

# 4

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN CHINA

### AN EMPIRICAL INQUIRY THROUGH THE LENS OF THE SYSTEM OF STUDENT INFORMANTS (XUESHENG XINXIYUAN)

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In 1919, the May Fourth Movement, which was mainly led by and made up of students and intellectuals, waged attacks against traditional Chinese values and called for individual freedom, freedom of speech, and democracy. In the midst of the so-called “Enlightenment Movement in China,”<sup>1</sup> the then-president of Peking University, Cai Yuanpei, advocated for the independence of higher education from “both national politics and religion,” with independent “administration, funding, ideas and content.”<sup>2</sup> “The independence of spirit, the freedom of thought” (*duli zhi jingshen, ziyou zhi sixiang*) raised by one of the leading intellectuals of the May Fourth generation, Chen Yinke, in 1929 has long been acknowledged by many in China as the motto and goal of both academics and academic institutions. After the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (China) in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (the Party) repelled the model of academic freedom advocated by Cai, which was rooted in the “Western idea of rationalism,”<sup>3</sup> and fully integrated higher education into its political, economic, and social development agenda.<sup>4</sup> For the communists, higher education was a key vehicle for popular mobilization and political control.<sup>5</sup>

Nowadays, mounting news reports and research accounts show that Chinese academics are under increasing pressure.<sup>6</sup> Today, the authorities’ oversight and

discipline may be recognized as an entity that makes up two intertwined swords of Damocles that hang over the heads of teachers and students in universities. The first sword is an array of official bans or restraints on what a teacher may (or may not) say in the classroom or what teaching materials and textbooks can be used, and it is often implemented under the name of the “code of teacher’s professional ethics” (*shide*). The second sword, which is used to make sure that these official requirements (or taboos) are abided by, is a student informant (*xuesheng xinxiyuan*) system that both formally employs and informally encourages students to scrutinize their teachers and report potential violations.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the high-tech cameras that are already installed in classrooms for monitoring lectures and discussion, student informants are viewed by authorities as key information nodes for a bottom-up, masses-based form of surveillance and control.<sup>8</sup> In this sense, the system of student informants provides a crucial lens for examining academic freedom in China under the leadership of Xi Jinping.

This chapter aims at exploring the Chinese authorities’ wielding of these two main swords of Damocles—top-down control and bottom-up surveillance—on university campuses through the lens of the student informant system. As Sheena Chestnut Greitens and Rory Truex note in their China Scholar Research Experience Survey,<sup>9</sup> we lack empirical information on the experience, comments, and insights of Chinese scholars—and scholars who are based in China—in the current political context. In an effort to fill this gap, the first part of this chapter provides an overview, based on open-access documents and reports, of the institutional framework and the operation of this system. This overview highlights both the continuance and development of the Party’s ideological control over teachers and students via the system of student informants. The second part of the chapter focuses on data I gathered through interviews with ten university professors based in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. This qualitative study, which draws heavily on the personal accounts of my interlocuters, provides an intimate and fine-grained commentary on China’s modern student informant system and its contributions to the deteriorating state of academic freedom in China. In addition, the chapter also provides a critical discussion of the far-reaching and profound harm student informants are having on individuals and society more broadly—factors that may further buttress the Party’s authoritarian rule in China.

### **New Wine in an Old Bottle: Controls and Restraints on University Campuses through the System of Student Informants**

Officially identified as part of the socialist bureaucracy, universities and the academy have been routinely molded to fulfill the Party’s socioeconomic agenda. After the Opening and Reform era in the 1980s, the Party launched a

series of educational reforms by granting some autonomy (*zizhi quan*), in the sense of self-regulation and responsibilities, to universities and colleges for their training of more qualified personnel for economic development and national modernization.<sup>10</sup> These principles were later stipulated in legal statutes. Article 10 of China's Higher Education Law adopted in 1998 provides that "the State ensures the freedoms of scientific research, literary and artistic creation and other cultural activities conducted in higher education institutions." This law also supports academic freedom and autonomy in some more specific aspects, including undertaking research and teaching activities,<sup>11</sup> managing curriculum and course materials,<sup>12</sup> setting up the university's charter,<sup>13</sup> hiring faculty members, and rewarding or punishing them.<sup>14</sup> These provisions are in line with the PRC Constitution, which enshrines citizens' enjoyment of freedom of speech<sup>15</sup> as well as the freedom of "engaging in scientific research, literary and artistic creation and other cultural pursuits."<sup>16</sup> As China is a state member of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and a signatory of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), it also has an obligation to implement its commitment to the academic freedom that is confirmed in these international human rights instruments.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, in tandem with the principles and provisions in the Constitution—and, in fact, the Chinese legal system—that rights are relative (*xiangdui*) and always associated with duties,<sup>18</sup> there are also provisions in the Higher Education Law that create tensions with academic freedom and the autonomy of universities. For example, it stipulates that higher education should "adhere to Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory,"<sup>19</sup> and the paramount responsibility of it is to carry out "the lines, principles and policies of the Chinese Communist Party . . . and to lead the ideological and political work and moral education in the institutions."<sup>20</sup> Likewise, Article 39 of the Higher Education Law stipulates the Presidential Responsibility System under the leadership of the University Party Committee, which means universities and colleges in China are placed under the dual management system of their administration and the Party.<sup>21</sup>

According to some scholars, such paradoxical provisions reflect the Party's insecure stance—especially after the Tiananmen Movement in 1989—and its effort to ensure that universities and colleges would not be springboards of political protests.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, these provisions help ensure the Party's leadership on campus, even though some power and autonomy is delegated to universities and colleges.<sup>23</sup> Since a Chinese university is legally required to serve and sustain the interests of the Party-state, it is, by its nature, receptive and responsive to the Party-state's initiative and intervention.<sup>24</sup> This mode or relationship between higher education and the government indicates that China stands at nearly the extreme of the knowledge-power nexus spectrum: as a reciprocal relationship,

the political authority legitimizes knowledge, including what constitutes “proper knowledge,” and knowledge, in turn, is employed as a critical source of the authority’s legitimacy.<sup>25</sup> That is also to say, campus integrity, as conceptualized by the Academic Freedom Index (AFI) as one pivotal indicator for academic freedom, is especially vulnerable in China.<sup>26</sup>

Party control over higher education has intensified since Xi Jinping assumed power in late 2012, and alongside a broader political tightening campaign.<sup>27</sup> In 2013, investigative journalist Gao Yu revealed online the “Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere,” also known as “Document Number 9,” allegedly an internal directive issued by the General Office of the Party Central Committee.<sup>28</sup> This “document,” confirmed by multiple academics who were based in China to be oral instructions given by their universities, banned seven politically sensitive topics in the classroom—these so-called “seven no mentions” (*qi bu jiang*) included “universal values, press freedom, civil society, civic rights, historical mistakes by the Communist Party, elite cronyism, and judicial independence.”<sup>29</sup> A bit later in the same year, the Party issued “Sixteen Guidelines on Strengthening and Improving the Ideological and Political Work of Young Teachers in Colleges and Universities” (widely known as “Sixteen Guidelines”), which was recognized by some China observers as an open version of the “Document Number 9.”<sup>30</sup> This “Sixteen Guidelines” document expressly highlights the significance of promoting ideological study among junior teachers, and it associates the teacher’s role in ideological and political education with their promotion.<sup>31</sup> More generally and fundamentally, the Party has strengthened its leadership role within universities by reiterating, in its 2014 policy, that “the Party has the full responsibility of policymaking on teaching, research, and administrative issues,” and “both students and teachers should arm themselves with the theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics.”<sup>32</sup> In 2017, the Nineteenth Party Congress amended the Party Charter by stressing the Party’s absolute and overall leadership in “the Party, government, military, society and education” (*dang, zheng, jun, min, xue, dang lingdao yiqie*).<sup>33</sup> Then, more specifically on the front of education, China’s Ministry of Education issued the “Outline for Implementing the Project on Improving the Quality of Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities” in December 2017, which stated that “ideological and political performance” will be “the single most heavily weighted criterion in the evaluation of university teachers” and “the most important factor in determining the career prospects of university faculty.”<sup>34</sup> More recently, in March 2019, President Xi Jinping, at a conference held for the representatives of teachers across the country, stressed that educators should take a “leading role in spreading mainstream ideology and directly confronting all kinds of wrong viewpoints and ideologies” and should “guide the students to be confident about socialism with Chinese characteristics . . . to have patriotism deeply ingrained

among the students,” and to reject “wrong ideas and ideology” while they also “carry out strict self-discipline.”<sup>35</sup>

Universities in China embarked on various measures to conform to this political directive—for example, some universities reformed their teacher evaluation system and strengthened teacher training.<sup>36</sup> Three top Chinese universities—Peking University, Fudan University, and Sun Yat-Sen University—jointly published a statement on the Party media *Seeking Truth (Qiushi)* to proclaim their resolution to strengthen ideological work on campus.<sup>37</sup> Surveillance cameras were widely installed in classrooms.<sup>38</sup> Government officials were also tasked with visiting colleges and universities regularly to check and assess teachers’ performance and compliance.<sup>39</sup> Some media members launched activities, including sitting in classes at scores of universities across China and then exposing the university teachers’ three principal problems with teaching China-related courses. These problems, as summarized by *Liaoning Daily*, were “lacking the sense of identity with the Party’s theories, policies and sentiments” as “attacking China and referring to foreign countries” had become a “fashion” in the classroom.<sup>40</sup>

