a mechanism of class differentiation within Bourdieu's analytical framework, see Bourdieu, "The 'Soviet' Variant and Political Capital" in *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). Weber discusses this dimension of stratification in his remarks on political parties and social differentiation. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, Volume 2, translated by G. Roth and C. Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 926–939.
9. Regarding the role of imperial civil service examinations in shaping a class of scholar officials drawn largely from the landed gentry, see Benjamin Elman, "Political, Social and Cultural Reproduction via Civil Service Examinations in Late Imperial China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 50 (1991): 7–28.
10. Members of the old educated elite retained high positions in economic, political, and cultural institutions after they were reorganized under communist control, although real power was placed in the hands of party officials. Children of the educated elite also enjoyed cultural preparation that allowed them to predominate in exams for admission to the best schools.
11. Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Technocrats in Socialist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
12. The family origin system originated as an instrument of revolutionary usurpation during land reform. As part of the investigation that preceded re-division of property in villages, each family was assigned a class designation. The Party mobilized poor and middle peasants to struggle against landlords and rich peasants in a campaign that was extraordinarily violent and reduced the families of landlords and rich peasants to social pariahs. The class structure in the cities, however, was more resistant to such radical leveling. Members of the old urban elites, capitalists and high intellectuals, often retained privileged positions and the discrimination faced by members of their families was often not as severe as that faced by the old rural elites. See Lynn White III, "Leadership in Shanghai, 1955–1969," in Robert Scalapino, editor, *Elites in the People's Republic of China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 302–377; and Gordon White, "The Politics of Class and Class Origin," 2.
13. Classes, as defined by the family origin system, are key categories used in this article. Use of these categories presents analytical problems, including the fact that they refer to situations before the radical social and economic changes that took place after 1949. Use of these class categories, however, is unavoidable because they were the juridically reinforced categories that framed group identities during the Cultural Revolution.
14. Those who had participated full-time in the revolutionary movement while the Communist Party was still an insurrectionary organization were designated revo-

- lutionary cadres, soldiers, or martyrs, regardless of the socioeconomic position of their families.
15. The category *zhiyuan*, which I have translated as “white collar employee,” included white collar government employees, teachers, and other managerial and professional employees. These occupations required a relatively high level of education and the number of *zhiyuan* was very small relative to the population of pre-revolutionary China. Their class position was, therefore, higher than that of the ordinary clerical workers in more economically developed countries.
  16. In 1949, about 10 percent of adult males had completed high school and about 1 percent had completed college. See Zhong Deng and Don Treiman, “The Impact of the Cultural Revolution on Trends in Educational Attainment in the People’s Republic of China,” *American Journal of Sociology* 103 (1997): 391–428. The proportions were far smaller for women.
  17. Meritocratic ideas had deep roots in the Confucian ethics of the scholar gentry. This tradition, based on classical literary culture, was reshaped with the introduction in the twentieth century of Western educational practices, which emphasized technical knowledge. The introduction of Soviet methods in the 1950s reinforced these meritocratic and technocratic traditions, imposing on them a uniform system of disciplinary categories, ranks, and credentials and providing them with socialist ideological legitimacy. See Ruth Hayhoe, *China’s Universities 1895–1995: A Century of Cultural Conflict* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996); and Suzanne Pepper, *Radicalism and Education Reform in 20th Century China: The Search for an Ideal Development Model* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
  18. *Jinggangshan, Aug. 24, 1967.*
  19. Kexuan Liu et al., editors, *Beida yu Qinghua (Peking University and Tsinghua)* (National Administrative Institute Press, 1998), 556–591.
  20. See Cheng Li, *The Rise of Technocracy: Elite Transformation and Ideological Change in Post-Mao China* (Princeton: Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Princeton University, 1992), 170–192; William Hinton, *Hundred Day War: The Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 28–37; and Shaojie Tang, “Cong Qinghua Daxue Liang Pai Kan ‘Wenhua Da Geming’ Zhong Qunzhong Zuzhi de Duili he Fenqi” (“The Antagonisms and Differences Between ‘Cultural Revolution’ Mass Organizations from the Perspective of the Two Factions at Tsinghua University”), in *Zhonggong Dangshi Yanjiu (Chinese Communist Party History Research)* 2 (1998): 69–74. While senior professors continued to receive high salaries and played an important role academically, most, especially the large number who had been trained in the United States, were marginalized politically.
  21. In one TU student’s class, for instance, only two students were excluded from the Youth League. One was the interviewee, whose father, a highly educated administrator, was politically suspect because of overseas family connections. The other was a student of poor peasant origin who was suspected of stealing from another student. Interview No. 1.
  22. Interview No. 1.
  23. Cited in Robert Taylor, *China’s Intellectual Dilemma: Politics and University Enrollment, 1949–1978* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), 132.
  24. Nanxiang Jiang, *Jiang Nanxiang Wenji (Collected Works of Jiang Nanxiang)* (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1998), 810–811; *Jinggangshan*, Oct. 12, 1967.
  25. Tsinghua Attached Middle School, School History Group, *Qinghua Daxue Fushu*

