

國立政治大學社會科學學院亞太研究英語碩士學位學程

National Chengchi University

International Master's Program in Asia-Pacific Studies

碩士論文

Master's Thesis

中國文化外交之研究—以墨西哥的孔子學院為例

A Study on Chinese Cultural Diplomacy:
The Case of Confucius Institutes in Mexico

Student: Melissa Moreno Parrao
Advisor: Yung-Fang Lin, Ph. D.

2021年1月
January 2021

Abstract

The exponential growth of Confucius Institutes in the world is part of China's foreign policy strategies to promote its language and culture, and in turn improve its image, relationships, and influence in the international system. This thesis analyzes the relationship between soft power and cultural diplomacy implemented by the Chinese government in its foreign policy for the creation of the Confucius Institutes in Mexico as part of their strategy to strengthen its power and influence in Mexico. Through a multiple case study, the functioning of three Confucius Institutes in Mexico is analyzed as instruments of Chinese cultural diplomacy in Mexico: the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico and the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan.

Key words: Confucius Institute, Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power, China, Mexico.

抽象

中國外交政策策略之一是讓孔子學院在世界各地指數式的增長，以促進中國語言與文化的發展，進而改善其在國際體系中的形象、關係與影響力。本論文探討中國政府如何運用在墨西哥設立孔子學院的外交政策，加強其對墨西哥的權力和影響力，研究這之中實行的軟實力與文化外交之間的關係。透過不同個案，分析作為中國文化外交工具的三所墨西哥孔子學院的功能：奇瓦瓦自治大學孔子學院、墨西哥國立自治大學孔子學院、尤卡坦自治大學孔子學院。

關鍵字： 關鍵字： 孔子學院、文化外交、軟實力、中國、墨西哥

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures	i
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1 Research Background and Purpose.....	1
1.2 Theoretical Framework and Research Method.....	6
1.3 Literature Review.....	20
1.4 Outline of the Thesis.....	28
Chapter 2. Chinese Cultural Diplomacy	31
2.1 Cultural Diplomacy	31
2.2 Chinese Public and Cultural Diplomacy.....	37
2.3 Internal Dimension of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy.....	45
2.4 External Dimension of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy.....	47
Chapter 3. Confucius Institutes as An Instrument of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy	51
3.1 Confucius Institutes.....	52
3.2. Confucius Institutes in World Context.....	55
3.3 Confucius Institutes in Latin America	57
3.4 International Concerns.....	66
Chapter 4. Confucius Institutes in Mexico	69
4.1 China's Cultural Diplomacy in Mexico.....	69
4.2 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Chihuahua (North of Mexico).....	76
4.3 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Mexico (Center of Mexico)).....	82
4.4 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Yucatan (South of Mexico)).....	86
4.5 Mexican public opinion on China.....	94
Chapter 5. Conclusion	100
References	106

List of Tables and Figures

Table 3.1 Confucius Institutes growth in the world.....	56
Table 3.2 Confucius Institutes in Latin America and their Chinese partners.....	62
Figure 4.1 Organizational chart of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.....	79
Figure 4.2 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.....	81
Figure 4.3 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico.....	86
Figure 4.4 Organizational chart of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan.....	88
Figure 4.5 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan.....	91
Figure 4.6 Comparative chart of the Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the Autonomous University of Mexico, the Autonomous University of Yucatan.....	93
Figure 4.7 Percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable attitude towards China.....	97
Figure 4.8 Percentage of the Mexican population that has an unfavorable attitude towards China.....	98
Figure 4.9 Comparative percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China.....	99

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Purpose

During the XXI century, new rising powers have appeared reshaping the international preestablished order. The People's Republic of China, which is within this group, has reemerged as a major economic and political power, a key element to understand the evolution of the globalization process, consolidating itself as the second largest economy in the world, and one of the most influential countries with global impact (Oqubay, 2019, p. 1).

To achieve this growth and expansion, China in the period of 'openness' radically changed its foreign policy and began to seek a market for its products, foreign investment, technology transfer, raw material supply sources and, later, allies that allow it to position itself in the international market. These reforms led the country to rapidly become an export power and to significantly grow its economy. However, at the same time in the international community positions began to emerge that spoke of the "Chinese threat", in which academics, journalists and politicians outside of China began to write texts about the negative consequences of China's presence in the world, which negatively affected its international image. Among the most important negative tendencies are those that see China as a cultural and ideological threat since its economic growth could underpin the existence of an alternative "communist" model, a challenge for the ideologically predominant liberal capitalism-electoral democracy ideology in the rest of the world. In this context and in response, the Chinese government launched an ideological and cultural campaign that seeks to build a positive image of its presence in the world and counteract the perception of threat, by adopting the concept of soft power in its foreign policy. China also

modified the objectives of its cultural policy to link its economic interests, improve its image and seek acceptance of its presence as a peaceful world power (Cornejo & Martínez, 2018).

In this context of China's reform and opening, the new generation of Chinese leadership headed by Xi Jinping established a new international relations policy known as the “FenFa YouWei” or “Striving for achievement”. A more active and pragmatic approach, which seeks for a more active role in the international affairs as a world power, by establishing relations with a win-win cooperation and the increase and consolidation of the soft power of the People's Republic of China.

Along with the new foreign policy, Xi Jinping established the ‘Chinese Dream’, a pragmatic approach to accomplishing the modernization, empowerment and repositioning of China as a world power leader. The main purposes of the Chinese Dream are; to learn from the Chinese experience and enhance the spiritual consciousness of being Chinese, build the necessary foundations of prosperity that improve the well-being of the general population in all respects, and to revive its nation by consolidating all means of Chinese power (Kong, 2019, pp. 63-64).

Consequently, China's new diplomatic policy is responding to the international challenges that faces nowadays, since, due to its rapid economic development, but especially its military growth, the international community began to see China as a threat to the world international system. Therefore, China also needs to maintain and project peace and stability in the country both internally and internationally, to achieve the Chinese Dream.

In this sense, based on the need to spread the idea of "peaceful rise", as well as to project a better and more positive image to the world, China began to implement a series of diplomatic policies. One of them is the establishment of the Confucius Institutes project in the world, as an instrument of public diplomacy in education and culture. For China's leaders, improving the country's image and the way it is perceived in the world by enhancing its resources of soft power has become of strategic importance, which has led China to build increasingly active relationships with the world, and to expand its cultural soft power resources exponentially, making Culture the core of Chinese soft power.

Over the last two decades, China has focused on creating and improving a strategic partnership with Latin America. Sino-Latin American relations experienced a process of remarkable expansion without precedent; political, commercial and cultural relations had increased and strengthened, and Mexico has not been the exception.

Confucius Institutes are non-profit governmental educational institutions whose objective is to promote and spread the Chinese language and culture abroad. In Mexico and the rest of the world, they have emerged as the main tool of the Chinese government with the purpose of consolidating its soft power via cultural diplomacy. Since the beginning of the 21st century, China has used Confucius Institutes projects not only as institutions for teaching Mandarin, but also as centers to build harmonious international relations, improve socio-cultural appreciation, spread and internationalize Chinese culture, as well as to promote collaboration agreements with other countries. (Lo, 2014, p. 5).

Over the past fifteen years, the Confucius Institutes have grown and positioned themselves throughout the world, in parallel with the economic and commercial development of China. Since the first institute, founded in Seoul in 2004, Hanban, which is the abbreviation of Office of Chinese Language Council International, has established 541 Confucius Institutes in 134 countries around the world, and the number of students is 1.9 million. In Latin America, the first institute was founded in Mexico in 2006. To date, there are 144 Confucius Institutes and 384 Confucius Classrooms in Latin America, distributed in 15 countries. Mexico has 5 Confucius Institutes and 1 Confucius Classroom (Cornejo, 2018, pp. 28 - 29).

Despite the impressive numbers, Confucius institutions are still surprisingly understudied. Although studies on Sino-Mexican economic cooperation and political relations have predominated, the studies of the Confucius Institutes and Chinese cultural diplomacy are still in an initial phase. China's cultural policy in Mexico has a great challenge to improve its image and perception. Since Mexico has a long and studied history of anti-Chinese racism, which is retaken and re-expressed, every time there is a situation of social unrest and unemployment in the country. At the same time, since the intensification of economic relations between China and Mexico in this century, a new trend of negative public opinion about China has been built in the Mexican society. This is because the causes of Mexico's economic and trade problems are attributed to the growth of China, its seizure of the market, and the large deficit trade relationship with Mexico, which has put the production and sales of domestic manufactures in serious crisis, both in the domestic market and in the export markets. Also, some fail projects associated with acts of corruption contributed to China's negative image in Mexico such as the development of the megamall project called 'Dragon Mart' and the construction of a fast train in the center of the

country. China has responded to its bad image in Mexico with an intense propaganda campaign of cultural diplomacy, with many and varied projects, among the main ones is the establishment of the Confucius Institutes in the country.

All considered, the main argument that guides this thesis is based on the fact that the diplomatic policy for the creation of the Confucius Institutes in Mexico is part of the strategy of soft power and cultural diplomacy of the People's Republic of China to strengthen its power and influence in Mexico. Therefore, the general objective of this research is the analysis of the correlation between soft power and cultural diplomacy implemented by the Chinese government in its foreign policy strategy in Mexico.

This thesis seeks to contribute to academic research on the contemporary development of China's soft power and China's participation in Mexico by answering the subsequent research questions: What is soft power in the Chinese context and what are its characteristics in the implementation of China's cultural diplomacy? How does China use cultural diplomacy through the Confucius Institutes in its international insertion strategy? Lastly, what is the current situation and how has Chinese cultural policy developed in Mexico through the Confucius Institutes?

Chinese soft power has been studied and adapted to Chinese culture since it was officially introduced in 1993. Promoted by the government, it has been a part of foreign policy ever since, gaining importance and relevance over the years. Chinese soft power implies the concept of culture as its central element and an ideological and identity foundation for its domestic and foreign policies. The Confucius Institutes are the instrument of Chinese cultural diplomacy to consolidate

its soft power by strengthening its global influence and building a positive, peaceful and cooperative image. China's cultural policy in Mexico has been effective, despite the fact that the conditions for building a positive image of China in Mexico have been difficult. In Mexico, from 2006 to today, 5 Confucius Institutes and 1 Confucius Classroom have been established, over the years they have gained public interest and their student body has grown considerably.

1.2 Theoretical Framework and Research Method

1.2.1 Joseph S. Nye's Theory of Soft Power

The concept of soft power was introduced in 1990 by Harvard Professor Joseph Nye, in his work *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, and further revisited and developed the concept in 2004 in his work *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 2008 in *The Powers to Lead*, and 2011 in *The Future of Power*, among other publications. The original concept was developed to be applied exclusively in America, and in its following publications Nye expanded the concept to be used and apply throughout the world.

Nye starts by defining power as “the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants” (Nye, 2004, pp. 2-3). However, contrary to what was thought, this type of power has multiple variants to be effective, it is not strictly a power of command and coercion.

Nye established that to affect the behavior of others, a State can use coercion, incentives and attraction. The first form refers to the use of threats and psychological or physical violence, for example the invasion of Yemen in 2015 by the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America among others. The second form seeks to influence others through incentives mainly of

the economic type, such as cooperation agreements, loans or even the cut or reduction of taxes in some type of international loan or even debt relief, for example with the International Monetary Fund. The third form consists in attracting other countries through admiration and emulation of their values, co-opting them not only to do what you want, but to want what you want (Nye, 2004, pp. 2-3).

These three ways to influence the behavior of others are manifested in three types of power relations: hard power, soft power and smart power. Firstly, hard power refers to the power and influence that is exerted towards another country from coercion and the use of military and economic force, and it has been the dominant form of power, or traditional form of interaction in international relations in the past. Otherwise stated, hard power force one or more actors to act in accordance with the interests of the actor exercising the measure of coercion. Nye affirms that this type of interaction is of great importance, however it is increasingly risky, difficult to use, easy to lose, and has a high cost to be reestablish, therefore less dominant on the international scene, taking into account that soft power can have the same impact without the risks (Nye, 2011, pp. 80-83).

The second type of power is soft power, defined as the faculty to achieve what you want by attracting and persuading others to adopt your goals, the power relation that concerns this research, which we will analyze and use throughout the thesis. The last type of power is smart power the combination of hard power and the use of military coercion and economic payment resources with the soft power of persuasion and attraction. Nye specifies that in the 21st century, smart power is not about maximizing power or maintaining dominion, it is about the ability of

finding ways to combine resources (hard and soft power) in effective strategies in the contemporary diverse contexts of power distribution (Nye, 2011, pp. 207-213).

The contemporary international scenarios, defined by the globalization of the economy, technology and the global flow of information, are key elements to incorporate into the design of an effective soft power policy in the international relations strategies of countries.

Soft power or “the second face of power” is the ability to get others to want the endings that you want, by co-opting rather than coerce. Soft power is indirect and intangible, because its method of influence or action is the triangulation of the three dimensions of behavior: setting a mutual agenda that is considered legitimate, persuasion and positive attraction. Through these aspects of power behavior soft power can make others do what they otherwise would not have done and shape their preferences, in general terms by aspiring to their well-being or conditions of prosperity, admiring or acknowledging their values or, following their example.

Persuasion and attraction are challenging concepts to put into practice. Persuasion is the use of rational arguments to impact the beliefs, actions or perceptions of others without the intimidation of military force, economic repercussions or financial promises. It has to take into account the diversity of audiences, so that it can strategically configure its policies or projects. Persuasion is closely related to attraction.

In turn, the fundamental factor when framing an agenda from the viewpoint of soft power, is that it has to be legitimately accepted by the target State or Institution. On the contrary, if it is

not legitimized, the only way to implement it is through of imposition, becoming an aspect of hard power. Narratives are particularly important for framing topics persuasively, that is why crafting an agenda is closely related to the persuasion aspect, because an attractively framed argument that the target considers legitimate is more likely to be persuasive. And the result of this joint agenda considered legitimate by all parties, will be reflected in the positive image that society and public opinion will generate of it.

Regarding attraction, Nye recognizes that it is more complex than it seems because it can refer to creating an attractive or magnetic positive effect that draws attention, and attention may not necessarily be positive, it can also be negative (Nye, 2011, pp. 92-93). In order to generate positive attraction a State must have certain values and qualities such as: being perceived as benign, which in turn generates trust, credibility and acquiescence; conduct itself with competence, which will produce respect and emulation; and have integrity with respect to their ideals and values, which generates inspiration and adherence.

Once a state has the right values and qualities, in order for the attraction to be effective, they need to be perceived correctly. Soft power depends on credibility what produces attraction for one country can produce repulsion for another, especially in an era distinct by global information, technology and distribution of power where the subject or any individual has immediate media access with endless information with which the actor's intentions can be contrasted (Nye, 2011, p. 93).

In this sense, soft power is the faculty to seduce and attract. To do so, some abilities are necessary previously activating the use of resources to obtain effective results, that is, attraction is primarily dependent on specific values that are innately attractive, compelling, and seductive (Nye, 2008, pp. 95-96).

Regarding the effectiveness of soft power, due to the complexity of the international context of these times, soft power is an eminently long-term policy of fragile construction, depending on subjective and unstable external elements outside the control of the actors, such as image, public opinion and the media influence.

Subsequently, the actor must fully understand the present and past conditions in which he wants to deploy the resources of soft power, since it is extremely important to contemplate in the short, but especially in the medium and long term, the dynamics that prevail in the politics of international arena.

In Nye's theory, the more stable, constant and extensive the duration of the relations between the actor and the subject, built on legitimate discourse and solid cooperative actions, the more likely it will be effective and that the subject will end up accepting the actor's influence and decide to adopt his values.

Nye highlights that globalization and the arrival of the global information age are the elements that define political agendas and contemporary international relations with the arrival of new resources of power, such as the capacity for effective communication and for developing and

using multilateral institutions. The inclusion of these two factors creates new channels to spread soft power with greater impact and speed, as information becomes power (Nye, 2004, pp. 71-73).

Furthermore, the soft power that was previously exercised almost exclusively by the State can now be exercised by any individual: civil society, transnational companies or non-governmental organizations. However, regarding the application of soft power that normally occurs between a government and a foreign audience, which could be another country, non-governmental organization or civil society, in order for the relationship to be consolidated, the intervention of the governments between the countries is required to provide the legal and structural terms with which such a relationship will be possible (Nye, 2004, pp. 74-76).

Soft power depends mainly on three resources; its culture, its political values and its foreign policies. These resources of power can be interpreted as attractive elements that can influence others towards favorable results, as long as they meet specific conditions. Culture resource can only be effective only in spaces where culture is attractive to recipients; political values when they are aligned with the values of the country and abroad; and diplomatic policies when have sufficient moral authority and legitimacy (Nye, 2011, pp. 84-85). This research will focus on the first resource, culture.

Nye states that culture is the interaction of practices and values that create and give meaning and identity to a society through different manifestations (Nye, 2004, p. 11). It is divided into two large groups, according to the type of audience to reach: high culture and popular culture. High culture attracts mainly the elites, whose main disseminators and legitimators are

governments, international organizations like the UNESCO and non-governmental organizations. Seeking to permeate in other cultures and the masses, in this category we can find literature, visual arts, theater, dance and music mainly. As for popular culture, all kinds of representations are included with the aim of mass dissemination, such as pop music or cinema. It is consumed by all kinds of people; with the help of the media and the entertainment industry it can reach countless consumers (pp. 11-13).

Culture is an essential source of soft power since it promotes mutual interest and understanding between nations and allows attracting other actors to build points of rapprochement through its various manifestations: the exchange of ideas, language, values, information and traditions, among other (Montiel, 2010, pp. 17-18).

All things considered, within the resources, culture is the most attractive to foreign audiences, however, to be effective, it is necessary to consider cooperation projects in the short, medium and long term, as we have already mentioned before, with elements that efficiently generate a positive, stable and lasting relationship with the foreign audience.

1.2.2 Soft Power in the Chinese Context

The concept of soft power was presented in China almost three decades ago in 1993 by political theorist Wang Hunning. In his book, *Culture as National Power: Soft Power*, Wang in accordance with Nye affirmed that there is no need to use hard power and the high costs that this power generates, if a state has a strong cultural and ideological base, which other countries will naturally tend to appreciate. (Becard & Menechelli, 2019, p. 2).

