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Abstract

This study explains the dual task on both political and academic issues in Chinese higher education, using Fudan University in Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China (PRC), as a case study. The research problem focuses on the dynamics and complexity of the interplay among the state, university, staff, and students in the process of socialization through political education and academic affairs. With empirical data collected through documents, questionnaires, observation, and interviews, this study found that academic staff, as both political socialization enforcers and academic freedom pursuers, must implement political socialization and academic freedom in teaching. From its analysis of the interplay among the different players, this article suggests the existence of role-splitting as a phenomenon in Chinese higher education, in which university teachers play different specific roles to form their strategies, and have complex interactions with other players to deal with differentiated expectations. In these interactions, teachers take on different roles with different responsibilities,

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adopt different strategies, and exhibit different, even contrasting behaviors on different occasions. These behaviors could range from obediently observing bottom lines and working within boundaries set by the state, particularly regarding political affairs, to challenging norms by attempting to expand the scope of academic autonomy and freedom, even in areas the state might deem politically sensitive, which constituted a unique model of higher education. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Xiaoxin, Du, E-Mail: xxdu@connevt.hku.hk