

09:00-10:30

**Panel 4:
Think Tanks, IIR, and Disciplinary Development of Social Sciences**

Chair: Dr. I Yuan (IIR)

Panelists: Chien-Wen Kou (National Chengchi Univ.)

Simon Shen (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong)

John Wong (East Asian Institute, National Univ. of Singapore)

Discussant: Paul Evans (Univ. of British Columbia)

IIR and the Development of China Studies in Taiwan: Trajectories and Dynamics

Chien-wen Kou

*Department of Political Science &
Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies*

In the past six decades, Taiwan's China studies have undergone a gradual shift from a focus on policy analysis and political indoctrination to one that is centered on scholarly research with policy analyses as its secondary aim. During this process, the role of the IIR has moved from a government think tank, monopolizing China studies jointly with other state-dominated research units and serving the top brass, to a competitor for academic achievement and policy influence in a pluralistic academic and political market. This paper will examine this marked transition across three dimensions: the IIR's relationship with the state, the educational backgrounds of research fellows, and the editorial policy of major IIR journals. This paper argues that the dynamics of such a transformation come from generational replacements of scholars on the one hand, and the amelioration of cross-Taiwan Strait relations and political and educational developments in Taiwan on the other.

Keywords: the Institute of International Relations, communist rebel studies, Chinese communist studies, and contemporary China studies

Introduction

Periodical assessments of the study of an academic field are crucial to the further progress of the field. Since the mid-1990s, several assessments have been made of the state of contemporary China studies in different countries, from North America and Europe to East Asia.¹ These apprais-

¹David Shambaugh ed., *American Studies of Contemporary China* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1993); Avery Goldstein, "Trends in the Study of Political Elites and Institutions in the PRC," *China Quarterly*, no. 139 (September 1994), pp. 714-730; Lucien Bianco, "French Studies of Contemporary China," *China Quarterly*, no. 142 (June 1995), pp. 509-520; Mark Sidel, "The Re-emergence of China Studies in Vietnam," *China Quarterly*, no. 142 (June 1995), pp. 521-540; Graham E. Johnson, "The True Strong: Contemporary Chinese Studies in Canada," *China Quarterly*, no. 143 (September 1995), pp. 851-866; Lowell Dittmer, "Approaches to the Study of Chinese Politics," *Issues & Studies*, vol. 32, no. 9 (September 1996), pp. 1-18; Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard, "Contemporary China Studies in Scandinavia," *China Quarterly*, no. 147 (September 1996), pp. 938-961; Robert Ash, David Shambaugh and Seiichiro Takagi eds., *China Watching: Perspectives from Europe, Japan and the United States* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007); Jae Ho Chung, "Studies of Contemporary Chinese Politics in Korea: An Assessment," *China Quarterly*, no. 194 (June 2008), pp. 395-413; Allen Carlson, Mary E. Gallagher, Kenneth Lieberthal and Melanie Manion, *Contemporary Chinese Politics: New Sources, Methods, and Field Strategies* (New York, NY: Cambridge University

als help us in understanding research focuses and debates, trends in approaches, methods and data sources, changes in academic manpower and resource allocations, and the dynamics of changes in the China studies field in different regions or countries throughout the world.

Owing to the needs of national security and politico-economic development, there has always been strong demand for China studies in Taiwan. Nevertheless, the development of Taiwan's China studies has rarely been evaluated in the existing literature, particularly in the English-language literature.² By illustrating the role of the Institute of International Relations (IIR), which has been a key research institute for mainland China studies and international relations in Taiwan since its establishment in 1953, this paper sketches the historical trajectory of this field in Taiwan and identifies the dynamics of its evolution.³

Using generational replacement of scholars and major political and academic events as criteria, this paper divides the development of China studies in Taiwan into three stages: communist rebel studies (匪情研究) (early 1950s to mid-1980s), Chinese communist studies (中共研究) (mid-1980s to late 1990s), and contemporary China studies (當代中國研究) (late 1990s to present). Changes in scholarly generations usually lead to a shift in the research paradigm of a field in terms of research mission, research focus, methods and data sources, and standards of performance evaluation, thereby serving as good demarcation points. Political and academic events are also important to the definition of developmental stages because they may trigger or accelerate the process of paradigm shift. Of course, these divisions are relative rather than definitive, owing to

Press, 2010); Melanie Manion, "Using All Tools in Our Toolbox? The Study of Chinese Politics by Western Scholars," the Keio Annual Symposium on Contemporary Chinese Politics, Center for Contemporary Chinese Studies, Keio University, Tokyo, December 15, 2012; Jing Vivian Zhan, "Studying Chinese Politics in Hong Kong: Resources, Methodologies and Prospects," the Keio Annual Symposium on Contemporary Chinese Politics, Center for Contemporary Chinese Studies, Keio University, Tokyo, December 15, 2012.

²The author found only one work in English addressing this topic and four in Chinese. See Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China: Communist China Studies in the United States and the Republic of China, 1949-1978* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1986); Kai-huang Yang (楊開煌), "Taiwan 'Zhongguo dalu yanjiu' zhi huigu yu qianzhan," (台灣「中國大陸研究」之回顧與前瞻, Retrospects and prospects of mainland China studies in Taiwan) in Si-Yin He (何思因) and Yu-shan Wu (吳玉山) eds., *Mairu ershiyi shiji de zhengzhixue* (邁入廿一世紀的政治學, Political Science in the 21st century) (Taipei: Zhongguo zhengzhi xuehui, 2000), pp. 527-551; Jieh-min Wu (吳介民), Chih-jou Chen (陳志柔) and Ming-chi Chen (陳明祺), "Kua haixia xin shehui yanjiu: Taiwan zhi Zhongguo yanjiu dianfan gengxin yu xinxing lingyu," (跨海峽新社會研究：台灣之中國研究典範更新與新興領域, New social research across the Taiwan Strait: paradigm renewals and burgeoning fields in China studies in Taiwan) *Dangdai Zhongguo yanjiu tongxun* (當代中國研究通訊), no. 9, (January 2008), pp. 12-33; Hong-yuan Chang (張弘遠) and Tsung-yi Lee (李宗義), "'Zhongguo yanjiu' zai Taiwan: yanjiu tizhi de fazhan yu bianqian," ('中國研究'在台灣：研究體制的發展與變遷, China studies in Taiwan: the developments and changes of research institution), in Chih-yu Shih (石之瑜) ed., *Cong linmo dao fansi: Woguo shehui kexue boshi dui oumei zhishi yu tizhi de huiying* (從臨摹到反思：我國社會科學博士對歐美知識與體制的回應, From imitation to introspection: reflections of Taiwanese doctors of philosophy in social sciences to academic knowledge and institution from Europe and America) (Taipei: hanlu, 2005), pp. 251-282; Hsin-hsien Wang (王信賢), "Taiwan Zhongguo zhengzhi yanjiu de xipu: fangfalun yu yiti fenxi," (台灣中國政治研究的系譜：方法論與議題分析, The pedigree of mainland China studies in Taiwan: an analysis of methods and issues) the Keio Annual Symposium on Contemporary Chinese Politics: In Search of New Research Strategies with Japanese Characteristics, Center for Contemporary Chinese Studies, Keio University, Tokyo, December 15, 2012.

³The Chinese name of the IIR was *Guoji guanxi yanjiuhui* (國際關係研究會, English name unavailable) when it was founded in April 1953. This name was changed to *Zhonghua minguo guoji guanxi yanjiusuo* (中華民國國際關係研究所, the Institute of International Relations of the Republic of China) in 1961. The Institute was then renamed *Guoji guanxi yanjiu zhongxin* (國際關係研究中心, the Institute of International Relations) when it was linked to National Chengchi University in July 1975. To facilitate discussion, this article will hereby refer to this institution by its current name, the Institute of International Relations.

the gradual and interweaving replacement of scholarly generations, as well as the continuous nature of changes in the political and academic climate.

In the past six decades, Taiwan's China studies have undergone a gradual shift from a focus on policy analysis and political indoctrination to one that is centered on scholarly research with policy analysis as its secondary aim. During this process, the role of the IIR has moved from a government think tank, monopolizing information about mainland China jointly with other state-dominated research units and serving the top brass, to a competitor for academic achievement and policy influence in a pluralistic academic and political market. This paper will examine this transition across three dimensions: the IIR's relationship with the state, the educational backgrounds of research fellows, and the editorial policy of major IIR journals. This paper argues that the dynamics of such a transformation come from generational replacements of scholars on the one hand, and the amelioration of cross-Taiwan Strait relations and political and educational developments in Taiwan on the other.

This paper is composed of three sections. The first section focuses on the communist rebel studies stage, the second illustrates the Chinese communist studies stage, and the last section focuses on the contemporary China studies stage. The main features of each stage of Taiwan's China studies, the role of the IIR in each stage, and the external and internal dynamics leading to paradigm shift and the evolution of the IIR will be presented in each section.

IIR as a Key Government Think Tank: from the Early 1950s to mid-1980s

During the communist rebel studies period, the primary attribute of China studies in Taiwan was its classification as official knowledge. The China studies field was tasked with the policy needs of “combating the communist rebels” (對匪鬥爭), enemy situation analysis and domestic political indoctrination, in contrast to the academic research of today.⁴ Guided by these policy needs, research themes during this period were primarily centered on Chinese Communist Party (CCP) political elites and other political issues, though they also touched on economics, culture and education, communist theory, CCP history, and the People's Liberation Army (PLA).⁵

In this period, only specific state agencies were authorized to read documents and information from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and to perform policy research on issues relevant to this information, while ordinary citizens were prohibited to do so. These agencies included the National Security Bureau, the Investigation Bureau, the Military Intelligence Bureau, and the Second Division of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang (KMT) (中國國民黨中央委員會第二組), which was renamed the Department of Mainland China Affairs (大陸工作會) in 1972.

The China studies scholars of this period were usually referred to as communist rebel affairs experts (匪情專家). The majority were either defected CCP cadres or KMT and government officials who had been engaged in the fight against the communists long before 1949.⁶ These spe-

⁴Kai-huang Yang, “Taiwan ‘Zhongguo dalu yanjiu’zhi huigu yu qianzhan,” pp. 531-534.

⁵Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, p. 82; Kai-huang Yang, “Taiwan ‘Zhongguo dalu yanjiu’zhi huigu yu qianzhan,” p. 531.

⁶For example, the former group included Warren Kuo (郭華倫), Yao Meng-xuan (姚孟軒), Liu Mao-nan (劉懋柵) and others, Some of the latter group were Li Tian-min (李天民), Zhaqi Siqin (札奇斯欽), Yin Qing-yao (尹慶耀) and Zhu Wen-lin (朱文琳). “Introduction to our division,” (本所簡介), the webpage of the Chinese Politics Division of

cialists usually worked in the four state agencies mentioned above.⁷ Though lacking training in social science methodology, they were experienced practitioners, and were relatively successful in correctly understanding and predicting events in mainland China.⁸ In terms of research methods, China studies experts in this period read intelligence reports, notes from interviews with mainland refugees, official documents and other mainland China publications (such as periodicals, news reports, radio broadcasts and pictures), observation notes from those who visited China, and information from other countries.⁹

The policy-oriented nature of China studies in this period also led to distribution restrictions on China studies publications. The analyses of these experts were rarely publicly circulated in the 1950s.¹⁰ Beginning in the 1960s, some of their analyses became available in periodicals focusing on issues related to mainland China or comparative communism, such as *Zhongguo dalu yuekan* (中國大陸月刊, Mainland China Monthly), *Feiqing yanjiu* (匪情研究, Studies on Chinese Communists), *Wenti yu yanjiu* (問題與研究, *Issues & Studies*, Chinese version), *Issues & Studies*, *Feiqing yuebao* (匪情月報, Chinese Communist Affairs Monthly), and *Gongdang wenti yanjiu* (共黨問題研究, Studies in Communism). These periodicals were all either directly or indirectly affiliated with the ruling KMT or government intelligence agencies. Moreover, these periodicals did not call for manuscripts until the 1960s, with publication of manuscripts from non-IIR affiliated academia only regularly emerging after the late 1980s.¹¹ Because their existence in this period was based on policy analysis, articles published in these periodicals did not go through the anonymous peer review process until the 1990s.

The IIR is a typical example of the policy-oriented nature of China studies in this period. First of all, the IIR was closely linked to the state and was indebted to Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) for its foundation and growth during its first 35 years of life. The

the IIR, <http://iir.nccu.edu.tw/chinapolitics/introduction.htm>.

⁷For instance Warren Kuo, Yao Meng-xuan (姚孟軒), Zeng Yong-xian (曾永賢), and Wang Zhang-ling (王章陵) came from the Investigation Bureau; Xiang Nai-guang (項迺光), Xuan Mo (玄默) (formal name She Yan-miao (佘延苗)), and Zhang Zhen-bang (張鎮邦) were from the Military Intelligence Bureau. See Yong-xian Zeng (曾永賢), dictation, *Cong zuo dao you liushi nian: Zeng Yong-xian xiansheng fangtanlu* (從左到右六十年：曾永賢先生訪談錄, 60 years from left to right: recorded interviews with Mr. Zeng Yong-xian) (Taipei: Academia Historica, 2009), pp. 104-107, 131, 190-191; Ming-yi Wang (王銘義), *Bu queding de haixia: dang Zhonghua Minguo pengshang Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo* (不確定的海峽：當中華民國碰上中華人民共和國, Strait of uncertainty: when the Republic of China encounters the People's Republic of China) (Taipei: Shibao wenhua gongsi, 1992), p. 58; Oral interview with Zhang-ling Wang (王章陵), the Research and Education Center for China Studies And Cross Taiwan-Strait Relations, Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University, September 2009, <http://politics.ntu.edu.tw/RAEC/comm2/InterviewTWang.doc>.

⁸Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, pp. 64-83.

⁹Warren Kuo (郭華倫), *Zhonggong wenti lunji*, (中共問題論集, CCP issues collectanea) enlarged edition (Taipei: Institute for International Relations, 1982), pp. 391, 394-395; Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, p. 6

¹⁰The IIR published *Wenti yu yanjiu* in April 1956 and *Feiqing yuebao* in January 1958. The former remained closed circulation journal until October 1961 (vol. 1, no. 1, reassigned serial numbers); the latter began allowing foreign subscriptions in February 1966 (vol. 9, no. 1) and officially announced public distribution in July 1988 (vol. 31, no. 1). See "History," (歷史沿革) IIR website, [ttp://iir.nccu.edu.tw/index.php?include=aboutus&mode=history](http://iir.nccu.edu.tw/index.php?include=aboutus&mode=history); Hui-lin Liu, "Lun 'Zhonggong yanjiu' de tujing ji zhongxi zai yanjiushang de fenqi," (論「中共研究」的途徑及中西在研究上的分歧, On the approaches of 'CCP studies' and the divergence in research methods between the West and the East) *Dongya jikan* (東亞季刊, East Asia Quarterly), vol. 7, no. 4 (April 1976), pp. 53-54.

¹¹This is the author's observational conclusion after examining the various versions of the call-for-manuscripts notices over years in these periodicals.