As mentioned above, Chinese university and college campuses are legally and institutionally established as one of the most crucial strongholds in upholding the Party’s rule. There are academic studies reviewing the Party’s long-standing and routine control over students and professors through a series of methods that include mandatory political and ideological education curriculum on Marxist theory and the thinking of Chinese political leaders;<sup>41</sup> regular political education events such as class meetings (*banhui*), reading sessions (*dushu hui*), and student Party branch meetings (*danghui*);<sup>42</sup> and a professional oversight hierarchy implemented by “guidance counselors” (*fudao yuan*)<sup>43</sup> to material benefits that include job opportunities and “direct admission to graduate school” (*baoyan*);<sup>44</sup> assessment measures embodying the state-defined criteria for success in targeting faculties and professors,<sup>45</sup> and the current, more “modernized” methods such as surveillance cameras and social media applications.<sup>46</sup> These studies note that at those campuses in the near extreme of the knowledge-power nexus spectrum, where there is a “more depoliticized, bureaucratic and materialistic” approach taken by the authorities—which is “driven by more concrete and tangible incentives rather than ideological causes” in engendering compliance and docility, or, as characterized by Elizabeth Perry, “educated acquiescence”—“those with cultural capital enjoy high standing in return for fulfilling state-established expectations.”<sup>47</sup> As pointed out by Yan Xiaojun, since the post-Deng era, these measures “have supplanted political indoctrination and mobilization as the main instruments of power, while regular Party-state cadre-teachers have replaced campaign activists as the primary scions tasked with keeping the Party-state’s grip” on university

campuses.<sup>48</sup> These studies, notwithstanding the way they highlight the somewhat depoliticized feature of the Party's control, may neglect some new developments in institutionalizing the so-called "moral" or "ethical" values as well as interweaving these "moral" or "ethical" values in with the seemingly cynical or apolitical incentives for generating intellectuals' internalized submission or subjection. The system of student informants that embeds this development and characteristic is crucial for an in-depth understanding of the effect the Party's control has over academia and the status quo of the relationship between the Party-state and higher education and intellectuals in China under Xi Jinping's leadership.

There is no official document detailing the initiation of the system of student informants nationwide or in any region. Various online resources show that this system was established in some Chinese universities at the beginning of the 2000s.<sup>49</sup> By analyzing available online resources about this system in multiple Chinese universities, we find two prominent features of this system at that period of time (i.e., before 2013). The first one is its secrecy—that is, its recruitment, operation, and compensation for informants was done covertly. For example, the Regulation of the System of Student Informants at Jilin University provides that "student informants are responsible directly to the department and the Office of Educational Administration (*jiaowuchu*) and the department and the Office of Educational Administration should keep the information reported by student informants confidential."<sup>50</sup> The Reward Methods for Student Informants at Hunan University of Technology and Business states, "in order to ensure the secrecy of the informants' work, any two informants cannot be present at the same time to receive the bounty."<sup>51</sup> Some Chinese media reports mentioned that the identities of student informants were unknown to professors and students, and thus, this system was also called a "mysterious organization in universities."<sup>52</sup>

The second feature is the overall general and vague subjects to inform on. At that time, the purpose of student informants' reporting was still rather broadly characterized as "collecting feedback on teaching from students for supervising teaching (*jiandu jiaoxue*)."<sup>53</sup> The responsibility of the student informant also appears to be ambiguously all-encompassing, ranging from teaching content and teaching equipment to examination and teaching materials.<sup>54</sup> The professors being informed on by their students were often derogated as "anti-Party, anti-socialism or counter-revolutionary"—very broad, vague, and Maoist-style political accusations.<sup>55</sup> This feature might be due to the lack of more specific rules or policies from authorities. Except for the general provisions in the Higher Education Law mentioned above, in the legal and institutional framework governing academia, the restrictions on academic freedom in other regulations during that period of time are also quite broad and general. For instance, the Notice on Further Strengthening the Management of Journals on Current Affairs and Politics, Comprehensive Cultural

Life, Information Digest, and Academic Theory, which was issued by the National Press and Publication Administration in 2000, lists seven main taboos, including denying the guiding status of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory; violating the Party's line, principles, and policies; divulging state secrets, endangering national security, or harming national interests; violating national and religious policies, endangering national unity, and affecting social stability; advocating murder, violence, obscenity, superstition, and pseudoscience; spreading rumors and false news and interfering with the work of the Party and the state; and other violations of the Party's propaganda discipline and the state regulations on publication administration.<sup>56</sup> The Opinions on Strengthening Academic Ethics issued by the Ministry of Education also simply and broadly emphasized “rectifying academic ethos and strengthening academic ethics” without offering more details or rules about implementation.<sup>57</sup>

Such abstract and general provisions—which read more or less like political guidelines or principles hovering over Chinese universities and professors for a long time (or, from the very beginning after 1949)—for one thing, make it hard to appeal to citizens at the court when they believe that academic freedom has been violated in their cases.<sup>58</sup> For another thing, the punishment or discipline of professors after they are reported by student informants is sporadic and rare. Some media reports indicate that even if they were not disciplined at the end of a case, the professors accused of “anti-Party, anti-socialism or counter-revolutionary” activity did not necessarily know the exact speeches of theirs that led to students reporting.<sup>59</sup>

After the promulgation of the “seven no mentions” and the apparent escalation of restraints on academic freedom after Xi Jinping took power in 2013, two salient developments of the system of student informants could be observed. First, both the rules on what can and cannot be taught and the recruitment of student informants have become more systematic and institutionalized. An accompanying development in this regard is that, under the Party's ideology of “governing the country in accordance with the law” (*yifa zhiguo*) and “rule by morality” (*yide zhiguo*), which Xi Jinping put forward in 2014, the restraints and monitoring at the front lines of higher education are implemented under the name of “virtue” or “morality.”<sup>60</sup> In 2018, the Ministry of Education issued the “Guiding Opinions on Dealing with Conducts of College and University Teachers That Violate Teacher's Professional Ethics,” which asks “every college and university nationwide” to “stipulate a negative list for the conducts violating teacher's professional ethics as well as the method of handling the violations.”<sup>61</sup> In response, universities across China promulgated local rules, specifying and detailing such a list under the guise of teachers' professional ethics.<sup>62</sup>

In this context, the second development becomes evident—that is, more and more professors were punished for allegedly breaching these rules, and such so-called “teaching incidents” (*jiaoxue shigu*) have become more frequent.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, regarding the incentive mechanism for student informants, the various forms of reward from the beginning of this system in the early 2000s include money, the reimbursement of book or tuition fees, credits to join the Party, and other certificates of honor.<sup>64</sup> Currently, the increasingly frequent and even routine proactive responses from the authorities to the informants, which has taken the form of disciplining and punishing those being informed on, along with some state-launched online platforms for much easier reporting,<sup>65</sup> have helped to cultivate the atmosphere that the informants are officially acknowledged and promoted as “activists” (*jiji fenzi*) delivering “positive energy” (*zheng nengliang*). This may also explain a current trend where students are now publishing and circulating their reporting on professors online, doing so with pride, using their real name, and demonstrating their (officially approved or commended) “right political sense.”<sup>66</sup> Although student informants, as well as their impact on professors, have been increasingly spotlighted by news reports, blogs, and social media posts, a systematic and in-depth study based on empirical evidence is needed to understand the details of its operation and the harm it has done to academic freedom, and perhaps even more.

## Findings from the Interviews

As part of this study, I conducted interviews with ten professors in February and March of 2021.<sup>67</sup> Among them, seven teach in mainland Chinese universities, including one non-Chinese professor who teaches at a joint-venture campus. Two teach in Hong Kong, and one teaches in Macau. A student informant system was not systematically implemented in Hong Kong and Macau at the time of interviewing<sup>68</sup>—yet the need for studying academic freedom in these two regions is crucial because tightening ideological control in China has a ripple effect in Macau and Hong Kong. As poignantly pointed out by some scholars, “when it comes to censorship and self-censorship, Macau is catching up with the mainland, and Hong Kong is catching up with Macau.”<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the rapidly deteriorating situation of academic freedom in these regions after the adoption of the National Security Law on June 30, 2020, is substantiated by the growing number of reports and the AFI 2020.<sup>70</sup> As noted by Katrin Kinzelbach in chapter 2 of this volume, academic freedom in Hong Kong is witnessing its “starkest deterioration” since the start of the century.

