

BOOK REVIEW

Zhang Jishun 张济顺,

A City Displaced: Shanghai in the 1950s

远去的都市：1950年代的上海

(北京：社会科学文献出版社，2015)

Chuchu Wang, University of California, San Diego

Shanghai was not only the birthplace of Chinese Communist Party (CCP), but also where the Party's revolution originally failed, forcing their flight from the city. Achieving military victory in the 1949, the CCP now needed to govern an urban culture it once failed to tame. Zhang's book, *A City Displaced: Shanghai in the 1950s*, adopts the bottom-up social history approach to explore how different social groups in Shanghai reacted to or even actively engaged with CCP's governance in the first decade of the People's Republic.

As a person born in 1949 and an offspring of Shanghai's modern education forerunner Zhang Huanlun (张焕纶), Zhang wrote this book with nostalgia and passion. Throughout the book, Zhang coherently addresses three overriding themes: continuity before and after 1949; the relationship between society/individuals and the state; Shanghai's modern urban culture's struggle with CCP's ideology. Zhang's book is in dialogue with three major paths followed by the literature on China's thirty years from 1949 to 1979: the breakdown of Shanghai urban culture; the intensified state control over society and economy which ultimately led to myriads of tragedies; the achievements that CCP made in health care, education, and infrastructure.¹ However, Zhang warns us of the danger of relying on one path and ignoring the complexity of the history record. Combining these three paths, Zhang argues that the CCP's successful control over Shanghai did not happen overnight and was never a smooth, overdetermined route.

The first chapter explores why the CCP's control over the highly mobile Shanghai society was successful at the bottom level of that society. Instead of abandoning the *baojia* (保甲) system, which was the social control organization adopted both by the Japanese colonial government and the GMD, the CCP copied this system, kept its personnel, and established a socialist counterpart: residents' committees (居民委员会). Because of the similarities in organization and personnel, residents' committees were not unacceptable for the lower levels of society. In terms of social control organization, the CCP's political and military victory in 1949 was then not a clean cut break. However, this continuity did not mean complete reproduction of the previous social system. Although the "impure" cadres contributed to this political transition, their background remained problematic in the eyes of the CCP. The CCP "purified" cadres step-by-step in two rectification

campaigns from 1952 to 1955, by distinguishing the reliable from the problematic ones. The success of CCP's transition and "purification" facilitated the state's penetration into society. However, the individuals involved could exert their own agency through participation in the state's construction and mobilization process. The state's intention and individuals' own agency were not polarly opposed, and the goals of both sides could be achieved, as Zhang demonstrates in this chapter. She clearly illustrates how society/individuals were actively involved in and contributed to the CCP's triumph over itself/themselves.

Chapter 2 uses several cases to demonstrate how, in Shanghai's first election for the local People's Congress, political reliability was not crucial for total success. The chapter begins with a female worker's suicide in mid-October 1953, when the election of the first members to the local People's Congress had just started. The female worker was a group leader in the popular religion *Yiguan dao* (一贯道) and committed suicide after she was deprived of the suffrage. Her suicide caught the Shanghai CCP leadership's attention and the importance of political background diminished as a consequence. The other cases Zhang deploys show that non-political factors such as newspaper reports, working skills, good relationships with colleagues, and ethnicity, all contributed more to an individual's election to the local People's Congress, than their absolute political reliability. More than a few people with politically problematic backgrounds were successful in the new socialist government. For common people, the state's first election could be a chance of promotion, achieving upward mobility, thus providing another example of the overlap of state and individual goals.

Chapter 3 discusses the relationship between the state and individuals, and the tensions between the state's ideology and Shanghai's urban culture. Through her analysis of the case of the Shanghai's newspaper *Wenhui bao* (文汇报), Zhang argues that in 1950s intellectuals were not always the target of state criticism and the press did not immediately become the CCP's mouthpiece. Even under the strict pressure of the rectification campaigns of September 1952, editor-in-chief Xu Zhucheng (徐铸成) and manager Yan Baoli (严宝礼) were needed by the state and were protected by their leader Chen Yusun (陈虞孙).

Under their new classifications, the CCP placed the *Wenhui bao* in the education sector. However, the *Wenhui bao* was not a state-owned newspaper and remained privately funded. The intellectuals who ran it reformed it to meet its target market audience in April 1952. Facing financial crisis and lacking the privileges public newspapers enjoyed, managers and journalists of *Wenhui bao* even pleaded with the state to take over the publication. Once again, this chapter successfully demonstrates that state and individuals were not always in conflict, and that the imposition of CCP ideology did not eliminate the market-oriented urban culture in the 1950s.