IIR was under the direct command of Chiang Ching-kuo when it was established in April 1953. It became the Policy Research Office (政策研究室) of the National Security Bureau after the foundation of the Bureau in 1955.¹² Due to the hierarchical relationship between the two units, the IIR needed to acquire the latter's approval before carrying out its major decisions and activities.¹³ The main function of the IIR was to provide the government, particularly the two Chiang presidents (Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo), current event analyses and policy suggestions about mainland China and international politics, as well as to promote international information exchanges about the PRC.¹⁴ In January 1966 the IIR began to play the role of information supply center, providing American scholars with PRC official documents, sometimes from intelligence sources, after translation into English.¹⁵

In 1968, under the authorization of Chiang Kai-shek, the IIR collaborated with National Chengchi University (NCCU) (國立政治大學) to found the Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies (GIEAS) (東亞研究所), the first graduate institute in Taiwan focusing on mainland China affairs, in order to nurture a younger generation of scholars on China studies.¹⁶ The IIR supported GIEAS by providing course instructors, funds and other logistic support services, resulting in a natural linkage with the National Security Bureau, just as was the case with the IIR.¹⁷ The IIR also annually recruited several GIEAS alumni as research fellows until the early 1990s.¹⁸

In July 1975, the IIR became nominally under the jurisdiction of NCCU but in reality operated independently of the university. This change in affiliation was probably at the suggestion of

¹² Anonymous author (佚名), "Taiwan zhengyao de yangchengsuo: jiekai 'guoguan zhongxin' de shenmi miansha (1)," (台灣政要的養成所——揭開「國關中心」的神秘面紗 (上), A training ground for government dignitaries in Taiwan: lifting the mysterious veil of the Institute of International Relations), *Zhongwai zazhi* (中外雜誌), vol. 52, no. 4 (October 1992), p. 112.

¹³ For example, the IIR's decision to publicly distribute *Wenti yu yanjiu* in October 1961 obtained the approval of the head of the National Security Bureau in September of that year and received budget support from the bureau within the limit of NT\$ 25,000.

¹⁴ The IIR Third Division self-assessment report of the 2002 academic year (91學年度第三所自我評鑑手冊), Third Division, IIR, National Chengchi University (2002), p. 1.

¹⁵ "History," (歷史沿革) IIR website, <http://iir.nccu.edu.tw/index.php?include=aboutus&mode=history>; Dongyang Zheng (鄭東陽), "Kuomintang zhongyang dangxiao jinxi," (國民黨中央黨校今昔, Past and present of the Kuomintang Central Party School), *Xinhua ao bao* (新華澳報), unknown date, <http://www.waou.com.mo/detail.asp?id=41970>; Hui-lin Liu, "Lun 'Zhonggong yanjiu' de tujing ji zhongxi zai yanjiushang de fenqi," p. 54; Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, p. 9.

¹⁶ Dongyang Zheng, "Kuomintang zhongyang dangxiao jinxi," GIEAS offered a master's degree program in 1968 with a primary focus on training talents in CCP theory, international communist movements, and mainland China issues. It opened a Ph.D. program in 1981.

¹⁷ GIEAS therefore had many more resources than the other departments and graduate institutes in NCCU, such as free transportation for faculty members, and article honorarium for *Dongya jikan*, GIEAS's official journal. Anonymous author, "Taiwan zhengyao de yangchengsuo (1)," p. 112; "Zhang Huan-qing jiaoshou koushu lishi shougao," (張煥卿教授口述歷史手稿, Manuscript of Huan-qing Zhang's oral history) the Research and Education Center for China Studies And Cross Taiwan-Strait Relations, Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University, October-December 2008, <http://raec.igd.tw/act/tw-9.doc>; "Rui He-zheng Zhongguo yanjiu jingyan koushu lishi fangtan jilu," (芮和蒸中國研究經驗口述歷史訪談紀錄, Minutes from an interview with He-zheng Rui on his China studies experiences), the Research and Education Center for China Studies And Cross-Taiwan Strait Relations, Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University, October 2008, <http://raec.igd.tw/act/tw-15.doc>. A typical example to illustrate the interweaving relationship between the IIR and GIEAS is Wu Jun-cai (吳俊才). He was director of the IIR from 1964 to 1972 while concurrently serving as the founding director of GIEAS from 1968 to 1972.

¹⁸ Hong-yuan Chang and Tsung-yi Lee, "'Zhongguo yanjiu' zai Taiwan," p. 255.

Chiang Ching-kuo.¹⁹ The IIR continued to receive funds from the National Security Bureau and engage in joint research with the other intelligence-related agencies in the government, the military, and the KMT.²⁰ The IIR maintained close ties with the National Security Bureau until its full amalgamation into NCCU in 1996.

In the second half of this period, dramatic changes in international circumstances shook Taiwan's international status as the only legal government of China and thereby gradually undermined the communist rebel studies research paradigm, which emphasized “anti-communism must prevail, tyranny must die” (反共必勝，暴政必亡). These challenges included Taiwan's withdrawal from the United Nations in 1971, Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in 1978, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China in 1979, and China's new policy toward Taiwan in 1979, which called for “peaceful reunification and *one country, two systems*” (和平統一，一國兩制). In order to extend Taiwan's international influence and improve civilian understanding of the CCP's political propaganda, Taiwan's China studies began to move towards more public transparency. Beginning in the 1970s, the IIR eagerly strengthened academic exchanges and collaborations with think tanks and research institutes in the US, Japan, South Korea, and Europe, holding bilateral annual conferences with these countries.²¹ Meanwhile, beginning in the mid-1970s, IIR research fellows supplied instructors for mainland China studies courses at National Taiwan University, NCCU and three other universities in order to strengthen “ideological education” and “knowing the enemy.”²²

The research paradigm of communist rebel studies faced more challenges after the 1970s. Starting in the early 1970s, facing questions from local and foreign scholars, leading experts of communist rebel studies began to illustrate their research methods in order to defend the results of their research on the PRC.²³ Many American China studies scholars, who usually had strong social science backgrounds and maintained a value-free attitude in their research, viewed the analyses done by these communist rebel specialists as suspect, partly due to their usage of emotive and negative anti-communist terms to describe the CCP and its leaders and partly due to their lack of social science research methods.²⁴ In response, Warren Kou (郭華倫), a leading expert on

¹⁹ Qi-bo Lin (林奇伯), “Cong muhou xiance dao duoyuan fasheng: Taiwan zhiku baihua qifang,” (從幕後獻策到多元發聲：台灣智庫百花齊放, From providing policy suggestions behind the scene to plural voices: the pluralization of think tanks in Taiwan) *Taiwan guanghua zazhi* (台灣光華雜誌), p. 3, http://www.taiwan-panorama.com/show_issue.php?id=200249104006c.txt&cur_page=3&table=1&distype=&h1=&h2=&search=&height=&type=&scope=&order=&keyword=&lstPage=&num=&year=2002&month=04.

²⁰ Anonymous author (佚名), “Taiwan zhengyao de yangchengsuo: jiekai ‘guoguan zhongxin’ de shenmi miansha (2),” (台灣政要的養成所——揭開「國關中心」的神秘面紗(下), A training ground for government dignitaries in Taiwan: lifting the mysterious veil of the Institute of International Relations), *Zhongwai zazhi* (中外雜誌), vol. 52, no. 5 (November 1992), p. 132.

²¹ For example, the Sino-American Conference on Mainland China began in 1970. Afterwards the conference was alternately held in the US and Taipei. The Sino-Japanese Conference on Mainland China was initiated in 1971. The first-annual Sino-Korean Conference and Sino-European Conference were respectively held in 1980 and 1984. See “History,” (歷史沿革) IIR website, <http://iir.nccu.edu.tw/index.php?include=aboutus&mode=history>.

²² Warren Kuo (郭華倫), *Zhonggong wenti lunji*, p. 398; Hui-lin Liu, “Lun ‘Zhonggong yanjiu’ de tujing ji zhongxi zai yanjiushang de fenqi,” p. 55; History,” IIR website, <http://iir.nccu.edu.tw/index.php?include=aboutus&mode=history>.

²³ For instance, Warren Kuo, “Guanyu yanjiu ‘Zhongguo dalu wenti zhi fangfa’,” (關於研究「中國大陸問題之方法, On mainland China studies research methods), presented at the Second Sino-American Conference on Mainland China, the Institute for International Relations, National Chengchi University, June 14, 1972. During the conference Kuo responded to former American ambassador to South Korea Richard Walker's 16 questions about research methods.

²⁴ Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, p. 11.

communist rebel affairs in the IIR, defined their oft-employed methods as the interactive usage of “analytical, inductive, deductive, comparative, and historical” methods, along with the simultaneous usage of the dialectical method.²⁵

However, these efforts did not prevent the eventual breakdown of this research paradigm. After the US and China established diplomatic relations in 1979, both sides signed cultural and academic exchanges. American scholars could thereby travel to China to do field work; however, scholars from Taiwan did not have the same opportunity. This change diminished the level of dependency American scholars had on Taiwan’s China studies, leading to greater discrepancies in research methods on both sides.²⁶ With the arrival of the 1980s, some Taiwanese political scientists studying abroad in the US, where they received training in social science methodology, called in question the research methods of communist rebel studies. In June 1982 *Shibao Zazhi* (時報雜誌) published Warren Kuo’s “Research methods for mainland China issues,”²⁷ and held a forum on China studies research methods in July of the same year.²⁸ In September, Lin Tse-min’s (林澤民) “Research methods and models in Chinese communist studies” was published in the same magazine, criticizing the research methods adopted by experts on communist rebel affairs.²⁹ This round of dialogues was a concrete example of the wane of the research paradigm of communist rebel studies.³⁰

IIR in Transition during the Era of Democratization: mid-1980s to Late 1990s

Taiwan’s China studies and the IIR underwent a great transformation during the period from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, entering a new stage – the Chinese communist studies stage. This transition away from the communist rebel studies stage represented the move from policy analysis toward academic research. While some scholars continued to conduct policy analyses, some others found increased leeway to pursue their research without political intervention, and their research outcomes also gradually distanced themselves from the predestined conclusion of “anti-communism must prevail, tyranny must die.” This division of labor became increasingly obvious as the stage progressed. In addition to the international changes mentioned in the previous section, generational replacement of scholars, Taiwan’s democratization, innovation in government research and education policy and also contributed to this transition.

²⁵See Warren Kuo, *Zhonggong wenti lunji*, pp. 392-393; Warren Kuo, “Zhongguo dalu wenti de yanjiu fangfa” (中國大陸問題的研究方法, Research methods for mainland China issues), *Shibao zazhi*, no. 131 (June 6, 1982), pp. 57-58.

²⁶Kai-huang Yang, “Taiwan ‘Zhongguo dalu yanjiu’ zhi huigu yu qianzhan,” pp. 536, 540.

²⁷Warren Kuo, “Research methods for mainland China issues,” pp. 57-58.

²⁸Four participants included Warren Kuo, Tsao Po-i (曹伯一), Yin Ching-yao (尹慶耀), Chao Hsien-yun (趙先運), Yuan Sung-hsi (袁頌西), and Alexander Ya-li Lu (呂亞力). The first four are typical experts on communist rebel affairs, while the latter two are returnee scholars with specialities in methodology. See Zhu-lun Mao, “‘Zhongguo dalu wenti de yanjiu fangfa’ zuotanhui,” (「中國大陸問題的研究方法」座談會) *Shibao zazhi* (時報雜誌), no. 135 (July 4, 1982), pp. 57-62.

²⁹Tse-min Lin (林澤民), “Zhonggong yanjiu de fangfa yu moshi,” (中共研究的方法與模式, Research methods and models in Chinese communist studies) *Shibao zazhi*, no. 145 (September 12, 1982), pp. 57-60. For instance, Tse-min Lin criticized Warren Kuo’s “analytical, inductive, deductive, comparative, and historical method” to be, in reality, simply the traditional “historical studies method.”

³⁰Kai-huang Yang, “Taiwan ‘Zhongguo dalu yanjiu’ zhi huigu yu qianzhan,” p. 539.

This stage marked the first generational shift in the field. In 1981 GIEAS opened its Ph.D. program. The program's Ph.D. students began graduating in the mid-1980s, finding employment at various universities and research institutions in Taiwan and other countries, including the IIR.³¹ With GIEAS the only China studies program that offered Ph.D. training, their graduating Ph.D. holders became the main force behind Taiwan's China studies field.³² Many of these scholars are still active in academia, media or policy consultation today. A few Ph.D.-holding returnees from abroad also entered this field, some of whom had obtained master's degrees from GIEAS.³³ At the same time, the aging experts of communist rebel studies began to withdraw from their posts, either due to retirement or death.³⁴

This stage also experienced dramatic changes in cross-Taiwan Strait relations and Taiwanese domestic politics. On July 16, 1981, Pai Wan-hsiang (白萬祥), director of the KMT's Department of Mainland China Affairs (大陸工作會), declared that Taiwanese officials would refer to mainland China as the "Chinese communist regime" (中共政權) and no longer use derogatory terms such as "communist rebels" in the public arena.³⁵ In October 1987 civilian travel to the mainland to visit relatives was opened, officially putting an end to the Three No's Policy (三不政策) (no contact, no compromise, and no negotiation). Increasingly frequent contact between both sides of the Taiwan Strait brought more information from the mainland, and also toned down the monopoly of the IIR and other state agencies over China studies.³⁶

These developments undoubtedly had a profound influence on the research topics, methods, and publications of Taiwan's China studies. As China's reform progressed, research topics in the field became more diverse. Besides traditional political and personnel research, topics dealing with socio-economic changes such as state-owned enterprise reform, social stratification, township and village enterprises, and grassroots politics also emerged, expanding the China studies field and moving towards typical area studies research.

Meanwhile, scholars of the younger generation used public information more frequently and extensively than their predecessors. Benefiting from China's reform, the environment for information acquisition had relatively fewer restrictions. Information acquisition channels also gradually became more diverse, resulting in a large decrease in the dependency on intelligence sources. Although the importance of social science methodology progressively increased, experience in mainland China and personal contacts continued to play a definite role. Taking scholars trained

³¹ A Korean national received the first Ph.D. from GIEAS in 1984. The next Ph.D. graduates were Lee Ying-ming (李英明) (former GIEAS professor and current vice principal of China University of Science and Technology) and Chi Mao-chi (齊茂吉) (professor in the Graduate Institute of History, National Central University). They obtained their doctoral degrees in 1985.

³² Examples are Shih Tse-hsiung (施哲雄), Zhao Chun-shan (趙春山), Wu An-chia (吳安家), Fu Feng-cheng (傅豐誠), Yang Kai-huang (楊開煌), Chang Jung-feng (張榮豐), Wei Ai (魏艾), Chi Chi-mao (齊茂吉), Li Ying-ming (李英明), Lo Shiao-nan (羅曉南), Yu Yu-lin (俞雨霖), Sung Kuo-cheng (宋國誠), Liu Sun-chi (劉勝驥), Chen Te-sheng (陳德昇), Kao Huei (高輝), and Chang Wu-Ueh (張五岳).

³³ Some examples are Chiu Kun-shuan (邱坤玄), Chao Chien-min (趙建民), Shao Zong-hai (邵宗海), Ming Chu-cheng (明居正), and Shih Chih-yu (石之瑜). Chao is a GIEAS alumnus.

³⁴ Tai-chun Kuo and Ramon Myers, *Understanding Communist China*, p. 7. For example, Warren Kuo, a former vice director of the IIR, and acting director of GIEAS, passed away in 1984.

³⁵ Xin Xue (薛昕) and Jia-yu Tang (湯家玉), "Jiang Jing-guo dui Taiwan wenti de sikao yu jueze" (蔣經國對臺灣問題的思考與抉擇, Chiang Ching-kuo's deliberations and decisions regarding Taiwan), *Dangshi zonglan*, reprinted in *Renwu ABC*, April 2004, http://www.rwabc.com/diqurenwu/rw_detail.asp?people_id=279&id=454.

