China's Foreign Policy Think Tanks: Explaining Institutional Developments and Shifting Roles

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1. Introduction

1.1 China´s rise and the growing influence of think tanks

For about a decade now, China has been the rising power to watch in the new millennium. Its already vast population, unprecedented three-decade-long economic boom and ancient culture have designated the country as one of the world´s most influential nations, in a sharp contrast to China´s experiences during the 19th and most of the 20th century. For many analysts, this power shift is central to a development that is expected to shape the nature of international politics for the foreseeable future: the relative decline of the world´s sole superpower, and the emergence of a fast-growing peer competitor that is on track to displace it at the apex of the global economic and political order. This angle has spawned a vast amount of literature dealing with the question of China´s motivations and aspirations.[1] The "rise of China" and the onset of the "Asian century" are thus seen as fundamentally new developments that signify a far more pronounced change than the transition from British to American primacy following the Second World War: due to the pronounced differences in culture, social order and economic systems between China and the USA, questions abound on how a Chinese-led world order might look like.

There is no reliable way to know how these long-term predictions and expectations will ultimately pan out, but they certainly served to move China into the focus of world politics, and so far, this attention has been justified. While the country had mostly remained on the sidelines of international and regional organizations for much of the 1980s and 90s, it has more recently been identified as the linchpin of crucial global governance efforts like the attempts to reign in global carbon dioxide emissions and concerted government responses to the 2008-2009 financial crisis. At the same time, other aspects of China´s position and actions on the international stage received increasing scrutiny as well: American analysts focused on China´s complex bilateral relationship with their own country, and particularly on the question of whether it would eventually turn into a superpower competitor that would issue a fundamental challenge to the US-led world order.[2] Sino-Indian and Sino-Japanese relations showed a similar pattern of robust economic partnerships that remained conflict-prone due to territorial conflicts and historical baggage. Southeast Asian nations explored ways in which China could be embedded into a framework of regional organizations for mutual economic gain and collective security, while remaining wary of its potential rise to regional dominance.[3] Finally, China´s outreach to establish strategic partnerships with developing nations in Africa and Latin America anchored the country in those regions as well, meeting substantial local interest in its developmental model and offers for aid (e.g., Kappel and Schneidenbach 2006; Gill, Huang and Morrison 2007).

With all of these trends serving to keep China in the spotlight of international attention, it is no surprise that scholars and policy analysts in the field of International Relations (IR) increasingly focused on China´s foreign policy as a key driver in shaping the global order in the 21st century. Apart from analyzing the likely effects of China´s overall strategy and specific policies (treating it as the explanans or independent variable), much attention was also directed towards their determinants, in an attempt to explain, or perhaps even forecast, Beijing´s moves at

[1] For general studies and overviews on the topic of "China´s rise", often but not always in the context of Sino-American relations, see Christensen (2006), Deng and Wang (eds., 2005), Kang (2007), Kristof (1993), Overholt (2008), and Shambaugh (ed., 2005).

[2] This expectation, usually referred to as the "China threat" hypothesis, is advanced by Gertz (2000) and Mearsheimer (2006). For a more optimistic view, see, for example, Glaser (2011). For an overview of the general debate on this question, also refer to Roy (1996).

[3] See, for example, Ba (2003), Goh (2007) Leong and Yu (eds., 2005).

the international level. To date, this has spawned a sizeable amount of literature on the domestic sources of China´s foreign policy, as well as on its strategic culture and patterns of responding to external events.[4]

While the exact effects of domestic impulses on the making of Chinese foreign policy are often hard to determine due to the opaque nature of China´s political system and the lack of open debates about these issues, there is one among them that has received particular attention, perhaps due to the relative ease of observation: the work of foreign policy think tanks, and the contributions which they provide towards China´s policymaking by supplying analyses and recommendations. Accordingly, recent studies on this issue have predominantly focused on the question of how this input shapes strategic decisions on foreign policy, where it enters into the system, and what the research agenda of Chinese think tanks can tell us about the priorities of decisionmakers.[5] A major point of consensus among the authors who have published on this topic is that the total influence of think tanks on the making of China´s foreign policy has substantially increased over the 1990s and 2000s, especially so under the recently concluded leadership of Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao (2002-2012).

As will be detailed over the course of this study, the development of the relevant institutes has been no less breathtaking than the economic boom which lifted China into the ranks of the world´s foremost powers: they have managed to secure a place in institutionalized policy processes, substantially boosted the quantity and academic quality of their work, embraced new activities in the field of communication and public relations, participated in semi-official diplomatic negotiations, and last but not least are expected to provide the world with answers about the implications of China´s rise. While these factors would, by themselves, already have sufficed to justify the increased interest in China´s think tanks, there is also another angle that underscores the relevance of this case: the scale on which China has adopted this particular organizational form, despite the near-absence of factors like a developed civil society, open political competition or independent business interests that are usually assumed to be particularly conducive to their development (Stone 2005). The most recent Global Go-To Think Tank Report published by James McGann (2012) estimates the total number of Chinese think tanks at 429, sufficient for the second place behind the US (1823). This number is already extraordinarily high for a developing country, and probably still set a bit too low due to the study´s methodology.[6] Certainly, not all of these institutes focus on foreign policy (economics and developmental issues being the other major fields), although those that do tend to be the most prominent representatives of China´s booming think tank sector.[7] The key point to take away from this, however, is the amount of resources that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is willing to invest in policy research capabilities, and the conclusions that can be drawn from this for the apparent importance that it ascribes to them.

[4] See, for example, Cabestan (2009), Heilmann (2004), Lai (2010), Lampton (2001), Lu (1997), Robinson and Shambaugh (1994) for excellent publications on this topic.

[5] See the next section for details.

[6] The study relies on surveys among institutes and related individuals (researchers, politicians, journalists and donors) that asked them to describe their work and rate the quality of institutes, respectively. Judging from personal experience, it is very likely that the response rate among US and other Western think tanks is far higher than those among Chinese organizations, probably resulting in an undercount.

[7] Among China´s five entrants among the list of top 100 non-US think tanks, three are focused exclusively on international issues, and one partly. Together with other sources, this ranking also influences the selection of cases for this study, see chapter 3 for details.

1.2 Literature review

Given the proliferation of think tanks in China and the apparent willingness of the CCP leadership to utilize their services, it is not surprising that this topic has enjoyed considerable attention, especially over the last decade that saw China emerge as an ever more important actor in global politics. Accordingly, this section will briefly present the available literature on China´s foreign policy think tanks, and then proceed to identify the niche that this study is supposed to fill.

The first widely cited publication on the topic, an article by renowned China expert David Shambaugh, did not appear until 1987, several decades into the existence of many relevant research organizations.[8] Although this contribution focused specifically on China´s national security research bureaucracy rather than the broader field of foreign policy, many of the institutes and processes covered in this account are still highly relevant to the latter field today: the inherent closeness of both research areas and the gradual evolution of Chinese international studies towards a more comprehensive coverage of international relations have served to retain much of the applicability of this information. Accordingly, the article paints a very detailed picture of the structures in which Chinese research institutes are embedded, and how these shape the information flow to political leaders. Key points are the attachment of think tanks to rigid vertical bureaucratic "systems" (*xitong*), which at the time resulted in heavy reliance on a single patron and a dearth of information-sharing with peers; the predominance of area studies rather than issue-specific research; and a strong focus on policy analyses and strategic studies over theory-oriented academia. The article also describes a number of particularly influential institutes, some of which (e.g., the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) or China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)) have retained their position, while others like the State Council´s International Studies Research Center (ISRC) are now defunct or have been absorbed by other institutions.

Nina Halpern (1988) does not focus specifically on think tanks in the foreign policy field either, but discusses a key aspect of social science research in China that is particularly relevant to their development: the degree to which their work is designed for maximum utility of political decisionmakers and the pursuit of their development agenda, resulting in the need to keep these capabilities under state control and their activities focused on policy-relevant research. Next to the field of economics, which was of crucial importance for the implementation of China´s reform agenda, international studies are described as the second major branch of state-run social sciences, and the only other one that is institutionally integrated into the policy process. Next to the official system for disseminating internal reports, the author also stresses the importance of informal personal relations (*guanxi*) in advising decisionmakers, a salient feature of Chinese social life in general. Finally, this account contains detailed information on the composition of research communities and the personnel profile of related institutes, which - as far as the foreign policy branch was concerned - was heavily dominated by former diplomats, military officers and ministry officials, owing to the dearth of academic specialists even a decade after the end of the Cultural Revolution.

The peak of (academic) interest in the topic is probably marked by a 2002 issue of *China Quarterly*, featuring several contributions that each tackle a distinct organizational subgroup. David Shambaugh revisited his earlier work on the topic and provided an update on major research organizations, their internal structures and specializations. Bonnie Glaser and Philip Saunders focused on trends shaping the whole field, like the increase in inter-institute

[8] While many prominent Chinese think tanks were founded as early as the mid- and late 1950s, almost all of them were closed for up to a decade during the Cultural Revolution, subtracting a bit from their total age.

communications, open competition for resources and projects, and moves towards a more transparent, Western-inspired model that includes frequent foreign exchanges. Again focusing on the question of policy influence, the authors also review several ways in which institutes may obtain it, stemming from their position within the bureaucracy, personal *guanxi*, or academic excellence. Finally, Bates Gill and James Mulvenon provide descriptions of military-related think tanks, most of which focus on narrow aspects of national security and military strategy.[9]

Ming-chen Shai and Diane Stone (2004) offer another survey of major Chinese foreign policy research institutes that mostly covers the same organizations as other studies in the field, but also attempts to provide historical context on their development. Specifically, the authors interpret the activity of modern Chinese think tanks as being in the tradition of "establishment intellectuals", continuing the historical closeness of political and educational elites in China.

In her study on China´s foreign policy think tanks and their impact on Sino-Japanese relations, Liao Xuanli (2006) also offers an up-to-date description of several key players, a short historical account of their changing roles and influence, and a country-specific typology based on shared organizational features. The latter is particularly relevant for my own efforts in this study and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Based on an analysis of think tank publications and government decisions, the author estimates the former´s influence on three important dimensions of Sino-Japanese relations (the security, history and economic angles), concluding that it has grown overall but still fluctuates depending on the specific issue.

Thomas Bondiguel and Thierry Kellner (2010) provide an update on the institutional landscape of Chinese foreign policy think tanks before moving on to discuss recent additions to their portfolio of activities and the ways in which this development has opened up new avenues for exercising influence. The authors provide information on media appearances by individual scholars and the role of think tanks in public relations efforts abroad, both of which constitute significant departures for many institutes that used to specialize in working behind the scenes.

Approaching the subject from a different angle, Stephan Scheuer (2010) focuses on the academic output of China´s think tanks rather than their policy influence. Accordingly, his thesis employs a content analysis of publications dealing with several significant international crises that affected Chinese interests (the 1995/96 Taiwan strait crisis, the 1999 Belgrade embassy bombing and the 2000 Taiwan election). The author finds that during the 1990s, Chinese scholars moved from making normative statements about these events towards neutral descriptions and employing formal theoretical frameworks, arguing that this signifies a trend towards greater academic professionalism.

Most recently, Zhao Quansheng (2011) prepared an (as of now) unpublished draft on the role of think tanks in the expansion of the Chinese foreign policy decisionmaking process that he generously provided to the author. The paper principally argues that think tanks are a key factor in linking the "inner circle" of decisionmakers with peripheral bureaucracies, international partners, and foreign and domestic civil society groups. Additionally, he details the various public, internal and unofficial communication channels through which think tanks and scholars can provide policy input to the decisionmaking center.

In addition to publications dealing with the whole sector of foreign policy think tanks, a few individual institutes are also prominent enough to have spawned detailed case studies. Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner´s (2007a, 2007b) work on the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) stands out due to its rich account of the history of China´s premier think tank. Notably, this account focuses on how political decisions created and shaped a research institute, rather than

[9] The same issue of the journal also includes an article by Murray Tanner on think tanks which focus on matters of internal security, as well as a contribution on economic research institutes by Barry Naughton, exemplifying the variety of policy fields in which think tanks are employed in contemporary China.

the other way around. Additionally, a 2011 report by the CIA´s Open Source Center (OSC) on CICIR and its position in China´s intelligence apparatus summarizes the publicly available information on what is by now the country´s biggest dedicated IR think thank.

In addition to the English-language studies summarized above, a few Chinese scholars have in recent years also published on the topic of their own nation´s think tanks. Although the research interests of Chinese experts on this topic mirror those of their Western counterparts in that they are primarily interested in foreign rather than domestic organizations (predominantly American think tanks),[10] those who do discuss Chinese institutes are often able to offer first-hand knowledge of their status and activities. In the most widely cited source among Chinese articles, Sun Zhe (2004) profiles the most important foreign policy research organizations in China, applying a broad notion of what constitutes a "think tank" that includes many specialized university departments. He also focuses on the considerable variety of roles which these institutes perform, identifying five major functions (providing formal policy advice, acting as unofficial communication channels, in-person consultations with leaders, informing the public, and conducting policy reviews). Like other Chinese publications on the subject, the author also provides a program for improving the performance of think tanks (encouraging local specialization, more interactions with the public and especially foreign audiences, more transparent use and sharing of information, including think tanks in intelligence analysis, and improving the academic education of future staff). Since these calls often originate from scholars who are themselves employed in policy research institutes, they offer a window on how Chinese "establishment intellectuals" interpret their own role and define their personal interests.

Chen Guangmeng divided his recent research on the topic between two publications, the first of which (2009) proposes a categorization of institutes which will be discussed in the next chapter, while the second (2010) again takes up their influence on China´s foreign policy. Starting out with a comprehensive review of China´s political system and policy process, the author locates the primary means of influence in drafting various policy options on a given topic, consulting with decisionmakers on newly emerging issues that have not yet been officially taken up, and - more recently - influencing public opinion through the media. As is characteristic for Chinese publications, the paper also concludes with suggestions for further development, stressing the need for more research coordination between institutes and calling for a reorientation away from addressing broad strategic questions towards more issue-specific and academic research. Perhaps most interestingly, the author sees rising popular nationalism as a significant problem for implementing a peaceful foreign policy, and calls on experts to deflect these pressures by engaging more with the public and explaining international issues that bear a potential for conflict.

Finally, there are several studies that do not focus specifically on foreign policy think tanks, but rather the importance of policy research and the organizations that conduct it within China´s political system. In China, Zhu Xufeng (2009a, 2009b, 2013; with Lan Xue, 2007), has in recent years emerged as the preeminent expert on the topic of think tanks in general, particularly through his interesting quantitative approaches to measuring the notoriously elusive concept of policy influence. These contributions will not be discussed here in detail, but are of course often applicable to the specific subset of foreign policy think tanks as well.

[10] Despite this difference in research focus, some of the Chinese-language publications on the subject of US think tanks do offer indirect information on Chinese institutes as well, since they sometimes take an implicit comparative approach or portray them as role models for the further development of China´s own capabilities. These studies will be covered in more detail in chapter 6.

1.3 Research gap and aims of the study

As we have seen, research on Chinese think tanks is often motivated by an interest to gauge the impact of their advice on the making of Chinese foreign policy, rather than the changing roles and activities of the institutes themselves. To be sure, the emergence of major new fields of activity (e.g., media presence) or general changes in structural conditions like the channels of communication which they can utilize have been covered as well, most recently by Bondiguel and Kellner (2010) and Zhao (2011). However, what is still lacking in the literature is a model that treats the development of China´s think tanks themselves as the central dependent variable and seeks to identify both long- and short-term causal factors that shaped their distinct profiles over the course of their existence.

As described above, most existing accounts do feature ad-hoc historical overviews of the development of Chinese foreign policy think tanks, usually focusing on key turning points like the Cultural Revolution or the onset of the reform era under Deng Xiaoping. To be sure, these are events that have had a massive impact on the country´s turbulent modern history, and think tanks are certainly no exception. However, most likely due to limitations imposed by the publication format, none of these contributions aim to systematically disentangle the various strands of factors that had, at different times, a plausible impact on think tank development. Neither do they dwell much on differences between individual institutes or groups of them, other than to discuss questions of status, influence or their general positions in the system. The actual output of think tanks in the form of publications, recommendations or media appearances is usually not studied in depth - let alone analyzed through quantitative measures and compared between cases - although this should be considered a key aspect for the understanding of shifting or expanding roles. My own research questions spring directly from these gaps in the literature and are aimed at closing them as far as possible: first and foremost, what are the peculiar characteristics of Chinese foreign policy think tanks, and how can we account for them? What roles have these institutes played under different generations of Chinese leaders and the specific approaches which they brought to domestic and foreign policy? How have the drastic changes in China´s internal and external environment over the history of the PRC impacted its think tank sector? Why and how have these institutes developed their contemporary portfolio of activities, and - as far as can be possibly foreseen - how are these likely to evolve in the future?[11]

In tackling these questions, I will review changes in a rather broad range of factors - cultural, political, economical and technological - that have exhibited considerable variance over the history of the PRC and are suspected to have influenced the evolution of the country´s foreign policy think tanks. Subsequently, the development of these institutes is mapped across two dimensions: first, structural changes - the question of when and under what circumstances these institutes were established, abolished or reorganized; and second, role changes, or how their specific activities shifted over the course of their existence. Whenever possible, detailed information about specific institutes will be given and used for comparisons between cases, although the scarcity of such data for earlier periods sometimes only allows for characterizations of the sector as a whole. The relationships between changes in environmental factors and

[11] Not all of these questions will be examined here for the first time - for example, the role of think tanks in the broader political system has already been extensively covered due to its high salience to the exploration of policy influence (e.g., Halpern (1988); Shai and Stone (2004)). However, it is necessary to reexamine these aspects here again in order to provide a context for my original research, and - whenever possible - to update the work that has already been done on these questions with new findings.

outcomes at the institutional level will be examined comprehensively, allowing for an interpretation of the former´s relative importance in shaping the latter. Due to the range of potentially important explanatory factors and the resulting large number of interactions between them and the outcomes they are supposed to explain, they will first be discussed separately over the course of several chapters before linking them to specific developments in the concluding chapter.

In order to establish patterns that allow us to draw meaningful causal inferences, it is also necessary to come up with very detailed and up-to-date profiles of the relevant research organizations. Apart from its focus on explaining think tank change, this study will accordingly feature a substantial descriptive element that similarly goes beyond previous work: whenever possible, data on the structural conditions and output of think tanks will be presented quantitatively, resulting in more detailed profiles and facilitating comparisons between cases. Finally, although this thesis is intended as a country-specific study of cases that were shaped by a highly distinct set of circumstances, some of its findings should also allow us to understand the development of think tanks in general, particularly in nations that share some of China´s environmental characteristics. Since, as we will see in the next chapter, most existing frameworks for analyzing the development of think tanks implicitly or explicitly proceed from assumptions that are derived from their position in Western nations, this would also constitute a valuable addition to the field.

In order to fulfill this multitude of objectives, it is of course necessary to emphasize some aspects of the topic at the expense of others. While the period between 1949 and (approximately) 2002 will be covered more generally, with a focus on processes of organizational creation and destruction, particular attention will be given to the most recent decade (2002-2012), which coincides with the "fourth generation" of CCP leadership around general secretary Hu Jintao and premier Wen Jiabao. This is done for several reasons: first, as we have seen, the developments in earlier period(s) have already been covered by several of the existing publications mentioned above, leaving comparatively less to add through the application of a dedicated model. Second, several of the contemporary activities of think tanks, like professional scholarly work, media appearances or institutionalized consultation mechanisms, are quite recent phenomena that could not have been pursued in earlier periods, mostly due to political constraints. While the emergence of new activities is, of course, something to be explained through comparison to previous conditions, the recency of these developments leaves less ground to cover when discussing earlier periods. Third, due to the significant upheavals that the Chinese think tanks system has undergone over the decades (most notably, its total abolition between the late 1960s and late 1970s), information about their early activities is very hard to come by, necessarily resulting in a picture that will be more finely grained the closer we get to the present.

In summary, the approach of this study will be to gauge the long-term effects of major political and social shifts on the constitution of China´s foreign policy think tanks and their general role within the political system, while focusing on the last decade to track most of the smaller changes in their activity profile. This basic setup will also be echoed in the structure of many of the subsequent chapters, which will proceed from the description of fundamental features and long-term trends towards more detailed observations of recent developments.

1.4 Structural outline of the study

Having stated its general purpose, this thesis will proceed as follows: chapter 2 first discusses existing analytical frameworks regarding the classification of think tanks and explanations for their development. It then moves on to introduce an alternative, general-purpose

typology and a case-specific explanatory model, and concludes with the formulation of research questions and a short description of the various methods employed to examine them. Chapter 3 summarizes the selection criteria that were used to identify the institutes that form the sample for this study, and provides brief profiles on each of them. These descriptions cover essential features like the kind, size, age and institutional affiliation of the selected think tanks, pointing out their individual relevance to the system and grouping them into three categories based on similarity.

Subsequently, chapter 4 aims to comprehensively address a range of potentially important cultural and historical context factors that cannot be otherwise explored within the framework introduced in chapter 2. Specifically, it tackles the often contentious relationship between the CCP and China´s intellectuals, mostly focusing on the mechanisms of political control and cooptation which political elites have employed vis-a-vis the latter. These factors allow for the exploration of two very important angles that would otherwise be missing from the picture: first, the motivations of political decisionmakers in organizing research through a system of think tanks; and second, the conditions under which intellectuals engage the state and provide the educated workforce needed to run these organizations. Since it is hard to integrate these discussions with the rest of the framework, this chapter stands slightly apart and is intended to provide a primer on relevant background information before launching into the main body of the thesis.

Chapters 5-7 constitute the empirical core of this thesis, with a structural division that mirrors the parts of the model introduced in chapter 2. First, chapter 5 deals with the study´s main explanatory factor, tracking shifts in the strategic interests of China´s political decisionmakers across two dimensions (domestic legitimation and foreign policy). As will be described in more detail in the next chapter, these interests are treated as the main explanatory factor due to the total dominance of the state over China´s research system, and the resulting assumption that organizational developments in this sector are primarily motivated by their political utility.

Chapter 6 proceeds to map out the influence of intervening factors, or changes in the non-political structural context conditions in which Chinese think tanks operate. These are, in turn, the size and education of their research personnel, the available funding, institutional leadership, and the kind of foreign role models that were, at times, explicitly emulated. These factors are introduced in order to establish the structural limits that constrain processes of organizational design, both regarding the creative freedom of decisionmakers and the opportunities for institutes to provide impulses for their own future development.

Consequently, chapter 7 contains the observations regarding the dependent variable, covering the current activity profiles of the institutes in the sample and the corresponding changes over time, with a special focus on the last decade. The various activities are subsumed under three fields - academic, advisory and propagandistic -, with an aim to track their relative importance for individual institutes as well as for the sector as a whole. Finally, chapter 8 summarizes the information presented in the preceding chapters in order to answer the specific research questions, before concluding with an outlook on possible avenues for future research.

2. Analytical framework and research design

This chapter will introduce the various elements of my research design for the rest of this study in a comprehensive fashion, leading to a somewhat complex internal structure. Its first part (sections 2.1 and 2.2) will address conceptual issues, providing a working definition for what constitutes a "think tank" and suggesting a flexible typological approach to explore differences between specific cases. The second part (sections 2.3 and 2.4) introduces the study´s explanatory model and specifies the dependent and independent variables that are most relevant to answer the research questions. Finally, the chapter closes with a brief description of the various methods that were used to obtain the empirical findings presented in subsequent chapters.

2.1 Definition: what is a think tank?

The notion of what exactly constitutes a “think tank” has been very much in flux over the past few decades, not least because of the substantial increase in the diversity of policy research organizations and the spread of such institutes across the world. This understanding was initially shaped mostly by a small group of prominent American institutes that dated back either to the progressive era (for example, the Brookings Institution) or World War II (the RAND corporation). Researchers subsequently expanded this narrow focus on technocrats and academics in order to accommodate the expanding role of think tanks in political struggles, either through their direct attachment to political actors (for example, the German party foundations) or their identification with an ideological movement - most notably, the "new partisans" associated with American conservatism (McGann 2007, p. 62-64; Stone 1996, p. 21-24).

Still, all of these examples are derived from developments in Western nations, and predominantly cover organizations associated with civil society, which is problematic since it might entail presupposing conditions that cannot be meaningfully applied to China. Indeed, the most recent global comparative study of this topic by McGann and Sabatini (2011, p. 15) still starts out from a definition of think tanks as "independent policy research organizations". Here, "independence" refers to a formal separation from government structures, a condition presumably included in order to distinguish think tanks as organizations from policy research teams attached to state bureaucracies. However, if consequently applied, this criterion would immediately have excluded the vast majority of cases from China and other Asian developing nations, since the government tends to dominate the think tank sector in these countries.

Taking these developments into account, this study aims to cast the net as widely as possible and defines a think thank simply as a public policy research organization – in other words, an organization whose research is intended to influence policies through a variety of means which will be detailed in the next section. Somewhat more precisely, this study will be restricted to foreign policy research organizations due to its thematic focus. This rather open definition explicitly allows for the inclusion of institutes affiliated with universities, which – while usually considered an altogether distinct form of organization – have come to play the same roles in China.[12] It also permits me to cover a very broad range of institutions of different sizes, status, and organizational affiliations, which could be particularly valuable in identifying how specific causal factors have impacted the structure and activity of think tanks by allowing for

[12] China´s universities and other “higher education institutes” (HEIs) have been explicitly instructed to perform the function of think tanks for state and party; see section XIII, article 49 of the Action Scheme for Invigorating Education Towards the 21st Century (Ministry of Education 1999).

comparisons between cases. Still, working with an open definition like this one that is likely to yield a considerable variance between cases also requires particular attention to the process of grouping them into categories according to shared features. Accordingly, the subsequent section will detail a typological scheme that is specifically designed to complement an inclusive definition by focusing on activities rather than structural features.

2.2 Typology

The best-known typology for classifying think tanks is probably the one introduced by Weaver (1989) in order to analyze the landscape of US policy research institutes, which were booming at the time. This classification divided them into "universities without students," "contract researchers" and "advocacy tanks." which captured their essential activities very well, and is therefore still widely used for analyzing American and Western think-tank systems. A subsequent reformulation by McGann and Weaver (2000, p. 10f.) expanded this model to include "party tanks," which are somewhat similar to advocacy organizations but have permanent affiliations with political parties instead of exhibiting the independence and issue focus that is characteristic of the former. However, this approach rests on a foundation that tends to locate think tanks in the realm of civil society rather than the government or its various bureaucracies. This is understandable when the American pedigree of most initial studies in this field is taken into account, but it poses significant problems when one attempts to take stock of research institutes in state-dominated societies such as China and many other developing nations.

To be sure, there is now a substantial body of Chinese literature that tackles this problem and maps the specific features of the country's think-tank landscape in great detail. Zhu (2009b) divides institutes by organizational status: "semi-official" (meaning that while they are not directly part of a government agency, they are still subordinate to one); private for-profit companies; private nonprofit organizations; and university-affiliated think tanks. Regarding the narrower subset of foreign policy research institutes, Chen (2009) devises categories based on organizational features. Four of these categories are based on institutional affiliation (with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), universities or the military), while the others are distinguished as "public diplomacy" think tanks, academic societies, and nongovernmental institutes.

Finally, Liao (2006, p. 56-59) suggests a distinction between "government", "academic" and "university-affiliated" foreign policy think tanks. The descriptions of these categories are somewhat counterintuitive, as we would expect universities to be predominantly engaged in academic work. However, in this usage, "academic" refers to institutes affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), not to a particular activity. Similarly, "government" think tanks do not include all government-run institutes, but rather those affiliated with specific agencies under the central government like MoFA. Technically, universities are also constituted under such an agency (the Ministry of Education), but one that is not engaged in the foreign policy process, warranting a distinct group. This is an interesting approach that strikes a balance between introducing specific categories and keeping a manageable limit on their number. Additionally, as we will see over the course of the empirical observation, there are several shared characteristics between institutes that indeed provide a foundation for this grouping.

However, I will abstain from orienting my own research around any of these typological schemes and instead propose to use a more flexible approach that also allows for a stronger focus on activities rather than structural characteristics. There are two main reasons for this decision: first, a completely country-specific model would entail abandoning substantial opportunities for making the findings applicable to cross-national comparisons, as well as the additional risk of a priori essentializing certain types of institutes regardless of the empirical realities and ongoing

shifts in the roles of such institutes. Furthermore, this study does not attempt to provide an exhaustive survey of the system of China´s foreign policy think tanks, but rather to cover a sample of prominent cases in more detail. Accordingly, having a highly specific typology could easily result in as many categories as there are cases, rendering it meaningless.

Hence, this section outlines a novel approach to think-tank classification that rests on two premises: First, all policy research institutes perform activities that can be subsumed under three general roles – academic, advisory, and propaganda.[13] Second, most if not all such institutes do not focus on any of these areas exclusively, but rather perform all of these roles simultaneously, while prioritizing certain activities. Accordingly, it would be unwarranted to classify them as ideal types, and it is much more promising to locate them on a spectrum between these extremes. In order to justify this approach and illustrate its advantages, I will subsequently describe my understanding of the main roles which think tanks perform and suggest a way of depicting various "mixtures" of activities in an intuitive, easy-to-understand continuum.

2.2.1 Think tank roles and activities: three ideal types

Academic activity

The first main role which think tanks perform is the conduct of academic research. The easiest way of defining "academic" research is to understand it as the kind of output that would be typical for a university department rather than a policy workshop. Academic research is characterized by a desire to understand fundamental patterns and relationships underlying a phenomenon, and - if possible - to generalize from empirical findings for the ultimate purpose of theory development. Accordingly, the respective studies will tend to be focused on observations of long-term trends rather than specific phenomena, or at least aim to explore the latter in the context of the former. Conducting this kind of research requires a very high degree of academic aptitude and expertise, usually acquired over at least a decade of professional work in a highly specific field and evidenced by the associated postgraduate credentials (a Ph. D. or at least M.A.). Their output will come in the form of peer-reviewed articles or scholarly books and be openly published in order to allow for scrutiny. The relevant audience is mostly made up of other academic experts in the field, since such works are often hard to understand without prior familiarity with the underlying theories, concepts and contextual knowledge.

Since this kind of work predominantly revolves around exchanges among a small and closely-knit (epistemic) community of experts, it is hard to make it immediately usable for the practical interests of political decisionmakers. However, in the social as well as the natural sciences, academic work can provide the fundaments to open up new avenues of applied research, thus making it potentially very valuable in the long term. Due to the nature of scientific progress, drawing up concrete agendas for this kind of research is much harder than for short-term analytical or descriptive projects, and can usually not be managed by outsiders. Accordingly, academic research is usually practiced at institutions with substantial independence and control over their own resources and agendas - most importantly, university departments. One final aspect of academic work - teaching and providing in-depth education on certain topics - is, of course, even more strongly associated with this type of organization.

[13] This tryptichon of think tank activities is evocative of the subtitle of McGann´s (2007) book on US think tanks ("academics, advisors and advocates"), but this contribution does not restrict its typological approach to these differences (instead coming up with a total of eight types), while also focusing strongly on affiliations rather than activities.

Advisory activity

In pronounced contrast to academic work, the provision of advice is much more strongly shaped by the short-term needs of policymakers. The latter usually have neither the time nor the in-depth knowledge to work through extensive amounts of academic material, but rather need timely and concise information that help them deal with specific problems that have recently come up. Accordingly, advisory work is usually focused on policy analyses and evaluations as well as mid-term policy planning. The related studies will tend to deal with topics on a case-by-case basis, offering descriptions and prescriptions for action, but not couching these findings in more general frameworks. As a result, this kind of output is much shorter, intended for quick consumption, and not made available to the public. Of course, these points not only apply to written statements, but also face-to-face consultations.

The target audience of advisors are political decisionmakers and mid-level bureaucrats in state agencies. In order to keep the specific needs of these patrons in mind, researchers with a practical rather than academic background may be better suited for this line of work, or at east not at a disadvantage. In the specific field of foreign policy, this would most likely include diplomats and military officers, depending on the research focus. In order to organize the associated personnel exchanges between agencies and think tanks (the so-called "revolving door"), advisory think tanks will likely feature a close institutional affiliation with relevant government bureaucracies. Finally, the research agendas of institutes specializing in this kind of work will tend to be externally determined and subjected to the needs of taking on and completing projects on relatively short notice.

Propaganda activity

Since the meaning of "propaganda" in the context of policy research could be easily misunderstood, exploring this activity first requires a clarification of my own usage of this term. Despite the most common understanding, "propaganda" does not necessarily entail knowingly spreading false information or embellishments of the truth. Rather, this term is intended to cover any dissemination of information that is supposed to inspire (political) action in its target audience.[14] When applied to think tanks, this role has often been described as "advocacy" (e.g., McGann (2007), p. 15-16), but this term is too evocative of open policy debates in pluralist societies to be useful for the study of related activities in other environments, including China. The advantages of the more inclusive concept of "propaganda" will hopefully become clear over the course of this study.

Regarding the nature of propaganda work and what sets it apart from the other fields, it is most important to note that this activity is not intended to establish new knowledge, but rather to disseminate existing knowledge in order to mobilize support for a given political position. Hence, propaganda think tanks expend little time on research from the ground up, but rather try to support a predetermined conclusion that is seen as desirable for ideological reasons or because of its conduciveness to the interests of their patrons. This may also entail reprocessing existing academic research in order to make it available for consumption by the broader public. Indeed, propaganda think tanks tend to aim at much larger audiences than the other types in order to mobilize popular support, and work together closely with the mass media for this purpose.

[14] This definition is closer to the original, early 20th century usage of the term, which was applied to apolitical commercial advertisements (see Bernays 1930)). The contemporary association with political desinformation is mostly a result of its application to mass politics in the interwar years and mobilization efforts during World War II.

In order to be able to effectively shape public opinion and to exercise the maximum influence over public debates, it is necessary to move quickly and disseminate knowledge about issues that have recently attracted attention. Accordingly, their agendas will tend to be dominated by the current political situation and the necessity to come out quickly with ad-hoc opinions on current issues. Although it needs to be pointed out again that propaganda is not necessarily misinformation, the accuracy and soundness of the related arguments is often secondary to these considerations. This, in turn, also shapes the personnel requirements of institutes specializing in propaganda efforts: if at all, academic credentials are mostly important to bolster the credibility of scholars at these institutions, instead of being necessary to ensure a high output quality. Media and communication specialists may be far more effective in shaping messages, and party officials or activists can link the institutes with social and political movements that benefit from the spread of their arguments. Accordingly, if these institutes are formally affiliated with other institutions, these will tend to include political parties and highly organized movements like labor unions, industrial associations or religions.

Since this approach assumes a split between three main roles, it is appropriate to visualize this spectrum or continuum as a triangle, with each corner corresponding to one of these roles (Figure 2.1). It is possible to map any observed case within this spectrum while describing the degree to which it prioritizes each of the roles and the associated activities. Since any organization has to make basic strategic decisions about how to allocate its limited resources between different areas of activity, this simple model makes it easy to visualize an essential feature of role prioritization: the closer a case is located to one of the extreme points, the further it is away from the two others. An institute that does not have any kind of priorities would be located at the exact geometric center of the triangular spectrum, while one that focuses exclusively on one of them would be located at the corresponding corner.

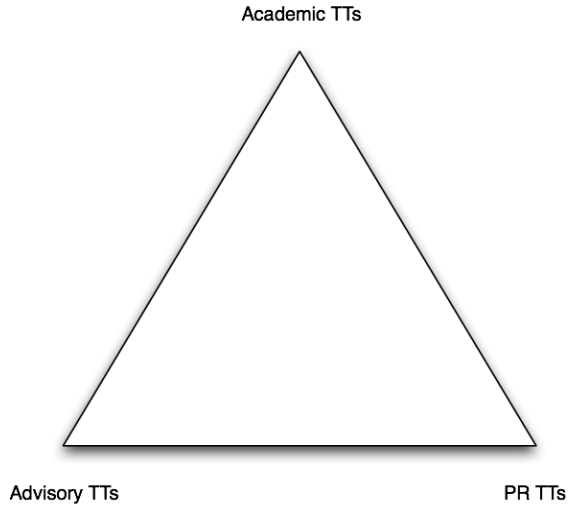

Figure 2.1: Triangular Continuum of Think-Tank Roles

The advantage of this typology is that it allows for both a great deal of precision in locating each case relative to the others and offers maximum flexibility in assigning cases to groups of subtypes, should this be desired. The latter point is of special importance, as it avoids the problem of essentialization and allows for the creation of subtypes contingent upon the actual observation instead of constraining it. Hence, this approach is not only useful for the immediate needs of this particular study, but would also make it possible to compare the results with other country-specific studies or to make them available for further work in this field. It would, for example, be possible to see if other nations feature similar “clusters” of institutes (that exhibit a

comparable degree of focus on each of the three roles), and then to perform a comparative causal analysis by identifying similar systemic features between both nations that may explain such resemblances.

2.3 Theoretical framework

Since this is a somewhat lengthy section, a brief remark on its structure is in order: first, I will discuss a range of existing theories that have so far been used to analyze think tank development and offer explanations for the specific systems of institutes that arise in different national contexts. Some of these are rather far-reaching, extensively developed and have been successfully applied to several cases, while others are of a more tentative nature and have not enjoyed the same degree of popularity. For each approach, I will briefly present its core assumptions as far as they are directly relevant for my research questions. Additionally, I will outline the provisional answers that each approach offers to the following questions: how do think tanks come into existence, what place do they occupy within the policy process, which roles do they fulfill, and how can we account for the variations that occur regarding these attributes?

Wherever possible, I will try to fit these models to my starting assumptions (primarily to the role-based typology that was introduced above), in order to gauge their usefulness for this particular study. In doing so, I may sometimes have to stretch and extend the existing models a bit by deducing new predictions from their original assumptions, but I will strive to do this in a manner that is straightforward and fair to the existing frameworks. While I consider no single one of them a perfect fit for the case of China, they also differ in the degree of their applicability. Hence, each subsection below contains a brief discussion of the individual merits of each approach that is mostly concerned with how well it could be expected to fare when applied to my case, but also raises a few more general points about their internal consistency and how well they are supported by available evidence from other studies. The aim of this process is to identify a set of assumptions about mechanisms within each model that could plausibly be applied to the study of Chinese institutes. The challenge, then, is to synthesize a new model that is able to accomodate as many of these as possible simultaneously while still maintaining a consistent logic.

2.3.1 Existing models

Pluralism

The pluralist view sees think tanks as key players in the „battle of ideas“ concerning public policy planning.[15] Trying to find a niche of their own in a highly competitive marketplace, they may take on a multitude of roles, which in turn tends to lead to very diversified landscapes of research institutes. It presupposes a broader political and social environment that is typical for advanced Western democracies, marked by unconstrained public policy debates, open and fair electoral competition, frequent changes in the control of government, and equal opportunities for interest groups to organize and lobby in pursuit of their aims. Pluralists argue that the intense political competition in the system also leads to a competition between think tanks, as they struggle for limited sources of funding and influence while trying to „sell“ their products in the marketplace of ideas.

[15] For details of this model and its application, see Stone (1996, p. 27-29) or Gellner (1995). Also refer to Liao (2006, p. 8-11) for a discussion of its applicability to the case of China.

In this view, think tanks are conceptualized as part of civil society, and although they may frequently interact with government agencies and bureaucracies, there is a fundamental difference between both kinds of organizations: think tanks are mostly concerned with policy *planning,* whereas the government bureaucracy is tasked with policy *implementation*. It is relatively easy to come up with a plausible explanation for this distinction: if a country is marked by frequent internal power shifts and changes in the control of government, a new administration will most likely lack the time to task state bureaucrats with developing policy plans from scratch. The time in which they control the government apparatus will be limited, and in order to make the most of it, policy implementation must begin right away, thus necessitating prior planning.

Additionally, since electoral competition also involves the presentation of concrete plans and programs for the country´s future, opposition parties must rely on extragovernmental organizations to provide them with the necessary research. Interest groups that are not strongly entangled with an organized political party or movement cannot expect to ever arrive in a position where they can control government agencies, and would therefore have an even stronger incentive to develop their own planning capabilities. In the pluralist view, all of these struggles create a strong and steady demand for policy research and expert advice on the part of political actors, and think tanks rise to the occasion by providing these services. They may do so by employing different strategies - i.e., allying themselves closely to particular actors, selling their services to the highest bidder, burnishing scholarly credentials or honing their propaganda skills -, thus giving rise to a highly diverse and competitive field of think tanks. Apart from identifying the general openness of a system as the main determinant of the total number and variety of think tanks, the pluralist model also points to a range of more specific features. These not only serve as variables by which „pluralism“ could be measured, but would also allow for tying general trends in the composition of a national think tank scene to individual causes. Key factors associated with pluralist explanations are democratization, the degree of civil society development, constraints on NGO activity, interparty competition, and the independence and organization of business actors (Stone 2005). Investigating the relative importance of these factors, as well as identifying the main drivers of think tank development in each category, would go a long way towards explaining the make-up of a particular national landscape - assuming, of course, that these factors are indeed present in the first place.

While the pluralist model emphasizes the think tanks´ involvement in policy battles and associations with distinct interest groups, it is important to note that it does not necessarily conceptualize them as political actors. As a matter of fact, many of the most prestigious institutes in Western societies have avoided the lure of partisanship and lasting entanglements with particular political actors. Specifically, the well-researched role of prominent American think tanks like the Brookings Institution or the Carnegie Endowment is to offer technocratic policy advice to decisionmakers, no matter who or which party is in power. Nevertheless, they are important participants in the policy process of their own accord, able to draw on independent sources of funding, and mostly free to determine their own research agenda. These institutes are not completely untouched by the interest-driven political process at the heart of the pluralist model, but at least their stated mission usually revolves around the public benefit, here defined as the technocratic effectiveness of government. They do owe their original establishment to an interest as well - improving the quality of policies by contributing scientific and scholarly perspectives - although it is an interest that is more broadly inclusive and focused on long-term profit instead of immediate gains for a narrow group of actors.

Connecting pluralist views to the kind of role-centered distinctions between types of think tanks introduced previously is relatively straightforward. Since the activity of research institutes is assumed to be closely related to ongoing struggles over policies, they can be expected to assume roles that are „in demand“, meaning that they would produce a research output that is in accordance with the wishes of a suitable provider of funding. Academic think tanks thrive in

societies with abundant philanthropic endowments and grants supporting long-term technocratic visions of policy development. Advisors benefit mostly from weak state bureaucracies and divided governments, resulting in little competition for their services and an increase in potential customers, respectively. Finally, propagandists will mostly profit from public struggles and partisan divisions, with the participants commissioning studies that are supposed to present their preferred policies as being both viable and in the public interest. If the arena in which public policy is decided were predominantly characterized by one of these features, pluralists would expect a rise in the associated type of think tank.

In summary, the pluralist model is dominant in the literature on the highly diverse field of US think tanks, and has been similarly applied to their British counterparts.[16] It is noticeably geared towards the peculiarities of the political system of the Unites States, but not without its critics even when just applied to this narrow national environment (alternative perspectives that have been applied to the same case are discussed below). Nevertheless, as mentioned above, it presupposes a political system that is marked by great degree of competitiveness and openness. This approach works well when comparing democratic systems, but runs into substantial problems when trying to account for the emergence and roles of think tanks in nondemocratic, state-dominated societies - systems that lack the structural features associated with pluralism and in which the model´s key explanatory factors are simply not present. For these reasons, the pluralist approach would not be a good choice as an overall framework for the case of China; however, it is useful to keep some of its proposed mechanisms in mind in order to see how they could be fit into a synthetic model that is more accommodating to China‘s specific circumstances. The rather general assumptions that were outlined above can to some extent be adapted to societies that lack open and transparent political competition, as long as there are at least some struggles and divisions at all.

Elite rule

In stark contrast to pluralist assumptions, the elite model diagnoses a low degree of actual political competition even in highly democratic societies. The associated theorists (e.g., Dye (1987); Fischer (1991)) posit that government policies mostly reflect the interests of a small, powerful elite made up predominantly of wealthy capitalists and corporations, no matter which party controls the government. In this view, most public policy battles are purely for show, and their end results do not depend so much on elections as rather intra-elite bargaining. Accordingly, elite theorists must devise a role for think tanks that is strikingly different than the one assumed by pluralists: like the political actors themselves, think tanks do not really compete with each other, but simply advance minor variations of the same rough policy consensus that follows from elite interests. Their role is supposedly not one of participating in debates, but rather consists of providing coordination for the policy planning process and an interface between political and business elites.

It is noteworthy that this perspective was not developed to theorize about the existence of think tanks in nondemocratic societies, but rather to apply it to the exact same landscape of American think tanks that supposedly constituted a poster case for the pluralist model. It is strongly influenced by skepticism about the nature of American democracy and the influence of wealthy business interests. As such, it is actually as much country-specific as the pluralist perspective, although it was originally developed with the goal of providing a universalist approach in mind. Subsequent variations of the elite approach relaxed the original assumptions

[16] For discussions of the influence of pluralism on the US think tank system, see, e.g., Abelson (2006) or the same author´s and Evert Lindquist´s contribution to McGann and Weaver (eds., 2000). For an analysis of British institutes that use a similar analytical prism, see Stone (1996).

and focused on narrower subsets of think tanks that are connected to distinct factions within the political and corporate establishments, rejecting the assumption of a wide-ranging elite consensus. Specifically, the elite model was utilized in studies that aimed to explain the rise of a new group of conservative free-market-oriented American think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute.[17] These institutes were notable for their strong connections to the corporate elites funding their work, their narrow issue focus, overt partisanship and strong ideological slant.

Marxist views on the interplay between power and ideas can also be subsumed under the range of elite theories on think tanks and their roles. Relevant contributions (Parmar (2004)) resort to a Gramscian perspective of power and focus on the collusion between state and private interests in the pursuit of „hegemonic projects". In this view, the intellectual elite that is assembled in think tanks often acts as an unofficial partner to the state and its agencies, blurring the distinction between state and civil society that is characteristic for the pluralist model.

One major problem with this approach is that it entails the danger of oversimplifying the complex interactions in policymaking, as well as to overestimate the degree to which there exists an intra- elite consensus. Both free market as well as planned economies will inevitably give rise to a complex web of actors, each with their own distinct interests and preferences over the allocation of resources, which in turn leads to conflicts. It is, of course, easily possible to adapt the elite approach to non-capitalist (which usually are also nondemocratic) countries and argue that policies in these societies are not influenced so much by private sector interests, but rather a nomenclature of party officials, high-level bureaucrats and (usually) military officers. More general, an elite constitutes itself by its power over the means of production and the allocation of goods in a society, no matter which economic or political system structures these processes. However, this is still insufficient to explain the role of think tanks: since the dominant interests in such systems are not part of civil society, but rather directly fused with the state, there is no need for a kind of organizational „interface" between the two spheres. Barring major societal upheaval, the same groups can expect to remain in permanent control of the government, obviating the need to develop policy-planning capacities beyond the narrower confines of the state bureaucracy.

Under these circumstances, it would be wasteful (and possibly even dangerous) to set up dedicated policy planning institutes that enjoy a degree of liberty from the state apparatus, instead of allocating such tasks to small, specialized research units that are tightly integrated into existing administrative structures. If a society´s dominant interests had already reached a rough consensus about desirable policies, all that remained would be to work out the details and implement them - a process that does not really require think tank services, neither in the form of assessments nor justifications. Indeed, the degree of independence and (supposedly) scholarliness that think tanks are usually expected to exhibit could create a dangerous breeding ground for dissent and criticism directed against elite policies. While this argument raises doubts about the ability of elite theories to explain why think tanks emerge at all in societies with monolithic and entrenched elites, it also allows us to glean an insight about a possible mechanism underlying the setup of such institutes: if societies with a stable elite consensus about policies do establish think tanks at all, they should generally be more tightly integrated into state bureaucracies. One possible exception to this rule are conditions in which policies become highly complex and require large-scale research teams - organizing such work within the confines of an existing bureaucracy could turn out to be so unwieldy that setting up external institutes is an attractive choice for principals, even when independence is seen as undesirable.

Another problem with the elite model is that it cannot satisfactorily explain the strong ideological divisions between think tanks that are particularly characteristic for the American

[17] See Burris (1992) and Fischer (1991). Also refer to a portrait of the Heritage Foundation from the perspective of its long-term president Edwin Feulner in McGann and Weaver (eds., 2000).

system, but also found to a lesser extent in other pluralistic societies - at least as long as the "elite" is conceptualized as monolithic in order to draw a clear distinction with the pluralist approach. Academic pursuits (and, to a lesser degree, propaganda activity) on the part of think tanks are also mostly incompatible with this model, since elite theorists would expect them to focus on advisory functions: purely academic studies are of little interest to practice-oriented decisionmakers, and propaganda can probably be better handled by specialized media outfits.

In summary, while this approach probably understates the degree of variation in both political outlook and assumed roles that think tanks exhibit in general, its focus on the interests of entrenched political (and economic) elites is of course an important angle when studying the Chinese case. In particular, studying how think tanks reacted to changes in the composition and/or political aims of the elite should yield very valuable insights; it is just important to keep in mind that the "interests" of elites cannot be established a priori, at least not beyond the most general aspects like gains in power and wealth. Instead, they are likely to vary considerably over time as leaders are replaced or change their minds, and, hence, have to be examined in appropriate detail.

Global convergence

This perspective states that policy research institutes - or, more generally, organizations within similar fields - across the globe are marked by a notable trend towards isomorphism, or convergence towards highly similar forms, and then sets out to propose an explanation for this phenomenon. Organizational convergence is mainly seen as a complement of global policy convergence - the conscious, targeted adaption of policies from other countries.[18] Think tanks are seen as critical agents in this process, since their international connections, intellectual openness, and policy- and country-specific expertise qualify them to assess policies from abroad and introduce successful ones to national decisionmakers. At the same time, this function and the international outlook and networking activity that comes with it also shapes the institutes themselves. The rise of think tanks in developing countries is explained by a desire to gain access to these global policy networks by copying the organizational forms that have proven successful in the West (Stone and Denham 2004, p. 8). Apart from similarities that can be attributed to conscious design, another factor that is generally assumed to promote convergence is the notion of social „contagions“: organizations do not exist in a vacuum or receive nothing but environmental influences, but are rather often part of extensive networks that involve other, similar organizations. These relationships can act as channels that quickly propagate organizational features, norms and viewpoints, thus increasing uniformity (Scott 2008, p. 165f.).

While conscious imitation of foreign models is certainly an attractive strategy for countries that must take the first step in the development of think tanks, this approach carries the risk of overstating the total convergence of both policies and research institutes across the globe. The congruent spread of democracy and the global dissemination of neo-liberal economic policies during the 1990s may have created an exaggerated impression of convergence that is not borne out by more recent developments. Not only China, but also a whole range of new rising powers and emerging economies have championed developmental models that are marked by a strong emphasis on state control and intervention. Under these circumstances, thinks tanks would necessarily have to play a much more creative role and pay more attention to local needs than to global policy paradigms.

While the „convergence“ approach can probably not offer a satisfying explanation for think tank development in general and might overstate the scope of its main observation, there is one more limited area in which it should be applicable: academic think tanks have to rely on

[18] See Stone (2000, 2001) for discussions about the role of think tanks in global policy transfers, and how they are themselves shaped by these interactions.

international networks much more strongly than the other ones, and their greater detachment from day-to-day politics and policymaking should allow them to be more receptive towards globalized discussions. Accordingly, this type of research institute should thrive as a country´s international connectedness grows, and as decisionmakers look beyond their own borders for policy ideas. Since they draw legitimacy and relevance from their access to global knowledge, they should be acutely sensitive towards new intellectual trends, and strive to be the first to introduce (or adapt) them to their own nation. Additionally, the period of the initial setup of research institutes should be closely examined for the impact of existing designs from abroad that may have shaped their structures, possibly to the point of outright imitation. This statement is less controversial, since this setup process does not really hinge on the question of whether or not there actually is a global *policy* convergence to boost organizational isomorphism.

Historical approach

In many ways, the historical method is the counterpart to the „convergence" approach: instead of stating the existence of truly global trends and analyzing their role, it conceptualizes national think tank communities as mostly couched in local traditions, attaining distinct „flavors" in the process. It can be subsumed under the broader paradigm of historical institutionalism as elaborated by March and Olsen (1984), and is - because of its emphasis on unique traditions and circumstances - usually associated with an area studies approach.[19] Comparative work in this vein is not conducted to identify isomorphisms - in fact, the very existence of such a phenomenon is usually contested -, but rather in the form of separate case studies that seek to explore the unique features of national communities and stress the differences between them (Stone and Denham 2004). While the national context of structures, culture and social institutions is by no means treated as immutable, it presents organizations with an additional corset to which they must adapt or else face a potentially debilitating backlash (Sil 2002, p. 73ff.). Past decisions are assumed to cast a long shadow through time, stressing the role of path dependency in explanations of how present organizational forms came about.

Regarding the case of Chinese policy research institutes, this approach has been advanced by Shai and Stone (2004), as well as implicitly by several other authors (e.g., Shambaugh 2002; Li 2006). These studies focus mostly on the most salient manner in which Chinese (and other East Asian) think tanks differ from their Western counterparts - their direct connections to state authorities. However, this relationship is not treated as a purely structural constraint on research activity, but rather as a continuation of the long-standing traditional closeness between the state and the intellectual elite.

Studies that focus on Western think tanks and employ role-based distinctions have also sometimes employed a similar framework, at least in part. Some authors (e.g., Stone (1996), p. 18-23; Abelson and Lindquist in Weaver and McGann (eds., 2000); Denham and Garnett in Stone, Denham and Garnett (eds., 1998)) draw distinctions between the first „wave" of Western think tanks, mostly founded in the early 20th century, with the arrival of new competitors during the 1970s: the concentration of the older institutes on academic work and legitimacy through objectivity is explained through a still-lingering progressive ethos that used to be culturally dominant at the time of their founding, and is still deeply ingrained in their organizational culture. This forms an undeniable contrast to the more partisan outlook and propaganda-oriented activity of more recently established institutes: although the latter managed to open up a wide new field of think tank activity and were highly successful in obtaining funding from business groups and

[19] See the examples cited below as well as the China-specific literature discussed in the introduction to this study.

wealthy individuals, the older institutes mostly stuck to their guns and continued to uphold the ideal of ideological neutrality. Pronounced differences between groups of organizations with different founding dates can be interpreted as evidence for „imprinting“ - a process whereby organizations institutionalize missions and norms that are prevalent at the time of their founding, making them very difficult to displace (Scott 2008, p. 158f.).

The basic conception of this thesis as a case study and the strong focus on roles are two important reasons to employ the historical approach. However, and in neat symmetry, one can also identify two reasons not to embrace this perspective prematurely: first, during most of the lifespan of modern think tanks in China, the country was subject to far-reaching societal transformations - some of them in the form of sudden, violent upheavals, some others proceeding more gradually, but still at a very fast pace.[20] Societal, political and institutional changes of this magnitude cannot go by without having drastic effects on established structures, naturally reducing the influence of historical constraints. Second, as was already mentioned, there is also a considerable body of literature on the distinct stages of development that Chinese think tanks have passed through in the last sixty years. Much of this work focuses on the considerable shifts in think thank focus and performance that have often tracked political developments relatively closely, suggesting a pronounced responsivity towards such changes on the part of the institutes (Glaser and Saunders (2002); Shai and Stone (2004); Zhu and Xue (2007)). These observations suggest that, at least as far as China is concerned, the corset of history may not be quite as restrictive as assumed by this approach - or at least that the influence of political principals is strong enough to overcome them with relative ease.

2.3.2 Synthesis and model development

Having reviewed the four major contending approaches for the explanation of think tank development, each of them includes some elements that do seem applicable for the specific topic of Chinese foreign policy think tanks, but also contains assumptions that are clearly not met in this case. In order to maintain the individual strengths of these models while eliminating their weaknesses, the following section will detail the process of synthesizing a case-specific explanatory framework. This requires first taking a step back and delving into a short review of general organizational theory in order to establish fundamental influences on organizational creation and transformation. Proceeding from these assumptions, I will identify the environmental conditions that were likely the most salient ones for the development of policy research institutes in China, treating them as independent variables. The assumed relationships between these factors and changes in think tank missions and activities are subsequently summarized and used to structure the empirical observations presented in subsequent chapters.

2.3.3 Organizational creation

Organizational structures like think tanks are human creations, and as such, each and every single one ultimately came into being through an agreement among conscious agents. No matter whether an organization was first set up by entrepreneurs, public officials, private citizens or another agency, the act of its creation was born from an explicit interest - usually one that is shared by a somewhat large group, since organizational creation can be very resource-intensive. Barring the possibility of purposeless action, organizations are thus conceived of in order to perform a specific task (or „mission“), and organizational design should reflect the founders´

[20] These processes will be dicussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

assumptions about how to best pursue these goals.[21] The usage of the plural is important here, as organizations rarely exhibit a single-minded devotion to one clear goal, but rather an often internally contested hierarchy of competing objectives. This issue can be expected to become more salient as an organization grows, adds new capabilities and increases its internal differentiation.

To be sure, the initial design of an organization is usually not a be-and-end-all solution to the specific problem that prompted its inception, even if its environment were to remain completely static throughout its lifespan. The creators of organizational structures are very likely not perfectly rational agents, cannot foresee the future with enough precision to come up with optimal solutions, and may also have other motives that might trump organizational efficiency. Hence, organizational theory usually employs a „bounded rationality" approach when trying to explain design features (Hall 1996, p. 103f.).

The arguably easiest way to set up a new organization is also not quite congruent with the notion of efficient problem-solving: instead of starting their design work from scratch, founders will often simply copy existing organizational structures. Doing so requires little to no anticipation, as suitable models will usually be selected based on past performance, not so much on expected future returns. This kind of copying (or, in its weaker form, „mimicking") is considered a major reason behind the aforementioned trend towards organizational and institutional isomorphism: the tendency of different organizations within the same field to exhibit highly similar structures (DiMaggio and Powell (1983); Hall (1996, p.108); Scott (2008, p. 151ff.). While regulative and normative constraints will also exert pressures towards uniformity on groups of organizations, intentional mimicking deserves some special attention because it is likely to outweigh the other influences during the initial creation phase. Assuming structural stability and a robust element of path dependency, the impact of decisions taking during this critical phase should still shape an organization even after multiple environmental shifts and subsequent transformations.

Assuming conscious and goal-oriented design at work during the creation phase, the most important question for the purpose of this study is how the three distinct roles of think tanks can be connected to the interests of the principals that have to decide on an institute´s mission. In other words, what is needed is a set of working assumptions (if not formal hypotheses) that attempts to explain why an institute would be tasked with providing academic work, policy advice or propaganda, respectively. A few plausible mechanisms were already extrapolated from the existing frameworks mentioned above, but these were identified by seeing how a typology centered around three distinct think tank roles might fit with theories that were not really developed to explain such specialization. The relationships that are to be discussed here take a different perspective by starting out with the assumption that the selection of one of these roles (or a mixture of them) is, in fact, a conscious design choice taken by the principals, and mostly identical to the process of settling on a mission. Viewed in this way, the question is what benefits think tanks of each type could provide for their principals in return for the resources that need to be invested. A basic description of the work each type primarily provides was already given in the first section of this chapter and will not be repeated here; instead, we will focus on the question of why such institutes would be created in societies like China, at the hands of principals who are already in control of a dominant state apparatus and imbued with far-reaching powers.

[21] This approach to organizational design is called the rational- or strategic choice theory, assuming principals who calculate the costs and benefits of setting up an organization and, if they do so, will usually settle on a design that maximizes efficiency in regard to fulfilling its task. This approach is not the only one in the field of organizational studies or without its critics (DiMaggio and Powell (1983); Scott (1987)), but will inform most of the argument in this section.

Academics can be expected to profit from long-term regime (and policy) stability, as their primary output is basic research that can be of great value in the long-term, but does not offer politicians much guidance for pressing policy choices. They offer services that are highly similar to universities as far as research is concerned, while usually not participating as much in education and training. One major motivation behind setting up think tanks instead of universities might be this separation of the two traditional aspects of academia - universities have historically often been hotbeds and breeding grounds of social upheaval and challenges to the established elites, not least of all in China.[22] The think tank model would offer an attractive opportunity to stay up to date on research while still exercising maximum control over the intellectuals employed in these institutes. When they do engage in the provision of training (to state and party officials, for example), they probably would be better suited to offer short-term, interdisciplinary courses than universities that specialize in full-time higher education.

Because of their usually greater international connectedness, academic institutes can act as semi- official channels for diplomacy, either as transmitters or as direct participants, as in „Track II" processes. Because they enjoy at least a measure of independence from state authorities and scholarly credibility, their use in signaling a country´s intentions would be beneficial for leaders whose own statements would otherwise be dismissed as propaganda. This is, of course, dependent on an interest in engaging the outside world and maintaining international linkages on the part of the state. Finally, academic research institutes can fulfill an important symbolic function that can justify their costs: like universities, they can be seen as symbols for development and progress, if for no other reason than their regular occurrence in highly developed societies.

Advisors will mostly rise to satisfy a demand for technocratic, scientifically guided governance, usually reflecting a regime´s desire to bolster its legitimacy through successful development. Increasing policy complexity, usually as a result of development and societal differentiation, would increase the need for such advice. Large, dedicated research institutes would have an edge in providing it, compared to small-scale research teams that are part of ministerial bureaucracies and scattered between specialized agencies. Another factor driving demand for policy advice can be a country´s increasing international connectedness, as far as the special field of IR and area studies is concerned. Because of their usually strong connections to the state bureaucracy, they are likely to benefit most from strong competition between (not with!) various state agencies soliciting advice in order to obtain an advantage. Finally, this type is the most likely provider of training for politicians and high-level bureaucrats and would thus benefit from an interest in increasing administrative expertise and efficiency.