*Zhongxue Jianshi (A Brief History of Tsinghua University Attached Middle School)* (Beijing: Beijing Municipal Education Research Institute, 1987), 22–67.

26. Even though the task of assigning students to class categories is aided by the official codification of these categories in China, the process inevitably involves ambiguities. In cities, classification depended largely on self-reporting, and the process of determining individual class labels was negotiated and contested. Because class line policies made it advantageous for both administrators and students to take a lax attitude toward qualifications for membership in the proletarian classes, it is likely that there were more than a few students of “fake” working class origin (*jia gongren*). Nevertheless, interviewees’ accounts of their own and their classmates’ humble family origins make it clear that there were a large number of students at TU who were from poor working class and peasant families.
27. Five former TAMS students (Interviews No. 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20) and ten former TU students (Interviews No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11) classified their classmates by family origin. Altogether there were just over 230 students in the classes described by TAMS students and just over 300 students in the classes described by TU students. Both schools were boarding schools and a class of students typically lived and studied together from admission to graduation. This allowed students to get to know their classmates well. Many students had clear recollections of their classmates’ family origin because this became a particularly salient personal characteristic before and during the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, after thirty years, the sharpness of former students’ memories varied considerably. Because of ambiguities in class designations and limitations of the power of memory, these estimates should be regarded as rough approximations. They, nevertheless, reveal the sharp difference in the composition of the student bodies at the two schools.
28. These figures, which include only one class of upper middle school students at TAMS, were presented in a statement published by Old Red Guard organizations at a college campus located near Tsinghua (Beijing Forestry Institute Red Guard Fighting Groups, *Yi Pian Hen Hao de Fangmian Jiaocai (A Very Good Piece of Negative Teaching Material)* (Beijing: Beijing Forestry Institute “East Is Red Commune,” 1966).
29. The TU radical faction’s newspaper *Jinggangshan* (Oct. 12, 1967) reported that in 1964, 44 percent of TU students were of working class and peasant origin and 10 percent were of “exploiting class” origin. The former figure, following common practice, presumably included children of revolutionary cadres. The remaining 46 percent were presumably from white-collar employee and other “middle” categories.
30. I have included in this category student estimates of the number of their classmates from families suspect for political reasons (e.g., “counter-revolutionaries” and “Rightists”).
31. *Peking Review*, Aug. 12, 1966: 8, 10.
32. Zedong Mao, “Comment on Comrade Ch’en Cheng-jen’s Report on Stay at a Selected Spot” translated in *Current Background* 891 (1969 [1965]): 49.
33. See Chan, Rosen, and Unger, “Students and Class Warfare”; and Stanley Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism and the Cultural Revolution in Guangzhou (Canton)* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982). Chan, Rosen, and Unger’s carefully researched studies on factional conflict in Guangzhou middle schools focused on the best schools, where they found that division along family origin lines was most pronounced. At ordinary and vocational middle schools, in contrast, they found the most salient division was between those who had been active in the Communist

