Article

Teachers' Work in China's Migrant Schools

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Abstract

In recent years, scholars have begun to document the emergence of private migrant schools in urban China. However, neither education nor labor scholars have empirically investigated teachers' work. Because it is precisely those with the fewest economic resources that have been restricted to privatized education in the city, migrant schools are dependent on a highly exploitative form of employment. Based on a study of Guangzhou and Beijing, we see that there is diversity in working conditions. In Beijing, teachers are subject to *extralegal precarity* in which basic legal enforcement is tenuous to nonexistent. In Guangzhou, there is greater legal compliance, but management has employed *market discipline* to shift risk onto teachers. In general, teachers' work in migrant schools is similar to other forms of migrant labor in China, characterized by low pay, long hours, high work intensity, and lack of job security. The article concludes by assessing the divergent politics of migration in each city while considering the implications for socioeconomic inequality.

Keywords

Beijing, Guangzhou, education, labor, urbanization

China is currently experiencing the largest human migration in history, at present numbering over 270 million rural-to-urban migrants (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014). As is well known, the citizenship regime enforced by the

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hukou system has established a number of obstacles for migrants to access public services once they are in the city. Perhaps of greatest concern to those who wish to settle in the city is access to education for their children. Frequently excluded from public schools, migrants in large urban centers have had to rely on a privatized education system (Goodburn, 2009: 497–99). While social service provision for their urban-resident compatriots is somewhat shielded from market forces, it is evident that working-class migrants have been largely relegated to privatized spaces of social reproduction. In part because of the defunding of rural education and other services (Kennedy, 2007; Xiang, 2007), more and more migrants are interested in staying in the city rather than returning to the village. As a result, the number of migrant children in China's cities has been growing rapidly—from 2.5 million in 2005 to 35.8 million in 2010 (Xin gongmin jihua, 2014).

Scholars have begun to document the emergence and pedagogical challenges of migrant schools 打工子弟学校—privately operated schools in which all or nearly all of the students have non-local rural hukou (Goodburn, 2009; Han, 2004; Kwong, 2004). But thus far, teachers have been overlooked.[1] A study of teachers' work offers two important insights. First, there is inherent value in deepening our understanding of the working lives of teachers, a numerically and socially significant group of workers that has heretofore been ignored by labor scholars. It is true that teachers in migrant schools are exceptional in that they are far outnumbered by their counterparts in public schools. And yet, with an increasing number of "substitute" 代课 teachers, as well as teachers employed in private schools, these "irregular" forms of employment are becoming increasingly common. This article provides the first empirical account of a type of labor that is sure to expand in coming years. Second, teachers' work provides a window onto how various municipalities are responding to the educational needs of a growing population of migrant children. As will become apparent, municipalities' differing approaches to migrant social service provision are clearly reflected in school organization and teachers' working conditions. Finally, and somewhat more speculatively, teachers' working conditions will have an impact on educational and socioeconomic outcomes for students.

Based on extensive ethnographic research and interview data from six migrant primary schools, three in Beijing and three in Guangzhou, I argue as follows: Because it is precisely those with the fewest economic resources that have been restricted to privatized education in the city, migrant schools are dependent on a highly exploitative form of employment. The teachers' working conditions more closely resemble those of other migrants in manufacturing or the service sector than those of urban teachers in public schools.

However, divergent approaches to the provision of migrant education in Beijing and Guangzhou have resulted in distinct working conditions for teachers. Teachers in Beijing's migrant schools experience *extralegal precarity*, in which lawlessness and profound institutional instability produce a raw form of exploitation. While management intervenes very little in the labor process, legal violations are endemic and teachers are subjected to incredibly heavy workloads, long hours, and extremely low wages. Schools in Beijing are decrepit and unsafe, and teachers' work therefore contains an element of bodily stress and risk. In Guangzhou, on the other hand, even low-end migrant schools have indoor plumbing and a decent physical plant. These teachers have a somewhat more humane work schedule and are paid above minimum wage, but they are subject to rationalized modes of exploitation in which management shifts market risk onto labor and engages in performance-based compensation. Although school administrators generally operate within the law, they have developed techniques of *market discipline* to overcome the limits of such legal restrictions in order to enhance profitability.

In the following sections, I first review the scholarship on migrant education and migrant workers, followed by a description of my methods and the cases. The empirical sections detail the policy environment and teachers' working conditions in both cities. I also provide a brief comparison with teachers' work in public schools. In the Conclusion, I suggest why each city has pursued such different approaches to providing education to migrant children and consider the implications for socioeconomic inequality.

Working and Teaching in Urban China

Researchers began documenting the emergence of private education in China in the 1990s and 2000s (Lin, 2007; Mok, Wong, and, Zhang, 2009; Chan and Mok, 2001; Mok, 2000; Kwong, 1997; Mok and Wat, 1998), paralleling the emergence of private enterprise more broadly. This literature did not focus on migrant schools in particular, but it identified generalizable trends such as decentralization,[2] increasing managerial autonomy, user fees, concern for efficiency (Zhu, 1991), and performance-based pay (Niu and Liu, 2012). Additionally, there has been significant research on the ideological effects of education reform, and how *suzhi* (population quality) education targets groups presumed to pose risks to social harmony—chief among which are poor rural children and migrants (Lin, 2011; Woronov, 2008; Kipnis, 2011; Murphy, 2004).

More recently, scholars have turned their attention to migrant education in particular. This research has largely focused on the children and policy environment, with particular attention to the question of inequality in educational

outcomes (Liang and Chen, 2007; Chen and Liang, 2007; Chen and Feng, 2013). Mirroring the large diversity in hukou reforms (Wang, 2010; Chan, 2009), different regions in China are developing distinct approaches to the provision of migrant education (Ming, 2009). But even if some regions have moved toward greater inclusiveness, working-class migrants everywhere are still largely dependent on private education and major inequalities with local residents remain (Hu and Saich, 2012). Scholars have consistently concluded that such stark inequality in education is likely to produce durable socioeconomic inequality (Xiong, 2015; Wang, 2008; Woronov, 2004).[3]

While understanding the legal, policy, and social context has deepened our understanding of migrant education, little is known about teachers' work. The literature has made passing reference to teachers' experiences, and has frequently made use of teachers as interview subjects (Li et al., 2010; Chen and Feng, 2013)—all of which is helpful in orienting us to potential issues. For instance, parents frequently complain about the low quality of teachers in migrant schools (Goodburn, 2015: 326; Ye, 2016: 78), and indeed it is common for teachers to lack relevant qualifications and experience (Xiong, 2015: 180). Charlotte Goodburn has noted that migrant schools often require teachers to cover all subject areas, rather than hiring specialist teachers (as would be the case in public schools) (2009: 499). Yihan Xiong has shown how rebellious migrant youth sometimes challenge the authority of teachers, occasionally even forming gangs to threaten them (2015: 176–77). In this sort of environment, simply maintaining order is a major task, and one that is likely much less pronounced for teachers in middle-class public schools. Liu and Jacob (2012) have focused on the challenges that public school teachers face in educating migrant children lucky enough to gain admission. While these teachers face some similar work challenges generated by the social environment, for example, lack of parental involvement, conditions in public schools are vastly different from the privately run schools (as we will see below).