³⁶ Kai-huang Yang, "Taiwan 'Zhongguo dalu yanjiu' zhi huigu yu qianzhan," pp. 538-541.

in GIEAS as examples, they learned about CCP party history, dialectics, and ideology, and had a strong grasp of official CCP documents.³⁷ However, because they lacked their predecessors' experience of personal contact with CCP elites, they were unable to fully carry on the research methods of the previous generation. Accordingly, alternative information sources became important to their research.

The IIR underwent a dramatic transformation during this period in terms of its relationship with the state, the educational backgrounds of research fellows, and the editorial policy of its major journals. First of all, the IIR cut off its institutional ties with the National Security Bureau and fully merged with NCCU in 1996, symbolizing the termination of its role as a government think tank. In the first several years after the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988, the IIR continued to provide President Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), a former IIR research fellow and GIEAS faculty member, current situation analysis and policy suggestions.³⁸ Lee also recruited several IIR heads and deputy heads into the government or the KMT as ranking officials, such as Chang King-yuh (張京育), Shao Yu-ming (邵玉銘), Su Chi (蘇起) and Wu An-chia (吳安家).

However, the IIR lost Lee's political trust after the early 1990s. A series of intensified splits in the KMT and the shift of Lee's mainland China policy from pro-reunification—the KMT's orthodox stance on cross-strait relations—toward pro-independence after the mid-1990s alienated the IIR from the president. Many IIR research fellows at the time—but not all—were against independence and supported Lee's political rivals in the KMT.³⁹ Consequently, the IIR did not participate in Lee's decisions on the “no haste, go slow” (戒急用忍) policy and the “special state-to-state relationship” (特殊國與國關係) statement.⁴⁰ The foundation of the Institute for National Policy Research (國家政策研究中心) in 1991 and the Taiwan Research Institute (台灣綜合研究院) in 1994 also demonstrated the declining role of the IIR in the eyes of Lee. These two private think tanks played an important role in his political reforms and mainland China policy in the 1990s.⁴¹

³⁷ These topics were focal courses during the early days of GIEAS, the instructors of which were communist rebel specialists. Because of the program's focus on party history and the privilege of access to classified materials about mainland China in the IIR, GIEAS students read a number of important CCP official documents, affording them an understanding of CCP documents and topics.

³⁸ When Lee became vice president, he required the IIR to provide him with weekly reports on the most current political and economic trends in mainland China. He was involved in the attempt to reorganize the institute after becoming president. Ming-yi Wang, *Bu queding de haixia*, pp. 105-106; Zhu-guo Tang (唐柱國), “Duo shi guojiang menglong—manji zhengda dongyusuo de zaoqi shiyou” (多是過江猛龍——漫記政大東亞所的早期師友, From nonentities to luminaries—notes on professors and friends of National Chengchi University's Graduate Institute of East Asian Studies of early years), Wu Chun-tsai xiansheng jinian wenji bianji weiyuanhui (吳俊才先生紀念文集編輯委員會, Commemorating the collected works of Mr. Wu Chun-tsai), *Aiguo yu aicai: huainian Wu Juncai xiansheng wenji* (愛國與愛才：懷念吳俊才先生文集, For the love of our country and talent: the collected works for remembering Mr. Wu Chun-tsai), (not formally published, 1997), pp. 133-135. Tse-hsiung Shih (施哲雄), “Wuxian huainian Wu shi shuxin” (無限懷念吳師叔心, Infinitely cherishing the memory of Wu Chun-tsai), Wu Jun-cai xiansheng jinian wenji bianji weiyuanhui, *Aiguo yu aicai*, p. 147.

³⁹ For example, Chou Yu-shan (周玉山), an associate research fellow of the IIR Third Division, was a member of the KMT minority faction (非主流派) and a longtime secretary to Hau Pei-tsun (郝柏村), Lee's political rival within the KMT in the 1990s. He was expelled from the party.

⁴⁰ Jin-yao Zheng (鄭進耀), “Gaichao huandai fenghua buzai, shichong de guoguan zhongxin yao suobian,” (改朝換代風華不再 失寵的國關中心要縮編, The IIR will be downsized after losing its luster in the face of government change) *Xin xinwen* (新新聞), no. 900 (June 3-9, 2004), p. 59.

⁴¹ Qi-bo Lin, “Cong muhou xiance dao duoyuan fasheng,” *Taiwan guanghua zazhi*, p. 5, http://www.taiwan-panorama.com/show_issue.php?id=200249104006c.txt&cur_page=5&table=1&distype=&h1=&h2=&search=&height=&type=&scope=&order=&keyword=&lstPage=&num=&year=2002&month=04.

Table 1. The educational backgrounds of IIR research fellows in 1996

Recruitment period	Doctoral degree holders before recruitment		No doctoral degree before recruitment		
	Overseas-trained	Locally-trained	Obtaining a doctoral degree after working at the IIR		No doctoral degree
			Overseas-trained	Locally-trained	
1962-1984	1	1	2	10	36
1985-1990	9	1	2	1	5
1991-1995	12	1	1	0	3

Primary information sources: Research fellows' names were obtained from the NCCU faculty member and staff directory of the 1996 academic year. Background information was mainly obtained from the IIR website and other on-line information sources. The numbers in each cell were calculated by the author.

After the merger with NCCU in 1996, the IIR became a college-level scholarly research institute, with a hierarchical status on par with that of university colleges such as the College of Social Sciences. The IIR director was chosen by the NCCU president. The recruitment and promotion of IIR research fellows follow the same evaluation process as other university faculty members while depriving the IIR director of the power of personnel recruitment formerly held by his office. In addition, all IIR research fellows and staff were openly listed in the NCCU faculty member and staff directory of the 1996 academic year for the first time since the institute's nominal affiliation with NCCU in 1975.

The changes in Taiwan's higher education environment—the increasing importance of a doctoral degree for university faculty members and the establishment of the anonymous review system in academic journals—also produced a great impact on the IIR. The IIR began to regularly recruit overseas Ph.D. holders after the mid-1980s. The initiator of this change in recruitment policy was Shao Yu-ming, who was appointed IIR director in September 1984. As Table 1 shows, in the 1996 academic year, 21 overseas-trained Ph.D. holders and 2 locally-trained Ph.D. holders were recruited into the institute from 1985 to 1995. In the same period, among the other 12 research fellows who did not have a doctoral degree at the time of recruitment, 3 obtained their degrees from foreign universities and 1 from a local university later in their career by means of retaining their position without pay (留職停薪) (see Table 1).

This pattern differs significantly from that which was observed before 1984. During the period between 1962 and 1984, as Table 1 shows, only 2 research fellows held a doctoral degree at the time of recruitment, while another 12 non-Ph.D. holders obtained a doctoral degree later in their career from local universities, particularly from GIEAS, after the mid-1980s through retaining their position without pay. The other 36 research fellows received no doctoral degree before retirement. The adaptation of the revised University Law (大學法) in 1994, which required a doctoral degree as a primary condition for appointment to assistant professor, reinforced this trend of personnel recruitment. In fact, a doctoral degree has been a prerequisite for IIR research fellow recruitment since 1995. This dramatic demographic change in the educational backgrounds of research fellows contributed to the full merger of the IIR with NCCU in 1996.

The editorial policy of major IIR periodicals was also under transformation in the Chinese communist studies stage. Owing to new developments in cross-strait relations and democrati-

zation in Taiwan, early China studies periodicals changed names in response to changes in the political climate. For instance, in July 1985 (vol. 28 no. 1) The IIR changed the name of *Feiqing yuebao* (匪情月報) to *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu* (中國大陸研究, Mainland China Studies). A much more important adjustment was the adoption of double-blind anonymous review systems for academic journals. Before the mid-1990s, the absence of a sound peer review mechanism was commonplace among academic periodicals in Taiwan. For example, the review mechanism for IIR periodicals was to a certain extent a formality. IIR division heads and senior research fellows reviewed manuscripts and then decided their rejection or acceptance for publication.⁴² Scholars outside the IIR played a minor role or even no role in the old review process. Due to the National Science Council's (NSC) attempt to improve the quality of academic journals in Taiwan, the IIR decided to establish a real anonymous review process for its academic journals in the mid-1990s at the request of Yun-han Chu (朱雲漢), coordinator of the political science section of the NSC from 1994 to 1997.⁴³ The time-consuming process of anonymous peer review was disadvantageous for current situation analyses, which required quick publication. In other words, this review mechanism resulted in the further separation of academic research from policy analysis.

IIR as a Competitor For Academic and Policy Influence: Late 1990s to Present

After experiencing dramatic changes in the period from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, Taiwan's China studies entered the contemporary China studies stage. In this stage, Taiwan's China studies completed its transformation from a state-dominated field to a society-guided one in which the state no longer politically dominated the research agenda, information sources and research outputs.⁴⁴

China studies in this stage have several attributes. First, there is a marked rift between scholarly research and policy analysis. Though academics might provide policy consultation, publish current issues reports in policy-oriented periodicals, and execute government policy projects, their promotions were usually based on academic publications. Policy analysts, usually affiliated with state agencies, often found publishing their works in scholarly journals to be an uphill battle due to the rigorous anonymous review process. A typical example is that *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu* did not publish any articles authored by persons working in the government or political parties after 1999 (see Figure 1). Moreover, scholars did not necessarily only interact with government institutions, and research topics were not only limited to the realm of policy. This shows that China studies scholars did not exist solely at the service of the government.

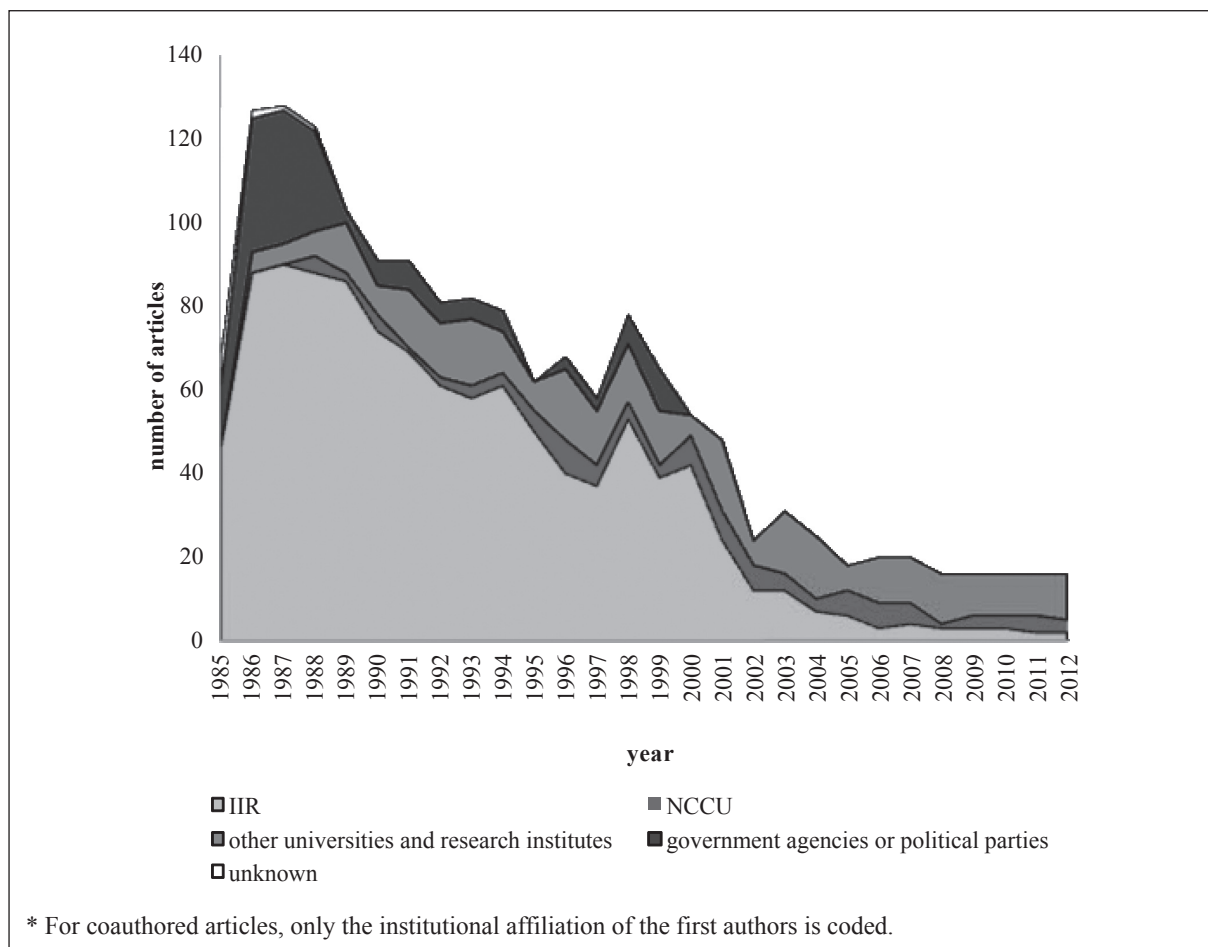
The second attribute is the encounter between area studies and disciplinary studies in the China studies field. China's rise attracted political scientists, economists and sociologists to enter the field. Scholarly journals in these disciplines began publishing articles with relevance to mainland China. More students from diverse universities wrote their theses on different issues relevant

⁴²IIR senior research fellow Wu Tung-yeh (吳東野) told the author this information on March 18, 2013.

⁴³Former IIR director Ho Szu-Yin (何思因) told the author this information on March 20, 2013.

⁴⁴For similar views, see Jieh-min Wu, Chih-jou Chen and Ming-chi Chen, "Kua haixia xin shehui yanjiu," *Dangdai Zhongguo yanjiu tongxun*, no. 9, (January 2008), p. 13; Hong-yuan Chang and Tsung-yi Lee, "'Zhongguo yanjiu' zai Taiwan," pp. 252-25.

Figure 1. The institutional affiliation of authors in *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu*



to mainland China.⁴⁵ At the same time, China studies journals received manuscripts from scholars affiliated with various social sciences-related departments or graduate institutes. This change demonstrates that Taiwan's China studies was no longer simply an area study, but was comprised of a variety of academic disciplines and the classical area studies tradition, which emphasized the extensive and overall understanding of a country or region. Scholars could utilize the research paradigms studied in their own disciplines to do research, engaging in theoretical dialogue and publishing their work. This added diversity and specialization to the China studies field. During this time many universities began offering mainland China studies courses. Furthermore, frequent academic conferences provided ample opportunities for contact between scholars on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

The third attribute of the contemporary China studies stage is that research topics and methods became more diverse, and the development of the field subject to higher education policy, rather than political restrictions. In terms of research topics, China studies expanded from the study of high politics to include the study of low politics. However, politics and elite research

⁴⁵Jieh-min Wu, Chih-jou Chen and Ming-chi Chen, "Kua haixia xin shehui yanjiu," *Dangdai Zhongguo yanjiu tongxun*, no. 9, (January 2008), pp. 22-24.

took a back seat to social, economic, and diplomatic security topics.⁴⁶ Personnel issues, in particular, were no longer in strong academic demand, reflected by that the fact few scholars invested resources and efforts in this topic. With regard to research methods, many Taiwanese scholars traveled to China to conduct field research in light of reduced restrictions. Scholars also began to set up databases or utilize those already accumulated by others in order to facilitate large-scale, longitudinal analysis. Thus, the research achievements of this stage placed emphasis on qualitative and quantitative characteristics, although most publications still use qualitative methods.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, higher education policy such as journal anonymous review systems, university program evaluation (大學系所評鑑), and the Aim for the Top University Project (邁向頂尖大學計畫), produced a strong impact on the research output of China studies. For example, starting in June 1999, the National Science Council's Research Institute for the Social Sciences began to set up the Taiwan Social Sciences Citation Index (TSSCI) and announced its first TSSCI list of included journals in October 2000.⁴⁸ Afterward, TSSCI journals, as well as Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) journals, gradually became important promotion and award indicators for university professors, particularly those affiliated with the universities in the Aim for the Top University Project (though not the only indicators).