Propagandists are best suited to further a regime´s legitimacy through the promotion of ideology, and to boost its policies by touting their compatibility with an established ideological orthodoxy. Since they are strongly connected to the state propaganda apparatus, they can also be expected to thrive in situations were the country´s populace is to be mobilized in pursuit of a major regime or national objective. Intra-party elite competition and factionalism should increase the demand for their services as politicians attempt to bolster their ideological credentials and enlist their help to outmaneuver rivals. Finally, one inherent advantage of propaganda institutes over the other two types is their typically lower cost: since the accuracy and academic quality of their work is not a primary concern for principals, their employees require no extensive higher education and their projects no rigorous, time-consuming research efforts. The relative ease with

[22] Consider, for example, the May 4th movement which many first-generation CCP officials and party-affiliated intellectuals experienced through direct participation, or the 1989 student protests in Tiananmen square. Chapter 4 discusses these events and the general trends in state control of intellectuals in China.

which they can be set up would be a major advantage over the other two types, especially in underdeveloped societies that lack both a pool of highly educated policy experts and capital that is available for research.

Of course, while many of these interests and factors may have been so prevalent at the time of an institute´s founding that they determined its mission (and, hence, type), they are not immutable and may wane or increase over time. Such changes can be presumed to eventually exercise a considerable pressure to adapt on institutes, as principals are replaced or prompted to reconsider the original mission of an institute. On the other hand, as many case studies dealing with Western think tanks suggest,[23] organizational missions may prove hard to change, especially in cases where they have stood for a long time and became an identity-defining part of the institute´s culture.

In summary, the role which an organization plays is dependent on its mission; the privilege to formulate the mission in the first place lies with the principals but will then take on a life of its own. Subsequent changes in an organization´s mission are always possible, but beyond the phase of initial creation, making such adjustments will take longer and may trigger substantial resistance from within the organization. Since these change processes are the main topic of this thesis and subject to a much more complex web of influences, we will now turn to discussing the mechanisms governing them in more detail.

2.3.4 Processes of organizational change: environmental effects

In the most general sense, think tanks are organizations operating in an institutional environment. The boundaries between institutions and organizations are somewhat ambiguous and elusive, prompting some authors to treat them as one and the same, usually by including „organizations" under the label of „institutions" and applying theories gleaned from the study of the latter (Scott 1987; 2008 p. 150). According to an often-used analogy, organizations like research institutes are embedded in their environment in a way that is similar to a biological organism facing its biotope. Accordingly, environmental constraints will determine whether there is a niche for an organization to develop. Once created, organizations have to rely on the environment for the resources needed to survive - or, less biologically expressed, to maintain themselves - and will therefore have to exhibit a degree of sensitivity to environmental changes and the resulting pressures to adapt. (Hall 1996, p.191ff.) Finally, the environment is also the source of threats to the continued existence of organizations, either in the form of a drying-up of the resources needed for maintenance, or active hostility on the part of other agents, be they competitors or outright predators.

This is not to suggest that these interactions are a one-way street in which organizations are exclusively impacted by environmental changes. Organizations, especially large and powerful ones, can shape their environment as well, making the relationship somewhat mutually constitutive (Hall 1996, p. 15ff). Apart from this, the fact that organizations exposed to the same set of environmental influences do not all end up in the same state makes it obvious that there are multiple viable ways to adapt, and internal factors cannot be ignored either. Any response to an external effect will always be constrained by an organization´s existing structures, commitments and values. These factors will be considered further below in section 2.3.5, but since they mostly shape the reaction to an environmental stimulus or impetus for change, it is useful to focus first on the most important ways in which the latter manifest themselves.

[23] See the aforementioned studies by Diane Stone (1996); Donald Abelson (2006) and Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett (1998).

Hence, when analyzing the specificities of a particular class of organizations and trying to explain both their origin and subsequent transformations, it is necessary to pay attention to their immediate environment. Determining the exact boundaries of a concept that is as vague and amorphous as „environment“ is, of course, not easy; but in the case of public policy research institutes, their technical description alone offers a cue as to the societal spheres in which they are most deeply embedded: first, the policymaking apparatus with its obvious importance as the primary consumer of its output and provider of financial resources; and second, the education and research system, in its function as a source of trained personnel, occasional external collaboration and as a secondary consumer of research output. It stands to reason that changes in these systems would have the most obvious and pronounced impact on the organizational subfield of think tanks; hence, they should be examined for specific features - or variables - in which they differ over time as explanations for the first establishment and subsequent changes in the roles of Chinese think tanks.

Tying broad organizational changes to environmental ones in this manner might not satisfy all of the conditions for identifying full causal relationships - as a matter of fact, even mere correlations are hard to uncover because of the expected lags in organizational responses. However, this method should yield a few plausible connections that could be further examined in more detail. In order to do so, it is imperative to first consider the full range of environmental dimensions, at least as far as they have a plausible effect on organizations in general, and then move on to assess the degree to which each of them exhibits a noticeable variation during the period that is to be examined.[24]

Technology. The term „technology“ is defined here in a rather broad manner that is inclusive of most aspects commonly associated with „knowledge“. Hence, it goes beyond a narrow class of devices and appliances to include ideas and theories as well. Technological progress, both incremental and in the form of sudden breakthroughs, is a very salient factor in environmental change and of major importance to organizations. Adopting new technologies early and thoroughly is often a key factor in enhancing an organization‘s competitiveness, most obviously so in the case of business ventures. Research institutes constitute a unique case as far as this dimension is concerned, since they are not only potential adopters, but also primary providers of technology. Nevertheless, since the development of cutting-edge technologies is impossible unless breakthroughs achieved by other agencies are incorporated into the research progress, they do have a very strong motivation to be responsive to external technological progress. The fact that their own job is to produce a good that is very similar to the one that is to be adopted should also make them acutely sensitive to technological progress and reduce traditionalist inhibitions against adoption. On the other hand, there is, of course, always the danger that research institutes (especially in the social sciences) will dig in their heels and defend a particular paradigm against progressive challenges simply because it is the foundation of their own work, and the widespread adoption of a different one would diminish their importance and influence.

Legal conditions. Laws have an obvious effect on the development of organizations in general, since they structure the conditions of their establishment, their work, and the aims they can pursue. In particular, laws governing the establishment of NGOs and philanthropic activities can be expected to have a very strong effect on think tanks within the sphere of civil society. However, these effects are most likely much weaker in countries that are authoritarian and in

[24] The following list of environmental conditions was taken from Hall (1996, p. 211ff.) and is presented here in a slightly altered and adapted version. Wherever possible, it contains short discussions about how important the influence of these factors can be expected for the case of China.

which political actors and state agencies are not subjected to a strict rule of law. Under such conditions, it is much more likely that the main constraint on the actions of state-run think tanks will be the wishes of their direct political and institutional supervisors. Hence, this factor is unlikely to play a major role in the case under study.

Political conditions. Changes in political conditions, be they regular, orderly shifts in government control, a mere reordering of priorities, or even violent upheavals, can be expected to have a particularly strong effect on public organizations, as they are directly subordinate to the entities in which political change manifests itself. The political dimension is, of course, also important for organizations in the private sector, since the power to make binding laws and to reallocate resources affects them as well, but in a more indirect fashion. In the case of public policy research institutes, this dimension is arguably the most salient one, since they are also expected to anticipate political changes and to develop policies and strategies for political actors, leading to an even closer relationship with them than most other public agencies have. This also means that the political dimension should be the one in which actual *interactions* between think tanks and their environment - as opposed to mere passive recipience of external inputs - are the most strongly pronounced.

Economic conditions. This dimension is the mirror image of the political one, insofar as it should impact organizations in the private sector much more strongly than public ones. Still, the two spheres are closely intertwined even in market-oriented economic systems, and changes in the respective conditions can have different plausible effects on public agencies - for example, an economic downturn could either lead to an expansion as part of a statist response, or conversely expose them to pressure in the wake of shrinking revenues. The impact of changing economic conditions is arguably not as strong in the case of foreign policy think tanks, since their field of study is not closely related to the respective domestic conditions. However, international economic exchanges and the political ties that often follow in their wake could indeed be very important for their fate: the closer a country is integrated into the global economy and, therefore, more exposed to the behavior of its trade partners, the more important it becomes to obtain information about them, thus expanding the niche of IR think tanks.

Demographics. Although demographic changes occur at a rate that is significantly slower than shifts in other conditions and are supposedly easier to anticipate and deal with, they can have important effects on organizations in the long run. For the purpose of this study, demographic effects are of minor relevance, with one important exception: if the overall level of higher education within the population is interpreted as a demographic variable, this would have to be considered, as it is a key factor in personnel recruitment for research institutes. In particular, the academic role is impossible to fulfill unless the think tank aspiring to conduct such work has access to highly trained postgraduates. If a country´s educational system is not up to the task of providing enough qualified staffers, we can assume that think tanks fulfilling advisory and propaganda work will thrive, simply because they lack another option.

Ecology. This is another dimension that is defined in a broad sense, such as to include both the actual physical environment of an organization as well as a social component. The latter is interpreted as its embeddedness in relationships with other agencies and organizations and is arguably the more important one, although the physical (or geographical) dimension should not be underestimated. Taking an example from the case at hand, it is no accident that China´s foreign policy think tanks are heavily clustered in Beijing, in close proximity to the central government. This dimension is arguably of lesser importance, if for no other reason than the fact that it varies very little, and shifts take a long time to complete.

Culture. The notion of culture is notoriously difficult to grasp and pin down in an exact fashion, but an attempt should be made nevertheless. It is arguably most closely related with a set of norms and values that organizations (like individuals) are expected to adhere to, with associated penalties for nonconformity. Culture can be expected to vary most strongly between different nations or ethnic groups, neither of which is relevant for this particular study, but we should also be able to detect small-scale variations within a society or even just one of its sectors. While the concept is usually associated with path-dependency and stability, culture is not a static factor, as any number of historical within-case comparisons will reveal. Variations should also occur more frequently in narrower societal subsystems, simply because they are not primarily shaped by a monolithic, all-encompassing notion of „culture", but more likely by a field-specific professional culture (or, perhaps, subculture). Since the latter is not rooted in as many aspects of human identity, it should also be subjected to less organized traditionalism and, hence, change faster and more easily.

2.3.5 Internal factors

Organizations like think tanks and their employees are, of course, not completely passive recipients of environmental effects or the whims of their patrons, but do have a degree of control over their own destiny. However, it is necessary to keep one thing in mind when considering internal impulses for think tank development: the modern Chinese party-state has generally enjoyed a very high level of control over its peripheral institutions, little to no competition from non-state actors, and at times resorted to extremely brutal repression in order to submit intellectuals and bureaucrats to the prevailing political line. This has necessarily resulted in less opportunity for scholars to exact their own influence on shaping the organizations in which they work, although the degree of political control has fluctuated heavily over time and needs to be studied in detail. Even the periods in which intellectuals were not exposed to persecution and given a relatively high degree of freedom by the party were not marked by genuine independence from state and party, but rather by collusion between interests on both sides.[25] Hence, internal agency is not a factor that is completely independent from the interests of decisionmakers, but in practice also often determined by efficiency calculations that ultimately serve these interests as well.

With this caveat out of the way, I will proceed to give a short list of factors that are plausible internal determinants of organizational change, again adapted as much as possible to the case at hand. Some of these factors can be assumed to drive or enable change, while others are more likely to act as inhibitors.

Staff composition and backgrounds. Of key importance is whether current employees were socialized into the prevailing culture of an organization, or whether they had previously experienced a substantially different environment (e.g., many Chinese IR scholars received their advanced degrees abroad before embarking on careers in Chinese institutes). While it cannot be assumed that employees will always prefer their earlier experiences, a high divergence between environments is more likely to result in friction, especially if employees are exposed to restrictions that they did not used to face. Additionally, as will be shown over the course of the study, the educational background of think tank scholars has differed markedly between distinct stages of their existence. Staff recruited from the ranks of former bureaucrats and officials will

[25] This point is extensively addressed in chapter 4.

necessarily have different skill sets, perspectives and individual research interests compared to employees recruited straight from universities and graduate schools. Individual organizational cultures and intermingling may serve to mitigate those differences over time, but on the other hand, this influence can also be reversed - a strong shift in staff composition can also decisively alter an organization´s culture, as a new majority defines the standard.

The status of orthodoxy. This factor determines how strongly an organization is dedicated to maintaining the ideas, methods and processes that have traditionally shaped its work. There is often a delicate balance between maintaining order, predictability and experience on the one hand, and allowing the necessary creative freedom to adapt to changing conditions by having these notions challenged. It is a particularly important factor for research institutes, as challenging established paradigms is often necessary in order to achieve scientific progress. For policy research institutes, especially those operating in a one-party state like China, "orthodoxy" takes on yet another meaning, as the separation between policies and politics is minimal - in other words, a challenge to standing policies can be interpreted as a challenge to the prevailing political orthodoxy, and ultimately the legitimacy of the elites that espouse it. Due to this connection, this factor is hard to disentangle from external conditions, as a sacrosanct political orthodoxy is certainly a very potent external constraint. However, organizations can also take specific measures of their own to cement or challenge orthodoxies, most obviously by relying on internal or external recruitment, or by instituting censorship systems or rewards for innovation, respectively.

Leadership. Finally, when analyzing the interplay between internal and external impulses on an institute´s mission and activity, it is important to pay attention on the level where both sides are most closely in contact: the organization´s senior leaders and their sometimes conflicting motives, which spring from being equally responsible to the elites which fund the institutes and the staff that works under their guidance. While even organizations at the periphery of the Chinese state bureaucracy are still thoroughly penetrated by party structures, whether or not they are headed by political appointees or personnel recruited from within makes a major difference. Organizational leaders occupy a crucial position at the intersection of politics and science, since they have to mediate between the interests of their patrons and their employees, in addition to control over the research agenda and funds which they can exercise at their own discretion. Accordingly, whether they tilt to one side or the other can have far-reaching consequences for the work of an institute, be it the selection of projects, the degree of political freedom enjoyed by employees, hiring policy or access to decisionmakers. While it will not be possible to investigate the personal actions of individual leaders within the scope of this study, I will try to approach this factor by taking their professional backgrounds into consideration.

2.4 Model presentation and summary

This section will summarize what has been said above, synthesize the various assumptions about how research institutes obtain their characteristic features and provide an overview of where the various influences are addressed in this study. First, as the structure of the previous two sections suggests, it is important to distinguish between the process of organizational creation and the subsequent transformation or adaption, a much more lengthy and gradual process that will last for the rest of an organization´s lifetime. During the first stage, self-interested principals arrive at the decision to set up a research institute in order to fulfill a clearly specified mission. The mission, in turn, determines the organization‘s role and activity (as well as, to a lesser degree, its

structure, but this aspect will not be discussed here). These two features can be treated as synonymous with a think tank´s type, or at least as its most easily observable manifestation.

At this point, the only constraints on the principals´ freedom in designing the organization are the environmental conditions present at the time. One major factor are the available resources, encompassing the two most obvious assets needed to start an organization - capital and qualified staffers - as well as one more subtle factor: the existence of organizational „blueprints“, defined as the availability of models performing the same functions that can be imitated. Setting up a new institute without having access to such models is of course possible, but much more demanding and carries a higher risk of failure.[26] Apart from this, existing legal and cultural constraints will also have to be taken into account, since they determine which organizational activity is allowed or considered appropriate, respectively. Since formal legal constraints are less of an issue for high- ranking principals in authoritarian states, it is the latter factor that deserves special attention here.

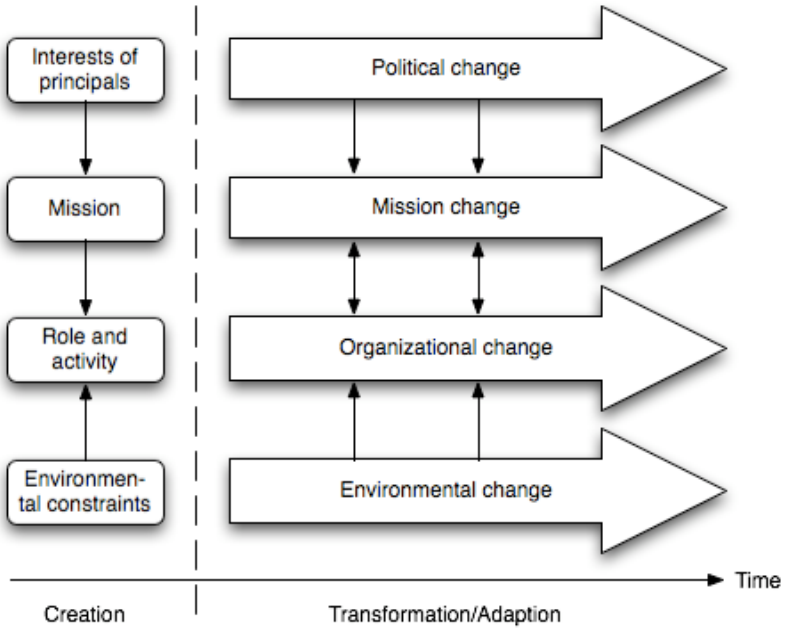

Fig. 2.2: Think tank creation and development

Subsequent changes involve more complex interactions between the different elements of the model. First and foremost, the institute´s principals may adopt different preferences or may be replaced altogether. Since in this case, the principals are political officials, this strand is referred to as „political change“ - one of the different dimensions of environmental change outlined in section 2.2. Because this influence is of such paramount importance for state-run think tanks, it should be given special prominence and is displayed as a distinct influence instead of being lumped in with other environmental variables. To be sure, this is a rather vague description and political change comes in many facets - the number and composition of influential actors, their outlook and interests, the structure of political rules and so on.

Limiting the scope of this construct to a working definition that is both manageable and fits the case at hand requires a somewhat more extensive discussion than can be given here. The

[26] Since China was evidently not the first nation to develop policy research institutes (claims to the contrary in some Chinese publications notwithstanding), the point is mostly irrelevant here. What matters more in this case is how the principals used the available blueprints and how they selected the eventual model.

full operationalization is given in chapter 5; for now it should suffice to give a very basic outlook: political principals are conceptualized as self-interested, rational decisionmakers. They juggle a variety of competing objectives, most important among them the preservation and, whenever possible, expansion of their power at both the domestic and international levels. Accordingly, they will only invest the necessary resources for the founding and maintenance of think tanks if the output of these institutes contributes to the pursuit of their overall strategy. The latter can take various forms, but its most important elements are shoring up the regime´s domestic legitimacy and ensuring the country´s survival at the international level. Strategies - and, hence, political action - can change for two reasons: first, because the composition of the political elites themselves may shift over time as the result of power struggles and natural replacements; and second, because there are always several plausible ways to reach the overarching goal of power preservation and expansion, and the principals´ assessments of their usefulness may shift over time.

Second, changes in the overall mission of the think tank can be effected by the principals, as during creation. However, the key difference between the two phases is that after an organization has been set up, its mission (or, viewed more broadly, sense of purpose) also takes on a life of its own and is subject to internal influences and resistances as well. Hence, we should also expect to see an *interaction* between the institute´s mission and its members and structures: while the former still determines the latter, the relationship is mutual and bidirectional, as organizational managers and staffers strive to see their own interests reflected in the institute´s mission. The power of internal agents manifests itself most strongly in being able to resist change, but proactive agenda setting and trying to steer the organization in a new direction are also distinct possibilities. In any case, the institute´s mission is likely to be repeatedly contested between employees and principals, with external events and structural changes shifting the balance of power back and forth.

Third, the rest of the environmental factors described above will exert a constant influence on the institute, as they pose challenges and provide catalysts and inhibitants to its development and the pursuit of its mission. This category incorporates the same resources that were needed for the initial setup, but also goes far beyond it in incorporating such diverse features as technology, demographics and culture. There are many distinct environmental influences that could plausibly shape the organization, but it is impossible to explore their full array within the confines of this study. Hence, the analysis will be limited to a few of the more salient factors that were discussed in sections 2.3.4 and 2.3.5, namely the skills of an institute´s employees, financial resources, and role models that can be imitated. To be sure, these factors are not strictly speaking independent from changes in the political environment - at least in a country like China, political decisionmakers certainly do have the power to significantly alter the availability of resources like skilled labor and research funding. The best way to think about these factors is perhaps as environmental constraints that can in the long term be overcome as a result of conscious political action, but have the potential to delay or prevent principals from getting what they want out of institutes under their control.

In summary, this model sees the explanandum - the existence of think tanks and their types as defined by activity - as the eventual outcome of conscious design and the subsequent process of organizational change. The former is determined by the interests of a set of political principals and constrained by the resources available to them at the time of its founding. Subsequent changes in both factors will expose the organization to a pressure to adapt and constrain or enhance its ability to do so, while internal interests may impact its motivation. This is a highly complex model that attempts to cover a lot of relevant influences on the development of think tanks, with a corresponding amount of interplays between them. Accordingly, presenting all of the various influences and their effects in a clear and coherent fashion is a considerable challenge and makes it necessary to give a brief description of where they are discussed in

subsequent chapters.

In my opinion, the best way of exploring these (assumed) causal relationships is by steadily proceeding from general shifts in the political climate to events that had a more limited and direct effect on think tanks. The reason for choosing this structure rather than a joint chronological account of influences and effects or a separation into independent and dependent variables is that changes in several environmental conditions that had an indirect effect on the development of think tanks can be traced back to prior political decisions, which is perhaps not surprising given the degree of control which Chinese politicians can exert over their society. This also means that particularly important political reorientations, like the seminal shift from ideological Maoism to economic reform, ultimately had far-reaching consequences across multiple dimensions, which can be better discussed in sequence rather than lumping them together.

At the most abstract level, chapter 4 starts out with general observations on how Chinese decisionmakers have sought to make use of intellectuals to further their agenda, to what extent the latter could assert their own interests both against and through the state, and how the balance of power between both sides has shifted. This is intended to provide an account of the general political boundaries that shape the work of think tanks and their employees. Accordingly, it touches upon aspects of political change as well as internal influences on the missions of institutes. This information is presented first because it is also crucial for understanding more specific shifts in the interests of principals and scholars, as well as providing a context for developments in the education and research systems.

Chapter 5 builds upon this foundation by discussing shifts in distinct political strategies pursued by decisionmakers, as well as the specific issues that they directed think tanks to examine. This covers the rest of the factors associated with political change, and provides a bridge between broad political concerns at the macro-level and the concrete demands that institutes have to fulfill. Chapter 6 proceeds with observations on the hurdles and incentives that institutes faced in reacting to this input, covering the environmental constraints described above, as well as other internal factors like institutional leadership and the imitation of role models. Finally, chapter 7 covers the explanans, detailing the contemporary activities of China´s foreign policy think tanks across all three fields. Bringing all of these strands together, the thesis concludes with an overview of the various factors associated with the creation and specialization of China´s system of foreign policy think tanks, again separated into impacts on specific fields of activity.

2.5 Methods used in this study

This chapter would not be complete without a brief discussion of the methodology behind the empirical investigations used to explore the questions outlined above. First and foremost, due to the large number of elements in the explanatory model and the effects of using an inclusive approach for the selection of cases, there is no single method that could possibly suffice to provide satisfactory answers. Accordingly, this study employs a "mixed methods" research design, making full use of the large methodological toolbox that the social sciences have built over their existence. This includes a variety of qualitative and (rudimentary) quantitative approaches described in detail below.

First of all, I make extensive use of document analysis, including English- and Chinese language academic studies on the subject, as well as primary documents like political proclamations, mission statements, historical records and media reports. Similarly, think tank output is analyzed by a combination of content analysis and database queries in order to derive profiles for each of the institutes. These methods are mostly aimed at establishing general features

that are characteristic for the whole body of a think tank´s output rather than detailed analysis of individual documents, in order to be able to see the big picture and to plot trends over time. Due to limitations on the availability of respective data sources, output is only analyzed for the last ten years (2002-2012).

Field research for this study was conducted between October and December 2011 as well as March and April 2012 with extended stays in Beijing and Shanghai, the two main clusters of foreign policy research in China. Due to the generous assistance of the staff at China Foreign Affairs University and Fudan University, I was able to make full use of their own knowledge about the Chinese think tank scene, as well as their personal networks in order to schedule visits to other institutes. This aspect of my research took the form of semi-structured interviews with multiple scholars and administrators at relevant institutions. All in all, I conducted a total of 25 interviews with employees at seven different think tanks and a few external experts, the full list of which is given in appendix 1. While no individual citations will be given due to confidentiality, these sources helped me tremendously in establishing background knowledge about China´s think tanks system in general, as well as their institutes´ positions therein.

Whenever possible and appropriate, I attempted to find quantitative data in order to allow for precise depictions of how dependent and independent variables fluctuated over time. However, for many of the factors included here, this is unfortunately not possible due to inherent conceptual reasons (e.g., the "interests of decisionmakers") or the lack of available data (e.g., information about the number of internal policy assessments). Still, in many places, such data is actually available at least for some aspects of a given factor - for example, the total number of academic articles published by an institute or an estimate of the share of theory-guided publications. Since these figures were obtained from a wide variety of sources, their quality, reliability and fit for the investigated concept will not be discussed here, but rather in the relevant text passages.

3. Case Selection and Descriptions

3.1 Selection criteria

As mentioned in the introduction, China has proven to be a very fertile ground for think tanks of all stripes, and even a relatively narrow subfield like foreign policy features dozens of specialized research organizations. Under these circumstances, it was not possible to conduct an exhaustive survey of all Chinese IR think tanks, and the subsequent analysis will rest on a more manageable, but hopefully still representative sample. In order to narrow the universe of cases down to a shortlist of institutes for detailed observation, I relied primarily on three selection criteria:

1) Prominence and influence. Cases were chosen from recent rankings and descriptions of influential Chinese foreign policy think tanks, both Western and local.[27] This resulted in the inclusion of a number of rather large organizations with a long and distinguished record in the field (e.g., CASS and CIIS), but also smaller, specialized research centers that are part of larger organizations but enjoy special prestige or prominence (e.g., Fudan University´s Center for American Studies). Notably, almost all of the institutes on this list publish top-ranked „core" journals, which attests to their influence in scholarly policy analysis.[28] In order to be able to characterize the output of institutes, they need to be prominent enough to have left a reasonably-sized footprint in academia, advisorship and the media, which many newer and smaller think tanks are still lacking. This is also relevant because the observation of long-term changes makes it necessary to draw upon previous studies that focused on similar sets of highly prominent institutes.

2) Accessibility. Due to the close relationship between the institutes and the state (and party) in China, as well as the sometimes sensitive nature of foreign policy, pragmatic concerns also had an impact on the ultimate case selection. Some institutions that are undoubtedly influential, like the National Defense University´s Institute for Strategic Studies and the policy research arm of the Central Party School, had to be dropped because of their inaccessibility to foreign scholars and general lack of available information. All but one of the remaining institutes could be visited in person, with the one exception being CICIR (however, this institute has nowadays left a substantial footprint in publicly available information).

3) Diversity. As mentioned above, think tanks nowadays come in many different forms, and China is no exception despite the lack of non-state agency in setting up research institutes. Accordingly, the final selection includes several distinct organizational forms: university-affiliated research centers, large comprehensive „academies", and specialized institutes affiliated to bureaucracies like the foreign ministry. This allows for the exploration of differences between groups of institutes that face different systemic environments as far as their constitution and affiliation are concerned. These differences are, of course, muted by the

[27] McGann (e.g., 2011, 2012) publishes regular rankings of the world´s think tanks, while Li (2006) summarizes the results of a one-off forum held in Beijing that year. Both variants gave the top spot among Chinese institutes to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), while also including the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), and Shanghai Institutes of International Studies (SIIS).

[28] The index of core journals (*hexin qikan*) in maintained by Peking University and updated every four years, with the most recent one being compiled in 2008. For details, see the Peking University catalogue of Chinese-language core journals, 2008 edition (*beijing daxue hexin qikan mulu 2008 nian ban*).

fact that all of these institutes are directly subordinate to state agencies and thus part of the overarching party-state system, but this is inevitable in a study of Chinese foreign policy think tanks. While it would have been very interesting to include non-governmental institutions as well, not a single such case could be identified, which may be due to the lack of public contestation over foreign policy.[29]

The subsequent analysis will deal with a sample of nine different institutes, two of which are part of the same larger organization. The following section gives brief overviews of their history, affiliation, structure, specialization and importance. The cases are grouped into three subsamples according to shared organizational features: the first group is made up of institutes belonging to the academy system, the second one contains institutes affiliated with government agencies or ministries, and the third and final one features university-affiliated organizations.[30] For cases that exhibit highly complex internal structures, basic organization charts based on their public self-descriptions are provided.[31]

3.2 Case profiles

3.2.1 Academies and academy-affiliated institutes

Chinese academies are a distinct organizational group, usually serving as a general structure or platform connecting and organizing a larger network of research institutes across multiple disciplinary branches. Like many of the country´s modern organizational forms, they were modeled on Soviet archetypes, and mostly served a similar function: the desire to systematically separate research and teaching.[32] Although China´s academies have undergone significant reforms over the more than 50 years since their initial establishment, this basic role has remained the same. Then as now, these organizations are characterized by direct affiliation with top-level executive decisionmakers, comprehensiveness and large size instead of narrow specialization, and prioritizing research efforts rather than teaching and education.

[29] In notable contrast, the field of economic policy and especially the issue of market reform and liberalization has already seen the establishment of prominent independent players like Unirule (Tianze) Institute and the Boyuan Foundation.

[30] A note on naming conventions: Structurally, Chinese research organizations are usually divided into three to four levels of (academic) organization depending on their size. The smallest units are research offices (*yanjiushi*), which usually comprise teams of two to four people (or, in some cases, even just individual specialists). Research centers (*yanjiu zhongxin*) are usually slightly larger, and - depending on the institute - are either made up of offices, or overlap with them (if, for example, the institute maintains separate structures for issue- and area-specific subdivisions). Research institutes (*yanjiusuo*) are typically larger, employing at least a dozen scholars, and have a very broad topical or area focus. For some of the cases described below, this is already the highest level of their own structure, while very large ones are designated as *yanjiuyuan, xueyuan* or *kexueyuan* in Chinese, depending on whether they are an independent institute, university-affiliated, or an academy. *Yanjiuyuan* also translates to "research institute" in English, but conveys the impression of a much larger size and importance.

[31] These feature only the research-related organizational structure, not administrative units like offices for personnel or fund management.

[32] For details on the process of importing this specific organizational form and the leadership´s motivation to do so, see 6.4.

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

This section will first introduce the general setup and history of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS, *zhongguo shehui kexueyuan*) and then move on to discuss the two cases selected from its range of institutes in further detail.

The roots of CASS trace back to the original establishment of the comprehensive Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS, *zhongguo kexueyuan*), a vast Soviet-inspired network of research institutes covering all scientific fields of Chinese academia. CAS was established in 1949, making it part of the first wave of institutions set up under CCP governance. Like many other state and party organizations founded during the era, CAS was built in the image of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, a platform that linked the majority of the country´s non-universitary research institutes. Its purpose, like that of its role model, was to allow for the systematic separation of teaching and research, as well as for the centralized planning of the latter (Graham 1975; Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b, p. 35-37). While CAS focused mostly on the natural sciences, it also established a number of institutes specializing in the social sciences and humanities (e.g., history, economics, literature and philosophy) that were consolidated under the "Division for Philosophy and Social Sciences" (*zhexue shehui kexue xuebu*) in 1955. International Studies were initially not a research focus, with correspondingly little efforts at organization-building. Political science was considered a "bourgeois science" and thus outlawed outright in the Mao era. However, the Chinese strand of Area Studies eventually had its beginnings at CAS, with the establishment of the institutes of Asian, African and Latin American studies in 1961.

Like the rest of Chinese academia, CAS was devastated by the Cultural Revolution beginning in 1966, and much of its research activities and all publications ceased until 1977. At the onset of the post-Mao era, Deng Xiaoping´s efforts to rebuild China´s science system quickly focused on CAS.[33] Because of their potential value for the party´s new developmental approach, the social sciences received particular attention, culminating in the establishment of CASS from the corresponding CAS division in 1978. Like the institution from which it originated, CASS was placed directly under the state council, giving it the status of a ministry and establishing a channel to high-level decisionmakers. Likewise, CASS occupied a key position in research planning even beyond its own structures, as it was tasked with drawing up the first five-year plan for the development of philosophy and social sciences.

Its very high profile as China´s designated number one think tank has been both a boon and a bane to CASS and its researchers - on the one hand, this status ensures attention and relevance; on the other, no other civilian policy research institution in the country is as strictly reglemented and supervised as CASS. Appointees to the presidency have been high-ranking politicians, some of which (most notably conservative ideologue Hu Qiaomu and his deputy Deng Liqun) involved CASS deeply in factional struggles within the party leadership. These clashes manifested themselves most visibly in 1989/90, when CASS was roiled by a conservative-led crackdown against intellectuals who had participated in or sympathized with the Tiananmen student demonstrations. Over the following decade, CASS suffered from a lack of funds and crumbling infrastructure, most likely due to lingering concerns over its loyalty to the regime (Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007a). While it is still by far the largest and most high-level think tank in China, the years of neglect caused it to lose its edge in research and some of its prestige, leading to staff retention problems especially when competing with universities. More recently, political decisionmakers and CASS leaders have attempted to alleviate this situation by providing more financing and implementing organizational reforms. Under the rubric of the "innovation project" (*chuangxin gongcheng*), CASS implemented a bundle of measures designed to improve the

[33]See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 41f).; also see Goldman (1981, p. 217-220) on Deng´s early plans for a CAS reform made in the last years of the Mao era.

quality of its work, including salary raises, incentive-based payment schemes, and new systems for science management and quality control.[34] Since CASS as a whole is such a vast and diverse research institution, the subsequent analysis will focus on two of its institutes: first, the Institute of Asia Pacific Studies (IAPS) as a representative of its Area Studies wing; and second, the Institute of World Economics and Politics (IWEP), the largest and most academically renowned constituent of its International Studies division.

Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies

The Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies (IAPS, *yazhou taipingyang yanjiusuo*)[35] was officially established in 1988, making it the most recent addition to CASS´ Area Studies capabilities. However, parts of what would eventually make up this institute already existed as independent research units before that date - the Institute of South Asian Studies had been established ten years earlier together with CASS itself; and the Institute of South and Southeast Asian Studies just two years earlier in 1986.[36] Its geographical focus is probably the broadest among CASS institutes, essentially covering an area from India to Korea as well as the Pacific Rim, although specialized institutes exist for Japanese, American and Latin American studies. It is further divided into five issue-specific research offices dealing with political, economic, security-related, cultural and regional cooperation topics, respectively; as well as six research centers focusing on South Asia, the South Pacific, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and regional security. It also organizes networks with external researchers who have a similar area focus through scholarly societies (*xuehui*) concerned with South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Its core personnel is made up of 50 researchers, on par with other area-focused CASS institutes. The IAPS also publishes the leading Chinese-language journal in its field, named *Contemporary Asia-Pacific* (*dangdai yatai*), as well as the India-focused *South Asian Studies* (*nanya yanjiu*)

IAPS stands out among CASS´ area studies institutes mostly due to its focus on China´s regional "backyard" in East and Southeast Asia. Since the 1990s, this part of the globe has steadily gained in importance, both due to China´s involvement in regional integration schemes as well as potential flashpoints located in the area, most notably the complicated territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Currently, IAPS also houses CASS´ India specialists, although the latter´s own large population and rapid economic expansion designate it as a major country, which should in turn justify the establishment of a separate institute sometime in the not-so-distant future.

[34] See the CASS portal on the Innovation Project, available online at <http://www.cssn.cn/cate/1304.htm>.

[35] For this name as well as all subsequent ones, the official English name of an organization, unit or journal as provided by the institute itself is used. In the few cases where no official translation exists, I attempted to provide the closest equivalent to the Chinese name.

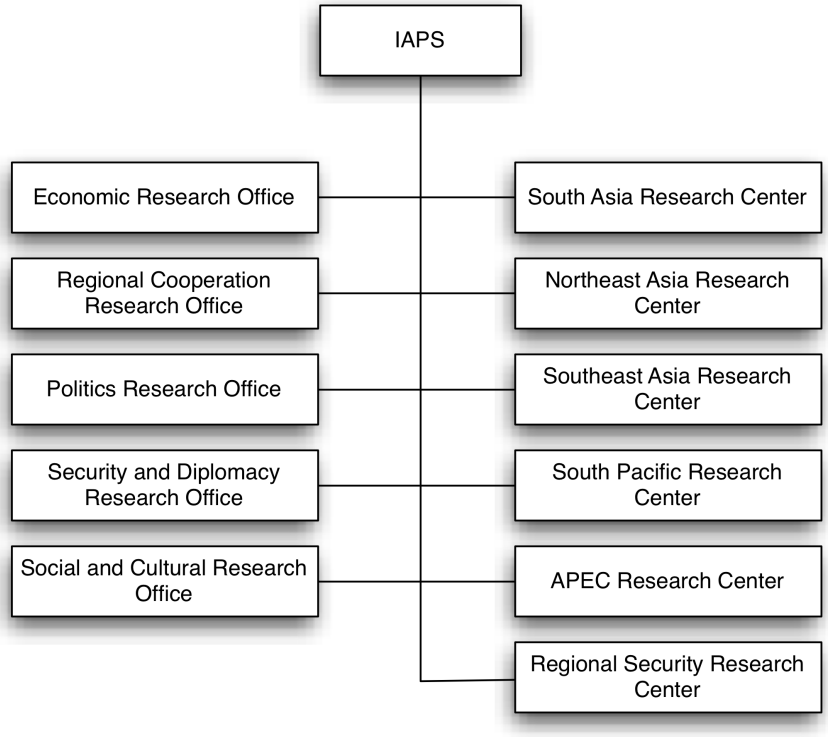

Figure 3.1: Internal structure of IAPS

Institute of World Economics and Politics

The Institute of World Economic and Politics (IWEP, *shijie jingji yu zhengzhi yanjiusuo*) is the result of a merger between two separate entities in 1981: the Institute of World Economics, focused mostly on matters of international trade and finance; and the Institute of World Politics, focused on general IR research and global studies that would not fit with any of CASS´ area-specialized institutes. These two strands have determined IWEP´s priorities and structure ever since. Its 12 research offices mostly have either an economic or political focus, although some interdisciplinary overlap exists. For economics, the relevant subunits are the offices for global macroeconomics, international finance, international trade, international investment, corporate management and industrial investment, and economic development. The institute´s international studies wing comprises the offices for international political theory, international strategic studies, and global governance. Finally, the offices for political economy, Marxist world political economic theory, and world energy resources are interdisciplinary. IWEP´s eight research centers have different priorities and are predominantly concerned with economics. These units focus on the Third World, international finance, global mergers and acquisitions, world economic history, corporate governance, overseas Chinese merchant communities, economic development and the US economy.

With 130 full-time researchers, IWEP is one of CASS´ largest and most prestigious institutes, as shown by its success in competing for project funding from national sources such as the National Fund for Social Sciences.[37] It publishes a large portfolio of equally prestigious journals, made up of the Chinese-language *World Economy* (*shijie jingji*), *World Economics and*

[37] Between 2002 and 2012, IWEP obtained funding for 11 projects from this source, second only to Beida. See the discussion of the latter case further below for a simple comparison.

Politics (*shijie jingji yu zhengzhi*), and *International Economic Review* (*guoji jingji pinglun*), as well as the English-language *China & World Economy* intended for international audiences.

IWEP´s high status within and outside of CASS is mostly determined by its consistently high academic standards, its strengths in theory-oriented research, and of course the high relevance of its issue focus brought about by China´s rapidly increasing integration into the world economy during the 1990s and 2000s. This also made it a natural fit for issues that arose in the wake of the 2008-2009 global financial crisis (such as international banking regulation), contentious bilateral issues like the Renminbi exchange rate, or the kind of regional economic integration pursued through planned or realized regional free trade agreements (e.g., CAFTA).

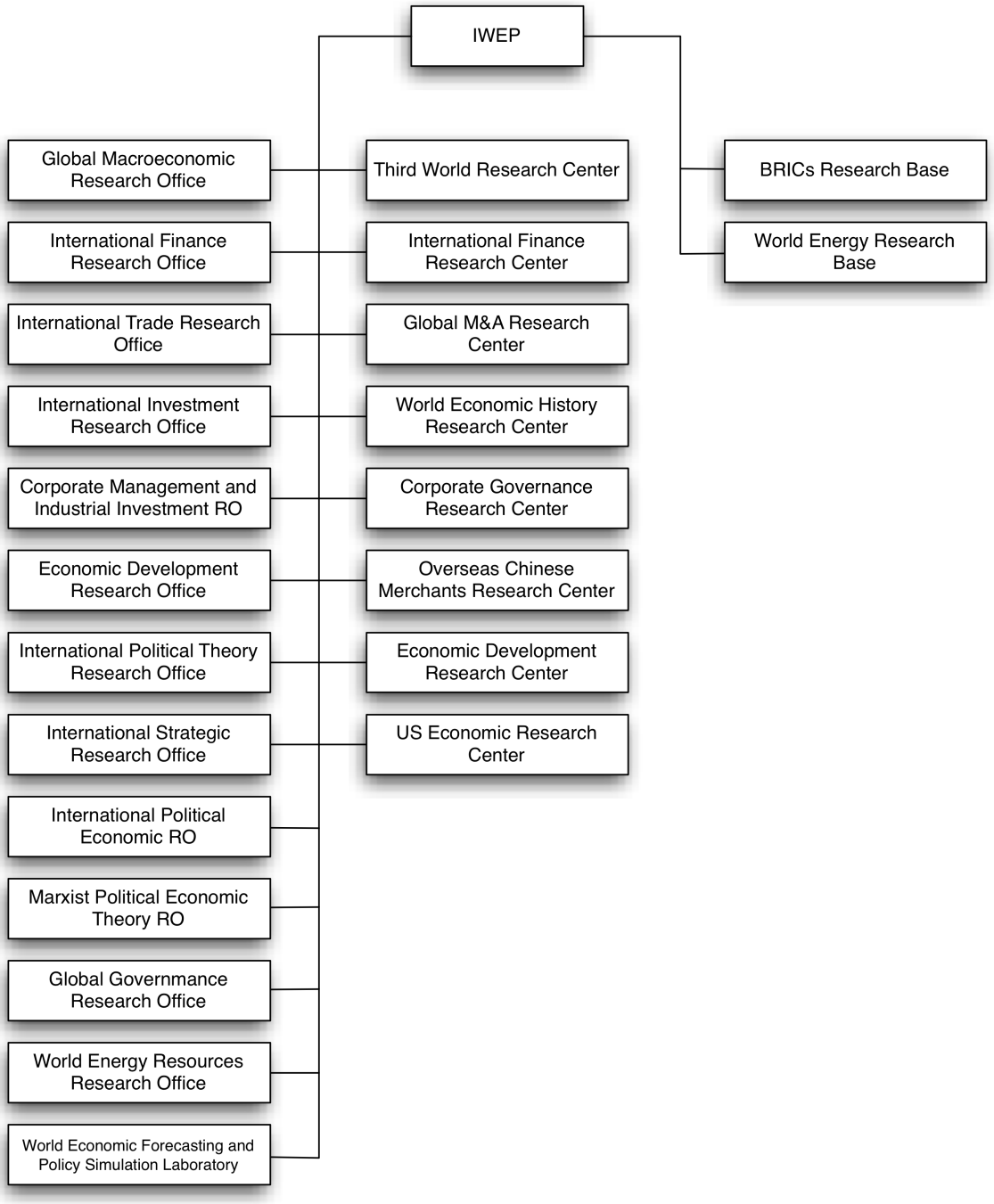

Figure 3.2: Internal structure of IWEP

Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences

The Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS, *shanghai shehui kexueyuan*) is one of CASS´ counterparts at the provincial level. As such, it is directly subordinate to the municipal government. Unlike most province-level academies, it features a department for international studies, which again reflects the unusual involvement of its principal in foreign policy issues. SASS was originally established in 1958 on the initiative of the municipal party committee, merging four separate local research institutes and university faculties from the fields of economics, law and politics. Accordingly, it is also notable as the PRC´s first academy that was specifically dedicated to social sciences rather than sciences in general.

SASS did not fare any better than the Beijing-based institutions during the Cultural Revolution, however: it was abolished in 1968, with its researchers being sent to reeducation or forced labor. Eventually, the turn towards reform policy also cleared the way for its reestablishment in 1979.[38] As Shanghai began to reclaim its former position as a major international trade hub and site for foreign investments in the 1980s, the academy developed a focus on these issues. As will be detailed below, international politics were a relatively late addition to its research fields, but still a remarkable specialization for a province-level organization.

In 2012, SASS established a new Institute of International Relations (IIR) to coordinate its research activities in this field, merging and replacing the existing institutes for Asia-Pacific Studies (IAPS) and Eurasian Studies (EAS).[39] Since this development is so recent, this case will be analyzed by concentrating on the activities of the now-defunct IAPS, which used to cover general IR research in addition to its area focus. IAPS was established in 1990 (two years after its counterpart in Beijing), and divided into four research centers for East Asian studies, international organizations, IR theory and Taiwan studies; as well as three research centers focusing on Japan, the Korean peninsula, and (since 2000) the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. The new IIR will retain some of these features in addition to elements inherited from the Institute for Eurasian Studies, but the structure underwent a major overhaul during the merger. Its research offices will specialize in issues like IR theory, international security, regional cooperation, great power strategies, Chinese diplomacy and international culture studies. Conversely, its centers will mostly continue to focus on regions, specifically the USA, Russia, Japan, Korea, ASEAN, the SCO, Israel, Central and South Asia, the Middle East, Taiwan, and emerging nations, in addition to an interregional center for world history. All in all, the IIR will comprise around 30 full-time researchers, slightly more than the combined total of its constituent parts before the merger (IAPS reported 9 research and assistant research fellows in its last available statistics, while the EAS contributed 15). In December 2012, the IIR started publishing the bi-monthly *Journal of International Relations* (*guoji guanxi yanjiu*).

[38] See several historical accounts published on occasion of SASS´ 50th anniversary in 2008, available online at <http://www.sass.org.cn/history_index.jsp>.

[39] Since 2003, these two institutes had already been more loosely associated under the umbrella of SASS´ Institute for World Economics and Politics (IWEP), which also comprised the Institute of World Economics and the Center for International Studies. The IWEP was consequently abolished, and the latter two units are now constituted independently and directly under SASS, although the CIS is in practice closely associated with the IIR.

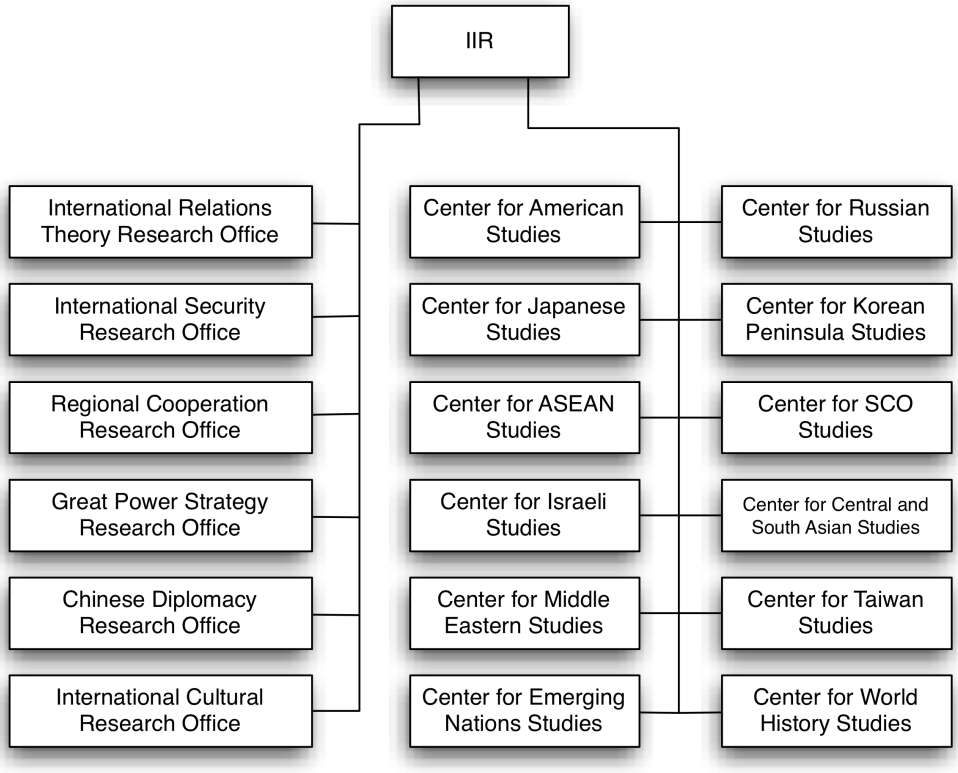

Figure 3.3: Internal structure of SASS´ IIR (post-merger)

3.2.2 Agency- and ministry-affiliated institutes

Research institutes that are subordinate to specific government agencies are probably the closest Chinese equivalent to most Western think tanks. Similar to academies, they specialize in research rather than teaching, but since their patrons have much narrower policy portfolios than executive organs, they tend to focus on a more limited range of issues as well. The relationship with their institutional superiors also tends to have a much larger influence on their research agenda and the dissemination of research findings than for the other two types.

China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

The China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR, *zhongguo xiandai guoji guanxi yanjiuyuan*) is China´s largest specialized IR think tank. CICIR is also notable for at least one other reason: it is subordinate to China´s Ministry of State Security (MSS), China´s primary foreign intelligence agency, which is usually not considered a major actor in foreign policy making. While little concrete details about the interactions between institute and ministry are known, this association has led to the assessment that CICIR used to specialize in non-military intelligence analysis (Shambaugh 1987, OSC 2011). However, as will be explored in further detail in later chapters, its current activity profile suggests that this is at least no longer its primary role: CICIR´s heavy involvement in academia, its open publication of current analyses, high

media presence and frequent international exchanges would be somewhat atypical for an organization that is primarily engaged in intelligence work.

CICIR gives its official date of establishment as 1980, although (as with many other institutes on this list) its institutional predecessors had already been around for longer. David Shambaugh (1987, 2002) sees CICIR´s roots as dating back to early Communist intelligence operations, leading up to its inception as an institute for intelligence analysis in 1965, and ultimately its conversion to a comprehensive IR think tank and "open" institute (i.e., one allowed to interact with foreigners) in 1980. Until 1982, CICIR was subordinate to the Central Committee´s investigation department, and then shifted to the current arrangement when the latter was folded into the newly established MSS.

Presently, CICIR features 11 research institutes, both those with an area focus (the USA, Russia, Latin America, Europe, Japan, South Asia/Southeast Asia/Oceania, and West Asia/Africa) and those specializing in issues (security and arms control, world politics, world economics, and information and social development). Two "research divisions" presumably perform the same function for the Korean Peninsula and Central Asia. Additionally, the institute has eight research centers focused on narrower issues and areas, like Hong Kong and Macao, Taiwan, ethnicities and religions, globalization, anti-terrorism, crisis management, economic security and maritime strategy. Finally, two research offices specialize in Central Asian and Korean studies. Altogether, CICIR now employs 175 full-time researchers, making it China´s largest IR think tank by far.

CICIR publishes the journal *Contemporary International Relations* (*xiandai guoji guanxi*), which has established itself as China´s highest-ranked IR journal and is now published monthly due to its high popularity. In early 2006, CICIR also began offering a bi-monthly English-language edition of the same publication.

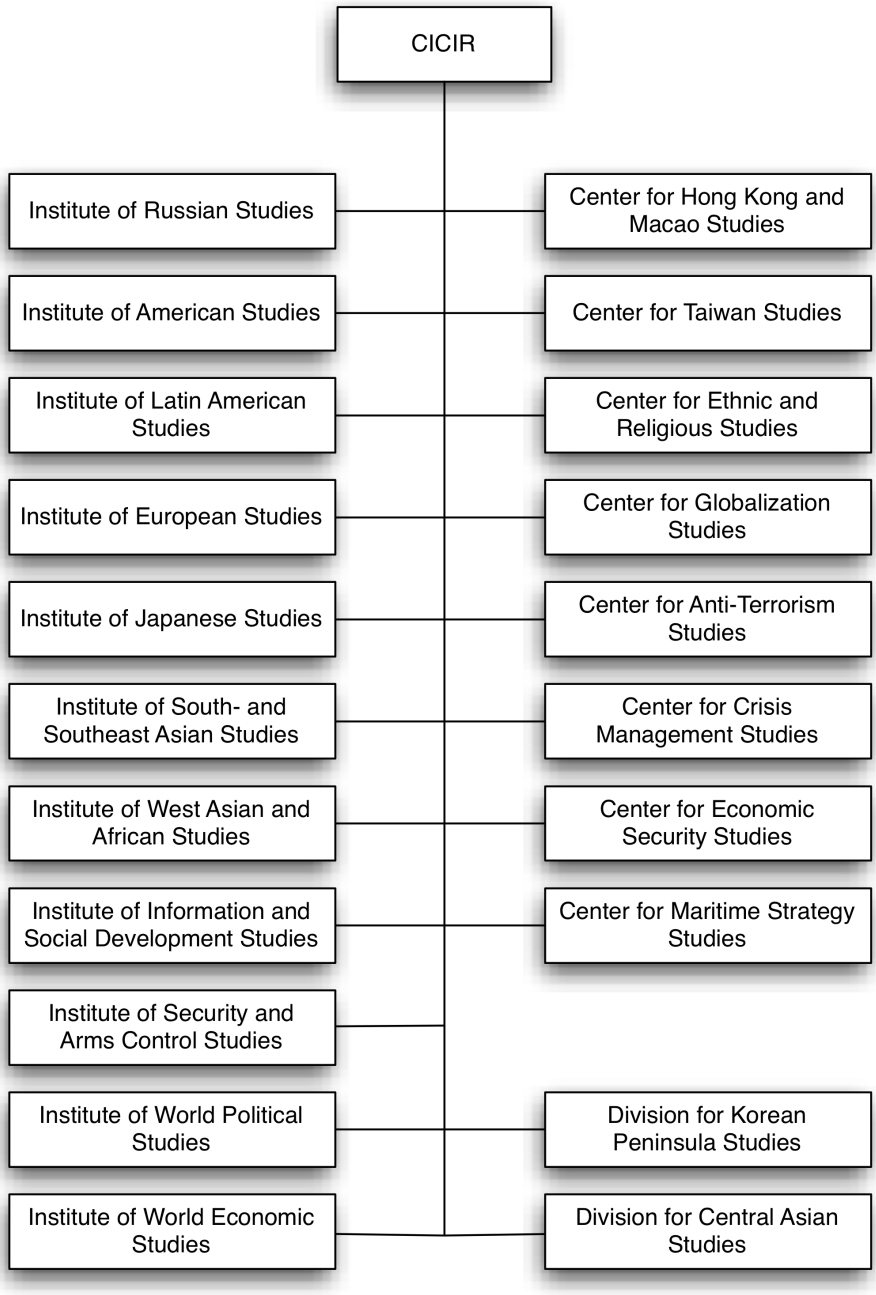

Figure 3.4: Internal structure of CICIR

China Institute of International Studies

The China Institute of International Studies (CIIS, *zhongguo guoji wenti yanjiusuo*) is the second-largest IR-focused think tank in China. Together with China Foreign Affairs University (see below), it provides the foreign ministry with external policy research capabilities. Between the two, CIIS comes closer to the classic notion of a "think tank" due to its focus on research rather than teaching, its greater activity in providing internal reports, and the larger share of former practitioners among its staff. However, none of these features are as pronounced as they

used to be, again testifying to the slow erosion of differences between the various types of institutes.

CIIS was first established as CAS´ Institute for International Relations in 1956, the first international studies organization under the academy system. Two years later, it was removed from CAS and reconstituted directly under the foreign ministry. Compared to other institutes, it recovered somewhat early from the Cultural Revolution, and was reopened in 1973, before the start of the reform era. This was apparently due to an increased demand for foreign policy advice in the wake of Sino-American detente. In 1998, the institute was upgraded by absorbing the State Council´s Center for International Studies (SCCIS) and its associated societies, giving it additional research capabilities on specific issues like regional economic integration and arms control.[40] Recently, it has become one of the key players in China´s "public diplomacy" (*gonggong waijiao*) initiative that aims to promote friendly international ties through contacts at the sub-governmental level.

CIIS is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary think tank structured around seven research departments (*yanjiubu*) focusing on international strategic studies, world economics and development, American studies, European studies, developing countries, Asia-Pacific security and cooperation, and Eurasian studies (focusing on Russia and Central Asia). While one would expect an institute of this size to also maintain research centers, there is no definitive information on this (only a single employee´s profile mentions that he is the head of an "arms control and international security research center" (*junkong yu guoji anquan yanjiu zhongxin*), probably an artifact left over from the absorption of the SCCIS). The institute employs a total of 93 researchers, almost all of whom have Ph.D. degrees, which - according to sources at the institute - is the result of an increasing professionalization over the last decade, as older former ministry bureaucrats were replaced by younger academics. CIIS also publishes the high-ranked Chinese-language journal *International Studies* (*guoji wenti yanjiu*), as well as its counterpart *China International Studies*, China´s first major English-language journal on IR.

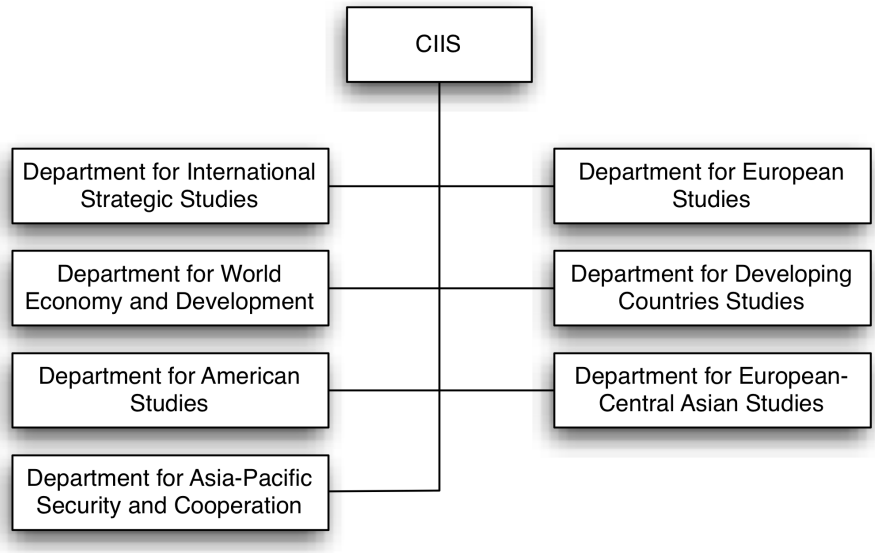

Figure 3.5: Internal structure of CIIS

[40] This organ was also reportedly responsible for filtering policy papers from China´s vast array of foreign policy research institutes and deciding which ones to pass on to the highest tier of China´s leadership (Shambaugh, 1987). Its removal was likely also an early indicator of the trend towards less centralized modes of communication between officials and research institutions.

Shanghai Institutes for International Studies

The Shanghai Institutes (sic) for International Studies (SIIS, *shanghai guoji wenti yanjiuyuan*) form the largest Chinese IR think thank outside of Beijing. It was established in 1960 under the Shanghai municipal government, an affiliation that it has since maintained, although it also frequently interacts with MoFA.[41] Since most province-level administrations did not used to be relevant players in foreign policy decisionmaking, it is unusual for them to maintain such capabilities. [42] However, Shanghai is a special case due to its historical role as China´s foremost open city and thus "gate to the world", which it was able to fully reprise after being designated a special economic zone in the reform era. Nowadays, Shanghai has established itself as China´s second major cluster of IR-related academia and research, with SIIS forming its largest constituent part.

SIIS´ internal structure is built around a matrix of issue-focused research institutes (*yanjiusuo*) and mostly area-focused research centers (*yanjiu zhongxin*). The seven institutes that make up the whole organization deal with international strategic studies, global governance, the world economy, foreign policy, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, comparative political and public policy studies, and a supporting department for data collection and -maintenance that is officially considered a research institute. SIIS´ nine research centers specialize in the Asia-Pacific, the US, Europe, South Asia, West Asia and Africa, Russia and Central Asia, the high seas and poles, world ethnicities, religions and cultures, and women studies (a first for any think tank in China). This structure was implemented in 2008, replacing the institute´s mostly area-centered departments, and provides an example for the overall shift away from area studies and towards global issues that has been characteristic for Chinese IR research over the past decade.

SIIS nowadays employs 82 researchers, making it the biggest IR think tank outside of Beijing. It also publishes the bi-monthly journal *Global Review* (*guoji zhanwang*) in both a Chinese-language and (since 2005) an English-language edition.

[41] These connections are, in part, personal, as SIIS´ current director, Jang Jiemian, is the brother of China´s state councillor responsible for foreign affairs and former foreign minister Yang Jiechi.
[42] Due to Shanghai´s status as a municipality under the central government (*zhixiashi*), it is considered equal to a province.