Rather than look to public school teachers as a comparison, perhaps other migrant workers are the more salient point of reference. Most research on Chinese labor has focused on manufacturing workers, and many of the insights of this literature are readily applicable to the case at hand. Teachers in migrant schools experience the long hours, low pay, and even health hazards that migrant workers face in a variety of industries (Chan, 2001; Pun and Lu, 2010; Pun, 2005). The large majority of these teachers are themselves migrants, and as with all migrants, capital benefits by not having to pay full price for their labor (Chan, 2010). Additionally, a large majority of teachers are female, and just as in manufacturing, their low wages are justified under the presumption that it is acceptable because they are not responsible for supporting a family (Lee, 1998). Migrant schools—particularly

those in Beijing—suffer from endemic legal violations (Cooney, 2007). For instance, non-payment of social insurance is common in Beijing's migrant schools, just as is the case in many factories and construction sites (Gallagher et al., 2015). Eileen Otis (2008) has alerted scholars to how service work in China is always intertwined in consumers' social world in what she terms "market-embedded labor." The market that migrant school teachers are embedded in is chaotic and limited in resources. Given these economic and social conditions, we can anticipate that these teachers' work will closely resemble that of their counterparts in the migrant labor market, rather than that of urban public school teachers.[4]

Methods

This article focuses on teachers in migrant schools in Beijing and Guangzhou. While I make no claims of representativeness, given the huge number of migrants these cities attract as well as their crucial position in the economy, these cities are important in and of themselves. They are also indicative of the recent trend of migrants bringing their children with them to the city (rather than leaving them in the countryside), as the total number of migrant children in Beijing and Guangzhou has reached 478,000 (Du, 2011) and 530,000 (Guangzhou shi jiaoyu ju, 2012) respectively. By 2015, the number of migrant students in Guangzhou's primary and middle schools had already surpassed the number of students with local hukou (Xinhua, 2015). Additionally, the cities make for a good comparison because despite both serving as major receiving areas for migrants, they have taken very different approaches to providing education to migrant children.

Between December 2011 and October 2013, I conducted more than 50 in-depth interviews with teachers and administrators in 6 migrant primary schools, 3 in Beijing and 3 in Guangzhou. I was introduced to the schools through a number of channels, including personal contacts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local scholars. Once I had gained entry, administrators arranged interviews with teachers from a variety of grades and subject matters. I also made an effort to interview males and females, as well as both novice and experienced teachers. In two of the schools in Beijing, I interviewed university graduates who were placed in the school through non-profit organizations such as Teach Future China 为中国而教. This sampling approach allowed me to assess a variety of perspectives within each school and to identify common features across schools. I also spent twenty hours directly observing teachers in and out of the classroom, and taught five hours of class myself. Additionally, I conducted twenty in-depth interviews with teachers and administrators in two public schools in Beijing to serve as a

Table 1. Investigated Schools.

	High-end	Mid-range	Low-end
Beijing	School A	School B	School C
Guangzhou	School X	School Y	School Z

reference point. One of these schools was located in the inner Xicheng district and served largely middle-class and elite families from Beijing, while the other was in Haidian district and had a student body that was 87% migrant children.

In each city, I consulted with local experts and school administrators to select a diversity of schools. Based on students' educational attainment, physical plant, teacher and student recruitment, overall working conditions, government and/or foundation support, and various forms of official recognition, I have categorized the six schools into three tiers: high-end, mid-range, and low-end (see Table 1). This is a relational categorization, and therefore the categories work differently in each city. For instance, the existence of indoor plumbing differentiates Beijing's School A from School B or C; but in Guangzhou, all of the schools had indoor facilities.

A few other examples will help illustrate how this categorization works. If we consider sources of funding, School A in Beijing had regular, substantial support from a well-endowed foundation, whereas School B had received some initial financial support and regularly had teachers provided to them by a non-profit organization. School C, on the other hand, was entirely funded by tuition. When considering student recruitment in Guangzhou, School X had developed such a positive image in the community that many *local* students tried to enroll—and indeed, every year parents would line up for countless hours to try to secure a spot for their children. This was unheard of in School Y, which had a fully migrant student body. And in School Z, recruiting enough students who were able to pay their tuition was such a problem that the school took to publically shaming teachers who had failed to collect from parents (see below). Finally, Schools A and X had both received extensive media coverage and awards in recognition of their achievements—certainly not true for School C or Z. And School B had been under constant threat of closure and demolition, suggesting that the government did not hold it in particularly high esteem.

Without an exhaustive database of every school in a given city, I cannot be certain that this is a representative approach, and it certainly relies on the subjective assessments of local experts and school administrators. But without comprehensive objective measures (to say nothing of the question of

access), this approach was the best choice to assess the universe of possibilities within each city. By investigating the diversity of the field, I am in a better position to draw out common themes in each city for comparative purposes.

Exclusion in Beijing and Marketization in Guangzhou

Before describing the working conditions for teachers in Beijing's and Guangzhou's migrant schools, we first need to understand something about the distinct education policy environment in each place. The two cities have taken remarkably different approaches to responding to the influx of migrant children. Whereas Beijing has pursued rigid exclusion and relegated migrant schools to a legal "gray space" (Yiftachel, 2009a, 2009b), Guangzhou has legalized and marketized migrant education. This political and institutional background is crucial for situating the different conditions of work for teachers in each city.