The teaching and research areas of all ten professors belong to social sciences and humanities. In this sense, the potential limitation of this qualitative study may include the comparatively small size of the sample, which may be critiqued as

not being representative enough. Also, it is hard to dig further into this sample to explore or segregate various factors, including the ranking and location of the various universities, and the ranking or different employment status of the various professors (e.g. tenured or nontenured, junior or senior, adjunct or employed) that may likely influence an individual's behaviors. This study does not involve professors in the STEM subjects (i.e., Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)—anecdotal resources indicate that these subjects are much less affected since it is much less likely that the teachers in these areas will touch upon those “taboo topics.” However, there are reports about a professor in the science and engineering fields being reported on by a student informant and then disciplined for allegedly making “inappropriate comparisons between Chinese and Japanese people” in class.<sup>71</sup> Some anecdotal information spread online also mentions that in teaching STEM subjects in China nowadays, mathematics teachers need to emphasize that Chinese circle-cutting is the origin and ancestor of calculus; science teachers need to refer to the four great inventions in China as the source of all inventions in the world; computer teachers need to emphasize that the computer binary comes from the *I Ching*; and chemistry teachers need to emphasize that alchemy is the ancestor of chemistry and physics.<sup>72</sup>

Two mainland Chinese professors I interviewed were reported on by their students and disciplined by their universities, yet the stories of both have not been covered by any media. In fact, in the interview, both of the professors mentioned their fear of being interviewed, even merely for research and academic purposes. Some Chinese professors based in the mainland who expressly turned down my interview requests also mentioned their fear about talking about this topic and the restrictions in their universities. For example, one professor told me that she could not talk to me because her university required professors to report any interaction or exchange with people overseas;<sup>73</sup> as far as she knew, it would be quite hard to get approval. In the process of looking for potential interviewees, I also corresponded with several students at Chinese universities and was told that some professors they knew who had been disciplined (including being demoted, relieved of teaching duties, or transferred to other positions in a place like the library) due to student informants tipping off something they said in the classroom, were silenced by their universities (under the intimidation of further punishment). In this sense, and given the intensifying pressure facing Chinese professors today, the comparatively small sample discussed in this research may also represent the majority of those who want to keep their jobs or develop their careers in their universities and in China. Moreover, to supplement my qualitative findings, I used some information obtained from online discussions, blogs, and essays penned by Chinese professors.

Due to travel restrictions amid the COVID-19 pandemic, all the interviews were conducted remotely via telephone. Given the sensitivity of this research

topic and in order to protect the interlocutors, all their names and identifying information are omitted in the chapter. The interview questions were all open-ended, focusing on the professor's knowledge and experience of the system of student informants and, more broadly, on their feelings, experiences, and comments about teaching and researching in China, Hong Kong, or Macau today. The interview questions were:

1. Whether or not, or to what extent are you aware of the student informants system?
2. What is your own experience (if any) with the student informants system?
3. According to your knowledge (if any), how is this system operated in your university?
4. What is the impact of this system on you, the students, and the wider context on the university campus?
5. What are your thoughts and comments on the student informants system and the status quo of academic freedom in China/Hong Kong/Macau today?
6. What is your experience and/or feeling of teaching in China/Hong Kong/Macau today?

Concerning the first three questions, it may not be surprising that the professors with and without such experiences expressed almost polarized attitudes and views on this system. Professor 1 researches and teaches ethnic issues in China, with a special focus on the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. She recounted the reasons and consequences of being reported by the student informants:<sup>74</sup>

The student did report me. My classes were suspended and I almost got fired. I was so traumatized. Oh, it was very scary. Nowadays, there are so many forbidden areas in academia. One of them is Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a particularly sensitive topic now. In one class, I was quite sympathetic to the [Hong Kong] students; then I said we have the Sino-British Joint Declaration, so we should keep our promises. My students recorded my words and reported to the provincial Ministry of Education.

Professor 1 is the only professor in this qualitative study talking about the operation of this system. Her accounts echo the various media and social media reports about the incentive mechanism of the student informants system—it involves not only material and pragmatic interests but also immaterial rewards for following the prevailing political and ideological requirements. For instance, some rules issued by the universities show that the rewards for informants include

money, reimbursement for books, extra credit, and honorary certificates.<sup>75</sup> Likewise, such grand political and ideological requirements have been concretized as evaluation criteria that are linked directly to material and pragmatic benefits.<sup>76</sup>

The students want to join the Party, to obtain a scholarship, as the evaluation powers and final say are not with the professors, but with those administrative leaders. The scholarship evaluation process also needs to appraise a student's political performance. Thus, you see, nowadays, it is all about politics and all stresses political performance. For example, according to the current criteria in our university, you get seven or eight points for taking part in an activity the administrative leaders enjoy and doing something they like with them, such as playing a basketball game, yet only two points for writing or publishing an essay.

Professor 2, who teaches the Constitution, had a similar traumatic experience and expressed similar feelings about being tipped-off by students.<sup>77</sup>

Xi Jinping revised the Constitution and I commented on it privately, but it was reported by my students. The school wanted to fire me. My mother committed suicide. Finally, the school still had some sympathies with me, so I was demoted, from professor directly to lecturer. Nowadays, there are students who blatantly record me in class and take pictures of me. They also take pictures of my PowerPoint slides in class.

Some online information also implies the vulnerability of professors who face the prospect of being tipped-off by students. According to anecdotal information, universities do not care much about the truthfulness of students' reports.<sup>78</sup> In the intensifying political climate, university leaders have to be extremely cautious. They are subjected to fear of being affected themselves if they do not deal with such reports or professors. Meanwhile, the professors who are reported have few if any effective ways to defend themselves. To defend oneself is to make "two wrongs" (*cuoshangjiaocuo*), since the leaders would simply ask, "There are so many teachers; why did the students just report you?"<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, with these professors having such traumatic experiences, and with the mounting reports and online discussions about this problem in domestic China, all four of the Chinese professors based in mainland China articulated their ignorance and justification of the system of student informants. Professor 3 justified the system as a necessary management system, and they dismissed the cases of professors being informed on and disciplined as being rumors:<sup>80</sup>

The university has anonymous informants, but they target not only teachers. They monitor a wide range of issues, such as class discipline and how the teacher teaches. Of course, the teacher's speeches and behaviors must be reported if they

are too aggressive. The teachers around me and I do not want to know who the informant is in the classroom. If you ask, you might be able to know it. Every university has the student informants system; it has been a long time. I have not heard of any real instances [of professors being reported by informants] so far—there are just rumors going around.

In a similar vein, Professor 4 thought that the students' reporting had little to do with academia or academic freedom but instead was just some regulation (*guizhi*) and discipline (*jiliu*) imposed on academics; perhaps this was the reason why he paid no attention to it. His alleged ignorance may imply that he did not view the regulation or discipline of academics as a violation or erosion of academic freedom.<sup>81</sup>

There are student informants in my university. This system is to manage the classroom as well as the teacher's speech and expression, and I think it has little to do with academics themselves, although of course it is also somewhat related to the discipline and regulation of academics and academia. The examples you gave [about professors being reported by informants] are very special cases and just exceptional. Students reporting their professors will not become a widespread phenomenon or a norm. I have not even heard of such things happening in my university at all. I do not pay any attention to such things.

Professor 5 justified this system by referring to some reports of professors telling dirty jokes in the classroom—namely, improper and unethical conduct that should be informed on.<sup>82</sup>

Students do report what the teachers say in class, but I am not sure if it has anything to do with the informants system. For example, a teacher told some jokes in class, while the students felt a little too much, especially some female students, and then they reported this to the faculty. Our leaders in the faculty held a meeting and said that teachers should be alert on not telling the jokes that may make students feel uncomfortable about.

Professor 6 was even briefer in her response, since she also paid little attention to this system and its operation was covert.<sup>83</sup>

I have heard of student informants, but I have not encountered any reported cases myself, and I do not know who the informants are. None of the informants is public.

Professor 7, a non-Chinese professor teaching at a joint-venture campus in China, acknowledged the existence of student informants in Chinese universities, yet she attributed her own status and the special status of her school as a shield

against the erosion of academic freedom by this system (and perhaps more fundamentally, by the Party).<sup>84</sup>

I have heard and read stories of that. But our school is very different. It is not our situation. I never heard of students in our law school reporting professors. I have my status (*shenfen*) in China. I think the students understand who I am. Why would they want to do me ill? No. I am a bridge between the two legal cultures.

Regarding the impact of this system, both Professors 1 and 2 expressed their deep sadness and dismay about the consequences this system has brought to themselves, their teaching, and the wider context—although they were accused of having “immoral” or “unethical” speeches or acts. Also, both professors talked about taking a nonserious and irresponsible attitude toward teaching (e.g., simply reading the textbook or even asking the students to read the textbook themselves) as self-protection. Professor 1 stated that:<sup>85</sup>

They were going to fire me, and I was so depressed—I nearly jumped off a building. There is nothing wrong with what I said, but they simply said, “You had evil thoughts.” That is a political crime, like in the Cultural Revolution, they accused you of bad political performance. Now they accuse me of degraded morality (*dexing buhao*). What is virtue? Is their morality good? They are poor in academics and even poorer in character (*renpin*), but they can reckon on this word of “morality” to bully you to death.

I think Hu Shi once said, when a country talks about morality every day, this country is particularly immoral. I really feel the degeneration of this country now—this country is hopeless. As so many people have profited from such a degraded environment, they are very supportive of such a system. A bad environment is where good people cannot do good things, so that you can only fall.