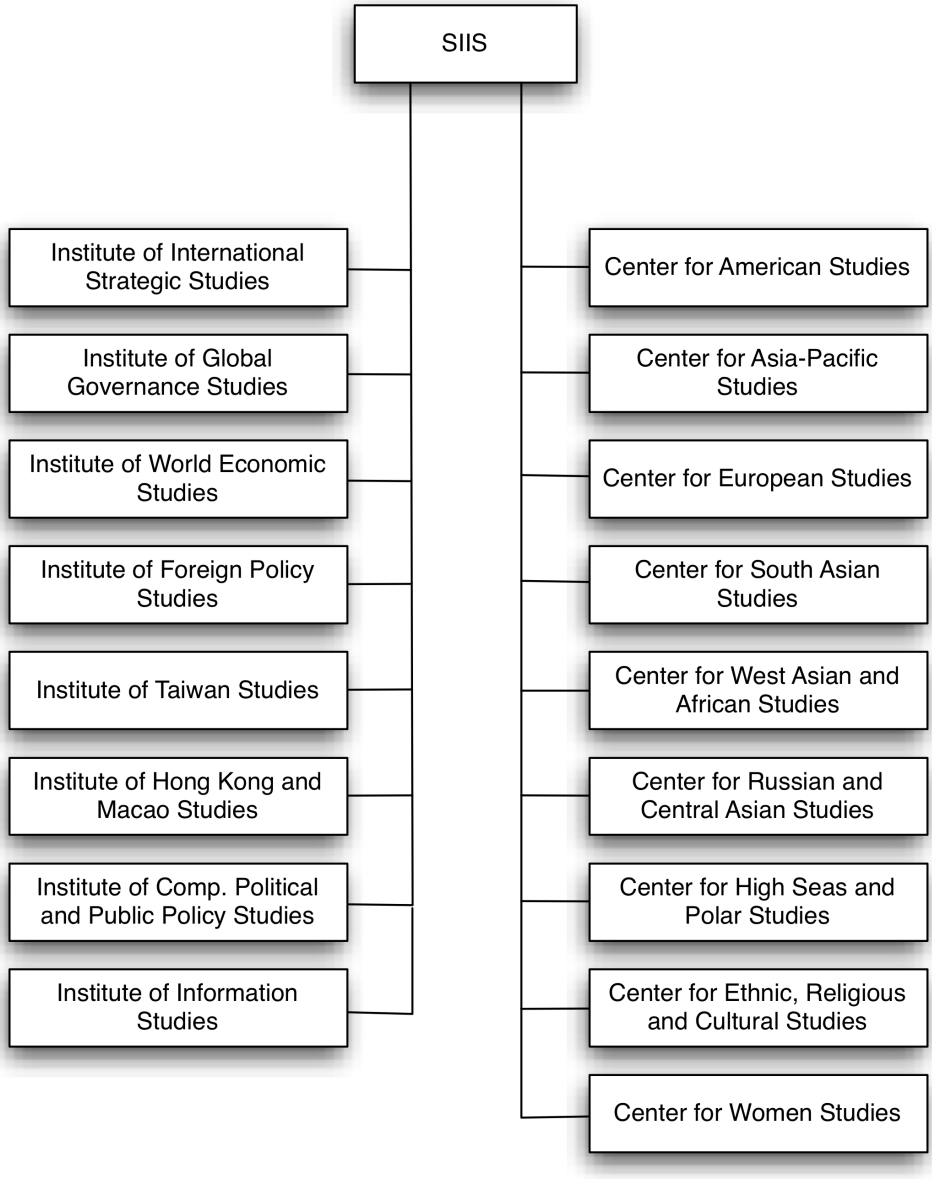

Figure 3.6: Internal structure of SIIS

3.2.3 Universities and university-affiliated institutes

Universities and their departments are usually considered to be an organizational form that is distinct from think tanks - at the most basic level, their mission is focused on education rather than performing advisory functions - but in the specific Chinese context, there are good reasons to include at least some of these institutes. Chinese decisionmakers have in the past explicitly instructed universities to make their academic expertise available for policy studies and advice, and university-based scholars have been prominent participants in the various mechanisms that were designed for these purposes. Still, there are pronounced differences in the degree to which different universities and departments are involved in policy research, and their inclusion into a sample of think tanks needs to be justified on a case-by-case basis.

China Foreign Affairs University

China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU, *waijiao xueyuan*) was established in 1955 by spinning off Renmin university´s department of diplomacy to a separate campus. CFAU was constituted directly under China´s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) rather than the Ministry of Education, which oversees most universities. The principal reason for its establishment had been to provide a specialized training ground for China´s foreign service, as stated by Zhou Enlai and regularly reaffirmed by leaders like Li Xiannian, Jiang Zemin and Tang Jiaxuan.[43] This association established a channel which is unique among universities, and which is used for the dissemination of policy advice and personnel exchanges. In particular, CFAU scholars are frequently embedded with Chinese embassies around the world in order to provide advice on local conditions in the host country.

Like other universities, CFAU was hit particularly hard by the Cultural Revolution, and all operations ceased until its reopening in 1980. During the reform era, it managed to establish itself as one of China´s most prestigious and competitive universities, and nowadays offers academic degrees up to the Ph.D. level in diplomacy, international relations and foreign languages. Presently, its association with MoFA is not as direct as it used to be, with graduates frequently pursuing careers outside of the diplomatic service. Apart from its full-time academic courses, CFAU also conducts further training for Chinese and foreign diplomats, mostly with a focus on language skills. Since many diplomats and other MoFA personnel are CFAU graduates, this also establishes an informal web of relationships between the university and its state-employed alumni.[44] With more than 100 cooperation agreements with international partners, frequent student exchanges and specialized classes for foreign diplomats, CFAU also stands out for its international connectedness.

For most of its existence, the university´s research capabilities were secondary to its teaching mission, but they have in recent years been bolstered with the establishment of new research centers. While the majority of CFAU´s academic personnel are still employed in its foreign language departments or focus on the practical aspects of diplomacy, the Institute of International Relations (IIR, *guoji guanxi yanjiusuo*) has been able to stake out a sizeable niche of its own, currently employing 13 senior professors and research fellows. The IIR´s official date of establishment is given as 1984, although (as with many other cases), it did have a forerunner in the university´s department for the history of IR, which was established as an original part of CFAU and China´s first dedicated IR research unit. The subsequent analysis will focus on this subunit, because CFAU is involved in a lot of research and teaching that is not directly related to foreign policy or IR, mostly due to its very large foreign language wing.[45] The IIR is further subdivided into three research centers for international security, Russian studies and European studies.

CFAU publishes the bi-monthly journal *Foreign Affairs Review* (*waijiao pinglun*), which has consistently ranked among China´s most prestigious core publications. Uncommonly for an academic publication, it is distributed within MoFA and to Chinese embassies throughout the world.

[43] These statements were compiled in a commemorative publication on behalf of CFAU´s 50th anniversary in 2005, proudly noting the extraordinary degree of elite interest in this institution.

[44] According to the same source (CFAU 2005), the university had up to that point trained 217 ambassadors, as well as 30 leading cadres.

[45] CFAU´s Department of English and International Studies employs 34 professors and assistant professors, while the Department of Foreign Languages which covers French and Japanese adds another 16.

School of International Studies, Peking University

Peking University´s School of International Studies (SIS, *beijing daxue guoji guanxi xueyuan*) was founded in 1996 by merging three of its existing departments. The tradition of IR research and area studies at Peking University (*beijing daxue*, usually referred to as "Beida") is almost as old as the field in China itself, beginning with the establishment of the Department of International Politics and the Institute of Asian and African studies in 1963, both of which would eventually be folded into SIS. Due to Beida´s status as the nation´s premier institution of higher education and the academic talent assembled there, SIS is nowadays China´s most famous universitary IR research institute. It has been extremely successful in bidding for high-level projects from prestigious sources like the National Fund for Social Sciences (NFSS), outcompeting every other institute in this sample by far.[46]

While its main focus is clearly on academic research and teaching and it lacks a permanent communication channel to decisionmakers, SIS nevertheless fits the broad definition of a think tank outlined in the preceding chapter: first, many of its researchers (like Wang Jisi, Pan Wei and Wang Yizhou) are very prominent in their field and are on occasion invited to provide input for the government or even participate in regular consultations. Second, SIS is also a premier address for providing specialized education to mid-level officials through so-called "cadre classes" (*ganbu ban*) organized separately from normal university courses. Third, while Beida´s high academic standards have created an environment that promotes theory-guided and abstract research, many of the SIS´ publications still exhibit an analytical bent that makes them suitable for policy assessments.

For teaching purposes, SIS is divided into four departments (*xi*) and three institutes, reflecting their distinct structures before the merger. The former focus on international politics, international political economy, diplomacy and foreign affairs management, as well as comparative politics; the latter specialize in international relations, Asia-Africa studies, and world socialism. A SIS´ research operation further boast a total of 19 research centers, exhibiting the familiar mixture of area- and issue-focused units, and employs 51 full-time researchers and professors. SIS publishes the quarterly *International Politics* (*guoji zhengzhi yanjiu*), which used to be an internal reference material, but was made openly available in 2002.

[46] Acording to the NFSS database, between 2002 and 2012, Beida´s SIS successfully applied for 13 projects in the field of international studies. IWEP is a close second with 11 projects, although it has more than twice as many scholars. All other institutes are far behind between three and five projects over the same period.

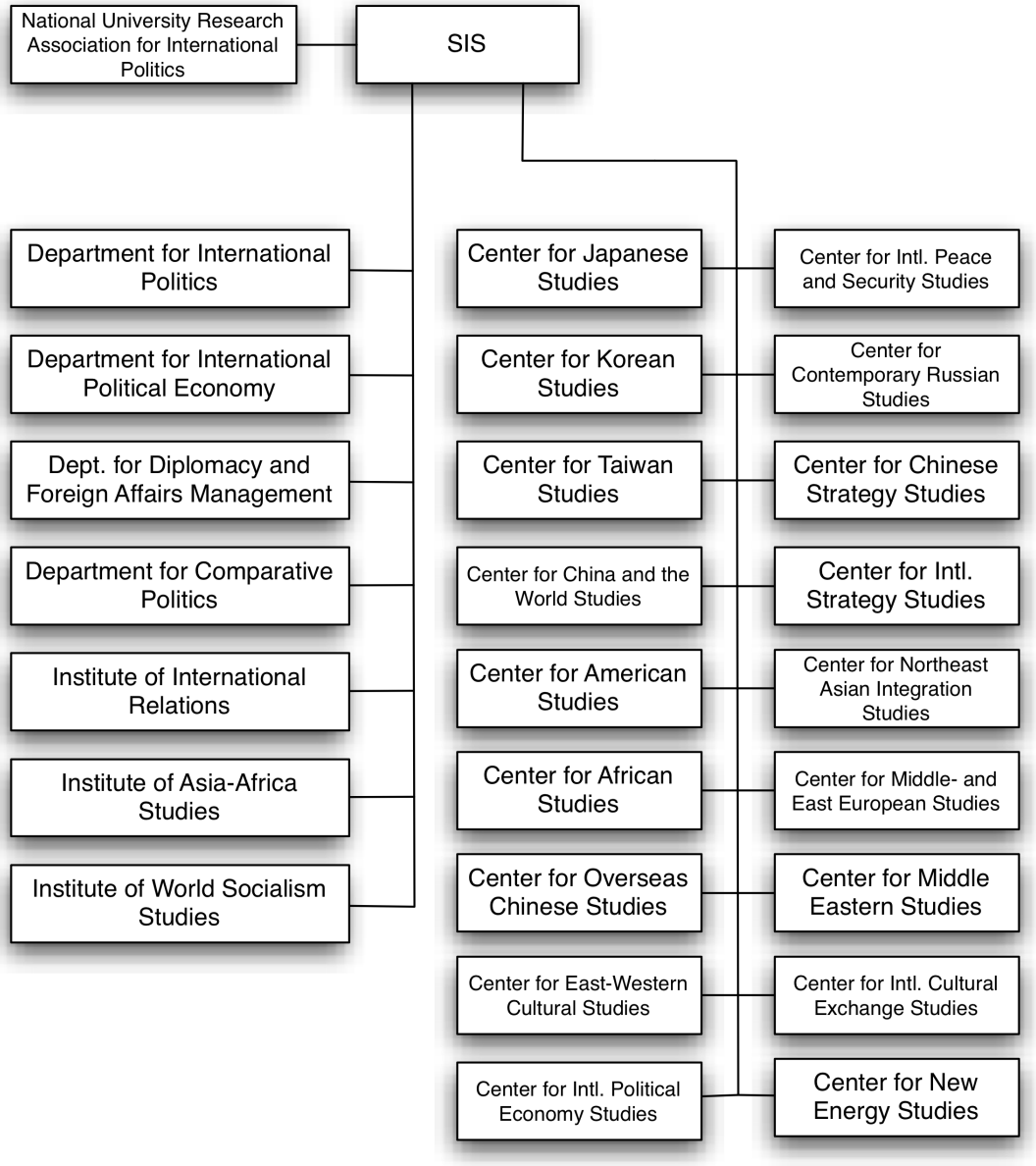

Figure 3.7: Internal structure of SIS

Center for American Studies, Fudan University

One of the smallest research units in this sample, Fudan University´s Center for American Studies (CAS, *fudan daxue meiguo yanjiu zhongxin*) is also a relatively young institution: it was set up in 1985 due to the personal initiative of Xie Xide, then chancellor of Fudan University and the newly-established center´s first director. Situated at China´s most prestigious university outside of Beijing, the CAS is notable not only for its academic clout, but also for its ability to attract significant foreign funding, again due to Xie´s personal connections to several US senators. Until 2011, CAS received annual appropriations of $300,000 from the US Congress, as well as $4 million in 1995 and $2 million in 2005 to construct its premises. While these connections were unquestionably a boon for the CAS as far as its academic work is concerned, they also aroused suspicions among Chinese decisionmakers and may thus have contributed to the center´s relatively distant relationship with its own government.

Apart from this rare feature, CAS´ status stems mostly from its international connectedness as one of China´s primary gateways for Sino-American exchanges. Fudan University has been at the forefront of organizing scholarships and research stays for young Chinese academics wishing to visit the United States. In the reform era, the often-contentious Sino-American relationship has always been a very important research focus for China´s IR community, and many of its most prominent members, like Wang Jisi, Yan Xuetong, Qin Yaqing or Fudan´s own Shen Dingli, are America specialists by training. Despite its small size with only 15 full-time researchers, the CAS is very prominent in Chinese IR and was designated a "key research base" (*zhongdian yanjiu jidi*) by the Ministry of Education, one out of nine centers in the field of international studies (and the only one in this sample) to receive this merit and the associated funds.

As a specialized research center, CAS is already one of the smallest subunits of Fudan University. It does feature a further internal division into research offices specializing in US diplomacy, American culture and economy, or IR theory, but these are too small to be functional in coordinating research efforts, often consisting of only one or two scholars each. As such, they are probably more representative of the individual specializations of its current faculty than of institutional research foci. CAS began publishing the bi-annual journal *Fudan American Review* (*meiguo wenti yanjiu*), which established itself as a core journal and is generally regarded as the premier publication in the field of American studies, edging out the competition from the corresponding CASS institute.

Overview

Table 3.1 summarizes key features of the institutes selected for analysis: their date of establishment, size, organizational affiliation and publications. This information was obtained from the institutes´ websites or most recent available annual reports.

Name	Established	Personnel	Affiliation	Journal
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) - Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies (IAPS), Institute for World Economy and Politics (IWEP)	1977 (CASS), 1988 (IAPS, merged), 1981 (IWEP, merged)	50 (IAPS), 130 (IWEP)	State Council, supervised by the CPC Propaganda Department	Dangdai yatai, nanya yanjiu (IAPS); shijie jingji, shijie jingji yu zhengzhi, China & World Economy, Intl. Economic Review (IWEP)
China Institute of International Studies (CIIS)	1956	93	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Guoji wenti yanjiu, China International Studies
China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR)	1980	175	Ministry of State Security	Xiandai guoji guanxi, Contemporary Intl. Relations
Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS)	1960	82	Shanghai municipal government, informal ties to MoFA	Guoji zhanwang, Global Review

Name	Established	Personnel	Affiliation	Journal
Center for American Studies, Fudan University (CAS)	1985	15	Ministry of Education	Meiguo wenti yanjiu
Institute of International Relations, School of Int. Studies, Beida	1996	51	Ministry of Education	Guoji zhengzhi yanjiu
Shanghai Academy of Social Science (SASS) - IAPS (IIR)	1990 (2012)	9 (30)	Shanghai municipal government	-- (*guoji guanxi yanjiu*)
Institute for International Relations, China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU)	1955 (CFAU)	13	MInistry of Foreign Affairs	Waijiao pinglun

Table 3.1: Key features of selected think tanks. Source: author´s compilation of data from institute websites.

Figure 3.8 illustrates the position of all institutes in the sample within China´s administrative system, pointing out the directly responsible overseers and channels of ommunication (official affiliations are sgnified by continuous lines, unofficial channels with dashed ones). This does not take other platforms into account that bring scholars from different institutes together with each other and decisionmakers, like consultations with the Politburo or Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG) or permanent advisory councils, since these interactions involve individual rather than organizational ties. However, a few of the most prominent mechanisms and patterns in the participation of scholars from different institutes will later be discussed in brief.

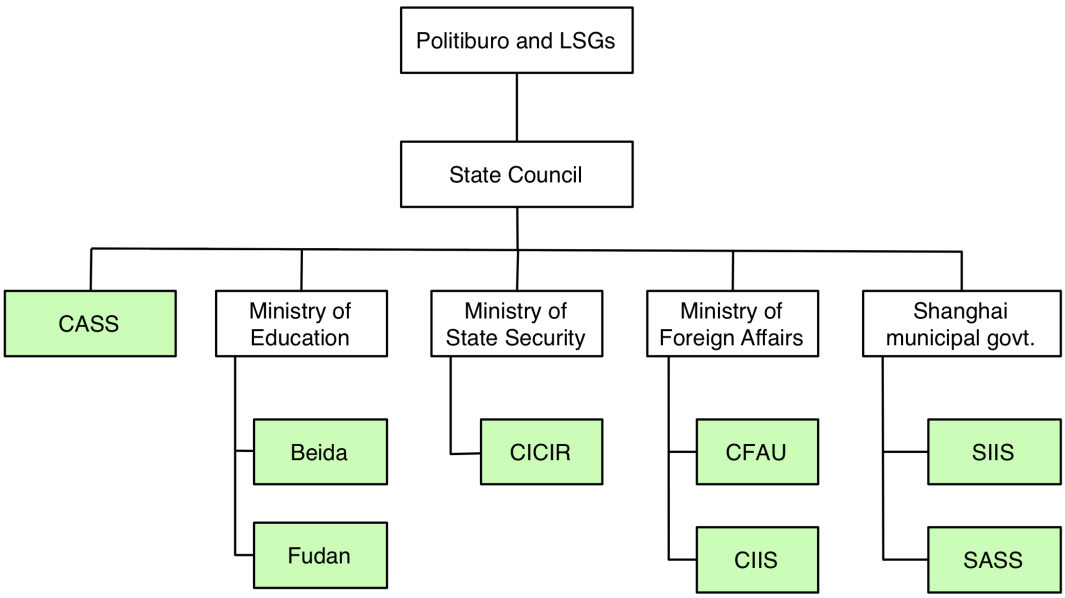

Figure 3.8: Position of sampled think tanks in China´s administrative system

4. Intellectuals and the state in modern China

In order to understand the role of think tanks in China´s political system, it is helpful to have a closer look at how intellectual life in China has developed under CCP rule. All aspects of the work which think tanks perform invariably require a work force that is highly educated, and - as the name itself suggests - engaged exclusively in intellectual work. Accordingly, this chapter is intended to provide a background on two key points that can be best explored through the prism of state-intellectual interactions in China: first, the question of why the CCP chose this specific organizational form in order to structure the nation´s policy research system; and second, the reasons for the popularity which think tanks enjoy as employers for intellectuals, despite the sometimes highly adverse material and political conditions faced by its staff. As will be detailed below, both questions are inextricably linked to the politics of control and cooptation that the CCP has exercised towards the nation´s intellectuals.

This chapter also serves an additional purpose for the broader argument presented in this study: whereas the explanatory model introduced in chapter 2 can in principle be applied to any country, it is also important to point out cultural context factors and conditions that are unique to modern China. The interactions between the state and intellectuals provide a helpful analytical approach for this task as well, and this chapter will accordingly attempt to explore them in a brief and comprehensive fashion.

Given China´s extraordinarily rich and long cultural tradition, no discussion of any length could hope to address all of the potentially relevant context factors, but the focus on the narrower aspect of intellectual life should be well suited to identify some of the most salient points. In order to explore this angle, it is necessary to take a step back and answer a few basic questions: who are "intellectuals" in the Chinese context, what characterizes the "state", and why and under what circumstances do they engage each other? In keeping with this study´s overall plan of moving steadily from the more abstract to the more concrete aspects of the topic, this background is provided here in order to build a bridge towards the in-depth analysis of specific cases provided in chapters 6 and 7.

The internal structure of this chapter follows the same principle: first, I will review the definition of the modern Chinese notion of "intellectuals", and how this concept has changed over time (section 1). Section 2 addresses the concept of the modern Chinese "state" and highlights two of its most important aspects: the tight integration of state and party, and the constitution as a modern nation state. Section 3 uses this conceptual frame to provide a historical overview of relations between the state and intellectuals over five distinct periods in modern Chinese history. Finally, section 4 summarizes the chapter´s key points and discusses how they relate to this study´s general topic.

4.1 Conceptual background

4.1.2 Definition of "intellectuals"

The notion of who is considered to be an "intellectual" has varied considerably over the last century or so of Chinese history, as successive waves of far-reaching social changes roiled the country. The nation´s intellectual elites were, of course, not exempted from being affected by these shifts, but neither their relatively powerless object like so many of their compatriots.

While the specific term "intellectual" (*zhishi fenzi*) is a modern one that reflects social divisions and political struggles as they existed in the first half of the 20th century, the more general and abstract concept of what can be termed a "knowledge elite" has far deeper roots in

Chinese history. Following Mencius, those who worked with their minds rather than hands were considered to be entitled to rule, laying the foundation for the fusion of education and power that found its most prominent expression in the establishment of scholar-bureaucrats (*shidafu*) that administered the country (Taylor 1989). The imperial examination system that governed access to the three tiers of officialdom demanded applicants to be steeped in the classical Confucian texts and to be able to compose commentaries on excerpts, skills that had to be developed through extensive (and expensive) study usually beginning in childhood (Elman 1991).

While those who managed to attain an official rank became part of the ruling class by definition, the large number of literati who either failed the highly competitive examinations or never even attempted to enter public service were still considered preeminent among the commoners.[47] Even without the trappings and authority conferred by an office, their monopoly on Confucian education and doctrines meant that they could still contribute to upholding the social order in a multitude of roles: as the moral conscience of society, they were expected to chastise the rulers and exhort the rest of the commoners to stick to their own roles within the cosmic order. As teachers, they would educate the next generation of office-seekers and thus participate in the system of elite replication. At the local level, they possessed enough authority to perform basic administrative and judicial roles.[48]

The Confucian concept of knowledge elites and their relation to the state were thus founded on a specific set of institutions - the education and examination system as an instrument of elite replication and the imperial administration as the means through which they could exercise state-authorized power. More generally, they also based their influence on the prevailing notion of what constituted the kind of relevant knowledge that justified such an exalted status in the first place - for more than a thousand years, the canon of classical Confucian texts occupied this position relatively unchallenged (Grieder 1983, p. 4f). However, this situation changed in the wake of China´s repeated humiliation at the hands of technologically advanced foreign powers beginning in the 19th century. By the close of the century, following China´s first defeat by a non-Western nation in the first Sino-Japanese war, calls for reform became powerful enough to effect a successful challenge to the prevailing institutions: China´s first modern universities with Western curricula were established shortly after the war´s end in 1895, among them the predecessors of today´s prestigious Beida and Tianjin universities.[49] A comprehensive public school system was introduced in 1904 to compete with the privately-run Confucian academies, although its original curriculum remained focused on teaching the classics (Pepper 1996, p. 59-60). The overthrow of the imperial dynasty in 1911 and the subsequent shifts in governance and administration shattered the other institutional foundation of China´s Confucian elites, while simultaneously clearing the way for further educational reform geared towards the dissemination of modern scientific knowledge. Although the Republican attempts at reform remained chaotic and disruptive,[50] frequently shifting from one organizational model to another, they succeeded in

[47] According to Taylor (1989), scholars (*shi*) were accorded special status among the four groups (*si min*) of commoners, which also comprised artisans, merchants and farmers. The category of "commoners" comprises all members of society who are subjected to the rule of the emperor and his administrative establishment.

[48] See Goldman (1981, p. 3-6) on intellectual dissent, Pepper (2000, p. 46-53) on the role of intellectuals in the education system, and Grieder (1983, p. 16f.) on their administrative functions.

[49] Tianjin University (formerly Beiyang University) was founded as the nation´s first Western-style university in 1895, established as a Sino-American joint venture. Beijing University (Beida, the former Capital University) was established in 1898 during the short-lived Hundred Days Reform.

[50] National attempts at comprehensive emulation of foreign school systems focused first on the German model in the 1910s, before embracing the American variant in the early 1920s and finally

establishing a radically different concept of knowledge elite: the modern intellectual, armed with scientifically derived expertise or a newfound consciousness for social problems, both of which could be deployed to spur the nation´s development and save it from its peril.[51]

Soon afterwards, the May Fourth and New Culture movements, in which students and young teachers directly attacked Confucianism as the ultimate root of China´s backwardness, pitted the old and new knowledge elites against each other.[52] This period also saw a shift away from the usage of the old terms "literati" (*wenren*) or scholars (*shi*) to designate educated elites, replacing them with the modern terms for intellectual (*zhishi fenzi*) or intelligentsia (*zhishi jieji*) in May Fourth discourse. The latter served as the more widely used term between the 1910s and 1949, even for individuals (U 2009).[53]

Since the system to which the modern intellectuals owed their status was still in its infancy and few Chinese had been exposed to any of the associated Western-inspired knowledge, the distinction of "intellectual" was initially applied far more widely than in Western nations: essentially, everyone who had received secondary (senior middle school, high school equivalent) education or above was considered an intellectual, as were those who worked in literary professions even without formal training in the new system (U 2009). Interestingly, while these concepts were introduced and most frequently used by May Fourth writers and revolutionaries (many of whom would obviously have met the criteria themselves), they often utilized both terms to distance themselves from the social group of "intellectuals", and sometimes even to designate them as an outright enemy. Communists, in particular, were eager to apply the label to both the delegitimized old scholar-bureaucrats and modern proponents of rival ideological persuasions, while identifying themselves as part of the working class (U 2009). The CCP eventually developed a preference for the term *zhishi fenzi* in the 1930s and established this nomenclature nationwide after its victory in the Chinese Civil War, while retaining the broad scope of the general definition of "intellectual".[54] Administratively, the label was used for registration and job assignments, despite the fact that the sheer breadth of the category and the resulting pronounced differences between the skill sets of individual members made it a tool of dubious utility.[55]

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settling on the French system in the late 1920s. Apart from the last shift, which was undertaken by Chiang Kai-shek´s Guomindang government that could exercise control over most of the country, political fragmentation also limited the effectiveness of national reform schemes (Pepper 1996, p. 62-63).

[51] Schwarcz (1986, p. 39-54) illustrates this shift by focusing on Beida, the nation´s foremost institution of modern higher education and an incubator for the May Fourth generation.

[52] See Schwarcz (1986), particularly p. 94-107.

[53] *Zhishi jieji*, literally "knowledge class", was adapted as a loan word from the Japanese translation for the Russian *intelligentsia*. Although the term appears evocative of Marxist social categories, it was apparently not used in this fashion, but rather applied to the more traditional Confucian divisions described above. See U (2003, 2009) for an extensive discussion of this terminology and its implications.

[54] This was apparently due to a growing familiarity with orthodox Marxist concepts of social order, which did not identify intellectuals as a distinct class due to their lack of a direct relationship to the means of production. The term´s "class" (*jieji*) element may have been dropped to avoid confusing it for an actual Marxist one, or because it was difficult to apply to individuals (U, 2003).

[55] See U (2003) for a discussion of the post-1949 drive to register and assign unemployed "intellectuals". One major consequence of using the label so broadly was that it reinforced existing anti-intellectual resentments, since it led to the widespread assignment of unqualified personnel and the inclusion of a disproportionally high number of former Guomindang officials into this group, which cast doubts on its loyalty as a whole (Zheng 1997, p. 80).

An even more important consequence of this official classification was that it ensured that an increasingly large share of China´s population - essentially, all of its citizens who had received more than the most basic primary education - could be implicated in future political persecutions directed against "intellectuals". Specifically, this approach would contribute to the massive disruption of China´s education system and the victimization of a whole generation of young Chinese during the Cultural Revolution, when even high school graduates were indiscriminately subjected to rural exile in order to correct their presumed bourgeois leanings.

The reformist turn in the post-Mao era effected another shift both in the definition of intellectuals and in their societal position. As part of the same sweep of reforms that were intended to improve China´s science and education systems, Deng Xiaoping also issued official protection to the knowledge elite by reformulating their standing in the CCP´s social theory. In Deng´s 1978 speech to the National Science Conference, intellectuals were conclusively designated to be "laboring people" and thus part of the working class, significantly lowering the threat of large-scale persecution, if not individual repression (Murthy 1984). The ensuing period of stability also meant that the task of providing mass education to China´s citizens could finally be tackled in a comprehensive and long-term fashion. As a result, the numbers of secondary school graduates grew rapidly,[56] and this level of educational attainment became less and less useful for designating a knowledge elite. The reason for this shift in meaning is immediately apparent from the most commonly used contemporary definition for the term *zhishi fenzi*, which consists of a very brief description as "mental workers with *relatively* high scientific and cultural knowledge".[57] The emphasis on "relativity" makes it inevitable that the more concrete criteria for this status would have to be constantly revised upwards as the general educational level of the population improves. Accordingly, in present-day China, the term has come to define a group of highly skilled experts (almost invariably university graduates), closing much of the original gap with the corresponding Western notion.[58]

In recent years, the concept of "public intellectuals" (*gonggong zhishifenzi*) has emerged as an even more specific designation for outspoken members of this group who wish to use their knowledge to exercise opinion leadership. This is, however, still a highly contentious venue of intellectual activity, as the CCP remains acutely suspicious of non-sanctioned impulses for public debates.[59] Still, the inclusion of many non-academics such as artists, media personalities and commentators in this group arguably signifies another shift in the definition of "intellectuals" that focuses on public stature in addition to educational attainment.

[56] By 1998, the general secondary school graduation rate of the contemporary age cohort was estimated at 15%, with another 15% finishing vocational or technical secondary school (Liang 2001).

[57] See the most recent (2012) edition of the *Contemporary Chinese Dictionary* (*Xiandai Hanyu Cidian*). The term´s entry also echoes Deng´s redefinition of intellectuals as a social group by stressing that they do not form a class of their own and that "most of them are part of the working class".

[58] See, for example, Suzanne Ogden´s and Edward Gu´s contributions in Gu and Goldman (eds., 2004, p. 23; p. 112).

[59] When the Chinese magazine Southern People Weekly published a list of 50 leading Chinese "public intellectuals" in 2004, it received an immediate rebuke in People´s Daily, attacking this very concept as incompatible with Marxist prescriptions for intellectuals to as organic mouthpieces of the working class (Holbig, 2005).

4.1.2 Distinct groups

When delineating the various groups of intellectuals, the specific focus of this chapter suggests an approach that rests on their relationship to the state. Authors who have explored this relationship in depth (e.g., Goldman (1981;1994), Gu and Goldman (2004), Hamrin and Cheek (1986), Hao (2003)) have generally taken the same avenue for their research, leading to a wealth of highly detailed descriptions and typologies.

Introducing the concept of "establishment intellectuals", Hamrin and Cheek (1986) assembled a range of individual case studies that served to illustrate a basic divide into party intellectuals, establishment scholars, and those on the fringe of the party-state apparatus. Observing at the outset that "all Chinese intellectuals are state employees", they use these categories to classify intellectuals serving in the vast public sector. While this statement was certainly true in the early stages of China´s economic reform endeavor, the subsequent expansion of the private sector and the emerging spaces for civil society have created new opportunities for Chinese intellectuals. The distinction between public and private employment and the consequences for relations between intellectuals and the state were subsequently expanded upon by Gu and Goldman (eds., 2004). At the most basic level, this development has tended to weaken state control over intellectuals as a group, and arguably forced it to devise new measures of maintaining their loyalty. While most intellectuals are still economically dependent on state institutions, private enterprises and NGOs have increasingly been able to field the necessary financial and social capital to establish new power centers and win intellectuals for their cause.[60]

More recently, Hao (2003, p. 68-72) has proposed to categorize intellectuals based on a two-dimensional, six-field matrix: the first dimension separates "humanistic" from "technological" intellectuals, based on their educational background and specialization. The second dimension consists of a distinction between organic, unattached and critical intellectuals. Following Gramsci, "organic" intellectuals are highly skilled agents who perform administrative and advocacy functions on behalf of a dominant social class (thereby furthering its power), yet are not part of that class themselves. They stand apart from "unattached" intellectuals - professionals who are not politically active or whose work is not directly politically relevant; e.g., commercial artists or natural scientists. Lastly, "critical" intellectuals are politically involved, but only responsible to their own ideals and guiding principles, and not consistently allied with any organized class interest.[61] This approach has yielded a very rich account of modern intellectual life in China, and this chapter will utilize its basic terminology in addition to many of the findings.

Since this study deals with the specific organizational form of foreign policy research institutes, not all of these groups will be covered in the same depth. Specifically, the sub-group of intellectuals that are organic to the state (and, to a lesser extent, those attached to the party) is the most important one, since it comprises the vast majority of think tank employees and administrators. Others, like their counterparts in private research centers, are arguably on the rise when it comes to economic policy, but the same phenomenon is not yet observable in the highly sensitive and state-centric field of foreign policy.

[60] See Gu and Goldman (eds., 2004, p. 10f., p. 39f.).
[61] See Hao (2003, p. 3-7) for short descriptions of these types.

4.2 Structural environment: State, Party and Nation

While this chapter aims to address the specific relationship between intellectuals and the state, it is in practice hard to disentangle the latter structure from two others that have left an undeniable imprint on modern China: first, the CCP with its ubiquitous organizational branches, and second, the modern concept of China as a nation. The areas of overlap are indeed so prominent that they are designated with the commonly used terms "party-state" and "nation-state", respectively. Accordingly, the purpose of this section is to (briefly) specify the ways in which the three structures are entwined, and how the relationship of intellectuals to one of them has often shaped the ways in which they will engage the others as well. Specifically, modern Chinese knowledge elites are often drawn towards public service out of a deeply felt desire to advance the development of their nation and enhance its international standing.[62] Due to the very strict limitations on non-state agency in support of the public good (let alone public advocacy) that are still characteristic for China, government service is by far the most prominent and safest venue to act on these impulses. However, in doing so, they will have to accept that service for the state often also entails service for the party that controls it, even if they have no primary motivation to further its aims and help it to maintain its monopoly on political power. This aspect of elite-state interactions is so crucial that it deserves to be pointed out in more detail before the discussion moves on to tackle the full scope of the relationship. It is, of course, not possible to explore these highly complex structures in full, but even a brief overview should also suffice to highlight another point: the enormous extent of the structural change which China has experienced due to the introduction of the modern institutions of "party" and "nation", and the radicalness of the break with the country´s traditional establishment that it has effected. In addition to the pronounced shifts in the definition of China´s knowledge elite, this justifies an approach that sees modern Chinese state-intellectual relations as something highly specific and distinct from ancient patterns of interactions between the government and educated public servants.

4.2.1 The party-state

Despite the CCP´s decades-old shift away from totalitarianism and permanent ideological permeation of society at large, China´s party apparatus remains vast and inextricably linked with state organizations at every level.[63] The specific institutions that were introduced after 1949 to enable party control and supervision of government agencies and enterprises have not been changed or challenged in any meaningful fashion: every level in the hierarchy of government structures is closely mirrored by an associated party committee that is authorized to supervise its work and make sure that it keeps in line with the aims of the CCP. The system permeates both administrative structures (the national, provincial, county and township levels) and agencies (ministries, commissions, bureaus, enterprises and other agencies with issue-specific tasks). Since party membership is a necessary condition for promotion to a leadership post in any but the very lowest-ranking government agencies, state officials are subjected to party jurisdiction in addition

[62] This commitment is probably the one characteristic that has changed the least among successive generations of Chinese intellectuals, and usually the basis for stressing historical continuity despite the radically different environments which they found themselves in (e.g., Hamrin and Cheek (1986), p. 8-10; Goldman (1981, p. 3-7); Hao (2003, p. 50-54).

[63] For a description of how party control is exercised in research institutes and shapes their particular work, please refer to chapter 6.4.

to being subordinate to the next-highest level within the state hierarchy. In practice, this results in a system of "dual rule", in which officials receive directions through both of these channels.[64]

Even though they have no standing to issue direct orders to officials, committees have the power to significantly impair their future career chances by issuing negative reports about their performance or loyalty to party leaders at higher levels.[65] Additionally, the system of party discipline inspection allows for the internal punishment or removal of members who are either corrupt or deemed to have deviated too strongly from the CCP´s principles and guiding ideology. The inspection system has a hierarchy of its own, but local discipline inspection commissions (DICs) are subordinate to party committees in addition to the higher-level DICs, similar to the "dual rule" system that institutionalizes state-party entanglement. This gives committees the power to trigger investigations against officials, or - conversely - shield them from their consequences, as all disciplinary penalties that go beyond mere warnings have to be affirmed by the responsible committee (Gong 2008).

Non-party members at lower levels of public service are not subjected to the same kind of direct control, but neither are they free from party supervision and interference. The CCP has retained the leeway to determine the state´s overall ideological orientation as well as the specific missions of government agencies, and non-party employees will thus be indirectly required to adhere to CCP-established guiding principles.[66] Due to its all-consuming scope and the prerogative of revolutionary change, party-sanctioned ideology had an especially pronounced constraining effect on the activity of intellectuals during the Mao era. In the wake of economic reforms, ideology has been deemphasized both because of its lessened importance as a legitimation for CCP rule and the difficulty to reconcile official Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy with the practice of market deregulation. However, the less doctrinaire guiding principles issued by the party still serve as a constraint on intellectual discourse by creating taboos that can be enforced through threats of employment termination.

For intellectuals wishing to promote the public good, the interlocking systems create a complicated and sometimes dangerous landscape. For them, alternatives to government service are altogether few, as the vast majority of policy-related Chinese institutions - the bureaucracy, media, academia, research institutes, publishing houses - are directly run by the state, testifying to the desire of the CCP to retain tight control over these sectors and their employees.[67] When providing opinions on matters of politics and policy, the latter often have to walk a tight rope

[64] See Zheng (1997, p. 81-83) for essential features of this system and the process of its initial implementation.

[65] This is particularly important for appointments to high-level public sector positions (e.g., governorships, ministerial positions and the leadership of major individual institutions such as universities (Shambaugh 2000 p.173), as these are handled directly by the party´s Organization Department.

[66] The various elements of CCP principles are usually portrayed as an expanding canon enshrined in the party´s constitution, with each succesive paramount leader adding to it (Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, Jiang Zemin´s Three Represents and most recently Hu Jintao´s Scientific Development). The leaders of public agencies will regularly profess adherence on these principles and more concrete directives on behalf of their institutes.

[67] In addition to the vast array of state institutions which it controls, the CCP also maintains an establishment of its own that employs a large number of intellectuals tasked with developing party doctrine, educating cadres and promoting campaigns aimed at the broader populace, e.g., the Propaganda Department and the Party School system (Shambaugh 2007, 2008). This is, of course, another aspect of the modern Chinese party-state that should not be overlooked, although it primarily concerns those intellectuals which identify with the party and embrace its dominant position in Chinese society.

between providing a welcome impetus for further development and issuing a potentially dangerous challenge to the party-established status quo. The mechanisms that the party-state employs to assess ideas as valuable or threatening are well known, but individual outcomes are nevertheless extremely hard to predict. The main reason for the existence of the PRC´s vast monitoring and censorship systems is their dual utility as both a detector and a filter for opinions: they are tasked with picking up on some concerns and reform ideas and using state-internal communication channels to report them upwards the chain of command, while simultaneously attempting to manipulate or silence public debates about issues that are deemed to undermine the party´s legitimacy.[68] Intellectuals are, of course, not the only citizens who are subjected to these interventions, but they are far more likely to encounter them due to the nature of their work.

Another element that is particularly characteristic for the post-Mao Chinese party state and highly influential in how it deals with intellectual input is its diffuse internal distribution of power. Establishing centralized control structures and executing rigid top-down decisionmaking has always been a daunting task in a country as vast and diverse as China, and one that is still vexing to decisionmakers even given modern forms of organization and communication technologies. Additionally, the excesses of the Mao era (during which such centralized control arguably existed at times) served to cast lasting doubts on the desirability and appropriateness of having a single dominant political power center. Accordingly, what developed during the reform era was a new mode of governance that has been characterized by "fragmented authoritarianism" and "collective leadership".[69] According to more recent analyses, these are trends that have persisted and arguably accelerated under successive generations of China´s leadership, owing to the fact that their respective "paramount leaders" have enjoyed less individual clout and authority than Deng himself .[70]

In addition to the long-standing existence of patronage networks and local cliques within the party, China´s development has also resulted in growing social pluralism, and - as a result - the entry of new interest groups into policy struggles, especially those related to the distributive aspects of economic policies. Disagreements over the speed and scope of further market reforms, social balancing and political opening have given rise to new, distinct intra-party factions with vested interests in promoting or restricting the circulation of ideas, depending on whether they underpin or undermine their positions in current debates, respectively. As will be described in more detail below, shifts in the political balance of power have at times resulted in very sudden changes to the limits and content of acceptable public discourse, and individual intellectuals have been victimized or empowered depending on their alignment with certain factions.

All of this results in a climate that is no longer outright repressive, but rather highly ambiguous and volatile: intellectuals who engage the vast party-state establishment with its byzantine bureaucracy, myriad diverging instincts, independent power centers and hidden factional struggles run a serious risk due to the associated unpredictability in how the state will react to a given impulse. There can be no doubt that the system as a whole nowadays tolerates a much greater degree of public criticism and dissent from established orthodoxies than has been

[68] See Shambaugh (2007) for a recent overview of how the Chinese propaganda system operates and how it has adapted to changes in the media environment. Also see Noesselt (2013) for its digital media activity.

[69] The former concept was introduced by Lieberthal and Oksenberg (1988) to decribe a policymaking process characterized by bureaucratic politics and distinct vested interests at the agency level. The latter was initially used for Soviet politics in the post-Stalin era, but has also been applied to contemporary China under Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao (Li, 2007).

[70] See Li (2007) for a brief overview. Lai (2010) and Lampton (2001) offer in-depth analyses of the specific decisionmaking process used for foreign policy.

the average under CCP rule, but the continuing, intractable fusion of party and state maintains the potential for serious backlashes.

4.2.2 The nation-state

Similar to the organizational form of the CCP and the ideology to which it owes its existence, the concept of China as a nation was also forged during the country´s turbulent transition to modernity. Indeed, the significance of China´s exposition to the harsh realities of a nation-based world order and its imperialist and Social Darwinist corollaries in the Opium War (1840-43) is readily apparent from the structure of PRC historiography: the latter event is seen as the watershed moment that heralded the transition from ancient history (*gudaishi*, beginning with the earliest traces of humanity in China) to modern history (*jindaishi*, 1840-1949).[71] In stark contrast to the Chinese Empire and its construction as a universal, culture-based community, Western-style nationalism experienced a growing popularity among elites seeking to halt and reverse China´s rapid decline.[72]

Despite the strongly internationalist outlook of Marxist orthodoxy and its call for cross-border unity of the working class, the CCP was never a stranger to this phenomenon. Accordingly, the modern nation state and party state are tightly linked due to the party´s post-1949 monopoly on defining the nation, and its long-standing reliance on nationalism as a tool of regime legitimation and mass mobilization. The system of state institutions that the Communists built after their victory in the Civil War was not just determined by their plans for internal social transformation, but also by the specific variant of nationalism that they advanced, and which continues to define state-society relations. CCP elites actively promoted an approach dubbed "state nationalism" (Zhao 2004, p. 21-29), as opposed to Han-centric "ethnic nationalism" and republican "liberal nationalism", which were deemed less suitable for the PRC due to its far-flung, minority-inhabited periphery and an incompatibility with single-party rule, respectively (Zhao 1998). This "state nationalist" approach had been primarily shaped by the traumatizing experience of repeated imperialist aggression, and the primacy of survival in a hostile environment.

Hence, the CCP´s focus was on building a powerful state apparatus with far-reaching mobilization capabilities that would enable it to defend China´s territorial integrity and restore its international standing by closing the gap with the developed world. State-led nationalism is thus another key determinant of the modern Chinese state´s authoritarian character, and a very plausible reason for why it has persisted in spite of a strong shift away from totalitarian social utopism. Contrary to the chaos wrought by the party´s original revolutionary agenda, the modern Chinese state has been undeniably successful at maintaining internal stability, deterring foreign

[71] The period from the foundation of the PRC in 1949 to the present is officially referred to as contemporary history (*xiandaishi*), signaling the entry into yet another altogether distinct stage of development supposedly brought about by the nationwide implementation of socialism. Here, the term "modern China" is applied to post-1949 China as well, while "contemporary China" is used to designate roughly the most recent decade (2002-2012).

[72] This shift in consciousness can be tracked in late 19th and early 20th century writings (which are, due to low overall literacy, synonymous with elite discourse), specifically, the way in which China is referred to as a political entity: a declining usage of the universalist term "all under heaven" (*tianxia*) is juxtaposed with increasing appearances of the modern "nation" (*minzu*) from the 1870s onwards (Zhao 2004, p. 45f.; Zhang 1997). The 1911 revolution and the resulting quest to establish a new, modern national identity marks a crucial point in this shift.

aggression, spurring economic growth and enhancing China´s international prestige. In the post-Mao era, this success has become the main foundation for the state´s claim to dominance over the country´s civil society and the legitimacy of continuing one-party rule.

In what is probably the clearest example of this trend, Chinese authorities began to promote a comprehensive, state-sanctioned nationalist narrative through the implementation of the "patriotic education" (*aiguozhuyi jiaoyu*) curriculum in the early 1990s.[73] This initiative followed on the heels of the Tiananmen crackdown and was explicitly targeted at the country´s youth, seeking to strengthen their allegiance to the state by deemphasizing Marxist orthodoxy and shifting the focus towards China´s history, culture and position in the world.[74] Simultaneously, the program was aimed at delegitimizing the supposedly "Western" (or "non-Chinese") ideational influences that had undergirded the student protesters´ calls for political reform by portraying them as alien and incompatible with Chinese culture.[75] The campaign seems to have been particularly effective at promoting nationalist or patriotic sentiments among younger intellectuals and university students, an effect that probably contributed to the ongoing popularity of direct or indirect state service among well-educated young intellectuals.[76] To be sure, establishment propaganda is by no means the only source of Chinese nationalism, nor is the party the only organized actor who can effectively claim nationalist credentials. Stoking the flames of popular nationalist sentiment is often hard to reconcile with managing international relationships for mutual gain, in particular when it comes to highly sensitive and historically burdened cases like Sino-Japanese relations. Intellectuals have, at times, acted as an avantgarde in promoting nationalist sentiment without any obvious instigation or sponsorship by state organs.[77] However, the usage of patriotic sentiments undoubtedly represents yet another powerful tool which the party can wield in its dealings with intellectuals.

In short, the enduring dominance of the state apparatus in Chinese society and its jealously guarded monopoly over defining and pursuing the national interest leave public-minded intellectuals with very few options other than state service. This is especially true for issue areas like foreign policy that are inherently focused on sovereign agency, but also borne out by the fact that even many of China´s "liberal" or "new right" intellectuals who seek to reduce the role of the

[73] In China, as in many other countries around the globe, "patriotism" (*aiguozhuyi*, literally "love of country-ism") is a much more popular concept that "nationalism" (*minzuzhuyi*) due to its more positive connotations. Hence, the term "patriotism" predominates in official pronoucements and discourse (Zhao 1998).

[74] Notably, the sections dealing with Marxist othodoxy were removed from the all-important university entrance exams, while patriotic education was made compulsory throughout high school (Zhao 1998). Instead of trying to foster the youth´s loyalty to the party directly, authorities switched to a tactic of emphasizing service to the nation and thus the state it controlled, again highlighting the close linkages between all three structures.

[75] See Zhao (1997) on the post-Tiananmen shift from an anti-traditionalist to a cultural nationalist intellectual climate and how this trend was promoted (if not caused) by the party´s appropriation of traditional Chinese culture.

[76] According to a Chinese survey, 43% of returning overseas graduates entered the public sector, mainly driven by the popularity of jobs in academia and research institutes, which alone accounted for 30% (People´s Daily 2012a). This is especially notable since graduates from overseas universities are usually the most highly sought-after job candidates in the private sector and can demand corresponding salaries.

[77] In particular, the publication of the bestseller *China Can Say No* (*zhongguo keyi shuo bu*) in 1996 and the similar literature its success inspired represent a genuine show of grassroots sentiment rather than a state-organized campaign (Li, 1997; Zhao, 1997).

state are themselves employed by public institutions.[78] While the option of opposing the party and criticizing the self-serving behavior of its officials exists, advancing patriotic ideals from outside of the party-state system usually results in a backlash ranging from isolation to repression. For those who specialize in a directly policy-relevant field, like most of the social sciences, joining one of the many state-run research organizations is a very attractive way of pursuing an academic career while still availing themselves of a channel that can transmit their ideas to decisionmakers.[79] While there is no guarantee of any specific advice being translated into actual policy, past precedent during the reform era has been, on balance, encouraging for those who wish to utilize their knowledge to improve the situation of the country. Out of the many aspects of the complicated relationship between intellectuals and the state, this ambition is key for explaining the popularity of think tanks in modern China.

4.3 Historical trends and phases

In order to allow for later analysis of how shifts in the state´s handling of intellectuals influenced the climate in which Chinese think tanks operate, this part of the chapter will identify the most important turning points in the evolution of the relationship between China´s intellectuals and the state. Since this is but one of many plausible influences on the development of think tanks, the historical account presented below is necessarily restricted to the most pronounced shifts (of which, as we will see, there are still many).

4.3.1 State building and Thought Reform, 1949-57

The vast reorganization of the Chinese state that took place after 1949 would turn out to be a double-edged affair for intellectuals: it offered an opportunity for them to take the reins of public institutions, while simultaneously exposing them to a system of tight controls and pressures for ideological conformity. This reflected the CCP´s status as a party founded and run by intellectuals that had been extraordinarily successful at recruiting them to their cause, and yet remained acutely suspicious of any deviations from orthodoxy, an attitude perhaps forged during the heated struggles of the 1920s and 30s.[80]

Given the scope of organizational construction, even the cohorts of reliable party intellectuals were insufficient to staff the many new agencies. As a result, recruiters were soon forced to draw upon trained personnel that had been affiliated with the Guomindang government (Zheng 1997, p. 80f.). As mentioned above, the CCP launched a nationwide effort to register intellectuals and appoint them to state institutions, with ideological indoctrination initially taking a backseat to the immediate need for qualified personnel (U, 2009). However, lingering suspicions within the party elite soon led to an organized ideological remodeling campaign, establishing the first precedent for the pattern of alternating pragmatic cooperation and

[78] Leonard (2008, p.19f) focuses on the activity of Zhang Weiying, head of Beida´s school of management until his removal in 2010. Other prominent liberals, such as Fan Gang (CASS), Wang Dingding (Beida) and Zhu Xueqin (Shanghai university), also hold positions in state-run academia.

[79] See Ogden in Gu and Goldman (eds., 2004, p. 114f).

[80] See Schwarcz (1986, p. 186-191) and U (2009) on the CCP´s growing distance from and early suppression of intellectuals during the late 1920s, as the party rapidly coalesced around a formal Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy.

persecution that would become characteristic for state policy towards intellectuals in the coming decades. Beginning in late 1951, the "Thought Reform" (*sixiang gaizao*) campaign was the first organized effort to establish party control over intellectuals by making them directly organic to the party, instead of merely enforcing their cooperation in governing the country.[81] As opposed to the party´s revolutionary spirit and the politically unconscious masses, intellectuals were suspected of actively subverting the new regime through their alleged petty-bourgeois and pro-Western sympathies (Hao 2003, p. 75f). The campaign relied heavily on tools developed during the smaller-scale campaigns of the CCP´s Yan'an years (1937-1947): most notably, forcing intellectuals to engage in rigorous self-criticisms of their past attitudes and submitting them to group meetings in which colleagues would attack each others´ ideological shortcomings. While it did initially enjoy widespread cooperation from formerly unattached intellectuals who were willing to embrace the new orthodoxy, violent excesses and the emphasis on propagandistic conformity over individual creativity eventually even turned off some of the CCP´s most ardent supporters (Hao 2003, p. 79-82). Dissidents who were unwilling to embrace Communism altogether often fled the country, while the party cemented its authority over the remaining intellectuals.

4.3.2 Hundred Flowers and Anti-Rightist movements, 1957-58

Although the Thought Reform campaign had been an apparent success, regime paranoia over subversion by unreconstructed intellectuals abated only slowly. The early and mid-1950s saw a further succession of political campaigns to purge officials, bureaucrats and specialists who were deemed unreliable from the ranks of the party and its new governing apparatus.[82] In 1956, these policies were reversed again, as a result of a personal initiative of Mao Zedong. In an attempt to improve CCP governance by inviting outside critics to point out aberrations, the so-called "Hundred Flowers" movement (*baihua yundong*) suddenly opened up a vast new intellectual space: problems like corruption, incompetence, abuses of power or irreconcilable differences between ideology and reality could be pointed out in public, and proposals for rectifications and reforms were initially endorsed by the establishment. In his speech on "the correct handling of contradictions among the people" held in February 1957, Mao devoted a whole section to the new program and personally encouraged criticism by singling out "dogmatism" (*jiaotiaozhuyi*) as inimical to China´s future development.[83] As a result, intellectuals of all stripes -revolutionaries, supporters of United Front parties, students - as well as other citizens eagerly seized the opportunity to criticize the party and its handling of government

[81] From the outset, this program was modeled as a mass campaign, in line with the party´s other efforts to mobilize the country and extend control over all areas of economic and social life in China. It ultimately affected the vast majority of university students and teachers providing secondary and tertiary education (Hao 2003, p. 78).

[82] In total, no less than fourteen distinct ideological campaigns were launched in 1950-55, ranging in scope from efforts targeted at relatively small circles of party leadership to nationwide mass campaigns like the one described above (Zheng 1997, p. 270).

[83] Exemplifying the quickly-changing elite opinion on this question, the revised speech published in June 1957 featured a section in which "revisionism" (*xiuchengzhuyi,* signifying the voicing of anti-Marxist or anti-party sentiments) was now considered an even graver threat than dogmatism (Schoenhals 1986). The original manuscript (in Chinese) can be found online at <http://www.marxists.org/chinese/maozedong/marxist.org-chinese-mao-19570227AA.htm>, the revised version at <http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-01/05/content_2418530.htm>.

affairs. Some went as far as to question whether any of these shortcomings could be effectively addressed while the CCP insisted on its monopoly on power, culminating in open calls for a regime change (Hao 2003, p. 83f).

This result turned out to be a shock to party leaders, particularly those who had considered the Thought Reform campaign a success and who were convinced that the vast majority of intellectuals were now supporting the party. It also provides an illustration for a recurring and highly important aspect of the interactions between the state and its educated elite: the inherent tension between the party´s desire to improve its governance through expert advice and fears that its claim to unchallenged power would be undermined through a public discussion of its shortcomings. One solution to this dilemma that arguably had a considerable impact on the development of think tanks was to keep such criticism out of the public debate by constricting criticism and constructive advice to the state´s internal communication channels. State-run policy research institutes like the ones discussed here turned out to be uniquely suited to this arrangement and allowed them to thrive in an authoritarian developmental state.

However, the most immediate regime reaction to the wave of criticism consisted in brutal suppression, an instinct that has unfortunately been as characteristic for the state´s relationship with intellectuals as the pragmatic usage of their skills. Interpreting the critics´ input as a direct challenge to the new system and as evidence of their suspected reactionary sympathies, the core leadership prepared a backlash in the form of yet another mass campaign, the so-called "Anti-Rightist" movement (*fan youpai yundong*). Intellectuals who had expressed criticism were branded as "rightists", even if they had such impeccable revolutionary credentials as the writers Ding Ling and Ai Qing. From 1957-58, more than half a million people were officially denounced as rightists and punished, mostly through imprisonment or forced labor (Hao 2003, p. 86).[84] The CCP´s radical ideological faction had once again asserted the primacy of revolutionary struggle over pragmatic problem solving, and silenced those intellectuals who had been most willing and able to provide the latter. In doing so, they had also made it clear that the political machine would not tolerate any external impulses for change, even if "externality" in this case applied to countless intellectuals who considered themselves organic to the party and were fully committed to its project of social transformation. Given the heated ideological climate, the only (relatively) safe courses of action for many of them were the simple repetition of official guidelines or complete detachment from politics, focusing instead on the application of technical skills. To an ambitious intellectual, neither of these options was particularly attractive - the first due to the lack of challenge and integrity involved, and the second due to the shrinking field of disciplines and activities that were not considered inherently political.[85] Nevertheless, until the party establishment itself decided to shift its focus, these were the only narrow niches left.

4.3.3 Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, 1958-76

Concurrent to the Hundred Flowers and Anti-Rightist campaigns, the CCP had also been preparing a radically new schedule for economic expansion, intended to rapidly close the gap with the developed world. The so-called "Great Leap Forward" (*da yue jin*) comprised the forced

[84] This number is especially staggering when accounting for the fact that even under the very broad definition of "intellectual" used in the 1950s, only five million people had met the criteria by 1957 (Hao 2003, p. 78).

[85] As a result of the CCP´s insistence on permanent revolutionary mobilization, the arts, media, policy-relevant social sciences and even some fields of the natural sciences had become thoroughly politicized in the 1950s and 60s (Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b, p. 36f, also see Schneider´s contribution to Simon and Goldman (eds., 1989)).

collectivization of agriculture, a rapid industrial buildup and infrastructure expansion. Between these measures, the agricultural labor force dwindled rapidly, with an estimated 15 million rural citizens moving to the cities in 1958 alone (Dikötter 2010, p. 61), which ultimately brought about a devastating famine without accomplishing any of the ambitious development goals.[86] Another characteristic feature of Great Leap policies that is of particular interest here was the deliberate, politically motivated blurring of lines between ideological and technological knowledge. This is perhaps best exemplified by the party´s 1957-58 exhortation for officials and intellectuals to become "red and expert" (*hong yu zhuan*), first proposed by Liu Shaoqi and soon endorsed by Mao. In Liu´s original formulation, this slogan was explicitly aimed at intellectuals wishing to pursue their craft in detachment from the party´s revolutionary program, admonishing them that "it is impossible to keep away from politics" (Baum 1964). In practice, particularly in the context of the Great Leap, this stance led to a strong overemphasis on ideological conviction and the belief that political fervor could overcome technical problems. Indeed, some of the Leap´s most prominent failures - like the attempt to produce high-quality steel from "backyard furnaces" or the overly dense planting of seeds that contributed to crop failures - can be directly attributed to the rejection of established scientific knowledge in favor of revolutionary zeal.[87]

Eventually, the catastrophic outcome of the Great Leap program was enough to effect a short-term power shift within the party, delegitimizing Mao and the radical faction. The CCP´s ascendant bureaucratic wing showed more willingness to listen to expert advice and could provide protection to its providers, although some of its leaders (notably Deng Xiaoping) had been complicit in the earlier "anti-rightist" crackdown. The ensuing period of relative stability brought a respite from the constant campaigns and allowed the education system to focus on the task of providing modern scientific knowledge. The ranks of intellectuals grew quickly in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as did their status within the administration.[88]

However, these years turned out to be just a brief interlude, leading up to the most severe disruption in China´s post-war history: the chaotic period from 1966-76 named after the "Cultural Revolution" (*wenhua da geming*) campaign that reached its height in the late 1960s. This period is not only notable for the sheer magnitude of its effects on intellectuals and countless other citizens, but also because it added a new facet to the relations between the PRC state and its knowledge elite. In previous campaigns, a unified leadership had engaged intellectuals as a relatively undifferentiated group, without pronounced factionalism on either side playing a major role. Conversely, the beginnings of the campaign in 1966 were inextricably linked with power struggles within the political and intellectual elites. Initially, Mao himself sought to empower the most radical elements among the party´s organic intellectuals in their attack on moderate pragmatists, aiming to restore his own power within the CCP leadership.[89] After the successful purge of Peng Zhen and with radicals now in firm control of the committee overseeing the campaign, the Cultural Revolution evolved into a mass movement with the mobilization of the country´s youth. With Mao´s official endorsement, newly formed Red Guards quickly seized the initiative, and the campaign expanded from a narrow focus on party cadres to engulf most of the

[86] Dikötter (2010, p.325) estimates the death toll of this campaign at over 45 million people, mostly as a result of mass starvation due to repeated crop failures in 1958-61.
[87] See Baum (1964), DeGlopper (1987).
[88] According to Pepper (1996, p. 285-287), total tertiary school enrollment grew from around 400,000 in 1956 to almost a million in 1961.
[89] In one of the most detailed accounts of this period, Goldman (1981, in particular p. 61-66) describes the onset of the Cultural Revolution as a conflict between "liberals" and "radicals", the former of which corresponds to the "pragmatist" faction described here.

nation´s education system.[90] Escalating violence and factional strife between Guards brought the country to the brink of civil war in 1968, when a PLA crackdown effectively ended the mass movement. Consequently, most of the urban students that had formed the main recruitment pool for the Red Guards were exiled to the countryside, further disrupting a whole generation´s access to higher education (Deng and Treiman 1997). For older cohorts of intellectuals, their fortunes depended on whether they were aligned with the radical Maoist faction later designated as the "Gang of Four". With the education and science systems at the epicenter of the turmoil and the media and propaganda apparatus under the control of the radicals, few other opportunities remained, although the pragmatist wing of the party retained control of the State Council apparatus and most aspects of economic management.[91]

4.3.4 Reform era, 1978 - 1989

After the death of Mao and the ouster of the Gang of Four, the moderate bureaucratic faction quickly reasserted its dominance over Chinese politics. Deng and some of his close associates like Hu Yaobang had already spent the last years of the Mao era drawing up policy plans for the reform of China´s education system in addition to the economy, and concluded that modern scientific knowledge was indispensable to both efforts.[92] Accordingly, right at the onset of the Reform era in 1978, one of Deng´s first acts concerned the party´s future policy towards what remained of the country´s knowledge elite. As mentioned above, intellectuals were redefined as part of the working class, removing the ideological basis for the repeated persecutions this group had suffered over the past decades. Most of the "rightists" and urban youth who had been banished to the countryside in the past campaigns were rehabilitated and allowed to return to their homes. The university system was relaunched in 1977, with its new curricula shifting the focus once again away from "redness" and towards "expertise".[93] The dissemination of technical skills was considered to be of paramount importance for economic modernization, leading to a flowering of programs in what is nowadays referred to as STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).[94] Most of the first waves of graduates remained in public employment, as the country´s budding private sector was initially too small to absorb many of them, but the basic freedom to choose a career of one´s own volition, and to potentially do so outside of the direct control of the state, represented a shift of fundamental importance.[95]

For intellectuals who went on to serve in state-controlled academia or the reconstituted think tanks, the growing pluralization and the emergence of new power centers also had direct consequences, albeit more of a mixed bag: on the one hand, the considerable ideological diversity

[90] Secondary and tertiary schools were closed from 1966 onwards, with most secondary schools reopening in 1968 and universities in 1972, although it would take several more years to return to full efficiency after the disruption (Deng and Treiman 1997).
[91] Moderates like Zhou Enlai and (intermittently) Deng Xiaoping could extent some protection to intellectuals employed in this sector and used the mid-1970s to draw up blueprints for economic reform, again underscoring the importance of high-level political patronage. See Goldman (1981, p. 214-221) and Baum (1994, p. 29f) on Deng´s early reform efforts before his second purge.
[92] See Goldman (1981, p. 215-219).
[93] The direct effects of this change in the supply of skilled labor are discussed in chapter 6.1.
[94] See Tsang (2000).
[95] See Bonnin and Chevrier (1991) in addition to Edward Gu´s and Suzanne Ogden´s contributions to Gu and Goldman (eds., 2004).

of Deng´s coalition and the lifting of many limits on political debates created a much greater number of potential patrons to whom intellectuals could pledge their support depending on their own ideals and preferences. In particular, liberals like Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang could extend political protection to academics who did not want to stop at economic reform, but also proposed ways of opening up the country´s political system to more competition (Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b, p. 96; Baum 1994 p. 161f.). On the other hand, even this kind of indirect involvement also bred the risk of being caught up in ongoing political struggles, with principals seeking to purge the allies of their opponents from organizations under their control. Conservatives, led by Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun, increasingly viewed the Western-inspired political reform proposals as a direct threat to CCP rule and organized two major campaigns against "spiritual pollution" (1983) and "bourgeois liberalization" (1987) that targeted the advisory networks of their rivals.[96] Once more, most of the intellectuals affected by the campaigns had focused on reforming and democratizing the CCP rather than calling for it to relinquish its monopoly on power outright, but even this kind of relatively loyal opposition could still trigger a backlash depending on power shifts within the leadership (Hao 2003, p. 106). The question of what constituted legitimate knowledge was also by no means settled, despite a general consensus about moving away from the Mao-era focus on revolutionary ideology. The frictions that led to the abovementioned campaigns were triggered by a controversy over the introduction of Western knowledge, specifically the concerns of conservatives that a slippery slope would lead from economic to political liberalism.[97] While the campaign was much smaller in scope than the Mao-era mass movements and resulted in dismissals rather than imprisonment,[98] exile or even execution, the leadership had made it clear that it was not willing to allow an unrestricted intellectual debate in fields relevant to policy and politics.