- Youth League and those who had not, with the former tending to be more conservative. Although universities were outside the scope of their investigation, Rosen noted that factional alignment at universities in Guangzhou seemed to follow the pattern at non-elite middle schools (Rosen, *Red Guard Factionalism*, 1–6). Chan, Rosen, and Unger, nevertheless, chose to focus analytically on the pattern of factional conflict at elite middle schools, noting divergent patterns at other schools only in passing.
34. See, for instance, Harry Harding, “The Chinese State in Crisis” in Roderick MacFarquhar and John Fairbank, editors, *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 15: People’s Republic, Part 2: Revolutions Within the Chinese Revolution, 1966–82* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 154–156; Mark Lupher, *Power Restructuring in China and Russia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 202; Maurice Meisner, *Mao’s China and After: A History of the People’s Republic* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 335; and Andrew Nathan, *Chinese Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 64.
  35. For accounts of the rise of the TAMS Red Guards, from different viewpoints, see Yi Zheng, “Taowang Shengya Gouqile Yi Duan Huiyi” (“An Exile Career Evokes a Memory”), *Jiushi Niandai (The Nineties)* 6 (1992): 91–95; Weiguang Zhong, “Qinghua Fuzhong Hong Weibing Xiaozu Dansheng Shishi” (“Historical Facts About the Birth of the Tsinghua Attached Middle School Red Guard Organization”), *Beijing Zhi Chun (Beijing Spring)* 41 (1996); and Weihua Pu, “Qinghua Fuzhong Hong Weibing Chengli Shimo” (“The Whole Story of the Founding of the Tsinghua Attached Middle School Red Guards”), *Zhonggong Dangshi Ziliao (Materials on the History of the Chinese Communist Party)* 70 (Beijing: Communist Party History Publishing House, 1998): 96–107.
  36. Zedong Mao, “A Letter to the Red Guards of the Middle School Attached to Tsinghua University,” translated in *Current Background* 891 (1969 [1966]): 63.
  37. Youqin Wang, “1966: Xuesheng Da Laoshi de Geming” (“1966: A Revolution in which Students Beat Teachers”) in Qingfeng Liu, editor, *Wenhua Da Geming: Shishi yu Yanjiu (Cultural Revolution: Facts and Analysis)* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1996): 17–38.
  38. Tsinghua Attached Middle School Red Guard, “Hail Line of the Proletarian Class!” translated in *China News Analysis* 636 (1966): 2–5.
  39. Ibid.
  40. Core Group of TAMS High School Class No. 655, “Zuo Ding Tian Li Di de Ren” (“Be an Indomitable Person”), *Bingtuan Zhanbao (Regiment War Report)*, Nov. 18, 1966, reprinted in Song and Sun, *Heterodox Thinking*, 87.
  41. Two or more competing Red Guard organizations emerged in many Beijing middle schools in August 1966, sometimes reflecting conflict between revolutionary cadres’ children and children of workers and peasants. At TAMS in the summer of 1966, however, there was only one Red Guard organization. It dominated the school until an opposition faction, composed mainly of children of intellectuals, emerged in late 1966.
  42. United Action Committee, “Zhongyang, Beijing Dang Zheng Jun Ganbu Zidi (Nu) Lianhe Xingdong Weiyuan Hui Tongbao” (“Notice of the Central and Beijing Party, Government and Military Cadres’ Children’s United Action Committee”), Jan. 1, 1967, reprinted in Song and Sun, *Heterodox Thinking*, 108.
  43. Like others before him, Mao used the term “revisionist” to accuse international and domestic communist leaders of revising Marxist revolutionary principles.
  44. Tsinghua Attached Middle School Jinggangshan Regiment, “Tequan Jiecheng de