Although the central government has been discussing hukou reform for many years now, it is clear that ultimate authority to integrate migrants into urban public service provision is the preserve of municipal governments (Chan and Buckingham, 2008). The central government has made regular pronouncements since 2001 that receiving areas should be primarily responsible for financing education for migrant children (irrespective of hukou status), and that students should be primarily assigned to public schools. This policy is known as the "two primaries" 两为主. Similarly, the 2014 "State Council Opinion on Advancing Residence System Reform" calls for cities to allow migrants to apply for "residence permits" after six months, and that permit holders' basic education rights will be the same as those of local hukou holders. But as is true for social service provision in general, the center's exhortations are merely principles, and are neither legally binding nor supported with sufficient concomitant funding. Particularly relevant for Beijing and Guangzhou, the National New Urbanization Plan (2014–2020) specifically calls for cities with populations over 5 million to "strictly control" their population by restricting access to local hukou (Xinhua, 2014). This suggests that receiving areas might be little inclined to provide public education for the children of migrants. In a context in which the central government is sending potentially contradictory messages, municipalities have considerable leeway in determining migrant education policy.

Beijing has pursued a particularly exclusionary education policy, with the hopes of disincentivizing undesired migrants from settling in the capital. Underlying this is the assumption that overpopulation would lead to political

instability (Wallace, 2014). This is most apparent in the municipal government's refusal to license the large majority of migrant schools. The government has acknowledged the existence of 79 unlicensed schools, though the actual number is likely higher (Beijing shi renmin zhengfu, 2012). Indeed, experts in civil society estimate that there are approximately 140 migrant schools in the city, only about a third of which are legal (Interview, June 27, 2012). These unlicensed schools exist in permanent legal limbo and are allowed to persist only at the beneficence of district-level officials. Relegating presumed troublemakers to an uncertain legal-administrative space is a key strategy of the Chinese state (Stern and Hassid, 2012), as they can be shut down arbitrarily at a moment's notice and without providing compensation. This has resulted in the development of a shadow education system, one that is excluded from the political, social, and even physical infrastructure of the city. Beijing has relied on the market to provide education to migrant children but it is a market that is largely unregulated.

The persistence of this shadow education system seems to be at odds with the municipal government's stated wishes. Beginning in the 1990s, migrants in Beijing began opening completely informal operations, running on shoestring budgets and totally dependent on tuition for their survival. Recognizing that these schools were providing a service (however inadequate it may have been), the government initially took a laissez faire attitude and decided not to ban them. Rather, its hope was that the schools would be nothing more than a transitory phase, and that they would naturally disappear over time (Kwong, 2004: 1079). But as early as 2004, the government decided to take a more active role in addressing poor conditions, issuing a directive that stated, "within three years or so, all private schools that accept floating children will be up to standard" (Beijing shi renmin zhengfu, 2004). In 2005, the government issued the "Beijing Education Committee's Directive on Strengthening the Management of Self-Operated Migrant Schools," which established the principle of "supporting some [schools], approving some, and eliminating some" (Xinhua, 2005). Yet eight years later, there were still approximately 100 schools that had not been able to register or get government support, but were still in operation. Similarly, the Chaoyang district government left no room for uncertainty when it announced in 2012 that all unregistered schools would be closed by the end of 2014—a task it failed to accomplish (Beijing ribao, 2012).

The politics behind this indeterminate environment are of course opaque. But there are some obvious disincentives to legalizing private migrant schools: the government is legally responsible to provide an array of tax breaks and services (including provision of electricity, water, and gas) to registered private schools just as it would for public schools (Beijing shi renmin

daibiao dahui changwu weiyuanhuai, 2006). Additionally, it would have to provide greater justification and compensation in the case of a school demolition. And it goes without saying that absorbing migrant children into the public system would require a major outlay of resources. The government has certainly resorted to the more coercive approach of school closures. But even if we cannot fully account for why such a large number of unlicensed schools have persisted, the salient point is simply that they exist.

Guangzhou has taken a different approach in which it has marketized and legalized the provision of migrant education. Support at the provincial level for private migrant education was made clear in the Guangdong government's 2011 "Opinion on Correct Handling of Compulsory Education for Children of Workers Who Have Entered the City" (Guangdong sheng renmin zhengfu, 2011). The Opinion calls on cities within the province to "encourage and support private schools that are oriented toward migrant children," further stating that private schools should be given the same preferential tax treatment as public schools. Finally, the Opinion states that local governments should set up a "private education development fund" and that they can explore voucher-like programs to outsource migrant education.

At the municipal level, the Guangzhou government has gone a step further in specifying its commitment to supporting private education. In the "Guangzhou Municipal People's Government Opinion on Promoting the Development of Private Education," the government stressed the importance of strengthening private schools given that a full 33% of the city's children (including those with local hukou) were enrolled in private primary schools (Guangzhou shi renmin zhengfu, 2014). What is more, the government explicitly acknowledged that "private school teachers' wages are rather low, and they have little social insurance. There is a clear problem with the stability of the workforce, with a lack of core young and middle-age teachers, and turnover is serious." The municipal government spent more than 1.1 billion yuan between 2008 and 2014 in support of private schools (Xinhua, 2015). Specifically on the question of private education for migrant children, the Opinion called for "increasing support of private schools that recruit migrant children that have come to Guangzhou." It is clear that the Guangzhou government is much more supportive of privatized primary education in general, and for migrant children in particular.

Although the Beijing government has repeated official boilerplate about supporting private education,[5] it has not emphasized private education for migrant children in particular. And the facts speak for themselves: Guangzhou has more than 300 migrant schools that are all registered with the government and are subject to some form of state oversight (Interview, Dec. 24, 2012), whereas Beijing's 140 migrant schools are largely unlicensed. We should not

put too much faith in official statistics on public school attendance by migrant children, given that those students least likely to be counted in official surveys are also least likely to gain admission to public schools. But for what it is worth, Beijing reported that over 70% of migrant children attended public school in 2010 (Fazhi wang, 2010), whereas in Guangzhou that number was 42% in 2013 (Sun, 2015: 90). A 2007 study by researchers at the National Institute of Education Sciences (a research institute of the Ministry of Education) found an even larger gap, as their survey showed 63% of migrant children in Beijing in public schools but only 28% in Guangzhou (Tian et al., 2008: 15). While not specific to migrant education, official statistics reveal that private primary education plays a much larger role in Guangzhou than in Beijing. As mentioned above, 33% of all primary students in the former are enrolled in private schools, but under 9% in the latter (Beijing shi jiaoyu weiyuanhui, 2015). Similar rhetoric aside, the two cities are evidently taking very different approaches.