Unsurprisingly, the establishment´s reaction to criticism from intellectuals who remained outside of the party-state nexus and were usually willing to call for much more far-reaching proposals was even less lenient than its treatment of state-employed academics. Outright dissidence was quickly suppressed by the state, as participants in the short-lived "Democracy Wall" (*minzhu qiang*) movement had to experience early into the Deng era.[99] Similarly, a wave of student protests that had erupted in late 1986 led Deng to side with the conservatives, resulting in a series of arrests and paving the way for the campaign against bourgeois liberalization (Baum 1994, p. 205f.). However, these crackdowns could only silence grassroots activism momentarily, as the biggest challenge to CCP authority was yet to come.

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[96] Both of these clashes focused on CASS due to its status as a high-profile, diverse organization that had emerged as a haven for liberals, see chapter 6.3 for details.

[97] See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 91). According to the same source, the campaign against "burgeois liberalization" also drew on cultural nationalism (asserting the superiority of Chinese over foreign knowledge) rather than old-school Maoist doctrines to delegitimize its "Westernized" targets.

[98] Among the most notable targets were astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, political theorist Su Shaozhi (director of CASS´ institute for Marxism-Leninism studies) and journalist Wang Ruoshui, all of whom were removed from their posts and expelled from the party (See Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b p.91; 96f.; also see Su Shaozhi´s own account in Hamrin and Zhao (eds., 1995).

[99] The movement took its name from the practice of publishing political articles on posters along Xidan avenue in Beijing from late 1978 to spring 1979. It initially focused on criticizing the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and the deposed radical faction, receiving support from Deng. However, as its focus expanded to criticism of Mao and single-party rule in general, the hardline wing of the reform coalition prevailed with its calls for a crackdown, resulting in the arrest of key activists and the clearing of the area (Baum 1994, p.69-79).

4.3.5 Tiananmen and its aftermath, 1989 - present

In April and May 1989, following the death of former secretary general Hu Yaobang, students across the nation turned out in massive numbers to voice their dissatisfaction with the earlier campaigns against advocates of political reform, as well as specific grievances about poor conditions within the higher education system (Baum 1994, p. 247). Like the protests of 1919 and 1976 (and, to be sure, the Red Guards of 1966), this movement had once again originated at Beida and anchored itself on Beijing´s Tiananmen Square, the nation´s historical center. The students were soon joined by citizens from all other walks of life, strengthening the impression that this was not an isolated group of intellectuals pursuing their particularistic interest, but rather a broad social movement striving for the common good (ibid., p. 251f). On the contrary, in resisting calls to disclose the incomes of officials and their family members, it was the party itself that risked criticism for exploiting their monopoly on power. With domestic and international public opinion now strongly in their favor, the protesters had evidently succeeded in claiming the cause of patriotism and public interest (ibid., p. 253-256). The challenge to regime legitimacy had reached a threshold that most members of the leadership were no longer willing to tolerate. Over the isolated objections of Zhao Ziyang, they moved to institute martial law on May 20th and eventually sent in troops to clear Tiananmen square on June 4th, resulting in a civilian and military casualties estimated to have numbered at least several hundred, mostly along Chang'an avenue (ibid., 282-288).

The military crackdown was the overture to another state backlash against dissidents, this time much larger in scope and commensurate to the threat which party leaders had seen in the protest: state-employed intellectuals who had sided with the students either fled the country or were removed from office;[100] many unofficial newspapers and other literature supporting political reform were banned, while the official media were put under a much stricter censorship regime;[101] and university curricula were again reoriented towards ideological indoctrination, albeit one that stressed the party´s nationalist rather than socialist credentials.[102] Rallying around Jiang Zemin and Li Peng, conservatives even succeeded in delaying further economic liberalization for several years, although this part of the reform agenda was eventually reimplemented beginning in 1992.

Even for those intellectuals who had not suffered directly from the backlash, the aftermath of the Tiananmen massacre turned out to be a major turning point. The party´s apparent unwillingness to deal constructively with outside criticism regarding such obvious problems as corruption and abuses of power turned many previously loyal intellectuals off from politics altogether (Hao 2003, p. 213-219). Simultaneously, the economic boom of the 1990s and 00s and the rapid expansion of the private sector presented an ever more attractive alternative career path for intellectuals with managerial or technical skills. The promise of substantially better salaries and a safe distance from political turmoil lured many younger intellectuals to "jump into the sea" (*xiahai*) and enter the market economy (Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b, p. 221). With little space

[100] Again underscoring the importance of CASS as a battleground for factional strife, two of its most well-known supporters of political reform were victims of this crackdown: Yan Jiaqi, director of the Institute for Political Science and his former colleague Su Shaozhi moved to France and the United States, repsectively, where they joined networks of exiled dissidents. Many lesser-known CASS scholars who had also been part of Zhao Ziyang´s groups were purged from the institute in the following years (Sleeboom-Faulkner, 2007a).

[101] See Hao (2003, p. 121); Baum (1994, p. 295). Also see Cheng and White (1991) on the specific case of the *World Economic Herald*, a high-profile venue for critical intellectuals in the 1980s published by SASS.

[102] See Zhao (1998).

remaining between an unyieldingly authoritarian state, for-profit enterprises, commercialized media and tightly monitored academia, detachment from politics and professionalization became dominant trends of the 1990s (Hao 2003, p. 206-208).

4.3.6 From control to cooptation, 2002-2012

For party leaders, this development turned out to be a double-edged sword - on the one hand, intellectuals who had chosen detachment would not directly challenge the regime; on the other hand, disillusionment about the CCP´s identification with the public good and the undesirable working conditions in state institutions also drained the state of the talent necessary to pursue its ambitious development agenda.[103] Accordingly, the party launched a large-scale propaganda effort to promote patriotism among students, stressing its own nationalist credentials and successes in modernizing the country. State service was promoted as a way of acting on the sense of responsibility for the nation that had been a defining characteristic for successive generations of modern Chinese intellectuals. Flanked by measures to improve the financial situation of state employees, these campaigns were ultimately very successful in attracting large numbers of highly educated professionals to government agencies and policy research institutes.[104]

The party itself was similarly able to recruit highly educated personnel to its ranks, as shown by the high share of university graduates among its cadres.[105] It is, of course, very hard to determine how many intellectuals joined the CCP because they are genuinely committed to its ideological program or national development efforts, how many did so because it is a necessary requirement for a leading position in the public sector, and how many joined out of a cynical desire to reach a position of power that can be exploited for personal gain. What makes them organic to state and party is a shared desire in regime stability, be it out of concern for their own position or because they see no viable alternative to the current system.[106] In the 2000s, the Hu administration continued on this path by promising ideologically neutral experts a major role in policymaking, formally enshrined in the doctrine of "Scientific Development" and the request for academia to act as "think tanks for state and party".[107] These efforts will be described in detail in one of the subsequent chapters due to their very high importance for the development of think tanks.

Despite the ongoing persecution of individuals who stepped over the (usually blurry) boundaries of party-sanctioned speech, intellectuals as a whole have in recent times enjoyed an

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[103] See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007a) on the decline of CASS as a result of worsening working conditions and lack of competitiveness in the 1990s.

[104] See the aforementioned report in People´s Daily (2012); also refer to section 6.1 for a more detailed account of the shifts in personnel employed by foreign policy research institutes.

[105] In a 1999 survey, about one third of self-identified intellectuals reported to be party members, compared to about 7% within the population at large (Tang 2005, p. 164-166); the same study also found that party intellectuals had on average a significantly higher educational background and socioeconomic status.

[106] Hao (2003, p. 286-303) divides this group into several distinct clusters based on their profession (e.g., propagandists, lower-level bureaucrats and government advisors) and (implicitly) the kind of knowledge to which they owe their position. As a whole, this group is also mostly identical with the alternative designation "establishment intellectuals".

[107] See the Ministry of Education´s (1999) "Action Scheme for Invigorating Education towards the 21st century", as well as the Central Committee´s (2004) "Views on the Further Prosperity and Development of Philosophy and Social Sciences".

usually stable period of relaxation in the state´s efforts to control them. In a trend that was especially pronounced over the last decade, what has evolved is a complicated system of cooptation rather than exploitation. In exchange for providing crucial services to state and nation, organic intellectuals have been able to significantly enhance their position by receiving both material and non-material benefits from the state: higher payment, better housing, more funds for research and training, a voice in public debates, opportunities to provide policy input, and perhaps most importantly, official endorsement as an avantgarde that is at the forefront of restoring China to its former glory.[108] Whether this arrangement signifies the return to an ancient model of collusion between political and educational elites or is simply the result of a momentary overlap in interests cannot be discussed here, but there is every reason to believe that it constitutes a very important context factor for the development of think tanks.

4.4 Conclusion

As a consequence of China´s modernization and growing social (if not political) pluralism, its intellectuals have been able to embrace a greater variety of new roles, and their relationship with the state has become much more complex. Since the country entered its tumultuous modernity, intellectuals as a social group have also undergone several far-reaching redefinitions regarding their identity and standing in society. These shifts have usually been connected to political contestations over the kind of knowledge that forms the basis for their elite status: most notably, traditionalist Confucianism, modern science, and Marxist-Leninist ideology have at different times been exalted as the indispensable framework of intellectual activity, and served as dividing lines between rival factions not only among the intellectual, but also the political elite. In all of its incarnations, knowledge has been a crucial power resource in modern China, simultaneously empowering intellectuals and making them a prime target for political control. Accordingly, the fortunes of specific kinds of intellectuals have waxed and waned in tune with those of their political patrons, depending on which kind of knowledge received an official state endorsement. As we have seen, many of these patrons qualified as intellectuals themselves, further complicating the relationship. Some long-standing continuities, especially the unbroken desire of many intellectuals to serve the state, have been pointed out by many of the authors who wrote on the subject (e.g., Goldman (1981), Hamrin and Cheek (1986), Hao (2003)), but this should not subtract from the specificity of their current situation, brought about by a series of massive external shocks originating in domestic and international politics.

When examining how these developments have impacted the creation and transformation of policy research organizations, there are two points that stand out as important context factors, and which need to be taken into account before discussing the model´s main dependent and independent variables:

First, controlling intellectuals and their knowledge has been a long-standing aim of successive generations of CCP leaders. Changes in the state´s approach towards its most educated citizens have mostly concerned the relative emphasis on carrots and sticks, or cooptation and repression. This makes it highly plausible that organizational models for policy research are also, at least in part, chosen to strike a balance between exercising control and allowing enough freedom as is necessary to provide high-quality input to the policy process. Thinks tanks have a clear advantage over traditional universities in this regard, since they do not feature large numbers

[108] See Hao (2003, p. 233-250) for a very extensive discussion of the living standards of Chinese academics in the mid-1990s; recent changes in factors like payment and funding are discussed in chapter 6 of this study.

of potentially rebellious students, are not as much in the spotlight of domestic and foreign attention, and "internal" assessments routed through a single communication channel can be much easier censored than the practice of academic publishing.

Of course, as we will see in subsequent chapters, many of these aspects have themselves changed strongly since the first establishment of Chinese think tanks - the borders between institutes and universities have been blurred, new roles in the propaganda field have made it necessary to step out of the shadows, and their handling of information and publishing has become much more open and transparent. Such changes are, after all, precisely what this study is supposed to explain, and shifts in the state´s attitude towards intellectuals are an important aspect of the interests of decisionmakers that are assumed to be their root cause.

Second, given the dangers and frustrations which intellectuals repeatedly experienced under CCP rule, explaining why they participate in the system at all is anything but easy, especially when considering the emergence of alternative career paths in the private sector or abroad. A comparison of material incentives does not offer a plausible explanation for the continuous popularity of employment in the public sector, at least when it comes to research jobs that do not offer the trappings of officialdom. Instead, one needs to focus on the sustained enthusiasm of intellectuals for the cause of China´s development, an attitude that the CCP has certainly been very eager to foster through campaigns targeted specifically at the educational elite.

However, this is only one side of the story and certainly not meant to imply that the balance of power between intellectuals and the state has remained unchanged. Indeed, the new playing field created during the reform era has had a profound impact on the opportunities offered to scholars in the field of policy research: despite the state´s dominance over this sector, intellectuals could still opt for greater independence by moving from agency-affiliated institutes to universities. The bleeding of talent from CASS and the success of universities in attracting high-profile scholars was a major trend influencing the relative standing of think tanks during the 1990s and early 2000s. These developments served to empower China´s knowledge elite, making cooptation a much more viable strategy than repression. The exact effects at the institutional level will be detailed in subsequent chapters, but the main takeaway from this argument is that cooptation also entails granting scholars more control over their own activities, and, hence, the specialization of their institutes.

5. Political conditions: Interests of decisionmakers

5.1 Introduction: political elites and primary interests

In a highly statist and politicized policy research environment like China, there is every reason to suspect that the activities and roles of think tanks will ultimately be determined by the strategic interests of their patrons, the political elite at the helm of the party-state. Hence, this chapter continues the discussion of the model´s explanatory part by providing a rough definition of these interests and suggesting a scheme for mapping how they changed over time. These general features and turning points can subsequently be related to changes in think tank activity, allowing for the investigation of the relationships outlined in chapter 2.

As mentioned in the description of the study´s framework, "political elites" are conceptualized as the highest tier of CCP leadership, the relatively small circle of cadres at the top of the party-state who are imbued with the power to set doctrinal guidelines for the rest of the party and have the final say on matters of government policy. Over different periods of CCP history, "elite" can thus designate a quasi-monarchy, as at the height of Mao´s power; a small group of senior leaders with a primus inter pares, as during much of Deng Xiaoping´s tenure; or the increasing devolution and complicated collective decisionmaking arrangements that have characterized the Jiang and Hu eras. Since analyzing factional power shifts is beyond the scope of this study, "elite" designates a collective actor whose interests can be inferred from guidelines and policy decisions that reflect the views of the contemporary mainstream within the leadership.[109]

At the most fundamental level, this entails an assumption of instrumental rationality in the pursuit of two basic aims that guide their actions: to attain and maintain political power, and to implement policies that are in line with their vision for the future of the country. At times, these goals may clash and necessitate the prioritization of one or the other, but by and large, they are closely associated and the former is a precursor towards achieving the latter. The pursuit of these goals may happen in any number of ways, but among these, only a relatively narrow range of strategies is related to think tanks and will be explored in detail here.

"Strategies" can be conceptualized as coherent, long-term plans for action designed to achieve the fundamental goals outlined above. At this level, leaders face a choice between several basic alternatives that will be discussed in more detail below. For now, it should suffice to describe the different policy dimensions in which strategic choices can be made, and how they connect the fundamental interests of decisionmakers to the work of think tanks. As was already brought up in chapter 4, think tanks and the intellectuals that they employ are valuable to political decisionmakers due to their ability to imbue political elites with legitimacy, the key resource in justifying political authority. At the policy level, the association is even stronger - helping decisionmakers draft policies in order to achieve their strategic goals is, after all, the activity that is most often associated with think tanks. Accordingly, in order to map changes in the explanans and relate them meaningfully to the development of think tanks, it is necessary to track shifts in the strategic aims of decisionmakers across both the legitimacy and the policy dimension of this concept. Since this study focuses on foreign policy think tanks, the latter dimension entails only changes in China´s international strategy. To be sure, both strands are not entirely separate from each other - for example, the necessity to placate domestic nationalists can lead to international

[109] Due to the importance of informal arrangements, personal relationships beyond official structures and shifting coalitions in the practice of the CCP´s exercise of political power, the standing of individual politicians, cliques or factions is often hard to infer for outside observers. See Köllner (2013) for a review of past developments and more recent attempts at institutionalizing decisionmaking and succession mechanisms.

conflict, and conversely, maintaining international stability is often important to safeguard domestic development. The most important among these interrelations will be pointed out whenever possible.

Between these two aspects of strategic interests, more weight and attention will be given to the foreign policy dimension due to two reasons: first, it is more directly relevant to the specific work done by institutes in the sample; and second, changes in the domestic legitimation strategy overlap on many occasions with the shifts in state attitude towards intellectuals that were discussed in the preceding chapter. This approach makes it necessary to break a highly complex topic down to a basic dichotomous choice, while pointing out its specific consequences for think tank development.

The general structure of this chapter is as follows: sections 2 and 3 introduce the basic alternatives in legitimation and foreign policy strategies (respectively) adopted by Chinese decisionmakers over the course of CCP rule. Each of these sections then proceeds to identify the most important turning points that led to elites switching strategies, focusing on the period between 1949 and 2002. Since the period from 2002 to 2012 is of special importance to this study, it will be covered in more detail: section 4 summarizes the decade´s two major doctrinal developments, one each in the fields of general regime legitimation and foreign policy. The formulation of doctrines entails an explicit articulation of strategic interests and concrete actions to attain them, thus allowing for a closer investigation of the relationship between elite interests and shifts in think tank activity.

Finally, section 5 explores how these doctrines shaped elite interests in policy research by analyzing specific research guidances issued by decisionmakers over the same time period. Taking this intermediate level into account allows for the establishment of a clearer link between elite interests and actual research activities, thus providing a segue into the next chapter and the discussion of the model´s explanandum.

5.2 Legitimation strategies

The legitimacy of a political order in the eyes of the governed is crucial for the elites at its helm, at least as long as they wish to prevent organized challenges that - if successful - would result in their downfall. There are a number of distinct ways in which legitimacy can be derived: following Weber´s (1978, p. 215f.) famous model, it can spring from either personal charisma, an appeal to traditional authority, or the rational-legal approach that forms the basis of the modern nation-state that pursues the public good within strict limits provided by the rule of law. Of course, not all of these different kinds of legitimacy can be provided by think tanks and intellectuals, or were even just seen as desirable by Chinese political elites during the time period covered by this study: For example, while the old establishment of Confucian scholars was definitely closely related to the provision of political legitimacy through a traditional-legalistic approach, the desired radical break with China´s past after 1949 closed off this particular source of legitimacy. Mao´s personal charisma, on the other hand, was extensively used to justify his standing as the nation´s paramount leader (Zhong 1996, Zhao 2009), but think tanks played next to no role in propping up the Maoist cult of personality that was especially prevalent during the Cultural Revolution. Finally, the nature of the CCP´s revolutionary project and the sweeping authority that it claimed in its pursuit made it impossible to derive legitimacy from explicit democratic consent or reliable legal mechanisms.

Accordingly, the function of think tanks centered on the provision of a relatively narrow, but crucially important kind of legitimacy based on the utility of a majority of the governed. This basic aspect of the CCP´s quest for political legitimacy has remained the same throughout its

existence, although different generations of CCP leaders resorted to a variety of strategies in order to attain it. [110] For the purposes of this study, it is sufficient two subsume them under two distinct approaches: the first among these can be dubbed the revolutionary ideological strategy, while the second emphasizes evolutionary development.[111] The following subsections will outline each of them in brief, focusing on their general aims, concrete promises towards the people, and the mechanisms employed to further them. While each of these two strategies is predominantly associated with a lengthy period in modern Chinese history (the Mao era and reform era, respectively), they do not coincide completely with specific leadership configurations. Each generation of CCP leaders employed a mixture of both, usually with a clear preference for one or the other, but still conducted back-and-forth shifts similar to, and often coinciding with, those between the cycles of control and relaxation towards intellectuals discussed in chapter 4. Accordingly, the most important turning points and strategic reorientations will be identified in a final section after the introduction of both approaches.

5.2.1 Revolutionary-ideological strategy

An ideology-based strategy conveys legitimacy to the elite through their commitment to a utopian vision of social change. Political elites justify their authority by painting a bleak picture of the present, establishing the need for a radical revision of the existing order, and promising a final resolution of long-standing social problems in accordance with the interests of a majority of the people. Problems are identified at a highly abstract and fundamental level inherent in traditional social orders, both explaining why they have never been resolved and justifying the need to employ unshackled, centralized power to bear down on them.

Concrete programs and organizational measures enacted by the state are derived from ideological conceptions rather than compartmentalized, narrow issues and problems. This practice should lead to a high degree of coherence between state policies, provided that the government is sufficiently centralized. However, this connectedness also leads to a situation where everything the state is and does hinges on the acceptance of the core ideology, which will consequently be enshrined as a dogma to protect it from challenges. Additionally, the failure of any policy breeds the risk of undermining faith in the principles from which it was derived, and with it the legitimacy of the whole system. Ultimately, the defense of the ideological core itself replaces the amelioration of the problems it identified the as the state´s raison d´etre; failures must be glossed over through propaganda or designating scapegoats; and critical debates are discouraged altogether, as a discussion about the utility of any government program could get out of hand and result in a challenge to the state as a whole. The requirements of mass mobilization and the discrepancy between ideal and reality that is likely to develop under these circumstances create a very large demand for propaganda, the activity most closely associated with attaining legitimacy through persuasion (Brady 2009). These features are, of course, not unique to China, but recurring features of Communist governance (Zhong 1996), or indeed any authoritarian regime with an ideological mission.

In summary, an ideology-based legitimation strategy rests on a utopian promise of social change, demands sweeping, unified and unchallenged power for the agents of revolution, advances an ideologically pure and coherent masterplan tying all government policies together,

[110] On the general long-term trends of regime legitimacy and legitimation in China, see Chen (1995), Dittmer (1984), and Zhong (1996). On the most recent programs aimed at addressing legitimacy issues in the Hu era, see Holbig (2006), Holbig and Gilley (2009, 2010).

[111] This basic distinction is very similar to what Brady (2009) and Zhao (2009) have described as "persuasion" and "performance" strategies, respectively.

and results in little to no tolerance for any form of criticism or deviation from orthodoxy. Under these conditions, think tanks and intellectuals have very little room to perform their main functions, and are also of little use to the government altogether: technical expertise becomes secondary to political commitment, the free debates that are the lifeblood of academic progress are discouraged or shut down altogether, and the government is impervious to any form of advice that is not directly derived from the core principles of the ideology it espouses. Since interpreting these principles and judging the orthodoxy of ideas is a very potent source of political power under an ideology-based regime, elites will tend to monopolize it within the core leadership rather than outsourcing it, which means that peripheral institutions like think tanks have little chance of exercising influence by engaging in ideological work themselves. They may still be of limited use to political elites in their propaganda/advocacy role, but mass media under direct state control are a an overall far more effective and important tool for this purpose. At best, they will be reduced to repeating slogans handed down from the top of the system; at worst, their work will inadvertently contradict an arbitrary interpretation of an ideological principle and trigger suppression.

5.2.2 Evolutionary-developmental strategy

Whereas the ideological strategy rests on the promise that social mobilization will eventually result in a major breakthrough towards the utopian vision, the alternate approach of evolutionary development emphasizes incremental improvements that may not be as impressive by themselves, but combine the steady delivery of tangible results with the possibility of correcting the course at every step along the way. It is similarly based on the utility of the masses and eschews procedural compliance or explicit consent in favor of results, but is much more responsive to the actual concerns and preferences of the governed rather than simply inferring them from an ideological model. In his China-specific extension to the Weberian model, Zhao (2009) described this variant as "performance legitimacy", an idea to which he ascribes extensive roots in Chinese political philosophy, ultimately going back to the ancient "Mandate of Heaven". In its modern variant, however, its immediate goals are relatively modest and narrow: in a nutshell, enhancing living standards and public services become key to maintaining social stability and ensuring enough popular support to continue the existing power arrangement.

In the pursuit of these aims, the Chinese regime took on an archetypical form of the "developmental state" model, albeit a very authoritarian one: rather than elevating a narrow set of first principles to the status of infallible dogma, this approach seeks to address problems by compartmentalizing them and drafting policies on a case-by-case basis. Since the state retains sweeping powers and single-party governance, policy coherence is still likely to be much more pronounced than in liberal democracies. However, the possibility to revise individual elements based on their performance allows for much greater flexibility and variety in policymaking than the rigid ideology-guided approach. This more nuanced attitude can be expected to have a similar effect on the state´s conduct of foreign policy and solicitation of related advice: discarding the ideological blinders means acknowledging the complexities of international orders and the variety of relevant actors, which in turn creates demand for country- and issue-specific expertise.

Most importantly, however, the need to evaluate (and, as far as possible, predict) policy outcomes significantly expands the circle of actors who have an influence on actual policymaking rather than being tasked with implementation alone. The expertise of state agencies, think tanks, and independent academics becomes indispensable during the drafting stage, and their input will determine the range of policy alternatives that end up on the desks of decisionmakers. In order to remove bottlenecks in the policy process, formal decisionmaking authority is at times even delegated from the center to subordinate units on low-profile issues.

Apart from gaining more influence through devolution, peripheral actors can also be expected to secure more resources and autonomy, at least as far as necessary to perform their tasks effectively: by providing expertise that improves the performance of government policies, think tanks and other technocrats become a major source of legitimacy for the regime, a status which they can in turn leverage for their own further benefit. This mirrors the shifts from control to cooptation in the state´s relationship with intellectuals as a group discussed in chapter 4. In summary, a state dedicated to the pursuit of a technocratic developmental strategy is arguably as close to a perfect environment for think tanks as they come under the constraints of an authoritarian system with a "marketplace of ideas" that is both heavily restricted and monopsonistic.

5.2.3 Domestic strategy choices, 1949-2002

The role of ideology in modern Chinese politics is primarily associated with the person and reign of Mao Zedong, the CCP´s central figure from their victory in 1949 to his death in 1976. Mao stands out due to his status as China´s most prominent indigenous contributor to Communist theory, the center of a cult of personality that developed in the 1960s, and as a leader whose personal support for different approaches to Communist transformation was often decisive for their implementation. Conversely, Deng Xiaoping and the reform agenda which he introduced upon his ascension to the leadership appear antithetical to this approach, unceremoniously doing away with old taboos in the interest of pragmatic problem-solving (Zhao 2009, Zhong 1996). There are, to be sure, highly plausible reasons for a dichotomous depiction: It is certainly no coincidence that the most radical push to create a socialist utopia occurred at the same time as the high water mark of Mao´s personal status during the Cultural Revolution; nor is it one that his death led to the CCP´s most significant reorientation in domestic policy only two years later. However, while the equation of the "Mao era" (1949-1976) with ideological legitimation and the "reform era" (1978-present) with a focus on developmental performance does capture the most important turning point in domestic regime strategy, there are two major exceptions to this scheme that are particularly relevant to the development of China´s think tanks, and which will be pointed out here.

The first such exception concerns the first years of CCP rule, roughly up to the implementation of the "Great Leap Forward" in 1958, which - as was discussed in chapter 4 - designated a turning point towards a radical development strategy emphasizing the supremacy of ideological conviction over material constraints. However, before this point, the CCP had been much more focused on state-building, realizing intermediate development goals, and most importantly, delivering tangible benefits especially to the vast numbers of peasants that had formed its backbone during the Civil War. Land reform - the practice of confiscating land, crops and livestock owned by wealthy owners and redistributing it to the poorer peasants - was quickly extended to the areas that had recently come under Communist control, effecting a dramatic change in ownership structure.[112] Modern medical care and education opportunities were quickly extended throughout the nation (Zhong 1996; Pepper 1996 p. 198f.). The party rectification campaigns of 1950-51 and admonishments for lower-level officials to take local conditions into account are also indicative of an elite that was acutely conscious of the primacy of winning

[112] According to Gurley (1975, quoting earlier figures by Peter Schran), the share of rural land held by landlords and rich peasants dropped from 46.7% in 1949 to 8.5% in 1952, while the share of poor and middle peasants rose from 53.5% to 91.6%, resulting in a distribution roughly in line with the respective population shares.

popular support based on results (Harding 1981, p. 42-45; 67). Finally, the treatment of groups that had been designated as class enemies - rural landlords, the small urban bourgeoisie, former supporters of the KMT, and, at times, intellectuals - was relatively lenient compared to the mass campaigns and violent persecutions of later years, with the practical benefits of cooptation apparently winning out over an ideological commitment to class struggle.

In short, the CCP´s main concern during the early years of its rule was not to tout its mastery of an abstract ideology, but to provide concrete examples of its actual applicability and beneficiency for a majority of the people. It was the developmental and organizational success of the early 1950s that cemented CCP rule and made the turn towards far more ambitious and transformative goals, like those set for the Great Leap, possible in the first place (Chen 1994). Utopianism was in full swing between 1958 and 1961, a turn best symbolized by the decision to communalize China´s agriculture in 1958: the party had evidently entrenched itself enough to put the goal of social transformation ahead of the interests of individual farmers, and its power and organizational prowess had grown to the point where it could submit China´s vast rural population to structures that would control many aspects of their daily lives (Gurley 1975). Additionally, the Leap period was also marked by the sidelining of valuable technical professionals in organizations throughout the country and direct ideological mobilization of the masses by cadres (Schurmann 1966, p. 71f.). While the Leap´s failure did usher in another few years of pragmatic development efforts in the early 1960s, this constituted a brief interlude rather than a genuine reorientation at least as far as the time´s preeminent leader was concerned: Mao´s personal commitment to radical revolutionary change and his ability to launch corresponding mass campaigns did ensure the primacy of ideology for most of the remainder of his reign (Chen 1994), culminating in the Cultural Revolution that officially went on until 1976. This period marked the absolute nadir of policy research in modern China, with almost all institutes effectively ceasing to exist.

The other main exception to the basic distinction between the two broad eras of PRC history concerns the conservative backlash following the Tiananmen protests and the interruption of reform policy between 1989 and 1992. While this development was nowhere near in scope to the mass campaigns of the Cultural Revolution and certainly did not have the same profoundly disruptive effects, it nevertheless represented the most significant departure from the general political trend after 1978, and the one that had the biggest influence on Chinese think tanks.

Following the crackdown and the official retirement of Deng Xiaoping, conservative elements within the leadership (Chen Yun, Li Peng and, initially, the newly-appointed Jiang Zemin) sought to portray the challenge to CCP rule as a direct consequence of economic reform, advocating for a renewed emphasis on ideology in propaganda and policy (Zhao 1993). The former part of this turn was swiftly implemented with the dedication of new resources to propaganda work, strict controls on the media and public discourse, the emphasis on party-guided nationalism evident in the "patriotic education" campaign, and delegitimation of "Western" notions of democracy and liberalism (Brady 2008 p. 44-47; Zhao 1998). Reformist leaders, including Deng, supported these measures, but ended up in conflict with conservatives over the latters´ subsequent attempts to roll back economic reforms. Eventually, Deng´s "southern tour" succeeded in rallying public and published opinion behind the cause of reform, breaking the deadlock and committing Jiang to the continuation of economic liberalization (Zhao 1993). Efforts to modernize CCP ideology, however, continued even after the resumption of reform - consisting of a complex mélange of development promises, nationalism, cultural traditionalism, and institutional reform (Holbig and Gilley 2010).

This episode clearly differs from Mao-era reliance on ideological legitimacy in that it was not characterized by utopian goals for social transformation, but rather an attempt to stabilize the existing arrangements by any means necessary. Instead of employing promises of future benefits, authorities relied predominantly on threats against would-be challengers. However, it did

represent a turn away from the pragmatist focus on performance and towards the ideational realm in the leadership´s quest to shore up its legitimacy. Additionally, as detailed in the preceding chapter, the strategic shift did have serious consequences for the position of researchers and some of their institutes, affecting their political influence, freedom of public expression and access to funding.

Given the main turning points described above, we can categorize the years from 1949 to 2002 into roughly five periods: developmental efforts and attempts to establish "performance legitimacy" predominated in 1949-1958, the initial reform era between 1978 and 1989, and again from 1992 onwards. On the other hand, ideological utopism was dominant during the rest of the Mao era (1958-1976) - perhaps less so in the early 1960s, but especially pronounced during the height of the Cultural Revolution. Finally, the years between the Tiananmen crackdown and Deng´s Southern Tour in 1992 did see a brief return to putting ideology front and center, albeit one of a different flavor.

5.3 Foreign Policy strategies

Compared to the basic dichotomy of internal legitimation strategies, there is a much greater variety of potential foreign policy strategies that a nation can pursue, and different generations of Chinese leaders have made extensive use of the options that presented themselves at the time. Over time, a rich body of theoretical and empirical research on China´s foreign policy has accumulated, reflecting the country´s status as a nuclear power, Security Council member, and - increasingly - global actor.[113] However, for the purposes of this study, it is necessary to generalize and restrict the analysis to a narrower range of broad strategic templates similar to the basic dichotomy outlined in the section above. For foreign policy strategies, this can be done by focusing on the two major aims of any state within the international system: first, maintaining its own sovereignty, and second, exercising influence to shape the international order to its liking. There is a very broad range of alternative ways in which these aims can be pursued - for example, a mainstay of IR is the exploration of when and how states seek safety by "balancing" against threats, submitting to them through "bandwagoning", or trying to get other states to bear the cost of a confrontation by "buck-passing". I will employ a much simpler approach here that only focuses on two alternatives for each major aim: regarding the defense of its own sovereignty, a state like China has a basic choice of aligning with a superior power and exchanging a little sovereignty for protection, or, conversely, charting its own course through the treacherous waters of international politics and assuming the full risk associated with this independence. When it comes to a state´s attitude towards the international order, it can either attempt to integrate itself into the system and support the existing arrangements, thus designating it as a status-quo-power; or it can issue a fundamental challenge to the system and seek to overturn it.[114]

Integrating both alternatives leaves us with four possible approaches that suffice to cover the broad outlines of China´s changing behavior at the international level. First, the *aligned-status quo* strategy in which it allied itself to the dominant power maintaining the international order;

[113] Much of this section is based on the the excellent work of authors who focused on China´s international relations and strategy directly: for general overviews, see Robinson and Shambaugh (eds., 1994) and Zhao (1996). On Sino-American relations, see Friedberg (2005) and Ross (1995). On China´s contemporary strategy, see Deng and Wang (2005), as well as Goldstein (2005).

[114] These two concepts were adopted from power transition theory in IR (Organski 1958, Organski and Kugler 1980), a research approach focusing on how power shifts in the international system and the acceptance of existing orders relate to the outbreak of great power conflict.

second, the *aligned-challenge* strategy, designating an alliance with a superior power that sought to overturn it; third, the *independent-status quo* approach in which it sought to become a stakeholder in the existing global order without tying itself to any other nation; and fourth and finally, the *independent-challenge* variant, designating a highly risky strategy of pursuing a fundamental revision of the international order all by itself.

	Status Quo	**Challenger**
Aligned	Aligned-status quo	aligned-challenging
Independent	Independent-status quo	Independent-challenging

Table 5.1: Matrix containing combinations of strategies regarding external alignment (y axis) and attitudes towards the global order (x axis)

Due to the greater variety in strategies and their potential targets, it is much harder to map out the general effects which the pursuit of any particular foreign policy strategy would be expected to have on the development of think tanks. During the Cold War, such organizations flourished on both sides of the Iron Curtain, as both the status-quo nations (the USA and allied European colonial powers) and the challengers in the Soviet camp engaged in a heated global contest that created strong demand for strategic advice and area-specific expertise. The question of whether it is a more demanding task to work within rather than against existing institutions does not have a straightforward answer either, as it depends on whether the "challenge" alternative takes the form of a mere rejection of the prevailing order or the advancement of a comprehensive alternative. Staying on the sidelines and denouncing the illegitimacy of the status quo requires not nearly as much expertise as actually developing an alternative proposal that has any chance of finding support among other disenfranchised actors on the international stage. This further choice is also reminiscent of the one between an ideological and pragmatic legitimation strategy at the domestic level, which makes it likely that there is at least some overlap between both dimensions. Regarding the choice between international alignment and engaging in independent great power politics, the distinction is somewhat clearer: since an alignment strategy usually entails deferring to the superior partner on policy coordination, it can be expected that an independent course is overall more demanding of a nation´s policy research capabilities, thus creating more opportunities for growth in the think tank sector.

The following section will provide a rough outline on when these different strategies were adopted by Chinese leaders by relating them to major turning points in China´s diplomacy, while pointing out features that were of particular importance to the development of the think tank sector. For this purpose, it is necessary to keep the characterizations very brief, so they cannot capture the full, complicated history of modern China´s foreign relations.

5.3.1 Alignment with the challenger: 1949-1960

Regarding the choice of its international strategy, the first decade of the PRC´s existence was marked by very close alignment with the Soviet Union, its principal sponsor and source of protection and foreign aid. This policy was initially justified by the necessity to "lean to one side"

(*yi bian dao*) in the perceived global struggle between socialism and imperialism.[115] Apart from the existing strong ties to the Soviet camp and their shared ideological outlook, the PRC´s position was also determined by the ongoing division of China after the KMT´s retreat to Taiwan, which locked each of the rival governments into a camp simply based on which side was willing to accept them as the legitimate representatives of all of China. The PRC´s entry into the Soviet camp was codified in a bilateral friendship treaty in early 1950 and put to the test later that same year, as both states supported the North during the Korean War.

Accordingly, for most of the decade that followed, Chinese leaders stuck with the Soviet Union in its challenge to the emerging American-led capitalist world order and its advocacy of socialist world revolution as an alternative. For Beijing, this arrangement did have many benefits - apart from issuing protection, the Soviet Union also provided extensive development aid in the form of industrial plants and training for engineers and scientists - and few drawbacks, as the US-led institutions were closed to the PRC anyway. For China, supporting the Soviet Union also meant comprehensive emulation of its bureaucratic structure and development model, an imitation which Soviet leaders were eager to encourage (Robinson and Shambaugh 1994, p. 236f.).[116] It was therefore a suitable arrangement for a time during which the CCP elite was predominantly focused on stabilizing and developing the country as well as its own governance mechanisms, and consequently showed little appetite for international entanglements. However, as in the case of the sharp reorientation in domestic policy towards the Great Leap that happened almost simultaneously, previous success enabled Mao to formulate a new foreign policy that was closer to his ideological predispositions, but would turn out to have drastically adverse consequences for the nation.

5.3.2 The independent challenge: 1960-1969

The initial willingness of Chinese elites to accept Soviet leadership in the broader systemic struggle deteriorated towards the end of the 1950s, both due to Mao´s increasing preference for self-reliance and mounting concerns about their patron´s lack of dedication to the common cause of a socialist world revolution after the death of Stalin (Robinson and Shambaugh 1994, p. 40f, p. 238-244). By 1960/61, the differences between both sides had become irreconcilable, triggering the end of the Sino-Soviet alliance and a policy shift towards open antagonism. In addition to continuing its opposition to "American imperialism", Chinese leaders began to denounce the Soviet Union as "revisionist", in a bid to position themselves as the only legitimate partner and advocate of leftist national liberation movements in the Third World (van Ness 1970, p. 15f.).

Strategically, this put China in a highly vulnerable position - adding to the ongoing conflict with the United States and Japan, its foremost ally had now turned into its biggest threat. The sheer length of the Chinese-Soviet border, ongoing territorial conflicts and strong troop concentrations on both sides created a steady potential for conflict (which did, eventually, erupt in the 1969 border clashes). While Chinese elites did keep up their challenge to the international status quo, they reacted to the new environment by bolstering their own capabilities and seeking out new allies. The former objective was pursued primarily through a nuclear program that

[115] This slogan was one of three principles to which Mao Zedong committed Chinese foreign policy as early as 1949, the others being a fresh start in relations with other nations and an initial priority on internal development over foreign relations (Zhao 1996, p. 46f.).

[116] The wholesale import of Soviet institutions that was a consequence of the alliance also led directly to the establishment of China´s first wave of think tanks, a point that will be addressed in detail in the next chapter.

culminated in a successful test in 1964, although it would still almost two decades before China had developed the necessary range and number of delivery vehicles to constitute a truly secure deterrent (Goldstein 2005, p. 23).

Starting in 1961, the Chinese leadership decided to intensify its outreach to non-aligned nations, many of which shared China´s postcolonial history and might be receptive to its official stance of opposing both Western and Soviet imperialism or "hegemonism". This did, however, turn out to be significantly more difficult: the most important neighboring postcolonial nation, India, was not only unavailable as an alliance option, but even yet another enemy - in 1962, border frictions led to an all-out war between Asia´s most populous nations. China´s outreach to African nations turned out to be successful in achieving diplomatic support: in the 1960s, fifteen nations from the continent recognized the PRC as the legitimate Chinese state, accounting for nearly all newly established relations during the decade. However, these results fell far short of the strategy´s aim of building a coalition of underdeveloped nations that could form a viable third block in world politics and even ultimately overpower the Soviet and Western camps.[117] Due to the geographical distance and underdevelopment of its new partners, these nations could also not improve China´s precarious security situation. Ill-fated Chinese attempts to support communist insurgents and revolutionaries in the Congo, Burundi, Angola and Niger ended up undermining Chinese support among African governments (Ismael 1971). Still, the newfound political interest in these regions was enough to trigger an official program for the establishment of area studies capabilities focusing on Africa and Latin America, which was part of the origin of some of the institutes in this sample.[118]

5.3.3 Alignment with the status quo power: 1969-1989

Although the next important shift in China´s foreign policy strategy coincided with the watershed change in domestic leadership - the end of the Mao era and, after the brief and inconsequential Hua Guofeng interlude, the ascension of Deng Xiaoping - its seeds had already been planted in the last years of Mao´s rule, primarily due to Zhou Enlai´s ability to obtain his support (Oksenberg 1982). It came in the form of the Sino-American detente, which was generally considered one of the most important turning points in the Cold War and a triumph of *realpolitik* over ideological differences. Notably, the first concrete steps towards this realignment were taken in 1969, while the frenzy of the Cultural Revolution reached its height in China and America had just elected a staunchly anticommunist president in Richard Nixon (Burr 2001).

At the heart of the realignment were primarily two factors: first, the further deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations, with significant border clashes in March and August 1969 deepening Chinese fears of an all-out Soviet attack on their country (Burr 2001; Ross 1995, p. 24); and

[117] This aim was stated in a 1965 directive by Lin Biao (soon to be China´s second-ranked leader) entitled "Long Live the Victory of People´s War" (*renmin zhanzheng shengli wan sui*) (van Ness 1970, p. 16; Robinson and Shambaugh 1994, p. 558). The article applies the priciples of Maoist guerilla warfare to international politics, calling for an alliance of the "rural areas of the world" (Asia, Africa and Latin America) to overcome its "cities" (North America and Europe). See Lin (1965) for a full-text English translation, particularly the section "The International Significance of Comrade Mao-Tse Tung's Theory of People's War".

[118] See Jiang (2012) for a discussion of Mao´s personal initiative in establishing capabilities for African and Latin American studies. This decision became the origin of respective institutes at CAS in 1961 and Beida in 1963, the first dedicated programs for international studies at these organizations.

second, the mechanism behind what was later on referred to as "triangular diplomacy": the strong motivation for Chinese, Soviet and American leaders to avoid a hostile coalition of the other two powers. Since the open warfare between both Communist nations precluded any option of rebuilding their alliance, the US found itself in the favorable position of being the crucial player, an opportunity that it used for overtures towards Beijing in an attempt to bolster its anti-Soviet containment efforts.[119] Initial attempts by both sides to reach out to the other began as early as 1969, although it would not be until 1972 before official talks picked up (Burr 2001). The talks were repeatedly delayed by domestic political events - the Watergate scandal of 1973/74, Zhou Enlai´s death and Deng´s purge in early 1976, and finally the protracted factional fights after the death of Mao in late 1976 - and a full normalization of relations was not achieved until 1979 (Oksenberg 1982).[120] Accordingly, there is a discrepancy of almost a full decade between the strategic shift from the pursuit of a global revolutionary agenda towards exploring accommodation with the West and its actual implementation. The former point is treated as the more important date here, as it is more directly indicative of the interests of decisionmakers, rather than their capability to follow through on a strategy.

As important as the Sino-American detente was for the Cold War in general, its impact on China had even longer-lasting effects: here was a new beginning for a complicated partnership that permanently eclipsed all other bilateral ties in its importance for China´s security, while remaining contentious due to conflicting interests, most importantly the complicated status of Taiwan.[121] On the other hand, the political partnership forged in the 1970s expanded to include significant economic ties as China´s economic liberalization efforts took root over the following decade. Trade between China and the US quadrupled between 1981 and 1990, with an initial trade deficit from the Chinese point of view turning into a substantial surplus by the middle of the decade (Wang 2010). The US also became China´s major source of foreign investments by the end of the decade, giving it a substantial stake in China´s economic development (Ross 1995, p. 240).

Although China´s alignment with the US was never as strong as its alliance with the Soviet Union had been in the 1950s,[122] it did serve a similar purpose: allowing China to focus on its internal development, which Deng Xiaoping reestablished as the foremost priority in 1980 (Zhao 1996, p. 51). Closer comprehensive ties to Washington were key for the pursuit of this goal, as they both discouraged a Soviet attack and spurred economic development through export opportunities. As will be described in more detail in chapter 6, the US also performed a similar function to the Soviets in the 1950s by training large numbers of Chinese students and scientists.

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[119] See Henry Kissinger´s (1994, p. 719-729) own account of the strategic motivation underlying the opening to China.

[120] Beginning in 1978, a renewed Soviet military buildup and expansionism in the Third World raised enough concerns both in Washington and Beijing to make a final push for full normalization of their bilateral relations, which was implemented on January 1st, 1979. Since this arrangement included provisions like technology transfers and intelligence sharing (Ross 1995, p. 130-132), it can be seen as an alliance in all but name.

[121] China and the US clashed over Taiwan´s membership in the Asian Development Bank in 1983 (Ross 1995, p. 230f.), on several occasions over US arms sales to the island (ibid, p. 249), and eventually entered a protracted crisis in 1995-96 over president Lee Teng-hui´s visit to the US (Goldstein 2005, p. 73f.).

[122] On international matters in which it had no direct stake, China frequently put cooperation with nonaligned countries ahead of supporting the US: between 1981 and 1990, China used its seat on the UN eecurity council to vote for 42 resolutions that were subsequently vetoed by the US, most of which were related to Israel and the Middle East (Morphet 2000).

Finally, China´s turn towards the West and the liberal economic order which it espoused also resulted in the rapid establishment of ties at the level of international organizations, a field from which had previously been almost completely absent.[123] By 1986, China´s involvement in international organizations had already caught up to the world average, soon overtaking and significantly exceeding it by 1997 (Johnston 2008, p. 34). Apart from the arena of official, high-level diplomacy, this led to a boom in bureaucratic interactions with UN agencies and foreign counterparts, creating yet another demand factor for highly issue-specific policy advice.

5.3.4 Independent maintenance of the status quo: 1989-2002

The 1989 Tiananmen protests and the regime crackdown that ended them marked another turning point not only for the CCP´s domestic strategy, but also its approach to foreign policy. The June 6th massacre was immediately condemned by the United States and European Union and answered with an embargo on arms transfers to China, ringing in a period in which the CCP´s human rights record became a significant issue, and sometimes stumbling block, in its relations to Western nations: China´s bid to (re-)join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, now the WTO), key requirement for favored access to its main export markets, was stalled until 1992, ultimately delaying its accession for perhaps as much as a decade (Halverson 2004). Apart from the immediate economic effects, the international reaction to Tiananmen also drove home the dangers of China´s overreliance on its political and economic ties to a single nation. Accordingly, the 1989 crackdown and the resulting backlash are often cited as the major motivation for China´s turn towards its regional neighbors, particularly the members of ASEAN (Foot 1998, Shambaugh 2005). While relations with Western nations worsened and popular anti-American sentiments was encouraged for domestic political reasons in the early 1990s,[124] China did actually make significant progress in improving its regional ties, notably joining the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996 and becoming a founding member of the ASEAN+3 platform in the same year, which also includes Japan and South Korea.

While the shift described above had resulted from a conscious action of the CCP, China´s international position was almost simultaneously affected by an external shock of even greater importance: the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990/91, which removed what had been the biggest threat to China´s security as well as the main rationale for its rapprochement with the US. Accordingly, the overriding goal of protecting the country against a hostile superpower that had dominated the international agenda gave way to a broader range of concerns and aims. Some of these - most notably the Taiwan issue - had already been on the agenda before and moved into

[123] In 1977, China had been a participant in 21 international organizations (IOs), and Chinese organizatons had been represented in 71 non-state IOs. In 1997, these numbers had increased to 52 and 1,163, respectively (Schmidt and Heilmann, 2010, p. 28). The increase in the latter number is especially significant for the emergence of so-called "complex interdependence" - the establishment of international economic, social and cultural linkages at the sub-state level, which increasingly acts as a constraint on governmental decisionmaking. See Keohane and Nye (1977) for the first introduction of this concept.

[124] As described in the preceding chapter, campaigns against "Western liberalism" were part of the attempt to systematically discredit China´s advocates of democratic reform after Tiananmen (Zhao 1998).

sharper focus,[125] while the emergence of others was a consequence of recent developments: the necessity of diversifying China´s portfolio of economic and political relations, establishing itself as a leading regional power by courting previously neglected neighbors particularly in Southeast Asia,[126] engaging and shaping international institutions,[127] and using China´s growing strength to enhance its status while simultaneously preventing a backlash resulting in its isolation and containment.[128]

At the time, Chinese visions about the emerging world order and their nation´s position in it quickly focused on the expectation of an accelerated shift towards multipolarity and growing interdependence: the end of the superpower standoff would lead to a deemphasis of military strength in favor of economic influence, empowering areas like Europe and Japan, while globalization would add to this trend with the emergence of new economic powers like China. (Pillsbury 2000, p. 3-7) By focusing on simultaneously improving China´s relations with the other new poles and committing itself to the stability of the liberal economic order that was the backbone of its export boom, the nation could best position itself for a future in which it would steadily gain further influence. However, the emergence of new actors would also mean that China´s actions would face much greater international attention and scrutiny, as had already happened during the Tiananmen protests. Given all the other flashpoints that would now move into the spotlight - the standoff with Taiwan, the occupation of Tibet, and territorial conflicts with many other neighbors - managing China´s image abroad and resolving fears about its motives became another crucial new task for Chinese diplomats (Goldstein 2005, p. 118).

In contrast to the two previous strategic shifts, which resulted from decisions made in the leadership´s top tier without much external input, the orientation towards a multipolar world order had been both anticipated and actively promoted by Chinese analysts.[129] The crafting of a grand strategy for the post-Cold War period was therefore the first occasion on which China´s related research capabilities were used to their full extent, and the much more diffuse international situation ensured continuous demand for consultations even after the leadership had settled on the key points of the new agenda. While the initial expectations of a quick shift to multipolarity were soon dashed due to the United States´ effective exercise of unipolar power and the continuity of its Cold War era alliance framework, Chinese leaders stuck with the overall approach outlined above, leading the country towards an ever more complex entanglement with international partners, regional and global institutions.

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[125] "Reunification with Taiwan" was actually the only concrete aim in foreign policy that had been declared by Deng Xiaoping, the only other guideline being a vague commitment to "opposing hegemony and preserving world peace" (Zhao 1996, p. 51).

[126] Contrary to the deterioration in relations with Western nations and Japan over Tiananmen, China and ASEAN states actually began engaging each other with increasing frequency in the early 1990s, as both sides sought to address post-Cold War security problems with new institutional frameworks (Shambaugh 2005, Ba 2003). On this topic, also see Foot (1998) and particularly Johnston´s (2008) very detailed account of China´s activities in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

[127] On China´s integration into multilateral institutions and shift towards increasingly active participation, see, for example, Christensen (2005), Goldstein (2005, p. 119-128), Wang (2000), and Wu and Lansdowne (2008), particularly the contribution by the editors themselves.

[128] On this dilemma, see Deng´s contribution to Deng and Wang (2005).

[129] According to Pillsbury (2000, p. 10-13), Deng´s national security adviser Huan Xiang began promoting the concept of multipolarity in 1986. By the late 1980s, the topic had already been widely accepted and used within Chinese IR, including increasingly elaborate metrics to track shifts in national power and attempts to develop forecasts for future developments (ibid., p. 210f.; 265-268).

5.4 Doctrinal evolution 2002-2012: "scientific" and "peaceful" development

The domestic and international strands of the CCP´s strategic orientation over the period from 1949 to 2002 showed some distinct overlap - most evident by the ideologically motivated excesses in both fields in the late 1960s, which were eventually followed by the pragmatist turn in economic and foreign policy in the 1970s. For the most recent decade (2002-2012), the period under the leadership of Hu Jintao, there is a similar common thread. The new administration´s overarching strategic vision for the future of the country was introduced with two closely related concepts: first, the doctrine of "scientific development" (*kexue fazhan*), Hu Jintaos official contribution to the CCP´s canon; and second, the parole of "peaceful rise", (*heping jueqi*) later renamed "peaceful development" (*heping fazhan*), as a leitmotif for China´s ongoing growth in power and international prestige. Since the former concept was intended to provide a direction for CCP governance in general and the latter was primarily developed to assuage international concerns about the consequences of China´s rise, they will be treated here as the latest iterations of the CCP leadership´s legitimation and foreign policy strategies, respectively. As with the preceding sections, the discussion of these concepts and their implications will be mostly restricted to aspects that are of direct relevance for the activity and position of think tanks.

5.4.1 The "scientific development" concept in domestic policy

Hu Jintao´s personal contribution to the CCP´s ideological guidelines, the "scientific development" concept, was introduced in his speech to the 16th party congress in October 2003. At the most general level, it acknowledges the continuing importance of economic growth, but stresses a more comprehensive notion of "development" that also includes political and "spiritual" (*jingshen*) or cultural progress. In addition to economic development, the initial doctrine called for "strengthened democracy, improvements in education, prospering culture, a harmonious society, and enriching people´s lives".[130]

In official CCP rhetoric, "democracy" (*minzhu*) does not refer to the common notion of a set of procedures and rules designed to produce a democratically legitimated government (which at the very least would have to include free and fair elections), since the actual implementation of such procedures would be obviously incompatible with the CCP´s continuing claim on monopolizing political power in China. Rather, this term is intended to describe a kind of government that may not be of or by the people, but nevertheless for them - in a nutshell, delivering good governance in accordance with the public interest. As such, it covers the "output" oriented half of Scharpf´s (2003) model of democratic legitimacy, while sidestepping the complementary "input" processes. The reality of CCP rule has, however, not always lived up to even these limited aspirations, as most obviously evidenced by the endemic corruption within China´s political and economic systems. Likewise, the parole of establishing a "harmonious society" (*hexie shehui*), which was eventually elevated to greater prominence as the ultimate goal of China´s development strategy, stands in pronounced contrast to widespread inequality and ongoing human rights violations. However, what is crucial here is not the extent of the gap between official rhetoric and observed reality, but rather the intentions behind the proclamation of such a vision, and the suggested ways in which it should be implemented.

First, the concept of "scientific development" should be understood as a manifesto of the (at the time) newly installed generation of Chinese leaders. Unlike the contributions of Hu´s predecessor as "paramount leader", Jiang Zemin, it was not published towards the end of his

[130] See Hu (2003) for the full text of the speech.

tenure in office, but within the first year of his ascension to the general secretariat and presidency. Hence, it was likely not intended to enshrine a legacy or secure a leader´s status vis-a-vis his predecessors, but rather as a message for the party and the public detailing what they could expect from the new administration.

Second, the emphasis on its scientific groundings is key for the model of governance advertised in the doctrine, and crucial for understanding the role of think tanks within China´s political system. By reassuring the public that Chinese leaders would resort to the best available scientific evidence when making policy decisions, the concept emphasizes the technocratic dimension of the developmental state. In this, it implicitly touts the main advantage of centralized autocracies over democratic procedures - the ability to make swift, coherent decisions instead of reaching a consensus through lengthy debates or formal elections. On the other hand, the problem of corruption bred by intransparency and a lack of public accountability is to be neutralized by resorting to impartial experts and scientific procedures. The concept thus takes the issue of privileged access to unelected decisionmakers - usually understood as a deficiency of non-democratic systems - and attempts to turn it into a strength by reserving it for experts serving the public interest.[131]

At first glance, the promise of "scientific development" is reminiscent of the old Marxist aspirations of building an all-encompassing scientific model of social advancement. However, other than reflecting the CCP´s enduring faith in state-controlled social engineering, there is little actual continuity with the doctrines at the heart of the ideological strategy: instead of an exclusive commitment to a small set of first principles and sweeping deductions, the kind of knowledge that is supposed to legitimize CCP rule in the 21st century is much more diverse, fragmented, often apolitical and technical in nature, and most importantly, its generation is not as directly controlled by the party itself. To be sure, the social sciences in China are still overwhelmingly dependent on government funding and the associated research directives, which will be discussed later in this chapter. However, these developments do reflect the same, subtle kind of change that also affected the party´s relationship with intellectuals discussed in the preceding chapter.

5.4.2 The "peaceful development" concept in foreign policy

Whereas the "scientific" development concept was intended to provide a theme for domestic governance, its equivalent in foreign policy, the doctrine of "peaceful development" was mostly intended for foreign audiences. This is evidenced by the fact that both its original author, party theorist and scholar Zheng Bijian, and the first leader to endorse the idea, premier Wen Jiabao, introduced the idea at international venues.[132] The concept, which was initially known as "peaceful rise", aimed to provide a positive vision for how China would use its newfound international weight, and to reassure both its neighbors and external great powers that it would not attempt to establish a regional hegemony. In this regard, the concept can be seen as a direct response to the so-called "China threat" hypothesis, an offshoot of academic IR theory that was at the time widely noticed and debated in American think tanks and government circles (Roy 1996). The hypothesis stems from an empirical observation underlying power transition theory - the tendency of rising powers to challenge existing international orders, leading to clashes with the "status quo" powers that built them during their period of dominance - and applies it to the case of

[131] Section 4.3.6 already explored this connection from the perspective of the promise which it contained towards intellectuals, while the focus here is on its utility to the public at large.

[132] Zheng Bijian first presented the original concept of "peaceful rise" at the November 2003 Boao Forum, while Wen did so a month later at Harvard University (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007).

China, expecting that its rapid economic development would eventually lead it to make an attempt at displacing the United States as the dominant power in East Asia and potentially the world (ibid.). Given that China had over the previous two decades joined a multitude of international and regional institutions and usually acted as a responsible stakeholder, Beijing saw this expectation not only as unfounded, but also as a significant threat to Chinese interests: if embraced by foreign political leaders, it might lead to China´s isolation, containment, and - as a result - even the end of its economic development for lack of access to overseas markets. Assuaging international concerns about the consequences of China´s rise thus became a key objective not just from a purely foreign policy standpoint, but also to safeguard the economic boom on which the party´s domestic legitimacy rested. The acute concerns of Chinese leaders over their country´s international image even led them to discard the term "peaceful rise" in favor of "peaceful development", as the former expression was still judged too threatening (Glaser and Medeiros, 2007). Establishing yet another thematic bridge between the two halves of China´s development strategy, Hu Jintao subsequently pronounced China´s ultimate international goal as building a "harmonious world" (*hexie shijie*), again mirroring the official domestic vision.[133]

Over the following decade, the Chinese government also showed an increasing interest in building up "soft power" (*ruan quanli*) capabilities, leading it to encourage cultural exchanges, promoting a positive image of China overseas (e.g., through the establishment of "Confucius institutes"), stepping up its foreign aid,[134] become increasingly active in developing its own institutional platforms and networks for international cooperation (like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICs meetings), all in the interest of projecting an image of China as an unthreatening, responsible and helpful status quo power. While there had been some Chinese predecessors to the American-inspired "soft power" approach, like the idea of "people´s diplomacy" (*renmin waijiao*) and the outreach to unaligned nations of the 1960s (Wang 2008), the 21st century agenda represented something distinctly new in both scope and style. However, one major hindrance in promoting a positive image of China abroad was the close association of state and ruling party, whose brutal reaction to the 1989 Tiananmen protests led to international outrage and a (brief) period of official diplomatic shunning by Western nations. The regime´s human rights record subsequently became a major issue in American and European debates about China policy, and a point on which Beijing faced considerable international pressure. Due to the importance of Western nations as China´s main export markets and particularly the equally complicated and crucial nature of the Sino-American relationship, a deterioration in public sentiment towards Chinese government institutions could easily constitute another threat to the country´s economic development (Goldstein p. 113-115).