The emergence of the TSSCI directly resulted in a reshuffling of the ranking of Taiwan's journals covering mainland China issues. Old-line journals that were able to adapt to changes in the scholarly climate, such as *Wenti yu yanjiu*, *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu*, and *Issues & Studies*, successfully transitioned from policy analysis journals to scholarly journals. Those that continued (or retained in part) their policy analysis orientation faced difficult challenges in attracting manuscripts from scholars at research-oriented universities, such as *Zhonggong yanjiu* (中共研究, Studies on Chinese Communism) and *Gongdang wenti yanjiu* (共黨問題研究, Studies in Communism), which was later renamed *Zhanwang yu tansuo* (展望與探索, Prospect & Exploration) in January 2003. The journals that were unable to be immediately included in the TSSCI list also faced challenges in attracting a sufficient number of high-quality manuscripts, such as *Tungya chikan* (東亞季刊), which adopted *Dongya yanjiu* (東亞研究, East Asian Studies) as its current name and changed its publication frequency from a quarterly to a biannual publication in 2004. The introduction of university program evaluation and the Aim for Top University Project fortified the developments discussed above. SSCI/TSSCI-listed publications are often used as an important factor in evaluating academic achievement.

The last attribute of this stage is the occurrence of a new round of generational replacement of scholars. After the late 1990s Ph.D. returnees specializing in China studies returned to Taiwan, where they gained positions in major public research institutions and universities.⁴⁹ These returnees formed the new wave of China studies scholars in Taiwan, but their influx also led to fewer

⁴⁶Hsin-hsien Wang, "Taiwan Zhongguo zhengzhi yanjiu de xipu," pp. 9-13.

⁴⁷Hsin-hsien Wang, "Taiwan Zhongguo zhengzhi yanjiu de xipu," pp. 7-8.

⁴⁸Chung-min Kuan (管中閔) and Ruoh-rong Yu (于若蓉), " 'Taiwan shehui kexue yinwen suoyin' ziliaoku de jianzhi gaikuang" (「臺灣社會科學引文索引」資料庫的建置概況, A profile of the establishment of the TSSCI databank), National Science Council's Social Sciences Research Center website, <http://ssrc.sinica.edu.tw/ssrc-home/5-21.htm>.

⁴⁹Examples are Su Szu-chien (徐斯儉), Phillip Szue-chin Hsu (徐斯勤), Kou Chien-wen (寇健文), Keng Shu (耿曙), Tao Yi-feng (陶儀芬), Tung Chen-yuan (童振源), Chen Chih-jou (陳志柔), Wu Jieh-min (吳介民), Chen Ming-chi (陳明祺), Wu Der-yuan (吳得源), and Simon T. Chang (張登及), as well as younger returnees Titus Chih-Chieh Chen (陳至潔), Tsai Chung-min (蔡中民), Liou Chih-shien (劉致賢), Hans Han-pu Tung (童涵浦), and Chelsea Chia-chen Chou (周嘉辰).

opportunities for locally trained Ph.D. holders. Of course, GIEAS continued to train many Ph.D. students to enter the China studies field.⁵⁰ Thus, we can say that this generational shift in Taiwan's China studies was primarily driven by returnees from abroad, with Ph.D. graduates from GIEAS serving as a secondary impetus.

After addressing the general characteristics of Taiwan's China studies in the current stage—the contemporary China studies stage, this paper turns its focus to the development of the IIR. After the IIR fully merged with NCCU in 1996, the institute was no longer affiliated with the state. In 2001, the IIR further made an official decision to prohibit the issue of politically sensitive policy reports in the name of the IIR by individual research fellows.⁵¹ After this event, IIR research fellows could only provide personal policy consultation. The separation of the IIR from the state thus reached a point of no return. Therefore, the IIR has to compete for research outputs and policy influence with others in a democratized and pluralistic society. So far, the IIR's efforts have achieved only partial success, due to NCCU's hesitation about the role of the IIR in the university and the lack of strong support for the rejuvenation of IIR research fellows.

In this period, the IIR continued to recruit Ph.D. holders, particularly those with foreign doctoral degrees. This led to the increase of the percentage of Ph.D. holders among IIR research fellows (see Table 2). However, the IIR's efforts to rejuvenate its research fellows suffered a serious setback primarily due to NCCU's decision to downsize the institute in 2004 (see Figure 2). From 2003 to 2005, the IIR lost almost 80% of its young assistant research fellows who were recruited between 1996 and 2002. Seven with foreign doctoral degrees transferred to other universities/research institutes or other departments of NCCU while only one foreign-trained and one locally-trained Ph.D. holder stayed. Since many of these young scholars were China studies specialists, their departure weakened the IIR's competitive advantage over resources and research outputs in the field today. Even worse, NCCU did not provide the IIR enough position quotas in order to recover from the loss of research talents. As a result, from 2003 to 2007 the IIR recruited only two new research fellows.

In this stage, *Issues & Studies*, *Wenti yu yanjiu*, and *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu*—three major IIR journals focusing on issues related to China studies—reduced their publication frequencies from monthly to bi-monthly and then to quarterly. While the adoption of increasingly rigorous and longer double-blind anonymous review systems after the mid-1990s indeed improved the quality of articles published in academic journals, the high rejection rate of manuscripts led to the decline of articles available for publication. In response to this tendency, scholarly journals reduced publication frequency. The publication frequency of *Issues & Studies* changed to bi-monthly in January 1999 (vol. 35, no. 1) and to quarterly in January 2002 (vol. 38, no. 1). *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu* be-

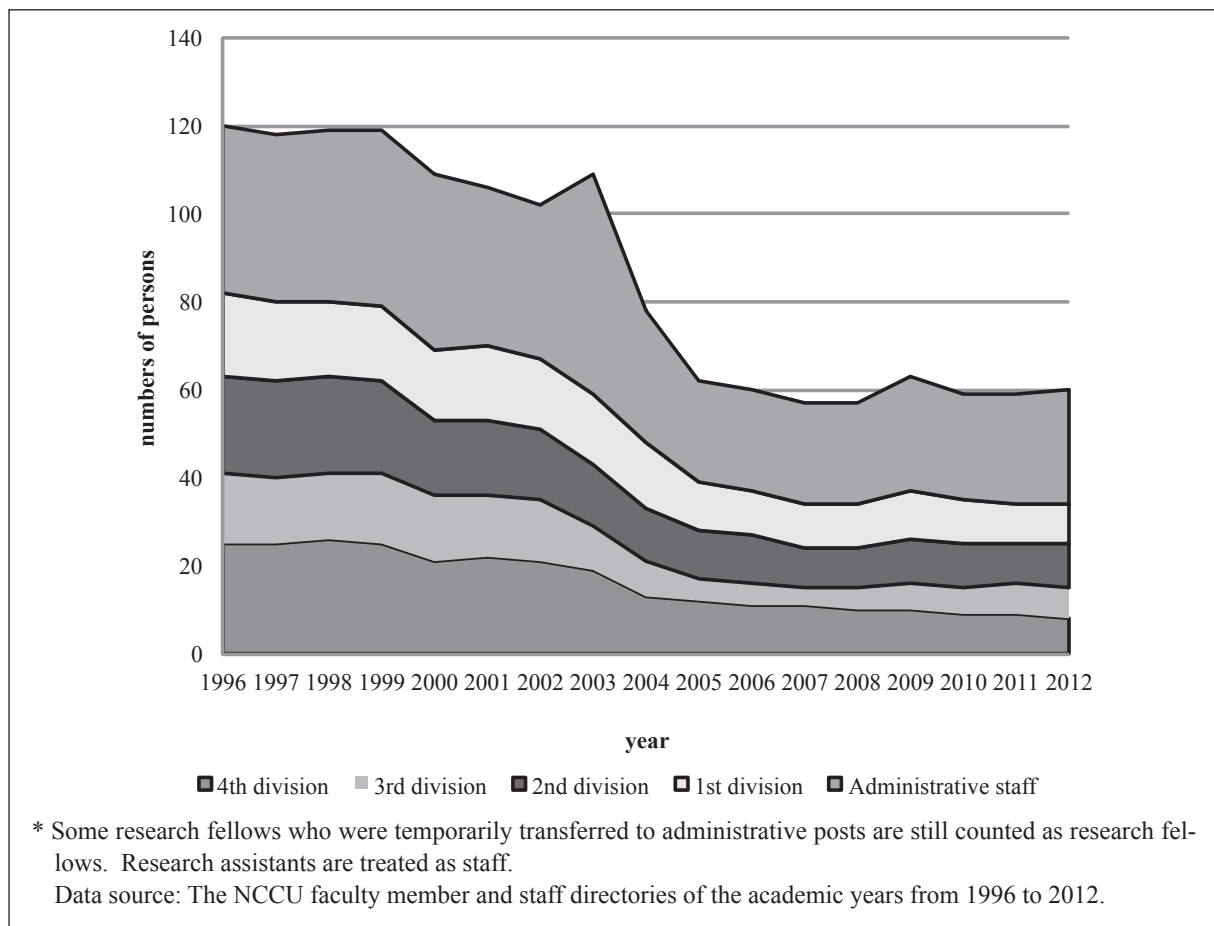
⁵⁰Examples are Dong Li-wen (董立文), Hsu Chih-chia (許志嘉) (deceased), Wang Hsin-hsien (王信賢), Liu Chin-tsai (柳金財), Chang Hong-yuan (張弘遠), Wang Chia-chou (王嘉洲), and Wang Chi-nian (王綺年), as well as younger scholars Tsai Wen-shuen (蔡文軒), Chung Yen-lin (鍾延麟), Shao Hsuan-lei (邵軒磊), and Emmy Rui-hua Lin (林瑞華).

⁵¹On July 18, 2002, Jau-shieh Joseph Wu (吳釗燮), then deputy director of the IIR, led several IIR research fellows to make a report to President Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) about the internal situation of mainland China. The dispatch from the Office of the President stated that, according to the report, the CCP faced several severe challenges and was in danger of “wangdang wangguo” (亡黨亡國, the ruin of the party and the country). The Office of the President, “Zongtong tingqu ‘Zhongguo neibu qingshi pinggu baogao’ jianbao,” (總統聽取「中國內部情勢評估報告」簡報, The president listened to the briefing on “the assessment report on the internal situation of mainland China”) July 18, 2001, <http://www.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=131&itemid=2654>. This report sparked criticisms from other IIR research fellows and led to the decision to prohibit the publication of politically-sensitive policy reports.

Table 2. The educational backgrounds of IIR research fellows in selected years

Year	Doctoral degree holders before recruitment		No doctoral degree before recruitment			Total
	Foreign trained	Local trained	Obtaining a doctoral degree after working at the IIR		No doctoral degree	
			Foreign trained	Local trained		
1996	22	3	5	11	41	82
2003	23	3	4	9	20	59
2012	18	5	3	4	4	34

Figure 2. The changes in IIR manpower from 1966 to 2012



came a bi-monthly journal in January 2002 (vol. 45, no. 1), and to quarterly in January 2004 (vol. 47, no. 1). *Wenti yu yanjiu* followed the same trend—the adjustments of publication frequency occurred in January 2001 (vol. 40, no. 1) and in January 2007 (vol. 46, no. 1). Meanwhile, major IIR journals have become more open in the 2000s than before, which is reflected by the fact that these journals have published much fewer articles authored by IIR research fellows in the 2000s. For example, from 1985 to 2012, the share of articles authored by IIR research fellows in *Zhong-guo dalu yanjiu* significantly declined. As Figure 2 shows, in comparison with the annual percent-

ages of *Zhongguo dalu yanjiu* articles authored by IIR research fellows between 1985 and 2002, which were always higher than 50%, the annual share reduced to 20% or less after 2006. Meanwhile, the share of authors from other universities and academic institutes has stayed at over 50% after the same year.

Conclusion

In the past 60 years, Taiwan's China studies have undergone a great transformation, from a state-dominated field to a society-guided one. The direction of this evolution can be summarized by three terms: depoliticization, proliferation and pluralization. Depoliticization refers to the change in the research mission of China studies from serving politics to being independent of the state's policy demands – scholarly research can exist on its own. This change has affected the long-term changes in the educational backgrounds of scholars, the evaluation standard of research performance, and the editorial direction of academic journals in this field. Proliferation represents the transformation of Taiwan's China studies from official knowledge with limited circulation to free access without political constraints. For example, China's rise attracted discipline-focused scholars to enter the China studies field, which was formerly occupied by scholars with area studies training. Pluralization refers to the situation in which research topics (high politics or low politics issues) and research methods (qualitative or quantitative) also became more diversified over time. The coexistence of discipline-oriented scholars and area studies specialists in China studies also contributes to pluralization.

The driving forces pushing the trajectory of the field differed in each stage. In the communist rebel studies stage, the dynamics of evolution came completely from politics, both internationally and domestically. In the Chinese communist studies stage, the driving forces included political and educational development with a primary emphasis on the former. The former included factors such as cross-strait relations and democratization while the latter were generational changes of scholars and the increasing importance of doctoral degrees. In the contemporary China studies stage, educational policy outweighed political development. For example, anonymous journal review systems, the TSSCI journal list, university program evaluation, and the Aim for the Top University Project played key roles in affecting the development of China studies in the current stage.

Under these circumstances, the role of the IIR has moved from a government think tank to a competitor for academic achievement and policy influence. In the past six decades, the institute has cut off its ties with the state, recruited many Ph.D. holders in order to rejuvenate its research fellows, and adjusted the editorial policy of its major scholarly journals. The success of the IIR in these dimensions is very impressive. Nevertheless, the decision of NCCU to downsize the IIR in 2004 not only reduced the manpower of the institute but also produced a negative effect on its research output. The institute has not yet recovered from the loss of research talents in the mid-2000s. The primary task of the IIR, as well as NCCU, in the near future is to accelerate generational shift of research fellows by recruiting more excellent young scholars and to provide these recruits with competitive, stable and comfortable research environments. Their maturation will bring a new golden era to the institute.

Challenges for Developing International Relations Research in Hong Kong after 1997

Simon Shen (Associate Professor / Director of Global Studies Programme,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

In sharp contrast to Hong Kong's renowned role as an international financial hub, the development of international relations research in the social science stream received little attention in the former British colony. The general public and government officials' relevant knowledge and understanding of this subject has been limited, especially after the handover of Hong Kong's sovereignty back to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1997. While there are structural reasons leading to the under-development of international relations in Hong Kong, this paper strives to examine and assess some of key aspects with due regard to the political, social and economic issues that subsequently lead to its weak development. This article will be divided into two parts. Part one examines the current development of international relations research in Hong Kong and the constraints upon its well establishment, while part two would critically assess the future possibilities and directions for international relations research development in Hong Kong.

Part One: The Current Development of International Relations Research in Hong Kong – What Went Wrong?