Chapter 4 further illustrates that the state could not take full control of intellectuals' fates, and that CCP ideology and urban culture were not diametrically opposed. The bulk of this chapter is a case study of two brothers who received education at Shanghai St. John's University and had similar careers in Republican era. For Huang Jiade (黄嘉德), a literature professor at St. John's University and chief editor of the Shanghai-based magazine *West Wind* (西风), the transition from Republican Shanghai's urban culture to CCP's ideology did not represent a sudden break. He had previously disagreed with the pre-revolutionary church and had condemned elements of American culture imported in late 1940s Shanghai. In Huang Jiade's mind, CCP ideology and Shanghai urban culture were not exclusive to each other and could co-exist. Ultimately, Jiade survived the Anti-Rightist Campaign in the late 1950s. His brother, Huang Jiayin (黄嘉音), another chief editor of *West Wind* and founder of several other Shanghai-based magazines, on the other hand, had a different life experience. Although Jiayin flourished in the first three years of PRC, his magazines were closed in 1952, he was criticized as a rightist in the Anti-Rightist Movement, sent down to Ningxia and died there in 1961. People's different survival strategies led to different results and the state was not always the sole determinant of people's fates.

Switching focus, chapter 5 examines Hong Kong films in the 1950s and early 1960s, arguing that Shanghai's urban modern culture continued to exist in the form of Hong Kong films. Although all U.S. movies were banned by the CCP since November 1950, more than forty Hong Kong films were screened in Shanghai in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In order to collect currency from people, the CCP approved the screening of Hong Kong leftist films. In the eyes of Shanghai audiences, Hong Kong films were the embodiment of western culture and urban modern life. On the other hand, Hong Kong films felt closer to Shanghai viewers than Hollywood films. The Republican-era Hollywood fans reunited watching Hong Kong films, nostalgic for pre-1949 Shanghai. The fever of Hong Kong films in the late 1950s and early 1960s shows that urban modern culture continued to exist after 1949.

In conclusion, Zhang's research on social control organization, intellectuals, and popular culture persuasively argues that the Republican Shanghai urban culture crossed the political divide of 1949 and continued to exist in different forms, even under CCP social control. Zhang's study on street-level society, local People's Representatives, intellectuals, and the press

demonstrates that the CCP's triumph was not a simple process of the state taking control of the society/individuals. Individuals and the state were not in constant conflict, in fact their goals overlapped frequently. When this happened, individuals could actively engage in the state's overriding process.

Although Zhang is not the first historian to study Communist Shanghai, her monograph throws light on some unexplored aspects of Mao-era Shanghai. Frederic Wakeman argued for continuity across the 1949 divide showing how the CCP kept the Republican policing system and its personnel.² However, his research stops in 1952 and his focus is more on the policies than the society. In contrast, Zhang's research on residents' committees not only extends the mid-1950s but also centers on the cadres and their agency during political campaigns, therefore, thus showing the complexity of this street-level organization. Elizabeth Perry's study on the remarkable wave of labor protests and the reestablishment of worker militias in the first four years of the PRC argues that it "bespoke a heady sense of political prowess and entitlement—encouraged both by official propaganda and by their own recent history of struggle".³ Zhang's research on the first People's Congress election in Shanghai echoes Perry's conclusions. They both address continuities across 1949 and both agree that the early communist regime's pro-labor rhetoric was not empty verbiage.

Zhang, as well as other scholars such as William C. Kirby, Lü Xiaobo, Elizabeth J. Perry, Mark W. Frazier, Susan L. Glosser, Jeremy Brown, Paul Pickowicz, and Frederic Wakeman Jr., have addressed the issue of continuities across the 1949 divide.⁴ Why does continuity matter? Alexis De Tocqueville famously wrote: "What in point of fact it [the French Revolution] destroyed, or is in process of destroying—for the Revolution is still operative—may be summed up as everything in the old order that stemmed from aristocratic and feudal institutions, was in any way connected with them, or even bore, however faintly, their imprint."⁵ With that, Tocqueville was inviting historians to reconsider the meaning of "revolution;" similarly, this focus on continuities across 1949 also sheds light on the extent of China's Communist revolution and pushes readers to rethink the meaning of "revolution" in China.