Accordingly, scholars began studying the concept, and at the same time it was incorporated into various speeches and interviews by Chinese leaders. However, it was not until 2007 when President Hu Jintao officially presented soft power in an official document as a diplomatic policy goal of the government at the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. He addressed that culture has become an imperative source of national cohesion and creativity and an essential component to increase national strength. He also highlighted, that the country must upsurge cultural development, stimulate the cultural creativity and enhance culture as part of the soft power of the country, and that “the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will definitely be accompanied by the thriving of Chinese culture” (Hu, 2007).

Since President Hu’s speech, China deliberately began to extending its influence in the world through the strategic development of soft power. Nye’s theory was easily adapted to the Chinese context due to its human character and the predominant role of culture in the theory of power, two elements that have previously been part of the tradition of Chinese politics. China’s leadership embraced the new soft power policy and resulted in increased funding for strengthening its cultural and public diplomacy, and the improvement of its cultural soft power at home, as well as for its expansion abroad. Among the most significant achievements in this process are the dissemination of the Confucius institutes and the internalization of China’s media. (Becard & Menechelli, 2019, pp. 1-2).

Around the same time, the government established an official policy called “China’s peaceful development” in order to achieve national goals, it was focused on building a peaceful

international environment as a counterweight to the threat and insecurity that it created in other states in their economic and military development process (Wilson, 2008, pp. 111-1112).

The peaceful policy would guarantee China's continuous economic development and improve its external image and reputation, in which it can be seen as a responsible actor in the world scene. In this sense, by focusing on the soft power agenda, China could avoid direct confrontation with the major world powers (Kurlantzick, 2007, p.39).

In 2011 at the 6th Plenary Session of the 17th Central Committee Hu Jintao highlighted the importance of the role and status of culture. He insisted that “the task of safeguarding the country's cultural security has become even more arduous, and the need to strengthen China's cultural soft power and the international influence of Chinese culture has become even more pressing. We need to explain that culture is increasingly becoming an important source of the nation's cohesiveness and innovativeness; an important factor in competition for overall national strength; and an important pillar of economic and social development” (Li, 2020).

Xi Jinping was elected president of China on March 14, 2013. Like his predecessor, he also encouraged and integrated soft power policy into China's strategies. Culture was established as the center of soft power, to the point that the term soft power and cultural diplomacy in China are gradually being replaced by the term cultural soft power. (Becard & Menechelli, 2019, p. 3).

In 2013, at a group study session of members of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, Xi Jinping referred to cultural soft power and the Chinese

Dream for the first time. He stated that the Chinese Dream signified the recognition of Chinese values, to build a prosperous society in all respects, and the great rejuvenation, to revive its nation by strengthening all means of Chinese power. He called for “efforts to promote advanced socialist culture, deepen reform in the cultural system, and enhance people's cultural creativity, moves that he believed will raise China's overall cultural strength and competitiveness... In order to build a solid foundation for the nation's cultural soft power, China needs to deepen the reform in its cultural system, promote socialist core values and push forward the cultural industry... To strengthen China's soft power, the country needs to build its capacity in international communication, construct a communication system, better use the new media and increase the creativity, appeal and credibility of China's publicity.” (Xi, 2014).

In 2017, Xi delivered his report at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, a guiding document for the future five years. The report pays special attention to culture, affirming that the only way for the country to prosper is through culture. A strong culture makes a strong nation, hence the need to develop a socialist culture of its own, which embraces modernization, the world and the future. There is also a special remark on the expansion of their influence in the world and the increase of Chinese cultural soft power (Xi, 2017).

It is important to mention that the development of cultural soft power was promoted by the government, who urged and encouraged academics to develop a Chinese theory of cultural soft power based on Western paradigms (Qin, 2011, pp.231-232). In this regard Chinese scholars increased their attention to the analysis and study of cultural soft power in the context of their

society and ideology. Research and studies related to the subject increased, as did the establishment of organizations for soft power research (Zhang, 2017, p. 24).

According to a search result made by the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), from 2004 to 2018 there are 9,754 publications in the social sciences and humanities sections feature one of the three translations of the term “soft power”, either in articles in journals and newspapers, or as a part of MA. and Ph. D. dissertations. To be more specific, 3,533 of the above-mentioned publications specifically uses the term “cultural soft power”. These figures are very significant compared to the results obtained in the same search before 2004, which is "null", which explains the exponential increase in popularity and interest of the concept (Wu, 2018, pp. 764-765).

The concept of soft power in China has singular peculiarities and characteristics. One of the most significant is the concept of culture. It is clear that culture is the center of Chinese soft power, as it determines the course and goals of the increase of cultural soft power. Culture is not only one of the main resources of soft power with ideals and politics, it is the central element of soft power, and ideals and politics are satellites that revolve around the main element, and that without it they could not exist. Subsequently, culture has a further pragmatic rhetoric in Chinese soft power when is used as an instrument of power. The government have a more central role in cultural diplomacy actions. Political elites have made culture an ideological and identity foundation for domestic and foreign policy, with strict control over the narratives, those that are distributed abroad and those that enter the country (Becard & Menechelli, 2019, p. 3).

Another important characteristic is that China's cultural soft power serves a unique dual purpose. It serves internationally to increase its global influence and to build a positive, peaceful and cooperative image, and it serves internally to promote traditional Chinese culture, instill core socialist values, and enhance national unity.

Lastly, the construction of ideological bases that form identity with traditional Chinese values used by the internal soft power, results in a combination of public diplomacy and propaganda, where there is no clear distinction between the two (Hartig, 2016, p. 657).

1.2.3 Research Method

Qualitative research method is a type of social science research, inductive in nature, exploratory, investigative and interpretive suitable for the comprehension of complex problems. It seeks to understand and explore in detail the meanings and perceptions of processes in the social world, through the explanation of the how and why of a particular social phenomenon in a specific context (Mohajan, 2018).

The aim of qualitative research is a deep understanding of a particular social phenomena through systematic description and interpretation. It predominantly lays emphasis on an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the relevance is placed on the generation of new concepts and theories (Bryman, 2012, p. 36).

Qualitative methods collect non-numerical data, typically in the form of words rather than numbers, and analyzes it to interpret its meaning. About qualitative data, Miles and Huberman in

their book *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, establish that they “are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events lead to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations. Good qualitative data are more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new integrations: they help researchers to get beyond initial conceptions and to generate or revise conceptual frameworks.” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 1-2).

In this sense, in order to analyze the relationship between soft power and cultural diplomacy implemented by the Chinese government in its foreign policy strategy in Mexico and answer the thesis research questions, this investigation will be conducted through qualitative content analysis method, such as analysis of existing literature on Chinese cultural diplomacy and Chinese soft power in the studies areas of international relations and political science, the analysis of the related political discourses and foreign policies, and the examination of historical events, in order to obtain a detailed establishment of contextual elements necessary to maintain conceptual validity (George & Bennett, 2005, pp. 19-20).

A research design is the one that provides a framework for the generation of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question in which the investigator is interested, in other words is a framework for the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2012, p. 45).

Regarding the choice of research design, it is important to mention that it reflects decisions about the priority given to a variety of dimensions of the research process. For this investigation, these include the importance attached to understanding behavior and the meaning of that behavior in its specific social context (p. 46).

There are a variety of different types of research designs, suitable for different types of research. The most relevant are experimental design; cross-sectional or survey design; longitudinal design; design of case studies; and comparative design (p. 45). The research design applicable to this thesis is case studies.

Accordingly, with Gary Thomas case study research is one of the principal means by which inquiry is conducted in the social sciences. “Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame—an object—within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates.” (Thomas, 2011, p. 513).

The main purpose of the case study is to generate a deep understanding of a specific topic. It is an in-depth investigation from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, or system in a "real life" context. It is research-based, includes different methods, and is evidence-based (Simons, 2009, p. 21).

In order to analyze the Confucius Institutes in Mexico, this investigation uses a multiple case study. Multiple case studies are a variant that includes two or more observations of the same phenomenon. This variant allows replication, that is, the use of multiple cases to confirm independent emergent constructions and propositions. It also allows extension, that is, using cases to reveal complementary aspects of the phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1991, p. 620). In this regard, Confucius Institutes are the same in terms of management, mission and organizational structure, however each Confucius Institute has its own peculiarities, such as its geographical location, and the particularities of the institution that houses it, therefore of its organizational culture.

All things considered, the thesis aims to know the current situation and how the Chinese cultural policy of the Confucius Institutes in Mexico has developed, through a multiple case study that consists of data from three of the Confucius Institutes in different geographical locations in Mexico; one in the north, one in the center and one in the south of the country.

1.3 Literature Review

The term ‘soft power’ has taken many forms since it was introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990. A concept that was originally developed specifically for the United States, due to international interest transmuted into a theory of soft power adaptable to any culture. Over the past three decades, the attention, use, and application of the theory have been gradually increasing around the world, from Southeast Asia, Africa, Australia, Russia, and the Middle East, to Latin America.

Soft power in the Chinese context was formally part of the government's foreign policies since 2007 under Hu Jintao, in response to international challenges and the need to create a better world image, government officials and researchers began the study and analysis of soft power applicable to China, seeking to find a scheme to adapt the Western concept of soft power in the Chinese context. Since then, it has been studied from different angles and perspectives by academics and government officials in a vast collection of published articles, speeches and official documents.

In this regard, the book *China Debates Soft Power* by Li Mingjiang is a renowned reference to understanding China's soft power strategy from the point of view of renowned Chinese officials and scholars. Mingjiang explains soft power theory in the Chinese context through the analysis of speeches and related official documents of top Chinese leaders, prominent scholarly articles, and reports from major national media. Through this analysis, Mingjiang reaches three main conclusions. First, the official soft power discourse is unclear on how soft power resources will translate into specific foreign policy goals or how these goals can be achieved. In other words, there is an absence of a concrete soft power strategy. Second, Chinese soft power adds a domestic context to the application of the theory, an element that did not exist in Nye's original conception, causing the internal political environment to have an impact on China's understanding of soft power. And third, despite all the efforts made by Chinese leaders to strengthen the country's soft power influence, there is always uncertainty of the implementation and results of soft power (Mingjiang, 2008). Mingjiang was able to clearly analyze the context in which the Chinese soft power idea was formed, and most of his statements over the years have proven to be true. It is one

of the most comprehensive works of collection of ideas on soft power, both from official speeches and from Chinese scholars.

Currently, when it comes to cultural diplomacy, considerable development and implementation can be seen in most countries, especially in the way they seek to permeate their culture internationally. There are several academic studies mainly focused on cultural diplomacy in developed countries, especially in the United States, Japan, France, and the United Kingdom (Kong, 2019, p. 24). However, there are relatively few analysis of soft power focused on cultural diplomacy or on the interrelationships of both of them.

Sheng Ding in his book *The Dragon's Hidden Wings: How China Rises with Its Soft Power* establishes that the concept of soft power, especially the method of influence referred to generating attraction to achieve objectives, is deeply related to ancient Chinese philosophy, both in theory and in practice. According to Ding, China to expand its soft power and improve its international image uses a multidimensional global strategy, which is deployed through a wide variety of resources, one of the most recurrent is to consolidate itself as a reference figure in terms of economic assistance, mainly with countries of the developing world. Another recurrent resource that is used is promoting its image through the use of its international aid. This aid can be exercised both through infrastructure projects and the development of educational and cultural programs directly linked to China's soft power policies. In contrast, Ding also states that although China has apparently made important advances in its development of soft power, these are not balanced, nor well founded, and that the biggest obstacle for the Chinese government to exercise its soft power comes from its outdated political values (Ding, 2008). Sheng Ding's contributions are key to

understanding the rise of China from its cultural diplomacy project used as an instrument to generate soft power.

In the book *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, Joshua Kurlantzick affirmed that China has deliberately extended its international presence through the strategic influence of soft power. In this sense, China uses several tools to implement its soft power: the tools of culture, such as language, arts, cultural manifestations and ethnicity, as well as the tools of economy, such as aid, trade and investment. He claims that over the years the policies used in Chinese public and cultural diplomacy have evolved and become more complex, since they also make use of elements of hard power such as foreign aid to countries in need and the benefits of trade to promote and project a better image of China, and power carry out more controversial projects. Kurlantzick called these soft power policies "charm offensives" because they often escape the attention of the media and politicians. With his extensive research in Africa and Latin America, he was able to clearly read China's soft power policies. The term "offensive charm" coined by Kurlantzick has become a reference in literature related to soft power.

To understand China's cultural diplomacy strategy from a different dynamic perspective, Lingmin Kong in *Exploring China's Soft Power: Manifestations of the Chinese Dream in Contemporary Practices of Cultural Diplomacy* argues that the existing literature has not developed research and analysis deep enough to capture the dynamics of China's cultural diplomacy, particularly in the context of soft power theory. He states that in order to have an adequate analysis of soft power, it is necessary to take into account the three factors of soft power; culture, political values and foreign policy. Today, traditional Chinese values and historical events

have been adapted and studied as resources to promote China's soft power that is implicitly intertwined with some form of hard power. However, it is important to mention that topics such as history or political ideology have been excluded from the existing literature on public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, or China's soft power. Kong concludes that it is necessary to know the Chinese foreign policy based on a comprehensive knowledge of its history, culture and traditional and political values, to have a real understanding of Chinese ideology reflected in its social context (Kong, 2019).

Regarding the Confucius institutes, in the last fifteen years the institutions have experienced an exponential expansion. However, despite the deployment of institutes, the interest in studying these institutes has grown slowly. To understand Confucius Institutes through the theories of public and cultural diplomacy, and the connections of China's rise with the institutes, Falk Hartig is an important reference. According to Hartig in his article Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China the Confucius Institutes are an instrument to spread the Chinese language and culture, which will result in the improvement of its international image. He asserts that there are two determining factors about the future development, growth and reform in China. First, China's national image represents its greatest strategic threat, and second, the perception of China in the international community. Subsequently, to help improve its image domestically and internationally, the Confucius Institutes are an instrument of public and cultural diplomacy of China, to influence the improvement of its international image (Hartig, 2012).

In this regard, he argues that it is surprising that only a few Western academic publications have research about Confucius Institutes. The Confucius Institute project is only mentioned in

research related to China's image, public diplomacy, or soft power. However, generally the investigations do not carry out a detailed analysis of the Confucius Institutes, they are only mentioned. Hartig concludes that Chinese leaders are aware of the need to improve China's reputation and image in the international system. It strategically and efficiently uses the current global appeal of Chinese language and culture to find international partners interested in co-financing the Confucius Institutes, thereby partially funding China's "charm offensive". The Confucius Institutes are a tool of Chinese cultural diplomacy, not a propaganda tool in the sinister sense of the word (Hartig, 2012).

On the other hand, he established that China's image and international reputation "are held hostage by the reputation of its exports." No Confucius Institute can erase the repression of the Tiananmen protests, the Tibet conflict or the religious censorship and persecution. In this regard, it remains to be seen the real influence of the Confucius Institutes, however, the great expansion of institutes worldwide reflects the growing interest of the general public, reflecting that the cultural diplomacy strategy is on the right track (Hartig, 2012).

Another important academic regarding Confucius Institutes is Su-Yan Pan, whose article *Confucius Institute project: China's Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power Projection*, is a very well accomplished analysis to understand the importance and effect of the Confucius Institutes administrative structure, operations and functions, to understand the projections of China's soft power. Pan argues that the Confucius Institutes are a government sponsored cultural diplomacy strategy run by the universities involved. The administration of the Institutes is in charge of the the Office of International Council of the Chinese Language (Haban). When Hanban was created

in 1987, it was a Chinese language education agency under the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Over the years and due to its growing importance as a state project, Haban gradually expanded its functions, and is now under the joint governance of 11 different ministries and commissions, collectively responsible for education, culture and public affairs, foreign affairs and strategic planning for long-term national development (Pan, 2013).

In addition, Confucius Institutes perform tasks and functions as consulates or diplomatic agents to promote China's international recognition and enhance its cultural connections in the global community, through the transmission of knowledge and information about China's language, cultural traditions, and foreign policies. Therefore, the Confucius Institutes project involves a complex of soft power techniques, as it uses very diverse means to exert Chinese influence internationally, such as language, education, cultural events, conferences and tourism for non-military or economic purposes. Pan concludes that the Confucius Institutes are not fully representative of the ability of soft power. First, because the expansion of the institutes is highly dependent on financial support from the Chinese government, generating soft power through coercion or payments. Secondly, because of the criticisms and objections found both internally and externally, which question its attraction capacity. (Pan, 2013).

From a different perspective, J. Hubbert, in the article *Ambiguous States: Confucius Institutes and Chinese Soft Power in the U.S. Classroom*, conducts an ethnographic study on perceptions of Confucius Institutes and Chinese soft power in American classrooms, a practical study of soft power. She examines the perspectives of students and parents on the activities related to the Confucius Institute, and the results established that the Chinese government is perceived as

an economic and political threat to the United States. However, when the study takes into account the relationships of students and parents with the administrative staff and teachers of the Confucius Institute, the results are modified. This real interaction in the institutes and classrooms changes the perspective, and disaggregates the perception of an authoritarian and monolithic state. This change in perception, for Hubbert, translates into reinforcing China's soft power, due to the effect of the soft power policies effectively promotes the discernment of the state-society divergence (Hubbert, 2014).

Regarding China's relations with Latin America, in the literature there is a vast body of research on economic, commercial and political relations, however there is little research dedicated to Sino-Latin American cultural diplomacy. In this sense, a book that is an indispensable reference to understand the cultural policy of China in Latin America, is *La política cultural de China en América Latina*. Under the coordination and co-authorship of Romer Cornejo, it is one of the few books dedicated to understanding the cultural relations and cultural politics of China in Latin America in contemporary times. The book analyzes the relations of cultural diplomacy of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Mexico, with China. The selection of these countries is due to the fact that they share similar characteristics in their cultural relations with China, such as the Confucius Institutes.

As far as this research is concerned, the author argues that the speed and content of the Confucius Institutes are difficult to understand without the development of comparative studies. A common factor widespread in the region is that its language scholarship and college scholarship programs have been very active, and China uses them as instruments to create a favorable climate

of admiration and gratitude in many universities. Also, that China integrates two elements in the diffusion and development of its international image; a modern aspect, which highlights its successful economic development process, and its technological advances, and in contrast, in cultural matters it emphasizes traditional elements of its ancestral culture. Therefore, instead of engaging in traditional soft power, the Chinese government executes a comprehensive interventionist strategy of ecumenical scope, encompassing politics, economics, and cultural relations (Cornejo, 2018).