- Weidaoshi” (“Apologists for the Privileged Stratum”), *Chun Lei (Spring Thunder)* July 1967, reproduced in *Red Guard Publications, Volume 4* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Chinese Research Materials Association of Research Libraries, 1979): 753.
45. Interview No. 17.
  46. Interview No. 18.
  47. For an English translation of Yu Luoke’s essay see White, “The Politics of Class and Class Origin”: 71-93. The Chinese original is included in Song and Sun, *Heterodox Thinking*, 120–140. Song and Sun also reproduced several other articles by Yu Luoke.
  48. Cited in Weiran Lin, *An Abortive Chinese Enlightenment: The Cultural Revolution and Class Theory* (Madison: Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1996): 260.
  49. See Anita Chan, *Children of Mao: Personality Development and Political Activism in the Red Guard Generation* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 233; Lin, *An Abortive Chinese Enlightenment*: 255–260; and Rosen, *The Origins and Development of the Red Guard Movement*: 196–204. After ignoring the debate in the middle school student press about Yu’s article for several months, in April 1967 the CCRSG denounced the article, largely stifling further debate.
  50. Interview No. 18.
  51. Interview No. 17.
  52. Liu Shaoqi’s daughter, Liu Tao, put up one of the first posters criticizing Jiang Nanxiang, her father’s erstwhile ally. *Jinggangshan*, Dec. 31, 1966.
  53. By 1966, Kuai had become a Youth League leader in his class as well as director of the editorial committee of the university radio station and he was well along in the lengthy process of applying for Party membership. Soon after he arrived at Tsinghua, Kuai sent a report to central Party authorities on corruption among rural cadres. Interview No. 38.
  54. In addition to President Liu Shaoqi’s daughter and Marshall He Long’s son, TU Red Guard leaders included Li Lifeng, son of Li Jingquan (First Secretary of the Southwestern Bureau of the Party Central Committee), Liu Qufen, son of Liu Ningyi (Secretary of the Central Committee’s Secretariat) and Wang Xiahu, son of Wang Renzhong (Secretary of the South Central Bureau of the Central Committee). Interviews No. 1 and 13; Jean Esmein, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1973), 104.
  55. Interview No. 14.
  56. This shift resulted from Mao’s effort to re-direct the movement against his principal target, the “capitalist roaders in authority in the Party.” Lin Biao’s October 1, 1966 speech was a dramatic public signal of this new offensive, encouraging the rise of TU Jinggangshan and similar organizations. Yan and Gao, *Turbulent Decade*, 95.
  57. The April 14th meeting was inspired by an article in the central Party journal *Hong Qi (Red Flag)* (No. 5, Apr. 7, 1966) that called for the rehabilitation of cadres. This article was part of a campaign initiated by central Party authorities in February 1967 to reestablish order in schools, workplaces, and localities after rebel “power seizures” in January had disrupted or overthrown existing organs of leadership. Military delegations were sent to schools and workplaces to reconcile contending factions and establish “revolutionary committees” composed of representatives of the new mass organizations, old cadres, and the military. A delegation led by Navy officers was sent to TU, but it was unable to impose its will on Jinggangshan, which steadfastly opposed the rehabilitation of old cadres. A revolutionary committee

- was not established at TU until after the warring student factions had been suppressed in July 1968. See Hinton, *Hundred Day War*; Tang, “The Rise and Fall of Tsinghua Jingtangshan Regiment;” and Shaojie Tang, “Hong Weibing Yundong de Sangzhong: Qinghua Daxue Bai Ri Da Wudou” (“Death Knell of the Red Guards: The Hundred Day War at Tsinghua University”) in Liu Qingfeng, editor, *Wenhua Da Geming: Shishi Yu Yanjiu (Cultural Revolution: Facts and Analysis)* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press 1996): 65–79.
58. Interview No. 38.
  59. See *Jingtangshan*, Apr. 5, 1967 and May 13, 1967; and a Jingtangshan Fighting Group poster reprinted in Tsinghua Jingtangshan United General Headquarters April 14th Cadre Office, *Dazibao Xuanbian (Selected Big Character Posters)* Volume 2 (Beijing, 1967): 35.
  60. *Jingtangshan*, July 5, 1968.
  61. *Jingtangshan*, May 13, 1967.
  62. Han Yinshan, a revolutionary cadre of poor peasant origin, was kicked off the University Party Committee in 1959 following conflicts with the leadership. He was subsequently relegated to a position in charge of campus maintenance. *Jingtangshan*, Apr. 29, 1967.
  63. Interview No. 39.
  64. This loose, unruly network of rebel organizations did not recognize a definite hierarchy of authority. Kuai Dafu and Jingtangshan were particularly feisty and Jingtangshan leaders even joined abortive campaigns against powerful patrons in the CCRSG including Kang Sheng and Zhang Chunqiao. Tang, “The Rise and Fall of Tsinghua Jingtangshan Regiment”: 52; Neale Hunter, *Shanghai Journal: An Eyewitness Account of the Cultural Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969): 230.
  65. Dafu Kuai, *Qinghua Daxue Dazibao (Tsinghua University Big Character Posters)* (Beijing: Tsinghua University Jingtangshan Red Guard Propaganda Team, no date), 61, Aug. 6, 1967.
  66. Tsinghua Jingtangshan Regiment, “Chushen Lun” (“Origin Theory”) in *Jingtangshan Tongxun (Jingtangshan News Report)* 138, Feb. 2, 1967.
  67. The effort made by one student to oppose the family origin system illustrates the limited hearing such views received at TU. Li Leiluo’s father had been an officer in the Nationalist army and he was, therefore, of very “bad” family origin. An acquaintance described him as an ardent admirer of Mao, but an opponent of class line. At mass meetings held at TU in the autumn of 1966 to debate bloodline theory, Li called for an end to the family origin system, but the rebel organizations all roundly rejected his views. Li, nevertheless, became an active supporter of Jingtangshan. In August 1967, he was killed in factional fighting in Wuhan and was buried as a martyr by TU Jingtangshan. *Jingtangshan*, Aug. 12, 1967.
  68. Interview No. 9.
  69. *Jingtangshan*, Nov. 17, 1967; Nov. 24, 1967.
  70. *Jingtangshan*, Nov. 9, 1967.
  71. *Jingtangshan*, May 1, 1967; May 8, 1967, May 13, 1967; and Nov. 17, 1967.
  72. *Jingtangshan*, Oct. 19, 1967.
  73. *Jingtangshan*, Oct. 19, 1967; Dec. 28, 1967.
  74. This statement took the form of a report on the excesses committed by the work team sent to Tsinghua in the summer of 1966. See *Hongqi (Red Flag)* 5, Apr. 7, 1967.
  75. Interview No. 37.
  76. After Jingtangshan split, both factions insisted on using the Jingtangshan name.