My main question for Zhang Jishun concerns the exciting but underdeveloped gender approach of her book. Chapter 1 mentions that housewives became a noticeable cadre group in the residents' committees after the rectification and "purification" in 1954. (56, 57, 80, 82.) In addition, chapter 2 illustrates why a female cotton factory worker could become a local People's Representative (107-113.). However, in Republican Shanghai, women had received higher education, become intellectuals, and had jobs outside the home. They also had been actively involved in public affairs during the Anti-Japanese War period. Therefore, my question is whether there was any continuity between the rise of feminism in Republican Shanghai and the appearance of female cadres after 1949? In which aspects was the appearance of female cadres an improvement from the Republican era?

I am also interested in the oral materials and memoirs used in this book, especially in chapter 4 and 5. Interviewees can be

cautious about the questions raised during the interview, and intentionally pick certain facts to tell. Are oral materials and memoirs reliable? How to use them? My last question is about this book's publication. Was the censorship strict when this book was published?

¹ Leo Ou-Fan Lee and Wen-hsin Yeh view the thirty years as a break in Shanghai's modern culture. Leo Ou-Fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1999). Wen-hsin Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

William C. Kirby, Philip A. Kuhn, Cao Shuji (曹树基), Yang Jisheg (杨继绳), Yang Xianhui (杨显惠), and Frank Dikötter explore the unstoppable expansion of state's power. William C. Kirby, "Introduction," in William C. Kirby, ed., *Realms of Freedom in Modern China* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press 2004). Philip A. Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press 2002). Cao Shuji 曹树基, *Dajihuang: 1959-1961 nian de Zhongguo renkou* 大饥荒: 1959-1961 年的中国人口 [The Great Famine: Chinese population 1959-1961] Xianggang guoji shidai youxian gongsi, 2005). Yang Jisheng 杨继绳, *Mudi: Zhongguo liushiniandai dajihuang jishi* 墓碑: 中国六十年代大饥荒纪实 [Tombstone: Records of the Chinese great famine of the 1960s] (Xianggang tiandi chubanshe, 2008). Yang Xianhui 杨显惠, *Jiabiangou jishi* 夹边沟记事 [Memories of Jiabiangou] (Huacheng chubanshe, 2008). Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2010). Frank Dikötter, *The Tragedy of Liberation: A History of the Communist Revolution 1945-1957* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2013).

Klaus Mühlhahn, Elizabeth J. Perry, Lin Chun stress the achievements that CCP made. Elizabeth J. Perry, "Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?" *The China Journal*, (2007): 1-22. Lin Chun, *The Transformation of Chinese Socialism* (Duke University Press, 2006). Klaus Mühlhahn,

"Rethinking the History of the People's Republic of China," Lecture at East China Normal University, March 13, 2014.

² 魏斐德 Frederic Wakeman Jr., *Hongxing zhaoyao Shanghai cheng—Gongchandang dui shizheng jingcha de gaizao* (1942-1952) 红星照耀上海城——共产党对市政警察的改造 (1942-1952) [Red Star over Shanghai: The CCP reform of municipal police] (Beijing: renmin chubanshe, 2011).

Frederic Wakeman Jr., "'Cleanup': The New Order in Shanghai," in Jeremy Brown, Paul G. Pickowicz, ed., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of People's Republic of China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007).

³ Elizabeth J. Perry, "Masters of the Country? Shanghai Workers in the Early People's Republic" in Jeremy Brown, Paul G. Pickowicz, ed., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of People's Republic of China*, Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007: 59.

⁴ William C. Kirby, "Continuity and Change in Modern China: Economic Planning on the Mainland and on Taiwan, 1943 – 1958," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 24 (1990): 121-141. Lü Xiaobo and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds., *Danwei: The Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). Mark W. Frazier, *The Making of the Chinese Industrial Workplace: State, Revolution, and Labor Management* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Susan L. Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State, 1915-1953* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). Jeremy Brown, Paul G. Pickowicz, ed., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of People's Republic of China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2007). Frederic Wakeman Jr., "'Cleanup': The New Order in Shanghai."

⁵ Alexis De Tocqueville, translated by Stuart Gilbert, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, New York: Anchor Books, 1983, pp.20.

Response

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(translated by Harlan Chambers, Columbia University)

I am very grateful that *The PRC History Review* is welcoming studies written in Chinese, and my thanks to Wu Yidi for selecting *A City Displaced: Shanghai in the 1950s* for review. Wang Chuchu's meticulous reading and critique took me back to the long and arduous but richly rewarding process of writing, affording me an opportunity to think over the book once again.