Regarding the cultural diplomacy of China in Mexico, the text *Mexico in the Cultural Diplomacy of China* written by Romer Cornejo and Itzel Martínez, is the most recent compilation and analysis to understand the relations of cultural diplomacy between Mexico and China. They argue that the conditions to create a positive image of China in Mexico have been difficult, principally due to the economic effects of Chinese imports from that country and the negative perception inherited. The perception of businessmen, the press and the general public is a perception of threat towards China. In this sense, the way China has responded to its bad image in Mexico is with an intense propaganda campaign from invitations to the country to opinion leaders, public officials, politicians and academics, in addition to establishing generous agreements with universities and, of course, with the establishment of the Confucius Institutes. Cornejo and Martínez conclude that in general terms, the Chinese cultural policy expressed through the Confucius Institutes has been successful, since they have helped improve its image in Mexico (Cornejo & Martínez, 2018).

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is organized in five chapters: Introduction; Chinese Cultural Diplomacy; Confucius Institutes as an instrument of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy; Confucius Institutes in Mexico; and Conclusions.

In the first chapter: Introduction, the background and purpose of the investigation are developed. In the theoretical framework section, Joseph S. Nye Jr.'s theory of soft power and the process by which the government together with Chinese academia built their own approach is discussed. In addition, in the literary review section, books and academic articles relevant to Chinese soft power and cultural diplomacy will be analyzed. As well as the literature related to cultural diplomacy in the Mexican context.

The second chapter corresponds to the study of Chinese cultural diplomacy. The concept of cultural diplomacy, the differences and meeting points between cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy, and its development as a means of mobilizing soft power are analyzed. The specific characteristics of Chinese public and cultural diplomacy are also analyzed, and its evolution and behavior both in the internal and external context are studied.

The third chapter examines the Confucius Institutes as an instrument of Chinese cultural diplomacy in its foreign policy strategy, its origins and antecedents, history and development in the world, as well as the characteristics of its structure and operation. Likewise, the exponential expansion of institutes in the world and particularly in Latin America is studied, hand in hand with

the analysis of Chinese cultural policy used in Latin America. Finally, international concerns about the nature and influence of the Confucius Institutes are discussed.

The fourth chapter analyzes the development of China's cultural diplomacy in Mexico and the Confucius Institutes as instruments of soft power and cultural diplomacy: with the multiple case study of the Confucius Institutes in the north, center and south of Mexico, in order to understand their operating model, the peculiarities of their conformation and operation. And through the analysis of the development and achievements of the institutes in Mexico, the perceptions in public opinion and in the image of China in the country are discussed.

In the fifth chapter on the conclusion, the main points of the investigation are synthesized, the results of the investigation are presented. The limitations of the thesis are formulated, as well as the areas, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2. Chinese Cultural Diplomacy

In recent times, China's recognition and understanding of the importance of international image and soft power, has made its public and cultural diplomacy an integral part of its new foreign policy strategy. In this new strategy of cultural diplomacy, China adopts culture and cultural exchanges as its main resources of soft power to give continuity to its peaceful development project and to strengthen its influence and leadership in the international order.

In order to study cultural diplomacy in China, first, it is pertinent to define what is understood in the literature by cultural diplomacy and how the concept has changed and evolved, how it has gained international recognition and how it has adapted to the needs of the present. Next, I present a variety of definitions of cultural diplomacy by different authors, followed by the characteristics, new actors, objectives and instruments of contemporary cultural diplomacy. Following, I establish the differences between public and cultural diplomacy to understand its relationship with soft power. And I present the particularities of cultural diplomacy as a means of mobilizing soft power in the contemporary world system. In the last sections I provide an overview of the development of China's public and cultural diplomacy strategy through the governments of Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping. Finally, I present the characteristics and objectives of Chinese cultural diplomacy from its internal and external dimensions.

2.1 Cultural Diplomacy

Culture has always been on the foreign policy and cultural diplomacy agenda. Culture has a long history in international foreign policy strategy, especially after World War II. However, in

recent decades it has gained greater recognition in international relations through the appearance of cultural components in international affairs. Culture is a broad general term that includes social behavior and norms found in human societies, as well as the beliefs, arts, laws, knowledge, customs, and habits of individuals. Diplomacy can be defined as the substance, purpose and attitudes of a state's relationships with others (Odinye, 2020, p.161). Nowadays, cultural diplomacy occupies a prominent place in the foreign policy practice of nation-states, especially in cultural discourse (Ang, & Mar, 2015, p. 365).

2.1.1 Concept

Due to the growing popularity and recognition of Cultural Diplomacy, it is used in varied contexts, which has generated different approaches and definitions of the concept. Milton Cummings formulated one of the well-known definitions of cultural diplomacy, commonly used by scholars, regarding the role of cultural factors in international relations. He defined it as “the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding. But ‘cultural diplomacy’ can also be more of a one-way street than a two-way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or ‘telling its story’ to the rest of the world.” (Cummings, 2003, p. 1). However, despite the integrative and adaptable nature of this definition, it is insufficient to address the multidimensional aspects of contemporary cultural diplomacy.

Currently, due to the increasing importance of cultural dimensions in the analysis of foreign affairs, cultural diplomacy has significantly expanded its scope, including cultural relations,

cultural cooperation, public diplomacy and even propaganda. Highlighting the influence that transnational flows have on the configuration of national identities and external perceptions (Kang, 2013, p. 1).

According to Cull, cultural diplomacy is “an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad.” (Cull, 2009, p. 19). In the past, cultural diplomacy relied on a country's foreign policy to export its culture to other countries. Currently, cultural diplomacy encompasses multiple activities, involving new actors and methods. NGOs, corporations, and the civil society are especially prominent and traditional international actors are less and less relevant. And global technologies were established as new mechanisms that have brought together the national and international spheres of cultural diplomacy (p. 13). In this way, the emergence of new diplomatic actors and the impact of information technologies are the key elements of contemporary public and cultural diplomacy.

The main objective of cultural diplomacy is to positively influence public opinion and the elites of a foreign state (Saddiki, 2009, p. 110). In this sense, the Scientific Council for Government Policy of the Netherlands, in its report "Culture and Diplomacy", defines three fundamental objectives of cultural diplomacy: to promote mutual understanding between countries and peoples; increase the position and prestige of a country, since the image in favor can be improved through a greater knowledge of the country in question and its culture; and finally, the protection of national identity, which refers to the right of cultural self-determination (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, 1987, pp. 11-12). Finally, it is important to mention that in cultural diplomacy there are also

functional objectives generated from the new needs of the world, such as the promotion of commercial, political, diplomatic and economic interests, and the development of bilateral relations in all areas (Mark, 2009, p. 9).

Regarding the instruments of cultural diplomacy, generally states use all the elements of what can be considered part of the culture of a nation, however there are some that have been used with more regularity and intensity than others, such as arts, exhibitions, exchanges, educational programs, language teaching and gifts. Exchanges with foreign countries, in a variety of fields, like educational, scientific, artistic, sports, language, and youth. Educational programs abroad for teaching or speaking tours, conference sponsorship, and scholarships. Language teaching is the key to better understanding foreign cultures. Lastly, giving gifts is a sign of consideration and respect, the effects can be long lasting (Lenczowski, 2008, pp. 12 -15).

In summary, the definition of cultural diplomacy has evolved considerably to adapt to the circumstances of the present. Cultural diplomacy It is not only an instrument of international relations, it is a complex process composed of various socio-political contexts and both national and international objectives. Consequently, the three areas of national interest that are the main basis of political approaches to cultural diplomacy are: soft power linked to the political scene, cultural identity linked to the social scene, and adaptive economy linked to the economic scene.

2.1.2 Cultural Diplomacy as the Means of Mobilizing Soft Power.

The study of cultural diplomacy is a multidisciplinary field. There is research on cultural diplomacy with focuses on international relations, politics, history, law, and even economics.

However, as soft power acquired increasing theoretical importance, most of the studies on cultural diplomacy were carried out under the conceptualization of soft power, despite its disciplinary diversity. As a result, today the concept of soft power is consolidated as the main instrument of analysis in the theory and practice of cultural diplomacy and as a prescriptive framework (Zamorano, 2016, pp. 174-175).

In order to understand the relationship and interactions between cultural diplomacy and soft power, it is important to establish the particularities and differences between the concept of public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. Both concepts have been closely related and are compatible in many respects, for example, both include dissemination and cultural exchange activities related to education, art language, sports and music, among others. And also, both emphasize the ways in which one country communicates with the citizens of another country. However, they are not the same, the differences between the two are very specific.

Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy. A differentiating element between the two is the recipients to whom the diplomacy is intended to be directed. While cultural diplomacy is focused on the populations of other countries and foreign public opinion, public diplomacy aims to influence mainly the governmental institutions of other countries. In this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization defines cultural diplomacy as “a form of soft power that strives to foster the exchange of views and ideas, promote knowledge of other cultures, and build bridges between communities. Ultimately, it seeks to promote a positive vision of cultural diversity, highlighting it as a source of innovation, dialogue and peace” (UNESCO).

Similarly, Ben O'Loughlin highlights the audience of cultural diplomacy as a distinctive element of public diplomacy, he argues that “cultural diplomacy is a more specific term insofar as diplomacy is usually associated with states. States’ public diplomacy is states liaising with publics in other states, so cultural diplomacy being states liaising with other states or their peoples through the medium of culture” (O’Loughlin, personal communication, cited in Kong, 2019, p. 22).

In the context of globalization, the rapid development of information technologies and the liberalization of trade favored the evolution of cultural diplomacy and democratized it. Nowadays, the fact that the general public in different countries participates in soft power activities means that diplomacy has shifted from the exclusivity of political elites to a larger mass market. In this way, content in the frame of soft power is another significant difference between cultural and public diplomacy. While cultural diplomacy has a tendency to emphasize the cultural dimension such as cultural exchanges, media communication, and educational exchanges, public diplomacy tends to focus on the dimension of hard power as economic, commercial, aid or military elements (Kong, 2019, p. 22).

All things considered, when governments seek to integrate the notion of soft power into their diplomatic maneuvers, particularly those aimed at an international audience, cultural diplomacy can be deployed as a means to generate and exercise soft power (Wastnidge, 2015, p. 365). The exercise of soft power is done through the influence and persuasion of other countries to achieve foreign diplomacy objectives. Objectives that seek to expand and strengthen the relationship between the people and the government, as well as with the citizens of other countries,

and to build common ground through the resources of culture, institutions and internal values (Kong, 2019, p. 23).

To sum up, cultural diplomacy is closely linked to public diplomacy. They differ mainly by the recipients and the audience to whom it is intended, and by the content in the framework of soft power. Cultural diplomacy is a long-term process that interacts directly with soft power concepts to advance national interests through cultural policies and initiatives. Therefore, cultural diplomacy can be seen as a means for countries to cultivate and promote soft power in certain target countries.

2.2 Chinese Public and Cultural Diplomacy

In recent decades, public diplomacy has become an integral part of China's foreign policy strategy. China recognized the importance of international image and soft power, so the conception of public diplomacy received enormous attention in official and academic circles. Chinese leadership rapidly established public diplomacy policies, as well as programs and instruments, investing large amounts of money and effort in projecting a more positive image of China for the international system, as well as its peaceful intentions (Hartig, 2016, p.1). As a result, China's foreign policy is taking on a larger role in world politics and economy.

This section provides an overview of the development of China's public diplomacy system of the government of Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, and discusses the model, objectives and characteristics of the Chinese public diplomacy internally and externally.

China's public diplomacy is evolving, gradually integrating a larger and more diverse number of actors, that include both individuals and groups from civil society, participating in global networks. These new players are slowly bringing new dynamics and more legitimacy to China's public diplomacy. However, the Chinese government remains the one that establishes and monitors most of the public diplomacy (d'Hooghe, 2011, p. 20).

First of all, it is important to clarify that in China "public diplomacy" is a foreign concept. Public diplomacy translates into Mandarin as *gongong waijiao*. This concept first appeared in the book *Diplomacy Abroad*, edited by Qipeng Zhou, when it was translated into English as public diplomacy for the encyclopedia of international public law entry in 1990 (Wang, 2008, p. 259).

Closely related to public diplomacy, the term *wai xuan chuan* or *wai xuan* (external propaganda) is used in China to emphasize the publicity of Chinese achievements and the promotion of the country's image abroad. Unlike in the West, in China propaganda has positive connotations associated with activities such as advertising, news publishing or the general configuration of ideology. *Xuan chuan* is constituted of two elements: *nei xuan* (internal propaganda) and *wai xuan* (external propaganda), which seek to promote the Chinese image abroad and at the national level. That is the root that results in the Chinese government's practice of mixing cultural diplomacy and soft power externally and internally (p. 259).

Deng Xiaoping

Prior to Deng Xiaoping's leadership, public diplomacy strategies were minimal and limited. In 1978 Deng Xiaoping and the second generation of Chinese leaders seized power and established

a period known as “Reform and Opening-up”. During this period, China reformed its economic development model, with a program called "Socialist Market Economy" and with a political-economic program called "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics." These reforms combined a strategic opening to international trade and the entry of foreign direct investment into the country, aimed at modernization. As a result, this new economic model resulted in unprecedented economic growth throughout the country, and it also strengthened the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party.

Deng Xiaoping's economic opening marked a watershed in Chinese diplomacy, due to the urgent need to establish connections with the world. Chinese leaders were forced to adopt a pragmatic way of relating to speed up international relations, where the economy prevailed over the ideological, unlike Mao's diplomacy marked by socialist ideologies. And the cultural diplomatic relations of this period focused on tourism and the cultural projection of China, principally.

Regarding public and cultural diplomacy, in this period both were part of the political discourse, but it was not until 1980 that they were fully implemented in practice through a program of cultural policy, with defined principles and objectives, an international campaign to spread understanding of China throughout the world. In general terms, the development and importance of public diplomacy in China's diplomacy policy became more complex, reaching a place of relevance in the strategy of foreign relations of China (d'Hooghe, 2007, p. 17).

Two public diplomacy programs established in this period stand out. First, China's participation in multilateral cultural diplomacy activities, various international treaties were signed, and a large number of various cultural policies and initiatives were implemented. For example, the promotion of traditional Chinese art and culture, cultural exchanges to generate a comprehensive fusion between traditional Chinese culture and western culture, exchanges and sports activities, and academic exchange with different countries, not only communists, which had not been done before. Secondly, the creation of the China Daily newspaper, which over the years became so important that it expanded to have an overseas edition, in both Chinese and English, consolidating itself as an important and effective instrument of contemporary Chinese cultural diplomacy (Kong, 2019, p. 44).

In summary, this period represents a fundamental change in Chinese politics and is established as a very prosperous period in Chinese history for the rapid and successful economic growth achieved. Also, in this period a more pragmatic foreign policy was established, giving less importance to the weight of ideology, which generated new cultural exchanges with other countries in a less restricted way, which resulted in better cultural diplomacy (Kong, 2019, p. 45). However, everything achieved in this period was diminished in 1989 by The Tiananmen Incident, where the Chinese Communist Party was strongly criticized internationally for the effective repression and use of force against the protesters. Incident that generated a very bad image to the interior and international for China.

Jiang Zemin

Jiang Zemin and the third generation of Chinese leaders continued the same Deng Xiaoping policy of diplomatic relations and economic policy of opening and transformation, materialized in reforms aimed at achieving the modernization initiated by the former leaders. However, special attention was paid to the development of cultural diplomacy, mainly with the aim of improving China's image in the international community, damaged by the Tiananmen repressions. In this sense, a special reform of the institutions of the cultural administrative system was carried out, where propaganda and ideology issues were introduced into cultural activities and programs.

During this period, China achieved important multilateral actions, such as joining the Asia Pacific Cooperation Forum (APEC), increasing its participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and after a long period of negotiations, China finally joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). In this regard, this period is characterized by the consolidation and materialization of agreements and intensification of its participation in regional and international organizations, which allowed it to expand its influence in the world (García, & Tello, 2019, p.32).

Among the main cultural diplomacy actions carried out in this period, we can mention the establishment of important international cultural activities. Cultural years were held that had an important international permeability, such as the "Chinese International Year of the Symphony" in 1996, the "Chinese International Year of Opera and Theater" in 1997 and the "International Year of Chinese Art" in 1998. In a period of 10 years, from 1990 to 2000, the cultural exchange between China and other countries grew from 733 to 1433 activities. (Chinese Cultural Relics Statistics 2005, cited in Kong, 2019, p. 46).

In order to improve China's image, significant attention was paid to strengthening and growing the media outlets, both within the country and abroad. During this period, China Radio International (CRI), China Central Television (CCTV), China News Service (CNS), and Xinhua News were established with strong party support.

In general, this period is characterized by the continuity of the policies established by Deng Xiaoping. Where important and constant actions of cultural diplomacy were carried out, most of them focused on trying to counteract the international repercussions generated by the Tiananmen incident.

Hu Jintao

Hu Jintao's period is characterized by the rise of public diplomacy, specifically cultural diplomacy. There were important changes in economics and international affairs, aimed at strengthening the policy and discourse of peace. The goal of the Chinese government was for the world to perceive China as an actor of peaceful development while participating in the international competition for recognition as a "world power."

In addition, in 2005, The State Council Information Office published a white paper entitled China's Peaceful Development Road. In which China establishes its commitment to cultural diplomacy to achieve peaceful development, as well as fight for a peaceful international environment based on development and comprehensive cooperation, to build a peaceful and prosperous world (*White Paper on Peaceful Development Road* Published, 2005).

Chinese leadership made better use of the previously established foundations and developed better strategies for promoting the national image, through cultural diplomacy and the use of soft power. A large number of internationalist academic studies and innumerable references to the subject were carried out in political discourse, especially on soft power.

In this sense, foreign policies focused on promoting soft power were increased and a large number of international cultural events and activities were organized to promote China abroad. Research institutes and centers dedicated to cultural diplomacy were established. A large number of cultural exchange contracts were signed with more than 145 countries, as well as relationships with more than 1000 international cultural organizations. (Meng, 2005). China understood that the more official relations it established with a greater number of countries, the easier it would be to penetrate them, and obtain their recognition and support for international decisions.

Xi Jinping

Xi Jinping and the fifth generation of Chinese leadership continued the achievements of the previous period and reaffirmed the unique cultural character of public diplomacy and soft power. During this period, China seeks to develop multi-markets in the world, consolidate itself in the global economy and establish more international economic cooperation projects that strengthen Chinese companies (Zhao, 2006, p.340).