I feel that I myself am a little degraded now, because my classes are just water classes (*shuike*) [i.e., I teach in a perfunctory way]. I am safe only in this way, otherwise, I would be snatched by student informants. My mistake in the past is that I was too serious; I even risked my life.

Likewise, Professor 2 said:<sup>86</sup>

Several professors have been reported by their own postgraduate students. I do not want to be complicit. I just want to listen to my heart. But I cannot be like that now. The scars inside me are so deep that I am really very disheartened when you ask me this question, and it hurts me

so much talking about it. Nowadays, civility has fallen to such a level. Universities have degenerated to such a level (sigh).

There are plenty of “water classes” (*shuikē*) in the university. Students and teachers are all irresponsible. I have been especially cautious in class this semester, and it is especially scary to see students. Nowadays, we teachers are all like this and students are not serious. We used to get angry when we saw students not being serious with study, but now we do not feel angry anymore—you snitch! Why should I be so dedicated to you?

Apart from the accounts I obtained from these professors, some online discussions also indicate the devastating impacts brought about by student informants on university teachers’ teaching and tutoring. For instance, one netizen mentions that a professor of their classmate, who is a postgraduate student of literature, looks at the surveillance camera and says, “This is what is in the books, not my personal opinions,” whenever they touch upon a topic even remotely related to politics.<sup>87</sup> Another anonymous teacher shares their experience of being snitched on by a student. They told this student to refer to textbooks written by professional scholars instead of those compiled by teachers doing ideological and political work for the Graduate Record Examination, yet this student reported them to the university.<sup>88</sup> A senior professor then suggested to this anonymous teacher, “Do not be so serious with students, as there are arranged informants; do not tell the whole truth, and it is best not to tell any truth; do not elaborate on any content when teaching—just leave after class, muddle through (*suibian duifu*) exams, and no one would hold you accountable in this case.”<sup>89</sup> Actually, due to the chilling effect produced by the growing cases of professors being punished after students report them, there have been a few—perhaps half-serious and half-joking—“guidelines” that have gone viral online to help university professors circumvent students reporting on them. Such “guidelines” include a scripted form of teaching; refraining from expressing personal opinions; not criticizing people and systems; and, for sensitive topics or questions you are reluctant to answer, telling students, “I do not know” or “Please check relevant materials” or “These issues should follow relevant documents issued by the authorities.”<sup>90</sup> A university professor wrote on their blog that, currently, in the university where they work, “the faculty leaders kindly remind us to pay attention to speech and behavior in the classroom and not to step over the ‘red line’; friends, out of good will, also advise us to be cautious with what we say or do; when colleagues exchange with each other on this issue, they especially relish their strategies to become both ‘red-and-professional’ (*you hong you zhuan*) or to sacrifice ‘profession’ for ‘red’ in dealing with (*yingfu*) teaching.”<sup>91</sup>

As shown in the first three questions, the professors who had no such experience with student reporting and who voiced their justification for this

system said they were not affected by student informants. For example, Professor 4 said:<sup>92</sup>

I do not have any problems. Maybe those teaching the Constitution would have some problems? But I never talked with them, thus know nothing.

Professor 6 said:<sup>93</sup>

I believe that the classroom is not a private space—it is public. So I do not think it matters if it is recorded or taped, and I will not be affected by it. The content of my classes are all discussions within the academic context, and we will also talk about the problems and shortcomings, but of course, we will certainly talk about the progress and the positive aspects of the law first.

The pedagogical philosophy of teaching “within the academic context” seems to be recognized by these professors as the most crucial factor for not being impacted by student informants. They seem to believe that they will never “cross the line” and touch upon the “forbidden zones.” Perhaps most importantly, they identify themselves with the official restraints and disapprove of “dissidents.” For example, Professor 3 stated:<sup>94</sup>

The technology is so advanced; thus, you know what you say may be filmed or recorded. You cannot say it forms pressure, but you would know it is—do not talk loosely (*luan shuohua*). If it is not necessary to say, you do not say it. Anyway, we professors are not cynics (*fenqing*), right?

Professor 5 also mentioned his pedagogical philosophy as categorizing officially banned topics as “politics” and leaving “politics” outside the classroom:<sup>95</sup>

I do not think there is any problem with the content of my lectures, so I am not particularly worried. I do worry a little when I see reports about it. But looking back at what those professors said in class after we saw the punishment, I felt that what they said in class was not quite the same as what I think Max Weber contends in *Science as a Vocation* (*Wissenschaft als Beruf*), and I agree that is not what a scholar should say in class. I am pretty sure that I will not talk about those issues myself, so I would not feel worried or nervous.

The non-Chinese professor, not viewing herself as subjected to the pressure caused by student informants, expressed concerns about students (as Chinese citizens) being affected by this system:<sup>96</sup>

The students may have some self-censorship that they do not want to talk about some topics in front of their classmates. I often tell my students that what we said in the classroom should stay there, but I cannot control that. I want my students to talk free, to voice what they think, but there are some students, like student Party cadres, you know—they may make some other students feel uncomfortable to say some things in the classroom.

As for the last two general questions about respondents' comments, experiences, and feelings about conducting research and teaching in China today, Professor 1 talked about the explicit censorship and even physical restraints she has experienced due to the fact that the authorities define her research area—Xinjiang—as one of the most politically sensitive topics.<sup>97</sup>

My project on Xinjiang (ethnic migration issues) was withdrawn by the university; they claimed that I wrote about a sensitive topic. My project has nothing sensitive. I am just seeking truth from facts (*shishi qiushi*). But they said I would expose some problems. I was doing fieldwork in Xinjiang while I was seized/arrested (*zhua*) by the police, and the police in Xinjiang restricted my freedom. I was so terrified.

We are supposed to be highly respected educators, but nowadays, those administrative leaders, those Party secretaries said plainly during the meeting that if anyone [the professors] wanted to research ethnicity, religion, or ideology, and if there is an ideological problem, you will be dismissed. You will not even be allowed to stay in this university; “you black sheep,” they call us. . . . They are doing politics (*gao zhengzhi*) every day; this situation is very serious. Honestly, I do not even know if I can tell you such things like this in the future.

Her accounts also revealed how the Party policy has penetrated the university, becoming something that is enforced by the university leaders, who characterized her work as “doing politics” on campus. In this context, Professor 2 described his research and teaching as “just, to survive in a fissure (*jiafeng zhong qiu shengcun*).”<sup>98</sup> Tan Song, who was fired by Chongqing Normal University in 2017 for his talks and research on the Party's land reform history, wrote about his feelings about student informants.<sup>99</sup>

Sometimes, I looked at my students in the classroom, sweeping my eyes over their youthful faces, and thinking, are there any “underground workers” developed by the Chinese Communist Party among them? If so, who are they? If I have to make a choice between cameras installed in the classroom and “informants” planted among students (i.e., monitoring

versus snitching), I would rather choose the former—as cameras will not ruin an individual’s soul. It is disturbing: amid this nation’s some 2,879 colleges and universities, how many students will be turned into informants? There are tens of millions of college students across the country. What kind of “talents” will they be cultivated after the last bit of independent spirit and free thought in the classroom is killed and the last few teachers who insist on telling the truth are swept out?

Another professor described their decision to resist the system of student informants in an online blog, although it was mocked by some as “naive.”<sup>100</sup>

Ultimately, it is the same fate that we are fighting against. In fact, why do not worry? If you really lose your job, you know exactly what you are facing. It is a sort of tragedy that middle-aged people can hardly afford. Having political problems means that you could never find another job or position of this type in China. This consequence is something that any rational person can think of while cannot afford. So, why take such risks? I think it is still the hearts of human beings (*renxin*)—it is the last bit of hope that I place on the hearts of human beings. Professionalism is also a shield for me. Professionalism should be a shield used by any profession, any industry, to defend against ideological control or uniformity. Of course, I am also aware that in the context of politics trumping everything else (*zhengzhi guashuai*), professionalism is actually defenseless against “red.” My thought is indeed naive. Nevertheless, if we even lose the confidence to stick to our profession and professional ethics, it really is the worst of times.

Yet another professor, who taught law in a university based in Shanghai, wrote about the stress and dismay he felt due to the constant erosion of academic freedom by politics and how this finally drove his decision to resign and leave academia.<sup>101</sup>

I was challenged by students in my class. For example, when I mentioned that traditionally in China, freedom is not valued, a student stood up, furiously, asking me to provide evidence; otherwise, it would be my irresponsibility of bringing my personal emotions into the classroom. I also encountered such challenges multiple times when I gave lectures to master students, and it happens increasingly frequent. But anyway, those students were still thinking and questioned me openly.

Concerning China’s politics in recent years, it is obvious that ideology and politics have been overwhelming in universities. They are only too anxious to unify teachers and courses. Nowadays, it is mandatory that every course and every class must include content on ideology and

politics. This contradicts my pedagogic philosophy. It is rather hard for me to insist on not bending to such requirements. It is not only that now I can gain less and less pleasure and fulfillment in teaching, but also, I have more and more pressure. I know that my political quality (*zhengzhi sushu*) is not that good. Thus, I decided to resign.