Moreover, since China´s statist development approach had left very little room for non-governmental organizations and genuine civil society initiatives, the CCP´s discredit bore the risk of tainting essentially all agencies and actors involved in managing China´s international ties, leaving the country without any options to improve its image that would not be instantly dismissed as party propaganda. Here, think tanks offered an attractive solution as well: while they were also state institutions and would be identified as such abroad, their low profile and focus on

[133] This parole was first introduced in Hu´s speech to the UN in September 2005. The principles expoused therein - collective security, economic cooperation, peaceful coexistence and multiculturalism - have since served as China´s vision for the future world order. The concept was also subsequently taken up by Chinese scholars in their efforts to develop a "Chinese IR theory" (Noesselt, 2012).

[134] According to a 2011 white paper on China´s foreign aid (SCIO, 2011), the latter rose by an average of 29.4% each year between 2004 and 2009, or approximately three times as fast as China´s overall GDP. African nations were particularly significant as recipients, reflecting China´s increasing involvement on the continent.

policy research rather than implementation created the plausible distance to the CCP´s actions that was necessary for any overtures to be taken seriously. Consequently, foreign politicians, scholars and journalists could interact more freely with these institutions while avoiding the charge of cozying up to an autocratic regime. The channels that were established in this manner have the added benefit of being bidirectional: not only could Chinese scholars convey a more positive image of their nation to their partners, but also receive messages intended for their own government that could go beyond the rigid confines of official diplomacy.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, during the same timeframe the institutions in which China participated also became more complex themselves, as a range of new issues appeared on the agenda - climate change, transnational terrorism, trade and currency exchange rates, finance and banking reform and the implications of modern information technology, to name a few of the most prominent ones.[135] Since these were predominantly global problems that could not be dealt with effectively within the boundaries of any single state, China would simultaneously have to familiarize itself with the operation of global governance mechanisms, another area in which it lacked expertise. Over the course of the decade, its growth in stature and sheer importance as the world´s number 2 economy, biggest exporter and largest emittent of carbon dioxide (positions which it captured from Japan in 2009, Germany in 2010, and the US in 2007, respectively) meant that China could no longer play a reactive diplomatic game, but would have to present and promote its own vision for the future of the global institutions to which it was a member. Apart from international pressures to commit to joint solutions on issues such as climate change, Beijing also faced internal calls - often emanating from the policy research community - to leverage China´s newfound strength into reforming the institutions to which it was a member.[136]

Consequently, in order to pursue a truly independent course, the Chinese government needed to develop positions on matters that had previously not been of particular importance, while still maintaining an overall strategic coherence with overarching principles and making sure that the country did not end up isolated in its stance. Many of these issues straddled the traditional boundaries between different academic fields, creating a need for interdisciplinary approaches.[137] This creates an inherent advantage for large think tanks that employ specialists from several fields and can easily bring them together in teams based on area or issue focus. The small-scale and highly specialized research teams attached to different organs of the state bureaucracy, on the other hand, would have had to cooperate across several organizational boundaries to achieve the same effect, which is decidedly more difficult.

Thus, China´s foreign policy had to address a sudden proliferation of new objectives and demands during the first decade of the 21st century: an ever-increasing integration into the world economy, the desire to play a constructive role in global governance schemes, actively promoting intercultural ties, and establishing alternative non- or semigovernmental channels of communication with other nations. Consequently, the need to effectively pursue China´s increasingly far-flung interests as a great power while simultaneously establishing the country as a trustworthy partner created a boom in demand for issue- and area-specific expertise which think

[135] See the next section for details.

[136] See, for example, Wang and Rosenau (2009) for an account of China´s reform agenda in global financial institutions; Gregory Chin´s contribution to Antkiewicz and Cooper (2008, p. 92-96) on China´s engagement of the G8 and the Heiligendamm process.

[137] For example, nontraditional security issues are far more rooted in sociological and demographic undercurrents than the traditional analysis of the actions and capabilities of other states. Understanding a complex non-state actor like al-Quaeda requires additional expertise in ethnological and religious studies as well as economic and social conditions in key recruitment areas, which purely military-focused institutions are unlikely to be able to provide.

tanks were well-positioned to provide. Before moving on to discuss how these general aims shaped Chinese think tanks and their activities, I will briefly review the concrete interests which decisionmakers expressed in specific questions and how these were transmitted to the institutes in question.

5.5 Topical research guidance

Having outlined the general strategic vision of Chinese decisionmakers in the early 21st century, the rest of this chapter will attempt to close the gap between political interests and actual research activity by looking at the more specific requests and guidances issued to policy research organizations.

The National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences (*guojia zhexue shehui kexue guihua bangongshi*, NPOPSS), is - as the name implies - the central agency for drawing up five-year development plans and annual research guidelines for China´s humanities and social sciences. Although the name seems reminiscent of Soviet-style efforts at centralized research planning, the office is a reform era institution, first established in 1991 together with the National Fund for Social Sciences (*guojia shehui kexue jijin*, NFSS) that it manages. Organizationally, NPOPSS is constituted under the party´s Central Propaganda Department (*zhonggong zhongyang xuanchuanbu*), indicating an oversight function similar to other grant- and prize-awarding institutions in the arts or media (Brady 2009). The office forms the bureaucratic backbone of the party´s leading small group (*lingdao xiaozu*, LSG) for the planning of philosophy and social sciences, a conference of senior party officials from the administration, propaganda department and leaders of select research institutions.[138] The LSG´s current head is Liu Yunshan, one of China´s top leaders,[139] with CASS president Chen Kuiyuan serving as his deputy. Accordingly, the fund is a thoroughly politicized institution, a feature which it openly advertises in the description of its project review process: the first and most important selection criterion is minding the "correct political orientation" (*zhengque de zhengzhi fangxiang*) of proposals and related doubts will lead to immediate rejection, a point which is stressed above such factor as focus on quality, balance and fairness.[140]

Under the direction of these leaders, the NPOPSS translates research requests of decisionmakers into specific "topical guidelines" (*keti zhinan*), which are then compiled and published annually. Scholars are invited to propose projects that tackle the issues outlined therein, and successful applications are rewarded with a research grant from the NFSS.[141] With its departments for planning, fund supervision and the monitoring of results, the NPOPSS is involved in all aspects of guiding research in China´s social sciences. However, the activity that is

[138] Very little information about the LSG´s exact composition and work is publicly available, but according to a 2004 report <http://www.bjpopss.gov.cn/bjpssweb/n8178c6.aspx>, one of its meetings was attended by Liu, Chen, as well as deputy propanda department director Ji Bingxuan and education minister Zhou Ji.

[139] Liu was elevated to the Politburo´s standing committee (the innermost circle of leaders) in 2012, simultaneously taking over as president of the Central Party School, a position previously held by Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping. He used to serve as the director of the party´s propaganda department between 2007 and 2012.

[140] See NPOPSS´ (2012) report on its most recent project selection conference as of the time of this writing.

[141] Specific funding levels are discussed in section 6.2.

of most interest here is the compilation of annual guidelines, since the close coordination between planners and officials allows a glimpse at the current research interests of party decisionmakers.

Between 2002 and 2012, the NPOPSS published a total of 402 topical guidelines in the international studies sections of its annual calls for funding applications. This period covers or overlaps with the 10th (2001-2005), 11th (2006-2010) and 12th (2011-2015) five-year-plans for the development of philosophy and the social sciences. There is a great deal of diversity between those instructions (especially regarding their specificity), which makes it hard to classify them along consistent lines. Nevertheless, an attempt was made to identify several distinct thematic clusters and to gauge their overall importance and shifts over time.[142]

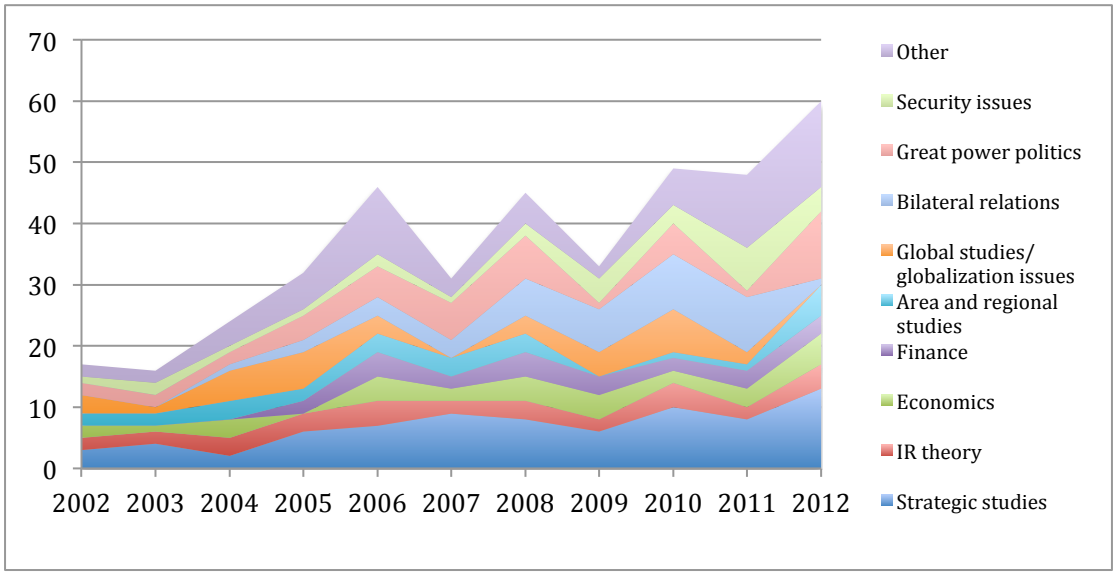

Figure 5.1: Total number and breakdown of NPOPSS research topics in international studies, 2002-2012[143]

First and most obvious, the topical guidelines have become much more varied and detailed over the past decade: while 2002 and 2003 saw less than 20 individual suggestions (unchanged from the late 1990s), by the middle of the decade the catalog had already grown to twice that number, and eventually its triple by the 2010s. In 2002, the list was still composed of rather vague entries, delineating broad areas of interest such as "globalization", the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or the war on terror, without suggesting specific research questions. A year later, the total number of entries had still been almost unchanged, but many familiar catchall terms like "American studies" or "China´s international environment" were now broken down into lists of subentries with more detailed guidance. From 2004 onwards, these entries were presented separately, quickly leading to the expansion in total length observed above.

Second, as would have been expected from a list compiled under the direction of decisionmakers, many of the suggested topics are characterized by a high direct policy relevance rather than a predominantly academic interest. Most notably, theory development is relatively understated as a research aim, usually featuring only in two or three entries per year and subsumed under blanket terms like "Chinese", "Marxist" or "Western" IR theory. While Marxist

[142] For reference purposes, the full list of guidelines is given in appendix 2 along with a few classification rules.

[143] Source: author´s compilation and classification of NPOPSS data, <http://www.npopss-cn.gov.cn/GB/219555/219557/index.html>

research frameworks used to dominate Chinese international studies in the Mao and early reform eras (Shambaugh, 2011), they are almost completely absent from the guidelines issued in the past decade.[144] Strategic and policy studies, on the other hand, regularly comprise the largest distinct category. Accordingly, most of the suggested topics for policy research closely track current events or fields that were recently designated as focal points by the CCP leadership: the 2008-2009 financial crisis spawned a series of requests for studies on its causes and effects as well as related global governance efforts; major US strategic initiatives like the "pivot to Asia" or the abortive attempt to establish a "League of Democracies" inevitably triggered corresponding requests in the next year; the Arab Spring put studies on the domestic situation in Middle Eastern and North African countries on the agenda; and after the Central Committee had declared the development of China´s "socialist culture" and international cultural power a key activity in October 2011,[145] the 2012 guidelines published three months later contained no less than six suggestions for related studies, a remarkable uptick over previous years.

Research on specific foreign countries or regions in general is another staple of Chinese IR research, which is evident in the guidelines as well. According to the classification scheme used here, such topics are distributed among several categories: regional studies, great power politics (focusing on single highly important cases, e.g., the USA or Russia), and bilateral relations between China and specific other nations or groupings of states (e.g., the EU). The boundaries between these categories are especially difficult to establish, but there is again a clear predominance of the more policy-relevant guidelines, like those focusing on bilateral relations and concrete events (e.g., elections or policy changes), over generic area or regional studies.

Third, studies in international economics and finance are relatively small categories between themselves, despite the crucial importance of global trade (and, consequently, financial aspects like currency exchange rates) to China´s export-driven development strategy. Since two other NFSS fields are dedicated specifically to theoretical and applied economics, respectively, questions related to their international aspects are sometimes included in these sections as well, which probably leads to a slight undercount here. Most importantly, however, the regular presence of these topics and their bent towards police economy studies (e.g., strategic resource pricing or global financial governance) underscores the enduring importance of interdisciplinarity in conducting international studies. This characteristic is most likely another effect of the close association between China´s domestic development and international political rise, as documented by the twin strands of the CCP´s strategic vision outlined above. Additionally, the fact that many of China´s top exporters and almost all of its major banks are SOEs creates an even more direct link between the fields of international economics and politics than in Western nations. As was argued above, this creates an inherent advantage for larger research organizations that employ a variety of specialists from both fields like CASS´ IWEP.

Fourth, security-related issues are also a relatively small category overall, but two points are notable here: first, the fact that questions on such sensitive issues are being made available for open bidding at all, instead of dealing with them strictly within the confines of the national security research bureaucracy; and second, the shift towards a more comprehensive and non-traditional view of national security in general. It is quite plausible that these two trends are interrelated - specifically, that a move away from military- and great power-focused security studies opened the field up to general IR think tanks and university departments. The initial spark for this development arguably occurred right before the decade covered here, in the sharp turn

[144] The NFSS maintains a distinct field of "Marxism and scientific socialism" (*makesizhuyi - kexue shehuizhuyi*) in which such studies are concentrated, but this discipline has nowadays been almost completely separated from international studies both on an academic and institutional level.

[145] See CCPCC (2011).

towards international terrorism as a source of threat in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Over time, however, nontraditional security studies have come to encompass an even broader array of potential challenges.[146] Here, again, the broadening of the horizon and the resulting move towards interdisciplinary arguably created additional opportunities that shaped the field: institutes that were already part of the national security research bureaucracy (most notably, CICIR)[147] received an incentive to branch out into new fields and issues, while also opening the door to new actors (e.g., university departments).

Fifth and finally, China´s turn towards more active participation in regional institutions and its emergence as a key actor in global governance are also readily apparent in the record of research guidelines: China´s role in East- and Southeast Asian regional cooperation first appeared on the agenda in 2004/05; the focus then shifted from WTO-related issues to regional economic integration as China implemented its FTA with ASEAN and began exploring a similar arrangement with Japan and Korea; and 2010 saw especially pronounced interest in global governance questions in the wake of international attempts to engineer a concerted response to the financial crisis.[148] These developments did constitute a significant departure from China´s earlier skepticism towards multilateral institutions (Wu and Lansdowne 2008, p. 29-34), and thus contributed further to the expansion of Beijing´s international agenda and requirements for advice.

As far as the area- rather than issue-focus is concerned, there is considerably less variation over time: US-related topics and Sino-American relations are steadily the most prominent overall, accounting for more than a quarter of all specific mentions of countries and regions.[149] Russia and Japan are the two other major bilateral relationships with single nations, while topics subsumed under "European" studies are slightly more numerous, but also delineate a broader field that includes bilateral relations with major EU nations as well as regional and supranational issues (e.g., the Eurozone crisis). The only other nation that is regularly singled out for case studies is India, albeit much less often and in a less specific fashion than the others, usually garnering a single reference to general Sino-Indian relations a year.

In addition to specific countries, regional studies are the other staple of area-focused research suggestions. These take up less space overall, and variations in prominence between regions are mostly determined by geographical proximity: China´s neighboring regions of East Asia, Southeast Asia and Central Asia nowadays receive the most attention, while the traditional focal points of Chinese area studies - Africa and Latin America - are only featured once a year each. This is unsurprising, as China is much more strongly involved in regional institutions and governance schemes in its own backyard (including those of its own making, like the SCO and CAFTA), and one would expect a correspondingly higher demand for information about these

[146] For example, the 2012 list of guidelines specifically mentions economic security concerns due to external shocks from price developments in key resources (most notably, oil); and the 2009 edition brought up climate change and other environmental issues in this context. Generic "nontraditional security" (*fei chuantong anquan*) studies became a recurring feature of the guidelines in 2004.

[147] See Shambaugh (1987) for a description of China´s national security research bureaucracy at the time, including the contributions of some of the cases treated here (CICIR, CIIS and SIIS).

[148] See Antkiewicz and Whalley (2005) on China´s emergence as a key driver of East Asian economic integration, and Wang and Rosenau (2009) on the evolution of China´s attitude towards global governance.

[149] Included in this count are only direct references to the United States. In practice, the actual focus on US policy is even stronger, since several other topic suggestions dealing with particularly sensitive topics like Taiwan sometimes make thinly veiled references to the US with less-than-flattering terms (e.g., "hegemonism" (*baquanzhuyi*) or "hostile forces" (*didui shili*)).

organizations and the respective partners. Although China´s economic ties with Latin American and Africa have grown even faster than its overall trade volume over the last decade (Kappel and Schneidenbach 2006) and it simultaneously established numerous "strategic partnerships" with key nations in both regions, this seems to have had little impact on the research agenda. Overall, the geographic composition of the guidelines seems to mirror Chinese expectations of an emerging multipolar world order, in which the United States will still maintain a leading, but no longer dominant role. At the same time, the main area specializations that are characteristic for many institutes are not only maintained, but also reinforced by this selection of cases.

6. Structural conditions and the non-political environment

Having extensively discussed political changes in the two preceding chapters, it is now time to turn to the institutes themselves and to examine how they reacted to changes in their environment. Before studying their various activities, however, it is necessary to consider one final set of factors that governed their ability to pursue them in the first place. Accordingly, the present chapter will cover the non-political external and internal constraints faced by think tanks, how changes in these conditions impacted their responses to new demands from their patrons, and - to an extent - allowed them to assert their own interests. Some of these developments affected the whole sector, while others are restricted to individual institutes, with distinctions being pointed out on a case-by-case basis where appropriate. It is divided into four sections: the first two deal with the changes in availability of the two resources which the explanatory model considers to be of key importance, namely research funds and trained personnel. Part three covers changes in the institutional leadership, mostly centering on the background of the leaders that were selected to head the respective institutes, and interpreting this information in light of the relationship between institutions and their principals. Finally, part four covers the impact of foreign organizational models on the structural setup of Chinese research institutes.

Much of the discussion below focuses on in detail on developments since the reformist turn, and - like previous parts - particularly on the last decade. This is contrasted with what little information I could obtain about the state of affairs during the period in which institutes were first established, although the record is unfortunately very sparse, presumably due to the intermittent chaos of the Cultural Revolution. Still, the available information allows for the detailed investigation of organizational change during a time period when the supply of skilled personnel and funding also underwent its greatest increases. Overall, covering organizational transformation during this timeframe should yield more insights than the often relatively short existences that institutes experienced until their closure in the 1960s.

6.1 Personnel levels

6.1.1 Changes in quantity

Due to the lack of available comprehensive and continuous statistics, much of the information below had to be compiled from a variety of sources: the institutes´ websites and recent annual reports for up-to-date information on the current status; as well as existing publications, surveys and yearbooks for past years. These do not always cover the exact same time periods or report data with the same level of detail. A further complication stems from the frequent reorganizations in the landscape of Chinese research institutes: mergers and renamings are quite common over the observed time period, which makes it even harder to find comparable data points for past years.[150]

[150] For example, Beida´s SIS was assembled from several smaller, already-existing centers and departments in 1996; CASS´ IWEP and IAPS were reconstituted from other institutes in 1988 and 1981, respectively; CIIS absorbed the State Council´s Center for International Studies; CICIR and SIIS both changed their names slightly in the 00s. Other institutes at the sub-organizational level, such as Fudan´s CAS and CFAU´s IIR maintained their structural identity since their inception in the mid-1980s, but personnel data is usually not reported for this level.

	Late 1980s[151]/Early 1990s[152]	Late 1990s[153]	2012[154]
CICIR	ca. 100	ca. 150	175
CIIS	ca. 100	ca. 50	93
SIIS	ca. 50	ca. 80	82
CASS-IAPS	61 (1994)	42	50
CASS-IWEP	146 (1994)	112	130
SASS (-IAPS)			9
Beida SIS	--	--	51
Fudan CAS			15
CFAU		170	170 (13 in IIR)

Table 6.1: fluctuation of personnel levels at various institutes. -- = institute did not exist at the time, empty cells = missing values. Source: author´s compilation of data from sources noted in footnotes.

Despite these problems, it is possible to construct a broad outline of how China´s foreign policy research landscape has developed over time, and roughly estimate how much of that change has been driven by personnel levels and qualifications. It is striking - especially in light of the strongly improved funding situation discussed in the next subsection - that the availability of these new resources has not led to a pronounced quantitative increase in institute staff. As can be seen from table 6.1, most of the observed institutes only underwent relatively slight changes over time. The most notable exception is CIIS, which apparently suffered a drastic decline in staff from the late 1980s to mid-90s, but then recovered to previous levels over the following decade. The latter development is mostly due to absorbing the State Council´s Center for International Studies with its 30 full-time researchers in 1998, while the reasons for the preceding drop are unknown. SIIS and CICIR showed substantial expansion in the early 1990s and have held mostly steady since. Staff levels in the CASS institutes rose modestly over the same time period, although CASS as a whole underwent a substantial downsizing program in the late 1990s and 00s.[155]

While existing institutes did not see pronounced increases in the number of their staff over the last decade, the total number of research establishments in IR, area studies and international politics in China has definitely increased during the same time period, offering numerous other employment opportunities for specialists and helping to absorb as well as fuel the surge in new graduates.[156] At the same time, China´s relations with the outside world have steadily gained in intensity and complexity, also primarily as a result of the country´s economic development. This has broadened the field of government agencies that are, at some point, involved in foreign policy

[151] These figures were obtained from IAS (1989), but are unfortunately not available for all institutes.
[152] Figures for both CASS institutes were obtained from the organizations´ 1994 yearbook (CASS 1994).
[153] For CASS institutes, these figures were obained from the 1998 CASS statistical yearbook (CASS 1998); for the other cases, see Friedrich (1996).
[154] These figures were obtained from the institutes´ websites, see appendix X for the full list.
[155] Overall personnel level dropped from a peak of 5000 (academic and administrative staff) in 1994 (Sleeboom-Faulkner 2007b, p. 240f.), to around 4000 in the period of the 11th Five-Year-Plan (2006-2010), see CASS (2006). However, these cuts primarily targeted the administrative apparatus, which was seen as excessively bloated.
[156] See Shambaugh (2011).

decisionmaking: provincial governments (especially in the trade-oriented coastal regions), the People´s Liberation Army (PLA) and its subsidiaries, the Ministry of Commerce, and SEOs like China´s national oil companies have, at times, all been involved in the crafting of foreign policies on issues that are of particular concern to them.[157] This expansion of relevant players, whose interests are often at odds, has also contributed to the increase in overall demand for advice on international issues. If an agency sees itself faced with these issues on a near-permanent basis, setting up a research institute of its own may turn out to be more efficient than repeatedly procuring advice on an ad-hoc basis.[158] This surge of new institutions has also led to increased competition between them - for resources like funding and staff, as well as for projects and intangibles like the attention of decisionmakers. Judging from staff levels and their dispersal between a rising number of institutes, encouraging this sense of competition seems to have outweighed the earlier desire to create vast organizations like CASS that are directly attached to the central government.

Overall, judging from the multitude of institutes and their staff levels, China´s foreign policy research community can now be estimated to rank among the largest in the world, a change that seems befitting for a country whose international influence and linkages have rapidly increased since the inception of its reform policy.

6.1.2 Changes in quality and background

Regarding the overall quality of an institute´s research staff - their level of training in relevant disciplines, research and language skills, as well as academic rigor - it is even harder to find concrete statistics about the situation in the past. Fortunately, it is instead possible to draw upon information provided about the state of the field in which these institutes were active, the overall development of China´s education sector, and several publicized suggestions and plans to improve staff quality in research institutions.

One thing that has very clearly changed is the overall supply of trained personnel in the specific subfield of International Relations, area studies and foreign policy analysis. The history of this discipline in China is quite short, according to recent publications on this topic:[159] curricula in International Studies were first established in 1964, at a very small group of only three universities - Beida, Fudan and Renmin University - and were soon again aborted due to the Cultural Revolution. In the wake of the reconstruction of China´s education system in the 1980s, they were reestablished as well, although the most profound impact during this period was probably the sudden availability of scholarships to study these topics at foreign - mostly American - universities.[160] Young researchers who had been educated abroad could in turn act as

[157] See, for example, Lai (2010), Lampton (ed., 2001), Lu (1997).

[158] State actors below the level of the Central Government tend to focus their research capabilities on specific issue areas that are of particular concern for their activity, rather than the still very state-centric discipline of IR. For example, the Guangdong Academy of Social Sciences is heavily focused on international economics and trade; PLA-affiliated institutions like National Defense University and the Academy of Military Sciences concentrate on national security questions and strategies; MOFCOM runs the Chinese Academy for International Trade and Economic Cooperation; China National Petroleum Company maintains a research institute for international oil economics.

[159] See Shambaugh (2011), Chen, Y. (2010).

[160] According to Shambaugh (2011), in the 1980s, US philanthropic foundations and government-sponsored funds were responsible for training a whole generation of researchers specializing in American Studies, many of whom would later rise to prominent positions in the field. See also

the faculty for a quickly expanding number of new university departments specializing in International Studies. By 2010, China was already home to 49 universities and other institutes that could grant at least a Bachelor´s degree in IR or diplomacy.[161] Several institutes, such as CFAU, China Foreign Studies University and Shanghai International Studies University, are specifically focused on educating students in these fields. Each year, these institutions churn out thousands of new graduates, thus creating an abundant supply of well-educated potential employees for foreign policy think tanks.

IR is, of course, only one of the fields that foreign policy think tanks recruit from - depending on the specialization of an institute, general political science, law, foreign languages, economics and sometimes history are also plausible backgrounds for research personnel. Due to this flexibility and the fact that not all of these disciplines have always been staples (or, at times, even been outlawed), long-term trends in the supply of skilled labor for think tanks are perhaps better inferred from the general situation of the university system.

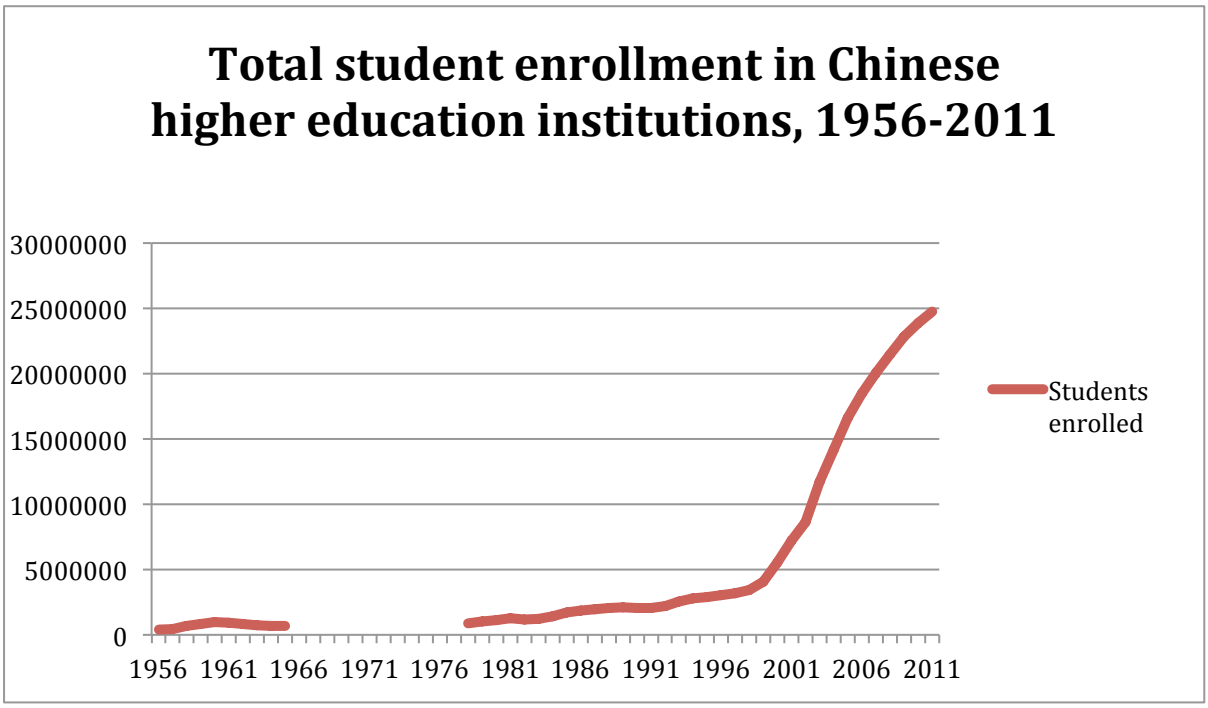

Figure 6.1: total student enrollment in Chinese HEIs, 1956-2011. Source: author´s compilation of data from various sources.[162]

Accordingly, figure 6.1 gives the total student enrollment numbers from 1956 to 2011, showing several distinct trends: during the 1950s and up to the Cultural Revolution, university education was an extremely rare good, with an intermediate high water mark of 961,000 students

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section 4.2 for a short discussion of international exchange schemes in the context of structural reform.

[161] Shambaugh (2011) provides a complete list of these institutions and the curricula which they offer.

[162] For the period from 1956 to 1965, see Pepper (1996, p. 286); for 1978 to 1998, see Tsang (2000); for 1999-2011, data was obtained directly from statistics released by MoE, counting the number of students enrolled in regular HEIs, both normal and short-cycle courses. The gap between 1966 and 1978 again shows the impact of the Cultural Revolution.

in 1960. Even these delicate beginnings were soon ended, however, due to the decade-long closure of the universities, with full-scale work in the education sector not resuming until the late 1970s. Over the reform era, gradual advances were made, especially when taking into account that the data below does not contain the rising number of overseas students. Finally, the most radical trend shift (other than the Cultural Revolution) again coincides with the last decade and the adoption of "scientific development": between 2002 and 2011, student numbers rose from approximately 8.6 million to almost 25 million, an unprecedented almost threefold increase. When breaking the student numbers down by disciplines and considering only those that are most relevant to think tanks, the uptick is sometimes even more pronounced: enrollment in economics courses was up by 283% over the same timeframe, law by 90%, and literature (of which foreign languages account for about a third) by 240%.[163] To be sure, these are also disciplines that are valuable for private-sector careers, which exposes think tanks to corresponding competition for graduates, but the increase in the supply of skilled labor is unmistakeable.

Nowadays, having a postgraduate degree - M.A., often even a Ph.D. - is par for the course for scholars in Chinese research institutes.[164] No matter whether the institute in question belongs to a university, is affiliated with a government agency or part of the Academy system, the vast majority of its researchers will have enjoyed an extensive university education, have often spent considerable time abroad or even obtained their advanced degrees there, are fluent in English and other languages (depending on their area specialization), and have a solid methodological and theoretical background. Such qualifications are, and have been for some time, a prerequisite for obtaining a fellowship in a research organization, with exceptions only being made for distinguished former officials.[165] Almost all of the institutes in the sample are able to confer their own Ph.D. degrees on postgraduate students, and are thus themselves contributing to the increasing supply of well-trained young scholars.[166] This activity also tends to blur the once-clear demarcation line between universities and think tanks (or research institutes in general) that had been characteristic for China´s education and research system before the reform period.[167]

As the supply of highly educated academics grew, so did the demand for their service on the part of the institutes. After the country embarked on its new course of technocratic

[163] These statistics were obtained from official MoE reports on full-time students in regular HEIs, a detailed breakdown of the "literature" category is provided for 2011, but not 2002. The "law" category has in some other reports included political science courses, although it is unclear if this is also the case here.

[164] For all institutes which maintain profiles of their researchers, it is possible to check for their educational background. Based upon a small sample of full-time staff drawn from each institute, researchers without a Ph.D. were extremely rare - no more than one out of ten, and often zero - and invariably older employees.

[165] According to interviews with Chinese researchers, non-academics are sometimes still attached to institutes as honorary members or senior advisers, but usually no longer hired as regular employees.

[166] CFAU, Beida and Fudan offer the full range of degrees; CICIR, SIIS and CASS are empowered to confer postgraduate degrees; and SASS offers a Master´s degree program (Shambaugh, 2011).

[167] This split between education and research had its roots in the emulation of the Soviet model during the first phase of rapid institution-building in the 1950s (Tanner 2002, Shambaugh 2002). Here, institutional inertia proved strong enough to resist the backlash against Soviet influence and policies after the Sino-Soviet split. However, the shock of the Cultural Revolution and the necessity -as well as opportunity - to rebuild the landscape of institutes during the early Reform Era brought about a reorientation towards a more comprehensive model for think tanks. See section 4.1 for details about how these models were adapted to China.

development, the old emphasis on ideological fervor and political reliability rapidly gave way to a demand for unbiased, objective analysis, perhaps best summed up by Deng Xiaoping´s bonmot that "It doesn't matter whether it's a white cat or a black; a cat that catches mice is a good cat". Individual academic credentials soon came to signify an ability to provide the kind of scientific knowledge that was necessary for both the "reform" and "opening up" parts of the new political strategy. The latter was, of course, the more important parole as far as the work of foreign policy think tanks is concerned. As the academic clout of individual researchers became an increasingly important asset for their own career prospects, so did institutes react by shifting their overall profile and focus. According to statements by researchers and administrators at several different institutes, the level of academic quality and seriousness is nowadays not only a key characteristic in the competition for academic research projects, but also in the provision of policy advice to decisionmakers.

Additionally, closing the gap with their counterparts in the developed world meant that Chinese think tanks could integrate themselves further into the global discourse on IR, including many topics that are of great direct relevance to governance. The higher overall academic level of Chinese scholars has not been the only factor driving the increase in international exchanges, such as conferences and visiting scholar programs - the removal of political constraints and the provision of additional funds were also critical in this regard - but it has certainly served to make these interactions easier and more fruitful for both sides. This has, in turn, further bolstered the value of think tanks as a semi-official international channel of communications as well as an information-gathering service.

The current standards represent a noticeable change compared to prevailing conditions in non-universitary institutes from the first founding period to the 1980s and early 90s, when many staff positions were still filled with former ministry officials and practitioners with little academic training. For example, according to a text published to memorize SIIS´ 50th anniversary in 2010, at its inception in 1960, the institute "did not have any specialist researchers apart from the president and vice-president, while many others were lawyers who had to retrain and learn on-the-go".[168]

This situation only began to gradually improve after the reopening in 1978, when SIIS also launched a program to train its own graduate students, many of whom would stay on at the institute as full-time researchers. Notably, current president Yang Jiemian - brother to China´s foreign minister Yang Jiechi - was part the first class of graduate students to begin their training at SIIS in 1979.[169] Still, in the 1980s and 1990s, recent graduates only started out in their careers as junior researchers, and the majority of the institutes´ scholars still consisted of employees without a subject-specific academic education. Reportedly, this situation came about as a consequence of using the ministry-affiliated institutes like CIIS as a refuge for retired bureaucrats and diplomats.[170] This state of affairs was at times directly criticized in Chinese publications comparing the then-existing domestic think tank sector with its counterparts in the United States and other developed nations. According to a paper published in 2002, China´s government-affiliated think tanks were still lacking rigorous examinations for prospective employees, and as a result were "reduced to providing a place for their superiors´ retirees and honorary posts for public figures". This, in turn, had led to "a drop in the quality of their staff, a skewed age distribution, and a unidimensionality in their expertise".[171] It is particularly notable that the closeness to government agencies was identified as the ultimate root cause of these problems, and

[168] SIIS (2010a). This text is available at <http://50.siis.org.cn/yscl.aspx?sid=46&id=7>.
[169] As related by Yang himself in an address on occasion of SIIS´ 50th anniversary (Yang 2010).
[170] See Bondiguel and Kellner (2010)
[171] See Chen and Chen (2002).

the authors´ key recommendation to improve the situation was to grant research institutes more leeway in managing their own affairs.

A stronger focus on the academic capabilities of research personnel was therefore recommended as a key measure for developing the institutes´ standards and, ultimately, the qualities of their publications and recommendations. Corresponding reforms were launched in the 1990s and 00s in many institutes, often introducing new models for evaluating the productivity of researchers and offering incentives for outstanding achievements. As part of a broader shift towards performance-based payment, the Ministry of Personnel, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Science and Technology issued an outline of how to implement such a program in government-attached research institutes in 2006.[172] Researchers were to be assigned one of thirteen possible ranks, divided into four main categories and several sublevels.[173] The rank of an employee is determined by the length of her employment at the institute and her educational attainments. Each institute was then assigned a block grant for performance-based payments, and given a great deal of flexibility in deciding how to apportion it among employees and which achievements to reward in particular. In some cases, institutes had already established evaluation systems for employee performance, and could use these mechanisms to determine how to distribute the bonus payments.

Researchers are evaluated based on their productivity, as measured by the quantity and quality of their work. This is usually done on a point scale, with points being assigned for each successfully submitted academic publication or internal report. Publications are scored according to the prestige of the journal, with each institute maintaining its own ranking, but usually based on the national index of core journals.

Internal reports also count towards an employee´s overall assessment. If a report is singled out by the receiving agency as worthy of special attention, a high-ranking cadre will attach a "comment" (*pishi*) to it and forward it to other decisionmakers. Since this is a rare merit for the author and the institute where the report originated, it will also usually be considered a reason to award a bonus.[174] Individual institutes set overall productivity targets according to their aims and mission, which are then used to calculate a minimum score for each employee, usually scaled by rank.[175] These targets do not just define the total number of articles and other output that is demanded of researchers, but also their composition, depending on whether the institute leadership wants to encourage a certain kind of output.[176] If a researcher´s output falls outside of the normal range, either rewards are granted or penalties applied, depending on whether she over- or underperformed the expectations for employees of her rank. Penalties may include deferred promotion or even contract termination, while rewards usually consist of bonus payments. According to statements by scholars and administrators at several institutes, these incentive schemes were highly instrumental in increasing the overall output of academic publications and promoting a shift towards younger, better-trained researchers among their staff.

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[172] See MoP/MoF/MoST (2006). This directive applies to CASS and all research institutes attached directly to the Central Government or its various ministries.

[173] These categories and the individual ranks are are research fellow (1-4), associate research fellow (5-7), assistant research fellow (8-10) and research intern (11-12). These rankings are used to calculate individual objectives as well as (presumably) their basic salary.

[174] See Lu (2012).

[175] For example, SIIS demands that its most senior scholars publish two articles in top-ranked journals each year, while associate fellows only have to publish one.

[176] According to interviews with researchers at institutes like CIIS and SIIS, ratcheting up publication requirements was one of the key measures towards achieving a higher academic profile and a faster personnel turnover in favor of younger academics. At CASS, scholars can also receive points for opinion pieces published in newspapers, encouraging them to embrace this role.

6.2 Funding

Another major structural change affecting China´s research community over the last three decades has been the government´s increasing increasing able- and willingness to constantly step up its investments into research and development (R&D).[177] This is another aspect of the focus on "scientific development" and its predecessors, again dating back to the start of the reform era. In China, there are two main sources of funding that have somewhat shifted in importance over time: first, a block grant or direct appropriation; and second, project-specific funding. The former is usually much bigger, although overall volume has been slowly shifting away from appropriations and towards project funding. The key difference between the two kinds of funding is that the former will be managed by an institute´s administrators and most senior scholars, while the latter is granted by external sources as a result of personal initiative on the part of individual researchers. In short and very general terms, block grants represent the tradition of centralized, state-organized research in China, while project funding is a more recent element, designed to induce competition among and grant more freedom to researchers in deciding their agenda. This section will examine each in more detail and analyze how both interact to shape the research agenda of individual institutes.

6.2.1 Direct appropriations

The single most important source of income for China´s foreign policy think tanks remains the annual direct appropriation supplied by an institute´s administrative patron. This block grant is usually sufficiently dimensioned to cover an institute´s running costs for facilities, personnel and other infrastructure, as well as the majority of all project- and event-related costs. For example, among the 16 projects that were finished or still ongoing at CIIS in 2011, ten were funded using the institute´s own resources; three were financed by national research funds; one by a foreign source; and two were contract projects for government agencies. This breakdown corresponds to the institute´s budget, according to which 82% of its income is derived from direct government appropriations (and external funding is usually just one of several positions lumped together under the remaining 12% of "other income").[178] Likewise, SIIS draws 77% of its income from the annual appropriations by the Shanghai municipal government, and CASS obtained 76,3% of its income from the central government.[179] These figures corroborate previous research on the relationship between the work of Chinese think tanks and their funding sources: according to a 2001 survey of 71 think tank research projects undertaken by Zhu Xufeng, around three quarters (75,5%) were directly or indirectly funded by the government, with the central government and its ministries alone accounting for 61,7%.[180]

[177] According to Chen and Kenney (2007), total chinese investments in R&D were RMB 154 billion in 2003, or around 1,3% of its total GDP, up from 0,6% in 1991.
[178] These figures were obtained from CIIS´ annual report for 2011 (CIIS, 2011).
[179] These figures were obtained from SIIS´ annual report for 2011 (SIIS,2011) and the Central Government´s 2012 budget for CASS (CASS, 2012), respectively.
[180] See Zhu (2009b, p.84 f.) Also see Chen and Kenney (2007), according to whom the share of government funding in technology research institutes is slightly above 70%, despite the much bigger role that private companies play in this field.

Institute	Share of government funding (budget year)	Main sources of government funding
CASS	76,3% (2012)	Central gov´t through MoF
SIIS	77% (2011)	Shanghai government
Fudan U	47% (2010)	MoE, Shanghai government
CFAU	63% (2006)	MoFA
Beida	44% (2010)	MoST, MoE, Beijing gov´t
CIIS	82% (2011)	MoFA
CICIR	?	MoSS?
SASS	97% (2012)	Shanghai government

Table 6.2: share of government financial provisions of total income. MoF: Ministry of Finance; MoE: Ministry of Education; MoFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs; MoST: Ministry of Science and Technology; MoSS: Ministry of State Security. Source: author´s compilation of most recent publicly available budget data.

Table 6.2 shows the share of direct (non-project specific) government appropriations among each institute´s total income, as given in the most recent publicly available budget. Unfortunately, it was not possible to find detailed statistics for institutes at the sub-organizational level (e.g., individual CASS institutes), because such information is internally reported to the organization´s central budgeting office, which will then publish only the statistics for the organization as a whole.[181] As can be seen, direct government appropriations are by far the most important source of income for all non-universitary institutes, and still a major position for the university-affiliated ones. The main reason for this discrepancy is that universities can obtain substantial income from student enrollment fees, some of which can be used for research rather than teaching expenditures.[182] Institutes like CASS and Beida also have significant income from business ventures, which includes licensing and patents in the latter case (although it is unclear whether this income, which is primarily generated by the natural and applied sciences, can be used to subsidize social science research).[183] One important consequence of this variance is that the lesser an institute´s reliance on direct appropriations and project-specific contracts is, the more influence it has over setting its own research agenda. This is most likely a key reason why universities are more strongly engaged in theory-driven, academic research than institutes that are closer to the government (see the next chapter for details on this). Since the late 1990s, when CASS started to implement its first ambitious reform project under newly-appointed president Li Tieying, the central authorities have made substantial new investments into their biggest and most prominent think tank. Over the last decade, research funding for CASS has grown from RMB 50 million in 2001 to 103 million in 2012.[184]

[181] CICIR is, again, the exception, as it does not publish any public information about its finances.
[182] According to Tsang (2000), enrollment fees made up almost 13% of the revenue of Chinese universities in 1997, up from 3% at the inception of the new system in 1986. Since both enrollment numbers and fees have continuously risen since then, this share is likely even higher now.
[183] According to Chen and Kenney (2007), Beida was able to generate almost $2 billion in revenue from its business operations in 2003. Figures for total profits and their subsequent usage are unfortunately not available.
[184] See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 264) for the former figure and the CASS budget for 2012 for the latter.

When it comes to shaping the research agenda of institutes - a key element of determining their actual activity - the most important factor next to the size and relative importance of these block grants is the mode by which they are distributed among researchers and projects. These differ only slightly between most institutes, which is why it is helpful to explain the process by using a prominent and well-covered example: CASS and its various subinstitutes.[185]

CASS is somewhat typical in that the vast majority of its research expenditures are financed through the block government appropriation that - as mentioned above - makes up most of its income. The Academy leadership confers directly with its institutional superiors and sponsors - in this case, the party´s Central Committee - to come up with a shortlist of topics that are of high interest to decisionmakers. It then compiles a much larger list of suggested research topics clustered around these general outlines, and designates corresponding "major research tasks" (*zhongda keti yanjiu*), for which project funding can be provided. These are then published in the institute´s own five-year development plan, in order to invite funding applications by individual researchers or teams.[186] Since basic payment at CASS is quite low compared to universities, researchers have a strong incentive to improve their income by pursuing these tasks. The successful completion of these projects yields bonus payments on the order of one to several months´ salaries.

Institutes have some discretion in drawing up their own research plans, which leads to a dual system of "academy" and "institute"-level tasks, although this part of the system is probably CASS-specific and represents a necessary devolution due to the massive size and diversity of the academy. Overall, the possibilities for researchers to provide input and suggestions for the institute´s overall research agenda are therefore quite small. Unless an external source of funding can be obtained - such as an NFSS grant or a successful bid for contract work on behalf of an enterprise - scholars mostly have to stick with the suggested major research tasks.

In addition to the money provided by the Chinese government, funding from foreign foundations, companies or governmental institutions has emerged as a relatively new, and still rather small, source of income for Chinese research institutes. Apart from the general "crowding out" effect of continuously high spending by the Chinese government, institutes dealing with a highly sensitive field like foreign policy have the additional problem that cooperation with foreign partners will sometimes arouse the suspicions of their national patrons. Scholars at CASS, CICIR (and presumably several other institutes as well) have regular access to classified information through their work on internal reports, which might find their way into projects undertaken on behalf of foreign organizations.[187] There does seem to be an inverse relationship between an institute´s closeness to the central government and its success in obtaining funds from foreign sources. Two of the Shanghai-based institutes stick out in particular due to their relatively high reliance on foreign funding: first, Fudan University´s CAS has profited from a long relationship with the US Congress and several American philanthropic foundations. According to statements by CAS scholars, these ties were established through the personal networks of former president and chancellor Xie Xide, whose connections to high-ranking Chinese officials also allowed her to deflect the initial criticism of conservatives. In this case, foreign funding had a

[185] The following section draws heavily on an explanation of the process provided by Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 265-269), as well as interviews conducted with CASS researchers.

[186] The 11th Five-Year-Plan, covering the 2006-2010 period, identified a total of 193 "major research tasks", clustered around five themes: "Building Marxist theory", "economic reform and development", "building democracy, the rule of law and social development", "international studies theory and international strategy" and "Chinese and socialist culture" (CASS 2006). This also corresponds to the five academic divisions that are part of CASS´ internal structure.

[187] See OSC (2011) for a report on intelligence-related activities at CICIR, as well as Su Shaozhi´s contribution to Hamrin and Zhao (eds., 1995) for how this is handled at CASS.

highly significant impact on the development of the institute: CAS´ current facilities were financed by an appropriation of $? million from the US congress, and until 2011, the institute also received a yearly appropriation for work materials and IT infrastructure. Additionally, the center has been an important conduit for organizing Sino-American academic exchange programmes predominantly funded by US sources.

In the last few years, SIIS has also been able to raise between 5-10% of its revenue from foreign sources.[188] Although this share is dwarfed by the annual government appropriation, it does suffice to set the institute apart from its national competitors. This is arguably due to the fact that its supervising state organ, the Shanghai municipal government, has historically been libaeral, pragmatic and very open towards cooperation with the outside world. At present, these two institutes remain exceptions, and foreign funding is not a major factor in driving Chinese research on foreign policy. However, as connections with international partners are strengthened and the importance of academic research increases, this situation could be about to change.

6.2.2 Project-specific funding

Project-specific funding is, ultimately, not derived from a wholly different source than direct appropriations - most of the money in this category also comes from Chinese government agencies. However, the key feature that sets it apart is that these funds are not distributed through the traditional, strictly hierarchic channels linking each institute to its patron. Rather, individual agencies and funds will propose concrete projects or general topics and invite bids from research teams willing to carry them out. This is a comparatively new part of science funding in China, introduced in the late 1980s specifically to allow for more efficiency in research management by implementing devolution and allowing the various agencies and institutes to reach their own agreements about which results to pursue.[189] Enabling the institutes to work for clients other than their direct supervisors not only turned out to be helpful in removing the persistent problems of fragmentation, intransparency and redundancy that plagued the old system, but also empowered institutes and especially individual scholars to provide their own ideas for the initiation of new projects.

The National Fund for Social Science (NFSS; *guojia shehui kexue jijin*) is nowadays the most important and arguably most prestigious external source for research funding for the social sciences and humanities in China. It was established in 1991 under the National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Science (NPOPSS; *quanguo zhexue shehui kexue guihua bangongshi*), as the main vehicle through which this agency could encourage and oversee research in these disciplines. The NPOPSS is tasked with drawing up both long-term and annual plans for the development of the social sciences and humanities; implementing them by inviting bidding and allocating funds for corresponding research projects; evaluating the results of funded projects; and publicizing or forwarding the findings.[190] As mentioned in the preceding chapter, it occupies a key junction between (social) science and politics. Every year, the NPOPSS publishes a list of suggested research topics for each of the specific disciplines in its field, and invites bids for

[188] These figures were taken from SIIS´ annual reports for 2009-2011.

[189] See DeGlopper (1987), as well as Chen and Kenney (2007) about the reform programs that brought about this this reorganization of China´s research system. Section 6.4 also contains a more detailed discussion of some aspects of this shift.

[190] See NPOPSS´ official mission statement, available online at <cpc.people.com.cn/GB/219457/220819/14636682.html>.

projects that propose to tackle these issues. The selection process is extremely competitive - in 2012, 3291 projects out of 25243 applications received funding, or a quota of about 13%.[191]

Successful bids receive varying levels of support, mostly depending on the perceived importance of the topic and the status of the pricipally responsible researcher: projects are grouped into so-called major projects (*zhongda xiangmu*), focus projects (*zhongdian xiangmu*), ordinary projects (*yiban xiangmu*), and youth projects (*qingnian xiangmu*). Major and focus projects usually deal with topics of high political relevance and are entrusted to teams of several researchers headed by a leading scholar in the respective field. Even more important than academic expertise, the chief applicant must also have a spotless record of "political quality" (*zhengzhi suzhi*), or adherence to the party line.[192] This designation is very rare, and obtaining a focus project is a significant honor for a researcher and the institute where she works.[193] Youth projects, on the other hand, are intended to support researchers under the age of 40, who have only begun to establish themselves in the field and would have trouble competing for funds with their more senior and better-connected colleagues. In 2011, typical annual funding levels were 100.000-120.000 RMB for youth projects, 120.000-150.000 RMB for ordinary projects, and 200.000-250.000 RMB for focus projects. That year, the NFSS launched 2883 new projects, and had total outlays of 798 million RMB.[194] As shown in Figure 6.1, this represents a twenty-fold increase over 1991 when adjusting for inflation, which had a considerable impact during this time period.

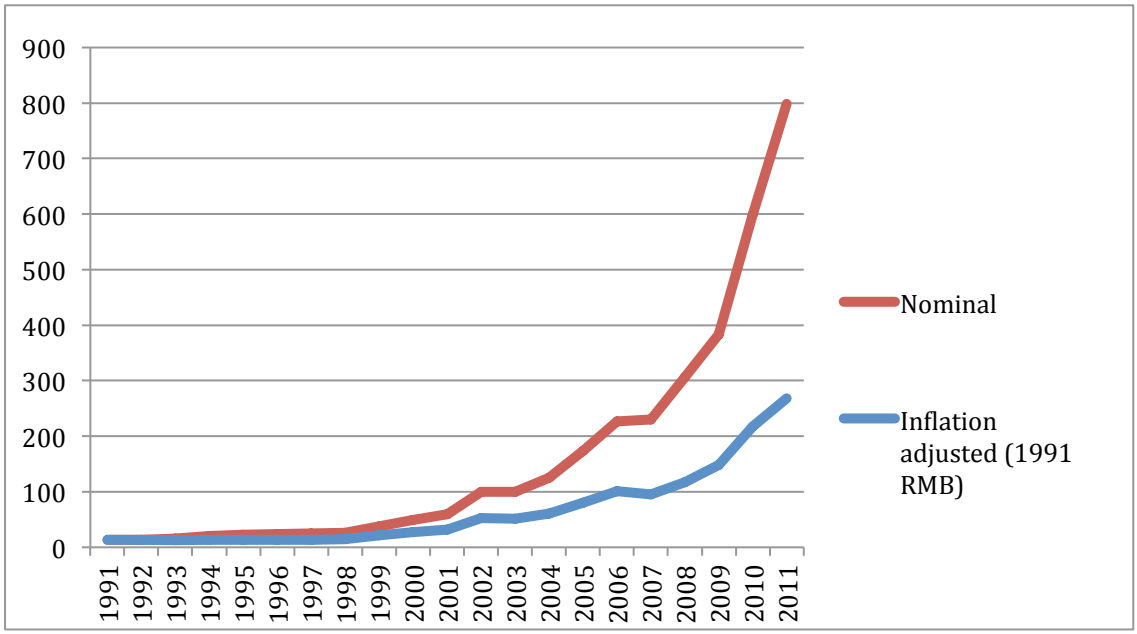

Figure 6.2: Development of the NFSS in nominal and 1991 RMB (million RMB). Source: author´s own compilation of NPOPSS data.[195]

[191] See NPOPSS (2012).

[192] See the Planning Office´s most recent (2013) invitation for major project applications.

[193] For example, in the 2005-2010 period, only nine out of 224 newly launched projects (4%) in the field of International Studies were designated as focus projects, while 82 (36%) were youth projects. This is roughly representative for the fund as a whole.

[194] All of these figures were obtained from NPOPSS´s (2011b) financial report for the previous year.

[195] Data on the fund´s yearly volume was obtained from the NPOPSS website (<http://www.npopss-cn.gov.cn/GB/219536/219537/14577987.html>), then adjusted for inflation

Still, even when accounting for this factor, it is clear that China´s research community has profited from an enormous influx of money in the wake of the country´s economic boom. There is also a noticeable change in the long-term trend around halfway through the fund´s history: while its volume grew around two and a half times between 1991 and 2001, it saw much stronger expansion during the following decade: from 2001 to 2011, it again increased eightfold.[196] This shift in the speed of expansion coincides with the Hu administration´s institution of "scientific development" as a policy guideline in 2003, which explicitly stressed the role of the social sciences in driving economic growth and alleviating social problems.[197] It would seem likely that the expansion of the NFSS is one of the measures designed to bring about the desired increase in the quality of policy-relevant research, which underscores the connection between government objectives and the shifting fortunes of the research establishment. Foreign policy think tanks are no exception to this remarkable expansion of research funding. While the category of International Studies (*guoji wenti yanjiu*) is a relatively small one compared to the overall volume of the NFSS (only 71 out of the aforementioned 2883 projects fell into this category in 2011), it is a field in which think tanks are highly competitive, most likely due to its high policy relevance and direct relation to sovereignty concerns.[198] This is especially notable when accounting for the fact the NFSS is only one among several funding sources for think tank research projects, and others - such as direct assignments or invitations for bids from government agencies - are probably even more inherently accomodating to their strenghts.

Since the annual topic suggestions published by the NPOPSS usually describe a project only in very general terms, this leaves individual researchers a lot of leeway in putting together a project application that is also shaped according to their own interests and competences.[199] In practice, however, this is a feature that only senior, established scholars can really take advantage of, since junior researchers have little chance for success in applying on their own. However, it is yet another mechanism that has contributed to the shift towards more grassroots-driven research, as well as towards a more academic orientation of policy research institutes.

6.3 Institutional leadership

This section covers the characteristics of the various presidents, directors and deans who were appointed to head the observed institutes during their existence, with a focus on long-term shifts in the backgrounds of successive generations of leaders. In this context, "leadership" describes the group of personnel that mediates between the political and bureaucratic patrons of

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by computing a price index from China´s yearly GDP deflators as measured by the World Bank, and dividing each year´s figure by the corresponding index value.

[196] The precise values are RMB 13 million in 1991, RMB 32 million in 2001, and RMB 269 million in 2011, adjusted for inflation.

[197] See Fewsmith (2004). One of the key features of this doctrine is that it embraced a broader concept of "development" that went beyond the traditional narrow focus on economics, and paid at least lip-service to notions of social equality and sustainability, thus opening the field for contributions from other policy-relevant disciplines.

[198] Among the 244 projects in this category that were launched between 2005 and 2010, the relatively small sample of observed institutes alone was responsible for a total of 35 (14%), despite nowadays having to compete with many newlly-established university departments that also specialize in these issues, and usually have to rely on the NFSS to a greater extent.

[199] See appendix X for a full list of topic suggestions in the field of international studies over the last decade.

an institute and its researchers. They have to decide on how the institute allocates its funds, which projects should be pursued, the kind of personnel that is hired, and how to build the institute´s brand. In all institutes except Beida and Fudan universities, they were appointed to their posts by the political actors to which the institutes are attached.

Figure 6.3 shows the backgrounds of individual leaders divided into three main groups: "Cadres" are party officials who were appointed to their jobs after a career in politics. "Scholars" have an academic background and worked as researchers either in the same or a closely related field as their institute specializes in. "Ministry officials" are bureaucrats who had risen through the ranks of the agency overseeing some of the institutes (diplomats in the case of CFAU and CIIS, intelligence officers in the case of CICIR).

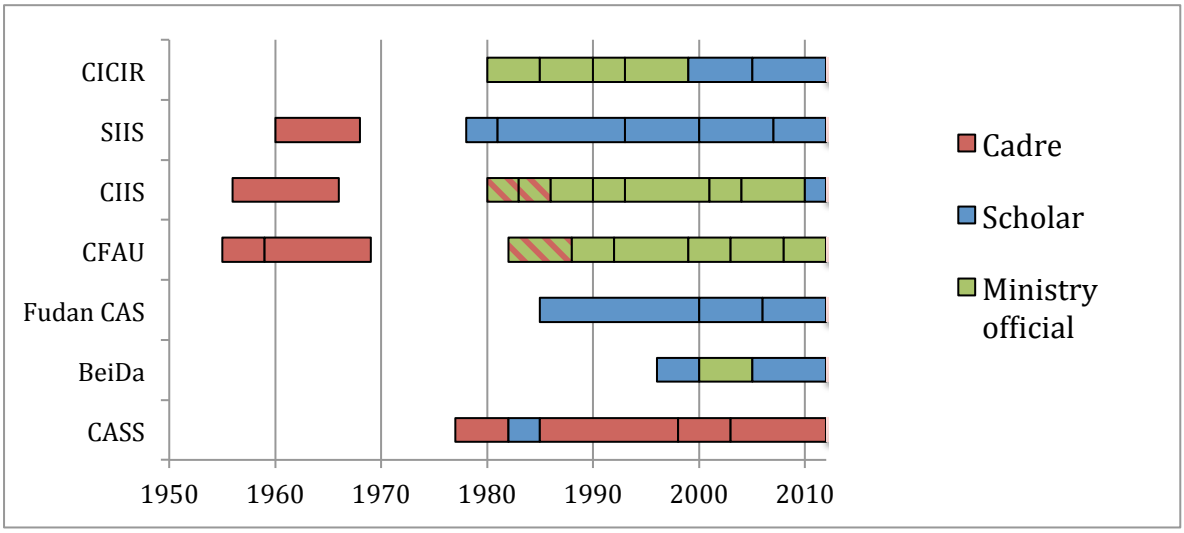

Figure 6.3: Personal backgrounds of primary institute leaders. Source: author´s own compilation of biographical data from institute websites.[200]

Several "waves" of leaders with identical backgrounds can be made out in the diagram: first, the prevalence of cadres and revolutionaries in the 1950s and 60s; second, the dominance of ministry officials in the 1980s and 90s; and third, a steady shift towards leaders with an academic background, usually picked from within the institute itself. The following sections will explore how these shifts corresponded both to the distinct political conditions of different time periods and the specific organizational affiliations of individual institutes.

6.3.1 From the founding of the PRC to the Cultural Revolution, 1949-1969

When the Chinese government started creating its first dedicated foreign policy research institutes in the 1950s, the pool of available personnel to head these institutes was no less limited than the funds or lower-level researchers that were discussed in the preceding two sections. The reason for this is also identical - China´s status as an impoverished country devastated by two decades of foreign aggression and civil war - although this chapter of Chinese history gains added importance through its special, intricate relationship to the biographies of many of the newly

[200] See appendix 3 for a detailed list of individual leaders and their careers before and after their tenure at the respective institutes.

appointed leaders. What can be dubbed as the "first generation" of post-war institutional leadership is thus marked by similar experiences during their youth: while the ranks of the party leadership were replete with people who had entered politics as revolutionary intellectuals in the 1920s, the demands of party activity and the armed struggles that were soon to break out had also shortened the exposure which they´d had to formal academic education. All of the leaders that were appointed to head institutes before the Cultural Revolution (and some who took over afterwards), had participated in the wars in some function: Li Enqiu, Chen Xinren and Chen Yi at CFAU; Meng Yongqian at CIIS; and Lei Jingtian at SASS all held military posts at some point. Jin Zhonghua, first president of SIIS, was not directly involved in the armed struggle, but served the party´s mobilization efforts during the Sino-Japanese war as an editor and writer. Their academic backgrounds were eclectic and varied, unsurprisingly not featuring the specific discipline of International Relations, as their student years came decades before this field developed in China. Few had any extensive personal experience abroad either, although having spent their student years in cosmopolitan pre-war Shanghai may have led to similar exposure in some cases. Since the CCP´s activities during the war had focused on mobilizing soldiers and promoting revolutionary ideology rather than providing governance beyond the most basic and local level, the party officials of the 1950s also lacked experience in running complex state institutions.[201] Instead, their main qualification for these posts appears to have been mostly their proven devotion to the party and its greater ideological cause. Since, at the time, the international behavior of states was understood to be a corollary of dominant class interests at the domestic level, being steeped in orthodox Marxism also constituted a relevant qualification to oversee research work in this field. Members of this generation frequently switched between several administrative positions, as the CCP sought to build its governing apparatus with a limited supply of reliable cadres. Sometimes, such posts were held in addition to the institute leadership, as in the cases of Chen Yi, who simultaneously served as foreign minister and president of CFAU, or Jin Zhonghua, who acted as vice mayor of Shanghai through most of his tenure at SIIS.