In this regard, Xi Jinping established a new foreign policy known as the “*FenFa YouWei*” or “*Striving for Achievement*”, a more active and pragmatic foreign policy, that recognizes the importance of its cultural, philosophical and religious values. It seeks new foreign relations with a

more active role in international affairs and aims to establish mutually beneficial cooperative relations and consolidate China's soft power. This new diplomacy policy is based on five principles: equality and mutual benefit; a non-aggression policy; respect for territorial sovereignty; a policy of hands-off; and peaceful coexistence (Song, 2012, p. 89).

Along with the new foreign policy, the new generation of leaders have chosen the “Chinese Dream”, a pragmatic approach to achieving the repositioning of China as a global dominant power. Since Xi took power, the Chinese Dream became the most prominent and recurring ideological slogan in official speeches, linked with the goal of leading China towards great rejuvenation. The Chinese Dream has three main objectives: to improve the spiritual awareness of being Chinese from the experiences of the past, to have a prosperous nation through the improvement of the well-being of its population, and to revive the nation by consolidating all means of Chinese power (Kong, 2019, pp. 63-64).

In 2017, at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi established that “The dream of the Chinese people is closely connected with the dreams of the peoples of other countries; the Chinese Dream can be realized only in a stable and peaceful environment. We must keep in mind both our internal and international imperatives, stay on the path of peaceful development, and continue to pursue a mutually beneficial strategy of opening up.” (Xi, 2017). Xi is responding to international challenges, stating that the priority of Chinese international relations is to sustain a peaceful and stable international order, in order to achieve the Chinese Dream.

In this period, Chinese cultural diplomacy gained special attention. As part of their cultural diplomacy strategies, the current image of China that is presented and promoted to the world rescues the values of traditional Chinese culture, historical narratives and Confucianism.

Another case of cultural diplomacy in this period, is the strategy ‘One belt, One road’, a global infrastructure development that seeks a stronger cooperation and easier accessibility between between China and the Eurasian countries. The name suggests the historical silk road that linked China with western civilizations, in which important commercial exchanges were carried out, as well as cultural exchanges.

In summary, Xi Jinping to achieve his goals of consolidating in the global economy and establishing greater international economic cooperation of mutual benefit, he makes use of an active foreign policy in which he uses cultural diplomacy to permeate the ideology of the Chinese Dream and consolidate the Chinese soft power in a dual way. In one way, Xi actively applies cultural diplomacy to his internal situation establish the ideal conditions that facilitate sustained growth. And in opposition, also uses it to promote the achievements of the Chinese Dream internationally (Kong, 2019, p. 71).

2.3 Internal Dimension of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy

Chinese cultural diplomacy has been changing over time. Although, the main national objectives such as consolidating its soft power in the world or improving its international image abroad, have remained constant in recent decades. The strategic motivation has changed and evolved, not only seeking to improve international opinion, but also to increase China's

international discourse rights and preserve its political legitimacy at the national level. (Yang, 2020, p. 370).

In this respect, the Chinese government developed a particular cultural diplomacy strategy that incorporates both external and internal dimensions of action. In this way, Chinese cultural diplomacy not only addresses external objectives of image, discourse and reputation, but also addresses internal concerns of political legitimacy. Cultural diplomacy in theory is not a tool for domestic consumption, but it generally has an internal impact, which is why the Chinese government has used it to gain recognition within the country (p. 382).

The internal dimension of Chinese cultural diplomacy implies the construction of an internal identity based on the development of a socialist culture and the strengthening of socialist values, both related to the projection of the external image. Moreover, this internal dimension has two main objectives: the dissemination of the country's performance and increasing the self-perception of China on the rise under the guidance and leadership of the Communist Party of China, which will enhance the political legitimacy of the government (pp. 372-373). And a counteracting ideological element that has two aspects. First, as a resource to attenuate the discrepancies between the official discourse of modernity and the lack of socioeconomic well-being of a large part of the population, with the aim of preventing social instability. And second, to counteract the effects of individualism introduced with economic modernization, reestablishing the role of the basic social spheres, such as the family and the community.

2.4 External Dimension of Chinese Cultural Diplomacy

In recent years, China has increased its commitment to cultural diplomacy, generating a growing commitment to international affairs. In general, China uses cultural diplomacy to engage with international audiences, and resolve conflicts.

The objectives of the external dimension of Chinese cultural diplomacy include creating a peaceful and favorable international environment; increase and strengthen international reputation; achieve recognition and respect of their ancestral culture; and the establishment of China's image, firstly, as a cooperative and responsible international actor; second, as a responsible and reliable economic partner; and third as a responsible and committed member with the political international system (p. 338).

In this sense, one of the fundamental functional interests for China is the creation of a good international image, which will be reflected in a favorable external environment, essential for the economic and political development of China, that day by day depends to a greater extent of the international community (p. 338).

To achieve the goals of cultural diplomacy more effectively, but especially for the establishment of a stable, trustworthy and responsible image in the world, China uses a variety of actors and instruments. In terms of actors, participation in cultural diplomacy has gradually expanded with a more diverse group of non-state actors. And although the main actor continues to be the state and party organs, new groups of the Chinese society are participating every day (d'Hooghe 2011, 19). The non-state actors include NGOs; academics and transnational epistemic communities, overseas Chinese communities, friendship associations; twin sister organizations;

tourist and students. (d'Hooghe, 2007, p. 25). In regard of the instruments, China uses a wide variety of instruments, such as the media, development aid, events, publications, student exchanges, and cultural and linguistic institutions such as the Confucius Institutes.

Media

The media is one of the main instruments of China's public diplomacy, also used by China's cultural diplomacy, from Chinese English-language newspapers and magazines targeting foreign audiences; China Radio International, with broadcasts in the main languages of the world; Chinese state television with increasing international broadcasts; to the most important media outlet *Xinhua News Agency*. All the mentioned media are owned and controlled by the State. In the last ten years, China has invested significant amounts of money in financing its media outlets to expand its presence and international offerings. In this sense, the media play an essential role in China's cultural diplomacy arsenal to influence foreign audiences, as they are a means to control narratives and tell their own story, they help channel their policies to the outside world and they contribute to show the culture and traditions of the country (Hartig, 2014, p. 339).

Student exchanges

Inviting foreign students to China has become another important tool of Chinese cultural diplomacy. Program that has considerably accredited year after year, as a reference only in 2005 more than 141,000 foreigners studied in China. A large number of students are interested in learning the language, with the future goal of doing business with China, but another growing number are studying arts, philosophy, history and even traditional Chinese medicine. The

attraction to Chinese culture by the international community has grown significantly (d'Hooghe, 2007, p. 30).

Events

China has become an enthusiastic and committed organizer of major international events, with the aim of increasing its visibility and improving its image in the world. Among the most important events, in 2001, China hosted the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit; in 2008 it hosted the Olympic Games and in 2010 it hosted the World's Fair. In addition, it also organizes countless medium and small events dedicated to Chinese culture with other countries.

Development Aid

China also uses trade agreements and foreign investment, development aid and emergency aid as instruments of public diplomacy, especially in less developed regions. But they have also been used to an extent to achieve the objectives of Chinese cultural diplomacy, specifically in relation to generating a better and more positive image in the international community. Development Aid is used in various ways, such as through extensive training programs for professionals in developing countries, offering scholarships, building schools and hospitals, and sending experts and volunteers to developing countries. In terms of aid, China offers "no strings attached" aid on certain key projects. For example, in 2005, China became the world's third largest food donor, and is the largest financial donor in countries like Cambodia and the Philippines. Another key program is China's emergency aid abroad, which has also expanded considerably over the past decade. In 2003, China provided aid to Algeria and Iran after the earthquakes. In 2004, it

provided aid to countries in South and Southeast Asia after the tsunami. And, in 2005, she provided aid to victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (d'Hooghe, 2007, pp. 33-34).

Confucius Institutes

In 2004, China began establishing non-profit organizations called "Confucius Institutes" around the world, with the aim of promoting Chinese language and culture abroad. The institutes work in conjunction with educational institutes based abroad and both entities participate financially. This approach fosters a web-based form of public diplomacy. Not all Confucius Institutes have been successful cases, but some have been received with great positivism in the receiving countries and have grown exponentially. And others, for various reasons, have decided to terminate their contracts and close the institutes permanently in different countries such as Canada, the United States, Australia, France, Sweden, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands.

To summarize this chapter, in recent years China has increased its attention to cultural diplomacy, generating a growing commitment to international affairs. In general, China seeks to integrate the notion of soft power into its diplomatic strategies and uses cultural diplomacy to interact with international audiences, resolve conflicts, and create a "harmonious international environment for China's development" (Hartig, 2014, p. 338) In other words, it uses cultural diplomacy as a means to generate and exercise soft power.

Chapter 3. Confucius Institutes as an Instrument of Chinese

Cultural Diplomacy

At the beginning of the 21st century, the world experienced a rise of soft power and cultural diplomacy on the international agenda. In this sense, the Chinese government began to exploit institutional and cultural resources to reverse the negative image of the country built in an adverse context, due to its growing economic and political power. China's bad image was associated with cheap and low-quality products, and its relentlessness in international trade. An image totally contrary to the image of a responsible and peaceful actor that the government intended to build in the foreign policy discourse. To counter these perceptions, the Chinese elite needed to construct an image whose symbol had legitimacy and was respected, inside and outside, being able to become a distinctive brand of the best of China. It was imperative to choose a symbol that reflected the national cultural tradition.

The figure of Confucius was chosen to represent the new China, one with notions of ancient civilization and modernity, which, with 5,000 years of history, had among its objectives to endorse its place among international powers. Confucianism was the most prominent philosophy in the governmental system of imperial China. The ethical character of its corpus, specifically in the principles known as Confucian virtues, was ideal to fix in the social conscience the guidelines of correct behavior in society.

The foreign policy discourse on building a "harmonious world" had its buttress in 2004 with the establishment of the Chinese model of cultural centers presented as bridges of harmony,

called the Confucius Institute. The denomination alluded to the exploitation of the renewed image of Confucius as an educator and to the impulse of Confucianism as the philosophical basis of the official discourse abroad, giving it a moral basis, to legitimize its actions.

3.1 Confucius Institutes

In 2004, after two years of preparations, the Chinese government inaugurated the first Confucius Institute in Seoul. According to its Constitution and By-Laws, the Confucius Institute is a non-profit organization, which in line with the principles of friendly relations based on mutual respect and mutual benefit, seeks to promote and facilitate the teaching of the Chinese language, as well as the educational and cultural exchange between colleges and universities in China and colleges and universities in other countries (*Confucius Institute*, n.d.).

The Office of Chinese Language Council International, better known as Hanban, is in charge of the direction and administration of the Confucius Institutes. Haban is an organization based in Beijing, under the main authority of the Chinese Ministry of Education, however, it is also linked to representatives of 11 other different ministries or agencies. Among them, the most prominent and with the greatest political relevance are The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Press and Publications Administration, the General Office of the State Council, and the Ministry of Finance; followed by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, the State Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Culture, the State Administration of Radio Film and Television (China Radio International), the State Council Information Office, and the State Language Work Committee. In this regard, the Confucius

Institute Project Operation Council is composed exclusively of high-ranking members of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government. (Peterson, 2017, p. 22).

Hanban's main functions include processing and approving applications for the establishment of new Confucius Institutes, overseeing the institutes' operations, and ensuring quality management. It also handles teacher placement, development and distribution of teaching materials, and coordinates cooperation between partner institutions in China and abroad (Hartig, 2011, p. 59).

The Confucius Institutes offer a wide variety of cultural courses and events suitable for all audiences, so that people from all over the world can learn and know about the Chinese language and culture. Among the cultural events on offer are exhibitions, film screenings, readings, concerts and conferences. The courses taught include martial arts, Chinese medicine, Chinese history, Chinese theater, and flower arranging, principally. The offer of courses and cultural events varies from one institute to another, depending on the priorities of interest of each place, but in general they all offer similar content. Between 2012 and 2017, the Confucius Institutes and Classrooms around the world have held more than 100,000 cultural activities with 60 million viewers (*Hanban-News*, 2017).

The Confucius Classrooms are an integral part of the Hanban program alongside the Confucius Institutes. They teach Chinese language and culture to high school students. As in the Confucius Institutes, there are also various courses and cultural events with a very active development in terms of quantity and promotion.

The Confucius Institutes function under three models: one in which Hanban is the only responsible organism; another in which the operation is joint between Hanban and a local partner or educational institution; and the latter in which the Confucius Institute is exclusively operated by a local institution under a license from Hanban.

The model of cultural organization represented by the Confucius Institute is a hybrid of two of the classic models: the government control model, in which the government has direct control, through an official agency or ministry, and also, the model in which the government has concentrated total control, but delegates to unofficial agencies contracted particularly to operate independently within the scope of their powers. The most frequently used model is the joint venture, in which the local university abroad, in addition to the association with Hanban, establishes cooperation agreements with a Chinese university. These centers are the product of a joint effort of the central governments, through their educational institutions, ensuring that the student community around the world is the priority. As for the parties involved in the negotiations, on the Chinese side it is always Hanban, and on the foreign side, it is usually the universities that intervene directly, although in some cases the direct intervention of the central governments is required with the signing of bilateral agreements.

In respect of the operation of the Confucius Institute, both the host university and the Chinese university work in coordination, sharing academic and personnel exchanges. The host universities are responsible for providing the physical space for the Confucius Institute, the administrative staff that includes a director and some funds or goods in kind. For its part, the

Chinese university, in cooperation with Hanban, provides the professors, a Chinese director, and most of the funds. There are different financing models for Confucius Institutes, however, they generally have an initial fund of \$100,000, plus certain scholarships that can be awarded in later years according to the particular needs and performance of each institute. It is important to mention that the institutes are established as non-profit institutions under the jurisdiction of both the host country and China (Gil, 2017).

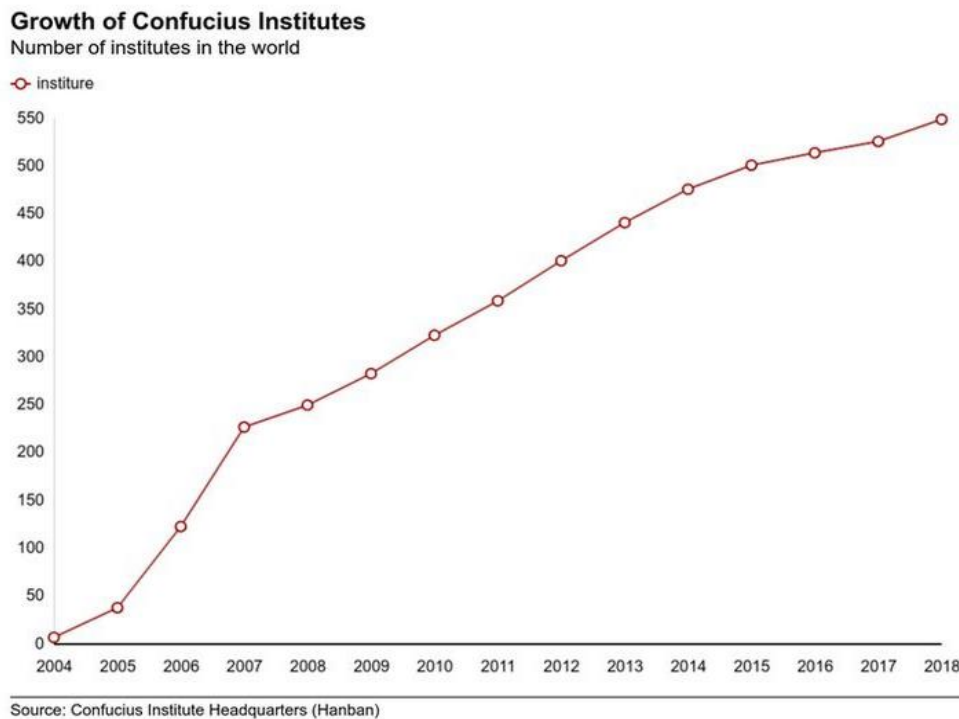
3.2 Confucius Institutes in the World Context

Image and international status are of great importance in the strategic planning of Chinese foreign policy. The Chinese government elites adopted the Confucius Institutes project with the aim of promoting the creation of a "harmonious world", a positive image of China and international friendly relations, which in turn could strengthen positive international understanding, and China's soft power resources. In this sense, being one of the programs of special interest to Chinese leaders, the Confucius Institutes have had rapid growth in recent decades.

According to the Hanban website, there are 541 Confucius Institutes in 159 countries around the world. In Asia there are 135 Confucius Institutes in 39 countries; in Africa there are 61 Confucius Institutes in 46 countries; in the Americas there are 138 Confucius Institutes in 27 countries; in Europe there are 187 Confucius Institutes in 42 countries; and in Oceania there are 20 Confucius Institutes in 5 countries (*Hanban-Confucius Institute/ClassRoom-About Confucius Institute/ClassRoom*, n.d.-a). By country, the United States has more Confucius Institutes and more Confucius Classrooms than any other country in the world. It has 103 Confucius Institutes which comprise 20 percent of all institutes, and its 501 Confucius Classrooms represent 47 percent of all

Confucius Classrooms worldwide. In second place is the United Kingdom, it has 29 Confucius Institutes and 148 Confucius Classrooms, which represents 11 percent in the world. And in third place is Australia with 14 Confucius Institutes and 67 Confucius Classrooms, with 5 percent of the world total.

Table 3.1 Confucius Institutes growth in the world.



Source: *Confucius Institutes: The growth of China's controversial cultural branch*. BBC News. (Jakhar, 2019)

Furthermore, the number of Confucius Classrooms in the world's primary and secondary schools reached 1,000. In total, the number of students reached by Confucius institutes and classrooms is 1.9 million. (Cornejo, 2018, p. 28). This rapid growth of the Confucius Institutes, although it does not represent a solid indicator of their final success, does indicate that in the world

there is a strong openness and disposition of the governments of the host countries to the Confucius Institutes, as well as of the authorities of host universities to establish a stable cooperative relationship.

A key factor to consider is the importance and prestige of the host universities, 70 of the top 200 universities in the world have hosted a Confucius Institute (Rhoads et al., 2014, p. 178). For China, it is of great benefit and advantage that the Confucius Institutes are linked and established with universities that have academic recognition and renown, since the association with the universities alone enhances the image and prestige of the Institutes and, therefore, of China on the world stage.