Rather differently, those who were confident of not encountering trouble themselves talked about the tacit understanding or consensus among teachers and students, which largely involves complying with the official line. Undertaking self-censorship (both consciously and unconsciously) on the one hand, they expressed their disapproval of or even dismissed those who crossed the party line. For instance, Professor 3 said:<sup>102</sup>

In the domestic environment, everyone now has a basic consensus on what should be said and what should not be said, and we are less likely to worry about this issue. You cannot say exactly where that line is, but you just know. Now the student also knows that there is a line, and they will not ask, as she/he knows that anyway this teacher will not say, or that the teacher would not feel comfortable to answer this question. Now we all have such a tacit understanding (*moqi*).

For example, a professor discussed the legitimacy of the ruling of the Communist Party of China in his students' WeChat group and forum—so he was fired. We teachers in general are not like this, so he is like an alien (*yilei*). We all wonder, “Why do you have to study this? What is the point of discussing this? Are you trying to subvert the regime?”

Professor 4 talked about a quite similar tenet that he held:<sup>103</sup>

In the classroom, you cannot randomly elaborate on what should and should not be said, and this has formed the perception and consensus in our work. Professors should not talk about those facetiously (*luanjiang*). For example, when we teach laws, you should focus on the legal provisions, the system, the spirit, which are essentially professional and academic issues, and there is no need to touch upon those political, sensitive, or even reactionary things, because those things are beyond our classroom.

Professor 5 was open about engaging self-censorship; however, as mentioned earlier, they justified this self-censorship as something that restricted teaching within the sphere of academia, which seems to imply that according to them, the watershed between academia and politics is the Party's definition of specific topics.<sup>104</sup>

In the classroom, there are some issues that we would better not talk about or expand on, and there is definitely some self-censorship. In the current political environment, we definitely will not mention the issues such as the “seven no-mentions” and revision of the Constitution in our class—yet anyway, it is meaningless to talk about them, and those issues are by no means what I can do anything about. I agree with what Max Weber contends in *Science as a Vocation* (*Wissenschaft als Beruf*)—the classroom is not the place to preach personal political views and ideologies, but mainly to service the course itself. I believe that these issues can be separated and should be separated.

Professor 6 expressed the same thought as the primary reason why her teaching was not influenced by student informants:<sup>105</sup>

My own classes have not been affected in any way; I teach the same way as how I did five or ten years ago. The school did pass on some policies, but I never talked about what they asked not to in any case, so it does not affect me at all.

Still, according to the non-Chinese Professor 7, the special status of her school is the foundation for enjoying academic freedom, even when other Chinese universities do not have it:<sup>106</sup>

Our dean is American; there are many Americans teaching here. Academic freedom in our law school is very different from the situation in other, normal Chinese law schools. The normal law schools have dean and party secretary, but the party secretary in our school is not the chief (*yibashou*). Well, it has to be that way; otherwise our law school cannot exist. Our law school gives an American JD [Juris Doctor] degree, and this JD degree is specially approved by the State Council to teach the American legal system. That means lots of foreigners and lots of foreign ideas. It is a goal of our school to have academic freedom. Otherwise, everybody would quit and the program would collapse.

Due to the small sample in this study, it is hard to assess the extent to which a professor’s nationality and status, or the somewhat special status of the joint-venture campus in China, impacts academic freedom.

Concerning the status quo of academic freedom in Hong Kong, both Professors 1 and 2 mentioned pressure and concerns brought about by the increasingly polarized political stances of students from Hong Kong and those from mainland China. Although there seems to be no systematic recruitment of student informants in Hong Kong, the professors were worried that their students

would record and circulate their teaching online. Teaching online amid the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbates such concerns. Both the professors mentioned self-censoring out of stress and fear, and they also mentioned the lack of support from the university or other faculty after the adoption of the National Security Law in Hong Kong. Professor A told me:<sup>107</sup>

Now I teach online, and those mainland students enrolled may not be physically based in Hong Kong. Basically, the university requires us to record everything. The lectures will be on the record, and it will be accessible to the university and to all the students. This is one concern. Also, since it is online teaching, you even do not know whether or not the person sitting in front of the camera is your student—it can be anyone. That created a lot of pressure, as you may face the consequences for what you say in the class. It is also because the students are so emotionally attached—you are facing pressure from both sides.

I don't know if/what the students have reported me; that is the worst thing about it. There is no such thing as procedural fairness, so if any student reports me, I will not be called upon to explain myself. So far, I have not heard anything about students reporting me. Before this semester, I did ask the school for guidance on how to protect ourselves and how to express ourselves. The school did not give any. The dean said these instructions can be very easily used to silence people. Well, that is the thing—he did not give me any guidance; nor did he give me any support. So, without any clear instructions on how I should approach things, I was left to make my own decision. I also do not know what the consequences are. Actually, that is self-censorship.

I do not think there is academic freedom in Hong Kong. The minimum [for academic freedom] would be that you are allowed to speak about very controversial matters without the fear of receiving any consequences.

According to Professor B, the situation and pressure he is facing are quite similar.<sup>108</sup>

My teaching, of course, is affected, yet the reason may be different from that of mainland teachers, as Hong Kong adopted the National Security Law in June last year. I have a clear feeling that it is related to the passage of the National Security Law. I cannot say that all my colleagues are worried about this issue, but at least more than half of them are worried, no matter what subject they teach. There is a provision in the National Security Law that says if you incite dissatisfaction with the Hong Kong government, it can constitute an incitement to subversion. This is a sweepingly broad

provision—we can see from those who have been charged recently, this provision has been interpreted very broadly.

They [the Hong Kong government] will not expressly say that these topics, such as Hong Kong independence, are not allowed to talk about in class, but we all know where the red line is. Every few months or so, this line becomes clearer as we see more and more prosecution cases. Maybe it is a process. You can realize that there is a risk, yet on the other hand, you are no longer sure that there is an institutional safeguard. You are taking personal risks.

There is self-censorship in teaching. For example, when discussing the protection of human rights in China and Hong Kong in class, I would talk more about the legal provisions. When we discuss judicial cases and social events, now we are consciously trying to make sure that views from both sides are elaborated on. This may be subtle self-censorship, which means you express more of those points that are different from your own, and make sure that the official position is articulated. University autonomy is mainly based on a consensus, but now we professors cannot expect to obtain support from the committee member who has the power.

The accounts from Professor C echo the worrying trend that academic freedom in Macau is also evidently deteriorating in recent years.<sup>109</sup>

In Macau, since 2014 or 2015, professors have been required to report whom they met and what they did when they had contact with Taiwan scholars. At that time, there were students who reported it, but it was still a relatively hidden practice back then. The Liaison Office of the Central People's Government asked some students to sit in my class and record. The Liaison Office also find students from the Student Union to ask what the teachers said in class, such as what they said about the June 4th movement.

The Liaison Office knows the academic community in Hong Kong very well. They have a list—who are their enemies; who are their friends; who speaks for them; who can be united with. I believe there is such a list in Macau, too. In Macau, professors have a sense of what they can and cannot talk about in class. Some professors failed to renew their contracts because they took part in political activities in Macau, such as demonstrations and protests. After that, professors became much more cautious. The Liaison Office and the government [of Macau] also approach us and talk about these issues.

But compared to the universities in mainland China, the universities in Macau still have a certain degree of academic freedom today—although some professors in Macau have also started to preach and acclaim the government’s policies in their classes.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This research sheds empirical light on the status quo of academic freedom in China via the system of student informants. The case studies and in-depth interviews with ten professors based in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau show the mechanism of this system in practice, including how it operates, the possible motivations of the informants, and the impacts it produces on professors’ teaching, research, and the broader atmosphere at university campuses. As acknowledged in the introduction, the potential limitation of this qualitative study and the significance of this topic show how further research is necessary to supplement a more comprehensive picture of the student informants system and academic freedom in China.

Elizabeth Perry and Yan Xiaojun highlight two features of the Party-state’s control over Chinese intellectuals after the Tiananmen movement in 1989 compared to the Mao era. The first one is its depoliticization and the fact that it is driven by more tangible or material, rather than ideological, causes. The second one is its combination with state-of-the-art, high-tech surveillance tools, including cameras and mobile apps.<sup>110</sup> The research presented in this chapter shows some further developments in the Party-state’s control after Xi Jinping took power, which includes the instilling of ideological elements—not only in the imposition of restrictions on academic freedom but also in motivating bottom-up student participation in curtailing that freedom. Although an interlocutor mentioned their reminiscence of the Cultural Revolution, it is also noteworthy that the current system of student informants is systematically built and has a regulatory basis. In this sense, the current system of student informants, though it bears a resemblance to the Maoist Mass Line, spotlights the official agenda of “rule by virtue” and “governing the nation in accordance with law” in the Xi Jinping era.