Dated back to the colonial times, the strategic importance of Hong Kong has always lied in its geopolitical advantage rather than a strict identity construct. The colonial government has granted Hong Kong some unique roles to play in the international arena, yet did not encourage developing international studies in Hong Kong at the same time, as the status was primarily serving British interests rather than aiming at promoting a distinctive identity for Hong Kong. Still, the rooms that Hong Kong could play in the international arena are far from negligible, and to some extents, are even larger than that of Taiwan as Hong Kong can join quite many international organizations that Taiwan, for various reasons, cannot easily participate.

Following the handover, the official terminology used by the PRC to describe the status of both Hong Kong and Macau is a "special administrative region", one which practices "one country, two systems", governed under the Basic Law. Hong Kong's Basic Law replaced the Letters Patent and the Royal Instruction of the British colonial era as Hong Kong's "mini-constitution" from 1997. As the HKSAR was established by authorization of the Chinese National People's Congress, it is understood that there shall be no nullifying power held by Hong Kong under this arrangement. Speaking of the role of Hong Kong in the international arena, Article 13 of the Basic Law clearly states that "the Central People's Government shall be responsible for the foreign affairs relating to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region [and] the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China shall establish an office in Hong Kong to deal with foreign affairs" (The Basic Law, 2012). This prevents Hong Kong from conducting diplomatic affairs with other states because its

sovereignty lies with China. However, the same article also states that “the Central People’s Government authorizes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to conduct relevant external affairs on its own in accordance with this Law” (The Basic Law, 2012). Thus in Article 151 of the Basic Law, the areas where Hong Kong may participate in the name of external relations are specifically indicated: “the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region may on its own, using the name ‘Hong Kong, China’, maintain and develop relations and conclude and implement agreements with foreign states and regions and relevant international organizations in the appropriate fields, including the economic, trade, financial and monetary, shipping, communications, tourism, cultural and sports fields” (The Basic Law, 2012). As a result, Hong Kong is an independent “member economy” of the World Trade Organization and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and enters as an independent entity as “Hong Kong, China” when participating in the World Cup and Olympic Games.

Political Sensitivity of International Relations under “One-country, Two-system”

However, within the aforementioned framework, an obvious grey area exists that can only be resolved politically at Beijing’s pleasure, i.e. what Hong Kong can do and what it cannot do independently in the international arena. While there are no international laws which clearly distinguish between “foreign” or “diplomatic” relations and “external” relations, the former terms, referring to the parts that Hong Kong cannot do alone, are conventionally interpreted as activities which can only be conducted by sovereign states, such as joining the United Nations or declaring war. Meanwhile, the latter, referring to the parts that Hong Kong can do alone, are understood to mean activities which don’t necessarily involve the concept of sovereignty. However, the difficulties involved in drawing boundaries between the two are not easily solvable, leading most practitioners preferring to apply a stricter measure to define the terms for the sake of maintaining political correctness after the handover. Some see a possible danger for international relations research to cross the vague boundary and to, intentionally or unintentionally, promote a distinctive identity for Hong Kong in the world that exceeds Beijing’s scope of tolerance.

Among all, the most sensitive element is the Hong Kong-US bilateral relations. Seeing the US’s intention to stay in Hong Kong as part of its conspiracy to subvert the Chinese regime via promoting “colour revolution” in Hong Kong, the most conservative pro-Beijing critics always have the tendency to use the US presence in Hong Kong as a strawman to discourage establishing close linkage between Hong Kong and the external community. For instance, pro-Beijing commentators have criticized the Washington-based NGO, the National Democratic Institute, for its involvement with pan-democratic political parties in Hong Kong on the grounds that this could affect China’s national security (China Review, 2007). Applying the same logic of such critics, by allowing the US to investigate cargo in Hong Kong, in the name of anti-terrorism, could also affect China’s national security when the two nations are on bad terms. Clearly, Beijing has the right to disallow any US ship or navy from coming to Hong Kong as shown by the *USS Kitty Hawk* incident in 2007. We cannot discuss

the individual cases here in great details; the message is that, any serious international relations researchers in Hong Kong could face severe criticisms one day if a witch hunt campaign is suddenly launched.

The same phenomenon can be observed in Hong Kong-Taiwan relations as well. Immediately after 1997, Taiwan relation was handled by the SARG's special advisor Paul Yip, whose special advisory position was not part of the HKSARG hierarchy as designed by the Basic Law. His function within the official mechanism, relying on his think tank Hong Kong Policy Research Institute, was seen as arbitrary and unclear by other administrative officers. Yet he still enjoyed some degrees of flexibilities to promote Hong Kong-Taiwan relations from the bottom-up manner, such as organizing a city-to-city forum in Hong Kong by inviting Ma Ying-jeou, then Taipei mayor, to visit Hong Kong. When CH Tung was re-elected as the chief executive in 2002 and did not renew Yip's contract, Yip suspected that his removal from the government was because his institute had been more vocal and aggressive than the HKSARG itself – and probably Beijing's representatives in Hong Kong were comfortable with – even though Yip strongly believed that his policies were in line with the “spirit of Beijing's policy towards Taiwan” (Shen, 2010). As a result of this, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau has formalized handling Taiwan as part of its official duties. The Bureau heads have been extremely prudent in handling Taiwan since then by closely following Beijing's line, in the hope of not repeating Yip's mistake. The message is, any researcher on Taiwan would have to take their political risk seriously.

There are many other examples that alarmed international relations researchers in Hong Kong after 1997. For instance, the activists defending China's sovereignty over the Diaoyutai Islands, supposed to be a politically safe, patriotic behaviors, could risk violating Beijing's policy and being accused of escalating conflicts; whether echoing their behaviors or not would require researchers on Sino-Japanese relations second thoughts. As another example, when eight Hong Kong tourists were killed in the Manila Hostage Crisis in 2010, those supporting the Chief Executive's direct phone call to the president of the Philippines were subjecting to criticisms from the pro-Beijing critics for supporting creating an independent identity for Hong Kong that was comparable to sovereign states. And when the court in Hong Kong ruled that absolute immunity for foreign countries should not be practiced in Hong Kong in the “Congo Case” in 2011, Beijing stepped in by reinterpreting the Basic Law to state that absolute immunity should be applicable to Hong Kong, leaving the law scholars endorsing the relative immunity principle vulnerable for attack. Reporting on Taiwan issues, Xinjiang riots or Tibet relations with the world may also have a chance to violate Article 23 of the Basic Law that “to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets, to prohibit foreign political organizations or bodies from conducting political activities in the Region” (The Basic Law, 2012). As some scholars worry, the unclearness of this article somewhat leads to the self-censorship of Hong Kong media in practice (Chan, 2003: 20-21).

Careers Outlet: The Practical Dilemma

As researchers of international relations in Hong Kong, most colleagues have the mission and passion to promote the discipline. Yet as responsible mentors to students at the same time, the same people often have the tendency to discourage some students to study in the field due to the unclear careers prospect. With no foreign service or intelligence service, Hong Kong has no direct corresponding governmental units to host the international relations graduates. The closest within the government is the position of trade officers, and the administrative officers who are posted overseas in Hong Kong's Economic and Trade Offices. Yet, they are generic posts after all, rather than positions for specialists. The commercial sector in Hong Kong requires knowledge of international political economy, yet most of the attention is given to the figures rather than the concepts. Graduates of international relations would easily complain against the seemingly irrelevancy of their study and their life, which is a difficult issue to be resolved. In fact, each year almost over 50% of graduates from the Department of Government of Public Administration in the Chinese University of Hong Kong choose to seek their first graduate job in commerce industry.¹

As a result, the overwhelming outlet of studying international relations in Hong Kong is still the academia. Sadly, there are so far no independent departments of international relations in all universities in Hong Kong. The usual practice is to have one or two experts of the field working in the government and public administration departments, or their equivalence, and their courses are usually selective rather than elective. While organizing a conference on internationally renowned hot topics elsewhere, like in Singapore, Taiwan or Beijing, could easily attract a large pool of audience, the international relations scholars in Hong Kong simply do not have the institutional backup to create a coherent identity to house such conferences. The lack of identity of international relations as a discipline in Hong Kong is not only an issue of imaging: in the bureaucratic structure of universities, that also implies the lack of resources, manpower, cliental incentives for students and colleagues to support, among others.

Lack of Administrative Correspondence

We see the key of promoting Hong Kong's international position, in both the political and academic sense, is to have stakeholders within the Hong Kong government who can assume responsibility for designing Hong Kong's external relations strategy, and then coordinate with Beijing on relevant issues. However, the problem lies not only with the structural area as discussed in the cases but also in the existing bureaucratic situation. Like its counterparts overseas, the HKSARG bureaucracy relies on hierarchical coordination between policy formulation and implementation. After 1997, as more or less an academic consensus, the division of labor became more muddled as the institutional arrangement afforded less power

¹ Source of data: Career Planning & Development Centre, Office of Student Affairs, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Cited in CUHK's Government and Public Administration website:
<http://www2.cuhk.edu.hk/gpa/career.php>

to the bureaus to act as monitors and coordinators (Law Wai-fung, 2005). For instance, the Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau (CIT) are responsible for policy matters concerning Hong Kong's external commercial relations. Their scope of duties, however, tends to be restricted to economic policy, leaving other soft promotional work to the quasi-official Tourist Board. Likewise, the Constitutional Affairs Bureau – which was renamed the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau in 2007 – is assigned to deal with policy-oriented external affairs and coordinate the participation of the HKSARG in various regional cooperation initiatives between Hong Kong and the mainland. However, the promotion of competition falls to the duty of the Economic Development Branch of the Labour Bureau. And theoretically, the only unit within the HKSARG to have any marginal responsibility to devise a strategy for advancing Hong Kong's external relations is its Central Policy Unit (CPU), but even if it really did relevant research, it lacks the coordinative function to push forward its ideas. Inevitably, the consequence of all this is that the division of labor becomes very blurred. There are also consultative committees, as part of Hong Kong's tradition of "administrative absorption" of social elites, focusing on global issues. For instance, the CIT has set up the Hong Kong Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (HKCPEC), as the unit to participate in the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) on behalf of Hong Kong, to advise the government on relevant affairs in which the author is an appointed member. However, the Committee obviously still has a lot of unrealized potential to play in various fields: a meaningful comparison is that the similar agencies in Singapore has already commissioned a large number of research on the Trans-Pacific Partnership and its relevancy to Singapore, while the same topic is still almost an unknown within the Hong Kong governmental framework.

Indeed, if properly utilized, the HKSARG ETOs could indeed become "white gloves" for Beijing, enabling it to interact with the rest of the world in an informal manner. The Beijing ETO of the HKSARG assumes the duty of receiving official diplomatic information from the PRC, as it is the highest representative of Hong Kong in China and possesses responsibilities which the other ETOs do not have. In other words, although the functions of ETOs are driven by economics and trade, one of the subsidiary functions for the Beijing Office is to conduct *de facto* diplomatic relations between China and the rest of the world via the special status of Hong Kong, which is an area that is not yet fully explored. The same functions, although not carried out in name, were also shared by other ETOs overseas in the colonial era as their heads are often grouped with the ambassadors or consuls of sovereign states in their representing countries. But how such a special status of Hong Kong can better serve the national interests of China remains an area to be further explored.

Academic Assessment: How Hong Kong and International Relations can "Win"?

In order to carve a good niche in the academic field, publishing articles in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) journals is always the only necessary step to success in Hong Kong. In recent years, peer review appears to become a popular way to determine a journal article

publication. Nevertheless, as Kostoff (1996: 23-24) suggested, there are several problems during the process of peer reviews which involve “partiality of peers to influence the outcome for non-technical reasons, including organizational and personal reasons” and “reviewers differ in criteria to access and interpret”. As mentioned earlier, the current political and constitutional barriers tend to refrain from discussing Hong Kong’s role in international relations. Given the very small field of international relations in Hong Kong, writing on Hong Kong’s external relations faces two unsolvable difficulties: on one hand, it is not interested by most peers in the global academic circle as most see Hong Kong as an irrelevant player; on the other hand, such topics are often not wanted by the peers who are politically conservative or inclining towards Beijing. There is also a relatively dearth of academic scholars who specialise in Hong Kong’s external relations or in the field of International Relations in Hong Kong. Early in 1997, Lee and Chan (1997: 178) trenchantly observed that there has been traditionally less scholarly work concerned with the concept of “One Country Two Systems” in accordance with Hong Kong’s external relations and foreign affairs. The lack of academicians in this field also inhibits the growth of international relations as there are fewer professional scholars to give meticulous attention on various topics and explore the potentiality of future publications.

Since citation is a dominant factor for justifying academic achievement, it is common that some subfields would be cited more than others. In the 1980s to 1990s, Hong Kong was once a relatively attended topic academically, yet after 1997, it is no longer the case. The study of Hong Kong’s external relation with the world constantly receives even less attention. The reality is that the number of articles, particularly those examining Hong Kong’s external relations, dropped remarkably in the previous decades (Tang 1997, 1999; Huenemann 2000; Wong 2002, Shen, 2010a). As a result, the Hong Kong international relations scholars often have to practically shift their effort and attention to submit articles to other regional issues, or simply the area of China studies.

The Recent Trends in the Hong Kong Education System

The education system in Hong Kong has long been criticised for being “examination orientated” (Liu, 1987). Like in other Chinese societies, the idea for obtaining good public examination results is still prevailing among students and thus many of them opted for choosing science stream in order to achieve a better result in public examination. As a result, since the secondary school, Hong Kong students have been narrowly focused on science subjects and have generally ignored other arts and humanity subjects that are not, “helpful”, to them. Morris (1996: 105-106) argues that the Hong Kong students were instrumental that they were trained to learn knowledge and skills that are necessarily beneficial for them in public examination.

In Hong Kong, global issues are never covered independently, and the arts and humanity subjects, which are housing the former, are traditionally undermined in the curriculum. Since the introduction of nine-year compulsory education in 1978, the number of subjects for Hong

Kong Certificate Examination (HKCEE) has increased from 31 in 1978 to 46 in 2002 (Tsang, 2011: 48). Nonetheless, the majority of students chose to enrol in science subjects such as Physics, Chemistry or Biology (Ibid.). It was once hoping that the introduction of Liberal Studies as one of the required subjects in Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (DSE) in 2009 would help enhancing students' understanding to the world affairs, as the new Liberal Studies curriculum strives to "broad students' knowledge base and enhance their social awareness through the study of a wide range of issues. The modules selected for the curriculum focus on themes of significance to students, society and the world" (Education Bureau, 2007a: 1). In particular, "Globalization" is listed as one of the six modules under the current framework of these three areas: Self and Personal Development, Society and Culture and finally Science, Technology and the Environment. However, due to the confusing education reform, parents' confidence towards the whole syllabus is yet to be developed, and the mission of dismissing model answers in addressing global issues seemed to be failed – without the basic knowledge, students commenting on issues of globalization would easily result in offering impromptus.

After all, the Hong Kong students are pragmatic, preferring memorization and recitation to critical thinking. Students are not quite encouraged to develop their own thoughts and attempt to answer the questions that are beyond the scope of regular curriculum. For instance, a history student will chiefly focus on "the major European powers at the beginning of the twentieth century" as it has been included in the history curriculum (Education Bureau, 2007b: 12). The study of Hong Kong's international relations with the Latin American countries or the history of the Middle East, for examples, would be inevitably overlooked. The level of English proficiency among Hong Kong teenagers has also declined alarmingly since the introduction of "mother-tongue" language education in 1997, leading to a widening gap to comprehend non-local issues.