3.3 Confucius Institutes in Latin America

In order to understand the context of how the relations between Latin America and the People's Republic of China occurred, a historical account will be made that shows the origin of a cultural nature, of the relations between these two parties, which allowed strengthening ties of trust and establishing the bases of future diplomatic and economic relations, followed by the analysis of the current situation of cultural diplomacy and Confucius Institutes in Latin America.

China has a historical cultural relationship with Latin America since the founding of the People's Republic of China. One of the first actions to strengthen relations in the region was the establishment of the China-Chile Friendship Association in 1952, a non-governmental organization to maintain bilateral communications between both countries. The next friendship associations that were established were with Mexico in 1953 and Brazil in 1959.

In 1960, the China-Latin America Friendship Association (AACAL) was established, which aimed to build ties of cooperation and friendship with the region. In this context, China invited many renowned writers, painters and artists, as well as outstanding personalities to participate in the cultural exchange with China. This association and its activities laid the foundations for the future establishment of diplomatic relations with China (Shixue, 2006, p. 63).

In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the People's Republic of China as the sole representative on its security council and assigned it a permanent seat. Situation that modified the international position of China. Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, followed by the visit of President Richard Nixon to China, considerably reduced the pressure from the United States regarding relations with China and the Latin American region managed to establish official government relations of a diplomatic and economic nature (Delage, 2007). Deng Xiaoping's reforms are important to understand the improvement in China-Latin America relations. Since China, starting from its economic opening to the international system and internal reforms, begins to propose a foreign policy that moves away from ideological concerns of Maoism, towards cooperation with the outside (Bahamón Rojas, 2012, p. 33).

Chile was the first Latin American country to establish diplomatic relations with China in 1970, mainly due to the strong cultural relations between the two countries. Between 1971 and 1980, 12 countries in the region established diplomatic relations with Beijing. In the same period, China, under the influence of its economic reforms, signed trade and economic agreements with more than 10 Latin American countries and more than 50 official trade delegations were exchanged

between China and Latin America. To understand and illustrate the growth of trade relations, Chinese Customs states that trade between China and Latin America grew from \$ 1,331 million in 1980, \$ 2,294 million in 1990 to \$ 12,600 million in 2000. The products traded were mainly food and mining (Shixue, 2006).

In the 21st century, China becomes even more involved in the dynamics of the international system. This can be seen through its accession to The World Trade Organization in 2001, its increased participation in The Association of Southeast Asian Nations forums, the signing of free trade agreements, its role in APEC, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, among others. In 2006, the People's Republic of China, in line with its geopolitical interests, and with the intention of positioning itself as a strategic partner in Latin America, established the first Confucius Institute in the region, in Mexico City, the same year, in which China consolidated its first free trade agreement negotiations in the region, with Chile and Mexico. In 2008 China published the White Paper on Latin America where it established three key points for the relationships: broadening the consensus based on mutual respect and trust; deepening cooperation in the spirit of mutual benefit and shared gain; and strengthening exchanges for the sake of mutual learning and common progress (Bartesaghi, 2015). In the following years, China participated in important international events, such as the World Economic Forum on Latin America. It also maintained permanent relations with Mercosur, the Rio Group and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN). In 2012, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the People's Bank of China (Central Bank of China) presented a common fund for Latin America and the Caribbean (Xiaoping et al., 2014)

In 2014, Hanban established the Regional Center of Confucius Institutes for Latin America (CRICAL) in Santiago, Chile. The center aims to play a strategic role in the process of intensification and deepening of relations between Latin America and the People's Republic of China, through the execution of activities at the institutional, individual or group level. In addition, the center seeks to jointly formulate a cultural, educational, academic, economic, technological and commercial offer for Hanban, as well as coordinate policies and take the initiative in the selection, organization and evaluation of the activities carried out by the Confucius Institutes of the region (Objectives and Functions - CRICAL // Regional Center of Confucius Institutes for Latin America, n.d.).

In 2016, the year of China-Latin America and the Caribbean cultural exchange was celebrated, which involved 30 Latin American countries. It was the largest cultural event held by China in Latin America. In addition, the 45 years of diplomatic relations between these countries and China were celebrated in countries such as Mexico and Peru. As part of the results of these celebrations, the "Chinese Library" was inaugurated in Mexico.

China has intensified its economic presence in Latin America in recent years and is already the second largest trading partner in the region, only behind the United States. That country's trade with Latin America has increased by almost 2,000% in the last 15 years (Peters, 2015). However, China's participation in the region is not limited to the economic context. As we can see, the Chinese government coordinates efforts so that the country is present in multiple spheres.

Furthermore, the establishment of Confucius Institutes in Latin America has grown with the same trend, confirming to be a strong cultural campaign that contributes to China's comprehensive rapprochement with the region. The Chinese government and its partners in Latin America, mostly made up of public universities, are investing huge resources in expanding China's cultural reach through the Confucius Institutes. According to the Hanban website, in Latin America and the Caribbean there are 45 Confucius Institutes and 11 Confucius Classrooms, distributed in 22 countries (*Hanban-Confucius Institute/ClassRoom-About Confucius Institute/ClassRoom*, n.d.). with a total enrollment of more than 50,000 students and more than 8 million people who participate in various cultural activities organized by the Confucius Institutes (*Hanban-News*, 2018). Brazil has the highest number of institutes with 10 Confucius Institutes and 2 Confucius Classrooms, followed by Mexico with 5 Confucius Institutes and 1 Confucius Classroom and Peru with 4 Confucius Institutes.

Most of the 45 Confucius Institutes in the region, including in Brazil, appear to follow a well-designed strategy by the Chinese government, which was developed by Hanban and implemented by the host institution in collaboration with a Chinese university. The differences between countries in terms of the number of Institutes, as well as their different emphasis on language teaching or the promotion of cultural events, can be explained partly by the peculiarities of local directors, but mainly by the different political orientations of Hanban in the negotiation and supervision of "win-win" partnerships. These government negotiations make the Confucius Institute a clear example of the public and cultural diplomacy employed by the Chinese government. In this sense, as Hanban is responsible for building a formal and informal network of relationships between Chinese universities and their foreign partners, through annual Confucius

Institutes conferences, as well as regional and national conferences, it can use the institutes for deepening of international relations with China (Cornejo, 2018).

The following table shows the relationship between the Confucius Institutes established in Latin America and their Chinese partners, generally Chinese universities, but in some cases the association is directly with Hanban.

Table 3.2 Confucius Institutes in Latin America and their Chinese partners

Argentina	
CI of the University of Buenos Aires	International University of Xi'an
CI of the University of La Plata	University of Jilin
Bahamas	
CI of the University of Bahamas	University of Nanjing
Bolivia	
CI of the University of San Simón	Vocational Institute of Foreign Languages of Hebei
Brazil	
CI of the University of Brasilia	University of Hebei
CI of Paulista State University	Hubei University

CI of General Minas Gerais University	Huazhong University of Science and Technology
CI of Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro	Hebei University
CI of Pernambuco University	Central University of Finance and Economics
CI for Business FAAP	University of International Business and Economics
CI of the Federal University of Rio Grande del Sur	University of Communication of China
Confucius Classroom in Chinbra (Center for Chinese Language and Culture)	Hanban
CI of Campinas State University	Beijing Jiaotong University
Confucius Classroom in the Asian Cultural Center of São Paulo	Hanban
CI Federal University of Pará	Normal University of Shandong
CI Federal University of Ceará	University of Nankai
Chile	
CI of Santo Tomás University	Anhui University
CI of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	University of Nanjing
Costa Rica	
CI of the University of Costa Rica	Renmin University

Colombia	
CI of the University of Medellín	University of Languages Foreigners from Dalian
CI from the University of the Andes	University of Nankai
CI from the University of Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano	University of Foreign Studies of Tianjin
Confucius Classroom at the Nueva Granada School	Yaohua High School, in Tianjin
Cuba	
CI of the University of Havana	University of Beijing Language and Culture
Ecuador	
CI of the San Francisco de Quito University	China Petroleum University
Confucius Classroom at Siyuan Chinese Language Academy	Hanban
Granada	
Confucius Classroom at T.A. Community School	Ningbo University of Technology
Guyana	
CI Guyana University	University of Foreign Languages of Dalian

Peru	
CI of Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú	University of International Studies of Shanghai
CI of University of Piura	Capital Normal University
CI of Santa María Catholic University	Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
CI of Ricardo Palma University	Hebei Normal University
Mexico	
CI del Instituto Cultural Chino Huaxia	Luhe High School
CI of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua	University of International Studies of Beijing
CI of the Autonomous University of Nuevo León	University of Economics and International Business
CI of the Autonomous University of Yucatán	Sun Yat-Sen University
CI from the National Autonomous University of Mexico	University of Language and Culture of Beijing
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	
University of the West Indies	Normal University of South China

Source: The Regional Center of Confucius Institutes for Latin America, in the survey of CRICAL 2015. (*Encuesta Crical 2015*, 2015 cited in Cornejo, 2018, p. 28).

3.4 International Concerns

In recent years, governments, academics and observers have questioned the Confucius Institutes project, from its rapid expansion and growth, its financial stability, questions about its function and purpose, to concerns about transparency and censorship. A main concern is Hanban's deep involvement in the institutes. Because the connection between Hanban and the Chinese elites is too close, the Confucius Institutes are seen as part of a propaganda campaign by the Chinese government. These concerns were compounded when, in 2009, Li Changchun, then head of propaganda for the Communist Party of China, defined the Confucius Institutes as an important part of China's propaganda structure in foreign affairs (Peterson, 2017, p. 9).

One of the main ideological concerns is related to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Confucius Institute. In its sixth clause, it establishes that the activities of the Confucius Institute cannot conflict with the laws and regulations of China, especially the applicable censorship laws. (*Confucius Institute*, n.d.). This regulation greatly increases censorship concerns related to the institutes, coupled with the fact that, in different parts of the world, there have been different incidents of violation of academic freedom.

Another concern is the lack of transparency, Hanban controls and oversees all planning, resources, budget, academic staff selection, and negotiation of contracts. Regarding the agreements and contracts, it is important to mention that Hanban in most cases does not make public the terms of the contracts and agreements between the universities, this lack of transparency only increases concerns about the institutes. In this regard, after several incidents of lack of transparency, censorship and the closure of several of the Confucius Institutes in America, in 2017, the National

Association of Scholars published a report on the Confucius Institutes, concluding that the program needed more transparency. Part of the research consisted of interviewing and visiting different directors of Confucius institutes. In several cases, the directors did not want to do interviews and several of the meetings that were already scheduled were canceled at the last minute.

In conclusion, the establishment of the Confucius Institutes is an initiative of the Chinese government with the purpose of disseminating specific aspects of cultural diplomacy, such as language and educational exchange, mainly through cooperative relations with foreign universities. Hence, the Confucius Institutes are an instrument of Chinese cultural diplomacy, of a soft power initiative, where, the Chinese government mainly, but also its collaborators, usually renowned universities around the world, are investing large resources in expanding the cultural reach of China through the Confucius Institutes project.

Confucius Institutes tend to present China in a positive light, focusing primarily on the cultural aspects of China. As part of the results of the establishment of Confucius institutes we can mention that, generally, students attending Confucius Institutes develop a natural interest in establishing professional relationships with those from China. Host universities are often interested in maintaining and expanding friendships and cooperative relationships with universities in China, an effect that, at the same time, can lead to the directors of the host universities being silent in certain disputes with Hanban.

The image of China and the Confucius Institutes project have been greatly benefited from being associated with the world's leading universities. Finally, generally in the world there is a

lack of awareness or a lack of concern about the potential of Confucius Institutes as opinion formers beyond language. For the same reason, it is common for Chinese diplomats to participate in events and present themselves as academics, fostering a direct offering of Chinese political and economic thought to a relatively less critical and thoughtful audience.



Chapter 4. Confucius Institutes in Mexico

The Confucius Institutes in Mexico are an important part of China's cultural policy strategy in Mexico to strengthen its image and influence. In this chapter I will begin with a historical introduction to China's cultural diplomacy in Mexico, as cultural diplomacy has been an important part of China's foreign policy in Mexico since before Mexico formally recognized China. Followed by the analysis of the challenges and difficulties of the image of China in Mexico, and the diplomatic background of China-Mexico relations within the framework of the establishment of the Confucius Institutes. The next section addresses the context of China's active cultural policy in Mexico in this century, through the analysis of three Confucius Institutes in Mexico: The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Mexico and The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Yucatan. Finally, the analysis of the surveys on the public opinion of the Mexican Society regarding China.

4.1 China's Cultural Diplomacy in Mexico

On February 14, 1972, Mexico changed its diplomatic recognition to Beijing, and institutional relations between both parties began. Although they had a slow beginning, little by little the commercial flow increased considerably, with a notably beneficial trade balance for Mexico, whose export totals had great changes. In cultural matters, one of the outstanding achievements was the Special Program for the Teaching of Spanish to Students of the People's Republic of China sponsored by the Secretariat of Public Education of Mexico and developed by El Colegio de México between 1974 and 1987.

Since the end of the Maoist rule, the beginning of market economic reforms, and becoming a full member of the United Nations and other major international organizations, China radically changed its foreign policy and began to seek a market for its products, foreign investment, technology transfer, raw material supply sources and, later, allies that allow it to position itself in the international community as an exporting power, as a source of capital for investments outside its borders and as an element of balance between the world's powers. In this way the objective of its cultural policy changed to be linked to its economic interests and its search for acceptance of its presence as a peaceful world power.

In 1980 and 1990, in the context of the great change in capitalism called the 'Reaganomics' era, China sought to create a truly global market, and the great companies of the world took advantage of the platform that China offered them for the production of capital, taking advantage of its hand of cheap work and Mexico was no exception, who still had a beneficial trade balance. The market reforms implemented by China led the country to rapidly become an export powerhouse and to unprecedented growth of its economy. This rapid growth and expansion worried the international community, and negative positions began to emerge that referred to China as a "threat". Academics, journalists and politicians outside of China began to write texts about the negative consequences of China's presence in the world, which negatively affected its international image. Among the negative trends that most concerned the West are those that see China as a cultural and ideological threat since its economic growth could underpin the existence of an alternative "communist" model, which represents a challenge to the prevailing ideology in the rest of the world: the ideology of liberal capitalism of electoral democracy.

Specifically, in Mexico the negative image of China has roots in a long and studied history of anti-Chinese racism. However, it is important to mention that this negative perception regains vitality and is expressed again every time a situation of social unrest and unemployment occurs in Mexico. Added to this historic perception is the fact that since the intensification of economic relations between China and Mexico in this century, a new trend of negative public opinion about China has developed in Mexican society. This new negative perception is due to the fact that the causes of Mexico's economic and commercial problems are attributed to the economic growth of China, to how it took over the international market and especially to the commercial relationship between the two countries, which is of great deficit for Mexico, which has put the production and sales of domestic manufactures in serious crisis, both in the domestic market and in the export markets. Therefore, in the perception of many businessmen, the press and the general public, a perception of threat predominates, which are linked to similar currents of appreciation in the United States, of which Mexico has traditionally been an ideological follower.

Since 2001, Mexico has accepted China's entry into the WTO, at which point China is already an inescapable reference in the national and international economy, at this time Mexico begins to have a great interest in the effects of the economic relationship with China. In the first years of the new century, particularly between 2003 and 2005, the main newspapers of the country expressed great interest in China and the effects of its international economic insertion on the country's economy, generated an unfavorable public opinion towards China, to such an extent that a columnist specialized in finance stated: "China is the fashionable villain country for Mexicans. We blame China for taking away jobs, investment and competitiveness. It is a rare day that the

media does not mention the great economic threat that China represents to our country." (Serrano, 2006, cited in Cornejo, 2008, p. 348).

The headlines of the main newspapers of the country began to express their clear fear about the effects of Chinese imports, and contributed to the creation of a negative public opinion that China was a threat, for example: "China 'eats' the Mexican market", "Manufacturing, increasingly fragile; China, a threat", "Chinese command attacks to evict the city", "Mexico, at war with China before the WTO", "China reaches the markets", and "Chinese motorcycles invade Mexico" (p. 348). Other headlines simply expressed racism and mistrust, many of which did not exactly match the information they contained. In the same context, some officials cornered by criticism of government inaction and customs corruption colluded with smuggling, even claimed that the "fault" for the success of Chinese products in the country was the consumers who preferred them. In this framework of public opinion formation, protests were raised in front of the Chinese embassy over the loss of jobs in the textile and shoemaker sector.

Some important failed infrastructure projects also contributed to the negative image of China in Mexico such as the establishment of the development of the megaproject called 'Dragon Mart' and the construction of a fast train in the center of the country. Because these projects, after long preparations and negotiations, and with continuous mentions and focus in the press with promises to create jobs and boost the economy, did not materialize due to their association with acts of corruption by the Mexican government. Also, in the same way, China was blamed in the press, without any basis, for the movements of the exchange rate of the Mexican peso in 2015 and 2016.

Thus, China's cultural policy in Mexico has a great challenge to improve its image and perception. To counter China, it has responded to its bad image in Mexico with an intense propaganda campaign of diplomacy, contacting officials, politicians and businessmen with offers of investment, infrastructure and cooperation projects. China has also implemented an intense campaign of cultural diplomacy, with invitations to opinion leaders, public officials, politicians, academics and businessmen to China, offering a generous scholarship program at all levels, establishing generous agreements with universities, visual exhibitions and translations of their writers and, of course, with the establishment of the Confucius Institutes.

The diplomatic antecedents of Mexico-China relations within the framework of the establishment of the Confucius Institutes date back to 2003, when bilateral relations gained important relevance with the visit of Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to Mexico. During this visit, the Mexico-China Strategic Association was established, which laid the foundations for the establishment of the Permanent Binational Commission (PBC), with the objective of acting as the main means of communication and long-term diplomatic planning. In this regard, the Confucius Institutes in Mexico were founded within the framework of the government cooperation relationship in education and culture between Mexico and China, formalized with the constitution of the PBC in 2004, which established a permanent binational cultural and educational cooperation agenda. Since the first PBC Meeting, which took place in Beijing in August 2004, the principle of culture as a vehicle for rapprochement has been used by the Chinese side to express its interest in promoting the teaching of Chinese in Mexico. The PBC was for China the key institutional structure to establish in Mexico one of its main instruments of cultural diplomacy: the Confucius

Institute. Chinese leaders perceived Mexico as the main economic actor in Latin America, with wide respect in the international community.