One consequence of the uncertain legal framework for private migrant education in Beijing is that private investors face much higher risk. Schools that are not sanctioned by the state can be shut down without any justification or compensation. Under such conditions, it is hardly surprising that the physical plant of Beijing schools was so decrepit (see below for more detail) and that teachers were often under-qualified. It is also extremely unlikely that illegal schools would be able to secure lines of credit—as just one indication of this, all but one of 41 Beijing migrant schools surveyed in a 2009 study had to rent space (Fazhi ribao, 2009). Given the poor investment environment, many schools in the city are heavily dependent on financial support from foundations. While these forms of support are well intentioned, they are woefully insufficient when it comes to providing a decent educational and work environment.

The highly classed nature of legal market-based provision of education means that Guangzhou is not pursuing a particularly *inclusive* approach, but it has, nonetheless, created an institutional environment in which private migrant schools are subjected to state oversight and granted a degree of stability. For example, on one of the days I visited School Y, the administrators were hurriedly preparing for a visit from the Education Bureau.

> Deputy Principal: All of the private schools in Tianhe district have to provide their administrative materials. . . . If we're not up to standard, we can't operate next year.
>
> EF: What are their requirements for being up to standard?
>
> DP: There are a lot of standard requirements. . . . Altogether there are four main areas: the first is school management, the second is operating conditions, the third is pedagogy, and the fourth is student management. (Interview, Dec. 25, 2012)

Although private schools in Guangzhou sometimes close as result of market competition, they are legal and do not face the threat of arbitrary closure.

As a result, private investors have been pouring money into schools. A volunteer from a migrant education NGO in Guangzhou neatly summarized the difference between the two places: "Those Beijing schools that have to gruelingly raise money for their operating expenses, that would never happen in Guangzhou. In Guangzhou, it's all big bosses that open schools. In Guangzhou they have cars, they have houses, they have money" (Interview, Dec. 24, 2012). And I found in my research that migrant education in the provincial capital has in fact become big business—a kind of "neoliberal populism" (Roy, 2010). All of the schools I studied in Guangzhou had prominently displayed descriptions of the school close to their entrances, which read like advertisements of the school's successes. For example, a wall-sized poster at School Y presented the history of the school's parent company, Zhiren Education Corporation,[6] as well as its CEO. The poster boasted that the corporation had 18 schools, 18,000 students, and 1,000 employees. Additionally, it claimed,

> The board of directors of Zhiren Education Corporation never sees profit as its goal. . . . [The company] continuously expands investment in education, improves educational operations, uses high salaries to hire outstanding administrators and superior teachers from within and outside of the province as well as from overseas, to allow tens of thousands of migrant children to enjoy high-quality education. (Field notes, Dec. 25, 2012)

A teacher at the school had a somewhat more cynical take:

> [Their profit margins] are at least fifty percent. At some schools it's even more. The more [students] there are, the less their relative investment. If you study economics, you'll know it's resource sharing. The boss has eighteen hundred students a year; he can earn seven million RMB. I'm not totally clear on this, and he won't tell you. But we've calculated it ourselves before, how much money they receive, how much rent costs, how much they invest in students, teachers' salary. (Interview, Dec. 31, 2011)

Whether the teacher's calculation is correct or not is unimportant; the salient point is that large education companies have come into existence in the relatively stable market environment of Guangzhou. By excluding migrant children from public education but allowing a market for education to flourish, the state has opened a rich terrain for capital accumulation.

These markedly different policy approaches have resulted in substantial differentiation in migrant schooling, and therefore teachers' working conditions, in each city. I will now turn to a description of the workplace.

The Workplace

The first thing that struck me as radically different between Beijing's and Guangzhou's migrant schools was their spatial distribution within the city. In Beijing, the three schools I studied were located deep in the suburbs. From my apartment in the central area of Beijing (Dongzhimen), it would take me more than two hours to reach School C—a combination of three subway lines, an express bus on the Badaling Expressway, and finally an unlicensed cab from the bus stop to the village where the school was located. Schools A and B were in similarly remote sections of the city, and with the run-down apartments, piles of trash, and narrow streets of these neighborhoods it felt like a different world from the central city. Nor were these schools exceptional. An interactive digital map compiled by a local NGO shows only four out of eighty migrant schools within the fourth ring road.[7] As a staff member of this organization noted, migrants and their schools are continually being pushed further afield: "There will always be more suburbs, there will always be a place where the city meets the country. Now it's the fifth, sixth ring road; soon it will be the sixth, seventh ring road. These people will once again be squeezed out to where the city meets the country" (Interview, June 12, 2012).

Reflecting their legal status, migrant schools in Guangzhou were much more integrated into the fabric of the city. Even though the geography of the city does not lend itself to easy identification of the remoteness of schools (as is the case with Beijing's ring roads), it is clear from their relative ease of access that they were not nearly as peripheral as those in Beijing. As one indicator of this, all three of the schools I studied were within a 15-minute walk of a subway station, as were two other schools I visited but did not include in the sample. Traveling to these schools from the relatively centrally located campus of Sun Yat-sen University took between 30 and 60 minutes, door to door. A perusal of the aforementioned interactive map reveals that these schools are not at all exceptional in terms of their distance from the urban core.

The physical plant of migrant schools in the two cities also presented a stark contrast. The single-level schools in Beijing were decrepit and potentially unsafe. Classrooms were poorly lit and often filthy, particularly in winter months when children would track water and mud in from outside. Buildings were often in disrepair, as a teacher from School C noted,

> Public schools get subsidies every year from the government for their facilities. . . . In our school, when it rains a lot outside, it also rains a lot in the classroom. The roof is full of holes. . . . Two days ago was the final exam, and the floor was covered with water. All of their exams got soaked. (Interview, July 3, 2013)

Neither School B nor C had indoor plumbing or central heating. Visiting the outhouses in these schools was a demanding sensory experience, particularly in the sweltering summer heat. The heat was a similarly severe problem in the classrooms, which had neither air conditioning nor fans, creating a taxing work environment for the teachers. Winter was perhaps even more challenging as the classrooms were generally very cold. Every day I visited these schools during December and January, I would leave with numb feet, longing to enjoy the relative comfort of a crowded but warm bus. And these conditions certainly had an effect on the health of the children and teachers. After spending a day at School C in December, I remarked in my field notes: "I taught Zhang Xin's English class, which was 40 minutes. In a class of about 30–35 students, there was almost continuous coughing for the entire class" (Field notes, Dec. 12, 2012). Particularly given that students have poor access to health care and their parents generally work exceedingly long hours, caring for sick children often fell to the teachers.