This generation of leadership was still in place when the Cultural Revolution began to throw the country into turmoil in the latter half of the 1960s. With the exception of Jin Zhonghua, who was persecuted and driven to suicide in 1968, they escaped the most drastic personal consequences of this upheaval and were reassigned to government positions as the country´s academic institutions shut down.

6.3.2 Rebuilding during the Reform Era, 1978 - 2000

When the institutes that had existed prior to the Cultural Revolution were reopened and new ones established in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the problems that had plagued the search for staff in the 1950s presented itself anew. Since the majority of research institutes and all universities had been shut down for almost a decade, another generation of Chinese intellectuals had been unable to enjoy an uninterrupted higher education. The factional strife, purges and counter-purges of the preceding years had also contributed to depleting the ranks of the party´s revolutionary generation. Although the newly emergent political leadership under Deng (which was itself still mostly composed of revolutionary veterans) had to draw once more upon its own age cohort to head the research institutes, the "second generation" of leaders had a much more

[201] The CCP had initially retained some 400000 officials who had worked in the Guomindang government due to severe personnel shortages, representing about a quarter of all active cadres in 1951. However, these were among the first to be purged from the party´s ranks in several ideological campaigns in the latter half of the 1950s, which trnded to leave the younger generation of revolutionaries in place (Zheng (1997) p. 80f.).

varied background prior to their appointment than the first. In particular, institutes that had been attached to ministries (such as CFAU, CICIR and CIIS) were taken over by a succession of leaders who had been officials in these principal institutions - diplomats and ambassadors in the case of MoFA, intelligence officers in the case of MoSS. Hu Qiaomu, the first dean of CASS, had been a high-ranking Politburo member and close ally of Deng in addition to being an eminent party historian.[202] His high status reflected on CASS´ designated profile as the country´s premier think tank, as well as the desire to exert tight, high-level political control over this institute. Li Chuwen, who was appointed as the new president of SIIS at its reopening, established a local tradition of recruiting leaders from the ranks of scholars rather than practitioners. Li, a Yale graduate and Christian theologian by training, had been advising the Shanghai municipal government on international issues prior to his tenure at SIIS. The first high-profile new university-attached think tank, Fudan University´s Center for American Studies, would eventually be headed by another colorful figure: Xie Xide, an American-trained physicist and Central Committee member, who successfully used her political connections in both countries to establish the first think tank that drew extensively on foreign as well as domestic funding sources. Xie is also notable as the only woman to head one of the institutes in the sample for any length of time. Ultimately, CASS would remain as the only institute to still be headed by high-ranking cadres. This, however, is not just determined by the structure and importance of the institute, but may simply be a product of its high-level administrative attachment: since CASS is directly subordinate to the State Council and thus has the official rank of a ministry, it may be considered inappropriate to select a mid-level official or scholar as its head. indeed, all of the deans in the history of CASS were already part of the highest tier of leadership prior to their appointment, as Central Committee and sometimes even Politburo members.

The crackdown on the student movement and Zhao Ziyang´s reformist faction also led to consequences at some of the institutes that had ties to this group and served as its advisers. In addition to the SCDRC, this concerned several institutes of CASS, as well as reportedly CICIR. The director of CASS´ Institute for Political Science, Yan Jiaqi, as well as the former director of the Institute for Marxism, Su Shaozhi, went into exile immediately after the Tiananmen massacre. At the highest level, no changes in the leadership were made - Hu Sheng continued to serve as dean until 1998 - although the pressure for political conformity increased and purges of lower-level researchers were not uncommon even a decade after the crackdown.[203] Because of its high profile and rank, the CASS leadership has been a particularly contested office, with several intra-party factions reportedly warring over the appointment.[204]

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[202] Hu had also been directly involved in Deng´s plan to revitalize China´s scientific establishment. In 1975, he headed a mission to investigate conditions at the Academy of Sciences (CAS), which at that point still included a Department of Social Sciences that would later form the core of CASS at its inception. Their "Outline Report on the work of the CAS" became one of the key elements of Deng´s plan to rebuild an academia that was still langishing from the effects of the Cultural Revolution, and to reorient it towards a more pragmatic stance (Goldman 1981, p.218).

[203] See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007a), as well as newspaper reports, e.g. AFP (2000). This happened as part of a renewed campaign against "burgeois liberalism" in 2000, when three liberal CASS scholars - He Depu, Liu Jinning and well-known Wang Yan - were dismissed from their jobs.

[204] See two articles in the Hong Kong-based newspaper *Standard*: "Outsider named Academy president", Lam Wo-Lap, March 6th, 1998; "Li Peng man boosts power", Fong Tak-Ho, October 26th, 1998.

6.3.3 Recent years, 2000 - 2012

The most characteristic development in recent years has been the gradual takeover of institutional leadership positions by academics, most of whom had already spent their whole careers at the same institute. This "third generation" is also the first whose members usually feature biographies that resemble those of their counterparts in developed countries, marked by uninterrupted access to specialized education. Since in China, institute presidents and directors rarely rise to these positions before age 50, the current generation is the first that entered university after the Cultural Revolution, as well as the first that could take advantage of modernized curricula in Political Science and IR. For example, Wang Jisi, the current dean of Beida´s SIS and one of China´s best-known IR scholars, was a member of the first class to enroll in the university´s newly established International Studies curriculum in 1978.[205]

Thus, today´s leadership personnel was shaped by the same developments in academia that have led to an increase in the supply of well-trained researchers in general. In institutes like CICIR and CIIS, they have gradually replaced the previously predominant cohort of ministry officials. CFAU, while still nominally headed by a career diplomat as president, is nowadays primarily run by its party secretary Qin Yaqing, an IR scholar and high-level government adviser. CFAU is somewhat extraordinary in that its presidency and secretariat (the highest office in the institute´s party organization) have relatively often been held by different individuals. Usually, these offices are assigned to the same person, most likely in order to avoid potentially crippling internal power struggles. However, in the case of CFAU, both the various presidents and secretaries were recruited from the ranks of MoFA until Qin´s appointment in 2005, so this still represents a noticeable change.

Universities without affiliations to line ministries, like Fudan and Beida, have appointed scholars to their leadership posts throughout their existence (with the exception of former foreign minister and Politburo member Qian Qichen, who served as dean of Beida´s IIR between 2000 and 2005). This is very likely due to the greater leeway over internal promotion and leadership selection that these institutes enjoy. The Ministry of Education, to which they are attached, does not have a history of meddling in personnel questions concerning the universities it oversees, and may well lack the power to do so. For reasons already mentioned above, CASS remains the exception to this "rise of the scholars" in China´s foreign policy research establishment. It is also notable that over the last decade, CASS has had problems retaining its most famous academics - for example, Wang Jisi, arguably China´s best-known IR scholar, left the Academy to head Beida´s IIR in 2005. Aside from other reasons that have made CASS somewhat less attractive to researchers since Tiananmen - such as low payment, poor facilities and very tight political control[206] - this lack of an internal track to leadership positions based on academic clout may have also contributed to these retention problems. At the level of individual CASS institutes, such as IWEP and IAPS, changes in the leadership have also happened as a consequence of shifts in the academy presidency.[207]

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[205] See Wang´s official biography, available at the SIS website under <http://www.sis.pku.edu.cn/situation.aspx?classid=1&cateid=3>. Wang did not spend his entire career at Beida - he held posts at several American universities in the 1980s, and joined CASS´ Institute for American Studies in 1991.

[206] Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007a).

[207] For example, shortly after Li Tieying took over the reigns of CASS in 1998, all institute directors over the age of 60 were required to retire from their offices. The individual institutes have little say in this question - although directors are usually picked from within their own ranks, the specific choice remains with the board of the Academy and its powerful Party Committee.

The reason why this trend is important is because the senior leadership ultimately determines which projects to fund with the appropriations received from the government. The president and secretary are not alone in this - usually, the final decision rests with a board of directors, vice presidents or other senior researchers, known in most institutes as the "academic committee" (*xueshu weiyuanhui*). In deciding which activities the institute will pursue, they have to gauge several different factors: first, whether it conforms to the list of desired research topics produced by their superiors; second, whether the institute or individual researchers have the necessary capabilities to see it through; and third, what benefit it will yield from an academic point of view. Since the suggested topics are often relatively vague and generic,[208] this leaves the committee members considerable leeway in judging which project ideas conform to the framework. Thus, they occupy the juncture of politics and academia, and have to mediate between the needs of political elites and the researchers´ own academic interests. As these positions are increasingly filled with leaders who have a background in academia rather than politics or the bureaucracy, they may prove to be more receptive to project ideas that are primarily of academic rather than political value.

Two additional features stand out because they are shared by almost all of the leaders in this sample: first, they are usually party members; and second, they are – with the aforementioned exception of Xie Xide at Fudan University – men. These are both par for the course as far as public and government-related agencies and enterprises in China are concerned, and academia seems to be no exception. The prevailing system of entangled party and organizational hierarchies brings about a situation in which party membership is usually an unofficial requirement for elevation to the top of a public agency. The lack of women in leadership positions is another issue, albeit one that is likely somewhat connected to the first one: due to the influence of party officials over the appointment process, establishing personal connections within the party structure is a very important element of advancement in state agencies and enterprises. Apparently, it is much harder for women to become an active part of these networks, which leads to a systemic career disadvantage.

6.4 Foreign role models and templates

One final factor for the development of China´s think tanks that can also be understood as a resource of sorts is the availability of organizational role models or blueprint: existing organizations in the field that can be emulated when an institute is established for the first time or undergoes extensive restructuring. In cases like China, where an underdeveloped nation has to build a whole sector from scratch or overhaul it in order to catch up with more advanced nations, these role models will have to be found abroad. Accordingly, this section will address the role that foreign influences had on the history and current setup of China´s research institutes. It is separated into two parts, covering two distinct influences that combined to bring about the present situation: first, the introduction of Soviet-inspired models in the early phase of institution-building in the 1950s; and second, the shift towards Westernization and market-inspired reforms that has been characteristic for the reform era since 1978.

Individual institutes can only exercise discretion in appointing employees at the sub-professorial level (Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b), p. 241, 251).

[208] See appendix 2 for a list of topic suggestions by the National Fund for Social Sciences 2001-2010.

6.4.1 Soviet influences: 1949-1960s

The import of foreign innovations to China has been a staple in the country´s efforts to address its underdevelopment throughout the 20th and even 19th century. This is easily understandable when accounting for the fact that China was often facing a very hostile international environment, and had been unable to defend itself against the smaller, but much more technological advanced colonial powers that preyed on it.

The final choice about which models to emulate was often not the product of an individual assessment that concerned just one specific organization. Mostly, different generations of post-war Chinese leadership did not exhibit a pick-and-choose attitude - importing different organizational models from different countries and for different purposes - but rather aimed at large-scale, sectoral if not systemic emulation, modified for the specific needs of the country. This was nowhere more apparent than during the period of the Sino-Soviet alliance (1949- ca. 1960), when the Soviet Union was touted as a model for how to turn an agrarian society into one of the world´s foremost industrial and military powers. Having emerged victorious from the second phase of the Chinese Civil War, the CCP embarked on its own ambitious project of societal transformation. In accordance with Maoist doctrine, the new elites had judged that China´s path towards Communism would have to be a different one than the Soviet Union´s, due to its even larger share of peasants, most of whom lacked the kind of class consciousness that was considered necessary for the revolutionary project. However, they shared both the Soviet outlook that the process had to be elite-driven and controlled by party functionaries in all relevant social institutions, as well as the immediate goal of economic development, thus creating a sizeable industrial proletariat that was expected to constitute a natural base of support for communism.[209] This led to a wholesale import of models for party and state organization from the Soviet Union. On the most general level, the CCP adopted the practice of "dual rule", in which government agencies would be controlled not only by their superiors within the state administration, but also the party committees at the corresponding level.[210] Accordingly, party groups (*dangzu*) and committees (*weiyuanhui*) were quickly formed in all but the smallest Chinese organizations, establishing the twin hierarchies that are characteristic for the country´s complex state-party interactions. Science, and especially the social sciences, was considered to be inherently political, which prompted tight party supervision of this field.[211]

[209] This attitude was not just born from ideology, but also to a degree from sheer necessity - while China´s state institutions had been devastated and had to be rebuilt from scratch, the party had already developed an extensive organization of its own that promised a faster way to take control of the country (Zheng (1997), p. 47ff.).

[210] See Zheng (1997), p. 81f. Once established, the system has proven resilient up to this day, and remains the main reason why leading bureaucrats are usually party members, so they can simultaneously act as agency and party leaders within the same institution. In cases where the two posts are not held by the same person, the party secretary will usually be the first-ranked vice president of the institute.

[211] See DeGlopper (1987). This attitude had also carried over from the Soviet Union, where one of the reasons for separating research and teaching had been the suspected "burgeois" leanings of research scientists, and concerns about exposing students to them (Graham, 1993).

Figure 6.3 shows a general template for how these two system affected the constitution of a Chinese research institute. They are vertically embedded in both the state apparatus as well as the party hierarchy: a superordinate government agency (e.g., a ministry) is responsible for appointing its administrative leadership, while the party committee attached to the same agency will appoint the institute´s own committee. This body is in turn responsible for supervising both the leadership and the local party organization, and has a right to veto decisions. It is usually made up of a broader circle of high-ranking administrators and scholars, instituting an element of collective leadership.

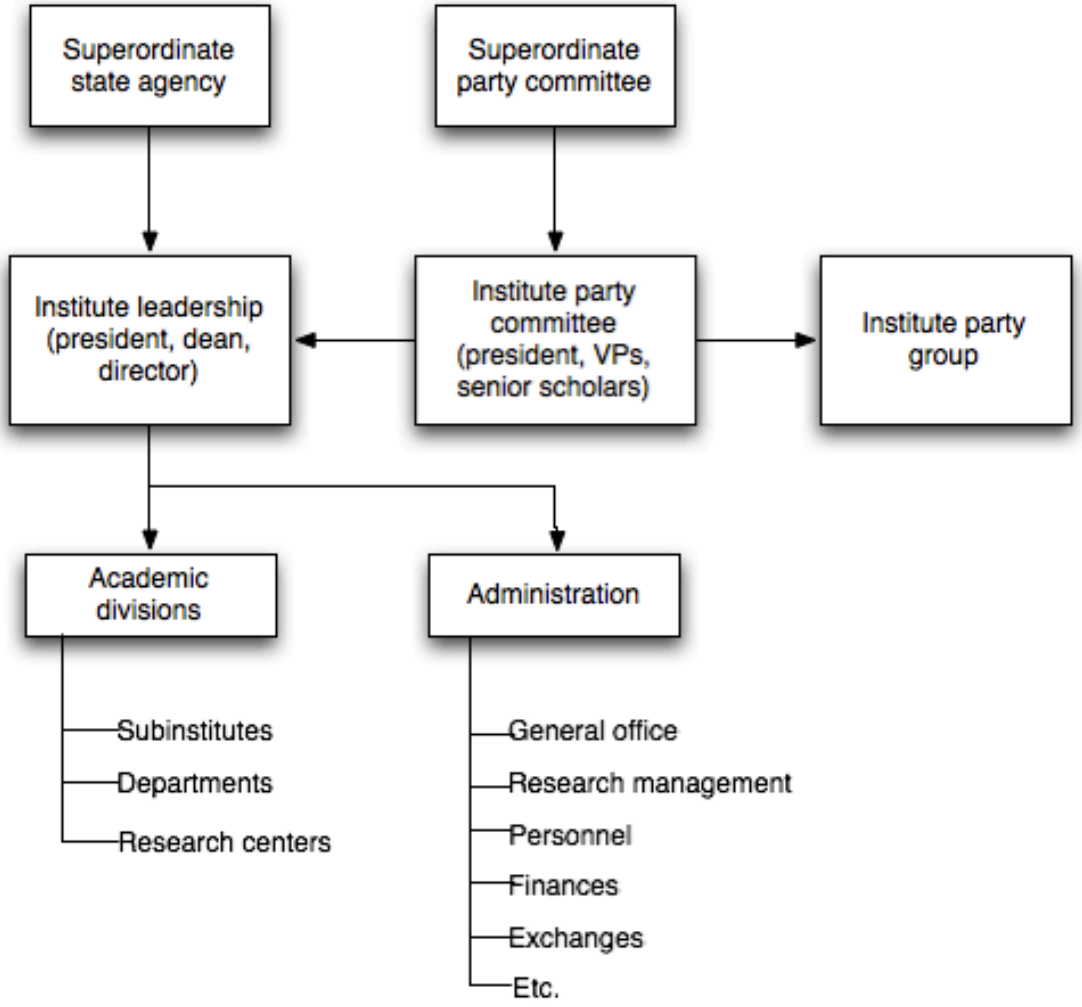

Figure 6.4: General organizational template of Chinese research institutes. Source: author's compilation.

Administrative and academic matters are handled between the leadership and the institute´s specialized subunits. The planning of research activities and allocation of funds is usually handled by an academic committee (*xueshu weiyuanhui*) made up of leaders and senior scholars, overlapping at least in part with the party committee. Finally, the local party group is responsible for ensuring the loyalty of researchers to the party and screening publications for ideological conformity.[212]

[212] See Su Shaozhi, "CASS and the Marxism-Leninism Institute" in Hamrin and Zhao (eds., 1995). CASS also fits this template, but is a bit more complicated: due to its size, it features an

At the level of individual organizations, Soviet models were also eagerly imported. The most important innovation that the Soviet Union had introduced in the sector of science and technology was, indeed, the proliferation of research institutes themselves.[213] As early as the 1920s, Soviet leaders had determined that rapid scientific development was a key component to the establishment of a socialist society, and set towards reorganizing and expanding the country´s languishing academia. Building upon German precursors, most notably the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, the domains of research and teaching were systematically separated on a grand scale. Teaching and education duties were assigned to universities, while applied research was concentrated in smaller bureaus, often attached to industrial enterprises. The gap between these two was to be covered by a great number of newly established research institutes for the basic sciences, which soon came to dominate the Soviet science sector. At the pinnacle of the vast system of individual institutes and directly superordinate to many of them, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) comprised the country´s most esteemed scientists and generally best-equipped facilities. Its purpose was to allow centralized control over research efforts that could be of direct relevance to the Communist plans for the development of state and society.[214] The primary focus of this model had originally been on the natural sciences, but social sciences were eventually included as well as they emerged during the 20th century. For example, the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and the Institute for US and Canadian Studies (ISKRAN), two prominent Soviet foreign policy think tanks, were also part of the Academy system rather than attached to specific government agencies.[215]

This model was introduced to China as early as 1949, incorporated as the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), although it would be several years before this organization moved beyond the framework phase. Operations began in earnest in July 1955, with one of its four "divisions" (*xuebu*) dedicated to philosophy and the social sciences. The departments and institutes under this division mainly concerned themselves with history, Marxist philosophy, economics, law, archaeology and domestic and foreign languages.[216] An Institute for International Relations was set up under the CAS in November 1956, but then attached to MoFA only two years later, thus establishing the kernel of what would eventually become today´s CIIS.[217] The distinct focus on area studies that has been characteristic for the field of international studies in China took root during this phase as well: in 1961, CAS established institutes for West Asian and African Studies and Latin American Studies, apparently as a reaction to Mao Zedong´s rising personal interest in revolutionary movements in the developing world.[218] In 1965, they were joined by the Institute for Soviet Studies, under the joint administration of CAS and the Central Committee´s International Liaison Department, which was at the time tasked with conducting informal foreign policy at the inter-party level. When the division for philosophy and social sciences was detached from CAS and reconstituted as the Academy of Social Sciences

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additional administrative level between the individual institutes and the superordinate agency (in this case, the State Council). Its publications are also supervised by the Central Propaganda Department in addition to the local party structure.

[213] See Graham (1993, p. 175ff.)

[214] See Mayntz (1998). According to Graham (1993, p. 174), by 1990, the network of institutes under the NAS had grown to around 600.

[215] Like the Academy itself, these institutions have survived the collapse of the Soviet Union and continued their work under the same structure. Short versions of their histories can be accessed online at <http://www.iskran.ru/engl/index-en.html> and <http://www.imemo.ru/en/history/>, respectively.

[216] See Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 37f.).

[217] See <http://www.ciis.org.cn/chinese/node_520589.htm> for a short history of this institute.

[218] Jiang (2012).

(CASS) in 1978, these institutes formed the core of its international studies division, ensuring a continuous focus on area studies.

During the period of the Sino-Soviet alliance (1949-1960), Chinese researchers could regularly obtain first-hand experience with the Soviet research system and then use that knowledge to develop their own country´s institutions. Between 1949 and 1960 an estimated 2500 scientists and 7500 students received training in the Soviet Union or worked there as visiting scholars.[219] During this period, Chinese scholars often reported on the findings and activities of Soviet research institutes, a practice that abruptly declined after relations between the two countries broke down in the early 1960s.[220] Although the withdrawal of Soviet aid unquestionably hurt the development of China´s own science and technology sector and left the country without any partner in the developed world, a seed for indigenous advancement had been planted. On the other hand, the imitation of the Soviet model also introduced a number of inefficiencies that would hamper the advancement of China´s academia in the long term: first, research institutes were mostly headed by administrators who did not have experience in the field of research they were supposed to oversee. Individual researchers were also assigned to institutes by bureaucrats who were often unable to assess their specialization and qualifications, leading to misplacement.[221] Second, research was to be centrally planned and governed by five-year-plans, despite the importance of unforeseeable breakthroughs, competition and organic development in driving scientific innovation. Neither the needs of individual consumers nor the interests of producers of research had much of an impact on the formulation of these plans.[222] Third, neither the Soviet nor the Chinese model for the organization of science envisioned the kind of open exchange and circulation of findings that is necessary to quickly disseminate new insights and avoid redundancy. Instead, the system placed institutes into a strict vertical hierarchy, in which many findings were classified and reported only to the superordinate agencies rather than peers working in the same field, or other agencies and enterprises that might have made use of them.[223] This is probably also the main reason for the proliferation of institutes that are attached to different agencies, but have highly similar capacities and specializations: the difficulty of accessing research generated by an institute in a different vertical branch of the system created an incentive for patrons to build their own institutes.

[219] DeGlopper (1987), in particular the section about "Soviet Influence in the 1950s".

[220] A query of the China Academic Journals database revealed a total of 625 Chinese articles whose abstracts contain both the words "Soviet/Soviet Union (*su-lian*)" and "research institute (*yanjiusuo*)" between 1951 and 1960. By comparison, only 186 such articles were published between 1961 and 1970, most of them in the first two years of that period. From the beginning of the reform period in 1978 to the collapse of the Soviet Union, activity steadily picked up pace again, with 376 such articles published in 1990 alone. Most of these articles report on recent research findings by the institute in question, a few also on work procedures and organization.

[221] See DeGlopper (1987) for a discussion of these problems, especially the section about "Shortcomings of the Science and Technology System".

[222] See Xue (2007).

[223] Chen and Kenney (2007) discuss the problems this system posed for effective research in the natural sciences and technology. Since the social sciences operated under the same system, there is reason to believe that they suffered similar problems.

6.4.2 Western-inspired reforms, 1978-today

The general organizational setup described further above proved very resilient to external shocks like the Cultural Revolution and the reform of China´s economic system. Institutes that were newly established or reassembled after the onset of the reform era did not exhibit structural features that differed markedly from the older generation of Chinese think tanks. This can be easily observed when considering the most prominent example of reorganization: the establishment of CASS by spinning off the philosophy and social sciences division from the Academy of Sciences. CASS itself shared the same features of centralization and comprehensiveness as its counterpart for the natural sciences, although it did not develop the same extensive network of subordinate institutes dispersed all over the country. Instead, a lot of emphasis was placed on providing a direct channel of communication to the Central Government, and this practice was imitated at the provincial level by attaching the local Academies of Social Science to the respective governments as well.

However, although the general structural template of Chinese institutes remained intact, the specific practices that contributed to the sector´s overall inefficiency were eventually identified as stumbling blocks for the country´s further development and systematically tackled. From the beginning of the reform era in 1978 onward, Chinese leaders began to look towards the capitalist world for models on how to organize the vast array of institutions under their control more efficiently. This was a somewhat more complicated task compared to the initial establishment of Soviet-inspired research institutes in the 1950s: Western (and particularly American) organizations were embedded in a completely different political and social system strongly characterized by features which conservative Chinese elites did not want to emulate, such as pluralism and independence from state control. The solution on which leaders ultimately settled followed the same outline as the general project of economic reform: similar to the vision of a "socialist market economy", the Chinese government would maintain direct ownership of and political control over its research organizations, but allow them much more leeway in choosing their projects, hiring appropriate personnel and responding to market incentives. These reforms were institutionalized in the mid-1980s through a brace of decrees issued by the Central Government, targeting research institutes and universities, respectively.[224]

This Western-inspired trend towards partial devolution was further reinforced by the resumption of international exchange programs: the government launched new programs to send talented students abroad and allow them to attain degrees from prestigious universities in the developed world. The United States in particular soon emerged as the most popular destination for students who could take advantage of China´s opening to the outside world.[225] However, this new openness also exposed Chinese universities and institutes to competition for skilled labor, and the development of China´s own academia was ultimately delayed by a pronounced "brain drain" resulting from a widespread unwillingness to return. The crackdown on the student movement in 1989, culminating in the Tiananmen massacre, only confounded this problem. In the late 1990s and 00s, this problem was slowly alleviated through increasing state funding and a

[224] See DeGlopper (1987). The "Decision on the Reform of the Science and Technology Management System", announced in March 1985, specified that direct appropriations to research institutes were to be reduced in favor of project-specific funding and more opportunities to engage in contract research. The "Provisional Regulations Concerning the Management of Institutions of Higher Learning", announced in 1986, granted universities similar freedom in creating their curricula, choosing projects, accepting external funding and appointing scholars.

[225] According to statistics compiled by Zhang Guochu and Li Wenjun (OECD 2001), an estimated 400000 Chinese students left the country to study abroad between 1978 and 1999. Among these, slightly more than half went to the US, around 16% to Japan, and approximately 20% to Europe.

resulting ability for Chinese institutes to pay more competitive salaries to returnees.[226] Nowadays, many researchers at Chinese think tanks have studies abroad or attained advanced degrees from foreign universities.

Finally, the experiences that these scholars made abroad may have contributed to a preference for Western modes of organization. Those who have offered their own opinions on this question continue to hold up Western and American institutes as role models, thus adding a grassroots element to a process that used to be mostly elite-driven. Suggestions on how to proceed with the development of China´s think tank sector include further reducing their financial dependence on government sources, more cooperation with private enterprises, allowing for more transparency when handling data and analyses, a greater public presence, more participation in "public diplomacy", and more interactions with foreign partners, especially to counter negative perceptions of China.[227] The more recent focus of Chinese institutes on public relations and increasing involvement with foreign and domestic media may be the clearest example of their ongoing "Westernization", as such activities would have been completely anathema to the secretive existence of China´s old, Soviet-styled research establishment. All of these initiatives need to be approved by the supervising government agencies, and think tank scholars will first have to convince their superiors that a particular activity is beneficial to the state, but this example still demonstrates that low-level agencies have increased their ability to provide impulses for change themselves.

[226] See Klemm (2004).
[227] See Chen and Chen (2002), Wang (2011), Zhao and Yang (2011).

7. Current activities and roles of think tanks

Having previously considered changes in the institutes´ material conditions, it is finally time to tackle the explanandum of this thesis with a thorough investigation of how their activities have evolved over time. The observations below are, again, mostly focused on the last decade, as this period has featured the most remarkable developments (especially when considering academic and propaganda activities), and data is available in sufficient quality and quantity to track them in great detail. Nevertheless, whenever possible and appropriate, the most pronounced differences with prior time periods are pointed out in order to provide a context for the more recent developments. Structurally, this chapter is split into three parts, each of which is dedicated to one of the fields of activity that form the basis for my typology.

7.1 Academic activity

The first key role which modern think tanks fulfill to a varying extent is the production of academic research, i.e., material that is published in peer-reviewed journals, primarily intended for an audience of other scholars, usually marked by a stronger focus on abstraction, theory testing and development, and long-term research projects. Accordingly, this section explores key quantitative and qualitative features of the research output of China´s think tanks. Figure 7.1 contains the total number of academic publications for each of the selected institutes during the years 2001-2010. The statistics were derived from the database China Academic Journals (CAJ), a repository for academic publications similar to JSTOR.[228]

[228] A couple of caveats apply to the interpretation of these numbers: first, while CAJ covers all top-ranked „core" journals and a vast number of other publications, some less prominent outlets are missing. Matching the numbers derived from CAJ against publication statistics published by the institutes directly revealed that in a few cases, the respective journals were not part of the database. Second, this method relies on a correct registration of the author´s affiliation, which is not always the case. Institutional affiliation was rarely recorded before 1999 and is still incomplete for several years afterwards, explaining some of the extent of the initial jump in 2001-2002. Work units that are part of a larger organization, like CFAU´s IIR, could be slightly underrepresented compared to large institutes like the CIIS or CICIR, because the author´s exact departmental affiliation was not recorded in a few cases (e.g., the affiliation is only given as „CFAU"). A third source of discrepancies is that official statistics published by institutes sometimes contain large numbers of items that are not academic publications, but rather newspaper commentaries or essays lumped together under the „article" (lunwen) category. Furthermore, official statistics usually feature only publications by full-time staff, while CAJ also contains those handed in by Ph.D. students. Accordingly, institutes that train larger numbers of young researchers (mostly universities) may be slightly overrepresented in this count. However, the clear advantage of using CAJ is that its numbers are more easily comparable than those gleaned from statistics that were compiled by individual institutes with different methodologies, and that in some cases (e.g., CICIR) the latter could not be obtained anyway. Finally, an additional source of error may be the propensity of researchers to repeatedly publish the same findings in several journals under slightly different titles. Unfortunately, the substantial volume of publications makes it impossible to check for this in depth by comparing their actual contents. However, while this method may serve to inflate the overall publication count of institutes in general, this should be less of an issue regarding the comparability across cases and time. If anything, well-regarded Chinese journals have recently gotten better at preventing this type of cheating.

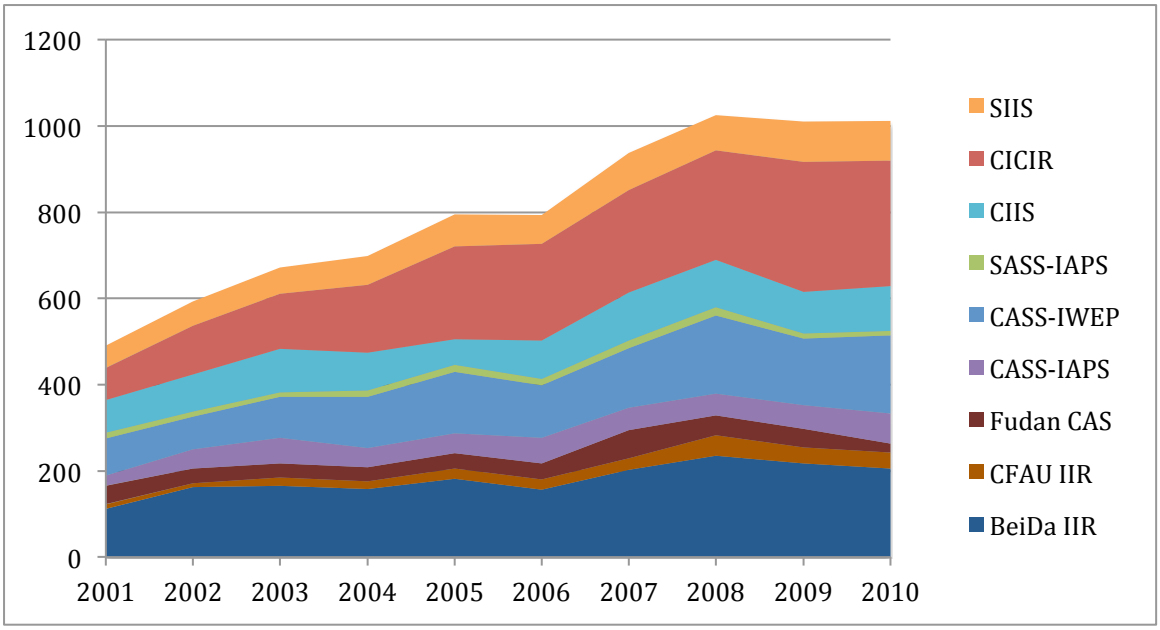

Fig. 7.1: Number of published journal articles per institute and year, 2001-2010. Source: author´s own compilation of CAJ data, see the preceding page for details.

Of course, many of the pronounced differences between the observed cases can be readily explained with the substantial variety in sheer size which they exhibit: CICIR, CIIS and some of the CASS institutes are, and have always been, much larger than specialized university departments such as those at CFAU and Fudan University. In order to account for these differences, fig. 4 features the number of publications for 2010, divided by the number of full-time staffers as most recently specified by each institute.[229]

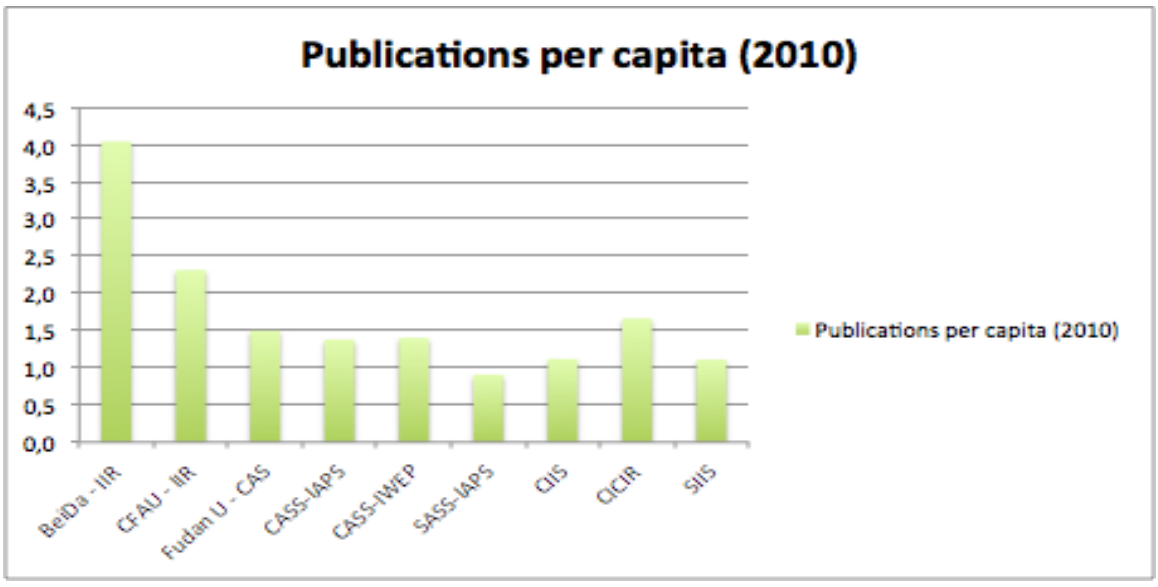

Fig. 7.2: Number of publications divided by number of full-time research staff per institute (2010). Source: author´s own compilation of CAJ data and information from institute websites.

[229] Publication figures were again obtained from CAJ and checked in detail to avoid double-counting. Employment figures were obtained from the institutes´ websites and should also be valid for 2010, given the low overall rate of change in staff figures.

A couple of general trends are immediately apparent: first, most institutes were able to significantly increase the total number of publications over the last decade. It is important to note that this feat was apparently achieved without significant concurrent increases in personnel (while most institutes did invest some of their expanded budgets in a few new specialists, these increases were very modest, and the general lack of available facilities would have made a dramatic expansion impossible anyway).[230] One major reason for this increase may be found in special incentive schemes that were enacted at all these institutes over the last decade in some form.[231] Since the basic salary of researchers in China is still quite low, bonus payments for publications in top journals are a major incentive on top of the academic prestige resulting from successful submissions. Additionally, the gradual replacement of non-academic senior researchers (many of whom used to focus on internal reports and policy analysis) with younger university graduates would also have had an effect on the overall propensity to publish in academic journals. The latter trend has disproportionally affected non-unversitary, agency-affiliated institutes, since they used to have a much larger share of non-academics to begin with. Accordingly, they had more of an upside for further strengthening this activity, and successfully seized this opportunity.

Second, much of the overall increase can be attributed to relatively few institutes that boosted their output by very high margins. CICIR alone tripled its publication count in ten years, and its per capita output is nowadays almost on the same level as that of most university departments (fig. 4), despite the fact that its main mission remains intelligence analysis. Beida´s SIS, China´s most prominent and best-staffed university-affiliated research institute for IR, almost doubled its total in the same timespan and has the highest per capita ratio.[232] Robust growth was also achieved by CASS institutes and agency-affiliated institutes such as CIIS and SIIS. Apart from sheer quantity, the research output of China´s IR think tanks is also notable for its quality: with the exception of SASS´ Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, all of these research organizations publish top-ranked „core“ journals in the field of IR. CICIR´s Contemporary International Relations (xiandai guoji guanxi) is the most highly regarded Chinese journal in the field and nowadays also published in an English edition, same as CIIS´ venerable China International Studies (guoji wenti yanjiu). The significant increase in publication activity has also created both a supply and a demand for more venues in the form of peer-reviewed journals. Newcomers like Fudan´s CAS eventually started publishing their own journals (in this case, in 2001), while those who were already active in the field stepped up their publication schedules to keep pace with the increase in output. The Chinese edition of *Contemporary International Relations* originally appeared only infrequently, but its growing popularity led it to become a quarterly in 1986, a bi-monthly in 1992, and finally even a monthly journal in 1993, a publication frequency which it has since steadily held.[233] Likewise, *China International Studies* switched from a quarterly to a bi-monthly schedule in 2000. The widespread in-house publication of core journals at these institutes provides the researchers with a convenient channel to high-quality review and

[230] For example, personnel statistics for CASS (e.g., CASSGO (1998) show that IAPS and IWEP grew only by about 10% between then and now), otherwise comments by researchers and administrators are used as a basis. Also refer to section 1.1 for more details on this development, although concrete historical data on this point is unfortunately often hard to come by for many other institutes.

[231] See chapter 6 for details about incentive-based payment and its relation to overall productivity.

[232] Although this is in some part due to the bi-weekly magazine Chinese Entrepreneur (zhongguo qiyejia) being counted as an academic journal, which is somewhat dubious; one single researcher at this institute is a very prolific author for this magazine and wrote at least 14 such pieces in 2010. Some of the other cavaeats mentioned above apply here as well.

[233] See the official website of *Contemporary International Relations* (Chinese edition), available at <http://www.cicir.ac.cn/chinese/bookView.aspx?cid=136>.

publishing operations, bolstering academic productivity. Overall, between one half and two thirds of all articles published by the observed institutes appear in core journals, attesting to their quality.[234]

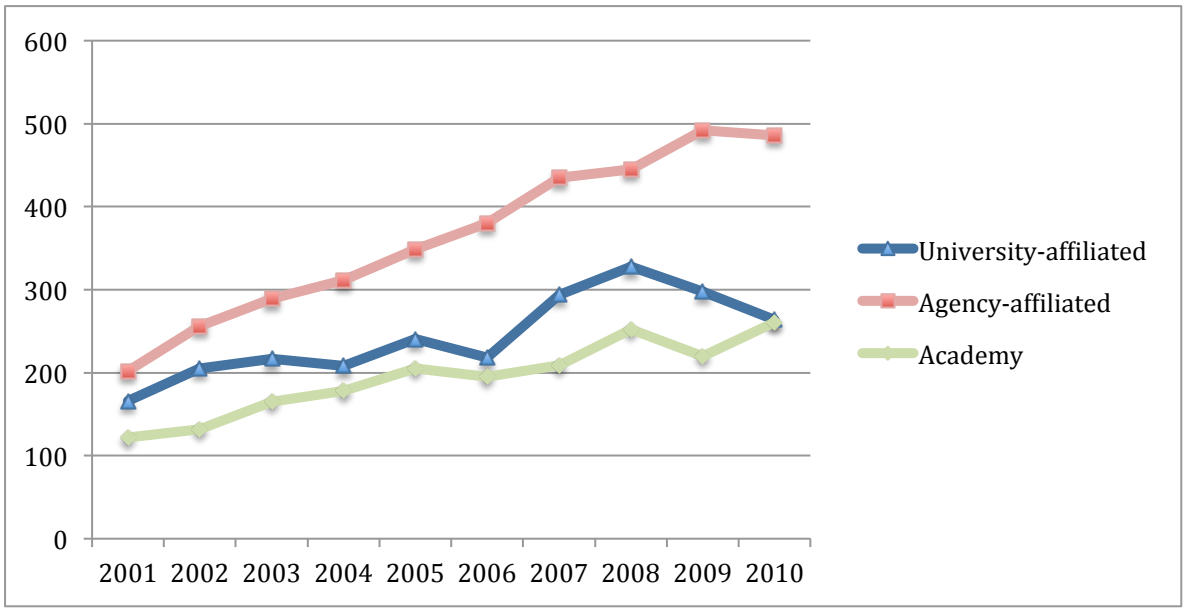

Fig. 7.3: Number of publications per organizational group (aggregated from institutes), 2001-2010. Source: author´s own compilation of CAJ data.

A third feature becomes apparent when cases are grouped according to shared organizational characteristics. We can again broadly distinguish between university-affiliated institutes and research centers (CFAU´s IIR, Fudan´s CAS and Beida´s SIS), institutes that are part of comprehensive academies like CASS and SASS, and specialized institutes affiliated to ministries (CIIS and CICIR) or local governments (SIIS). Notably, the institutes that have historically been most strongly involved in policy analysis and the provision of internal advice have nowadays also emerged as key players in academia and boosted the highest increases in publications (fig. 5). On the one hand, the adoption of „scientific development" has apparently led decisionmakers to demand a higher academic standard from policy-relevant research projects, and institutes have reacted to this as their overall environment has become more competitive.[235] On the other hand, it is important not to equate „academic" with „theory-driven" research, as is often done in the West. While both the adoption of Western theories as well as efforts to develop an indigenous Chinese IR theory may have left a slight imprint on the relevant publications, descriptive or atheoretical analytical approaches still dominate. This can be seen as a side-effect of the stronger representation of non-universitary institutes: figure 6 gives the estimated share of

[234] The figures were also derived from CAJ, by narrowing the overall results for publication down to core journals only. There do not seem to be pronounced differences between individual institutes, especially when accounting for significant year-to-year fluctuation in institutes with a smaller overall publication count. Additionally, a presumed database error that results in almost no hits for core journals in 2008 makes comparisons over time difficult.

[235] According to interviews conducted with researchers and administrators at these institutes, Chinese decisionmakers have come to rely on academic status and visibility as the primary metric of gauging their usuefulness, in tune with the overall technocratic bent of China´s most recent generation of leadership.

theory-oriented articles among all publications in the observed period (2001-2010), both for the individual institutes as well as aggregate values for each specific group.[236]

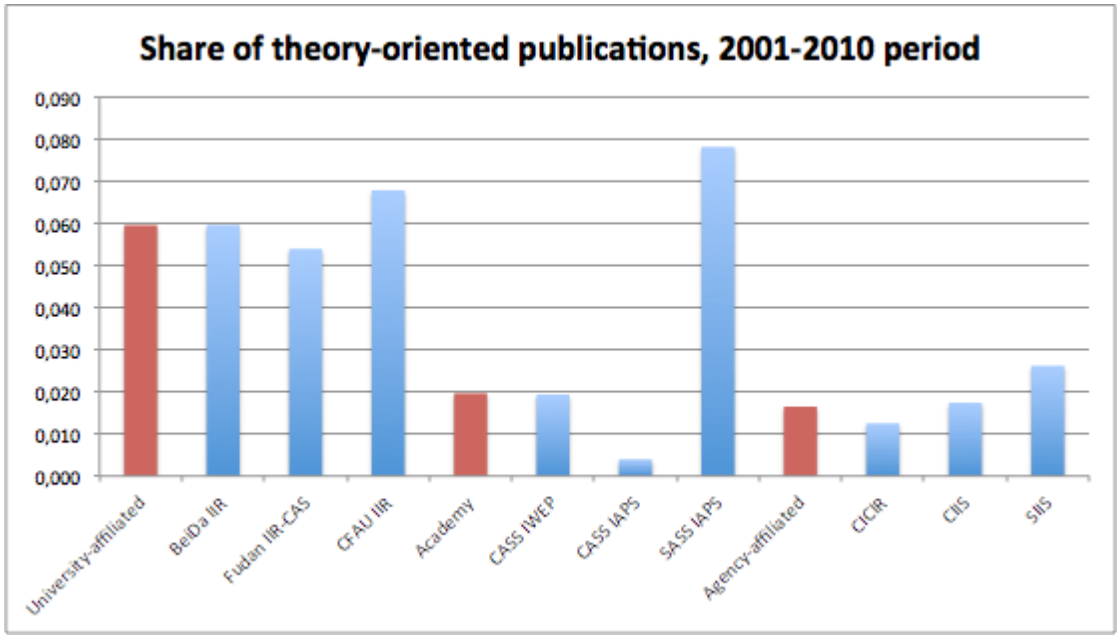

Fig. 7.4: Share of theory-oriented journal articles per institute and organizational group, 2001-2010. Source: author´s own compilation of CAJ data.

Acknowledging the generally low share of theory-driven articles, pronounced differences between the three groups are still apparent. Perhaps unsurprisingly, university-affiliated institutes are much more likely to produce such material than either of the other two groups. This is most likely due to a combination of reasons: first, universities have the greatest degree of liberty when it comes to allocating their general budget and are least dependent on government-sponsored contract work, although the share of the latter has been increasing.[237] Young researchers, who are the most likely to pursue theory-guided research (and, conversely, the least likely to succeed in open bidding for more applied contract research) usually have more opportunities to obtain funding for such projects from university departments that their colleagues at specialized institutes may lack. While CASS also has a similar system to aid young academics, their project funding is still more strongly determined by direct government input, and hence less receptive to strongly theory-oriented proposals.

[236] This is done by searching the articles´ abstracts for the Chinese terms for the leading „schools“ of IR theory: Realism (xianshizhuyi), Liberalism (ziyouzhuyi), Constructivism (jiangouzhuyi) and Marxism (makesizhuyi). A match for any of these terms results in an article being classified as theory-oriented, multiple occurences of several terms in the same abstract (i.e., in articles discussing several contending schools) are counted as a single match. While the abovementioned four terms do not exhaustively cover the whole range of IR theory, they are by far the most prominent in China and represent the vast majority of theory-guided publications in this field (see Johnston (2003), Shambaugh (2011), Wang (2002)). The very low overall share of theory-oriented articles is also in line with the findings of the aforementioned authors.

[237] See section 2 for details on funding sources and how they differ between organizational subgroups. An overall trend towards less reliance on block grants and more open bidding for projects and funding has been characteristic for all institutes, but universities have been consistently ahead of the curve on this process.

Second, university-based researchers are least involved in providing policy advice and internal reports, since their institutes usually lack the administrative channels to do so (CFAU may be an exception here). Accordingly, they have the greatest liberty to employ concepts and theories that are exclusively targeted at an academic audience, and are far more likely to derive career advantages from such publications. Third, scholars at university research centers almost invariably hold Ph.D.s or are in the process of obtaining them, and are therefore more likely to have been extensively exposed to theoretical frameworks in the field of IR. While agency-affiliated institutes have also bolstered their ranks with well-educated academics over the past decade, they are still lagging behind in comparison. Academies - which do, similar to universities, have internal funding opportunities for basic research - are in between, while institutes that are closely affiliated with specific government agencies have the lowest overall share of theoretical contributions, although the difference between the two is not as pronounced. Interestingly, there is considerable variance between two very similar institutes in this group: the Chinese Academy of Social Science´s Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies and its Shanghai-based counterpart, with the two boasting the lowest and highest shares of theory-oriented articles in the sample, respectively.[238] Since institutes with a traditional area studies focus would have been expected to be less engaged in theoretical debates in IR, the Shanghai IAPS should probably be regarded as the anomaly here. Finally, as one would expect, institutes that are affiliated with a government agency and which have an analytical pedigree bring up the rear in this metric, although there are again differences within the group. Notably, another Shanghai-based institute (SIIS) sticks out in this group for its above-average share of theoretical contributions. Although the data is not sufficient to explore to examine the impact of geography in detail, it is possible that a greater distance to the capital leads to less frequent interactions with decisionmakers, and hence less pressure to keep one´s own research applied and policy-relevant. SIIS and CAS were also among the vanguard of institutes when it came to establishing ties with foreign partners, which may have led to an earlier exposure to and adoption of Western theoretical frameworks.[239]

The generally atheoretical nature of IR research in China does seem to clash with recent government efforts to develop and promote an „IR theory with Chinese characteristics“, and it remains to be seen if this program will change anything about the basic picture.[240] The increasing involvement of think tanks in academic work will likely continue to tip the scales towards applied research and policy analysis. However, at the same time, a subtler generational shift among the institutes´ workforce is underway, and the increasing prevalence of young, highly educated staffers with a solid background in theory may ultimately turn out to be a countervailing factor here.

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[238] More specifically, the CASS-IAPS published only two articles that reviewed the field of IR theories in general between 2001 and 2010, while the much smaller SASS-IAPS put out eleven such articles over the same period. Since the latter is a much smaller institute, the respective numbers are subject to stronger fluctuation, so these figures need to be interpreted cautiously.

[239] Notably, SIIS established a partnership with Germany´s Social Democratic Party-affiliated Friedrich Ebert Foundation as far back as 1978. Fudan University´s CAS, established in 1986, could draw on then-chancellor Xie Xide´s connections to American politicians to secure guest scholar spots and even financial aid from the US Congress.

[240] Since 2005, this issue has been featured prominently in the list of topics that the National Planning Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences (NPOPSS) announced as key projects in the field of IR. However, it is one of only few theory-oriented research efforts in this field, and the other ones mostly revolve around the application of Marxist-Leninist thought to IR, which few institutes are able or willing to handle nowadays. The historic association of „theory“ with closely related Marxist-Leninist or Maoist ideological thought that has been particularly notable in this discipline may also be another reason for the general lack of popularity of theory-guided research.

7.2 Policy advice

Unlike academic work or media appearances, which are always intended to be public and can therefore be easily observed, advisory activities performed by think tanks are much harder to measure in a meaningful way. This is mostly due to the opaque nature of the policy process in China, and most researchers themselves never learn how their input may or may not have impacted policy debates among officials. All advisory activities can be subsumed under two broad categories: first, the system of collecting and disseminating written reports, so-called „internal references“ (*neibu cankao* or *neican*); and second, the comparatively less institutionalized provision of in-person advice through lectures, briefings and commissions.

In institutes such as CASS, material for internal reports is centrally collected by the General Office and then compiled and distributed to decisionmakers, without the researchers themselves having a hand in the process. In fact, the only way they can be sure that it has been noted at all is when an official decides to write a "commentary" (*pishi*) on a piece, which is a comparatively rare event.[241] Specialized institutes like CICIR and CIIS forward these reports to their administrative patrons (and, in the case of SIIS, to the foreign ministry as well). University-affiliated institutes under the system supervised by the Ministry of Education are exempt from this practice, while CFAU is in a grey area due to its association with MoFA.[242]

The concept of these „administrative channels“ has in the past been used to estimate the influence of individual institutes, as well as to explain why they settle on certain communication strategies for advice (Zhu and Xue, 2007). These kinds of regular reports are usually not triggered by specific requests for information, but are mostly commentaries and assessments on very recent events or a byproduct of ongoing academic research. In addition, this category also encompasses non-public research reports that are the end product of a specific project undertaken on behalf of the government. Such assignments used to be given predominantly by the think tanks´ administrative patrons and supervisors, but this tight vertical integration has gradually been replaced by a more flexible system of open competition for research projects and the associated funding.[243] Providing internal reports remains a mainstay of think tank activity in China, attested to by the fact that they are considered equal to academic publications in the incentive-based payment schemes introduced by many institutes in recent years.[244] Unfortunately, statistics like the number of internal reports published each year are not publicly available, and instances of consultation or training provided for government agencies are also usually not announced by the

[241] According to a survey conducted by Zhu Xufeng (2009a), almost all contacted think tanks reported receiving less than five such commentaries on their reports per year. Considering the very high overall output of such reports, it is indeed questionable whether many of them are ever read by officials above the bureaucratic level at all (see Lu (2012)).

[242] According to interviews with CFAU researchers, the institute does not collect and disseminate reports on a permanent basis, but individuals are more likely to engage in it due to a channel for direct requests from the ministry, and more extensive personal connections with ministry officials.

[243] See section 2.2 for more information on how these administrative changes influenced the relationship between agencies and think tanks. The main goal of the respective reforms was to remove the inefficiencies and redundancies brought about by the strict separation between different institutes.

[244] Depending on whether an institute has a formal system for providing neican (which is usually not the case in universities, see table 3), such efforts are usually rewarded with points equal to average academic publications, and count similarly towards a researcher´s annual performance evaluation. Internal reports that trigger a „commentary“ by an official are apparently rewarded with an additional bonus, similar to publications in very prestigious journals (Lu, 2012).

institutes engaging in these activities.[245] Because of the lack of public statistics on the activity itself, it is necessary to rely on information about known institutional affiliations and the existence of formal mechanisms for the provision of internal advice. Additional information was obtained from two rounds of interviews conducted with researchers at these institutes in late 2011 and spring 2012, in which interviewees were asked to assess the importance of this work.[246]

Table 3 compiles this information for three categories: first, the official administrative patrons of each institute; second, the existence or absence of a communication channel for the regular submission of internal reports; and third, an overall estimate of the importance of this activity for the researchers employed at the institute.

Institute	**Affiliation/Supervising organ**	**Fixed channels for internal reports**	**Importance of internal reports**
Beida IIR	Ministry of Education (MoE)	No	low-medium
CFAU IIR	MoFA	No	low
Fudan CAS	MoE	No	low
CASS-IAPS	State Council, Central Propaganda Dept.	Yes	medium
CASS-IWEP	State Council, Central Propaganda Dept.	Yes	medium
SASS-IAPS	Shanghai municipal government	Yes	low-medium
CIIS	MoFA	Yes	medium
CICIR	Ministry of State Security	Yes	medium-high?
SIIS	Shanghai municipal government (unofficially also MoFA)	Yes	medium

Table 7.1: Administrative linkages and structures for the provision of internal reports. Source: author´s own compilation of data from interviews and institute websites.

The most obvious and notable difference is again the one between universities and institutes belonging to either of the other two groups. Since Chinese universities are usually constituted under the system headed by the Ministry of Education, they lack a direct

[245] Consultations in particular are also an activity in which researchers are usually free to engage on their own accord, which means that many of these activities are not recorded by the institutes themselves in the first case. This kind of work is highly attarctive to academics because of the high payments associated with it, especially compared to their often rather low basic salary.

[246] CICIR is an exception here, since its scholars are officially forbidden from providing information about work procedures. Hence, it is necessary to rely on how researchers employed at other institutes see this particular case.

administrative channel to state organs that are involved in the making of foreign policy. This does not mean that scholars at these institutes will never submit such reports, but the absence of an institutional mechanism suggests that this activity is of relatively minor importance - an assessment that was corroborated by statements from individual researchers.[247]

Besides the submission of written reports to a mostly anonymous audience of officials, individual scholars who have attained prominence in their fields may be singled out to give direct input to decisionmakers. Early into his tenure as secretary general of the CCP, Hu Jintao instituted a lecture series for the senior leadership known as „study sessions" (*jiti xuexi*): almost every month, two well-known scholars would give a talk to the assembled Politburo to provide them with a background on specific policy-related topics ranging from rural development to national security.[248] These are mostly restricted to providing a very general overview of the field, as most of the issue-specific competence and decisionmaking power rests with the specialized „leading small groups" (*lingdao xiaozu*) that supervise policy subfields.[249] Invitations to give a lecture at these sessions are often issued to researchers at high-level think tanks that are directly attached to the State Council (such as CASS, the State Council´s Development Research Center and the National Development and Reform Commission), universities across the country (in particular prestigious ones like Beida, Renmin and Qinghua), or from smaller specialized research teams that are part of the state and party bureaucracy. However, since few of these sessions deal with foreign policy topics, this also limits the opportunities for researchers working at the institutes in this particular sample. Study sessions dealing with foreign policy issues more often than not have a narrow focus on national security, which leads to a preponderance of PLA-affiliated institutes at the expense of those specializing in IR or area studies.[250]

[247] The main difference is that university scholars usually have little career incentives to submit internal reports, especially when doing so would distract them from boosting their more imortant portfolio of academic publications. Accordingly, they mostly engage in these activities out of a personal ambition toinfluence policies more directly, or because of existing personal ties to officials.

[248] A full list of the study sessions during the 16th and 17th Politburo and their respective topics can be found at http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/8198/156261/index.html (in Chinese).

[249] See, for example, Cabestan (2009), Lai (2010), Lu (1997) about the centrality of these groups to the policymaking process, since LSGs occupy the junction of bureaucracy and top leadership. The foreign affairs LSG is personally headed by Hu Jintao, with vice-president and designated next paramount leader Xi Jinping serving as his deputy (Miller 2008).

[250] Out of a total of 121 lecturers, only four hailed from any of the nine institutes in this sample (three from CASS´ IWEP and one from CFAU). By contrast, the PLA-affiliated Academy of Military Science and National Defense University (NDU), which are China´s top institutions for non-technological military research (Gill and Mulvenon 2002) dispatched eight and four lecturers to study sessions, respectively.

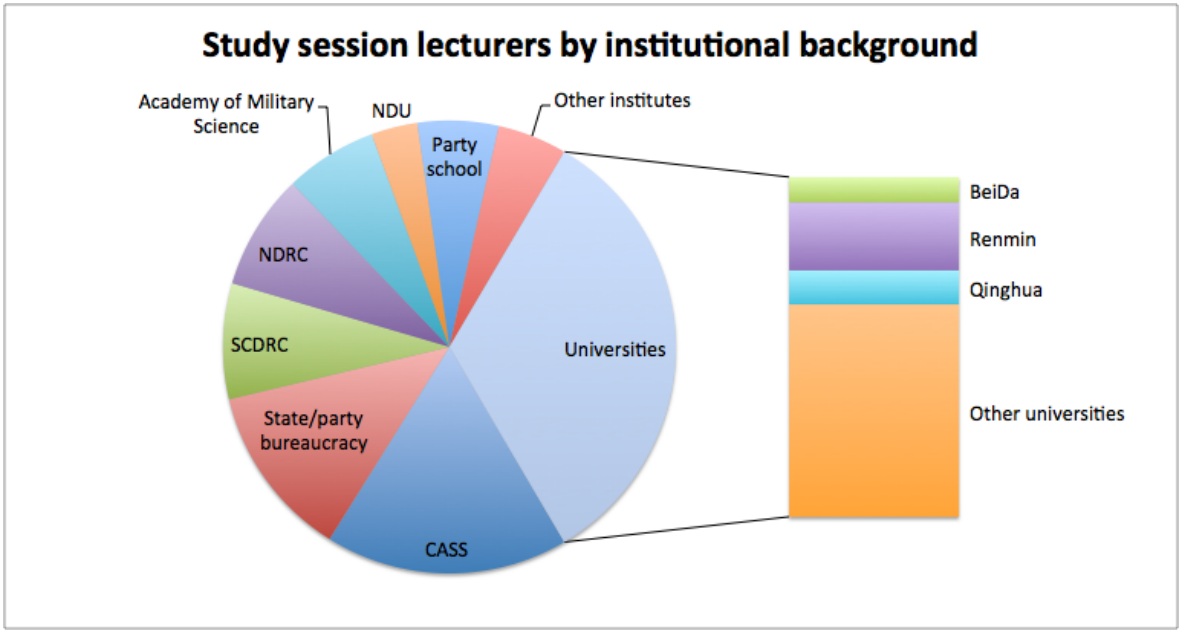

Fig. 7.5: Institutional affiliation of lecturers at the collective study sessions of the 16th and 17th Politburo (2002-2010). Source: author´s own compilation of data from People´s Daily online (see previous page for details).

Outstanding scholars are also occasionally summoned to brief individual officials in more detail, although this is mostly done on an ad-hoc basis unless deeper personal relationships can be established.[251] However, close association with single officials also entails the danger of being caught up in factional strife (as the crackdown on Zhao Ziyang´s brain trusts showed), although this problem is probably much less pronounced in foreign rather than economic or social policy, as the former is not as big an intraparty fault line. Additionally, a too close relationship with officials can also result in a diminished stature among one´s academic peers, although opinions in the scholarly community about this kind of direct involvement in politics are split.[252]A less contentious area is the provision of advice to the bureaucratic rather than the political establishment, and the frequency of these exchanges has also increased in recent years. Nowadays, it is not uncommon for think tank staffers to participate in projects conducted at government agencies, or to take up temporary jobs there in order to provide more extensive consultation. While these opportunities come as a result of the eroding barriers separating public work units from each other, direct administrative linkages are still important as channels for these exchanges as well.[253]

[251] See, for example, Glaser and Medeiros (2007) for a detailed study on how researcher Zheng Bijian was able to provide a direct impulse for China´s "peaceful rise" doctrine due to his close relationship with Hu Jintao and other members of the Central Committee.

[252] According to interviews conducted with Chinese researchers, university scholars are particularly likely to view interactions with officials as a distraction from academic duties, or even an outright violation of the ethos of independent scholarship. Such views are much less common in institutes that have historically had a close relationship with government agencies, like CIIS and SIIS.

[253] For example, CFAU´s staff are frequently embedded with Chinese embassies around the globe. Since CFAU is also the most important training ground for China´s foreign service and many current diplomats attended it, this also provides an additional network of personal connections that may facilitate these exchanges.