Among the achievements of the diplomatic rapprochement, we can mention that in March 2005, in the framework of the Summit of the United Nations Organization on Financing for Development that took place in Mexico, the Chinese delegation had an official rapprochement with the Ministry of Education Public of Mexico, to invite Mexico to participate in the Confucius Institutes project. In September 2005, President Hu Jintao made a state visit to Mexico where, with great publicity in the national media, several important collaboration documents were signed between the two countries, including the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of a China Cultural Center in Mexico City. The establishment of the cultural center was of such significance that it was mentioned in the speech Hu Jintao delivered in the Senate of the Republic of Mexico during his visit. The cultural center was a response from Beijing to initiate a systematic cultural policy to improve its image. Thus, members of the General Directorate of International Relations of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) visited several schools in the cities of Beijing and Shanghai, after receiving an invitation from the Ministry of Education of China. This visit was used to formally discuss an exchange project that involved the establishment in Mexico of the Confucius Institutes, dedicated to the teaching of Chinese culture and language. One of the objectives of this project was that an important segment of the Mexican population could acquire knowledge, not only of the Chinese language, but also of its culture and customs.

In subsequent years, government agreements were negotiated to manage more Chinese cultural centers in the country. On February 14, 2006, during the visit of the State Councilor for

Education, Culture and Sports Chen Zhili, the Memorandum for the Constitution of Confucius Institutes was established with the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon and the Autonomous University of Yucatan.

In the PBC's 2006-2010 Joint Action Program, the parties expressed their agreement for both ministries of education to advance the establishment of Confucius Institutes, for which they signed a letter of intent in February. Thus, as part of this bilateral cooperation, the deployment of Chinese cultural diplomacy in Mexico, through the Confucius Institutes, was a concerted action between the executive elites of both nations as part of their foreign policy, co-financed by Hanban and the budget designated by the Mexican Government for its public universities.

In this way, the first Confucius Institute that began activities in Mexico and Latin America was in Mexico City. This was largely due to the fact that since 1999 it already functioned as the Huaxia Chinese Cultural Institute, where Chinese culture and language classes were taught, at first, for members of the community of Chinese origin established in the city. With the signing of the memorandum of understanding, this civil organization adopted the guidelines of the Confucius Institutes and started activities as a Confucius Institute in November 2006. The second Confucius Institute inaugurated in Mexico was the Autonomous University of Nuevo León; constituted on November 3, 2007.

In 2008, with the signing of the Final Act of the Third Meeting of the Bilateral Commission, China's cultural strategy was even clearer, such as the Mexican government's acceptance of

including Chinese cultural diplomatic participation as a new element in its bilateral agenda. The same year, the Confucius Institutes of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, of the Autonomous University of Yucatán and of the National Autonomous University of Mexico were inaugurated in April, October and November, respectively. Finally, in August 2016, the first Confucius Classroom in Mexico was inaugurated by Chinese Minister Liu Yandong, located at the University of the Caribbean in the city of Cancun, Quintana Roo (Cornejo, 2018, pp. 170-171).

4.2 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Chihuahua (North of Mexico)

The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua is located in the North of Mexico. The Institute was formally inaugurating in April 2008 with the Beijing University of International Studies (BISU) as Sister University in China. (*Instituto Confucio UACH*, n.d.) The installation of the Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, followed the usual Hanban protocol procedure: the institution submitted a voluntary application, an evaluation was carried out, follow by the negotiations. On October 10, 2006, a meeting was held between the First Secretary of the Chinese Embassy in Mexico and officials from the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. Shortly, a delegation made up of Chihuahua government officials and officials from the Autonomous University of Chihuahua traveled to China in response to Hanban's invitation. During that visit, a collaboration was agreed with the Beijing International Studies University (BISU) to offer Mandarin Chinese classes and a collaborative program to establish the Confucius Institute on the University Campus of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua. On November 22, 2006, the collaboration agreement between Hanban and the Autonomous University of Chihuahua was signed in Beijing. In correspondence, Vice Chancellor Qui Ming and other officials from the Beijing International Studies University visited the Autonomous University of Chihuahua

on October 17, 2007 to sign the collaboration agreement that would begin the work of the Confucius Institute. (*Acuerdo Especifico de Cooperación Académica y Cultural Entre La Universidad de Estudios Internacionales de Beijing de La Republica Popular de China y La Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua Del Estado de Chihuahua de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos.*, n.d.)

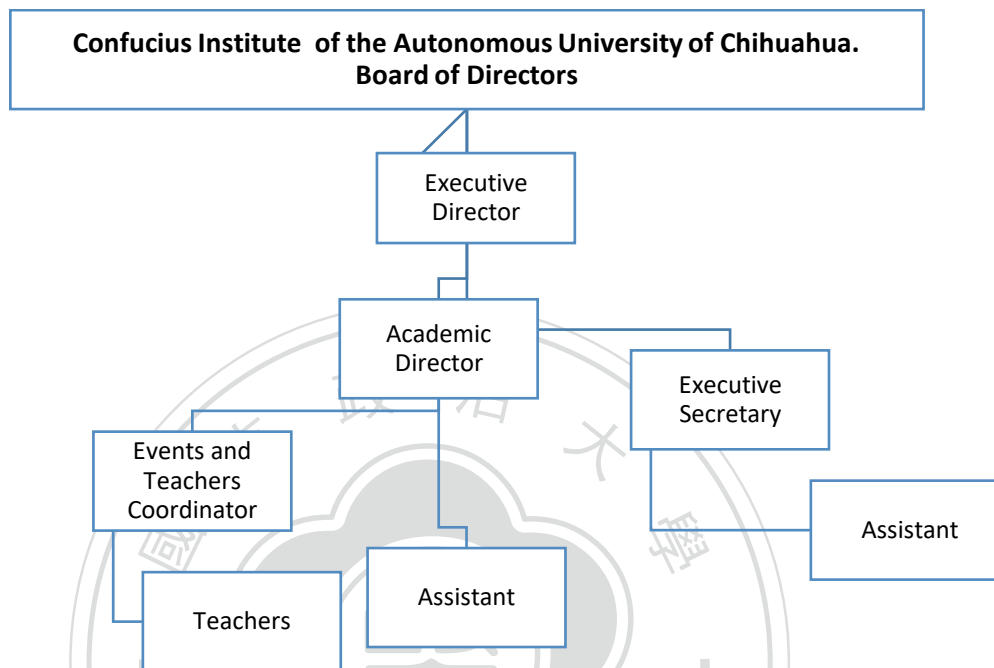
Regarding the commitments established in the collaboration agreement, Beijing University of International Studies agreed to provide bibliographic information, audiovisual and multimedia resources, as well as to send Chinese professors assigned to teach the language. The Autonomous University of Chihuahua agreed to offer the space for the installation of the Confucius Institute, provide the resources for coordination and maintenance, assign administrative personnel to the Confucius Institute; ensuring working conditions for Chinese staff, supporting immigration procedures to facilitate the entry of Chinese teachers to Mexico, paying the rent for a furnished apartment for teachers' stay and providing a social security system for each Chinese teacher. For his part, Hanban agreed to grant the rights to use the name and logo of the Confucius Institute, provide the teaching model and authorize access to internet courses, contribute between \$50,000 and \$100,000 dollars to activate the Confucius Institute, provide the specialized bibliography and cover travel expenses and salaries for Chinese teachers. (Durand & Rodríguez, 2017, pp. 172-173).

The first classes of the Mandarin course began on May 5, 2008 at the Language Center of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters on Campus I, and in 2009 the Confucius Institute was relocated to the area of the International Relations Coordination of the university. At the end of December 2012, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua signed a

specific cooperation agreement to become an official Chinese language proficiency exam applicator center for foreigners. Since then, the institute has been licensed to take the HSK exam (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) and the oral version HSKK (Hanyushuiping Kouyu Kaoshi). The HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) is a certifying exam for academic, daily life and work environment purposes for non-native speakers of Chinese, with the aim of standardizing the levels of knowledge of Mandarin. This exam recognizes 6 levels each with an evaluation of a specific number of characters and a specific level of grammar from oral comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing composition. The Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua currently offers six modules for learning Chinese. There are two types of classes, the first has a duration of three months, with daily classes of two hours. The second modality lasts for five months, classes are only on Saturdays. In both cases, the cost per course in 2017 was 2,300 pesos (Cornejo, 2018, p. 177)

In its beginnings in 2008, the institute had a staff of four professors of Chinese nationality, and a general director also of Chinese nationality sent by Hanban. By 2013, due to the increase in students and the cultural activities carried out, the Confucius Institute increased the number of teachers to six. Currently, the institute has eight professors, among whom two are Mexican graduates of the Confucius Institute, and who completed complementary studies in China, and six professors from China. And six full-time administrative and academic management employees: an executive director from Mexico assigned by the Autonomous University of Chihuahua; an academic director of Chinese origin appointed by Hanban, an executive secretary from Mexico, an Events and Teachers Coordinator from Mexico and two support personnel for the attention of teachers and students also from Mexico.

Figure 4.1 Organizational chart of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.



Source: Compilation based on data from The Autonomous University of Chihuahua from the Annual Management Reports (*Informes Anuales de Gestion*, 2019).

The Executive Director's job consists of organizing the promotion of the Confucius Institute in the Chihuahuan community, attending National and International Congresses of the Confucius Institutes, coordinating the follow-up of scholarship recipients in China and Chihuahua, monitoring projects, HSK exams, coordination, organization and promotion of academic and cultural activities of the Confucius Institute, preparation of budgets and support in the migration and internment process of teachers from China. The Academic Director is elected by the headquarters of the Confucius Institutes in China. The functions of the position consist of

organizing the calls for scholarships to study in China, organizing classes and hours for teachers and official exams for the level of knowledge of Mandarin Chinese.

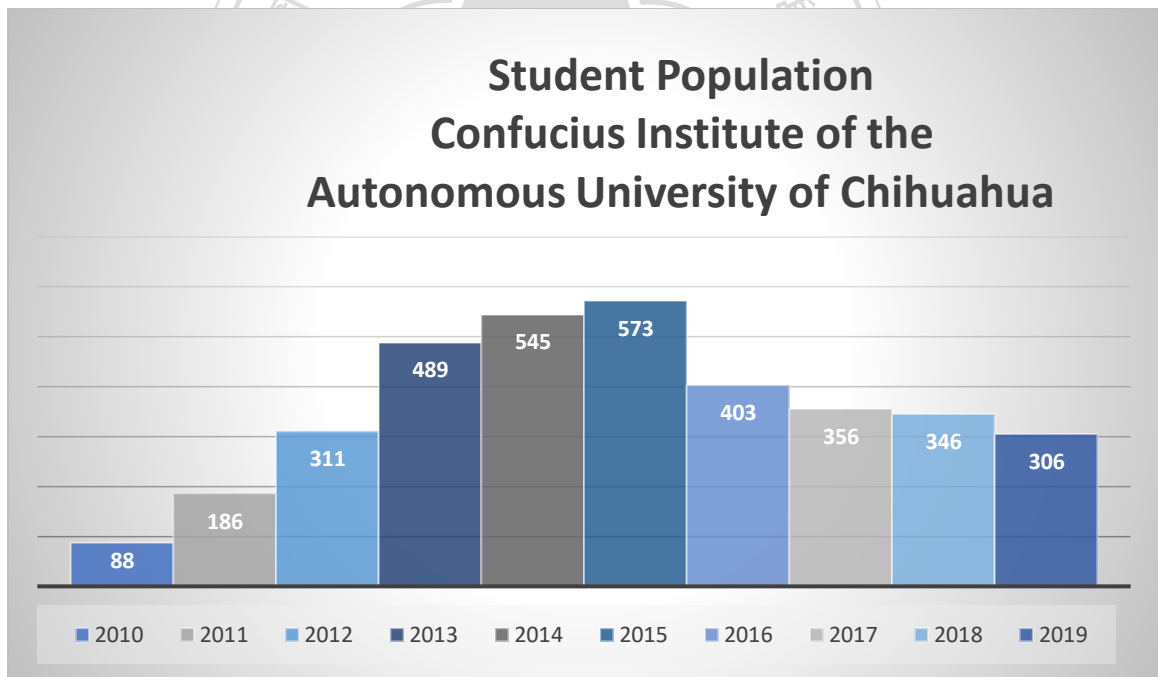
The Executive Secretary carries out all the administrative processes of the students, attention to students, support for the organization of cultural events, follow-up of Confucius Institute students, access to student information in the uach Diploma System, review and report of the IC furniture equipment, Auditorium scheduling and scheduling, Diploma course scheduling, activities requested by the Confucius Institute Director.

The Events and Teachers Coordinator has the function of following up on the procedures related to teachers (immigration procedures, reports, reports, notices, personal attention, etc.), scheduling Mandarin Chinese courses, answering phone calls, filing, reception and delivery of packages, promotion of academic and cultural activities of the Confucius Institute, filling out forms and activity reports of the Confucius Institute, teacher evaluation (surveys and reports), and in charge of material and library loans.

Regarding the growth and expansion of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, in 2015, an extension of the Confucius Institute was inaugurated within the facilities of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences. In 2016, the expansion of the Confucius Institute was opened at the Ciudad Juárez headquarters. And in 2018 another extension of the Confucius Institute was inaugurated at the Technological Institute of Sonora.

Among the cultural activities carried out in the institute are: martial arts classes, photographic exhibitions, manual arts, traditional gastronomy and calligraphy. Festivities such as China's National Day, the Mid-Autumn Festival were also organized to commemorate the Chinese Revolution and the Chinese New Year. But perhaps one of the most relevant attractions is the possibility of staying in China, the scholarships that are offered range from periods of stay of six months to perfect the language to two to four years to carry out bachelor's and master's studies in Chinese Letters and master's degrees in more than 200 schools in the country

Figure 4.2 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua.



Source: Compilation based on data from The Autonomous University of Chihuahua from the Annual Management Reports (*Informes Anuales de Gestion*, 2019).

4.3 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Mexico (Center of Mexico)

The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Mexico is located in the Center of Mexico. The Institute was formally inaugurated on October 2008, with the University of Language and Culture of Beijing, as its partner University in China. The background of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico is different from the other two Confucius Institutes. Since 1977, through the Foreign Language Teaching Center of the Autonomous University of Mexico the university offer courses of Chinese and other fourteen languages for the student community. For the establishment of Chinese classes, relationships were established with the Beijing Language and Cultural University (ULCB), with the purpose of undertaking the academic exchange program and hiring visiting professors to enrich the academic staff for a period of two, three or four years.

The collaborative relationships of the Foreign Language Teaching Center also extended to the Chinese Embassy in Mexico, specifically with the Education Section. Those who supported the center with a series of measures such as: the signing of the agreement to become the certifying institution for Latin America; with the contribution of Chinese teachers; and in the training of Mexican teachers, for the instruction of Mandarin, through the management of scholarships to enter language programs at universities in China.

It is undeniable that the academic exchange relationship between the Autonomous University of Mexico and the University of Language and Culture of Beijing was the university basis for the establishment of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico. Consequently, after a series of negotiations, on November 22, 2006, the agreement was signed

between the Autonomous University of Mexico and Hanban to establish the Confucius Institute, in order to intensify the collaboration between the two countries in educational matters, support and promote the development of Chinese teaching, strengthen mutual understanding and friendship between both.

Regarding the operation, both parties are responsible for providing funds for the operation of the institute and assigning professors for the courses. The Hanban offered a starting fund of \$100,000 dollars. The Autonomous University of Mexico does the corresponding in kind, by making available the property where it is located, the administrative staff, stationery and the resources for the maintenance of the facilities (Hanban-Autonomous University of Mexico, 2006).

About the functioning of the Confucius Institute, it is through a shared responsibility of the two universities that make up the institute: the Beijing University of Language and Culture and the Autonomous University of Mexico. The Board of Directors and the Management Board are the two governing bodies of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico and are made up of representatives of both houses of study. In both boards, the Autonomous University of Mexico has the absolute majority permanently, has the power to draw up the expense management regulation; develop the Confucius Institute publicity; take care of public relations; and determine the content of the work plans. Regarding the cultural events of the Confucius Institute, these must be organized within the framework of authorized activities, by the Autonomous University of Mexico and by Hanban. (Collaboration Agreement Autonomous University of Mexico - Beijing University of Language and Culture).