Wang Chuchu has been particularly attentive to the book's investigation of historical continuity in Shanghai before and after 1949. In truth, I had posed myself this difficult problem, and much of the support and criticism the book has garnered relates to this issue. It has even given rise to some ongoing discussions. For example, some critics find that in 1950's Shanghai "rupture" was dominant at the level of politics whilst continuity was assured at the level of society and culture. It was for this reason that the CCP launched profound and tumultuous social reforms. It was only a transitional strategy when the CCP, upon establishing its government, allowed the "old society" to endure alongside the new, implementing relatively lenient policies towards capitalists and intellectuals.

In order to take on such a major problematic, this book seeks to render it comprehensible in its historical particulars, thereby adding to our understanding of the historical complexities of 1950's China. Working from an abundance of open documents in Shanghai's archive, I was able to discover Shanghai society of the early 1950s. These materials revealed that the city's quotidian operating mechanisms, social networks, and cultural values were all oriented toward the Chinese Communist revolution's various agendas of regulation and even elimination. These agendas advanced through residents' committees, local elections, and the reform of mass culture. My understanding of historical continuity across 1949 is that it was not the natural continuation of society and culture in a general sense; rather, "continuity" indicates an ongoing process of restructuring. Beneath the great flood of revolution, I have found undercurrents and tributaries; there lies an unchanging, sub-structural force concealed in society's depths. My work therefore takes pains to investigate, amongst Shanghai's lowest social strata, urban culture and agency. The book's English title *A City Displaced*, if rendered back into Chinese, simultaneously implies conditions of "being without a home to return to," "being displaced," and "being replaced." I hope that these research cases situate 1950s Shanghai within various conditions of instability, rather than one of simply "being replaced," in which the state swallows Shanghai up.

Returning to Chuchu's response, I find the questions about "gender approach" and oral materials are particularly

significant. As everyone knows, Shanghai continues to be a major site for feminist scholarship to make its mark. Wang Zheng was the earliest historian to bring feminism into research of Shanghai's residents' committees.¹ Having benefited from her work, my study attends to women at the lowest rungs of Shanghai society, pursuing a practice which engages the intersection of gender and class. On the one hand, a great number of housewives became the main force in neighborhood committees, with average female workers being elected as People's Representatives. Such big-scale organization and mobilization won over the overlooked social group of housewives as well as becoming the means for female workers to pursue an agenda of upward mobility. This was truly an unprecedented move. On the other hand, any analysis cannot easily advance on lines of class or gender alone. The amalgam of classes, along with numerous, overlapping layers of social networks, were all caught up in sustained tensions with the exercise of state control. This pertains especially to the grain supply plan which implicated the livelihoods of countless households, for which neighborhood female cadres had to play the unusually ambiguous and awkward dual role of "government spokesperson" and "housewife" (73-77). The housewife was forever taken as having a "low level of political consciousness" by new political authority and considered relatively unreliable as a social group. Yet the wide range of the CCP's political mobilization and local-level control necessitated vast numbers of women who were not members of *danwei*, or formally recognized work units.

This paradox also existed for an important contingent of the CCP's target base: amongst workers, women received different political treatment on the basis of their different backgrounds and social connections. So it was that within the same textile factory examined in chapter two, the obscure Li Xiaomei, known only as an amenable and dedicated worker who avoided political movements, could be elected People's Representative. At the same time, the female worker "C," both a member of the Youth League and group leader for the *Yiguan dao* sect, was cast as "chief troublemaker," nearly being stripped of her voting rights as a "counter-revolutionary." In order to avoid such an "ultimate disaster," this female worker created an utterly confounding "case of attempted suicide," leading authorities to refrain from imposing a punishment (85-93). In summary, this book's investigation of gender and class indicate the state's contingency and imbalance, as well as the shifting boundary between state and society. The stories of Shanghai housewives' "liberation" or female worker as "masters" should not be conflated as proof of improvements in women's position during

the early PRC.² The “female liberation” lauded in CCP ideology can often be dispelled by attention to the everyday.