Apart from regular administrative linkages and individual contacts, there is at least one permanent high-profile gremium that provides regular input at the ministerial level: the so-called „Foreign Policy Advisory Committee“ (*waijiao zhengce zixun weyuanhui*) attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. First established in 2008, it is currently made up of 31 members (22 former ambassadors and 9 scholars), among them the leaders of Beida´s IIR, CIIS, CASS-IWEP, SIIS, CICIR and CFAU. However, it is unclear to what extent this committee is actually able to influence the policymaking process, as MoFA is mostly engaged in policy implementation rather than formulation. The available information about the activities of this group also suggests that its focus is mostly on informal diplomacy and interpreting and explaining policy to the public.[254]

7.3 Propaganda

7.3.1 Internal propaganda

The third major role of think tanks is their work in the field of propaganda or advocacy, trying to sway public opinion towards accepting policies favored by the institutes and their patrons. In order to do so, it is imperative to establish and maintain a steady presence in media outlets reporting on their area of expertise. This is an area where differences between Chinese and Western think tanks can be expected to be especially pronounced due to the much more restricted media environment in which the former have to operate, and it warrants special attention. This field is in many ways also diametrically opposed to the often secretive business of providing advice on sensitive matters like foreign policy and national security, which used to be the main raison d'etre for many of the institutes examined here. Accordingly, the emergence of think tanks as key players in media reporting on international affairs is an especially salient phenomenon in their more recent development.

Figure 7.6 shows the number of times that all of the cases were mentioned in People´s Daily (*renmin ribao*), one of China´s biggest daily newspapers, between 1990 and 2011.[255] Because the number of occurrences for each individual term is still quite small for most of the 1990s, the aggregate count is presented to avoid cluttering the diagram. Table 7.2 compares the number of mentions each individual institute received in 2011, the most recent complete year on record. Additionally, fig. 7.6 also contains the number of mentions the most prominent government agency in the field of foreign policy, China´s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), received in People´s Daily over the same period. This figure is included in order to provide a frame of reference for two important context factors: first, as a benchmark for the overall extent of coverage which international issues received over time; and second, in order to be able to compare the media presence of think tanks to that of agencies that are directly part of the government. The latter allows for the investigation of possible replacement effects between expert commentary and official pronouncements.

[254] See http://fpag.fmprc.gov.cn/chn/ (in Chinese) for regular updates on the committee´s activities.

[255] This particular news outlet was chosen because of its extensive, searchable archive that allows for long-term comparisons of the popularity or importance of issues. Aggregator services like the ones introduced later on have not been in operation long enough to cover periods of similar length.

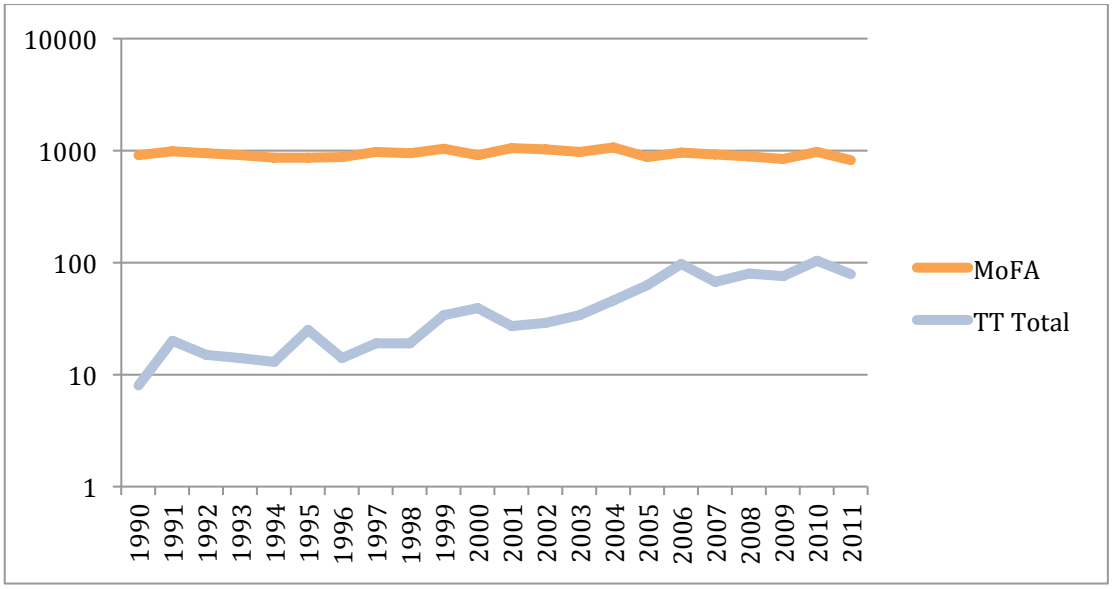

Fig. 7.6: Total number of mentions for all institutes and MoFA in People´s Daily, 1990-2011 (log scale). Source: author´s own compilation of data from People´s Daily archives.

It is immediately apparent that the level of coverage that MoFA received is surprisingly constant over the whole examined time frame, which suggests that even if international issues have gained prominence in Chinese media, the attention towards official government proclamations has probably remained stable. While we can see that think tanks have strongly expanded their media presence over the last 20 years (the total of 79 mentions in 2011 represents an almost tenfold increase compared to 1990), there is still a very pronounced gap with the attention that government agencies enjoy (MoFA was mentioned 823 times in 2011).[256] A major part of the reason for this gap is that state-run media in China are required to publish proclamations on recent events issued by government agencies, while the kind of information that think tanks provide is optional and has to be actively solicited.

Institute	**No. of mentions (People´s Daily, 2011)**	**No. of mentions (Baidu News, 2011)**	**Baidu mentions per capita (full-time research personnel, 2011)**
Beida IIR	13	5610	110
CFAU IIR	0	677	42.3
Fudan CAS	0	1600	114.3
CASS-IAPS	9	2430	48.6
CASS-IWEP	8	12235	94.1

[256] These and the preceding figures were obtained through a key word search of the People´s Daily online edition (*renmin ribao dianzi ban*) database, available at <http://paper.people.com.cn> for subscribers.

Institute	No. of mentions (People´s Daily, 2011)	No. of mentions (Baidu News, 2011)	Baidu mentions per capita (full-time research personnel, 2011)
SASS-IAPS	0	262	23.8
CIIS	12	10500	112.9
CICIR	29	22100	126.3
SIIS	8	3470	42.3

Table 7.2: Relative count of mentions in People´s Daily and Baidu News feeds during 2011; the latter is further divided by the number of full-time staff to enhance comparability. Source: author´s own compilation of data from People´s Daily archives and Baidu News database queries.

Table 7.2 and figure 7.7 also contain data from a different source: China´s most prominent online news aggregator and search engine Baidu News (*baidu xinwen*). The advantage of using this source is that is compiles news stories from a wide range of online news feeds, many of them associated with major traditional media outlets. This method also counts multiple instances of the same story, which is useful when trying to gauge how widely it was disseminated. Unfortunately, the service is a relatively recent development, has only been in operation since 2003, and did not cover the same range of outlets throughout. Of course, the substantial growth in online news feeds over the same timeframe also makes it difficult to compare cross-time series. However, these numbers are still useful to compare the various cases to each other at the same points in time. As can be seen from fig. 9, the extent to which they received media attention in this broader sample of outlets is quite uneven, but this is to be expected given the differences in size. When examining the pieces in which think tanks were mentioned more closely, they turned out to be overwhelmingly interviews or commentaries - in other words, pieces in which the media actively solicited expertise. Major events like conferences hosted by the institutes sometimes get coverage as well, but this is a relatively minor share. CASS is the only organization prominent enough to have its internal events (e.g., leadership changes) regularly featured in the media, but this level of attention usually only applies to the academy as a whole, not to individual research institutes. This means that an institute that has a larger number of researchers and covers more areas can also offer more expertise to media outlets and would therefore receive more attention. In order to account for this factor, table 7.2 gives the number of Baidu News media items mentioning each institute in 2011 divided by the number of full-time research staff, as given by each institute for the same year.

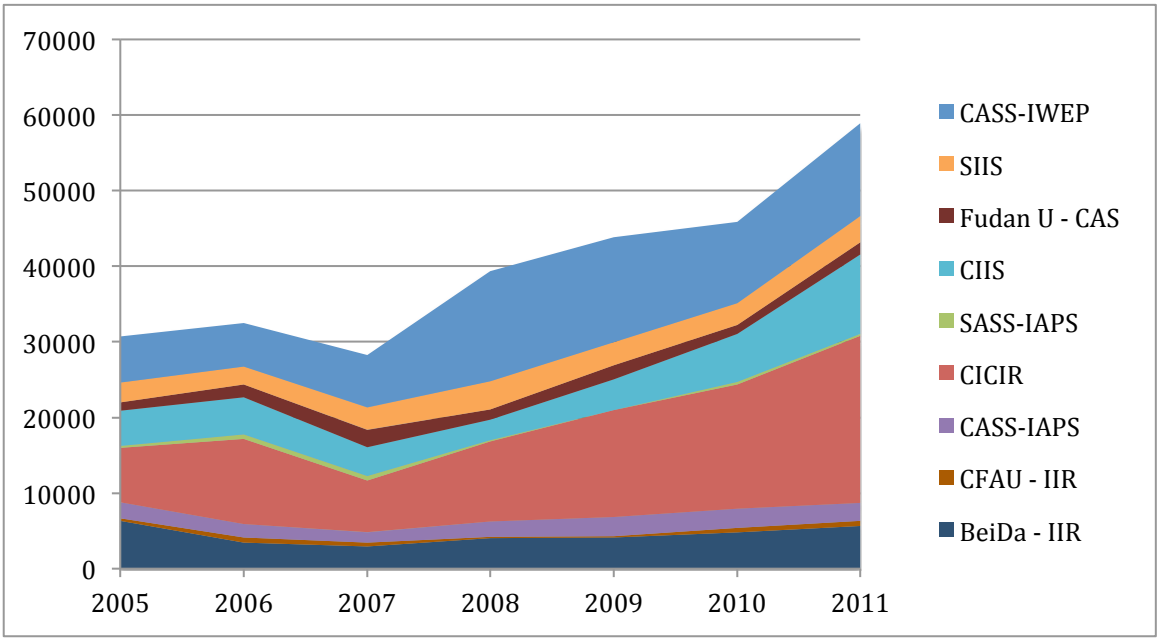

Figure 7.7: Total number of mentions per institute in Baidu News feeds, 2005-2011. Source: author´s own compilation of data from Baidu News database queries.

What becomes apparent from this comparison is that the attention an institute receives is apparently not primarily determined by staff size, as there is considerable variance in these numbers. Nor is there a clear association between organizational type and media attention: each group like universities, academies and agency-affiliated institutes features considerable variation in themselves. Geographical distribution may have some influence - SIIS and SASS were mentioned much less often that their Beijing-based counterparts - but Fudan University´s CAS does not fit this pattern. Here, the high prominence of its core issue (Sino-American relations) may be the determining factor.

The lack of an apparent connection between institute type and media attention is particularly interesting, because there are pronounced differences in the attitude which different kinds of organizations exhibit towards the media.[257] By and large, universities and their individual scholars are least interested in promoting their views in the media - no special incentives for this work are offered, their websites usually do not feature media-friendly news and commentary sections, and their organizational culture is most hostile towards „media scholars“. For university researchers, being heavily present in the media is seen by colleagues not only as a distraction from academic work, but also as signaling a lack of rigor and seriousness. On the other hand, institutes like CIIS and SIIS have made public relations and opinion leadership an explicit part of their mission in recent years, encouraged their scholars to appear in the media, and go to great lengths to communicate their opinions.[258][259] Academies are, again, in between these two

[257] The information in this section is again based on a series of interviews conducted with researchers and administrators at these institutes.

[258] SIIS mentions playing the role of "opinion leader" as one of its key missions in its latest annual report (SIIS, 2011). Several researchers at CIIS also stressed the focus on "public diplomacy" (*gonggong waijiao*) as the most significant reorientation which the institute has undergone in recent years.

[259] As a common feature of agency-affiliated institutes, their websites contain elaborate sections offering up-to-date commentary on recent events, republish opinion pieces written by their

extremes. While CASS enjoys special prominence as a well-known go-to think tank, this is counteracted by the tight controls enacted after 1989, and its supervision by the CCP´s Propaganda Department.[260]

However, it needs to be pointed out that the decision to pursue a high-profile media career is still left to the discretion of individual scholars, and the establishment of personal long-term relationships with reporters is crucial for being repeatedly featured. Since the Chinese government maintains tight control over (traditional) media, there is also less need for think tanks to be mobilized for swaying public opinion. Conversely, the kind of institutes that would have the strongest motivation to maintain a high media presence are private organizations that lack official ties to decisionmakers, and there are so far no notable cases of private think tanks in the field of foreign policy. Should this situation change - either through the establishment of private institutes or through a relaxation of media controls - it can be expected that this arena will grow in importance.

Besides the observations about the total extent of media activity, this section would not be complete without at least a brief discussion of the content that is disseminated to the public. While it is outside of the scope of this study to conduct a formal content analysis of the relevant documents, some insights can be gleaned from a brief overview of relevant media pieces dealing with a particularly salient international issue. This is not intended to investigate differences between institutes (as may arise from specific organizational cultures and editorial lines), but rather to establish a few general characteristics and clarify the meaning of "propaganda" when applied to think tank activity.

The most recent example of a major international issue that attracted strong and sustained attention in the Chinese mass media was the flare-up over the Diaoyu (or Senkaku) islands, an ongoing Sino-Japanese territorial conflict that erupted in September 2012.[261] Due to the intractable nature of conflicting sovereignty claims and the historically burdened and highly contentious Sino-Japanese relationship, the clash was widely discussed in the media and sparked a wave of popular nationalism. Accordingly, the high significance of the issue for both decisionmakers and the general public created a prime opportunity for experts to use their new platforms to disseminate background information and advice for action. Below is a selection of opinion pieces and analyses published by experts from several institutes, together with brief descriptions of the angles which they took on the issue.

Writing for CICIR, Ren Weidong (2012a, 2012b) and Chen Xiangyang (2013) mostly shared the same key points in their analyses: that Japan´s actions were undertaken in order to

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scholars for individual media outlets, and even feature video of interviews in the case of CICIR. Many policy analyses and academic publications are also made available to the public for free.

[260] According to Sleeboom-Faulkner (2007b, p. 123ff.), the post-Tiananmen crackdown on dissidents at CASS resulted in more than 100 disciplinary measures against individual researchers, the ban of several institute journals, and heavy pressure on researchers to denounce liberalism and Westernization both publicly and in academic articles.

[261] This territorial conflict is one among several highly complicated legacies of the Second World War in the region: the small group of islands was officially claimed by Japan during the 1st Sino-Japanese War, then ceded to the United States in the San Francisco peace treaty, and restored to Japanese sovereignty in 1971, whereupon both the PRC and Republic of China issued their own claims. The immediate trigger that moved the issue into the focus of international attention in 2012 was an announcement by the Japanese national government that it would purchase some of the smaller islands off their private owners, preempting a similar plan by the Tokyo prefectural government. See Godehardt et al. (2012) for an assessment of the most recent crisis, and Downs and Saunders (1999) for a discussion of the issue in the context of the mobilization of nationalist sentiments to improve regime legitimacy.

placate a domestic right-wing audience, that they had to be seen in the context of the Japanese-American alliance and US efforts to contain China, and that China´s response was justified in light of its sovereignty claims and the strategic value of the islands (the latter, of course, being a point on which dissent would not be possible). Ren articulated the most hardline position among the sampled commentaries, calling for pressure on Taiwan to join the PRC cause, and advocating continued civilian (fishing) and military activity in the vicinity of the islands. However, in their outlook, both CICIR scholars also reaffirmed the desirability of stable and productive Sino-Japanese relations, advocated for a reactive tit-for-tat strategy rather than escalation, and suggested a diplomatic approach by building a coalition with other states that have ongoing territorial conflicts with Japan (e.g., Russia and South Korea).

CIIS analyst Jia Xiudong, who also wrote repeatedly on the subject, echoed these sentiments in placing the blame for the flare-up squarely on Japan and reiterating China´s "unassailable" claim to the islands, while urging calmness and a bilateral dialogue (Jia 2012). In a follow-up article in February (Jia 2013), he presented a nuanced view of the Japanese-American alliance and argued that the US actually exercised a restraining influence on their partner rather than being a behind-the-scenes instigator. The article closed with a call for building international support for China´s case and concentrating its public diplomacy efforts on this aim.

For CASS, academics at the Academy´s Institute for Japanese Studies also stressed the importance of the upcoming elections in explaining the other side´s actions (People´s Daily 2012b). In a joint interview with a colleague from Shanghai Jiaotong University, the IJS´ Zhang Jifeng argued against people´s boycotts of Japanese goods or even state actions against imports, pointing out the strong economic interdependence between both nations and the danger of losing Japanese investments to other developing markets in the region (Sina 2012). In the spring of 2013, CASS scholars released a series of articles that were aimed at bolstering the legitimacy of China´s historical claims over the isles, which accordingly involved the Institute for History rather than its IR branch.[262]

Finally, CFAU´s Japan Expert Zhou Yongsheng also interpreted Tokyo´s actions as the result of a desire to avoid interferences by private landholders and to bolster the government´s nationalist credentials in the run-up to an important election (Xinhua 2012). Similar to his CIIS colleague, he also sought to dispel the notion that the United States were trying to instigate a Sino-Japanese clash, before closing with the (somewhat ironic) argument that ordinary Japanese had been misled by one-sided media reporting and were therefore ignorant of the validity of Chinese claims.

Without reading too much into this admittedly incomplete collection of statements, a few clear patterns are nevertheless visible. First, each one explicitly affirms the fundamental position of the Chinese government, and it is extremely unlikely that a Chinese expert could openly voice an opinion that would undermine it without facing serious consequences. Second, the arguments presented do not appear to be intended to fan the flames of popular nationalism or demonize China´s international interlocutors, but rather stress the importance of domestic political factors and aim criticism at elites. Third, all statements included calls for restraint, de-escalation and a diplomatic solution to the problem, pointing out the extensive economic ties that now connect both nations. While this is certainly sound advice, it is also notable for the liberal bent and focus on the constraints of interdependence that it exhibits, rather than a hard-nosed interpretation of international politics as a zero-sum game.

While this very limited sample is not sufficient to systematically explore differences between institutes that might result from contending paradigms or different political lines, the observations gleaned from it do cast some light on the content of propaganda issued by Chinese

[262] See People´s Daily (2013a), Wan (2013). IAPS scholars apparently published no articles on this issue, but the institute did convene an ad-hoc conference on the issue in September 2012.

think tanks, and their role within the respective system. While the statements described above are clearly intended to rally popular opinion behind the government´s position, this should not be confused with the common notion of propaganda as a tool to drum up nationalist fervor. Rather, it is a much more subtle approach that finds a common ground between the interests of scholars and political decisionmakers: first, the individual desires of experts to explain complex issues (and, at least in some cases, to dispel prejudices against foreign nations with which they are themselves deeply connected); and second, the government´s interest in not having its international negotiating position constrained by domestic outrage, or being pushed to commit to a hard line that could result in a disastrous conflict. This also sets Chinese institutes apart from the propaganda activities of non-governmental Western think tanks - instead of mobilizing popular opinion through advocacy and trying to push the government to enact favored policies, China´s think tanks nowadays specialize in shaping public discourse in a way that will deflect such pressures from decisionmakers.

There can be no doubt that performing this function in an authoritarian one-party state will sometimes require compromising the ideals of intellectual independence and integrity, although the same criticism can also be applied to advocacy think tanks in democratic societies. However, for the time being, this is the only realistic option available to Chinese researchers who want to do their part in keeping their country out of international conflicts, and it does offer them an opportunity to issue calls for restraint and pragmatism that could be very valuable in managing China´s rise.

7.3.2 External propaganda

Whereas the previous two sections have dealt with the relative presence of Chinese foreign policy think tanks in domestic media and the kind of messages which they seek to transmit to the respective audience, the propaganda role also has an international aspect that is an even more recent, but highly important addition to their portfolio of activities. As we have seen in chapter 5, the identification of China´s rise as a potential threat to some of its neighbors and the United States has been a major problem for Beijing´s post-Cold War diplomacy, and it should therefore not be surprising that think tanks were employed in tackling it. This not only concerns their activity in providing strategic guidance and information about the perceptions and motivations of other states, but also direct participation in efforts to project a more positive image of China abroad. The official Chinese term for these measures is "public diplomacy" (*gonggong waijiao*), although they can perhaps be better described as external propaganda activities.[263] Contrary to traditional diplomacy at the interstate level or the "track II" variety which involves semi-official international meetings between scholars in order to prepare official exchanges, "public" diplomacy is aimed at an altogether different audience - as the name signifies, the public of foreign nations rather than their official representatives.[264] While the target of these efforts is always a foreign civil society, they can be initiated by either the government or a domestic non-state actor.

[263] According to Wang (2008), "external propaganda" (*duiwai xuanchuan*) was indeed used to describe many of the same activities that are now considered core elements of "public diplomacy" before the latter term gained widespread usage in the late 2000s.

[264] According to Cull (2009), the term was coined as early as 1965 by retired US diplomat Edmund Gullion, and used to described coordinated efforts to influence public opinion in other countries, the promotion of international ties between private actors and intercultural communication.

Although the specific instrument of "public diplomacy" is a rather recent addition to Beijing´s toolbox of foreign relations, it is not entirely unprecedented. In the 1950s, China had already implemented a program of "popular diplomacy" (*minjian waijiao*), which was at the time designed to overcome the PRC´s diplomatic isolation by establishing contacts with foreign private citizens and organizations. These efforts were, however, not intended as part of an image-shaping campaign or even just directed at the foreign public as the final recipient of propaganda, but rather an attempt to establish unofficial channels that could forward messages to governments that did not maintain official relations with China. In 2004, MoFA had already begun to use the term "public diplomacy" and even established a department for these activities, but according to Wang (2008), the ministry´s understanding at the time was that related efforts should consist of explaining Chinese diplomacy to domestic audiences. Eventually, Hu Jintao and other leaders introduced the term and its common meaning to official discourse in 2009, designating it as a key part of furthering Chinese "soft power" and directing MoFA and its related organizations to coordinate the corresponding efforts.[265]

When reviewing this very brief history, it is important to note that the turn towards public diplomacy (and soft power in general) did not occur as the result of a top-down directive, but rather sprang from the suggestions of academics on how to improve China´s international image. Along the way of the concept's introduction to China and subsequent adoption, it had constantly been promoted by Chinese think tanks and individual scholars: American documents describing the concept had first been translated to Chinese by CFAU professor Zhou Qipeng in 1990; Fudan University CAS scholar Wang Yiwei gave a lecture on its theory and practice to MoFA officials in 2003;[266] former CFAU professor and (nowadays) CIIS president Qu Xing promoted it in an interview in 2005;[267] and publications describing the related activities of American think tanks (e.g., Wang 2011) suggested that their Chinese counterparts should exercise the same roles.

The official adoption of the concept ultimately led to the establishment of a whole new organizational platform, the Charhar Society (*chahaer xuehui*), named after its unusual location outside of Beijing that was presumably chosen to signify distance from the center of Chinese state power and strengthen the impression of independence.[268] Apart from this organization, the coordination of related efforts by MoFA has resulted in pioneering roles for the think tanks under its supervision - particularly CIIS, which has made public diplomacy a core element of its mission in recent years. The institute is already extremely well-connected internationally, receiving around 800 foreign academics, officials, journalists or other citizens and conducting at least ten international conferences per year.[269] CIIS is also ranked first among the member institutions of the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA, *zhongguo gonggong waijiao xiehui*), another supra-organizational platform made up of research institutes, universities, societies related to

[265] The first official to use the term was Chen Haosu, chairman of the People´s Consultative Conference´s foreign affairs commitee, on occassion of the Conference´s 11th session in March 2009. Hu first used it four months later in a speech to China´s diplomatic corps, indicating it had been adopted as part of MoFA´s official program (People´s Daily 2009a, 2009b).

[266] See Wang´s (2008) account of his own involvement and prior efforts to introduce the concept to China.

[267] See PDCEC (2005).

[268] Contrary to institutes like the ones discussed in this thesis, the society does not maintain its own research capabilities, but provides a platform for coordination and cooperation between scholars at different institutes (among them CASS, Beida, Fudan and CFAU). A full list of members can be found online at <http://www.charhar.org.cn/research.aspx>.

[269] Again, this is mostly the result of very high growth over the last decade - according to statements by CIIS personnel, the current numbers represent a tenfold increase over the early 2000s.

foreign and cultural exchange activities, multinational corporations and media conglomerates. Due to this position and experience, it is likely that CIIS will continue to spearhead China´s public diplomacy efforts.

The role of other organizations in this activity field is harder to gauge - most of them are involved in public diplomacy efforts as well, but probably not to the same extent as CIIS. Actions taken on behalf of China´s "public diplomacy" are in practice almost impossible to disentangle from "regular" academic activities like international exchanges, research visits and participation in conferences abroad, and are indeed perhaps best understood as an attempt to gain additional benefits from contacts that were already established for other purposes. Accordingly, it is not possible to measure involvement in public diplomacy by analyzing the international connections of think tanks, although having more of these certainly helps in pursuing the former.[270]

Some clues may instead be gleaned from their formal membership in the bevy of new institutions that have sprung up to organize these activities: for example, CPDA also includes CFAU, CASS and Beida;[271] and Wang Jisi (Beida SIS), Zhang Yuyan (IWEP), Zhao Jinjun (CFAU) and Yang Jiemian (SIIS) serve on its committee in addition to CIIS president Qu Xing.[272] When analyzing the Chahar Society´s roster of affiliated researchers, the first thing that is immediately apparent is that the vast majority of them are based at universities rather than academies or agency-affiliated institutes. Out of 54 profiled scholars, only two are based at CASS despite the vast size of this organization, and CICIR, CIIS, SIIS and SASS are not represented at all.[273] The three university-based research institutes in this sample show a moderate involvement, with three members from Beida´s SIS and two each from Fudan´s CAS and CFAU. The rest of the society´s affiliated researchers are almost all based at other universities like Qinghua, Renmin and a very large contingent from Shanghai Jiaotong University.

The most noticeable absence from these lists of participants is that of CICIR - despite its status as China´s largest dedicated IR think tank, it does not seem to play much of a role in public diplomacy efforts, neither through institutional participation nor through the efforts of individual scholars. The most plausible explanation for this lack of participation are probably CICIR´s roots as specialists in intelligence analysis and research related to national security, neither of which particularly lends itself to a high degree of openness towards international partners or maintaining a semblance of distance from the government.[274]

[270] One possibility to investigate this activity further would be to examine statements and editorials of Chinese scholars in international media, analogous to their presence in major domestic media as detailed in the preceding section. However, since "public diplomacy" is a very recent addition to the portfolio of foreign policy think tanks, it is probably too early to be able to gauge the impact of this directive on media presence.

[271] Additionally, a Shanghai Public Diplomacy Association (SPDA) is listed among the participants; this platform in turn includes SIIS and SASS.

[272] A list of CAPD´s members and leaders was recently published by People´s Daily (2013b).

[273] At least in the case of CIIS, the explanation for this lack of involvement is not a detachment from public diplomacy efforts, but rather the fact that they pursue their own programs in this field, as described above.

[274] The same argument also applies to other prominent foreign policy think tanks like NDU or the Central Party School, which are not part of the public diplomacy system either.

7.4 Conclusion

Using the information presented in the preceding three sections, it is possible to approximately map the relative position of China´s foreign policy research institutes within the triangular continuum described in chapter 2. Figure 7.8 gives a simple visualization using the triangular spectrum presented in chapter 2, and showing where individual cases should be placed according to the priorities which they place on each role or field of activity. It should be noted that this diagram is just intended to provide an at-a-glance overview of the rough position of all cases, and these were placed on the spectrum at the author´s personal judgement rather than determining their exact position through mathematical means. While it would be possible to derive the necessary figures for the two aspects of activity for which quantitative indicators are available (academic publications and media presence), this is unfortunately not possible for the still very important advisory role, and complete information would be necessary for exact placement.[275] Acknowledging these shortcomings, this mode of visualization is useful because it incorporates information derived by qualitative means,[276] and because is helpful as a reference for the discussion below.

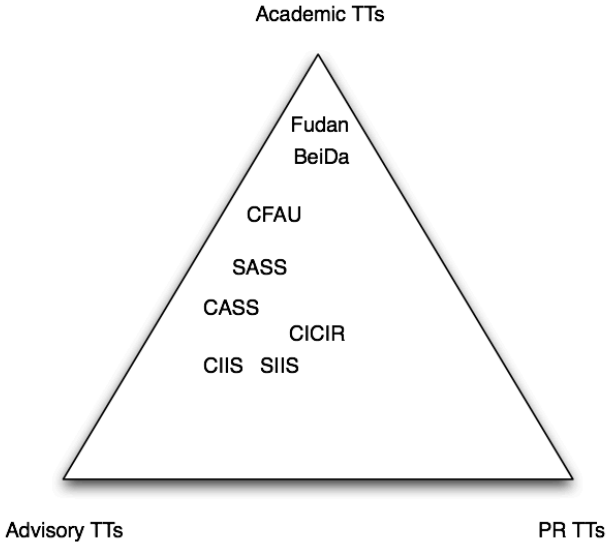

Fig. 7.8: Estimated position of analyzed cases according to relative priority of different roles

First, university-affiliated institutes (Beida, Fudan´s CAS, CFAU) are most closely situated to one of the extreme points (the academic one), and have also experienced the least change in their roles over time. Their focus is and has been primarily academic, while policy

[275] While Chinese think tanks maintain statistics on the provision of internal reports, these are considered sensitive information and usually unavailable to foreign researchers. Chinese scholars are given slightly better access - for example, Zhu Xufeng (2009) has been able to gain insights into work on non-public projects through his research in state agencies to which think tanks report their annual activities, enabling him to present some aggregate information.

[276] For example, a routine part of my interviews was to ask researchers and administrators to locate their own institute relative to others when it came to the relative importance of academic work or media presence. These statements were cross-checked against each other and compared to the information presented in the preceding sections of this chapter for consistency.

advice and particularly PR are minor activities pursued mostly on an individual basis. In this, Beida and Fudan´s larger School of International Relations and Public Affairs (SIRPA) have been very successful in both attracting highly esteemed faculty (e.g., Wang Jisi, Wang Yizhou and Pan Wei in the former and Chen Zhimin and Su Changhe in the latter case), as well as obtaining prestigious research grants for key projects on behalf of the National Fund for Philosophy and Social Sciences. The high academic profile of their scholars also makes them interesting suppliers of expert advice and opinion, although these work areas have not been designated as mission priorities at the institutional level.

Second, academies like CASS and SASS continue to straddle the fence between advice and academic work. While their academic clout is seen to have diminished in recent years, their extensive systems for providing regular internal reports and their direct administrative channels to high-level decisionmaking organs (the State Council and Shanghai government, respectively) ensure their enduring relevance for the former role. Efforts at restructuring and enhancing competitiveness, most notably CASS´ „innovation project“, are currently underway with a specific focus on boosting academic research. Still, the growing importance of academic excellence and the increased competition from other institutes provide a challenge to China´s biggest and most prominent research organization.

Third, agency-affiliated institutes (CIIS, CICIR and SIIS) nowadays exhibit the most multifaceted roles and have also undergone the most changes over the last decade. Where they used to predominantly focus on providing internal advice (an activity that is still considered the top priority for them), these institutes have been very successful in raising their academic profile. Simultaneously, they are emerging as key players in public relations as well, providing their principals with valuable communication channels. They have also been at the forefront of establishing new issue-specific research centers and hiring young, well-trained specialists, reacting early on the demand for knowledge about China´s new challenges in the 21st century. Additionally, they have been heavily engaged in international network building with foreign scholars and officials, an area in which they nowadays seem to hold an edge over both universities and academies. This could turn out to be a decisive strategic advantage, as these networks and partnerships not only raise their international profile, but also give them an advantage when it comes to activities like track-II-diplomacy that China has shown increasing interest in.

In this variety of newly acquired and expanded roles, China´s foreign policy think tanks have come quite far from their original, Soviet-inspired roots as secluded organizations at the fringe of state bureaucracy that were subjected to ideological shackles, had no discernible impact on major policy decisions, and no platform through which they could transfer their ideas to the population at large. Having previously considered a very large range of political, environmental and internal developments that are plausibly linked to these changes, the next chapter will conclude this study by discussing how individual impulses and outcomes were related to each other, and which ones likely had the biggest impact on the development of specific features.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Influences on organizational creation and destruction

When it comes to the direct impact of decisionmakers´ interests on the development of think tanks, it is important to distinguish between factors related to their existence as independent organizations - the causes of creation and abolition - and those that had a more subtle influence on adaptation regarding their focus and activity.

In the former category, there is considerable evidence that suggests a primacy of domestic legitimation interests over foreign policy strategies, no just as far as think tanks in general are concerned, but also for the narrow subsample of foreign policy think tanks. In most of the observed cases, the dates of their initial establishment, closure and subsequent reopening coincide closely with very distinct periods in the regime´s domestic strategy: the period between 1949 and 1958, marked by pragmatic development and imitation of the Soviet model, saw the establishment of CAS, CFAU, CIIS and SASS.

Conversely, the following period of ideological radicalization led directly to the decline of this first wave of think tanks, culminating in the Cultural Revolution that paralyzed the whole research and education system for years. Think tanks were by no means the only organizations which suffered in the 1960s and 70s, as the CCP grew openly hostile towards formal bureaucratic structures and tried to instigate the revolutionary fervor of the masses through direct appeals from the top leadership.[277] Accordingly, the abolition of China´s foreign policy research capabilities did not occur due to a decision that would have specifically targeted this sector, but was rather an unfortunate consequence of a broader political campaign against "experts" and the desire to replace bureaucratic procedures with mass action. Additionally, there were few incentives to continue maintaining these capabilities, as the lack of trained personnel, the insistence on a single framework for analysis and most importantly the monopolization of decisionmaking power in a small, sealed-off circle had never allowed them to live up to their potential. The fact that this development was not final again attests to the importance of domestic factors: the drastic shift in leadership priorities back towards developmental goals in the early reform era (late 1970s to 1980s) led to the quick resurrection of previous organizational capabilities, sometimes in a slightly different form.

To be sure, there are a few notable exceptions to this general rule, or instances in which the regime´s foreign policy orientation was more important for processes of creation and destruction: for one, the establishment of CAS´ and Beida´s area studies institutes in 1961-1963 (which would later form much of the basis for CASS´ international studies division and the SIS) can be directly traced to the strategy of reaching out to nonaligned nations in the third world which Mao had embarked on in the early 1960s. Likewise, the strong focus on Sino-American relations in the 1980s created both the demand and the opportunity for the establishment of Fudan University´s IAS, a model that was at the time unique for its tight relationship and channels towards a foreign country. However, during many key periods of foreign policy realignment (like the Sino-Soviet Split or Sino-American detente in the 1970s), there is no evidence to suggest that think tanks played any role in it or that decisionmakers at the time showed much interest in their services. This did eventually change over the subsequent decades, but the primacy of domestic priorities is again evidenced by the fact that it took a drastic reorientation in this domain before China´s foreign policy think tanks could fulfill a notable function in the system.

[277] See Schurmann (1966, p. 70-72) on the CCP´s attempts to do away with state and party structures in favor of mass mobilization.

Of course, this conclusion stems in part from the study´s focus on prominent cases with a relatively long historical record, which went through most of the PRC´s often turbulent history. On the other hand, some newer additions to China´s think tank scene (most notably the platform provided by the Chahar Society) can be traced to the specific requirements of Beijing´s "peaceful rise" strategy. Due to the long-term stability of the CCP´s shift away from ideological transformation and the enduring primacy of tangible development efforts, it is also likely that foreign policy goals will be the more important determinant of future institutional changes in China´s related policy research establishment. Figure 8.1 visualizes the coincidences between strategic shifts and organizational creation (or major reorganizations) across a bisected timeline, with the upper half showing domestic strategic changes and the lower half showing international ones. Institutional destruction, as happened between 1966 and 1976, is not shown separately, but coincides very strongly with the most pronounced period of reliance on ideological legitimation.

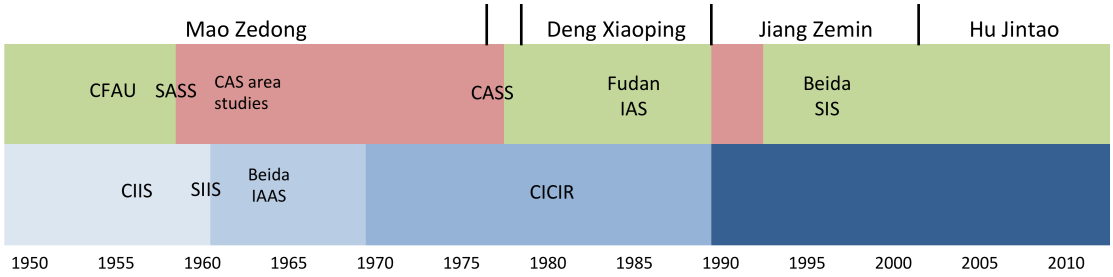

Figure 8.1: Timeline of strategic switches and institute establishments. The upper bar shows switches in domestic legitimation strategies (green for developmental red for ideological); the lower bar uses color progression to show the adoption of different foreign policy strategies (these are, in turn, challenger-aligned, independent challenge, status-quo-aligned, independent status quo). Cases are spaced out between both bars to avoid overlap, not to signify an association with any particular strand of strategy

Interestingly, organizational creation also seems to have almost no connection to the availability of key resources: Both the "first wave" of institute establishments in the 1950s and the subsequent reorganization and reopening in the late 1970s occurred predominantly during periods when the available supply of trained personnel was extremely low, and when the Chinese economy was just emerging from very deep troughs. In both cases, the country had experienced severe disruptions in the preceding years - first the lengthy alternations between civil war and foreign invasion of the 1930s and 40s, then the chaos of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. As a result, the higher education system had effectively ceased to function for lengthy periods of time, thus draining the pipeline of new recruits with the necessary qualifications. Additionally, practices like the ideological campaigns against intellectuals and their exile to the countryside further contributed to this problem by willfully squandering the already narrow knowledge base on which China´s research system was founded.

Similarly, the economic problems that had piled up due to wartime destruction and mismanagement not only led to a dearth of financial resources that could be spent on research, but also to a high number of competing demands and objectives for their usage. Conversely, the dramatic increase in prosperity and capital available to the state which China experienced in the 1990s and 2000s did not result in the creation of any notable new institutions, and even major reorganizations like Beida´s SIS in 1996 or CIIS´ absorption of the SCCIS in 1998 were mostly conducted by rearranging existing capabilities.

Given the associations between explanatory factors and the key events in organizational creation and destruction, it seems plausible to conclude that the latter are most strongly influenced by the party´s choice of legitimation strategy, with a developmental outlook providing the

impetus for creation, and an ideological strategy having significantly adverse effects. The same effects can also be observed when viewing think tanks in a broader context, as through the lens of relations between the state and intellectuals presented in chapter 4. This particularly concerns periods in which the state opted for outright suppression of intellectuals, as was - again - especially pronounced during the Cultural Revolution, but also apparent in the years following the 1989 crackdown, which led to the decline of CASS. On the other hand, shifts towards the cooptation of intellectuals, which are mostly associated with the pursuit of developmental strategies, coincide with the establishment of institutes - arguably because these are an effective instrument to exercise control over intellectuals while still profiting from their talents and skills.

Of course, the establishment of institutes is just one part of the picture, and arguably the less important one. As we have seen, the concrete activities of think tanks have changed quite a bit especially in recent years, suggesting that a particular organizational setup does not commit an institute to a specific task, but rather provides a general structure that can be adapted to different tasks as the need arises. Accordingly, it is necessary to move on to the considerably more challenging task of identifying the factors that drove these adaptive processes.

8.2 Influences on transformation and role change

When looking at how existing institutes adapted to changing conditions, the impact of the foreign policy dimension is considerably more pronounced than on the question of creation and destruction, leading to a murkier and more complex picture. Since adaptation is a gradual process rather than a discrete event, it is also much harder to establish plausible causal connections for each of the many shifts in role and focus which Chinese think tanks have undergone over the decades. In order to somewhat disentangle the high number of plausible causal influences, they will be discussed separately for each of the three fields of activity. As in the previous paragraphs, it is most useful to start out with the extreme points in the dependent and independent variables, try to connect them, and then interpret other periods against the information gleaned from these associations.

8.2.1 Propaganda activity

Propaganda activity is the aspect of think tank work that has probably experienced the most interesting reversals of fortune over the period covered here, compared to the steadier development trends in the other roles. Specifically, this activity is marked by two pronounced spikes in relative importance that are separated by a long period of dormancy, and each of which occurred under significantly different circumstances.

First off, we can clearly see a pronounced connection between the institutes´ output and the general political climate in the mid-1960s, shortly before almost all think tanks and universities were closed down altogether. At the time, the CCP´s ideological radicalization was already well underway, and the enshrinement of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought as an all-encompassing framework for exploring any social questions resulted in a complete domination of Chinese academia. Accordingly, many issues were addressed not from a case-specific angle or through attempts to develop theories, but rather through a heavy reliance on deduction from Marxist principles - the interests of other nation states and key domestic groups, for example, were seldom directly explored, but rather inferred from their economic constitution or class structure. It is hard to see how researchers employing frameworks handed down from the party

leadership could reach any conclusions that would actually have enriched the latters´ decisionmaking, or why senior ideologues would have paid particular attention to mere regurgitations of their own theses.

Hence, there is indeed a close association between ideological legitimation and the employment of think tanks in a propaganda role, albeit a rather inconsequential one: the CCP´s increasing reliance on mass campaigns, suppression of intellectual discourse and hostility towards formal organizations made policy research institutes ultimately superfluous, a factor that likely contributed to their intermittent abolition. Consequently, this activity was not a priority during much of the reform era. In recent years, it has gained more traction again, with think tank scholars stepping up their media activity, institutes publishing analyses for popular consumption, and - probably most importantly - involvement in efforts to build China´s image abroad.

However, this activity profile is considerably different from the earlier efforts, and much more strongly related to implementing an international strategy rather than regime legitimation at the domestic level. While the state-run Chinese mass media and the party´s gigantic propaganda apparatus are far more important in addressing the CCP´s domestic audience, the circumstances in targeting foreign governments, opinion leaders or publics are significantly different: here, think tanks can play a unique role in projecting a more positive image of China, at least as long as they are seen as having a measure of independence from the party-state apparatus. Hence, contrary to the earlier period, using think tanks in a modern propaganda role entails granting them leeway rather than tightly controlling their activities and publications.

Based on some of the public writings of Chinese think tank analysts, it also needs to be stressed that their participation in contemporary "propaganda" activity should not be confused with inciting the masses for political ends. Given Beijing´s difficulties in juggling domestic nationalism and the ever-increasing international linkages that form the backbone of China´s economic development, think tanks and experts can play a much more valuable role in this field: by informing the public about the complexities and intricacies of China´s bilateral relations, they can help to expand the government´s freedom of action in pursuing cooperation with nations that are otherwise embroiled in heated disputes with China, often over conflicting sovereignty claims. This perspective would identify the statements of think tank experts as a subtle element of the officially mandated political line, intended to deflect the demands of grassroots nationalists and keep them from pressuring the government into international conflicts.

While the argument above focuses on the most common notion of propaganda as a regime tool, there is yet another side to this development that is more closely related to the advocacy aspect of "propaganda" and to the individual agency of intellectuals. Contrary to publication requirements and the preparation of internal reports (for non-universitary think tanks), media appearances are not a mandatory activity for think tank experts. Engaging the public in this manner is a matter of personal choice, sometimes encouraged by institutional incentives. Accordingly, while experts have to take taboos and censorship into account when facing the media, they are usually not acting as official mouthpieces, but rather out of a desire to share their personal assessments, and - if possible - to inspire action through advocacy. Accordingly, the web of relationships between scholars, the media, the public and the party that has evolved over the past decade has arguably served to empower the former, and an increase in propaganda activity does not imply a return to the strict control of intellectuals and primacy of ideology that marked the 1960s and much of the 1970s. Mirroring the developments in other fields of intellectual activity, the system that has arisen is an arrangement between elites and experts for mutual gain, in which the latters´ effective cooptation can only be had at the price of granting a measure of independence.

Figure 8.2 summarizes the factors that have, not always simultaneously, led to an increase in propaganda work on the part of think tanks. In accordance with the explanatory model used throughout the study, they are split between the interests of political decisionmakers and context factors.

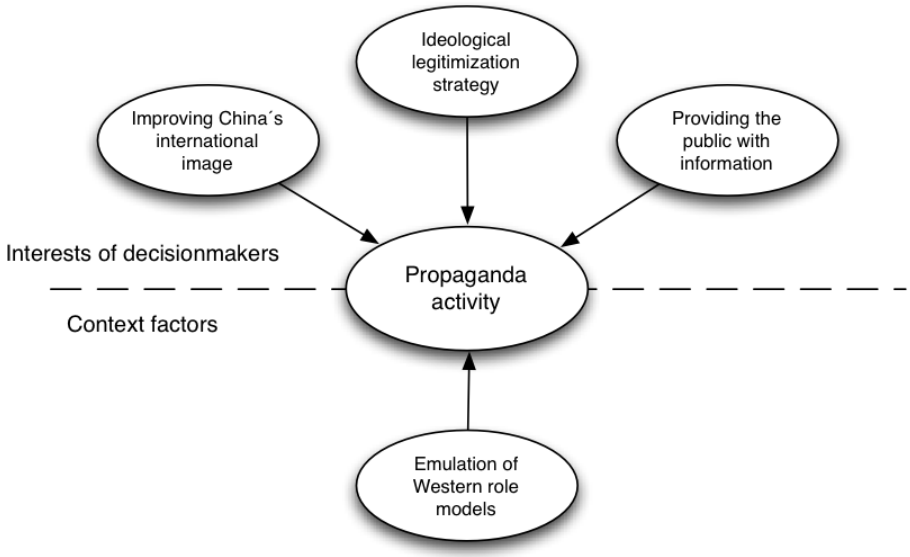

Figure 8.2: Factors associated with the expansion of propaganda activity

8.2.2 Academic activity

Overall academic performance and output are arguably the area in which Chinese policy research institutes have made the greatest strides - especially so in the last ten years, but also continuing a trend that began with the systematic investments in academic training in the 1980s. The centrality of education and scientific knowledge to the developmental model which the CCP embraced under Deng Xiaoping is evident from his actions and writings shortly before and after he took the reigns in 1978, particularly his personal initiative in establishing CASS. While there is every reason to believe that China´s think tanks benefited from the gradual lifting of ideological constraints on research frameworks and issues, identifying the positive impulses for this increase is significantly more difficult, especially with an independent variable like the one used here: at first, it seems puzzling why decisionmakers would invest so many resources into the expansion of academic pursuits instead of keeping think tanks tightly focused on advisory functions. There are a couple of answers to this question, each concerning a distinct factor that arguably contributed to the present situation:

First, it is likely that the CCP´s recent embrace of "scientific" development and decisionmaking triggered the surge in status that is accorded to academic publications. According to statements by researchers at several of the institutes, the academic quality of their work (both at the individual and institutional level) has become a key determinant of the attention that they receive from decisionmakers. Accordingly, think tanks need to engage in processes characteristic for academia - peer review, making findings transparent and open debate and exchanges - in order to demonstrate that their work is in line with the scientific standards of quality that their patrons have come to expect. When looking at various metrics associated with scientific work, the impact of this renewed push is readily apparent: publications from all observed institutes rose 70.4% between 2002 and 2010; the volume of the NFSS went up by a staggering inflation-adjusted 408.9% between 2002 and 2011; and total student enrollment rose by 186.9% over the same

timeframe. Given the elevated position which science, technology and policy research now occupy in the CCP´s development platform, this trend is very likely to remain stable and continue to shape the work of China´s think tanks in the foreseeable future.

Second, concerns about the system´s overall efficiency also probably played a role here: the previous practice of relying mostly on internal reports and vertical communication channels that excluded agencies in other "systems" (*xitong*) had encouraged fragmentation, redundancy and intra-agency fighting, all of which are detrimental to the task of bringing the best available advice to the desks of decisionmakers. Increased reliance on open publications, unless precluded by the sensitivity or secrecy of an issue, constituted a relatively easy way to achieve the pooling of knowledge across organizational boundaries. Platforms like the NFSS encouraged open competition between scholars while still maintaining centralized political control over the national research agenda.

Third, we have seen that the establishment of international connections and unofficial channels of communication has been another important aspect of the shifting role of Chinese policy research institutes, especially those with a focus on international studies. Many of these partners are institutes from developed Western nations (particularly the United States) that owe their own status to academic excellence and the ability to conduct cutting-edge policy research. In order to effectively cooperate with such partners, it was necessary for Chinese institutes to see eye-to-eye with them, to be able to understand and utilize the same (often highly theoretical) frameworks that they employ, and to subscribe to the same standards of open inquiry despite the difference in political constraints.

Apart from the main independent variable, it is plausible that this aspect of think tank work was especially affected by the context factors described in chapter 6: the education levels of employees, funding and the emulation of foreign role models. Among these, the association between education, research ability and related interests is the most obvious one. The introduction of Western research frameworks, formal qualitative and quantitative methodology, and the ability to study abroad all contributed to steadily raise the academic abilities of successive generations of Chinese graduates over the more than three decades of reform. This qualitative aspect is arguably more important than the rise in the numbers of new graduates, since - as we have seen - overall personnel levels have not increased in tandem with graduation rates. Of course, the heightened competition for entry-level positions that is a result of the sharp rise in graduates is another matter, and an important factor insofar as it has allowed institutes to maintain their workforce while restricting hiring to the best applicants.

Regarding the issue of funding, it is likely that its most important contribution is also not so much the increase in overall volume, but rather the diversification in sources that is accompanying the maturation of China´s research system: the ability to fund some projects at their own discretion that is especially pronounced among universities has strengthened the personal academic interests of researchers vis-a-vis those of their political patrons. Similarly, extraneous sources of funding have become available through the activity of foreign foundations and joint research projects conducted with international partners. While these partnerships still represent only a rather small slice of the total budget, they have served to increase the leeway of Chinese institutes and likely made a modest contribution to an international convergence in research agendas. As detailed in the preceding chapter, the inverse relationship between an institute´s reliance on direct government funding and the share of theory-guided publications in its total output does suggest that where academics are in charge of project funding, they are able to use these resources in accordance with their own interests. Finally, and echoing a point already made above, the conscious emulation of Western research institutes as an organizational role model also entailed opening think tanks up to domestic and international academic exchanges, and granting them the ability to publish key findings openly rather than constricting their circulation.

Due to the high number of factors involved in boosting the academic output of Chinese think tanks, they are visualized in figure 8.3 for an easier overview, again arrayed into those associated with the independent variable and intervening factors.

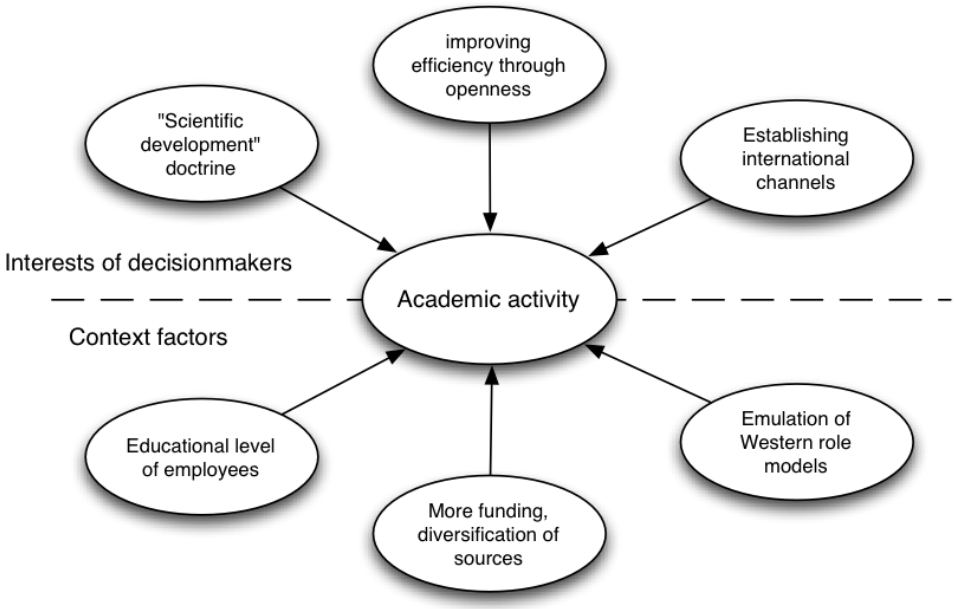

Figure 8.3: Factors associated with the expansion of academic activity

8.2.3 Advisory activity

Given the preceding observations on how academic and propaganda activities have increasingly gained traction over the last decade, the last remaining role necessarily had to experience a relative decline in importance. The direct provision of policy advice, which was the raison d´etre for Chinese think tanks since their reestablishment in the 1970s, still plays a major role, but diversification into other fields and the resulting institutional adjustments have tended to reduce its primacy. The result of this process - a declining reliance on advisory activity even as the overall influence of think tanks on the policy process has, by many accounts, grown - may seem paradoxical at first, but there are a number of arguments that can help to explain this discrepancy as well.

First, think tanks and the party-state structure to which they are appended have undergone extensive reorganizations especially during the later stages of the reform era, designed to increase the efficiency of their work processes. Some of these changes took the form of system-wide reforms: the abolition of the tight vertical linkages that isolated institutes from each other did away with wasteful redundancy, giving way to more cooperation and competition between think tanks. The introduction of bonus payment schemes created new incentives for individual productivity. In addition to the existing system for providing written input, face-to-face consultations have also been increasingly institutionalized with the introduction of "study sessions", advisory councils, and regular conferences and workshops attended by both officials and scholars. These changes have served to streamline policy input while simultaneously freeing up time for researchers to pursue other activities.

Second, as can be seen from the annual topic assignments, Chinese think tanks are nowadays supposed to engage in cutting-edge research on many of the same issues as their Western counterparts, instead of analyzing the broad contours of the international environment as during the 1980s. Since many of these assignments deal with newly emerging issues, they require extensive academic work before meaningful policy input can be provided, shifting the balance towards the former. Of course, the same developments have also increased the total demand for advice on the part of China´s decisionmakers, which makes the actual influence of this factor more ambiguous. Still, the most important outcome is arguably a change in the academic level of studies and policy analyses that is a corollary of the rising complexity of international issues.

Third, the same personnel shifts and new sources of revenue that enabled a boost in academic output have simultaneously undermined the more traditional relationships between institutes and patrons, most importantly the practice of posting former bureaucrats at think tanks and their dependence on direct budget appropriations. Moreover, while political decisionmakers are still in control of the overall research agenda, the hashing out of details and allocation of funds to specific projects is a task that is mostly handled at the institutional level, where senior positions are nowadays occupied by career academics. It is, again, likely that these developments have contributed to increase the gap in primary research interests between the political elite and scholars, with the latter gaining more control over the agenda.

On the other hand, there are also a couple of factors that have had a countervailing impact on the status of advisory work, thus serving to somewhat stabilize its share in the total activities pursued by think tanks. First and foremost, the range of other state actors and institutions which China now regularly encounters at the international stage is much larger than at any other point in history, owing to the expansion of its global economic ties and participation in international organizations. While many of the most important bilateral relationships still concern partners with which China has dealt extensively in the past (like the USA and Russia), its contemporary engagement of its regional neighbors and the outreach to developing nations in Africa and Latin America have created a renewed demand for the related area studies capabilities. As noted above, the same thing is true for many issues, especially those related to salient global governance problems like climate change, international finance, nontraditional security and nonproliferation.

Judging from these efforts, the pursuit of a strategy in support of the international status quo has placed a much greater workload on think tanks than China´s ideologically motivated challenges of the 1960s (or the aloofness of the 70s and early 80s, for that matter). This is interesting insofar as one would expect the creation of a comprehensive alternative order to be more demanding than an integration into existing mechanisms. However, the main reason for this discrepancy is probably the difference in thoroughness and, for lack of a better word, seriousness of China´s efforts in pursuing these strategies. Rather than deducing essentially everything from abstract Marxist principles, the contemporary work of Chinese think tanks is often relentlessly empirical and case-focused (and, as a result, far more likely to make accurate observations and predictions). If, in the future, Chinese leaders should indeed attempt to leverage their nation´s newfound power into actively reshaping or replacing the institutions of global governance, it is likely that this would result in even more demand for the services of think tanks.

Another ongoing trend that has served to boost advisory activities is the increase in the range of domestic actors that are able to influence the making of China´s foreign policy since the Deng era. This is, in part, due to general tendency towards devolution compared to the earlier approach of power concentration in the party´s innermost circle, resulting in the kind of "fragmented authoritarianism" described by Lieberthal and Oksenberg (1988). Depending on the specific issue, the foreign policy decisionmaking process may include actors and interest groups like the governments of trade-oriented provinces, the PLA, SOEs dealing in strategic resources like oil and gas, or private enterprises, thus expanding the demand for policy research and consulting services. Since not all of these actors have or had access to the research capabilities

provided by the institutes covered here, many of them maintain think tanks of their own. Accordingly, the entry of new actors into the decisionmaking process serves to cancel out some of the reductions in redundant capabilities that occurred as a result of better streamlining and research sharing among the core agencies engaged in foreign policy.

Perhaps most interesting about the corollaries of a more inclusive policy process is the fact that in the field of economics, a similar development has already led to the establishment of China´s first prominent private think tanks. It remains to be seen if the emergence of nonstate actors will, over time, result in private competition to China´s current system of state-run foreign policy research institutes, similar to existing capabilities in Western nations.

The relationships described above are summarized in figure 8.4, with the signs giving the estimated positive or negative influence on the relative importance of advisory activities. This is necessary because, compared to the preceding two sections and think tank roles, the impact of relevant developments in the interests of decisionmakers and structural context factors on this field of activity are not as unidirectional and clear-cut.

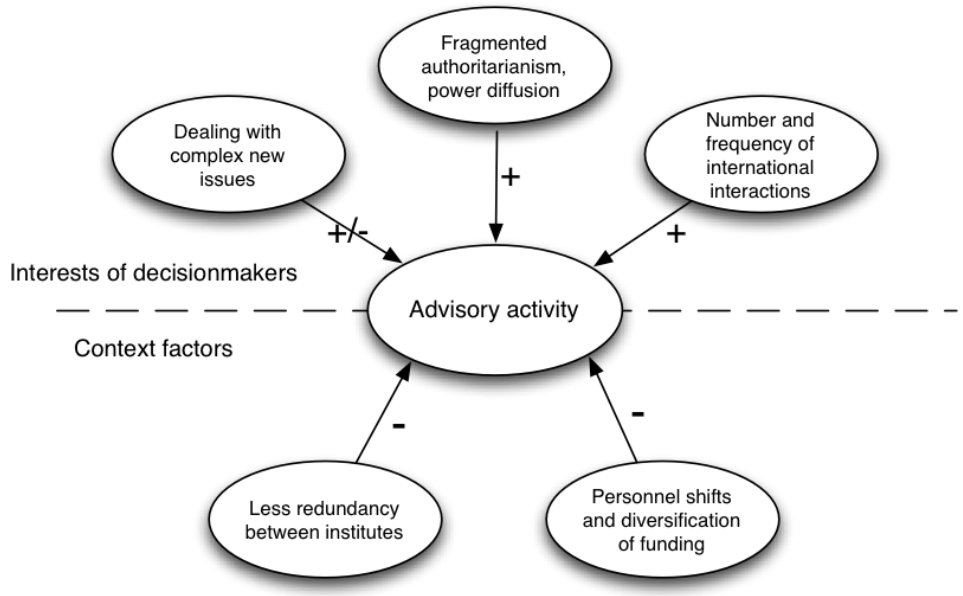

Figure 8.4: Factors associated with the development of advisory activity

8.3 Concluding remarks and outlook

There can be no doubt that China´s think tanks have, over the course of the reform era but especially so in the last decade, enjoyed a massive increase in status and influence. This, in turn, has been the trigger for the surge in outside attention that they have enjoyed over the last decade, with many foreign analysts focusing on the question of their influence on China´s foreign policy agenda.

This study has attempted to explore the topic from many different angles, and has hopefully been able to convey the amazing variety of roles which they now perform - instruments for the cooptation of intellectuals, purveyors of legitimacy, drafters of policy ideas, academic avantgarde, interpreters of China´s international position, ambassadors and transmitters of China´s desired image, to name the most important ones. I have primarily focused on how these

activities have changed compared to previous stages in China´s modern history, and which developments in China´s political system and context conditions best explain them. While this approach cannot contribute much to the examination of policy influence which previous authors on the subject focused on, I hope that this thesis will serve to rekindle an interest in think tanks as objects of study in their own right, rather than a backdoor to explaining policy choices.

Due to the range of these new tasks and the imperative of gauging their relative importance and institutional performance, it was not possible to examine each of them in the kind of detail which they would deserve, leaving a lot of open questions that could perhaps be best explored in narrower studies that only tackle one particular aspect. Many of these fields, and the positions of think tanks therein, are of high relevance for the study of Chinese politics and foreign policy: to name a few examples, the role of think tanks in regime legitimation, their contribution to the changing nature of IR research in China, and their ongoing efforts at "public diplomacy" are particularly interesting avenues for future research. The field of media activity can also be singled out as a promising object of study by itself, due to the recency of its addition to the portfolio of Chinese think tanks, its direct relation to contemporary regime and policy legitimation, and the large amounts of publicly available data that can be collected from the frequent appearances of experts. The public statements made by researchers, which could only be examined here in a cursory fashion, could potentially yield interesting insights in how public attitudes towards international problems are shaped by expert opinion rather than official propaganda if studied in more detail. Similarly, the question of whether these public pronouncements can serve as a genuine impulse on the policymaking process or are merely intended to rally public opinion around official positions that have already been decided upon is an important one for understanding the position of think tanks in China´s political system.

Due to the ongoing development of China´s think tank system, attempts to study it necessarily entail aiming at a moving target, but there are some significant changes that have actually served to make such observations easier. First and foremost, civilian institutes are nowadays empowered and even encouraged to seek out foreign counterparts and establish cooperative relationships. "Foreign exchange" (*duiwai jiaoliu*) activities are a key mission element of contemporary Chinese think tanks, and one that is vigorously pursued. International contacts, visits and formal exchanges have not only increased in frequency, but also in the range of backgrounds of foreign visitors: according to news items published about these encounters, they encompass not only scholars, officials and diplomats, but also journalists, businessmen and even sometimes civil society activists. This relative openness creates a lot of opportunities for foreigners to engage Chinese think tanks to learn more about their work in addition to background information on Chinese foreign policy or the international system in general. In the author´s personal experience, experts at these institutes are very frank and forthcoming about their personal views and ongoing debates within the scholarly community, despite the constraints of government supervision.