School C had no computers for either students or teachers, whereas School B had two computers for administrators. School A did have computers for teachers and a small computer lab for students, which it was able to purchase with support from a foundation. The playgrounds at Schools B and C hardly seemed conducive to play—School C's consisted of a potholed concrete slab, anchored on either end by slightly askew basketball hoops without nets. As the school principal said,

> When we have parent-teacher conferences, we tell the parents, "regardless of whether the children's grades are high, our teachers are doing their best." Because the conditions in our school aren't up to speed, teachers don't have teaching materials, and the facilities are insufficient, they have to rely just on their mouth to educate the children. (Interview, June 21, 2012)

Conditions were not nearly so grim in Guangzhou. Even the low-end case, School Z, had an even basketball court and ping pong tables. All the Guangzhou schools were equipped with indoor plumbing. They all had some computers, even if the student-to-computer ratio was significantly worse than in public schools. Classrooms were sufficiently sized, had decent natural light, and solid desks. Unlike the students in the low- and mid-range schools in Beijing, all of the students in Guangzhou were clothed in official school uniforms.

The infrastructure of the schools serves as an indicator of the level of investment and also has a direct bearing on the quality of work for teachers. While teachers in Guangzhou were subjected to various forms of work-related stress (described below), they did not face the same threat to their physical health posed by the poor physical plant of Beijing's schools. Before

describing the working conditions, we need to know something about the teachers' backgrounds.

The Teachers

Given my methodological approach, I cannot provide a systematic account of the teachers' social profiles. But I have developed a rough typology of three kinds of teachers in migrant schools: the migrant, the idealistic college student, and the retiree. The teachers in all of these categories are overwhelmingly female, with somewhat more male teachers in the higher grades. Although all three types of teachers appeared in both places, Guangzhou appears to have many fewer "idealistic college students."

The "migrant" is certainly the most common type of teacher in both places (and likely in other cities throughout China). Just like the communities they serve, these teachers are from rural areas and of modest means. They generally have somewhat more education than the parents of their students, with most of them having graduated from junior colleges or lower-tier universities. Typically, they are young—most of my interviewees were younger than 30 years. Few of these teachers hold official teaching credentials: while the situation may have improved somewhat in recent years, a 2004 survey in Guangzhou found that only 55% of migrant school teachers were licensed (Shen and Zhou, 2005: 16). This is not to suggest that they do not have important ethical and emotional attachments to their work—indeed, this is the norm. But rather it suggests that they do not envision a lifetime in the profession. Those who have better education and a proven track record with increasing student test scores have a better chance of getting a position in an urban public school, an opportunity too good for most to pass up. Others have moved between various jobs, and would be likely to move on if a better option presented itself.

The "idealistic college student" has a very different professional disposition and orientation to work. These teachers have recently graduated from elite universities, and view their work as a way of giving back to society. They recognize the injustice and inequality in China's education system, and want to do something about it. Frequently, recent graduates are placed in schools through NGOs such as Teach Future China. Although there are isolated cases of this type of teacher staying in the profession, the large majority leave within a year or two for better paying jobs. Their idealism notwithstanding, these teachers are often unprepared professionally, socially, and emotionally for the challenge of educating the urban underclass.

Finally, there are the retirees. Retirement age for female teachers in public schools is 55 years, which means that retirees often have many good working

years left. While they are no longer allowed to teach in public schools, private schools have no such restrictions. Although this is a numerically smaller group, these teachers are often highly valued by migrant school administrators, given their professional training and wealth of experience. Retirees take these jobs for a variety of reasons, both idealistic and practical. This group of teachers included both locals as well as people from other cities and provinces. In at least a few cases, I found that they had followed their adult children to the city.

Although I cannot state with confidence the precise distribution of these types of teachers in each city, there is one notable difference: the relative dearth of the idealistic college student in Guangzhou. Nationally, it is actually Beijing that is the outlier in this regard. This prevalence in Beijing is somewhat surprising, given that Guangdong has typically been much more welcoming to NGOs (Doyon, 2012). So it would be reasonable to expect that the kinds of organizations that place college graduates in migrant schools would have a more favorable environment in the South. But Beijing simply has more university students than Guangzhou—especially when considered in proportion to the number of migrant workers. Furthermore, the derelict conditions in Beijing's migrant schools are more likely to attract sympathy, both from students and from foundations. There is much to be said about the relationship between migrant schools and civil society in China (Kwong, 2004), but this question is beyond the scope of this article.

Extralegal Precarity and Market Discipline

A strong indicator of the different employment systems in Beijing and Guangzhou is that teachers in the former were much less likely to sign contracts. Of my three cases, only teachers in School A had signed contracts. This of course means that employment was totally at will, and that it is impossible for the state to adjudicate labor grievances. Although there are some issues with legal violations in Guangzhou schools, in general there is strong legal compliance.

As for specific working conditions, perhaps the most obvious difference was the great variation in working hours. In interview after interview, Beijing teachers complained significantly more than their Guangzhou counterparts about overwork and exhaustion. A 2012 survey by well-known Beijing NGO New Citizen Project 新公民计划 confirmed these findings. The nine-city survey included 280 teachers in 163 migrant schools and showed that Beijing teachers are responsible for an average of 25 classes per week, whereas the average in Guangzhou was 19 (Xin gongmin jihua, 2012b). Each additional class requires significant time in prep and correcting homework, and so what

first appears as a difference of under six hours in working time is in fact much more. And a 2010 survey by the Beijing Migrant Children Cultural Development Center 北京农民之子文化发展中心 revealed that 85% of Beijing's migrant school teachers were working in excess of 44 hours a week (Gongren ribao, 2011).

The sheer volume of work was perhaps the thing that most exasperated Beijing teachers. This included not only classroom time but also all the other things that go into being a primary school teacher: preparing for class, correcting homework, dealing with parents, helping children with their lunch, watching them while they play or rest, and so on. When I asked a teacher at School A to describe her typical day, she said,

> I feel like it's really . . . we even have to run to go to the bathroom. . . . It's not that I have more than twenty classes a week, all together it's almost thirty. . . . Every day is really busy; if I can't finish correcting the homework, or I can't finish my lesson plan, I take it home and finish it at night or on the weekends. If I can't finish it during normal hours or I haven't finished the school tasks, then I do unpaid overtime by myself at home. (Interview, June 13, 2012)

Another School A teacher, who previously worked in a public school, said, "When I first came here last September, I couldn't bear [teaching 27 classes a week]. . . . Every day it's ten hours. When I get home my body and mind are utterly exhausted" (Interview, June 7, 2012). In the course of an interview, a completely exasperated School B teacher teared up as she explained her difficult schedule:

> Every teacher here is really, really tired. . . . They teach all of the classes in a day, seven or eight classes a day. Most of the teachers here are like this. It's utterly exhausting . . . and the teachers really suffer. "Now you need to do this activity, now you need to do that activity"; I really suffer badly. (Interview, Dec. 14, 2012).