Unlike the established scholarship on feminist theory from Shanghai in the late Qing and Republican periods, Mao era research still contains many promising fields to develop, the most significant amongst them being urban housewives’ participation in public service. Under the key term “state feminists,” Wang Zheng has worked to understand the process of “finding women” within the socialist state, revealing how in the early CCP women’s movement, veteran leaders operated through a strategic “politics of concealment” behind state affairs in order to effectively implement the demand for “equality of the sexes” in neighborhood women’s organizations.³ Opening the possibility for participation in public service allowed a great number of housewives, especially women of the most disfavored social rung, to break through gendered boundaries.

Apart from the “state feminists,” Republican Shanghai also had numerous popular societies and mass media groups composed in large part by female intellectuals. They actively promoted women’s employment, supported developing professional skills for unemployed women and housewives, promoted knowledge for running a modern urban household, and were extraordinarily active in public service. In chapter four of the book, for example, I write about Huang Jiayin (黄嘉音) and his wife’s organization of the monthly journal *Jia* (家) as well as the “*Jia*” publishing house series on hygiene for mothers and children, as just one small example (238-252). Beyond the functioning of the CCP government, the great number of popular societies and mass media experienced were rolled out for a brief period before being subsequently withdrawn or shut down. Even those which still exist today, like the YWCA, have been put under state control. But the women in these groups have left traces of the struggles which they took up for the sake of housewives. Such traces point the way toward a research path quite distinct from that of “state feminists.” It is particularly noteworthy that in Shanghai during the early 1950s, amongst 950,000 housewives, over 54,000 were intellectuals. How this by no means negligible group of women responded to and took action during Shanghai’s major transformations of the 1950s could lead to research questions linking Republican and PRC periods.

In a similar vein, another figure whom we should attend to is the nanny, who shouldered a considerable share of domestic labor’s burden. According to statistics for January 1950, amongst the laboring women in Shanghai, the number of domestic workers (67,245) was second only to female artisanal and industrial workers (156,333). Amongst all professions, the highest proportion of women was in domestic work (71.38%).⁴ My book recounts several interesting cases of nannies who were selected as cadres for neighborhood committees and People’s Representatives (56-60, 120), even though this incurred their employers’ displeasure. Several nannies who became cadres saw their work complicated by cold treatment from wealthy residents.

By my recollection as well as by others of my generation, nannies in Shanghai during the 1950s were no longer referred to as “servants” (佣人) but were collectively called “laboring big sisters” (劳动大姐), though many employers and their own charges called them “aunties” (阿姨). In the homes of cadres and intellectuals, nannies no longer called heads of household “Master” (老爷) and “Mrs.” (太太); instead, many used the ungendered “comrade”, while some continued using “Mr.” (先生) for the male head of household. Until now, a series of questions still linger in my mind: why did nannies participate in public service apart from their domestic labor, and how was their participation different from the ways other working women used spare time to join in public life? How did nannies come to obtain a social position like People’s Representative? How did they manage to strike a balance between domestic labor and work in the broader social realm? How were relations with employers transformed in the context of “class” language ushered in through such participation? Was this all subordinate to the broader reality of “laboring people becoming masters of their own affairs” and “the liberation of oppressed women,” or was it merely a passing fantasy? Although scholars have written more on the topic of nannies in the past ten years, with sociologist Lan Pei-chia’s landmark work *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domesticity and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan* garnering considerable attention, I confess that my book grants scarce attention to the matter of domestic employment. This is a serious lacuna in early PRC historical research.

Of course, no matter whether research is on female domestic labor or the brief existence of women’s popular societies in the early PRC, retrieving first-hand sources from the archive is certainly necessary, though it can also be quite arduous. This, along with broadening the base of historical resources, have been the two principle premises for this research project. Fortunately, several Chinese universities and research institutes have made efforts in recent years to collate and build up large databases of oral histories, photography, and unofficial collections of popular historical materials.⁵ Such new historical sources may provide inspiration for the neglected topics described above, making such avenues possible for scholars.

Finally, I want to offer a few opinions on Chuchu’s question about the use of oral history and memoir. I am in full agreement with several historians’ view in recent years: we must remain cautious with respect to all kinds of historical sources. When reviewing my book, Gail Hershatter cautioned that “the archives are a record of the state talking to itself. So if we stay with archival documents, it is difficult to escape the framework of what we might summarize as ‘the state tries this policy, and here is what it encounters in the way of local response.’”⁶ Looking back on my experience as a researcher, I was sometimes so caught up in the thrill of archival discoveries that I lost my sense of restraint. *A City Displaced* makes use of archival findings culled over many years, and this is probably my forte as a Chinese historian; though it can also be a pitfall. At the same time, using oral history and memoir demands attention to their complexity. An interviewee will always present recollections under the influence of time’s passage and subsequent events, she or he having personally experienced