While this study did not attempt to explore the difficult issue of expert influence on China´s foreign policy, there are also a number of good reasons to focus on think tank activity related to this question: as detailed in chapters 5 and 7, public information about research assignments, lectures for officials, and ongoing projects do allow analysts a glimpse at the current interests of decisionmakers as well as their mid-term planning. To be sure, the Chinese policy process is still very opaque, and most scholars never learn who actually read their recommendations, or indeed if anyone did so at all. However, the broad contours and aims of future Chinese foreign policy initiatives are evident from these documents, and the related analyses published by think tanks do at least allow for the identification of one major impulse acting on the policy process. In doing so, it is important to remember that think tanks are nowadays expected to convey a particular image of China at the international level, which is likely to influence the points made in texts aimed at foreign audiences. Accordingly, wherever

possible, preference should be given to Chinese-language publications over the (still relatively sparse) English offerings.

For those interested in the academic output of think tanks, it remains to be seen how Chinese efforts to develop analytical frameworks of their own, or even a whole "IR theory with Chinese characteristics", will pan out in the future and whether they will find any resonance at the international level. However, for those interested in this project (or maybe the exploration of non-Western IR in general), studying the activities of the relevant Chinese research institutes is indispensable as well: Like much of Chinese IR research in general, this project is not just borne of a scholarly interest, but also from a political desire - in this case, to provide an underpinning that affirms the doctrines of "peaceful rise" and China´s role in bringing about a "harmonious world". However, it is precisely this multifaceted nature that reflects the current profile of Chinese think tanks: as an academic theory, a prescriptive doctrine, and as a PR vehicle to stress China´s peaceful intent, each of the three main roles which modern think tanks perform can, and are indeed expected to, make a contribution to this project.

Finally, while this project was conducted as a country study and did not feature comparisons with international cases, applying a similar explanatory model to a more diversified universe of cases should also allow for further insights into the general development of foreign policy research institutes. Structured comparisons could be particularly valuable here by keeping some factors constant - e.g., by comparing think tank systems from other rising nations like India or Brazil that were faced with similar new opportunities and challenges as their weight in international politics increased along with China´s. Conversely, comparing China´s system of state-run institutes to the predominantly independent Western think tanks would allow for the exploration of the effects of government control on their output and the relative importance of different fields of activity.

All of these conditions and ongoing developments should ensure that the high relevance of Chinese think tanks as a subject of study by themselves, as well as a gateway to exploring other issues, will extend into the foreseeable future. In the coming decades, managing China´s rise and its corollaries is likely to remain one of the biggest challenges in international politics, and one that is inextricably linked with the issue of expert advice. After several decades of marginalization and sometimes severe political repression, China´s intellectuals have nowadays arrived in a position where they can contribute the full extent of their knowledge to help their nation face present and future challenges. Accordingly, engaging them in constructive debate should be a high priority not just for academics who are interested in their work and how it relates to China´s international strategy, but also for foreign politicians, diplomats, journalists and entrepreneurs who wish to improve their understanding of a crucial actor in 21st century international politics. Beyond the information about their own work that I was able to obtain for this study, I have profited myself from discussions with China´s new generation of IR scholars by gaining insights into China´s role in contemporary world politics, and it has been an experience that I can only recommend to anyone whose research interests are related to the issue of China´s rise.

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10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Alphabetical list of interviewees

Name	Position	Institute
Chen, Dongxiao	Vice President	Shanghai Institutes for International Studies
Chen, Yugang	Vice Dean, School of International Relations and Public Affairs	Fudan University
Chen, Zhimin	Professor, School of International Relations and Public Affairs	Fudan University
Edelbauer, Regina	Project Manager, Beijing Office	Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Fang, Xiao	Deputy Director, Dept. of Research Management and International Exchanges	Shanghai Institutes for International Studies
Hefele, Peter	Director, Shanghai Office	Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Hu, Dawei	Director, Office of Research Management	China Institute of International Studies
Jin, Ling	Vice Director, Department for European Studies	China Institute of International Studies
Liu, Aming	Associate Professor, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies	Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
Liu, Ming	Executive Director, Institute of IR Studies	Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
Pan, Wei	Director, Center for Chinese and Global Affairs, School of International Studies	Beijing University
Pan, Zhongqi	Professor, School of International Relations and Public Affairs	Fudan University
Qiang, Xin	Deputy Director, Center for American Studies	Fudan University
Qin, Yaqing	Executive Vice President	China Foreign Affairs University
Qu, Bo	Research Fellow, Institute for International Relations	China Foreign Affairs University
Su, Changhe	Professor, School of International Relations and Public Affairs	Fudan University
Tong, Xin	Director, Foreign Affairs Office	China Foreign Affairs University
Wang, Shuming	Research Fellow, Institute of Eurasian Studies	Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
Wang, Yuzhu	Department Head, Department of Regional Cooperation, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Yang, Danzhi	Research Fellow, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Name	Position	Institute
Zhang, Jie	Department Head, Department of Security and Diplomatic Studies, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Zhang, Yifeng	Assistant Director, Center for SCO Studies	Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences
Zhao, Huaipu	Professor, Institute of International Relations	China Foreign Affairs University
Zhong, Feiteng	Assistant Professor, Department of Security and Diplomatic Studies, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
Zhu, Xufeng	Professor, Zhou Enlai School of Government	Nankai University

Appendix 2: List of NFSS research guidelines, 2002-2012

The yearly lists of research guidelines presented below were obtained from the NFSS archive, translated by the author and sorted into the following categories for analysis:

IR	General IR theory, abstract theory building and testing
SS	Strategic studies, developing policy ideas, analyzing concrete strategic problems and the strategic behavior of other countries
S	Security and military issues, traditional and non-traditional
G	Globalization and global governance issues
GP	Great power politics, analyzing the behavior and conditions of other major nations without taking specific account of their relationship to China
BR	Bilateral relations between China and other nations or groups of nations
RS	Regional and area studies
E	Economic issues
F	Finance issues
O	Other

There is, of course, some overlap between these categories, and some of the guidelines could have been plausibly allocated to several different categories. In such cases, I exercised individual judgement.

Year	Item	Translation	Cat.
2002	1. 恐怖主义、国际反恐怖主义斗争及对我国国家安全的影响	Terrorism, the global war on terror and ist influence on China's security	S
	2. 全球化与反全球化问题研究	Globalization and anti-gloalization	G
	3. 世界经济的周期理论研究	Theories on world economic cycles	E
	4. 新世纪中国国际关系理论发展研究	Development of Chinese IR theory in the new century	IR
	5. 传统霸权理论与美国的新霸权	Traditional theories on hegemony and the new US hegemony	GP
	6. 转型国家经济的比较研究	Comparative studies on national economic transformation	E
	7. 国际贸易的可持续发展研究	Sustainable development of international trade	O
	8. 全球石油供应关系的变化与中国的对策	Changes in the global oil supply (relations) and China's response	SS
	9. 东亚国家的城市化、环境、秩序与安全研究	Urbanization, environment, order (?) and security in East Asian countries	RS
	10. 布什政府关于美国对外战略的调整	Adjustments in US strategy under the Bush administration	GP
	11. 新中国外交理论与实践研究	China's foreign affairs theory and practice	SS
	12. 西方国际关系理论流派分析	Analyzing schools of Western IR theory	IR
	13. 上海合作组织研究	The SCO	RS
	14. 国际制度研究	The world system	G
	15. 苏联兴亡的文化透视	A cultural perspective on the rise and fall of the USSR (?)	O
	16. 新世纪的世界战略环境与我国西部大开发	The global strategic situation in the 21st century and the development of western China	SS
	17. 互联网、信息技术对当前国际关系的作用与影响	The function and influence of the Internet and IT on contemporary international relations	G

Year	Item		Cat.
2003	1. 新世纪初的时代特征与我国面临的机遇和挑战	Characteristics of the 21st century, opportunities and challenges facing China	SS
	2. 美国国家战略的调整对中国国家安全环境的影响	Impact of the US strategic shift on China's security environment	S
	3. 反对霸权主义与反对恐怖主义的关系	The relationship between anti-hegemonism and anti-terrorism	O
	4. 国际反恐问题研究	International anti-terror issues	S
	5. 建立公正合理的国际政治经济新秩序研究	Constructing a just and reasonable new economic order	SS
	6. 坚持独立自主的和平外交政策、维护世界和平与促进共同发展研究	Keeping up an independent, peaceful foreign policy, defending world peace and promoting common development	SS
	7. 全球化与区域经济一体化问题研究	Globalization and regional economic integration	RS
	8. 毛泽东、邓小平、江泽民国际政治理论研究	Mao Zedongs, Deng Xiaopings and Jiang Zemins theories on international politics	IR
	9. 中国的国际环境问题研究（当前国际安全形势下存在的问题，台湾问题中的国际因素，周边安全形势问题，加入 WTO 后的中国对外关系问题等）	China's international environment (problems regarding the international security situation; international facets of the Taiwan issue; periphery security problems; foreign relations issues after the WTO accession etc.)	SS
	10. 美国问题研究 （美国在世界上的实力地位，美国经济发展前景和危机趋势，美国的反恐斗争，美国经济对世界经济的影响，宗教与美国的外交政策等）	American issues (US global strength; prospects and perils for US economic development; the War on Terror; US economic influence on the world economy; religion and US foreign policy etc.)	GP
	11. 欧盟和俄罗斯问题研究（普京执政下的俄罗斯外交战略和政策；俄罗斯对外关系的新发展，如中俄关系、俄欧关系、俄美关系等；欧盟对外政治经济发展战略和政策；中国与欧盟的政治经济关系等）	EU and Russian issues (Russia's foreign policy and strategy under Putin; development of Russian international relations, i.e. Sino-Russian, Russo-European, Russo-American; European foreign and economic development policy; Sino-European political and economic relations)	GP
	12. 发展中国家问题研究	Issues regarding developing contries	G
	13. 国际经济问题研究 （汇率与经济发展问题，全球化与经济安全问题，新经济的曲折发展对世界经济的影响，石油问题，东盟自由贸易区问题，北美、西欧和日本三大经济体的经济问题及矛盾等）	International economic issues (exchange rates and economic development; globalization and economic security; the complicated development of the New Economy and its influence on the world economy; oil issues; the ASEAN free trade area; problems and contradictions in the three big economic zones (North America, western Europe and Japan) etc.	E

	14. 地区问题研究 (拉美和非洲的经济、金融和发展问题，中亚的战略地位和安全形势问题，巴以冲突对世界的影响，亚太形势，东北亚发展事态，朝鲜半岛的统一进程对周边国家的影响等)	Regional issues (Latin American and African economic, financial and development issues; Central Asia's strategic position and security issues; the Palestine conflict and its impact on the world; the situation in the Asia Pacific; the state of Northeast Asian development; the progress of Korean reunification and its impact on neighbouring countries etc.)	RS
	15. 理论问题研究 (当代世界社会主义运动的发展状况，当代资本主义的发展阶段问题，有关全球化的各种理论，国际人权对话，多边外交的理论与实践，国际机制与国际秩序问题，新帝国主义论对国际关系的影响，突发性危机事件的处理，各国安全决策机制等)	Theoretical issues (the state of development of World Socialism; theories relating to globalization; international human rights dialogue; theory and practice of multilateral diplomacy; international order and mechanisms; neoimperialist theory and its influence on international relations; handling sudden crises; national security policymaking mechanisms etc.)	IR
	16. 其它问题研究 (国际问题研究的学科建设与学科交叉研究，教育的国际化问题，全球化背景下世界文化多样性问题等)	Other issues (the scientific development of IR and interdisciplinary research; the internationalization of education; the diversification of global culture against the backdrop of globalization etc.)	O

Year	Item		Cat.
2004	1. 邓小平理论和“三个代表”重要思想关于国际战略问题的理论	Deng Xiaoping theory and "Three represents" thought relating to problems of international strategy	IR
	2. 全面建设小康社会与国家安全及国际战略	Buidling a prosperous society and national security and international strategy	SS
	3. 我国新世纪战略机遇期的外部资源环境与非传统安全问题研究	China's strategic opportunities in the 21st century, the external resource environment and non-traditional security issues	SS
	4. 我国与大国关系的中长期定位及战略发展趋势	Mid- and long-term trends in the strategic development of China's relations with great powers	BL
	5. 联合国在当今国际关系中的地位、作用与发展前景研究	The UN's current status in IR, its function and prospects for development	G
	6.国际组织中的政治势力集团与国际事务中的非政府组织	Political interest groups in international organizations and NGOs in international affairs	G
	7.“恐怖主义”产生的根源及我国对策研究	The sources of terrorism and China's response	S
	8.伊斯兰国家面临的挑战、发展趋势及我国应对策略	The challenges facing Islamic nations, their developmental trrends and China's policy towards them	RS
	9.经济全球化背景下的国际经济运行机制研究	The mechanisms of the world economy against the backdrop of globalization	E
	10.南亚次大陆经济发展与区域安全	South Asia's economic development and regional security	RS
	11.经济发展与均衡发展的国际经验及教训	Experiences and lessons from international economic and balanced development	E
	12.区域合作发展趋势与中国的参与	Trends in the development of regional cooperation and China's participation	RS
	13.世贸组织原则与国家经济主权）	WTO principles and national sovereignty	G
	14.全球化与反全球化问题研究	Globalization and anti-globalization issues	G
	15.发展中国家问题综合研究	Various issues regarding developing nations	G
	16.中国文化走向世界与新时期我国的对外宣传问题研究	The globalization of Chinese culture and PR issues in the new era	O
	17.西方传媒的理论、实践和我国的对策研究	Theory and practice of Western media and China's policy towards them	O
	18.美国对华文化策略、机制与手段	Mechanisms and methods of US cultural policy towards China	O
	19.美欧关系发展的新趋势及影响	New trends and influences in American-European relations	GP
	20.执政党经验教训的国际比较研究	Comparative research on the experiences of international ruling parties	O

	21.马克思主义国际关系理论研究	Marxist theory in IR	IR
	22.国际关系理论史研究	The history of IR theory	IR
	23.新自由主义在拉美的实践	The practice of Neoliberalism in Latin America	E
	24.美国的“新帝国主义理论”研究	US "Neoimperialist" theory	GP

Year	Item		Cat.
2005	1.马克思主义国际关系理论教材（可申报重点项目）	Teaching materials on Marxist IR theory (can be reported as a focus project)	IR
	2. 当代国际形势的特点及发展规律、时代特征研究	Characteristics and development patterns of the current world situation, features of the current era	G
	3. 中国特色国际关系理论建设研究	Developing an IR theory with Chinese characteristics	IR
	4. 国际关系与国际问题的方法论研究	The methodology of IR	IR
	5. 经济全球化背景下的国际贸易理论研究	Theories on international trade under globalization	G
	6. 经济全球化背景下的国际政治体制理论研究	Theories on international political systems under globalization	G
	7. 中国参与经济全球化的风险规避问题研究	Avoiding the risks of China's participation in economic globalization	SS
	8. 经济全球化背景下的我国文化安全和意识形态战略研究	China's cultural security and ideological strategy under globalization	SS
	9. WTO 框架下的国际贸易壁垒与我国对策机制研究	Trade barriers under the WTO framework and China's response mechanisms	SS
	10. 中美经济贸易依存度对中美双边关系的影响与制约研究	Sino-American trade dependence and its influence and constraints on bilateral relations	BL
	11. 全球与亚太背景下的台湾问题研究	The Taiwan issue in global and regional (Asia Pacific) context	O
	12. 我国外汇储备与人民币汇率机制改革研究	China's foreign currency reserves and the reform of RMB exchange rate mechanisms	F
	13. 人民币区域化问题研究	RMB regionalization	F
	14. 新形势下我国国防建设与经济建设关系的国际背景研究	International context regarding the building of China's defense and economy under the new situation	SS
	15. 中国国际战略与谋略研究	China's international strategy and planning	SS
	16. 东亚地区合作问题研究	East Asian regional cooperation	RS
	17. 东亚地区安全形势及安全合作机制研究	The security situation in East Asia and security cooperation mechanisms	S
	18. 拉美国家经济、社会转型过程中的重大社会问题与政府对策研究	Social problems and government responses in the economic and social transformation of Latin American countries	RS
	19. 欧洲一体化对世界多极化进程的意义研究	The significance of European integration for the global trend towards multipolarity	GP
	20. 美国新帝国主义与新保守主义研究	US neo-imperialism and neoconservatism	GP
	21. 美国的中国学研究	Sinology in the US	O
	22. 美国经济的现状及长期发展趋势在美国对外政策中的影响研究	US long-term economic development trends and their influence on US foreign policy	GP

	23. 日本军国主义的历史与现状及对中日关系的影响研究	The history of Japanese militarism and its influence on Sino-Japanese relations	BL
	24. 俄罗斯、中亚地区的能源问题及对我国的影响研究	Natural resource issues in Russia and Central Asia and their impact on China	O
	25. 新世纪的大国关系问题研究	Great-power relations in the 21st century	GP
	26. 经济全球化背景下的南北关系研究	North-South relations under economic globalization	G
	27. 国际关系民主化与联合国改革问题研究	The democratization of international relations and UN reform	G
	28. 新兴发展中国家（如印度、巴西）的崛起对国际格局及我国影响研究	The impact of the rise of new developing countries (India, Brazil) on the international structure and China	SS
	29. 世界战略资源共同管理机制探索研究	Exploring mechanisms for the joint management of global strategic resources	G
	30. 国家安全的科学、协调、高效工作机制的国际比较及对我国的借鉴研究	International comparison of scientific, harmonious and efficient national security working mechanisms (?!) and lessons for China	O
	31. 政党执政周期率问题的国际比较研究	Comparative study on the frequency of ruling party replacement	O
	32. 国家发展中的公平与效率关系问题研究——国际经验与教训	The relationship between justice and efficiency in national development - experiences and lessons	O

Year	Item		Cat.
2006	1. 马克思主义国际关系理论研究	Marxist IR theory	IR
	2. 马克思主义时代观研究	Marxist views on the current era	O
	3. 列宁“帝国主义论”与当代世界现实研究	Leninist theory on imperialism and the reality of the present world	IR
	4. 马克思主义民主人权观研究	Marxist views on democracy and human rights	O
	5. 国外国际关系前沿理论研究（如国际关系民主化理论、全球治理理论、文化霸权理论、人权与主权关系理论、新帝国主义理论、美国新现实主义理论等）	Foreign avantgardist IR theories (e.g., theory on the democratization of IR; world governance theory; cultural hegemony theory; theories on the relationship between sovereignty and human rights; neoimperialism; American neorealism etc.)	IR
	6. 国际格局与国际新秩序的理论与实践研究	Theory and practice of the new international structure and world order	G
	7. 发展中国家关于全球化理论研究	Theories on developing nations and globalization	IR
	8. 资本主义经济周期研究	Economic cycles in capitalism	E
	9. 经济全球化条件下的国际金融理论与实践研究	Theory and practice of international finance under conditions of economic globalization	F
	10. 社会发展动力与制约机制的国际比较研究	International comparison of the forces of societal development and constraining mechanisms	O
	11. 传统安全与非传统安全问题研究	Traditional and non-traditional security issues	S
	12. 新时期我国的和平发展道路与国际战略研究	China's path of peaceful development and its international strategy in the 21st century	SS
	13. 中国与世界各国友好关系史研究	History of cordial relations between China and the nations of the world	BL
	14. 犹太人在中国问题研究	Jews in China	O
	15. 国别外交思想史研究	Country studies on the intellectual history of diplomacy	O
	16. 国际敌对势力对“台独”的支持及对策研究	Hostile foreign forces supporting the Taiwanese Independence Movement and responses	SS
	17. 我国应对负面国际舆论挑战、营造良好国际环境问题研究	China's response to hostile international opinion and building a desirable international environment	SS
	18. 中国与发展中国家关系研究	Relations between China and developing nations	BL
	19. 加入 WTO 后我国面临的机遇、挑战及对策研究	Opportunities and challenges facing China after the WTO accession and responses to them	SS
	20. 经济全球化条件下的我国金融安全问题研究	China's financial security under globalization	F
	21. 开放条件下中国宏观经济政策及人民币汇率政策调整问	Readjusting China's macroeconomic policy and RMB exchange rate policy under the conditions of	F

	题研究	opening up	
	22. 世界能源形势变化及我国的对策研究	Changes in the global resource situation and China's response	SS
	23. 多边贸易体制的前景及中国贸易战略的重新定位与转型研究	The prospects of multilateral trade systems and reorientations in China's trade strategy	SS
	24. 中国境外投资协调机制和风险管理问题研究	Coordinating mechanisms for China's foreign investment and risk management issues	O
	25. 经济全球化条件下的劳工标准问题及对我国的影响和对策研究	The impact of labor standards under globalization on China and policy responses	E
	26. 国际非政府组织在我国的发展现状及对策研究	The role of NGOs in China's development and policy responses	E
	27. 中国在外层空间领域的对外合作问题研究	China's international ccoperation in space	SS
	28. 美国的文化软实力研究	US soft power	GP
	29. 俄罗斯的现状及发展趋势研究	Russia's current situation and development trends	GP
	30. 独联体国家“颜色革命”问题研究	The "color revolutions" in CIS nations	O
	31. 日本国内政治思潮研究	Trends in domestic Japanese politics	GP
	32. 欧盟扩大后的内部政策调整问题研究	EU policy adjustments after expansion	GP
	33. 欧洲发达国家合作经济模式研究	The European model of economic cooperation between developed nations	E
	34. 中亚地区发展与国际合作机制研究	Central Asia's development and international cooperation mechanisms	RS
	35. 非盟与非洲国家发展问题研究	The AU and the development of African nations	RS
	36. 拉美国家发展模式研究	Latin American development models	RS
	37. 美国全球战略新态势与中美关系问题研究	The new US global strategic posture and Sino-American relations	BL
	38. 美日同盟的发展与东亚地区安全及我国对策研究	The US-Japanese alliance, East Asian security and China's policy responses	GP
	39. 中国、俄国、印度、巴西等国合作发展研究	Developmental cooperation between BRICs and other nations	O
	40. 国际恐怖主义与反恐问题研究	International terrorism and anti-terror issues	S
	41. 应对突发事件的国际合作研究	International cooperation in emergency response	O
	42. 国际收入分配及国际援助与减贫问题研究	International income distribution, foreign aid and poverty reduction	O
	43. 国际货币体系改革研究	Reforming the international monetary system	F

	44. 联合国改革问题与我国对策研究	UN reform issues and China's response	G
	45. 促进全球贸易和投资自由化便利化研究	Promoting the liberalization and facilitation of global trade	G
	46. 民间外交研究	Public diplomacy	O

Year	Item		Cat.
2007	1. 建设和谐世界的理论与实践问题研究	Theory and practice of building a harmonious world	SS
	2. 马克思主义时代问题研究	Current problems in Marxism	O
	3. 中国特色社会主义国际关系理论研究	IR theory with Chinese characteristics	IR
	4. 国外国际关系前沿理论研究	Foreign avantgardist IR theories	IR
	5. 传统安全与非传统安全理论研究	Traditional and non-traditional security theories	S
	6. 资本主义经济周期研究	Economic cycles in capitalism	E
	7. 经济全球化条件下的国际金融理论与实践研究	Theory and practice of international finance under conditions of economic globalization	F
	8. 国际贸易体制理论研究	Theories on international trade systems	E
	9. 我国的和平发展道路与新时期国际战略研究	China's path of peaceful development and its international strategy in the 21st century	SS
	10. 中、美、日关系中的台湾问题研究	The Taiwan issue in Sino-American-Japanese relations	BR
	11. 全球经济发展不平衡对我国的影响及对策研究	Imbalances in global economic development, their influence on China and policy responses	SS
	12. 我国 WTO 过渡期后面临的机遇、挑战及对策研究	Opportunities and challenges facing China after the WTO transition; policy responses	SS
	13. WTO 框架下我国资本市场开放政策与金融风险规避问题研究	Opening China's capital market under the WTO framework and avoiding financial risks	F
	14. 我国对外贸易依存度与经济安全问题研究	China's trade dependence and economic security	SS
	15. 国际贸易摩擦问题及我国对策研究	Internationsl trade disputes and China's response	SS
	16. 我国能源安全与石油战略储备问题研究	China's resource security and strategic petrol reserve	SS
	17. 中国—东盟自由贸易区建设相关问题研究	Problems related to the establishment of CAFTA	O
	18. 朝鲜、伊朗核危机与核不扩散条约机制面临的挑战及我国对策研究	The North Korean and Iranian nuclear crises, challenges facing the NPT and China's response	SS
	19. 美国的亚洲安全战略对我国的影响及对策研究	Impact of the American security strategy in East Asia on China and her response	SS
	20. 欧盟对华政策调整及中欧关系研究	Adjustments in the EU's China policy and Sino-European relations	BR
	21. 欧盟解除对华武器禁运相关问题研究	Problems related to the lifting of the EU's arms embargo towards China	BR
	22. 非盟、非洲国家发展现状及深化中非合作机制研究	The status of AU and African nations' development and deepening Sino-African cooperation mechanisms	RS

	23. 东亚、东南亚经济一体化问题研究	East Asian and Southeast Asian economic integration	RS
	24. 上海合作组织发展面临的机遇与挑战	Opportunities and challenges facing SCO development	RS
	25. 日本右翼势力崛起对亚洲国家及国际关系的影响	The impact of the rise of Japan's right wing on Asian nations and China	GP
	26. 日本战略文化相关问题研究	Questions related to Japan's strategic culture	GP
	27. 美国意识形态国际化与“民主联盟”战略理论研究	The internationalization of American values and the theory behind the "league of democracies"	O
	28. 美国“新太空政策”相关问题研究	Questions related to the new US space policy	GP
	29. 经济全球化对欧洲模式的挑战及欧盟的应对战略研究	The challenges of economic globalization to the European model and its strategic answer	GP
	30. 欧洲宪法条约危机对欧洲一体化进程的影响	The impact of the EU treaty crisis on European integration	GP
	31. 普京主政以来俄罗斯政治经济政策调整评析	Adjustments in Russia's economic policy under the Putin administration	GP

Year	Item		Cat.
2008	1. 中国和平发展与推动建设和谐世界关系研究	China's peaceful development and striving for the building of harmonious relations around the world	SS
	2. 马克思主义国际关系理论研究	Marxist IR theory	IR
	3. 中国特色社会主义国际关系理论研究	IR theory with Chinese (socialist) characteristics	IR
	4. 马克思主义时代问题研究	Current problems in Marxism	O
	5. 国外国际关系前沿理论研究	Foreign avantgardist IR theories	IR
	6. 经济全球化条件下的国际金融理论研究	Theories on international finance under economic globalization	F
	7. 经济全球化条件下的国际贸易体制理论研究	Theories on international trade systems under economic globalization	E
	8. 经济全球化条件下的经济周期研究	Theories on economic cycles under economic globalization	E
	9. 经济全球化条件下的文化霸权主义与文化多样性以及话语体系研究	Cultural hegemony, diversity and discourse under economic globalization	O
	10. 当今世界形势下我国走和平发展道路面临的机遇与挑战问题研究	Opportunities and challenges on China's peaceful development path in the contemporary world	SS
	11. 坚持独立自主与参与经济全球化相结合问题研究	Combining the maintenance of independence and participation in economic globalization	G
	12. 高举和平、发展、合作旗帜与奉行独立自主的和平外交政策研究	Holding up peace, development and cooperation and pursuing an independent, peaceful diplomacy	SS
	13. 国际霸权主义对“台独”分裂活动的立场评析及我国因应对策研究	The position of international hegemonism on the separatist Taiwan independence movement and China's response	SS
	14. 国际和地区安全合作机制研究	International and regional cooperation mechanisms	RS
	15. 非传统安全威胁问题研究	Non-traditional security threats	S
	16. 人民币升值对我国发展的影响及对策研究	The impact of RMB appreciation on China's development and responses	F
	17. 我国国际投资的机遇、挑战及对策研究	Opportunities and risks in China's international investments and responses	F
	18. 国际资本流动特点与我国的对策研究	Characteristics of international capital flows and China's response	F
	19. 国际石油价格高涨对我国的影响及对策研究	The impact of the oil price surge on China and responses	E
	20. 冷战后美国全球战略新特点及对我国的影响研究	US global strategy after the Cold War and its impact on China	GP
	21. 美日等国推行所谓“民主国家同盟”战略及我国对策研	The US-Japanese "League of Democracies" strategy and China's response	GP

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	22. 日本福田康夫内阁的对外关系调整及中日关系发展前景研究	Adjustments in Japan's foreign policy under the Fukuda government and the development of Sino-Japanese relations	BR
	23. 美俄关系的现状与发展趋势及其对中美中俄关系的影响研究	The current status of US-Russian relations, future trends and their impact on Sino-American and Sino-Russian relations	GP
	24. 欧盟内外政策调整对我国的影响及对策研究	Adjustments in internal and external EU policies, their impact on China and responses	GP
	25. 中国—欧盟及与德、法、英等欧盟主要成员国关系现状、发展趋势研究	The current status and future trends of China-EU relations and relations with major member countries (D,F,GB)	BR
	26. 东北亚地区安全机制构建及中国的对策研究	Building regional security mechanisms in Northeast Asia and China's response	S
	27. 中印关系前景及其影响因素研究	Prospects for Sino-Indian relations and the factors influencing them	BR
	28. 中印俄经济发展的比较研究	Comparing China's, India's and Russia's economic development	O
	29. 国际上解决领海（岛屿）争端的案例研究及对我国的启示	International precedents regarding the resolutions of conflicts over seas and islands and lessons for China	SS
	30. 气候变化问题的国际博弈及我国对策研究	The international struggle over climate change and China's response	SS
	31. 深化中非合作关系问题研究与所谓“中国新殖民主义论”评析	Deepening Sino-African cooperation and analyzing theories about China's "neocolonialism"	BR
	32. 加强同发达国家战略对话与同广大发展中国家的团结合作研究	Strengthening strategic dialogue with developed nations and cooperation with large developing nations	SS
	33. 美国经济和美元的现状和前景研究	Current status and prospects for the US economy and the Dollar	E
	34. 美国对我国的中长期战略研究	US long-term strategy towards China	BR
	35. 冷战后美国的核战略与核不扩散体制危机问题研究	US nuclear strategy after the Cold War and the crisis of the NPT	GP
	36. 欧盟制宪进程评估与欧洲一体化发展研究	Evaluating the constitutional process of the EU and the development European integration	GP
	37. 俄罗斯社会经济发展模式、普京后时代俄罗斯政治经济走势问题研究	The Russian model of societal and economic development and Russia's political and economic stances in the post-Putin era	GP
	38. 东亚区域一体化前景问题研究	Prospects for East Asian integration	RS

	39.《东盟宪章》、《东盟经济共同体蓝图》等文件生效后的中国—东盟合作关系研究	China-ASEAN relations after the ASEAN charter, the roadmap for ASEAN economic integration and other treaties go into effect	BR
	40. 东欧、中亚发生“颜色革命”的国家政治经济现状与发展趋势研究	Current status and developmental trends of East European and Central Asian nations which experienced "color revolutions"	O
	41. 拉美国家左翼思潮对其发展道路的选择及区域合作模式的影响	The impact of Latin American Leftism on the selection of national development paths and regional cooperation	RS
	42. 当前国际经济格局条件下发展中国家的经济发展道路研究	Paths to economic development for developing nations under the present international economic structure	O
	43. 推动经济全球化向均衡、普惠、共赢方向发展研究	Promoting the development of a balanced, universal, and mutually profitable globalization	SS
	44. 经济全球化条件下国家间贫富差距及南北矛盾问题研究	The gap between rich and poor nations and North-South contradictions under economic globalization	G
	45. 极地问题（极地主权、极地国际法及解决北冰洋问题的国际机制等）研究	Issues regarding the polar regions (sovereignty, international law and dispute resolution mechanisms in the Arctic etc.)	G

Year	Item		Cat.
2009	1. 马克思《资本论》与当代资本主义金融危机和经济动荡研究	Marx' "Capital" and the recent financial crisis and economic upheaval in Capitalism	F
	2. 列宁《帝国主义论》与当今世界政治、经济秩序和矛盾研究	Lenin's "Imperialism" and the present world political and economic order and contradictions	IR
	3. 马克思主义当代国际关系理论研究	Marxist theory on contemporary IR	IR
	4. 经济全球化和经济虚拟化背景下的资本主义经济周期理论研究	Theory on cycles in the Capitalist economy under economic globalization and virtualization (?)	E
	5. 资本主义金融、经济危机形势下世界政治格局变化、左翼和社会主义思潮复兴前景研究	Changes in the pattern of world politics under the Capitalist financial and economic crisis, prospects for the revival of left-wing and socialist thought	G
	6. 当今世界形势下我国国家战略与新安全观研究	China's national strategy and new security concept in the current world situation	SS
	7. 当今世界形势下我国同发展中国家关系理论研究	Theory on China's relations with developing nations in the current world situation	SS
	8. 中国和平发展与推动建设和谐世界关系理论研究	Theory on China's peaceful development and the buidling of harmonious relations around the world	SS
	9. 国际金融危机形势下国际金融、货币、贸易体系改革及我国的作用研究	Reform of the international financial, monetary and trade systems under the current international financial crisis and China's role	G
	10. 国际金融危机爆发的经验教训、对我国经济的影响及对策研究	Lessons from the outbreak of the international financial crisis, its impact on China and policy responses	F
	11. 美国金融危机现状、前景、美元走势及对我国对外投资的影响评估及对策研究	Evaluating the current state and prospects for the American financial crisis, the trend of the dollar and its impact on China's foreign investments and policy responses	F
	12. 国际石油价格及原材料价格波动对我国经济的影响及对策研究	The impact of price fluctuations in oil and other commodities on China and policy responses	E
	13. 世界经济衰退形势下贸易保护主义对我国对外贸易的影响及对策研究	The impact of protectionism under the world economic crisis on China's foreign trade and policy responses	E
	14. 不同国家农业发展道路的比较及对我国的启示	Comparing the different paths for national agriculture development and lessons for China	E
	15. 西方国家粮食战略与我国粮食安全研究	Western foodstuffs strategies and China's foodstuffs security	SS
	16. 互联网国际化与我国文化安全研究	Internationalization of the internet and China's cultural security	O
	17. 气候、环境等非传统安全	Climate, the environment and other non-	S

	对国际关系和我国安全新挑战研究	traditional security challenges to international relations and China	
	18. 西方国家宗教战略与我国安全研究	Religion strategies (?) of Western nations and China's security	S
	19.“藏独”、“疆独”国外活动特点、西方利用“藏独”、“疆独”分裂势力对我国的遏制及对策研究	Characteristics of the Tibetan and Uighur separatist movements abroad, containing Western exploitation of these movements and policy responses	S
	20. 在台海两岸关系改善形势下美日对台政策走向分析及对策研究	Analyzing American and Japanese policy towards Taiwan in the context of improving cross-strait relations and policy responses	SS
	21. 美国奥巴马政府对华战略、中美关系的发展前景及我国对策研究	The Obama administration's strategy towards China, the development of Sino-American relations and policy responses	SS
	22. 俄格冲突后的美俄关系走向对中美、中俄关系的影响及对策研究	Trends in Russo-American relations after the Russian-Georgian war, their impact on Sino-American and Sino-Russian relations and policy responses	GP
	23. 欧盟一体化进程现状、趋势分析与发展中欧关系面临的机遇与挑战及对策研究	Analyzing the present state and trend of European integration and the opportunities and challenges for developing Sino-European relations	BR
	24. 欧盟中的英、法、德等大国对华政策比较及我国的对策研究	Comparing the policy of major EU nations (GB,F,D) towards China and policy responses	BR
	25. 深化中俄战略协作伙伴关系对世界经济政治格局的影响	The impact of deepening Sino-Russian strategic cooperation on the world political and economic structure	BR
	26. 中日关系现状及发展趋势研究	Present situation and future trends in Sino-Japanese relations	BR
	27. 发展中印战略合作伙伴关系的意义及面临的机遇与挑战及对策研究	The significance of developing strategic Sino-Indian cooperation, the opportunities and challenges it faces and policy responses	BR
	28. 深化中非关系面临的机遇与挑战及对策研究	Opportunities and challenges in deepening Sino-African relations and policy responses	BR
	29. 新时期中拉关系发展与前景及对策研究	Developing Sino-Latin American relations in the 21st century, prospects and policy responses	BR
	30. 朝鲜、伊朗核危机现状、发展趋势及我国对策研究	Current situation and prospects for the North Korean and Iranian nuclear crises and policy responses	S
	31. 新兴的国际对话协调机制如 20 国集团(G20)峰会、G8 与新兴国家领导人对话机制等对当今国际政治与经济的影响	The impact of the rise of new international dialogue mechanisms (e.g., the G20, G8, dialogue mechanisms for the leaders of rising powers) on international politics and economics	G
	32. 经济全球化背景下的非政府组织及其国际政治效应研究	NGOs under economic globalization and their effect on international politics	G

	33. 国际迁移流动中的妇女问题研究	Women issues in international migration flows	O

Year	Item		Cat.
2010	1. 中国特色社会主义国际关系理论研究	Socialist theory of IR with Chinese characteristics	IR
	2. 推动建设持久和平、共同繁荣的和谐世界研究	Promoting the building of a harmonious world of peace and mutual prosperity	SS
	3. 新时期我国国家安全与发展战略理论研究	Theories regarding China's security and development in the 21st century	SS
	4. 马克思主义时代与时代主题研究	Contemporary Marxism and contemporary issues (?)	O
	5. 当代资本主义国际垄断的现状、形式、特征及实质与列宁《帝国主义论》的当代价值研究	The situation, form, characterstics and substance of contemporary Capitalist monopolization and the contemporary value of Lenin's "Imperialism"	O
	6. 国际金融危机引发西方思想理论领域的震荡和资本主义生存发展状况研究	The impact of the international financial crisis on Western thought and theories and the conditions for the survival and development of Capitalism	IR
	7. 国外国际关系前沿理论研究	Foreign avantgardist IR theories	IR
	8. 世界社会主义和左翼思潮的现状及发展趋势研究	The current state and development trends of world socialism and left-wing thought	O
	9. 国际关系史、国别外交史研究	The history of IR and national diplomatic history	IR
	10. 国际法的历史沿革、现状及发展趋势研究	Past, present and future of international law	G
	11. 当前国际贸易保护主义对我国对外贸易的影响及对策研究	The current impact of protectionism on China's foreign trade and policy responses	SS
	12. 解决国际贸易争端的国际法研究	International law regarding the settlement of trade disputes	G
	13. 外汇储备对我国经济安全的影响及对策研究	The impact of foreign currency reserves on China's economic security and policy responses	SS
	14. 我国对外直接投资、资产并购面临的机遇、挑战及对策研究	Opportunities and challenges for China's FDI and assets and policy responses	SS
	15. 跨国公司（国际垄断资本）投资、资产并购对我国经济安全的影响及对策研究	The impact of multinational corporations' (monopoly capitalists) investments and assets on China's economic security and policy responses	SS
	16. 当今世界思想文化交流交融交锋的新特点与我国意识形态安全研究	Intellectual and cultural exchanges, syntheses and clashes in the contemporary world and their impact on China's ideological security (?)	O
	17. 西方媒体话语霸权的实质、反华报道的策略及手法分析与我国对策研究	The substance of hegemonic discourse in Western media, analyzing the tactics and techniques of anti-China reporting and policy responses	O
	18. 当前一些国际势力利用“藏独”、“疆独”和“台独”	Certain countries' exploitation of the Tibetan, Uighur and Taiwanese independence movements	SS

	势力对我遏制战略及我国对策研究	for their containment strategies against China and policy responses	
	19. 维护我国海洋安全、海洋主权与权益的战略与策略及海权争端中的国际法研究	Strategies and tactics for safeguarding China's maritime security, sovereignty and rights and the international law regarding maritime disputes	SS
	20. 当今我国面临的传统安全与非传统安全问题及对策研究	Traditional and non-traditional security issues facing China and policy responses	S
	21. 我国核战略及国际核裁军研究	China's nuclear strategy and international nuclear disarmament	S
	22. 大发展、大变革、大调整时期我国的周边安全形势与对策研究	China's peripheral security in the great development, transformation and adjustment period and policy responses	S
	23. 国际金融危机的成因、现状、发展趋势和各主要国家应对政策的调整研究	Causes, current status and future trends of the international financial crisis and major nations' policy responses and adjustments	F
	24. 国际金融危机背景下世界多极化发展特点与趋势研究	Characteristics and trends of the development of multipolarity under the international financial crisis	G
	25. 国际金融危机与国际货币体系改革及人民币在未来国际货币体系中的地位与作用研究	The international financial crisis and the reform of the international monetary system; the role and status of the RMB in the future international monetary system	F
	26. 石油、粮食等全球大宗商品定价及其机理研究	Price setting mechanisms for oil, foodstuffs and other world market products	E
	27. 全球应对气候变化的国际博弈对我国的影响及对策研究	The great game over global climate change and China's response	SS
	28. 发展清洁能源国际比较研究	International comparison of the development of clean energy	O
	29. 世界大国极地战略及我国的极地战略和策略研究	The polar strategies of great powers and China's polar strategy and policy responses	SS
	30. 全球问题与全球治理及其国际协调机制理论与实践研究	Theory and practice of global issues, global governance and coordination mechanisms	G
	31. 经济全球化条件下的国际与区域经济合作发展新趋势研究	Trends in the development of international and regional economic cooperation under globalization	G
	32. 上海合作组织与中国及中亚国家关系研究	The SCO and relations between China and Central Asian nations	BR
	33. ”中国—东盟”自由贸易区建设对我国发展同东盟国家战略伙伴关系的影响研究	The impact of CAFTA on China's development and strategic China-ASEAN partnership	BR
	34. 东亚共同体与东北亚区域合作框架、作用、发展趋势及我国对策研究	The East Asian Community and the framework, role and future of Northeast Asian regional cooperation and China's response	RS
	35. 美国重返东南亚研究	America's return to Southeast Asia	GP

	36. 欧盟一体化发展动向和欧盟的国际地位、作用研究	The future of European integration and the EU's international status and role	GP
	37. "二十国集团”在国际事务中的作用及我国在“二十国集团”等国际对话机制中的作用与策略研究	The role of the G12 in international affairs and China's role and policies in the G12 and other international dialogue mechanisms	G
	38. 国外非政府组织发展现状及其在当前国际政治中的作用研究	The present development of NGOs and their role in contemporary world politics	G
	39. 美国等世界主要大国的决策过程和智库现状、作用研究	The role and status of think tanks in the decisionmaking processes of the USA and other major nations	GP
	40. 美国、日本等国的海洋战略研究	The maritime strategy of the USA, Japan and other nations	GP
	41. 日本民主党执政后的内外政策走向及对中日关系的影响研究	The domestic and foreign policies of the new DPJ government and their impact on Sino-Japanese relations	GP
	42. 中英、中法、中德关系现状、发展前景及对我国与欧盟关系的影响研究	The present and future of Chinese-British, -French and -German relations and their impact Sino-European relations	BR
	43. 世界多极化条件下中俄战略协作伙伴关系研究	The strategic partnership between China and Russia under multipolarization	BR
	44. 中印关系现状、发展趋势及对策研究	The present and future of Sino-Indian relations and policy responses	BR
	45. 中蒙合作关系综合研究	Sino-Mongolian cooperation	BR
	46. 当今世界形势下加强我国与发展中国家关系的战略与策略问题研究	Strategies and tactics of strengthening relations between China and developing countries under the current world situation	BR
	47. 当今世界形势下深化中非关系对策研究	Strengthening Chinese-African relations under the current world situation and policy responses	BR
	48. 我国与拉美国家关系现状与发展趋势研究	Present and future of Sino-Latin American relations	BR
	49. 世界经济周期及其内在机制研究	World economic cycles and internal mechanisms	E

Year	Item		Cat.
2011	1.马克思主义国际问题基本理论研究	Theoretical foundations of Marxist international studies	IR
	2.国外国际关系前沿理论研究	Foreign avantgardist IR theories	IR
	3.新形势下邓小平“韬光养晦、有所作为”国际战略思想研究	Deng Xiaoping´s international strategy of "keep your head down, bide your time" under the new situation[278]	SS
	4.从“三个世界”划分到构建和谐世界理论研究	From "Three Worlds" to the building of a harmonious world	SS
	5.金融危机引发的政治思潮研究	Ideological trends triggered by the financial crisis	O
	6.全球经济“失衡”原因与“再平衡”途径研究	Causes of imbalances in the global economy and rebalancing measures	E
	7.低碳经济与全球经济增长模式的发展趋势研究	Trends in the development of low-carbon-economies and global economic growth models	E
	8.解决全球性问题的多边机制研究	Multilateral mechanisms for resolving global issues	G
	9.联合国改革与 20 国集团机制机理研究	UN reform and the G20 mechanism	G
	10.世界金融货币体系改革研究	Reforms in global finance and currency systems	F
	11.国际金融垄断集团和跨国公司研究	International finance monopolies and multnational corporations	F
	12.世界格局变化与中国安全发展战略研究	Global structural changes and strategies for China´s security development	S
	13.国际金融危机现状、趋势对我国的影响及对策研究	The impact of the global financial crisis on China and policy responses	SS
	14.我国外汇储备风险对策研究	Dealing with risk in China´s foreign exchange reserves	F
	15.国际汇率博弈的实质及我国对策研究	Power plays in international exchange rates and policy responses	SS
	16.全球大宗商品价格今后走向与我国经济安全研究	Trends in global commodity prices and China´s economic security	SS
	17.经济全球化背景下我国产业安全研究	China´s industrial security under economic globalization	S
	18.国际贸易保护主义对我国外贸影响及对策研究	The impact of protectionism on China´s foreign trade and policy responses	SS
	19.新形势下中国企业走出去发展战略研究	The "going out" development strategy of China´s enterprises under the new situation	O

[278] In this timeframe, the term "new situation" (*xin xingshi*) refers to a convergence of several deeply transformative global trends in the early 21st century, most notably an international power shift towards multipolarity, the emergence of developing nations as major actors on the international stage, and the political implications of continuing economic globalization and rapid advances in information technology (CCPCC 2009).

	20.中医中药走出去战略研究	"Going out" strategy for Traditional Chinese Medicine	O
	21.美国“21 世纪新资本主义”研究	American "21st century capitalism"	E
	22.国际金融危机冲击下欧洲发展模式前景研究	Perspectives for Europe´s development model under the impact of the financial crisis	O
	23.气候变化问题中的国际政治博弈研究	International power plays in climate change issues	SS
	24.转基因问题研究（鼓励哲学社会科学与自然科学工作者联合申报）	Transgenic issues (encouraging joint applications from social and natural scientists)	O
	25.国际关系中的文化自主性问题及话语权研究	Cultural autonomy and discursive power in international relations	O
	26.西方媒体在国际政治中的角色与作用研究	The role and function of Western media in international politics	O
	27.“普世价值”在美国战略中的地位作用及其推行途径和对策研究	The status and role of universal norms in US strategy and policy applications	GP
	28.网络文化与我国国家软实力建设研究	Internet culture and building Chinese soft power	O
	29.现代战争前沿理论与外国军队改革转型研究	The future of warfare and foreign military reforms	S
	30.新形势下我国国家安全体系创新研究	Innovation in China´s national security system under the new situation	S
	31.军民融合式我国国防建设研究	Civil-military interactions in China´s national defense	S
	32.我国军事危机的预警、控制与管理研究	China´s early warning, command and management in military crises	S
	33.国际海盗兴起原因及其治理研究	Causes of the rise in international piracy and how to cope	SS
	34.进一步加强我国与周边国家关系的战略研究	Furthering the strategy of strengthening China´s relations with neighboring countries	BR
	35.钓鱼岛问题研究	The Diayu islands issue	O
	36.亚洲区域经济合作的路径及我国参与区域经济合作的战略选择研究	Asia´s regional economic integration and China´s strategic options for participation	RS
	37.加快实施自由贸易区战略研究	The strategy of accelerating FTA implementation	O
	38.维护东南亚地区安全稳定的合作机制研究	Mechanisms for safeguarding and stabilizing Southeast Asia´s regional security	S
	39.中美关系现状、发展趋势及对策研究	The status quo of Sino-American relations, development trends and policy responses	BR
	40.中欧关系现状、特点及发展趋势研究	The status quo of Sino-European relations, characteristics and development trends	BR

	41.日本对外关系调整及中日关系前景研究	Japan´s international realignment and perspectives for Sino-Japanese relations	BR
	42.中俄关系在当今国际格局中地位及发展前景研究	Sino-Russian relations within the present international structure and development perspectives	BR
	43.中印关系现状、发展趋势及对策研究	The status quo of Sino-Indian relations, development trends and policy responses	BR
	44.核不扩散的双重标准与中国、朝鲜、伊朗关系研究	Double standards in the NPT and relations between China, North Korea and Iran	BR
	45. 新形势下中国非洲国家关系研究	China´s relations with African states under the new situation	BR
	46.新形势下中国拉美国家关系研究	China´s relations with Latin-American states under the new situation	BR
	47.全球贫富差距急剧拉大与左翼和社会主义思潮复兴研究	The rapid rise in global inequality and the resurgence of of leftist and socialist ideology	O
	48.世界左翼运动提出的资本主义替代方案研究	Alternatives to capitalism proposed by global leftist movements	O

Year	Item		Cat.
2012	1.马克思主义国际关系理论及其当代价值研究	Marxist IR theory and its value in the present	IR
	2.马克思《资本论》与当代资本主义金融危机研究	Marx´ "Capital" and the current financial crisis of capitalism	IR
	3.列宁《帝国主义论》与当今世界政治、经济秩序和主要矛盾研究	Lenin´s "Imperialism", the current world economic and political orders and major contradictions	IR
	4.毛泽东三个世界理论和加强我国与发展中国家关系问题研究	Mao´s "Three Worlds" theory and strengthening relations between Chian and developing nations	IR
	5.国际环境新变化对我国实现“十二五”发展目标的影响评估及对策研究	Evaluating the impact of changes in the international environment on the realization of the development golas of China´s 12th five-year-plan and policy responses	SS
	6.当代中国外交战略的调整与大国关系研究	Adjusting China´s current diplomatic strategy and great power relations	SS
	7.开展多渠道多形式多层次对外文化交流战略研究	Developing a multi-channel, multi-form and multi-layered strategy for foreign cultural exchanges	SS
	8.我国实施文化走出去工程战略研究	Realizing China´s cultural "going out" strategy	SS
	9.对外文化交流与维护国家文化安全研究	Foreign cultural exchanges and safeguarding national cultural safety	O
	10.世界文化多样性研究	World cultural diversity	O
	11.中外人文交流平台建设研究	Building platforms for international exchanges in the humanities	O
	12.面向外国青年文化交流机制研究	Develop mechanisms for foreign youth cultural exchanges	O
	13.国外国际关系前沿理论研究	Foreign avantgardist IR theories	IR
	14.经济全球化与国际金融危机研究	Economic globalization and the international finance crisis	E
	15.当代国际政治思潮研究	Current ideological trends in international politics	O
	16.后“9·11”时期的“软实力”帝国主义研究	"Soft imperialism" in the post-9/11 period	O
	17.当代国际关系中政治与经济互动机制研究	Mechanisms for interactions between politics and economics in current international relations	E
	18.金砖国家间的利益共同点与分歧点研究	Mutual interests and divergences between BRIC countries	GP
	19.西方国家国际干预理论、方式变化及干预案例研究	Theories about Western interventions, changing methods and precedents	GP
	20.美国重返亚洲战略及对策研究	The US pivot to Asia and policy responses	SS
	21.美国亚太政策的基本目标及	Basic objectives of US strategy towards Asia and	SS

	可能采取的政策手段研究	possible countermeasures	
	22.美国经济形势与美元走势研究	The Us economic situation and the future of the Dollar	GP
	23.美国国债负担变化对中国外汇储蓄安全的影响研究	Changes in the US debt burden and its impact on the safety of China´s foreign reserves	GP
	24.新形势下我国和平发展的军事战略研究	Military strategy for China´s peaceful rise under the new situation	S
	25.捍卫国家主权、海洋权益和领土完整的军事战略研究	Military strategy for protecting China´s sovereignty, maritime interests and territorial integrity	S
	26.世界大国和周边国家“中国观”的演变研究	The evolution of China´s image among great powers and peripheral nations	O
	27.中国人的国外形象研究	The image of Chinese abroad	O
	28.东海、南海区域对我国和平发展的作用和影响研究	The function and influence of the East and South China Seas on China´s peaceful development	SS
	29.印度洋区域对我国和平发展的作用和影响研究	The function and influence of the Indian Ocean on China´s peaceful development	SS
	30.中国海外投资的国家战略规划与风险防范研究	Strategic plan and risk-prevention for China´s overseas investments	SS
	31.和平发展背景下的中国外交与民间外交研究	China´s diplomacy and people´s diplomacy under peaceful development	SS
	32.我国对外援助与贸易和投资的互动关系研究	Interactions between China´s foreign aid, foreign trade and investments	E
	33.西方发达国家拓展公共外交机制研究	The expansion of public diplomacy mechanisms by developed Western nations	GP
	34.日本大地震、大海啸和核辐射事故后国家战略动向研究	Trends in Japan´s national strategy after the Fukushima earthquake and nuclear incident	GP
	35.日本社会结构和社会意识的演变及其对内外政策的影响研究	The development of Japan´s social structure and consciousness and its impact on domestic and foreign policy	GP
	36.朝鲜半岛现状发展趋势及对策研究	The status quo and development trends on the Korean peninsula and policy responses	SS
	37.中国与邻国构建和谐关系中“软实力”的应用研究	The use of soft power in establishing harmonious relations with China´s neighbors	SS
	38.印度对外战略研究	India´s foreign policy strategy	GP
	39.俄罗斯大选之后战略走向与中俄战略伙伴关系研究	Trends in the Sino-Russian strategic partnership after the Russian general election	BR
	40.俄罗斯北极政策及对地区的影响研究	Russia´s Arctic strategy and its influence over the region	GP
	41.欧洲主权债务危机现状、前景及影响研究	The status quo of Europe´s sovereign debt crisis, perspectives and impact	O
	42.欧债危机、欧元和欧洲一体化进程研究	Europe´s sovereign debt crisis, the Euro and the process of European integration	O
	43.西方强国中东北非战略与中	The strategy of Western powers towards the	GP

	东、阿拉伯地区政治格局变动趋势研究	Middle east and North Africa and political changes in the Middle East and Arab region	
	44.中东北非动乱的国内根源研究	The domestic sources of turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa	RS
	45.阿拉伯国家社会结构的演变及其对社会稳定的影响研究	The development of Arab societies and its influence on their stability	RS
	46.伊斯兰国家政治格局变化对中国民族宗教问题研究	Changes in the political structure of Islamic countries and issues regarding China´s religious minorities	RS
	47.发展军备和对外侵略对美国经济和综合国力的影响研究	The impact of military development and foreign aggression on America´s economy and comprehensive national strength	GP
	48.中国如何进一步扩大在拉美、非洲的影响力研究	How China can further expand its influence in latin America and Africa	SS
	49.国外外汇储备现状及经验借鉴研究	The present situation of overseas foreign-exchange reserves and lessons from past experiences	F
	50.国际货币监管的发展方向及对国际货币体系的影响研究	The development of international monetary supervision and its impact on the international currency system	F
	51.国际货币体系改革的出路以及世界主要货币的地位研究	Avenues for the reform of the international monetary system and the status of major currencies	F
	52.全球贫富差距问题及相关对策研究	Global inequality issues and related policy responses	O
	53.全球企业并购与国际直接投资的变化方向研究	Global mergers&acquisitions and changes in international direct investments	E
	54.全球大宗商品价格供求格局、价格形成机制与安全研究	The structure of global commodity prices, supply and demand, price-finding mechanisms and security	E
	55.石油、粮食、水及其他资源安全问题研究	Security issues regarding oil, grains, water and other natural resources	S
	56.全球核现状、核安全战略研究	The global nuclear status quo and nuclear safety strategies	S
	57.全球和平发展的话语权研究	Discursive power in global peaceful development	O
	58.原苏东社会主义国家的现状和社会主义思潮研究	The present state of former Soviet republics and trends in socialist thought	RS
	59.金融危机后的世界左翼和社会主义理论思潮研究	Trends in world leftist and socialist thought after the global financial crisis	O
	60.金融危机后各国共产党动态跟踪研究	Trends in international Communist parties after the financial crisis	O
	61.北极问题研究	Arctic issues	RS

Appendix 3: List of institutional leaders

Institute	Name (ZH)	Name (EN)	Tenure start	Tenure end	Years in office	Career	Field	Rank
CASS	胡乔木	Hu Qiaomu	1977	1982	5	Revolutionary, cadre	Party history	Politburo member
	马洪	Ma Hong	1982	1985	3	Scholar	Economics	Central Committee member
	胡绳	Hu Sheng	1985	1998	13	Revolutionary, scholar	Philosophy, history	Central Committee
	李铁映	Li Tieying	1998	2003	5	Cadre	Physics	Politburo member, state councilor
	陈奎元	Chen Kuiyuan	2003	--		Cadre	Political education	Central committee, party secretary (NM,XZ,HN)
CFAU	李恩求	Li Enqiu	1955	1959	4	Political officer, diplomat	Propaganda?	Embassy counselor
	陈辛仁	Chen Xinren	1959	1969	10	Revolutionary, diplomat	Literature	Ambassador
	陈毅	Chen Yi (Pres)	1961	1969	8	Revolutionary	Military affairs	Politburo member, marshal, minister
	刘春	Liu Chun	1982	1986	4	Revolutionary, diplomat	Political education	Ambassador
	章曙	Zhang Shu	1988	1992	4	Diplomat		Ambassador
	刘山	Liu Shan	1992	1998	6	Diplomat	Philosophy	Ambassador
	石午山	Yu Shishan (Sec)	1991	2001	8	Diplomat	Diplomacy	Ambassador
	杨福昌	Yang Fuchang (Pres)	1999	2003	4	Diplomat	Diplomacy	Vice minister, ambassador
	安永玉	An Yongyu (Sec)	2001	2005	4	Diplomat	Foreign Languages	Ambassador
	吴建民	Wu Jianmin (Pres)	2003	2008	5	Diplomat	Diplomacy	Ambassador
	赵进军	Zhao Jinjun (Pres)	2008	--		Diplomat	Diplomacy	Ambassador
	秦亚青	Qin Yaqing (Sec)	2005	--		Scholar	IR	Professor
CIIS	孟用潜	Meng Yongqian	1956	1966?		Revolutionary, cadre	Economics	State Councilor
	李汇川	Li Huichuan	1980	1983	3	Revolutionary, diplomat	Engineering	Ambassador
	郑为之	Zheng Weizhi	1983	1986	3	Revolutionary, diplomat	Physics	Ambassador
	王殊	Wang Shu	1986	1990	4	Cadre, diplomat	Journalism	Vice minister, ambassador

CIIS	杜攻	Du Gong	1990	1993	3	Diplomat	Diplomacy	Ambassador
	杨成绪	Yang Chengxu	1993	2001	8	Diplomat	Foreign Languages	Ambassador
	宋明江	Song Mingjiang	2001	2004	3	Diplomat	Foreign Languages	Ambassador
	马振岗	Ma Zhengang	2004	2010	6	Diplomat	Foreign Languages, Economics	Ambassador
	曲星	Qu Xing	2010	--		Scholar, diplomat	Diplomacy, political science	Ambassador, professor
BeiDa SIS	梁守德	Liang Shoude (Dean)	1996	2000	4	Scholar	IR	Professor
	钱其琛	Qian Qichen (Dean)	2000	2005	5	Diplomat		Politburo member, minister
	王缉思	Wang Jisi (Dean)	2005	--		Scholar	IR	Professor
	李寒梅	Li Hanmei (Sec)	2009	--		Scholar	Japanology, law	Assistant professor
SIIS	金仲华	Jin Zhonghua	1960	1968?		Revolutionary, editor	Journalism	Vice mayor
	李储文	Li Chuwen	1978	1981	3	Scholar	Christian theology	Department director
	陈启懋	Chen Qimao	1981	1993	12	Scholar	IR	
	陈佩尧	Chen Peiyao	1993	2000	7	Scholar	IR	
	俞新天	Yu Xintian	2000	2007	7	Scholar	History, IR	
	杨洁勉	Yang Jiemian	2007	--		Scholar	English, IR	Shanghai CPPCC member
Fudan CAS	谢希德	Xie Xide	1985	2000	15	Scientist	Physics	Central Committee member, Fudan chancellor
	倪世雄	Ni Shixiong	2000	2006	6	Scholar	IR	Professor
	沈丁立	Shen Dingli	2006	--		Scholar	Physics, arms control	Professor
CICIR	陈忠经	Chen Zhongjing	1980	1985?		Intelligence officer		
	柳瑟青	Liu Seqing	1985?	1990		Intelligence officer?		
	耿惠昌	Geng Huichang	1990	1993	3	Intelligence officer?		
	谌取荣	Chen Qurong	1993	1999?		Intelligence officer?		

CICIR	陆忠伟	Lu Zhongwei	1999	2005	6	Scholar	IR, Japanology	Professor
	崔立如	Cui Liru	2005	--		Scholar	IR	Professor
SASS	雷经天	Lei Jingtian	1958	1959	1	Revolutionary	Law?	Supreme Court president (SC branch)
	李培南	Li Peinan	1959	1960	1	Revolutionary		Shanghai municipal party committee member
	杨永直	Yang Yongzhi	1960	1966?				
	黄逸峰	Huang Yifeng	1978	1981	3	Revolutionary, dissident	Economics	President of Jiaotong University
	张仲礼	Zhang Zhongli	1981	?		Scholar	Economics	President of SASS Institute of Economics
	尹继佐	Yin Jizuo	?	2004		Scholar	Philosophy	Vice director of Shanghai propaganda dept.
	王荣华	Wang Ronghua	2004	2010	6	Official		Shanghai party secretary for education
	潘世伟	Pan Shiwei (Sec)	2010	--		Scholar	Politics, Marxism	Vice director of Shanghai propaganda dept.

Lebenslauf

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