At School Y in Guangzhou, on the other hand, teachers consistently reported having three or four classes a day and no more than 18 a week. A second-grade class director from School X reported having only 13–14 classes a week, putting her on par with public school teachers (Interview, Dec. 18, 2012). Even at the low-end School Z, an experienced teacher said the average was 18 classes a week. Without discounting the many challenges that Guangzhou teachers face, their workload is substantially lower than even the good migrant schools in Beijing.

Beijing teachers work longer hours—and they do so for less pay. Most teachers at School C reported monthly wages of 1,200 RMB. While this was

the low end of the scale, the highest paid teacher at School A made only 1,700 RMB. But the only reason this teacher was able to earn more was because she did not buy social insurance. And it is worth noting that in 2012 the monthly legal minimum wage in Beijing was 1,260 RMB for a 40-hour workweek (Caijing, 2011). Given that all of the teachers in these schools work well over 40 hours, they are being paid illegally low wages. As a teacher from School C put it, "The wages at this school are too low. You can't even support yourself, to say nothing of your family" (Interview, July 6, 2012). Although I did not hear about problems with wage arrears in my own research, a 2007 study found that 12% of teachers in Beijing migrant schools reported not being paid on time (Yao, 2010: 79). And social insurance was a luxury afforded to few teachers in Beijing. A survey of Beijing teachers found that 76.8% did not have social insurance (Xin jing bao, 2012), and in my study only School A offered such benefits.

The exceedingly poor compensation in Beijing has been brought to the public's attention by media reports of teachers working low-end jobs after school hours. The so-called corn teacher gained minor celebrity status when local media revealed that she had to sell corn on the streets of Beijing to help pay for family medical bills (Jinghua shibao, 2011). Working in cram schools after hours is quite common for teachers. A teacher from School C explained his reasoning in taking on the extra work: "My monthly salary is around 1,200 RMB. When I go to an outside company to teach, I earn about 260 per hour. So if I teach one outside class, that's already more than one day of salary" (Interview, July 3, 2013). Many more teachers—over 60% according to one estimate (Xin jing bao, 2012)—have to find work during the summer and winter breaks. Even though this may not be unique to teachers in Beijing, the low wages and high cost of living mean that they are economically worse off than teachers in other cities in China.

Teacher salaries in the three Guangzhou schools ranged from 2,000 to 3,500 RMB a month, well in excess of the legally required 1,300 RMB. Of course, many teachers worked more than 40 hours and there were often deductions to pay for social insurance. But the point of reference for these schools was local public schools, not migrant schools in other cities. The principal of School X fretted about teachers' low wages and the possibility for dissatisfaction: "This is a big problem for migrant schools. . . . Our teachers' wages are generally a third of that of public schools" (Interview, Dec. 28, 2012).

Greater legal enforcement pushed management in Guangzhou into devising strategies to shift market risk onto teachers. This was clearest at School Z, where management had taken some drastic steps to ensure profitability. The first was the implementation of a piece-rate wage system. Teachers'

basic (guaranteed) salary was approximately 25% of their total wages. Beyond this, they received a fixed payment for each class period they taught, and would lose pay even if they were sick: "You can take a sick day, but they'll deduct wages [and] you don't get that day's salary" (Interview 1, Dec. 26, 2012). These "piece rates" were not altogether absent in Beijing, as teachers at School A also reported being paid per class period. But at School A the proportions were quite different, with more than 80% of their total salary being included in the basic wages. Clearly the degree to which risk had been transferred to School A teachers was relatively small.

But the most significant movements toward tying teachers' work to market risk appeared in Guangzhou. A teacher at School Z talked about how the school generated profits through various assorted fees, which teachers were responsible for collecting:

> Teachers having to collect fees are a hidden secret in private schools. It's not like in public schools; expenses in a private school all come from student fees. . . . The major problem [we face] is collecting fees. We need to collect field-trip fees, but the parents of students in private schools don't have a lot of money. . . . At the end of the day, they're migrant workers. (Interview 2, Dec. 26, 2012)

And in fact teachers' ability to collect fees had a direct bearing on their salary:

> Because the school leadership doesn't care what the teachers say, every semester they give teachers a quota. For example, at the moment I'm about to collect the book reservation fees, and we have to get an 86 percent collection rate in order to meet the target. If we don't meet the target, they deduct from our salary. The class director is responsible for collecting the supplemental class fees, the uniform fees, the field-trip fees, etc. If we don't collect them, there is a direct relationship with our salary. (Interview 1, Dec. 26, 2012)

Given that the parents are migrant workers, sometimes collecting these fees wasn't easy: "One of the parents has four children in our school, so their pressure from tuition is quite high. The large majority are here as migrants workers, they have low wages, and they also have to pay rent—it's not easy" (Interview 1, Dec. 26, 2012). If teachers at School Z failed to reach their quota, not only would they lose pay, they were also publicly shamed. In the central courtyard of the school, just inside the entrance, was a large whiteboard with the heading "Fees Owed in Each Class," which listed in detail the fee deficits class by class.