Social Awareness and Media: Democratization and Localization

In the 1980s, notable scholars like Ambrose Y.C. King (1981) and Lau Siu-kai (1981) already pioneered in identifying the political apathy and passivity of the Hong Kong people. In particular, Lau (1982) attributed Hong Kong people's political attitudes to the instrumental and parochial characters of their own. Lam Wai-man (2003) juxtaposed the previous data on major political and social conflicts and argued that the level of political participation was not low during the period of 1949-1979. Nevertheless, as Choy Chi-keung argues (1999: 144), that mass political parties are still not well-developed in Hong Kong as "Hong Kong people have little interest in political beliefs and principles". Hong Kong has undergone significant changes in political, economic and social changes in the past century but it is still inherently a financial hub. It is therefore unsurprising that Hong Kong people refrain themselves from knowledge relevant to politics in general, let alone international relations.

Indeed, in the 1960s and 1970s, most headline news in Hong Kong concerned global issues like the Vietnam War (Ting, 2012). Yet, the introduction of *Next Magazine* and *Apple Daily*

in the mid-1990s has changed the landscape of Hong Kong media and later journalists and editors emphasised more on commercialization (So, 2003). Since the 1990s, the market share of “intellectual” newspapers that focus on politics, economics, and international affairs such as *Ming Pao*, *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, and *Hong Kong Economic Times* has dropped and commercial papers include *Apply Daily*, *Oriental Daily* and *The Sun* have become dominant newspapers in Hong Kong (Shi, 2006: 12-13). It was estimated that those commercial papers have occupied approximately 70 per cent of the total market in Hong Kong. As a result, the market-driven media shows that Hong Kong people are generally less concerned with international affairs and other newspapers thus invest more manpower and resources to report Hong Kong and China-related affairs.

Another notable trend is that since the process of democratization was started, public interests towards global issues greatly declined. As Ting Wai (2012) suggested, “the general public has very confined version” and “the outlook of people in Hong Kong is not what you would expect of residents of an international city”. The commercialization of media in the age of globalization has a further impact of localizing and trivializing the social awareness of Hong Kong. And within the community that is responsive to current issues, due to the heated debate on democratization, most would not prefer to focus on the non-local agendas. As a result, the international relations researchers in Hong Kong might find it even difficult to play the role of public intellectuals, which is a usual outlet of overseas colleagues to gain prestige and sense of satisfaction, due to the limited platform and attention in the local community. That becomes the final blow to the discipline to push away the potential interested talents, who already cared little about money or political aspirations, from joining the field.

Part Two: Future Development of International Relations Related Institutions in Hong Kong – Possibilities Ahead

International relations research institutes are not non-existing in Hong Kong, however. Two macro categories of such can be identified in Hong Kong: those affiliated to the universities and those who are privately run. The former includes the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, in which the author has set up an International Relations Research Programme in 2008, which was upgraded as a Center in 2012, to strive to further integrate research related activities on globalization and international relations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region (IARC, 2013). Outside the tertiary institutions, there are organizations like the Better Hong Kong Foundation, linked to the incumbent chief executive, that aims at promoting a positive image of Hong Kong overseas. Recently, the former chief executive CH Tung, now being a vice-chairperson of CPPCC and is responsible of participating in Chinese foreign policy as a “civilian”, has also patronized a foundation to study China’s energy diplomacy the Hong Kong. Meanwhile, the author has set up the Global Studies Institute to gather almost the entire list of international relations scholars in Hong Kong to conduct seminars and conferences together regularly in hope of constructing the circle gradually; another task of the institute is to publish a daily online commentary news portal on international affairs and publishing a quarterly journal of global issues in Chinese.

The Rise of China and Opportunities for Hong Kong in the World

Despite all the limitations that we have mentioned, there could still be a promising future of developing international relations research in Hong Kong due to the following reasons. First, given the fact that China has made substantial growth in economic trade and investment, it is foreseeable that there will be more academic discussions over the possibilities for economic, social and political issues with regard to China in the area of international relations. For instance, the term “rising China” (*jueqi zhongguo*) and/or “China’s rise” (*zhongguo de jueqi*) increased nearly 27 times from 35 in 1995 to 940 in 2006 (Chestnut and Iain Johnston, 2009: 238). There has long been an attention of China’s role in Asia-Pacific region. In particular, since the mid-1990s the East Asian region has witnessed a rapid rise of China in political, economic and military aspects. Some political scientists have attempted to compare the current East Asian issues with the nineteenth-century Europe problems (Jervis, 1991; Christensen, 2005). Turning into the twenty-first century, it seems that situations in Asia have been getting more intense and complex. For instance, North Korea has made rapid advancement and attempts in designing its long-range missile and even nuclear programmes; China also faced an increasing intense territorial conflict over Diaoyu islands (Senkaku islands in Japanese term) and the full re-militarization of Japan; the new presidency in two Koreas also looms the security and peace talk on the Korean Peninsula in the coming years. As can be seen, there are various hot topics relating to China and international relations in East Asia for scholarly discussion. Being a special administrative region of the PRC government, Hong Kong still enjoys a relatively good deal of freedom and expression. Consequently, Hong Kong scholars and political commenters should indeed capitalise the advantages and resources to evaluate and discuss China’s foreign affairs in the world.

Hong Kong and the Virgin Lands: Russia as an Example

Furthermore, there have been accelerating interactions and cooperation between Hong Kong and the world, especially with the often overlooked regions such as Russia, the Middle East or the Pacific islands since the handover. In 2011, the bilateral trade volume between China and the whole Middle East region increased to USD 134 billion (TDC, 2012). Hong Kong SAR government also announced a further economic integration with the Middle East and other African and East European countries in 2008 with an initial funding of 0.12 billion Hong Kong dollars (*Wen Wei Pao*, 2011). Yet among all, the most unexpected marks of progress in Hong Kong’s external relations in recent years was the extension of Russian-Hong Kong bilateral ties. The increased interaction between the HKSARG and the Russian government began with the inauguration of President Dmitry Medvedev in 2008. In contrast with Vladimir Putin, Medvedev’s administration has turned its focus on advancing Russian interests more via economic and financial means. Surprising many, Medvedev met with Tsang personally during the latter’s visit to Russia in 2010. In notable contrast, other provincial leaders of China have never met the Russian president, indicating that the sub-national sovereignty of China is still very much identified by the superpower. Seeing their

meeting as an opportunity to further develop Hong Kong-Russian ties, Tsang extended an invitation to Medvedev to visit Hong Kong. Medvedev accepted the invitation and paid an official visit to Hong Kong as part of his visit to China in 2011. The major achievement of the visit was primarily economic; to introduce Russian companies to Hong Kong. For instance, the Russian mining conglomerate RUSAL was listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in 2010, and this is expected to be followed by a number of other Russian companies. This shows that Hong Kong is still treated differently from other regional governments by most nations in the world. A tie such as this between Hong Kong and a superpower that is not the US is unprecedented in Hong Kong's history, and falls in the grey area that this chapter covers. A Russian diplomatic circle interviewed by the author suggested that one of Medvedev's key agendas was to find alternative international financial hubs for Russian companies to invest in, faced as they were with an increasing number of exiled Russian tycoons and Chechen rebels working in London – the original Russian favorite (Shen, 2013). As a result, Hong Kong, as both an international center built under British regulations and an SAR within the more friendly China, caught Medvedev's attention.

Serving Chinese Global Interests via the Hong Kong Identity: A New Blue Print

After all, the potential value of Hong Kong in serving the national interests of PRC in the world should not be undermined, and that is precisely an area that native researchers of international relations in Hong Kong can contribute. Indeed, despite being neglected by the general public in Hong Kong, this potential is definitely not under-estimated by some far-sighted Chinese officials. For instance, Referring to a speech made by Lu Xinhua, then commissioner of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Hong Kong, the potential Hong Kong has in assisting Chinese diplomacy includes “demonstrating the successful implementation of ‘one country, two systems’ for Taiwan”, “assisting China's global economic cooperation through financial, trading and transportation networks”, “assisting China's outreach efforts around the globe, and its energy diplomacy”, “supporting China's multilateral diplomacy by hosting international conferences and exhibitions” and “supporting China's public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy by mobilizing public involvement in foreign affairs” (*Wenweipo*, 2006). Responding to an internally circulated consultancy report commissioned by the Hong Kong Central Policy Unit during Tsang's reign in 2009, drafters from the Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS) – a leading international relations think tank headed by the brother of Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi – also explicitly advised Hong Kong to serve as an experimental pioneer by using its external relations capacity to perform public tasks that Beijing finds difficult (SIIS/HKSARGCPU, 2009).

How successfully use can be made of the Hong Kong identity for Chinese national interests is perhaps best illustrated by former HKSARG Secretary of Health Margaret Chan's election to the Director-Generalship of the World Health Organization in 2006 (Shen, 2008d). During Chan's campaign, Beijing emphasized greatly Chan's Hong Kong background as a Westernized and liberal technocrat with ample crisis management experience in the Hong Kong government. Such a perception is also upheld by Beijing when we compare Chan with

her major internal competitor, Liu Peilong, a home-grown technocrat equipped with greater experience and trust from Beijing. Before the election, Beijing had been more inclined to support Liu over Chan for some other important posts in the WHO. Although Chan's handling of the SARS crisis in Hong Kong was far from perfect, her representation of China in running for the WHO has already improved China's public image, at least in the domain of international health. Chan will find it relatively easy to distance herself, as would other representatives of Hong Kong, from the liability that Chinese technocrats faced simply because she was never a member of the same statist system.

Crossing Over and New Media: Efforts of the New Generation

Another encouraging sign is that there is also an increasing cooperation among academic institutes. For instance, recently, the Chinese University of Hong Kong has established graduate MBA students exchange programme with two Indian universities, Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad and Indian School of Business in Huderabad (CUHK, 2011). The University of Hong Kong also strives to establish collaboration with the Middle East research institutes in the next few years (*The Standard*, 2013). Early in 2010, HKU Space Community College has provided a short course on "Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies" (HKU SPACE, 2010). Acquaintance of international relations related knowledge facilitates further academic collaboration between Hong Kong and international academic institutes in the future.

Finally, due to the hard work of the new generation of international relations researchers, the media in Hong Kong is gradually developing an interest in topics involving crossing over between international relations and other areas of popular attention. For instance, studying global issues via international movies, sports and football, and popular music – all lead to publishing of popular books including some published by the author – becomes an accepted media to promote the subject among the new generation. Cultural trends from Japan and Korea like the Gangnam Style also aroused interests among the public to know more about the looming crisis in Northeast Asia, implying that constructing a new circle of public intellectuals on global issues is not impossible. Last but not least, the popularization of new media seems to be an effective tool to popularize international relations in Hong Kong: as a young international relations researcher, the author's Facebook Fans Page received more than 40,000 likes, which is not usual for someone focusing on a marginalized topic in town; the Infomaps created by the author's affiliated think tank and online commentary newspaper *Glocal* also got numerous sharing online. The signs are modestly encouraging, leading fellow colleagues contemplating more fruitful utilization of new media including Twitter, iPhone apps, online radio and television, among others, in the forthcoming future.

References

- The Basic Law. (2012). *The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau.*
- Central Policy Unit. (2013). "About CPU". Retrieved from http://www.cpu.gov.hk/en/about_us/about_cpu.html
- Chan, K. C. (2003). "Jiuqi hou de yanlun kongjian" (Freedom of Speech after 1997). In Lee, S.N., Paul (Ed.). *Xianggang chunamei xinshiji (The New Epic of Hong Kong Media)*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 17-34.
- China Daily*. (2010). "Discussing Sub-Sovereignty is Unnecessary". 9 September. A.10.
- China Review News* (2007), 22 October.
- Chestnut, S., & Iain, J.A. (2009). "Is China Rising?". In Paus, E., Prime, P., & Western, J. (Eds.). *Global Giant: Is China Changing the Rules of the Game?* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cheung, N.S. (2007). *Xue wen wu jie shuo (Knowledge without Borders)*. Xiangguang: Hua qian shu chu ban you xian gong si.
- CUHK, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. (2011). New Exchange Agreements. Retrieved from <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/oal/linkage/exploringPartner.html>
- Choy, C.K. (1999). "Political Parties and Political Participation in Hong Kong". In Joseph Cheng (Ed.). *Political Participation in Hong Kong: Theoretical Issues and Historical Legacy*. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
- Christensen, T. (2005). "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster: The Rise of China and U.S. Policy Towards East Asia". *International Security* 31 (1), 81-126.
- Education Bureau. (2007a). Liberal Studies Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6) Retrieved from http://334.edb.hkedcity.net/doc/eng/ls_final_e_070508.pdf
- _____. (2007b). History Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6). Retrieved from <http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=6338&langno=1>
- HKU SPACE. (2010). "Part-time Programmes: Certificate in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies" Retrieved from <http://hkuspace.hku.hk/prog/cert-in-islamic-and-middle-eastern-studies#general-information>
- Huenemann, R.W. (2000). "Anomalies in the Sino-Canadian Trade Data, with Particular Reference to the Hong Kong Re-export Trade". *Journal of Contemporary China* 9 (23), 333-343.
- IARC, International Affairs Research Centre. (2013). "About IARC".
- Jervis, R. (1991). "The Future of World Politics: Will it Resemble the Past?". *International Security*, 16 (3), 39-46.
- King, Y.C. (1981). "Administrative Absorption of Politics in Hong Kong: Emphasis on the Grass Roots Level". In Ambrose Y.C. King and Rance P. L. Lee. (Eds.). *Social Life and Development in Hong Kong* Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 127-146.
- Kostoff, R. (1996). The Principles and Practices of Peer Review. *Science and Engineering Ethics* (3), 19-34.

- Lam, W.F. (2005). "Coordinating the Government Bureaucracy in Hong Kong: An Institutional Analysis", *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, 18(4), 2005, pp.640.
- Lam W.M. (2004). *Understanding the Political Culture of Hong Kong: The Paradox of Activism and Depoliticization*. Armonk, N.Y. : M.E. Sharpe.
- Lau, S.K. (1981). "Utilitarianistic Familism: The Basic of Political Stability". In Ambrose Y.C. King and Rance P. L. Lee. (Eds.). *Social Life and Development in Hong Kong* Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, pp. 195-216.
- _____. (1982). *Society and Politics in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
- Lee, C.Y., and Chan, G. (1997). "Hong Kong's Changing international Relations Strategy" in Beatrice, Leung and Joseph, Cheng. (Eds.). *Hong Kong SAR: In Pursuit of Domestic and International Order*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Liu, W.X. (1987). "The Significance of Recent Reforms for Higher Education". *Canadian and International Education*. 16 (1), 162-171.
- Ma N. (2007). *Political Development in Hong Kong: State Political Society, and Civil Society*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Morris, P. (1996). "Asia's Four Little Tigers: A Comparison of the Role of Education in Their Development". *Comparative Education*. 32 (1), 95-109.
- SCMP, *South China Morning Post*. (2007). "NPC Warns on HK Autonomy". 7 June. A1.
- Shen, X. H., Simon. (2007). *Guo Ji Zheng Zhi Meng Gong Chang: Cong Dian Ying Kan Guo Ji Zheng Zhi (International Politics DreamWorks: Studying International Relations through Films)*. Xianggang : Shang shu ju. (Vol. 2a, 2b, 3, 4 hereafter).
- _____. (2008a). "Taiguo saoluan yu weiji guanli" (Crisis Management and Thai Riots). *Ming Pao*. 15 December. A28.
- _____. (2008b). "Cong teshou Freudian Slip kan tequ quefa guojiyanjiu (shang)" (Analysing the lack of international relations study from the Freudian Slip of HKSAR Chief Executive). *Ming Pao*. 22 December. A20.
- _____. (2008c) "Borrowing the Hong Kong Identity for Chinese Diplomacy: Implications of Margaret Chan's World Health Organization Campaign". *Pacific Affairs*, 81(3), pp.361-382.
- _____. (2010a). "Re-branding without Redeveloping: Constraints of Hong Kong's Asia's World City' Brand (1997-2007)". *The Pacific Review*. 23 (2), pp. 203-244.
- _____. (2010b). "Contemplating Hong Kong's Future from a former Africa's International Hub". *Ming Pao*. 9 August. A21.
- _____. (2010c). "Affect of Regime Changes on Non-State Actors in Taiwan-Hong Kong Relations (1997-2010): Publicly and Privately Affiliated Think Tanks as Cases-studies". *Asian Politics & Policy*, 2(4), pp.651-663.
- _____. (2013). "Achievements and Limitations in the Grey Area: External Relations of Hong Kong in the Tsang Administration", in *Hong Kong under Tsang Administration* (Ed. Joseph Cheng, City University of Hong Kong Press).