Due to its constant growth, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico currently has a staff of eleven Chinese professors, of which six have Chinese nationality, sent by the Beijing University of Language and Culture and five professors have Mexican nationality. The Institute offers courses for the general public with a minimum level of secondary education, as well as for university students. Every year three admission processes are opened, the courses last three months with a total of 70 hours per quarter. Each term is equivalent to one level and in total there are ten levels. The cost in 2017 of the quarterly courses was 2,700 pesos plus the registration of the first entry of 500 pesos. In this sense, it is important to mention that the minimum wage in Mexico City is less than 2,500 pesos (Cornejo, 2018, p. 175)

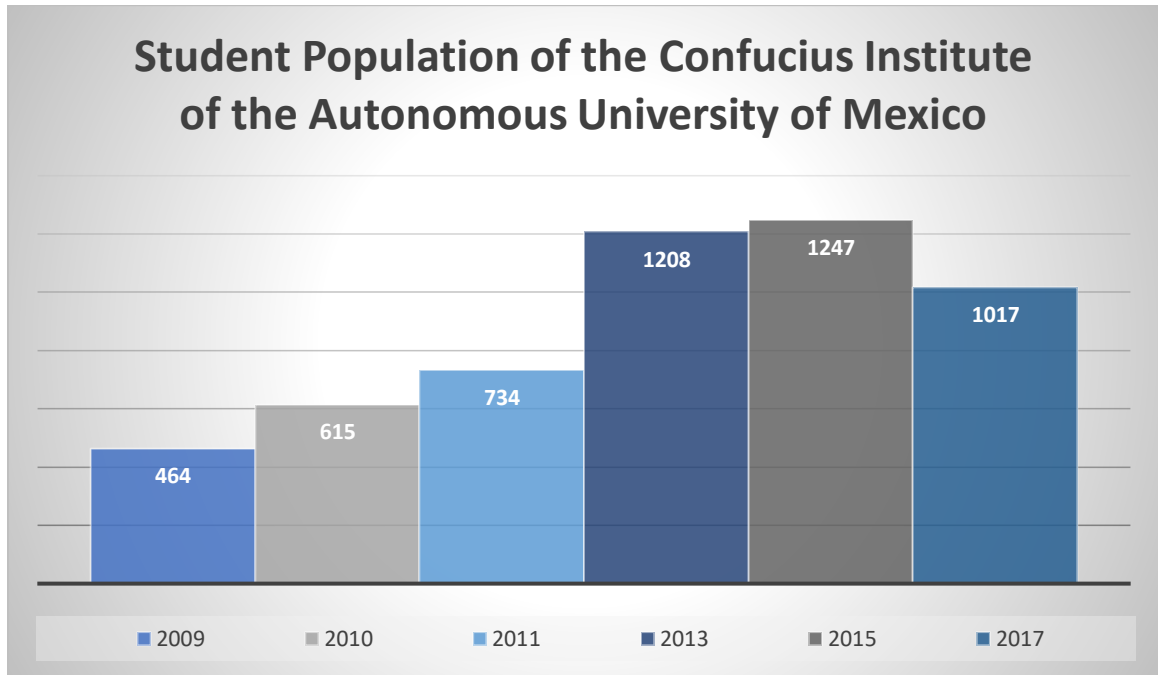
Regarding the growth and expansion of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico, extensions of it have been established in important locations. Since 2011, the collaborative extension with the Matías Romero Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs began, where Chinese courses are taught. In 2016 the extension of the Institute was inaugurated within the facilities of the Autonomous Metropolitan University (UAM). The Xochimilco unit of the UAM established the center called "Casa China" (Chinese House), where Chinese courses are taught and academic and cultural activities on China are held. The "Casa China" center is part of the Center for Transition Sciences, which also houses the World Program for Advanced Research, with international participation. Through the collaborative extension agreement between the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico and the UAM, there is an exchange agreement with 15 universities in China, while the embassy in Mexico recognizes the center and its study program as a school (Cornejo, 2018, p. 179). The collaborative relationships of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico to carry out the task of disseminating

culture and language over the years has been extended to other institutions such as the National Museum of Cultures of Mexico City, The China-Mexico Studies Center of the Autonomous University of Mexico, El Colegio de México and the Huawei company in Mexico City.

Regarding cultural activities, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico has a rich agenda of activities, inside and outside the institute, offered by a wide network of cultural and academic, public and civil society organizations, with which it has established cooperative relationships. The Institute does not have a specific focus like other institutes of the Hanban consortium which, to name a few examples, are specialized in the teaching of opera or traditional medicine. On the contrary, the objective is the teaching of the language and the dissemination of Chinese culture in general, so its activities are diversified into: calligraphy, traditional Chinese dance, Tai Chi, phonetics and writing of Chinese characters.

The cultural activities have an additional cost to the regular courses and are open to all interested public. Among the cultural activities that take place year after year of great impact in the Institute are the celebration of the Chinese New Year in Mexico City, and the participation in the Fair of Friendly Cultures also in Mexico City. Activities that have great impact and national dissemination through the main newspapers and media of the country and with the presence of a wide audience. In this sense, due to the great work carried out at the institute, in 2010, the Confucius Institute Director received the Confucius Institute 2010 Job Performance Award, which is given to the 30 best institute directors in the world. This recognition was delivered within the framework of the 5th meeting of Confucius institute administrators, held from December 9 to 12, 2010 at the National Convention Center, in the city of Beijing, China.

Figure 4.3 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico.



Source: Compilation based on data from The Autonomous University of Mexico from the Annual Management Reports (*Informe Anual, CELE-UNAM, 2019*)

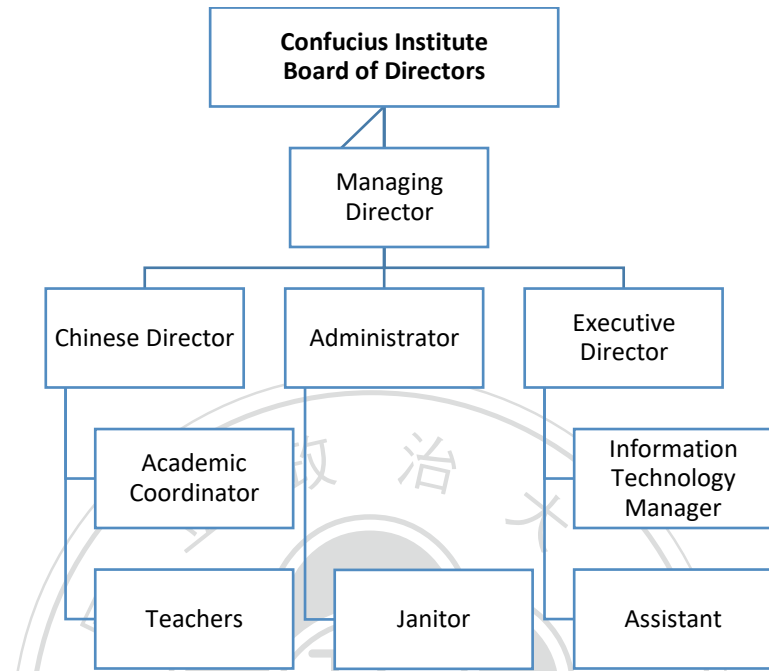
4.4 Confucius Institute at Autonomous University of Yucatan (South of Mexico)

The Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Yucatan is located in the South of Mexico. The Institute was formally inaugurated on October 2008, with the Sun Yat-Sen University (SYSU), as its partner University in China. Within the efforts to consolidate the Confucius Institute at the Autonomous University of Yucatán, in 2005, the former headmaster of the Autonomous University of Yucatan initiated communications with the Chinese Embassy in Mexico. After several negotiations, on November 25, 2006, the collaboration agreement between the Autonomous University of Yucatán and Hanban was signed for the establishment of the Confucius Institute. After signing this agreement, on January 28, 2008, the Autonomous

University of Yucatán found in the Sun Yat-Sen University (SYSU) the ideal candidate for the partner university agreement that Hanban requested. Thus, the institute formally began operations on October 14, 2008. (*Conoce El Instituto Confucio / Coordinacion General de Cooperacion e Internacionalizacion / Rectoria*, n.d.)

At the beginning of its activities, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatán had only two professors of Chinese nationality. Due to the increase in interest in the programs and courses in 2015, it already had an academic director of Chinese nationality, four part-time professors of Chinese nationality and two part-time Mexican professors. Currently, the institute has seven professors, among whom one is Mexican and six professors from China. And eight volunteers who assist the teachers. It also has eight full-time administrative and academic management employees: a general director assigned by the Autonomous University of Yucatan, a Hanban-appointed Chinese director, an executive director, a general administrator, an academic coordinator, an information technology administrator, an assistant of the executive director and a janitor. All except for the Chinese director are of Mexican nationality. All Chinese personnel receive their salary from Hanban and the Autonomous University of Yucatan is responsible for the payment of local professors and administrative personnel assigned to it.

Figure 4.4 Organizational chart of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan.



Source: (*Organigrama 2019, 2019*)

The Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatán offered three programs of Chinese classes in 2017: a program for children, one for adolescents and a diploma in Mandarin Chinese. The children's program has twelve levels, admits students with a minimum age of nine years and the classes are once a week with a duration of two hours. The program for adolescents is for those over twelve years of age, it is divided into nine levels with a frequency of one day a week with two-hour classes. The Diploma in Mandarin Chinese consists of seven levels and is aimed at people over 16 years of age, it offers classes twice a week for two hours. Course prices range between 1,100 and 2,700 pesos per semester, depending on the level (Cornejo, 2018, pp. 175-176).

In 2009, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatán applied to Hanban to become an official Chinese language proficiency exam application center for foreigners. In 2010, the Institute became the second institute in Latin America to be licensed to take the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) exam. And in 2014, the institute was licensed to take the oral HSKK (Hanyushuiping Kouyu Kaoshi) version.

The Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan promotes two types of scholarships, those offered through Hanban called Confucius Institute Scholarship whose call is annual and those offered through the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations. For the scholarships offered by Hanban, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatán performs the functions of disseminating, advising and receiving documents as well as updating the applications on the Hanban website. In the case of scholarships offered by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Confucius Institute only disseminates the information.

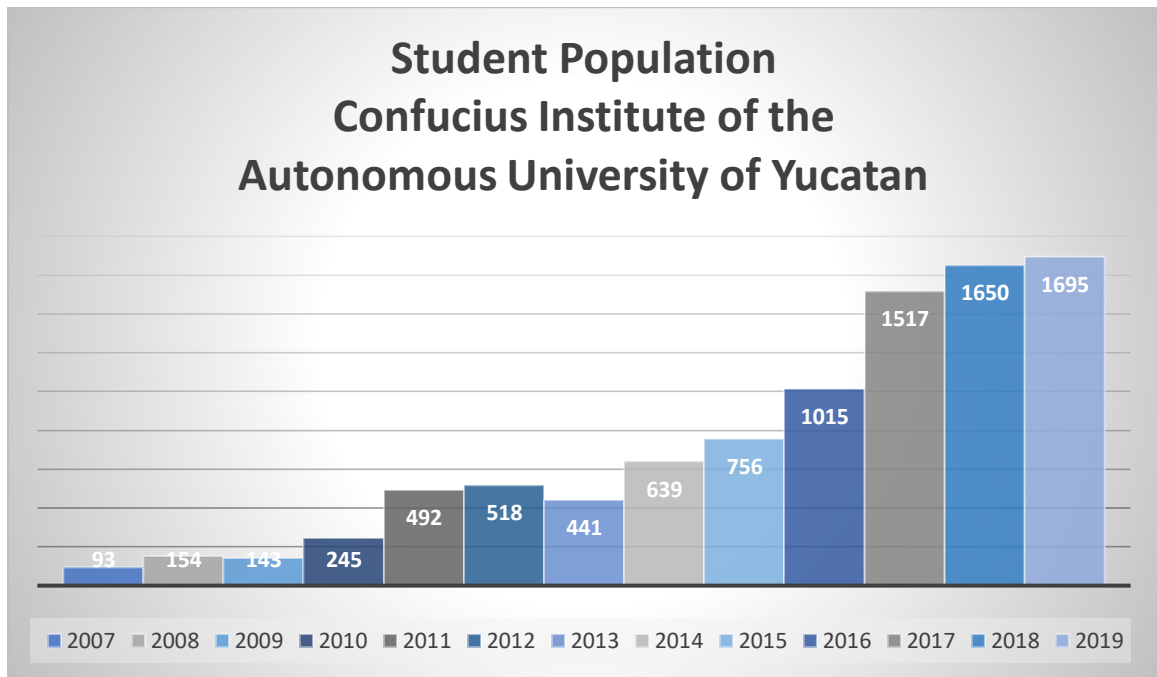
Regarding the growth and expansion of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan, in 2010, at the express request of the Director of the Faculty of Economics, a Mandarin course was opened for international trade students as an optional subject. The same year the first Chinese summer course for children was held with the participation of 30 children. In 2013, a new modality of Chinese courses for teenagers was launched and as of 2014 a complete program is followed so that any 8-year-old child can start Chinese courses until they finish at approximately 18 years of age with the entire Confucius Institute program divided for children, adolescents and adults. In 2015, the first major expansion of the Institute was carried out, an alternate campus of the Confucius Institute was inaugurated at the Autonomous University of

Campeche. And on August 7, 2016, the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatán inaugurated its first Confucius classroom (the first Confucius classroom in the country) in coordination with the Caribbean University in Quintana Roo.

In 2018, the implementation of the new Mandarin Chinese program for high school began according to the Educational Model for Comprehensive Training (MEFI). And during 2019, the Confucius Institute implemented a new educational program whose main characteristics are to reinforce oral communication competence in Chinese and comply with the standards defined in the Educational Model for Comprehensive Training (MEFI).

Regarding important events and cultural activities, in 2016 the Confucius Institute together with the Autonomous University of Yucatan hosted the Congress of the Confucius Institutes for Latin America. The Congress brought together about 100 people, including delegates, directors of the Confucius Institutes in Latin America, Hanban authorities, Chinese universities, and authorities of Latin American universities. In the framework of the 11th Conference of Confucius Institutes worldwide, the Autonomous University of Yucatán was internationally awarded with the 2016 Confucius Institute of the Year Award. On October 2019 the first seminar of Chinese Studies was held, with the following topics: film industry, poetry, translation techniques for Chinese to Spanish, Philosophy, and Business opportunities between China and Mexico. Among the cultural activities carried out in the institute are: Calligraphy, Beijing Opera Mask Painting, Tai Chi, Lion Dance, Kung Fu, Xinjiang and Tibet Dance, as well as exhibitions and conferences to promote Chinese culture.

Figure 4.5 Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan.



Source: Compilation based on data from The Autonomous University of Yucatan from Annual Report of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan 2019. (*Reporte Anual Del Instituto Confucio de la UADY 2019*, 2019)

Note: Number of students according to the parameters of the General Office of the Confucius Institutes (Hanban) which is a minimum of 24 hours of class.

In sum, within the framework of the launch of China's public diplomacy policy in the early 2000s, in Mexico with the Confucius Institutes project, the constitution of the Mexico-China Binational Commission in 2004 and the signing of the Memorandum to Establish Confucius Institutes in public universities, a timeline can be constructed whose content reflects the great advances of China's foreign policy in Mexico, in its sense of cultural soft power. Since it was possible to establish a joint agenda whose objectives had repercussions on the international

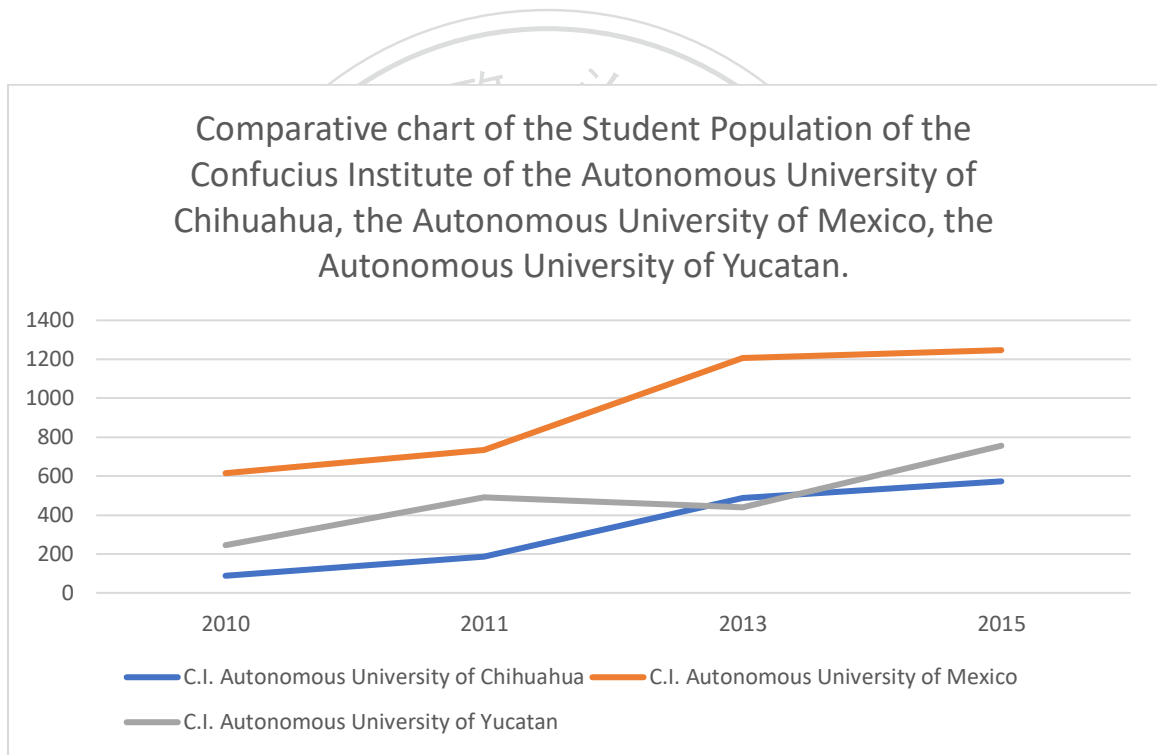
educational agenda of Mexico, especially in the autonomous public universities that until then had not included a Mandarin teaching program in their language centers.

For its part, Hanban, due to its constitutive character and its objectives, assumes the guidelines of the institutions of cultural diplomacy, since among its tasks are: to spread the Chinese language and culture; contribute to the development of a multilateral culture; and build a harmonious world, the last two are part of the Chinese discourse of the world in harmony, which is part of public diplomacy. The Confucius Institutes of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the Autonomous University of Mexico and the Autonomous University of Yucatan are considered as an instrument of Cultural Diplomacy, under the nature of an educational body in charge of promoting knowledge of China in Mexico. In this case, the resources of the Confucius Cultural Diplomacy case study institute are both the language and the cultural elements displayed in the outreach activities; Its audience is the foreign population made up of students enrolled in language courses; the civil society or spectators of the cultural activities they organize, local, political and academic elites, and the members of the entities or companies that are part of their network of contacts. However, it is with the students enrolled in Mandarin courses that communication manages to build a more lasting relationship, and consolidated with academic exchange programs.

The three Confucius Institutes case studies showed different behaviors in the number of students enrolled in Mandarin courses. The Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, shows constant growth until 2015, in the following years the student enrollment decreases. The Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Mexico, also shows a constant growth until 2015, in the following years the student enrollment decreases. The Confucius Institute

of the Autonomous University of Yucatán is the only one that shows a constant sustained growth until 2019. The only year in which student enrollment did not grow was in 2013, however, in 2014 the growth continued.

Figure 4.6 Comparative chart of the Student Population of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the Autonomous University of Mexico, the Autonomous University of Yucatan.



Source: Compilation based on data from The Autonomous University of Chihuahua from the Annual Management Reports (*Informes Anuales de Gestion*, 2019), The Autonomous University of Mexico from the Annual Management Reports (*Informe Anual, CELE-UNAM*, 2019), and The Autonomous University of Yucatan from Annual Report of the Confucius Institute of the Autonomous University of Yucatan 2019. (*Reporte Anual Del Instituto Confucio de la UADY 2019*, 2019)

The three Confucius Institutes case studies in this thesis have shown constant growth in different ways from their inception in 2008 to the present, first, in the number of cultural activities and the attendance and interest of the general public; second, in the workforce structure of each institute; third in the number of scholarships awarded to study in China; and fourth, academically the three institutes managed to obtain the license to take the HSK exam and the license to take the HSKK oral exam. This shows the increased interest in Chinese language and culture in the three institutes with different locations.

