

In a globalized, hyper-modern metropolis such as Shanghai, the state's official education policies have abandoned the revolutionary discourse that prevailed in the 1950s and 1960s. After the Reform and Opening Up, the state no longer grounds its authority and legitimacy in Marxist dogma or the elimination of class exploitation. The Chinese Communist Party presents itself not as the vanguard of revolutionaries, but as a technocratic manager overseeing China's modernization project. Education is explicitly framed within developmental rationality that prioritizes the production of "high-quality workers" who are globally competitive and competent to help China realize its rejuvenation goals. The shift ostensibly depoliticizes state control, rendering education policy as a "neutral" instrument for long-term economic growth and national survival. The paradox this chapter explores: How does an education system that increasingly relies on the "neutral" language of modernization and human capital simultaneously achieve ideological subjection of its student body? If the state has stepped back from significant and disruptive events—the ones that were widely adopted in Mao's era—how does the state maintain its grip on students' ideology and consciousness?

This chapter analyzes policy documents, published by the Shanghai Education Commission between 2000 and 2020, and argues that the state has not stepped back but has reconfigured its ideological dissemination. It argues that the Chinese state resolves the tension of modernization and political control through the following technologies:

1. Retreat from "hard" ideology and the adoption of developmental rationality to legitimize its control
2. Temporal enclosures: the routinization of ideology indoctrination
3. Ideological subjection as elite professionalization
4. The quantification of the effectiveness of ideological dissemination on the institutional level through audits