The final technique that Guangzhou schools used to shift market risk onto teachers was requiring them to recruit students. If teachers failed to reach

their recruitment quotas, they would face wage deductions. According to a teacher from School Z with more than ten years of experience, this was common throughout the city:

> Teacher: Because we aren't a public school, the school needs to ensure its resources, so at the end of every semester we have to go and pass out flyers. Some parents, they know we've been operating for a long time, so they'll introduce people to our school. . . .
> EF: If you don't recruit students, do you feel pressure from the administration?
> Teacher: If we don't recruit, the school will give us a little pressure, just to express their wishes.
> EF: Do they set quotas?
> Teacher: They do, every class director has to get a certain amount, regular classroom teachers have to get a certain amount, all of Guangzhou is like this, all other schools do it like this. (Interview 2, Dec. 26, 2012)

Another teacher recalled a brief stint she had at a school when she first arrived in Guangzhou and her experiences with mandatory student recruitment during summer break:

> Teacher: They only cared about making money, they weren't doing education. They were just about making money and would raise tuition all the time. If they don't raise tuition, then when you enter they want you to pay this fee or that fee. At this school we'd leave at eight in the morning, get to the recruiting spot at nine and stay there until six in the evening. . . . We'd put out an advertising sign, sit on a stool, and [school] leaders would come by repeatedly to check if we were still there.
> RA: So the teachers would just sit there?
> Teacher: Yes, sitting there we don't get any respect, we're teachers but we're the same as buskers. (Interview, Jan. 11, 2013, conducted by research assistant Zhou Xianqin)

School Closures

The final issue may at first not seem like a typical workplace concern: the threat of school closures. State-imposed school demolitions in Beijing first came to international attention in the summer of 2011 when the municipal government unexpectedly closed 30 schools just weeks before the semester was to begin (Jacobs, 2011). Although most media attention during school demolitions rightly focuses on the students, it also means that teachers lose their jobs. Since

they are working without a contract or social insurance, they have little chance of getting severance payments, unemployment benefits, or reassignments. As a teacher from a recently demolished school in Chaoyang district said,

> I've inquired many times at the village government and education committee [about reassignment to another school], but they haven't given me a positive response. They said there's nowhere to send us, because neither our school nor we teachers are officially recognized. (Xin jing bao, 2009).

But demolitions also posed a problem for migrant teachers even if their school had not been condemned. Although it is difficult to quantify the problem, many teachers had a persistent if dull sense of unease about the possibility that their workplace could be destroyed with hardly any notice: "A lot of migrant schools, because of our [economic] conditions, because of our buildings' conditions, and because of land issues, have been banned. I don't know whether a school like ours will have the opportunity to continue" (Interview, Dec. 13, 2011). And in fact, this school (B) was slated for closure just half a year after this teacher made this statement.[8] A teacher at the somewhat more remote School C made explicit the connection between spatial peripherality and the likelihood of being closed down:

> EF: Are you concerned [about being closed down]?
> Teacher: Not at the moment, but I don't know what will happen later. That area [where another school was closed] is where the city is expanding. On the periphery, the sixth ring road of Beijing, the city hasn't expanded to the sixth ring yet. This is the county town [*xiancheng*] of Changping—it's far from the city center.

And this potential for instability was yet another factor (along with low wages and long hours) hurting teacher recruitment:

> Another very important reason [for high turnover] is the government's policy isn't clear. I don't know how many years this school is going to be here. [Let's say] I arrive this year, but next year the school closes. Public school teachers think their school won't close for a hundred years, so teachers will be committed to their profession. If there's no future [for the school] then there's no money, and there's no hope. This really affects recruitment of young teachers. (Interview, June 27, 2012)

School closings have a direct impact on teachers' work not just in individual schools but also for the whole profession. When migrant schools are closed, official policy is that the government should make spots in public schools

available for the displaced children. In practice, however, this rarely happens unless the parents protest repeatedly. The NGO New Citizen Project conducted an in-depth case study of a school that was shut down in Chaoyang district in the summer of 2012. It conducted telephone interviews with parents and children, altogether accounting for the subsequent placement of 746 of the original 854 students from the closed school. Of the nearly 72% of students who remained in Beijing after the closure (most of the rest went back to their hometown), 16.5% were placed in public schools while the remainder went to migrant schools (Xin gongmin jihua, 2012a). Consequently, teachers in the three nearby migrant schools that absorbed the bulk of the displaced students suddenly experienced a large increase in their workload. Additionally, one of the most common teacher complaints is that their students have widely unequal abilities, in large part because they are moved from school to school so frequently. School closures and subsequent student displacements only exacerbate the problem.

Migrant schools in Guangzhou have occasionally been subject to demolition and relocation as well. There were reports of the government closing a handful of schools in the mid-2000s, claiming that they were not up to standard. But more recently, demolitions have been part of the general process of urban redevelopment, which of course affects all sorts of businesses and individuals. In my research, I did not uncover any cases in which schools were specifically targeted as they were in Beijing. For example, one of the schools I visited had in fact been demolished in the past to make way for a new elevated highway. But such schools were financially compensated and were able to reopen a few minutes away from their original location. This reveals the difference between "demolition and relocation" 拆迁 and "closure" 关闭: the former implies that the state should make arrangements for new space, whereas the latter is final. Guangzhou schools' official licensing imposes somewhat greater administrative and financial barriers than is the case for wholly unlicensed schools. Furthermore, the city is simply more dependent on private schooling than is Beijing. As one migrant school administrator said, "It's impossible for Guangzhou to close down migrant schools like they do in Beijing, because public schools can't absorb all of the migrant children. Private schools are the mainstay" (Chen and Ma, 2011). The closures that are a constant threat to Beijing schools are not a feature of the education landscape in Guangzhou, and neither the teachers nor administrators I interviewed expressed concern about this.

Public School Comparison

Migrant school teachers' working conditions are significantly different from those of urban public school teachers. A growing number of "substitute" 代课

teachers notwithstanding, most public school teachers are within the public personnel quota system 编制. As a result, teachers in large wealthy cities receive their full social insurance payments, frequently have access to a range of subsidies and bonuses, and have very strong job security.[9] Most important, they have much higher wages. A 2007 survey by Tian et al. of twelve cities found average monthly wages of 2,118, 1,381, and 896 yuan for, respectively, teachers in public schools, licensed migrant schools, and unlicensed migrant schools. In Beijing in particular, Haidian district required a yearly salary of more than 62,000 yuan for public school teachers in 2012 (Interview, Dec. 7, 2012)—quadruple the wages at School C, and more than double those of even the best-paid migrant school teacher. In 2010, the average public school teacher in Beijing taught just over 16 class periods per week (Gongren ribao, 2011), while the New Citizen Project survey found that the city's migrant school teachers taught an average of 25 classes. As noted above, teachers in schools A and B were responsible for up to 30 class periods per week. Not surprisingly, better working conditions led to greater employee stability. I interviewed the principal of a Haidian public school who expressed complete confidence in his ability to maintain a good workforce: "Aside from a few normal retirements, there hasn't been any teacher turnover in recent years. There was just one teacher who left because she/he lived too far away" (Interview, Dec. 7, 2012).