The moderates were popularly known as the “April 14th faction” (*414 pai*) while the radicals were known as the “Regiment faction” (*tuan pai*). I continue to call the radicals “Jinggangshan” for the sake of readers who feel overwhelmed by the number of factional names introduced.

77. *Jinggangshan Bao*, Dec. 1, 1967; July 5, 1967.
78. Interview No. 13.
79. Interview No. 14.
80. *Jinggangshan Bao*, Nov. 24, 1967; Dec. 14, 1967.
81. Interview No. 13.
82. Tang, “The Antagonisms and Differences Between ‘Cultural Revolution’ Mass Organizations from the Perspective of the Two Factions at Tsinghua University”; *Jinggangshan Bao*, Dec. 14, 1967.
83. Interview No. 29.
84. Interview No. 9.
85. These tables are based on information provided by members of the leadership of both organizations and other activists familiar with the leadership. When interviewees provided contradictory recollections, I used information that seemed most reliable, either because more people corroborated it or because it was provided by informants who seemed more acquainted with the individual. Where I was not satisfied with making a judgment, I have left a question mark. The leading bodies of both factions were not stable. I included individuals whom many informants agreed participated in these bodies for significant periods.
86. Quanying Zhou, “Wo Xinzhong de Wenge” (“My Understanding of the Cultural Revolution”) in *Ershiyi Shiji (Twenty-first Century)* 52 (April 1999): 139–143.
87. Interview No. 7.
88. *Jinggangshan Bao*, Sep. 5, 1967.
89. April 14th Cadre Office, *Selected Big Character Posters*: 5.
90. Interview No. 12.
91. Interview No. 38.
92. Interview No. 38.
93. Interview No. 38.
94. Interview No. 6.
95. Students of peasant origin have always been a minority in China’s elite educational institutions, but this minority has been an important source of recruits for left-wing causes. Before 1949, Communist Party organizers in middle schools and universities relied particularly on recruiting students of peasant origin. See Xiaoping Cong, *Localizing the Global, Nationalizing the Local: the Role of Teachers’ Schools in Making China Modern* (Los Angeles: Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of California, Los Angeles, 2001). I noticed that Leftist students I met at present-day Tsinghua were all of peasant origin, despite the fact that rural-origin students only make up about 20 percent of the student body.
96. Interview No. 1.
97. Interview No. 5.
98. Interview No. 12.
99. Interview No. 38.
100. Names used in this paper, with the exception of those of public figures (including the leaders of TU factions) are not real.
101. Interview No. 7.
102. Interview No. 10.
103. Interview No. 6.