Despite the observed trend that “in censorship and self-censorship, Macau is catching up with the mainland, and Hong Kong is catching up with Macau,”<sup>111</sup> salient differences can still be found from the ten interviews. In terms of an individual’s response or reaction to the harm to academic freedom brought about by students’ reporting, among other things, the interviewees from Hong Kong and Macau were clearly aware of, or they at least acknowledged, their undertaking of self-censorship under the considerable stress and suppression. However, the interlocutors teaching in mainland China, except for those who had been snatched

on by the student informants, mostly justified student reporting as the management (*guanli*) or regulation (*guizhi*) of academics and academia—a posture showing their confirmation of the official tone that promulgates the policies that restrict academic freedom. Holding this tenet, these professors further demonstrate three interweaving positions toward the system of student informants. First, as mentioned by multiple professors in the interviews, teaching should be limited to the “sphere of academia,” and “academia and politics” should (and could) be separated. Yet this tenet, uncritically claimed by these professors as a safeguard against being informed on or disciplined, suggests that the “sphere of academia” is a sphere defined and delineated by the Party-state. While the deliberately blurred sphere or line is exploited by the authorities to cultivate its rule by fear,<sup>112</sup> the “tacit understanding” or “safe zones” mentioned by the professors in the interviews may be constantly squeezed to keep pace with the Party’s strengthening control of academia. The second attitude involves a focus on oneself while discussing political or systematic settings. The typical approach, as shown in the interview, is this: As long as I follow the rule, I will not be adversely affected and I will not be concerned, or concerned much, with those who violate the rule or the rationale and ramification of the rule *per se*. In some cases, this second position generates or is symbiotic with the third position—namely, a demeaning or nihilistic attitude toward those who do not toe the line or those who challenge the official line eroding academic freedom.

In the study on self-censorship conducted by some Chinese intellectuals, Zhidong Hao and Zhengyang Guo refer to the concept of “obedient autonomy,” which was articulated by Erika Evasdottir to argue that Chinese intellectuals still have “some” academic freedom in these circumstances because the “increased social restrictions come along with ‘practical opportunities to combine and reinterpret such restrictions,’” which embodies an individual’s “self-directed control” in a Chinese context.<sup>113</sup> The “self-directed control” in “obedient autonomy,” as Evasdottir argues, means that one has the control or autonomy to act *as if* he or she has certain beliefs that are not his or her internal beliefs—since “obedient autonomy” takes a person “not as individual but as absorbed in interactions in the social world” and “focuses on obedient action, rather than thought, as the moral worth.”<sup>114</sup> The disparity involved in separating one’s inner beliefs from one’s outer actions, while taking the “judgments of moral character made about the self by other people” (conceptualized as orthopraxy and the fundament of obedient autonomy) and aligning inner belief with outer action (conceptualized as orthodoxy and the autonomy of “western-style”), as Evasdottir further argues, also constitutes the key to understanding academic freedom and autonomy in a Chinese context.

Based on the interviews with academics in China, Hong Kong, and Macau, this chapter argues that interpreting Chinese academics' self-censorship as "obedient autonomy" is problematic and hazardous, not only because this concept falls into the trap of cultural relativism but also, and perhaps more significantly, because it can further reinforce and justify the Party's authoritarian rule in China, especially against the current backdrop where the Party highlights rule by virtue (*yide zhiguo*) on a wide variety of fronts, including higher education, and where academics are frequently disciplined under the name of "violating professional ethics" or "degraded morality." Delia Lin characterizes this model of authoritarian rule as a combination of pan-moralism (*fan daodehua*) and pan-politicization (*fan zhengzhihua*), which is a twin process to "justify political agendas through a moral purpose" and "to treat moral choice, however trivial or personal, as a political issue."<sup>115</sup> This dual process requires an individual to submit one's autonomous moral agency to a single authority and dispel doctrines other than the single authority that is defined or endorsed by the Party-state.<sup>116</sup> The Chinese professors' accounts in this qualitative study embed their submission to the Party-defined single authority that is implemented under moral causes. Moreover, these professors internalized self-censorship in the process of, or in order to justify, their submission. In this sense, the research findings indicate the authoritarian rule's encroachment on one's autonomous agency, rather than the "self-directed control" practice that occurs when one splits one's actions and beliefs in an attempt to gear oneself to the authorities' judgments (as contended by the idea of "obedient autonomy"). This chapter further argues that such a cognitive dissonance embodied in "obedient autonomy" may hardly be possible or self-consistent—even in cases where people may claim a distance from politics (e.g., by sticking to "*Science as a Vocation (Wissenschaft als Beruf)*" or discussing only academic issues in class), it is still "a politics of depoliticization."<sup>117</sup> This formula, as argued by Slavoj Žižek, is not some naive cynical reason but a "paradox of an enlightened false consciousness" in which "one knows the falsehood very well, one is well aware of a particular interest hidden behind an ideological universality, but still one does not renounce it."<sup>118</sup>

Submitting one's autonomous moral agency to the Party-defined authority may be the most profound destruction caused by the system of student informants, as well as the various restrictions on academic freedom. This harm also casts a crucial light on the significance of highlighting the moral right to academic freedom—that is, to promote the value of academic freedom in light of intellectual independence and freedom from conformity.<sup>119</sup> Against the backdrop that academic freedom is under siege in various regimes (and with various regime types) today, it is especially important to interrogate the very nature of academic freedom or the justifications for protecting it. As Ronald Dworkin argues, justifying academic freedom from a pragmatic perspective—ranging from advancing social progress to discovering truth—can easily be abused as a method of restricting

or circumscribing academic freedom.<sup>120</sup> Thus, a more powerful justification is a nonconsequentialist and less contingent one, with its ethical ground in promoting a culture of intellectual independence and freedom from conformity, which is “an allegiance to personal rather than collective truth.”<sup>121</sup> The curtailment or invasion of academic freedom is essentially harmful to one’s ethical individualism, which is “to live our lives in accordance with our own felt convictions.”<sup>122</sup> This chapter, drawing upon professors’ experiences, comments, and insights about the system of student informants and academic freedom, shows the relationship between the suppression of academic freedom and the harm that it can cause to one’s ethical individualism. Such harm may further buttress authoritarian rule and authoritarian resilience in China.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> More discussions featuring the May Fourth Movement as the Enlightenment Movement in China can be seen in this interview with Zhou Lian on May 4, 2020, at <https://www.jiemian.com/article/4332374.html>, and in Zhang Yan, “An Historical Review of Featuring the May Fourth Movement as an Enlightenment Movement” (Wusi “Qimeng Yundong” Shuo De Lishi Kaobian), *Modern China*, January 11, 2019, <https://modernchina.org/4092.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Ningsha Zhong and Ruth Hayhoe, “University Autonomy in Twentieth-Century China,” in *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-Century China*, edited by Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe, and Yongling Lu (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 273.

<sup>3</sup> Kai Ren and Jun Li, “Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy: A Higher Education Policy Perspective,” *Higher Education Policy* 26, no. 4 (2013): 518.

<sup>4</sup> Zhong and Hayhoe, “University Autonomy in Twentieth-Century China,” 274.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth J. Perry, “Educated Acquiescence: How Academia Sustains Authoritarianism in China,” *Theory and Society* 49, no.1 (2020): 5.

<sup>6</sup> Some reports and cases can be seen at Scholars at Risk, “Obstacles to Excellence: Academic Freedom & China’s Quest for World-Class Universities,” September 9, 2019, [https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Scholars-at-Risk-Obstacles-to-Excellence\\_EN.pdf](https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Scholars-at-Risk-Obstacles-to-Excellence_EN.pdf); Taber, “How Xi Jinping is Shaping China’s Universities.”

<sup>7</sup> Jue Jiang, “The Eyes and Ears of the Authoritarian Regime: Mass Reporting in China,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* (September 11, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2020.1813790>.

<sup>8</sup> Jue Jiang, “The Eyes and Ears of the Authoritarian Regime.”

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Greitens and Truex, “Repressive Experiences among China Scholars.”

<sup>10</sup> Zhong and Hayhoe, “University Autonomy in Twentieth-Century China,” 276–277; Marina Svensson, “Chinese Universities: Restrictions on Academic Freedom and Global Implications,” in *Shifting Power and Human Rights Diplomacy*, edited by David Ismangil, Karen van der Schaaf, and Stijin Deklerck (Amnesty International Netherlands, 2020), 120.

<sup>11</sup> Article 35 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>12</sup> Article 34 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>13</sup> Article 28 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>14</sup> Articles 41 and 51 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>15</sup> Article 35 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>16</sup> Article 47 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>17</sup> More discussions on the state’s obligation in the international law can be seen at Scholars at Risk, “Free to Think 2020,” November 18, 2020, <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/free-to-think-2020/>; Jogchum Vrieling, Paul Lemmens and Stephan Parmentier et al., “Academic Freedom as a Fundamental Right,” *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences* 13 (2011).

<sup>18</sup> Liu Zuoxiang, “The Theory of Relativity of Rights and Debates over It” (Quanli De Xiangduixing Lilun Ji Qi Zhenglun), *Qinghua Faxue (Tsinghua Law Journal)*, no. 6 (2013): 110–121.