- Shen, X. H., Simon and C.C. Fung (2008). "The Decline of Hong Kong as a Showcase for Taiwan: The Rise and Fall of Non-State Actors in Hong Kong-Taiwan Relations" (in Chinese). *Hong Kong Journal of Social Sciences*. 34 (Summer), pp. 113-130.
- Shi, Q.B. (2006). *Xianggang bao ye xian zhuang yan jiu (The Current Status of Hong Kong Media)*. Xianggang : Xianggang Zhongguo xin wen chu ban she.
- SIIS/HKSARGCPU (2009). "China's Foreign Policy and Hong Kong's Position in Regional Development", Report for Central Policy Unit of Hong Kong. Shanghai: Shanghai Institute of International Studies.
- So, Y.K. (2003). "Shixiang xia de xiwen chuanmei" (The media group under marketization). In Lee, S.N., Paul (Ed.). *Xianggang chunamei xinshiji (The New Epic of Hong Kong Media)*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 99-124.
- The Standard*. (2013). "HKU Eyes Middle East Help in Fight Against New Bug". 22 February. P08.
- Tam, W.Y. (2003). "Huigui qianhou de zhongguo caifang" (Media reporting in China before and after the handover). In Lee, S.N., Paul (Ed.). *Xianggang chunamei xinshiji (The New Epic of Hong Kong Media)*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, pp. 35-69.
- Tang, J.T.H. (1997). "Hong Kong in United States-China Relations: The International Politics of Hong Kong's Reversion to Chinese Sovereignty". *Journal of Contemporary China* 6 (16), 419-433.
- _____. (1999). "Hong Kong after the Reversion: In Search of a Post-Colonial Order". *Journal of Contemporary China* 8 (20), 5-8.
- TDC. Hong Kong Trade Development Council. (2012). "Feizhou ji zhongdong shichang qianli keguan" (The African and Middle East Regions Have Promising Future).
- Ting W. (2012). "People: Professor Ting Wai: Reflections on International Affairs". Eyes on HKBU. Retrieved from <http://buenews.hkbu.edu.hk/eng/update/news.do;jsessionid=D4609016D74B8E7B459CC777911C8F17?newsId=581>
- Tsang, W.K. (2011). *Xianggang Te Qu Jiao Yu Xheng Ce Fen Xi (An Analysis of Hong Kong SAR Education System)*. Xianggang : San lian shu dian (Xianggang) you xian gong si.
- Wen Wei Pao*. (2006). "Zhongda Yanjiang" (Talk at CUHK), *Wenweipo*, 23 September.
- _____. (2011). "Maofaju xiayue chuzhao cheng zhongxiaoqi" (Hong Kong Trade Development Council suggested policies next month to support the middle-size corporations in Hong Kong). 16 December. B1.
- Wong, Y.L. (2002). "Going 'Back' and Staying 'Out': Articulating the Postcolonial Hong Kong Subjects in the Development of China". *Journal of Contemporary China* 11 (30), 141-159.

Singapore's Road to China Watching

John Wong

East Asian Institute, Singapore

This paper starts with a review of the rise and decline of “China Watching” in the West, which grew out primarily as the product of the Cold War, with a strong political agenda and heavily imbued with ideological biases. But it had dominated contemporary Chinese studies during the Cold War period. With the coming of the détente, China watching had also started to adapt. Subsequently, China watching has also evolved and changed as China started its economic reform and open-door policy in the 1980s. The sea change in China watching was actually brought about by the rise of the younger generation of China scholars, including many who were born and bred in China. Better trained in the social science disciplines and being able to conduct field work in China plus the availability of more abundant data, these younger China scholars had virtually put an end to the old-fashioned mode of China watching and “normalized” contemporary Chinese studies.

The development of China watching in Singapore bears some similarities as well as differences from the Western context. It was also heavily influenced by political considerations as it was in fact started under strong government auspices. It went through a rather tortuous process, being shaped by changes in Singapore's domestic politics and its changing relations with China.

China watching in Singapore was initiated by its first Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Goh Keng Swee, who set up the Institute of East Asian Philosophies (IEAP) in 1983, originally for the purpose of promoting Confucian studies, but subsequently changing its research direction to focus primarily on China watching.

In 1992, IEAP was renamed as the Institute of East Asian Political Economy (IEAPE). Still later, in 1997, IEAPE was renamed as East Asian Institute (EAI) to become an autonomous research organization within the National University of Singapore. Both IEAP and IEAPE were closed-door think tank for the Singapore government with their research findings kept out from the public domain. EAI, in contrast, was set up as an open academic organization, which is charged with the mission of conducting both policy-related and academic research.

From the outset, Singapore has followed its unique approach to China watching, which is as far as possible non-Western and non-PRC. Today, EAI has developed into a foremost research organization on China in the whole of Southeast Asia. It has continued to circulate its research reports on China and other aspects of East Asia to the Singapore government regularly (ministers and senior civil servants) while also encouraged scholars to publish in books and learned journals. EAI was recently ranked as one of the top five “thank tanks” in Asia.

The Old China Hands

“China watching” is an arcane art. Conventionally defined, it refers to modern Chinese studies during the Cold War period by a motley group of “China experts” comprising primarily journalists, analysts from the security or intelligence establishments and also academic scholars. Since

China watching was later given a derogatory label, it is not certain if it would be appropriate to call those prominent China scholars such as John K Fairbank, Benjamin Schwarz, Franz Michael, Robert Scalapino, A Doak Barnett, Lucian Pye, Allen Whiting, John Lewis, and Michel Oksenberg real “China watchers”. Many of their students in those Cold War days could be categorized as such. But the post-Cold War younger generation of China scholars or Sinologists would certainly shun this labeling.

The main objective of the China watching exercise was to explain or to “decipher” what was happening inside Communist China, mainly about short-term events rather than its long-term development. Since Communist China was closed to foreign scholars and foreign journalists, particularly after the collapse of the Great Leap Forward in 1959 when systematic official information and data were no longer available to the public, China watching started to thrive. Western journalists and analysts (including some well-known journalists like Stanley Karnow, Robert Elegant, Robert Keatly etc.) flocked to Hong Kong to glean information on China by looking for clues from official propaganda, meticulously poring over reports and events that appeared in the few newspapers and reports that were available outside China, including information from interviewing refugees, defectors and travelers coming out of China and even swapping notes with diplomats and spooks.¹ Their standard techniques include how to scrutinize top leaders’ public appearances (who stood next to whom and whose name was listed above whom) and also the sudden absence of any top leader from public view. By this measure, Mao was rumoured to have died at least 20 times!

In this way, a China watcher was able to piece together bits and pieces of information to build up a picture along with conjectural arguments on what was supposed to be happening in China at a particular point of time, which was often speculative, though might at times be quite accurate. But all this does not add up to true China scholarship, as a typical China watcher does not really “study” China in the sense that a true China scholar would spend a lot of time and efforts in analyzing an issue in depth or testing a hypothesis with more systematic data and observations.² Whereas a China watcher often starts off with some preconceived ideas and personal prejudices by concentrating mostly on negative reports or looking mainly at problems (“problems of communism”) in China, a true China scholar is supposed to be more neutral and more objective. China watching is therefore at most an imprecise art, which hardly deserves to be called Sinology. China watching is much like “Kremlinology” that was developed to “watch” developments in the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In short, both China watching and Kremlinology were basically the products of the Cold War.

A New Breed of China Watchers

With the advent of the Sino-US détente starting with President Nixon’s visit to Beijing in 1972, China watching begun to slowly lose its credibility and its reputation. Once the Cold War started to thaw, China watching had to struggle to find a useful and relevant role for itself. In the meanwhile, a group of American graduate students and younger faculty, who opposed the American war in Vietnam, founded the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars (CCAS) in 1968, and

¹Robert Shaplen, “The China Watchers,” *The New Yorker* (12 February 1966).

²See Gail Solin, “The Art of China Watching”, Center for the Study of Intelligence <Studies Archive Indexes>, Vol. 19, Approved for release 1994. CIA Historical Review Program 2 July 1996.

these CCAS scholars attacked the underlying approach of Asian studies, including Chins watching, as a form of Cold War scholarship, which was also used by the US government to further its Asian policy of domination and containment of China. Among the CCAS members were some budding and promising second-generation “China watchers” such as Elizabeth Perry, Mark Selden, Edward Friedman, Richard Baum, Orville Schell, Frederick Teiwes, and Susan Shirk, who also questioned the fundamental premises of China watching, particularly for its unorthodox ways of information gathering and its inherent ideological biases in their interpretation of events and in drawing their conclusions.³

Shortly before Nixon’s trip to Beijing, Zhou Enlai used the “Ping Pong diplomacy” as a means to invite selective China scholars to visit China, including some young CCAS members. It turned out that some of these young and idealistic scholars had swung to the other extreme of easily and uncritically embracing the official views of the Maoist doctrine (e.g. grass-roots democracy, egalitarianism) and certain positive aspects of the Cultural Revolution (rural development, health care by bare-footed doctors). Accordingly, they came out of China with glowing reports on what was happening in China based on what they were allowed to see and what they got from the official rhetoric.⁴

Through the 1970s, China was at the tail-end of the Cultural Revolution, but it was still full of political intrigues. The many political ups and downs in this decade include the sudden downfall of Mao’s designated heir-in-apparent Lin Biao, the Anti-Confucian Campaign (targeting at Zhou Enlai), the return of Deng Xiaoping, the appointment of Hua Guofeng as Mao’s successor, and the fall of the Gang of Four. As China was then still off-limits to foreigners with official information still scarce and scanty, China watchers continued to enjoy a great field day throughout the 1970s. In fact, for many years, even after the introduction of economic reform in 1978 with more foreigners touring China and businessmen coming to China to do business, China was still operating with a modicum of transparency. China watching was not immediately out of business yet!

Entering the 1980s, as the post-Mao China had openly discarded its radical revolutionary ideology in favour of market reform and economic development and as China had normalized relations first with the United States and subsequently with the anti-Communist ASEAN neighbour, China watching had lost its original *raison de’etre* as defined by the Cold War. Its *modus operandi* also had to change as China experts now increasingly comprised younger scholars, not just better trained in the social sciences but also having greater access to more and better-quality data and information. In the meanwhile, many original veteran journalistic China experts started to retire or just gradually faded away. In their stead were many bond fide China scholars who were not imbued with strong Cold War mentality.

Most significant of all was the development that the ranks of the new generation of China scholars, the third generation, were increasingly filled by those who were born and bred in Communist China, who went overseas for post-graduate studies. This group had personal experience of growing up in China during its most turbulent periods and many of them were from families

³Their early views were published in the CCAS’ journal *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*. For more detailed discussion, see Richard Baum, “Studies of Chinese Politics in the United States,” in Robert Ash, David Shambaugh and Seiichiro Takagi (eds), *China Watching: Perspectives from Europe, Japan and the United States* (London: Routledge, 2007). Also, Baum’s recent and last work, *China Watcher: Confessions of a Peking Tom* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2010).

⁴Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, *China! Inside the People’s Republic* (New York: Bantam Books, 1972).

with direct or indirect connection with the local or central leadership. And that started the sea change in the field of “China watching”. First, one can easily identify sharp ideological differences between the older China watchers and the younger ones. Many old China scholars in the US, haunted by the McCarthy anti-Communist fervour, had to show conformity and loyalty by openly displaying hostility towards any Communist regime for fear of being labeled as a Communist sympathizer. Old China scholars everywhere had to be ideologically hardened to the right in order to be politically correct, as China watching then was basically a kind of “enemy study”. After the Cold War, young China scholars eventually did not have to conform to such political and ideological constraints, and they could study China with a much more open mind, thereby starting the process of the gradual de-politicization of contemporary Chinese studies.

Secondly, whereas old China watchers mostly focused on political, economic and social development before 1980, particularly on events surrounding Mao’s campaigns such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, the new generation of China watchers focused initially on China’s reform and development after 1980 and subsequently on the rise of China and its regional and global impact. In terms of methodology, the old hands basically just chronicled events through historical analysis and screening of published information while the new China experts could resort to more sophisticated analytical tool to examine the increasingly abundant data and comprehensive information made available by the Chinese government. (China economists today can actually run regression and production function on China’s economic and social data). Above all, new China watchers could do field work and conduct interviews in China.⁵ And this has made for the sea change. Accordingly, “China watching” is regaining its proper name as “modern Chinese studies”.

The Legacies of China Watching

How do we evaluate China watching? Since it is not really Sinology in a strictly scholastic sense, we need to look at it not from the academic angle, but as a policy tool and its contribution to policy making. Without doubt, China watching had served Western media very well during the Cold War days in terms of informing the public about what was going on in China, rightly or wrongly. More importantly, it was primarily used by Western governments to formulate their China policy. At the peak of the Cold War, virtually hundreds of “China analysts” were employed in the US intelligence and defence establishments to monitor developments in Communist China.

The next critical question then arises: How effective as a tool has China watching actually been? Did it have strong predictive value? If the many China-watching old hands were called back today to make their self-confession, they would readily admit that despite all their efforts and with all the resources available to them in those days, their “trade” did not yield much useful predictive value.

Specifically, the United States had devoted by far the largest amount of resources to ‘China watching’, both in terms of number of researchers and amount of data, information and knowledge that had been accumulated. Yet it had spectacularly failed to predict the outbreak of all major events that happened to China during the Cold War, such as the Great Leap Forward (1958-60), the Sino-Soviet split (1959-62), the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), the downfall of the ‘Gang of

⁵See Zhang Zhixin, “Young American China Watchers’ View on China,” *CIR* (Jan/Feb 2008). China Institute of Contemporary International Relations.

Four' (1976), and Deng Xiaoping's return to power (1978). There are so many known unknowns as well as unknown unknowns in the real world of dynamic power relations, particularly in the closed Communist society. China watching does not provide the crystal ball to tell China's future.

Still, China watching has left behind both positive and negative legacies in the field of modern Chinese studies to this day. A veteran China-watching old hand had learnt to be very patient and meticulous in gathering basic information, highly cautious in accepting official rhetoric, and extremely careful in assessing and interpreting official publications. Many young scholars in today's Internet age have often taken those precautions for granted. But such meticulous and even tedious approach to data collection is still very important for empirical research such as area study today.