over seventy years of history and with the great majority of their generation having either passed away or having reached an advanced age. Narrating the events of a bygone era makes it all the more difficult to avoid constraints imposed by one's feelings, past misfortunes, and the traditional mindset that certain topics should remain off limits. This book does not use many oral histories, but during my research I became increasingly attentive to inadequacies and biases in oral histories and memoirs. When interpreting this material, I do my best to keep my feelings at bay, meticulously checking against historical material from other sources, exercising discrimination in judgement and getting as close as possible to a substantive and reasonable understanding of the truth. In addition, I found on several occasions when conducting oral history interviews that an interviewee refused to speak about their relative's painful experiences. Building the necessary relationship of mutual trust with her/him is by no means easy; the effort often produces meager results or simply none whatsoever.

¹ Wang, Zheng 王政, "Juweihui de gushi: shehui xingbie yu 1950 niandai Shanghai chengshi shehui de chongxin zuzhi" 居委会的故事: 社会性别与 1950 年代上海城市社会的重新组织 [Stories of neighborhood committees: gender and the reorganization of 1950's Shanghai urban society], in Lü, Fangshang, ed. 吕芳上主编, *Wusheng zhi sheng: jindai Zhongguo funü yu guojia* (1600-1950) 无声之声: 近代中国妇女与国家 [*The sound of silence: women of China's new epochs and the state* (1600-1950)], (Taipei: Zhongyanyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2003): 165-198.

² See the introduction in Hershatter, Gail, *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

³ Wang Zheng, *Finding Women in the State: A Socialist Feminist Revolution in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1964* (Oakland, University of California Press, 2017).

⁴ Shanghai shi tongji ju 上海市统计局 (Shanghai municipal statistics bureau), *Shi mishuchu bian 1949 Shanghai shi zonghe tongji ziliao* 市秘书处编 1949 年上海市综合统计资料 (1949 comprehensive statistical materials for Shanghai compiled by the municipal secretariat), 15 June 1950. Shanghai Municipal Archive B31-1-13: 15.

⁵ "Popular historical materials" refers to materials from used book sellers and donations, rather than government archives.

Even though this is the case, the history of Shanghai during the People's Republic of China remains rich with fascination. Many successful oral historians remain role models for me, and just as my fellow Shanghai *tongxiang* Li Jie wrote in *Shanghai Homes*: "My extended family members and former neighbors provided the most important building materials for this book, enlivening it with their voices over several summers. I thank them for entrusting with me their family and personal histories and can only hope that this book has done their stories justice" (ix).⁷ As I write in the acknowledgements of *A City Displaced*: "As a descendent of the Zhang family in Shanghai's old city and being the same age as the People's Republic itself, 1950s Shanghai is by no means a cold and distant history. My responsibilities as a historian aside, my birthplace, extended family, and loved ones all provide constant spiritual support" (3). What I ultimately mean is that Shanghai's history is not on the page, it is in my heart.

Amongst them, a great number provide archives which pertain to the broad social base (i.e., factory workers, schools, commune brigades, etc.); there are also private collections, or manuscript copies of official documents. In other words, popular historical materials constitute the most important archival source apart from the official archives. See: Zhang Jishun 张济顺, "Minjian shiliao yu Zhongguo dangdai yanjiu zhi renwen quxiang—Huadong Shifan daxue dangdai wenxian shiliao zhongxin shoucang suojian" 民间史料与中国当代史研究之人文取向——华东师范大学当代文献史料中心收藏所见 (Popular historical materials and tendencies in contemporary research on China—findings from East China Normal University's Center for Historical Materials), in Dongyang wenku chaocheng yazhou yanjiu bumen xiandai Zhongguo yanjiu ban ed. 东洋文库超域亚洲研究部门现代中国研究班主编, *Dang'an ziliao de nei yu wai: zhanwang dangdai Zhongguo yanjiu* 档案资料的内与外: 展望当代中国研究 [*Inside and outside the archives: new developments in contemporary research on China*] (Tokyo: Dongyang wenku, 2018): 3-22.

⁶ Hershatter, Gail, "Notes from the alleyway: Zhang Jishun's *A City Displaced* and the promise of archival research," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 10:1 (2016): 110.

⁷ Li Jie, *Shanghai Homes: Palimpsests of Private Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).