<sup>19</sup> Article 3 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>20</sup> Article 39 of the Higher Education Law of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>21</sup> Svensson, “Chinese Universities,” 123.

<sup>22</sup> Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 7.

<sup>23</sup> Zhong and Hayhoe, “University Autonomy in Twentieth-Century China,” 277.

<sup>24</sup> Ren and Li, “Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy,” 518.

<sup>25</sup> Qiang Zha, “Intellectuals, Academic Freedom, and University Autonomy in China,” in *University Governance and Reform: Policy, Fads, and Experience in International*

*Perspective*, edited by Hans G. Schuetze, William Bruneau, and Garnet Grosjean (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012), 211.

<sup>26</sup> Detailed discussions on the concept of campus integrity and the five different dimensions of the Academic Freedom Index (AFI) can be seen at Spannagel, J., & Kinzelbach, K. (2022). The Academic Freedom Index and Its indicators: Introduction to new global time-series V-Dem data. *Quality & Quantity*, 1–21.

<sup>27</sup> Marina Svensson and Eva Pils, “Academic Freedom: Universities Must Take a Stance or Risk Becoming Complicit with Chinese Government Interference,” *The Conversation* (June 14, 2019), [shorturl.at/dAQTW](https://shorturl.at/dAQTW). This trend, or watershed, is also corroborated in the survey conducted by Sheena Chestnut Greitens and Rory Truex. See Sheena Chestnut Greitens and Rory Truex, “Repressive Experiences among China Scholars: New Evidence from Survey Data,” *China Quarterly* 242 (June 2020): 359.

<sup>28</sup> Celia Hatton, “Chinese Journalist Gao Yu Faces Trial for Leaking State Secrets,” *BBC News*, November 20, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-china-blog-30125635>.

<sup>29</sup> Cao Guoxing, “Authorities Require College Professors ‘Seven No Mentions’” (Guanfang Yaoqiu Gaoxiao Jiaoshi “Qige Buyaojiang,” *RFI*, October 5, 2013, [shorturl.at/sFSV6](https://shorturl.at/sFSV6)).

<sup>30</sup> “The Adoption of 16 Guidelines on Strengthening and Improving the Ideological and Political Work of Young Teachers in Colleges and Universities” (Jiaqiang He Gaijin Gaoxiao Qingnian Jiaoshi Sixiang Zhengzhi Gongzuo 16 Tiao Yijian Chutai), *Renmin Wang (People’s Daily Online)*, May 28, 2013, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0528/c164113-21645326.html>.

<sup>31</sup> “The Adoption of 16 Guidelines.”

<sup>32</sup> Zhidong Hao, “Commercialization and Corporatization vs. Professorial Roles and Academic Freedom in the USA and Greater China,” in *Academic Freedom Under Siege: Higher Education in East Asia, the US and Australia*, edited by Zhidong Hao and Peter Zabielskis (Cham: Springer, 2020), 80.

<sup>33</sup> “Renda Bimu: Xi Jinping Yanjiang Qiangdiao ‘Dang Lingdao Yiqie,’” (NPC Closes: Xi Jinping Stresses “the Party’s Overall Leadership” in Speech), *BBC News*, March 20, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-43468026>.

<sup>34</sup> Nick Taber, “How Xi Jinping is Shaping China’s Universities,” *The Diplomat*, August 10, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/how-xi-jinping-is-shaping-chinas-universities/>.

<sup>35</sup> Catherine Wong, “Xi Jinping Tells Chinese Teachers to Help ‘Nurture Support’ for Communist Party Rule,” *South China Morning Post*, March 18, 2019, [shorturl.at/mnE17](https://shorturl.at/mnE17).

<sup>36</sup> Zhidong Hao and Zhengyang Guo, “Professors as Intellectuals in China: Political Roles and Academic Freedom in a Provincial University,” in *Academic Freedom Under Siege: Higher Education in East Asia, the US and Australia*, eds. Zhidong Hao and Peter Zabielskis (Cham: Springer, 2020), 134.

<sup>37</sup>“Setting Up Surveillance at Class, Turning University to Prison?” (Ketang She Jiankong, Daxue Bian Jianyu?), *Duowei Xinwen (DW News)*, December 3, 2014, <https://blog.dwnews.com/post-811927.html>.

<sup>38</sup>“Setting Up Surveillance.”

<sup>39</sup>Taber, “How Xi Jinping is Shaping China’s Universities.”

<sup>40</sup>In Chinese, “缺乏理论认同, 缺乏政治认同, 缺乏情感认同.” “University Teachers, Please Do Not Teach China This Way” (Daxue Jiaoshi: Qing Buyao Zheyang Jiang Zhongguo”), *Liaoning Ribao (Liaoning Daily)*, November 17, 2014, [https://www.guancha.cn/LiaoNingRiBao/2014\\_11\\_14\\_286323\\_s.shtml](https://www.guancha.cn/LiaoNingRiBao/2014_11_14_286323_s.shtml).

<sup>41</sup>Svensson, “Chinese Universities,” 123.

<sup>42</sup>Yan Xiaojun, “Engineering Stability: Authoritarian Political Control over University Students in Post-Deng China,” *The China Quarterly* 218 (June 2014), 501.

<sup>43</sup>Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 10.

<sup>44</sup>Yan, “Engineering Stability,” 506–507.

<sup>45</sup>Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 14.

<sup>46</sup>Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 10–11.

<sup>47</sup>Yan, “Engineering Stability,” 500; Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 14.

<sup>48</sup>Yan, “Engineering Stability,” 500.

<sup>49</sup>Li Ying, “Shi Da Gaoxiao Xinxiyuan Zhidu Duibi” (A Comparison of the System of Student Informants in Ten Universities), *Online Archive*, March 24, 2019, [shorturl.at/pK268](http://shorturl.at/pK268).

<sup>50</sup>Li, “Shi Da Gaoxiao Xinxiyuan Zhidu Duibi.”

<sup>51</sup>Li, “Shi Da Gaoxiao Xinxiyuan Zhidu Duibi.”

<sup>52</sup>Ming Sihan, “Informants: Who Is the Undercover?” (Xinxiyuan: Shei Shi Wodi?), *Wangyi Xinwen (Net Ease News)*, March 19, 2014, <https://www.163.com/dy/article/9NMRIQUU0512002P.html>.

<sup>53</sup>Ming, “Informants: Who Is the Undercover?”; “Espionage War in the University: Is It Reasonable to Ask Students to Spy on Their Teachers?” (Gaoxiao Diezhan: Rang Xuesheng Jianshi Laoshi Shi Heli De Ma?”), *Online Archive*, March 24, 2019, <https://cutt.ly/obwhj8d>.

<sup>54</sup>Li, “Shi Da Gaoxiao Xinxiyuan Zhidu Duibi.”

<sup>55</sup>See, for example, “Peking University Professor Xia Yeliang Was Reported of ‘Anti-Party and Anti-Socialism’” (Beida Jiaoshou Xia Yeliang Zao Yubao “Fandang Fan Shehui Zhuyi”), *VOA Chinese*, November 9, 2021, <https://cutt.ly/abwjxJR>; Shi Feike, “Follow-Up on the Professor Being Reported by Students of Counter-Revolutionary” (Jiaoshou Bei Xuesheng Jubao wei Fangeming Xu), *Sina News*, December 5, 2008, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2008-12-05/162416791646.shtml>.

<sup>56</sup>Article 2 of the Notice on Further Strengthening the Management of Journals on Current Affairs and Politics, Comprehensive Cultural Life, Information Digest, and

Academic Theory (Guanyu Jinyibu Jiaqiang Shishi Zhengzhi Lei, Zonghe Wenhua Lei, Xinxi Wenzhai Lei He Xueshu Lilun Lei Qikan Guanli De Tongzhi).

<sup>57</sup> The Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening Academic Ethics (Jiaoyubu Guanyu Jiaqiang Xueshu Daode Jianshe De Ruogan Yijian).

<sup>58</sup> Xie Haiding, “The Legal Protection on Academic Freedom in China” (Woguo Xueshu Ziyou Quan De Falü Bao Zhang), *Aisixiang*, July 25, 2006, <https://www.aisixiang.com/data/10477.html>.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Shi, “Follow-Up on the Professor.”

<sup>60</sup> The Party’s definition of morality includes “socialist core values, Chinese traditional virtues and morals, social morals, professional ethics, family virtues and personal character.” Delia Lin, “The CCP’s exploitation of Confucianism and Legalism,” in *Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Communist Party*, edited by Willy Wo-Lap Lam (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 54.

<sup>61</sup> The Guiding Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Dealing with Conducts of College and University Teachers That Violate Teacher’s Professional Ethics (Jiaoyubu Guanyu Gaoxiao Jiaoshi Shide Shifan Xingwei Chuli De Zhidao Yijian).

<sup>62</sup> More details and examples of these rules can be seen at Jue Jiang, “The Eyes and Ears of the Authoritarian Regime.”

<sup>63</sup> More cases and discussions by the professors being punished and disciplined due to the student informants’ reports can be seen at Javier C. Hernández, “Professors, Beware. In China, Student Spies Might Be Watching,” *New York Times*, November 1, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/01/world/asia/china-student-informers.html>.