On the other hand, as a product of Cold War scholarship, China watching used to be primarily focusing on "problems of Communism" by highlighting essentially all the negative aspects of development in China. This has left a lasting impact on the Western media today, which still tend to focus and report largely on the negative aspects of China's development and exaggerating China's problems, sometimes even out of context. Thus, many Western commentators still use double-standards to judge China's rise, which cannot be "peaceful" and hence the "China threat". China's diplomatic initiatives with its neighbours are interpreted as "assertive behavior". When China's economic growth has slowed from 10% to 8% (still a highly respectable growth performance by all accounts), it is labeled "hard landing".

True, academic research has to set its focus on problem, and a good scholar must start with skepticism and a good critical mind. But too many China scholars today have inherited the past biases to perpetuate their "problem-oriented" research, artificially and indiscriminately focusing on "alternative explanations" to all official lines. This has resulted in the lack of cool and balanced explanations of developments in China.

Take China's economic rise. China has chalked up near doubledigit rates of growth for over three decades to become the world's second largest economy after the US, and it has also lifted record numbers of people out of poverty. From economic development perspective, China's economic and social progress is historically an unequivocal success story. China scholars have never seriously explained China's economic success. But then China watching from the outset was never meant to provide a balanced conclusion.

China Watching in the Singapore Context

The Decline of the Chinese Language Schools

The development of China watching in Singapore bears some similarities but more differences from the Western context. Though China watching in Singapore was not started as part of the Cold War as in the West, it was also heavily influenced by political considerations as it was developed under strong government auspices. On the surface, Singapore looks very Chinese, with ethnic Chinese constitutes over 70% of its population. In reality, for political reasons, Singapore did not provide a conducive intellectual climate for scholars to become interested in modern Chinese studies.

Before its independence, Singapore used to be a "Chinese educational bastion" for Southeast

Asia developing a comprehensive Chinese-language education system without government support. Singapore also founded the first Chinese-speaking university outside of China entirely with private efforts, the Nanyang University. However, the Chinese education system had quickly declined after independence as the Singapore government led by Mr. Lee Kuan Yew did not develop or promote Chinese education while suppressed the Chinese newspapers (*Nanyang Siang Pau* and *Sin Chew Jit Poh*), as both were regarded as hotbeds for spreading Communism and Chinese chauvinism.⁶ Though the left-wing Chinese groups had originally facilitated his accession to power, Lee quickly split up with them after he had recognized the Communist threat and how it could endanger the survival of Singapore in the geo-political context of the anti-Communist Southeast Asia. He also realized that Chinese chauvinism could breed communalism, which would threaten the stability of Singapore as a multi-racial society. Thus, the government cracked down on the Chinese newspapers and introduced measures to integrate all schools by starting bilingual education at the primary level, with English as the major medium of instruction leaving Chinese, Malay and Tamil to be taught as mother tongues.

As a result, the Chinese language ability (both reading and writing) of the young generation of Singaporean Chinese had been severely weakened. As more and younger Singaporean Chinese started to speak English at home and to each other outside, their Chinese language standard further went down. Since books and newspapers from China were banned in Singapore and visits to China prohibited, young Singaporean Chinese had grown up with very little background knowledge about the history and geography of China. All this had contributed, intentionally and unintentionally, to what may be called the “de-Sinification” of the younger generation of Singaporean Chinese. Subsequently, the government did encourage them to study more Chinese and to speak more Mandarin by starting the annual “Speak Mandarin Campaign”; but it had not effectively reversed this process. This also explains why later on Singapore had to import China experts from PRC (People’s Republic of China) to carry out its “China watching”!

Not surprisingly, Singapore’s road to China watching had gone through a rather tortuous process comprising three phases: (1) It started off from the government’s sponsorship of classical studies to promote Confucian values by setting up the Institute of East Asian Philosophies (IEAP) in 1983. (2) IEAP was then reorganized in 1992 to become the Institute of East Asian Political Economy (IEAPE), which was an independent think tank specifically for China watching; and (3) IEAPE was dissolved in 1997 and renamed the East Asian Institute (EAI) to become an autonomous research organization within the National University of Singapore. The main mission of EAI, as a member of the wider university community, has gone from the early days of “China watching” to now both *watching China and studying China*.

The key person behind the whole process was the late Dr. Goh Keng Swee, who was Singapore’s first Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Lee Kuan Yew’s “right-hand man” from the start), having held portfolios in finance, defence and education.⁷ Goh was behind Singapore’s Confucianism campaign when he was Minister of Education, and he was also the Chairman of IEAP, which provided the intellectual support to this campaign.

After retiring from politics in 1984, Goh became an Economic Advisor to China’s State

⁶For further information, please see Lim, Mun Fah, “Chinese education in Singapore: As you sow, so will you reap,” *Sin Chew Daily* (November 26, 2009); and Thum Pingtjin, “Chinese Language Political Mobilization in Singapore, 1953-63,” (PhD thesis for Oxford University, 2011).

⁷For Goh’s contribution to Singapore’s development, including China watching, see Emrys CHEW and Chong Guan KWA (eds.), *Goh Keng Swee: A Legacy of Public Service* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2012).

Council's 'Office of Special Economic Zones' under Vice-Premier Gu Mu. Goh's China assignment had opened up his interests in China's economic reform and development, which in turn made him see the need to start China watching in Singapore.⁸

In 1990, John Wong was appointed by Goh as Director of IEAP and later IEAPE. With constant guidance and advice from Goh, Wong IEAPE started the business of China watching in Singapore. In 1997, IEAPE was renamed EAI, with Wang Gungwu as its Director and Wong, Research Director. Currently, the PRC-born Zheng Yongnian, who joined IEAPE in 1996, has succeeded Wang as Director of EAI.

Watching China to Understand China at IEAPE

Wong's immediate mission at IEAP was to change its research focus from classical studies to the study of contemporary China with special emphasis on China's economic reform and political changes, or "China watching" in short. The initial batch of China scholars at IEAP comprised a motley group of former officials associated with the deposed Zhao Ziyang regime. They were all happy to be out of China after the Tiananmen crackdown. Except for a few, they were not dissidents in the sense that they were banned from returning to China. Academically speaking, they were not really scholars with training to do research. They were more like interpreters or deciphers of what was going on in China. In any case, we found them very useful because they had lived and worked in China, thereby capable of providing insider knowledge and first-hand experience on understanding developments in China.

For the first two years, "China watching" was carried out virtually under the cloak of Confucian studies, for good political reasons. China watching was actually all about researching on 'Communist' China, which was still a politically sensitive subject in Singapore, and more so in the region around Singapore because of its anti-Communist legacies. Singapore established formal diplomatic relations with China only in October 1990, shortly after Indonesia had done so. Back in the early 1980s when Deng Xiaoping had already started economic reform, publications and newspapers from China were still banned in Singapore. Indonesia did not even allow the importation of all Chinese books and newspapers regardless of their origins—anything bearing Chinese characters, even from Taiwan. In Singapore, even by 1990, news about China seldom appeared on the front page of the local Chinese newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao* while the English *Straits Times* used the term "red" for things associated with PRC.

Because of these Cold War legacies, we thought it would be better for IEAP to carry on its sensitive research under the cover of classical studies for a start, especially since most of our researchers at that time were from China, with some having complicated political backgrounds. It was only in late 1992, when China had opened up much more after Deng's *Nanxun*, IEAP proceeded to change into 'IEAPE' or the Institute of East Asian Political Economy.

Recruitment of suitable researchers had posed even greater challenges. Back in the early 1990s, it was extremely difficult to recruit suitably qualified PRC scholars with training in modern social sciences. Wong made several trips to the USA, UK and Australia for recruitment purposes, without much success. China in the 1980s had sent quite a number of students abroad for further studies, but only a small proportion of them were in the social sciences, with even fewer seeking

⁸See ZHNG Yongnian and John Wong, *Goh Keng Swee on China: Selected Essays* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2013).

to pursue a PhD. In 1991, one could virtually count with his own fingers the number of PRC students who had obtained a PhD from a good university in Economics, Politics or Sociology. Those who did so would prefer to stay in America, even for a teaching job in a small college. And then not all of them were suitable for our kind of empirical research at the Institute: a PhD in Economics, for instance, was likely to be too narrow or too ‘mathematical’ for policy-related studies. In fact, IEAPE had continued to be dogged by this serious recruitment problem throughout.

In the spring of 1992, Deng Xiaoping in his celebrated *Nanxun* speech singled out Singapore as a country that had achieved both rapid economic growth and good social order—something the Chinese called ‘spiritual civilization’. He urged China to ‘learn from Singapore’ and later ‘do better than Singapore’. Shortly afterwards, the Chinese Communist Party dispatched a high-level delegation to Singapore, led by Vice-minister Xu Weicheng from its Propaganda Department, for a study trip.⁹ Following Xu’s visit, about 400 delegations from various PRC localities and organizations visited Singapore, and many of them came to IEAPE to hold discussions and exchange views.

Over the years, IEAPE had participated in many activities connected with high-level official visits from China and Taiwan, including Zhu Rongji’s trip to promote the Pudong project and the ‘Wang-Ku’ meeting to discuss the Cross-(Taiwan)-Strait issue. In fact, several members of China’s Politburo came to the Institute to hold discussions with Goh. Many of China’s top technocrats today have also been to the Institute for various activities, including Zhou Xiaochuan, Governor of the People’s Bank of China; Ma Kai, Minister at the State Council; and Guo Shuqing, Chairman of China Securities Regulatory Commission.

China Watching in Action

As IEAP and later IEAPE were charged with the primary mission of conducting policy research, all new scholars with university background had to adapt themselves from publication-based academic research to practical policy-oriented research. In reality, both require sound scholarship as foundation plus familiarity with basic methodology and modern social science tools. The major difference lies more in the approach as well as the attitude of the researcher. Unlike academic papers, a good piece of policy-related research usually needs to be well focused and factual, not meant to test any hypothesis or reach any preconceived conclusion. It also needs to be concise, informative and readable.

We took the view that for useful policy-oriented China watching, we should carefully monitor domestic developments in China in order to understand what is actually happening there. Goh wanted us to give low priority to international relations studies, a subjective considered to be full of personal perceptions and opinions. In discussing US-China relations, for example, a China scholar in Beijing would take an entirely different view from an American scholar in Washington, and indeed different American scholars from the left or right would further hold different views. It would also be hard for our scholars to come up with a very good paper on this subject to be able to ‘impress Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew’, as indeed many Western scholars and commentators

⁹The delegation returned to China and quickly put out a book, *Xing-jia-bo jing-shen wen-ming* or ‘Singapore’s Spiritual Civilization’ (Beijing: Red Flag Publishers, 1992). The book highlights Singapore’s social and cultural development in a very positive manner. It was made available to all Party branches in China, creating a good image of Singapore among the Party grass-roots members throughout China.

themselves have constantly come to Singapore to consult Lee on such issues.

Thus, the main research agenda for IEAP/IEAPE was to focus primarily on the domestic political, economic and social development of China, and issues that were directly related to economic reform and development. Such a research agenda still by and large constitutes the bulk of EAI's research activities today. For many decades, modern Chinese studies in the West, especially in USA, had have come under heavy influence of the Cold War, focusing largely on problems and negative aspects of developments in China. Accordingly, many Western commentaries on China have tended to be highly opinionated and heavily biased.

IEAP/IEAPE had made strong efforts to consciously follow a more 'objective' approach to China research, which was as far as possible trying to be non-Western and non-PRC in perspective. Looking back, such an objective and neutral approach has served us very well, rendering our research reports more relevant and more useful to the Singapore government. In fact, this has still constituted the basic tenet of China watching for scholars at EAI today.

Knowing that Taiwan had the best 'China watching' facilities in Asia, we assigned a scholar to go through Taiwan's major research publications on China, including those put out by its military intelligence units (such as *Fei-qing yan-jiu* 匪情研究 or 'bandit studies') through the decades. The conclusion was startling: no evidence to show that those major events like the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution had been predicted or anticipated beforehand in all the publications. This reminded us of the limits of China watching. Henceforth, we have come to adopt this as the cardinal principle for our China watching: "No foreign China expert knows what is happening inside *Zhongnanhai* (中南海, the residence of China's top leaders)."

The primary mission of IEAP/IEAPE was to update the Singapore government by informing it what was going on in China. For this purpose, short, readable research reports were circulated to cabinet ministers, ministers of state and permanent secretaries of various ministries. Wong wrote the first report as *IEAP China News Analysis* No.1, which went out on 3 January 1991. This was soon followed by other papers issued under different titles: *IEAP Background Brief*, *IEAP Commentaries*, *IEAP Discussion Paper* and *IEAP Internal Study Paper*. In the first two years, most of these papers were written by Eu Chooi Yip (formerly Secretary of the outlawed Malayan Communist Party's Southern Branch and just returned to Singapore from his exile in China) and Wong while Eu also translated into English many papers originally written in Chinese by PRC scholars. In short, IEAP/IEAPE practically functioned as a closed-door government think tank on China, with its research findings kept away from the public domain.

Studying China to Understand China at EAI

In March 1997, IEAPE was closed down and renamed East Asian Institute (EAI) to become an autonomous university-level research organization within the National University of Singapore. EAI's mission would be to conduct both academic as well as policy-related research on China (including Taiwan and Hong Kong) and China's changing relations with its neighbours in East Asia. In a sense, this contemporary China studies organization had undergone a double reincarnation, first from IEAP to IEAPE and then from IEAPE to EAI.

To fulfill its academic mission, EAI started to organize weekly seminars and regular public lectures. Over the past 15 years, EAI has organized many international conferences and workshops on developments in China while EAI scholars have also produced numerous books related to China and other East Asian countries (mainly English but also some Chinese), working papers

(both English and Chinese), and journal articles. Besides, EAI has published two academic journals, *China: An International Journal*, an internationally referred journal with citation indexes of Thomson Reuters, and *East Asian Policy*.

Meanwhile, its policy-related research has been expanded to meet its public service obligations by regularly circulating (now every week) to the Singapore government informative and policy-related reports as *EAI Background Briefs*, on developments in China and the rest of East Asia. By the end of 2012, EAI has sent out 781 issues. Some react to an event like the unrest in Tibet or riots in Xinjiang while many deal with developments of topical interest concerning the 18th Party Congress, the National People's Congress, and leadership changes at both central and local levels. Still many deal with topics like social protests, housing and healthcare reform, pollution and the environment, China's growing relations with the region and with the US. These Background Briefs are usually based on in-depth research and specialization of the individual scholars. Towards the end of every year, the Institute issues Background Briefs dealing with China's domestic political and social development throughout the year, its economic growth, and major changes in its foreign relations. Among the regular readers of the Background Briefs in the Cabinet is Mr. Lee Kuan Yew.

Besides, EAI often conducts briefings to ministers and senior officials in the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of National Development (MND) on developments in China and Japan. From time to time, it was often asked by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to brief visiting foreign dignitaries. Over the years, EAI was also commissioned to undertake consultancy reports for various ministries, including a detailed evaluation of the China-Singapore Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) for MTI.

EAI has developed into a foremost Research Institute on East Asian development, particularly on modern China, in the whole of Southeast Asia. Within Singapore, it is perhaps the only research institute among many others that has successfully maintained a good balance between academic and policy-related research. Recently, an organization at the University of Pennsylvania has ranked EAI as one of the top five "thank tanks" in Asia.