104. Factional conflict at Tsinghua was suppressed by tens of thousands of Beijing factory workers, led by army officers and authorized by Mao Zedong, who marched onto the campus on July 27, 1968. This watershed event signaled the end of the period of mass factional conflict during the Cultural Revolution. See Hinton, *Hundred Day War*, and Tang, "Death Knell of the Red Guards."
105. Dongping Han, *The Unknown Cultural Revolution: Education Reforms and Their Impact on China's Rural Development* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000); Suzanne Pepper, *Radicalism and Education Reform in 20th Century China: The Search for an Ideal Development Model* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Jonathan Unger, *Education Under Mao: Class and Competition in Canton Schools, 1960–1980* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
106. Han, *The Unknown Cultural Revolution*; Pepper, *Radicalism and Education Reform*; Stanley Rosen, "Restoring Key Secondary Schools in Post-Mao China: The Politics of Competition and Educational Quality" in David Lampton, editor, *Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
107. Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Technocrats*.
108. The technocratic project described by Konrad and Szelenyi was undermined in Eastern Europe by the revival of private property and the unraveling of party authority. While technocratic ideas were widely celebrated in China during the 1980s, today the class structure is again being fundamentally transformed, and the technocratic vision undermined, as economic capital is once more becoming the main foundation of class.

### Appendix: Interviews

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The following information about the people interviewed is provided below: school attended, time period at the school, gender, family origin, relationship to the Youth League and the Party, and factional sympathy, if any, during the Cultural Revolution.

1. TU student 1960–69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Jingtangshan sympathizer.
2. TU student 1962–69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL member.
3. TU student 1962–69. Male.
4. TU student 1963–69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Jingtangshan sympathizer.
5. TU student 1962–69. Male. White-collar employee. CYL member. April 14th activist.
6. TU student 1964–70. Male. Revolutionary cadre. CYL member. April 14th activist.
7. TU student 1964–70. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL leader. April 14th sympathizer.
8. TU student 1961–69. Male. Jingtangshan sympathizer.
9. TU student 1963–69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL member. Jingtangshan activist.

10. TU student 1964-70. Male. Middle peasant. CYL leader. Old Red Guard sympathizer.
11. TU student 1963-69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL member. April 14th sympathizer.
12. TU student 1964-70. Male. Poor peasant. CYL leader and party member. April 14th activist.
13. TU student 1962-69. Male. Landlord. April 14th activist.
14. TU student 1960-69. Male. Middle peasant. CYL member. April 14th activist.
15. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. Capitalist. CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
16. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. Revolutionary cadre. CYL leader. Old Red Guard activist.
17. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. "Bad." Not CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
18. TAMS student 1963-69. Female. Revolutionary cadre. CYL leader. Jinggangshan activist.
19. TAMS student 1963-69. Female. Revolutionary cadre. Mao Zedong Thought Red Guard sympathizer.
20. TAMS student 1965-69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Old Red Guard sympathizer.
21. TAMS student 1964-68. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL member.
22. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
23. TAMS student 1963-69. Female. Worker. CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
24. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
25. TAMS student 1963-69. Male. Capitalist. Not CYL member. Jinggangshan activist.
26. TAMS student 1965-69. Male. Revolutionary cadre. CYL member. Mao Zedong Thought Red Guard sympathizer.
27. TAMS student 1965-69. Female. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member.
28. TAMS student 1965-69. Female. Revolutionary cadre. CYL member. Mao Zedong Thought Red Guard sympathizer.
29. TAMS student 1965-69. Female. White-collar employee (intellectual). Not CYL member. Mao Zedong Thought Red Guard sympathizer. April 14th activist.
30. TU student 1965-70. Male. Small proprietor. April 14th sympathizer.
31. TU student 1965-70. Male. White collar employee (intellectual) Jinggangshan sympathizer.
32. TU student 1965-70. Male. Peasant. CYL leader. Jinggangshan activist.
33. TU student 1965-70. Male. Peasant. CYL member. Jinggangshan sympathizer.
34. TU student 1965-70. Male. Worker. CYL leader. April 14th activist.

35. TU student 1965–70. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL member.
  36. TU student 1965–70, 1979. Male. Capitalist. Not CYL member. Jingtangshan sympathizer.
  37. TU student 1965–70. Male. Revolutionary cadre. CYL leader and party member. April 14th activist.
  38. TU student 1963–69. Male. Poor peasant. CYL leader. Jingtangshan activist.
  39. TU student 1964–70. Male. Worker. CYL member. Jingtangshan activist.
  40. TU student 1960–68. Male. CYL member. April 14th activist.
  41. TU student 1965–70. Male. Middle peasant. Jingtangshan activist.
  42. TU student 1963–69. Male. Peasant. CYL leader. Jingtangshan activist.
  43. TU student 1961–68. Male. Peasant. April 14th sympathizer.
  44. TAMS student 1960–66. Male. White-collar employee (intellectual). CYL leader. Jingtangshan sympathizer.
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