<sup>64</sup> David Bandurski, “Informants in the Chinese Classroom,” *China Media Project*, September 27, 2018, <https://chinamediaproject.org/2018/09/27/informants-in-the-chinese-classroom/>; “Espionage War in the University.”

<sup>65</sup> For example, a hotline, website, and social media platform was established in April 2021 for the public to report “historical nihilism” at [https://www.12377.cn/wxxx/2021/fc6eb910\\_web.html](https://www.12377.cn/wxxx/2021/fc6eb910_web.html) (accessed April 10, 2021).

<sup>66</sup> For instance, in March 2019, a reporting letter entitled “The Haze Might Disperse” (*wumai tianqi keneng huanjie*) was posted online by a Tsinghua undergraduate. It was circulated widely, and it stirred many discussions in China and abroad. This letter, analyzing the PowerPoint slides used by this student’s ideological and political class professor in great detail, accused the professor of being “anti the Chinese Communist Party and against the Constitution” (*fandang weixian*). It called upon the discipline inspection office at Tsinghua University to review and inspect (*jiancha*) the professor’s speeches “as soon as possible” and to “seriously deal with this matter.” See Mao Dun, “The Haze Might Disperse” (Wumai Tianqi Keneng Huanjie), *China Digital Times*, March 26, 2019, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/608063.html>.

<sup>67</sup> This qualitative research has obtained the ethics approval from New York University, with IRB number IRB-FY2020-4105.

<sup>68</sup>In January 2021, there were lawmakers in Hong Kong who made the proposal to install cameras in the classrooms in Hong Kong as well as to monitor teachers' speeches and to identify "bad apples" in the profession. See "Install CCTV in Hong Kong Classrooms to Monitor Teachers, Urges Pro-Beijing Lawmaker," *Hong Kong Free Press*, January 22, 2021, [shorturl.at/sxFLV](https://www.hkfp.com/shorturl.at/sxFLV).

<sup>69</sup>Zhidong Hao, "Academic Freedom Under Siege: What, Why, and What Is to Be Done," in *Academic Freedom Under Siege: Higher Education in East Asia, the US and Australia*, edited by Zhidong Hao and Peter Zabielskis (Cham: Springer, 2020), 31; Zhidong Hao, "In Search of a Professional Identity and Academic Freedom: Higher Education in Macau and the Academic Role of Faculty," in *Academic Freedom Under Siege: Higher Education in East Asia, the US and Australia*, edited by Zhidong Hao and Peter Zabielskis (Cham: Springer, 2020), 250.

<sup>70</sup>Katrin Kinzelbach, Ilyas Saliba, Janika Spannagel, and Robert Quinn, "Free Universities: Putting the Academic Freedom Index Into Action," *GPPi*, March 11, 2021, <https://www.gppi.net/2021/03/11/free-universities>; Mimi Leung and Yojana Sharma, "Academic Freedom Crushed under New National Security Law," *University World News*, July 1, 2020, <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200701183222729>.

<sup>71</sup>Bandurski, "Informants in the Chinese Classroom."

<sup>72</sup>Zhang Jing, "Students Report on Teachers: The Party's Abetment for Maintaining Brainwashing Lies" (Xuesheng Jubao Laoshi: Zhonggong Jiaosuo Wei Weichi Xinao Huangyan), *Epoch Times*, December 22, 2021, <https://github.com/vhizyf3565/djy/blob/master/gb/21/12/21/n13451374.md>.

<sup>73</sup>I was based in Sweden when undertaking this research.

<sup>74</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 1 on February 23, 2021.

<sup>75</sup>Jue Jiang, "The Eyes and Ears of the Authoritarian Regime."

<sup>76</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 1 on February 23, 2021.

<sup>77</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 2 on February 23, 2021.

<sup>78</sup>"Facing Students' Report, How Can College Teachers Teach Safely?" (Miandui Xuesheng Jubao, Gaoxiao Laoshi Zenyang Jiangke Cai Anquan?).

<sup>79</sup>"Facing Students' Report, How Can College Teachers Teach Safely?" (Miandui Xuesheng Jubao, Gaoxiao Laoshi Zenyang Jiangke Cai Anquan?).

<sup>80</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 3 on February 24, 2021.

<sup>81</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 4 on February 26, 2021.

<sup>82</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 5 on March 2, 2021.

<sup>83</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 6 on March 8, 2021.

<sup>84</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 7 on March 3, 2021.

<sup>85</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 1 on February 23, 2021.

<sup>86</sup>Telephone interview with Professor 2 on February 23, 2021.

- <sup>87</sup> “Two More University Teachers Were Punished upon Students’ Reports!” (Youyou Liangwei Laoshi Bei Xuesheng Jubao Chuli), *Niuyue Ren Ni You (WeChat: ny-gps)*, November 10, 2021, <https://posts.careerengine.us/p/618b6313a5813e6985ffd944>.
- <sup>88</sup> “Two More University Teachers Were Punished upon Students’ Reports!”
- <sup>89</sup> “Two More University Teachers Were Punished upon Students’ Reports!”
- <sup>90</sup> “Facing Students’ Report, How Can College Teachers Teach Safely?” (Miandui Xuesheng Jubao, Gaoxiao Laoshi Zenyang Jiangke Cai Anquan?), December 1, 2021, <http://m.gaoxiaojob.com/view.php?aid=571585>.
- <sup>91</sup> Zi Ju, “University Teachers and Young People in the ‘Reporting Era’” (Daxue Laoshi Yu Jubao Shidai De Nianqingren), *Douban*, August 22, 2019, <https://www.douban.com/note/731369761/>.
- <sup>92</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 4 on February 26, 2021.
- <sup>93</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 6 on March 8, 2021.
- <sup>94</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 3 on February 24, 2021.
- <sup>95</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 5 on March 2, 2021.
- <sup>96</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 7 on March 3, 2021.
- <sup>97</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 1 on February 23, 2021.
- <sup>98</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 2 on February 23, 2021.
- <sup>99</sup> Tan Song, “The Dreaded Student Informants in Universities” (Kefa De Gaoxiao Xuesheng Xinxiyuan), *Botanwang*, March 31, 2009, [shorturl.at/vMV68](http://shorturl.at/vMV68).
- <sup>100</sup> Zi Ju, “University Teachers and Young People in the ‘Reporting Era’” (Daxue Laoshi Yu Jubao Shidai De Nianqingren).
- <sup>101</sup> Qiao Jialan, “After Ten Years, Why Did I Quit My University Job in Shanghai?” (Shinian Hou, Wo Weishenme Yao Cidiao Shanghai De Daxue Jiaozhi?), *China Digital Times*, January 27, 2022, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/676260.html>.
- <sup>102</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 3 on February 24, 2021.
- <sup>103</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 4 on February 26, 2021.
- <sup>104</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 5 on March 2, 2021.
- <sup>105</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 6 on March 8, 2021.
- <sup>106</sup> Telephone interview with Professor 7 on March 3, 2021.
- <sup>107</sup> Telephone interview with Professor A on February 19, 2021.
- <sup>108</sup> Telephone interview with Professor B on March 3, 2021.
- <sup>109</sup> Telephone interview with Professor C on March 6, 2021.
- <sup>110</sup> Yan, “Engineering Stability,” 500; Perry, “Educated Acquiescence,” 10–11.
- <sup>111</sup> Hao, “Academic Freedom Under Siege,” 30.
- <sup>112</sup> Some discussions on the rule by fear in China can be seen in Eva Pils, “Rule of Law Reform and the Rise of Rule by Fear in China,” in *Authoritarian Legality in*

*Asia: Formation, Development and Transition*, edited by Weitseng Chen and Hualing Fu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Minxin Pei, “China’s Rule of Fear,” *HuffPost*, February 16, 2016, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/china-rule-fear\\_b\\_9243774](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/china-rule-fear_b_9243774).

<sup>113</sup> Hao and Guo, “Professors as Intellectuals in China,” 142.

<sup>114</sup> Erika E. S. Evasdottir, *Obedient Autonomy: Chinese Intellectuals and the Achievement of Orderly Life* (Hawai‘i: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 21, 27–28.

<sup>115</sup> Lin, “The CCP’s Exploitation of Confucianism and Legalism,” 53.

<sup>116</sup> Delia Lin and Susan Trevaskes, “Creating a Virtuous Leviathan: The Party, Law, and Socialist Core Values,” *Asian Journal of Law and Society* 6, no. 1 (2019): 58.

<sup>117</sup> Yan, “Engineering Stability,” 503.

<sup>118</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 29.

<sup>119</sup> Eric Barendt, *Academic Freedom and the Law: A Comparative Study* (Oxford: Hart, 2010), 57–63.

<sup>120</sup> Barendt, *Academic Freedom and the Law*, 57–63.

<sup>121</sup> Ronald Dworkin, “We Need a New Interpretation of Academic Freedom,” in *The Future of Academic Freedom*, edited by Louis Menand (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 189.

<sup>122</sup> Ronald Dworkin, “We Need a New Interpretation of Academic Freedom,” *Academe* 82, no. 3 (1996): 12.