Although turnover is an imperfect proxy for understanding worker satisfaction, it gives us some kind of indication. And high turnover in migrant schools is a nearly universal problem, making it difficult to retain professionalized and experienced employees. As just one example of the extent of the problem, the associate principal at School Y in Guangzhou thought that losing up to a sixth of the workforce each semester was a *good* sign: "the teachers in our school are pretty stable, there's not a lot of turnover. . . . In general we lose fewer than ten [out of a total of 64] per semester" (Interview, Dec. 25, 2012). Although there was some variation between the high- and low-end cases, I estimate an average teacher turnover of 25% to 30% a year in migrant schools.[10] Many of the best teachers leave migrant schools to seek better employment opportunities in public schools. As a retired public school teacher who moved to School A commented,

> [Teacher turnover here] is indeed really high. . . . A lot of people just can't accept these low wages. Young people want to start a family, and practically speaking this requires money. Salaries [here] are light years away from satisfying their needs. A lot have left to go work in public schools. (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Conclusion

This article provides the first empirical account of teachers' work in China's migrant schools. As we have seen, teachers are subjected to a number of challenges familiar to other migrant workers: low pay, long hours, heavy workload, lack of job protections, legal violations, and even health risks. Similarly, the teachers themselves are largely migrants, and therefore are generally excluded from social service provision in their place of employment. Although it has not been a focus of this study, teachers also face immense difficulty in exercising a collective voice in the workplace—there are no unions or collective bargaining. Given their status as second-class citizens, weak labor market position, and vulnerability to workplace rights violations, these teachers face working conditions much more akin to those of migrants in the manufacturing or low-end service sectors than to urban public school teachers.

Exploitative conditions are clearly the norm, yet there is significant regional variation: concretely, teachers in Guangzhou work fewer hours for better pay than their Beijing counterparts. The institutional environment in Beijing means that migrant schools are unable to establish a stable organizational presence. Additionally, because there is no state oversight, they are able to flout the law. This means that teachers work without contracts, and management has a strong incentive to push their wages to subsistence levels while extending their working hours as long as possible. Lawlessness and the constant existential threat of school closure mean that teachers are subjected to multiple, overlapping forms of instability, or *extralegal precarity*. Migrant schools in Guangzhou receive some state oversight and are therefore more constrained by the law. They must pay teachers above minimum wage, provide some social insurance (though there is an array of accounting tricks to minimize the financial burden on management), and limit working hours. As a result, management has employed *market discipline* to shift risk onto teachers.

I would like to conclude by highlighting some broader implications of my findings. As I suggested at the outset, the investigation of teachers' work provides a window onto the distinct ways these two megacities are responding to mass rural-to-urban migration. In Beijing, the imagined link between overpopulation and political chaos has a decisive role in shaping this process, as stability—or at least the image thereof—is sacrosanct in the capital. Consequently, the government is reluctant to cede too much autonomy to the market, and the city has not licensed migrant schools for a decade. With a greater share of children in public schools, nervous officials have an additional population control lever. This fact became painfully obvious in 2014 when the city began a

concerted effort to remove migrant children from public schools (Zhao, 2015). It is clear that Beijing intends to make life uncomfortable for those "out of plan," be they teachers, students, or parents. On the other hand, Guangzhou has, until very recently, had a major labor shortage. The city has by no means committed to extend universal public education to entice migrants to stay, but it has allowed for an (at least somewhat regulated) education market to emerge. While it would be incorrect to say that Guangzhou has been particularly welcoming to migrants—recall that accessing public education is considerably more difficult than in Beijing—the city government has not taken the same coercive population control measures. However, the highly marketized model in Guangzhou should hardly been viewed as a model worth emulating. Indeed, with the state by and large withdrawn from subsidizing migrant education, the market will be left to its own devices, with predictably bad results for teachers and working-class students.

Is this fear of a highly stratified education system overblown? Since 2014, the central government has moved to eliminate the distinction between rural and urban hukou while promoting the adoption of easily attainable residence permits that, in theory, enable migrants to access local services. Both central and local governments continually stress that migrant children should be primarily placed in public schools. But despite policy that is moving away from the status-based exclusion of old, the state is establishing new forms of market-based differentiation. Particularly in the megacities with populations over 5 million, we see that point-based hukou schemes favor migrants with high levels of cultural and economic capital. Without local hukou, migrants are still required to produce evidence of formal housing and employment, and frequently need to demonstrate having paid into the local social insurance system in order to have their children admitted into public schools—all of which will be very difficult or impossible for informal and precarious workers. So while many migrants will make it into public schools, it is precisely those that are least likely to be able to purchase quality education on the market that are excluded from public education. Major political shifts notwithstanding, millions of migrant families will continue to depend on the goodwill and perseverance of overworked, underpaid, and underprepared teachers. Even without considering factors external to the school, the implications for the reinforcing and reproduction of a highly unequal class structure are apparent enough.

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Notes

1. There is a small amount of theoretical literature in Chinese on teachers' work dealing with teachers' labor process and whether their labor produces value (see Jiang, 1982; Yang, 2002; Zhao, 1980). None of these studies has looked at migrant schools, nor do they have substantial empirical material. The only empirical investigation of teachers that I am aware of focuses on rural schools (Wang, 2013).
2. But also some subsequent recentralization. See Hawkins, 2000.
3. As identified by Paul Willis (1977), Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron (1977), and others, the school is a primary site of the reproduction of class domination. Given space limitations, I am unable to fully explore these important issues in this article, but I believe this is not a controversial point.
4. I do not discount the heterogeneity within the category of "migrant labor." And yet the conditions discussed above are much more prevalent for migrant workers of various stripes than they are for urban workers.
5. For example, see "北京市实施'中华人民共和国民办教育促进法'办法" (Measures for the Implementation of the Private Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China in Beijing) (2006).
6. Pseudonym.
7. The map is not exhaustive, but includes more than half of the schools in the city: http://gongyi.baidu.com/map/dagongxuexiao.html (accessed Feb. 22, 2013).
8. As of August 2015, School B is still open because of a sustained campaign from parents and other supporters in civil society.
9. Public school teachers in rural areas and smaller, poorer, cities are another matter.
10. This number is a rough estimate. Turnover rates are based on reporting by principals and in some cases experienced teachers. A survey of twelve cities by Tian et al. found an annual turnover rate of over 20% in licensed migrant schools and nearly 50% in unlicensed schools (2008: 17).

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