4.5 Mexican public opinion on China

In general terms, it is still too early to assess the results of the Chinese government's efforts to change its image and perception in Mexico. However, some small changes are already being noticed, taking into account that there are two main influences on public opinion: the fact that the productive sectors have been seriously affected by competition from the Chinese products both in their exports to the United States and in the domestic market. And also, the fact that in Mexico there is a press that is formally independent of the State, reflects positions from various fields, particularly business and political (Cornejo, 2008, p. 182).

In Mexico there is little interest in knowing and studying the opinion of its citizens about China. There are very few studies available, and the existing ones are not very specific, since most of them are part of broader investigations that focus on studying various foreign policy issues, on issues of Asia, Asia-Pacific, foreign trade studies, among others. However, these studies are useful for analyzing the general perception and feelings of the population about the state of relations with China and the presence of Chinese citizens in the country. Opinion polls carried out by the

renowned Economic Research and Teaching Center (CIDE) in collaboration with the Mexican Council for International Affairs (COMEXI), show that very few citizens think that foreign relations are an important activity, and most see with mistrust that the customs of other countries spread in Mexico (Cornejo, 2008). For the most part, citizens believe that Mexico's international activism should focus on issues that directly affect the country. According to these surveys, Mexicans see as a threat what is related to their immediate concerns, such as economic and security problems, global economic crises and international terrorism.

In 2004, the aforementioned survey reveals that the proportion that perceived the rise of China as a world power as a serious threat to Mexico was 48%. During those years, as we have already said, there was great coverage by the national media about the threat that China posed to Mexico's foreign trade, particularly after the Asian country's entry into the WTO. Chinese products were also penetrating the Mexican market with great success, with the consequent impact and closure of many local manufacturing companies. In addition to the fact that during 2003 China displaced Mexico as the second largest supplier to the United States. In 2006, regarding the proportion that perceived the rise of China as a world power as a serious threat to Mexico, it dropped from 48% to 32% (Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE), 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2013 cited in Cornejo, 2018, pp. 184-186).

In 2008, among other indicators and questions in that year's survey are that China's public opinion was generally favorable with 64.6 points. And as for the relations between Mexico and China, 39% of the public believe that Mexico's relationship with China is one of friendship, 33% responded that they see it as partners, 9% as rivals and 7% as a threat. The survey included a new

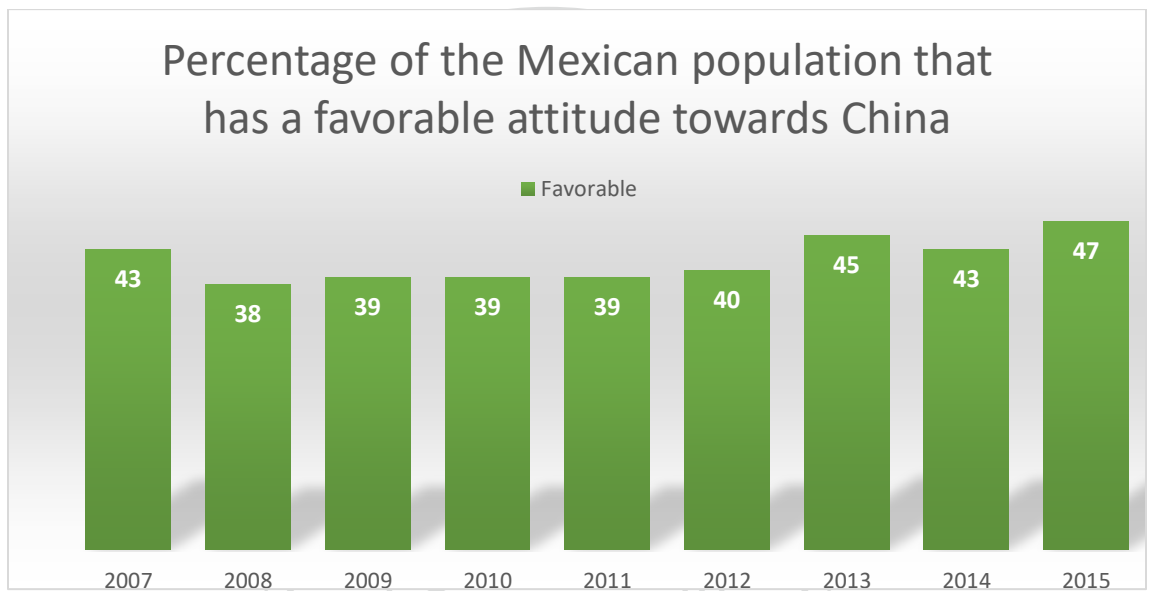
indicator, important for this thesis, where it found that Mexicans have a high average knowledge about China, the country obtained 80 points out of 100 points. It indicates a positive outcome of Beijing's efforts to disseminate information about China (pp. 186-188).

In the synthesis of the results of the CIDE survey in 2012-2013, it establishes that the emergence of China as a world power was scored 37%. Also, 69% agreed that Mexico signs a free trade agreement with China. And there is a positive evaluation of 46% of the general public about the economic rise of China and its influence in the world and in Mexico. (pp. 189-190).

For its part, The PEW Research Center, a non-partisan data center that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends that shape the world. It made a survey of public opinion on what percentages of the Mexican population have a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China. The whole question that was asked was: "Please tell me if you have a favorable opinion or an unfavorable opinion on China." According to this survey, in 2007 the percentage of the Mexican population that has an unfavorable attitude towards China was the 41%, while the percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable attitude towards China was the 43%. In 2008, the percentage of the Mexican population that has an unfavorable attitude towards China was 38%. Showing a 3-point improvement over the previous year, which may be linked to Chinese propaganda around the Olympics. In 2011, the percentage of the Mexican population that has an unfavorable attitude towards China reached the highest point with 46%, with a difference of 15 unfavorable points compared to the previous year, which was 31%. While the Percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable attitude towards China was 39%, maintaining the same percentage as in previous years. In sum, according to this organization's survey, the percentage of

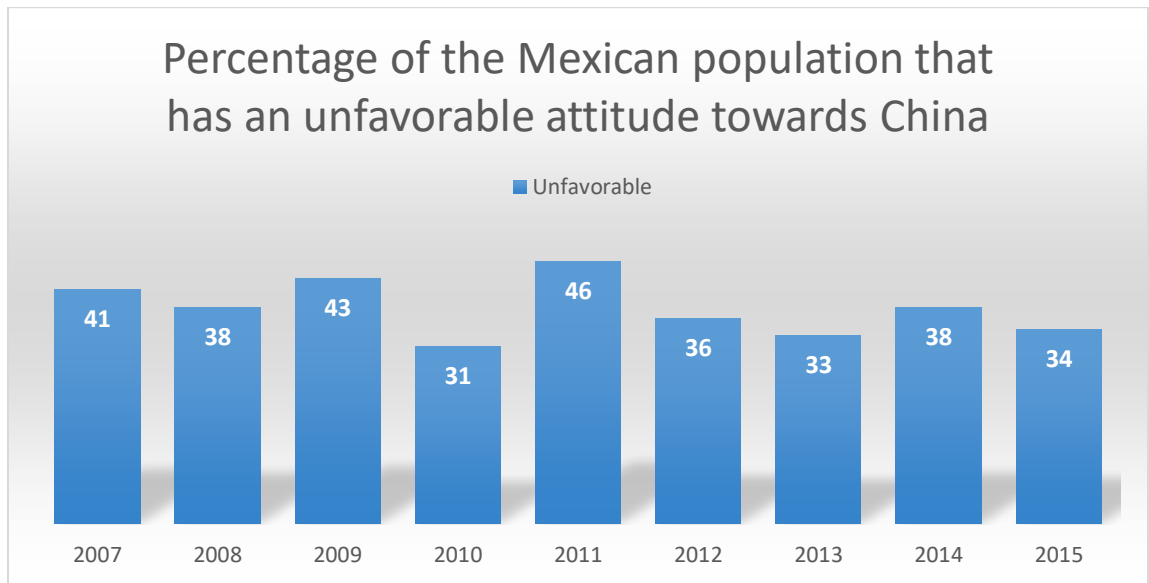
Mexicans who view China favorably, although it has increased, with ups and downs, between 2007 and 2015, its increase has been slow, from 43% to 47% of the population. And in the same period, with ups and downs, it is observed that the decrease in unfavorable opinions has been more remarkable, from 41 to 34 percent (Cornejo, 2018, pp. 191-193).

Figure 4.7 Percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable attitude towards China.



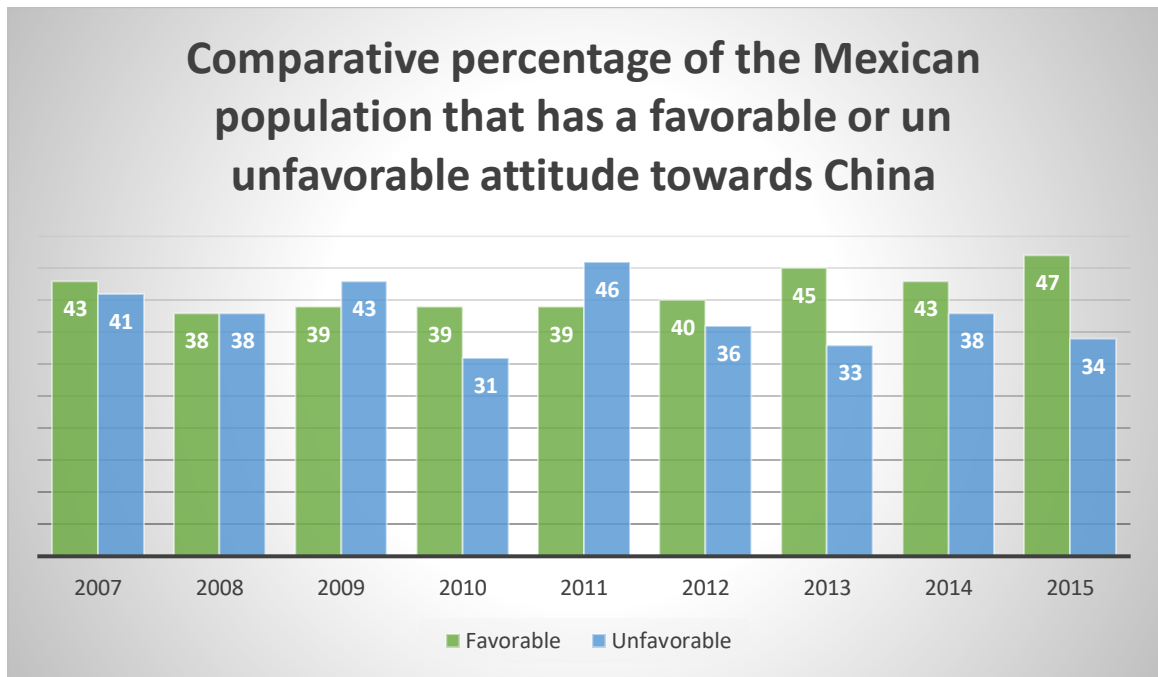
Source: Compilation based on survey of The PEW Research Center, on what percentages of the Mexican population have a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China (PEW, 2016, cited in Cornejo, 2018, p. 192).

Figure 4.8 Percentage of the Mexican population that has an unfavorable attitude towards China.



Source: Compilation based on survey of The PEW Research Center, on what percentages of the Mexican population have a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China (PEW, 2016, cited in Cornejo, 2018, pp. 192-193).

Figure 4.9 Comparative percentage of the Mexican population that has a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China.



Source: Compilation based on survey of The PEW Research Center, on what percentages of the Mexican population have a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards China (PEW, 2016, cited in Cornejo, 2018, p. 192).

As a general conclusion of the analysis of the surveys of the Economic Research and Teaching Center in collaboration with the Mexican Council for International Affairs, as well as the PEW Research Center, there is an increase in the positive opinion of Mexicans towards China. This, as we have already mentioned, despite the constant influence of the written press in which the perception of threat from China to the Mexican economy predominates. In general terms, the increase in positive opinion seems to indicate that Mexicans do not perceive China's economic results as a real threat and that the cultural policy of making their country known by the Chinese government has good results, since a majority of the Mexican population is aware of China and can formulate an opinion about that nation.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

In the context of international relations, it is possible to identify different ways in which a State interacts with other countries and with the international community in general. One way is based on the influence of soft power through public and cultural diplomacy strategies to generate attraction through culture. In this thesis it was identified that the People's Republic of China in recent decades has given a great boost and solidification to soft power in its foreign policy, as well as the development of its cultural diplomacy, through cultural exchanges between China and the world, due to the establishment and strengthening of strategic and collaborative relationships.

Through this research it was concluded that the main focus of Chinese soft power is to create a stable and welcoming international environment to gain global influence, due to the great image challenges it has faced worldwide. China has focused its cultural diplomacy strategy on building its international image, based on promoting China's modernization, its role as a responsible actor in the international system and the recognition of its cultural values, through the discourse of *Peaceful Rise* and in the rhetoric of *win-win cooperation* in its relationship with other countries. Therefore, China sought to increase the use of Soft Power to facilitate the construction of its image, where cultural diplomacy plays the role of mediator between what China is wanting to show the world and China's identity built by the environment of the international system. China seeks to integrate the notion of soft power into its diplomatic strategies and uses cultural diplomacy to interact with international audiences, resolve conflicts, and create a peaceful international environment for China's development, that is, it uses cultural diplomacy as a means to generate and exercise soft power.

In this sense, since the beginning of the new millennium, China has known how to exploit its cultural riches and has devoted enormous efforts to the dissemination of its culture throughout the world, through a program planned and executed by the Government itself: the Confucius Institutes. The Confucius Institutes are an instrument of Chinese cultural diplomacy responsible for the execution of various projects and cultural activities that allow overcoming the linguistic and cultural barriers that exist, but also testify to the advances that have been made in promoting mutual understanding between China and other countries. The Confucius Institutes were identified as key elements in the strengthening and maintenance of Mexico-China relations, since they generate attraction and admiration for Chinese culture. Its creation and operation are part of the diplomatic strategy of the People's Republic of China to fulfill its objectives of national interest, focused on improving its influence in Mexico, and international projection and position.

China's soft cultural power in Mexico is exercised through the triangulation of the Confucius Institutes. In Mexico, these institutes function diplomatically with the consent of the Mexican government, in its power to direct the country's foreign and educational policy and within the framework of the bilateral relationship. The two main objectives of the Confucius Institutes, which are the promotion of the Chinese language and culture, are successfully carried out in the Confucius Institutes of Mexico based on the growth of its student population, as well as participation and interest from the general public. It can be established that the Confucius Institutes of Mexico are an instrument of Chinese cultural diplomacy, since they promote the Chinese language and culture and are an instrument of cooperation between both countries, especially due

to their operational structure of joint ventures between universities in Mexico and China, which indicates the participation and cooperation of both countries and their universities.

The establishment of the Confucius Institutes at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua, the Autonomous University of Mexico, and the Autonomous University of Yucatán has served these three universities to satisfy the demand for language courses of the university population; provide an academic exchange option, an alternative to binational agreements; and internationalize its activities with the Center for Mexican Studies (CEM) of the Beijing University of Foreign Studies and with the other partner universities in China.

The Chinese cultural diplomacy model and its strategy in Mexico have been beneficial for both countries, because they have functioned as a communication platform with the political elite capable of influencing the foreign policy of each party. However, regarding its function as a communication bridge with the local population, Chinese cultural diplomacy is still at an early stage to have specific data on whether the work with Confucius institutes generates a stable and lasting communication feasible to convert the cultural resources in soft power. In the cultural soft power of China in Mexico is still in an initial state, that is, in the stage in which sending the positive message has as its first purpose to be heard by the audience, not necessarily with the aim of turning it into actions that benefit China, but in establishing a relationship of tolerance and respect for the message, while remaining in the consciousness of public opinion in general. In the promotion of the Chinese language and culture by the Confucius Institutes in Mexico has managed to spread a better image of China in the student population and in the general population that attends courses

and cultural activities, in addition to attracting a greater number of interested students year after year despite challenges and criticism.

Limitation of This Study

This thesis was carried out through a multiple case study, which allowed me to put my assumptions and questions in context, and thus examine the differences and similarities, in organization, operation, growth, organizational structure, classes, certifications, workshops and cultural activities offered in three Confucius Institutes in different states and geographic locations of Mexico. Also, through the multiple case study method I was able to analyze the individual work of each of the specific Confucius Institutes in Mexico where I collected specific information. However, due to the design of my research, I realized that this study suffers from a lack of generalizability. There are five Confucius Institutes in Mexico, for this study three Confucius Institutions were selected, that represent different geographic areas in Mexico, however, when conducting the analysis, I realized that classifying Confucius Institutes by location is not enough.

Another limitation of this study is the lack of access to information and data from the selected Confucius Institutes, since not all the information is accessible to the public and the information published from each institute on their web pages or on the official web pages of the host universities, is at the discretion of each university or institute. In general, there is a lack of quantitative data such as the total number of registrations, scholarships awarded each year, number of participants in events, project expenses, budget and annual expenses. Since the information published is at the discretion of each university or institute, there is a lack of consistency in the information from one year to the next. That is, one year you can find the information relevant to

scholarships awarded and infrastructure budget, which will not be found in the following year's report. It is important to mention that due to COVID-19 I was not able to physically visit the institutes and conduct field interviews with the students on campus, as well as with the directors, teachers and personnel of the institutes as I had planned to have an in-depth investigation of the case studies.

Areas for Future Research

This study aims to know the current situation of the relationship between soft power and cultural diplomacy implemented by the Chinese government in its foreign policy strategy in Mexico and how Chinese cultural policy has developed in Mexico through the Confucius Institutes. However, there are still considerable efforts to be made to fully understand the Chinese government's foreign policy strategy in Mexico, how the Confucius Institutes have developed, and the impact of the Confucius Institutes in Mexico, which are still in an early phase, constantly changing and growing.

A more in-depth investigation should be carried out on the development of a more defined typology of Confucius Institutes in Mexico with field interviews of students from both the Confucius institute and the host university, as well as the general public that participates in the activities of the Institutes, to have more specific data on their perceptions and the influence of the Confucius Institutes in the student community and the general public. Also, a comparative analysis of the five Confucius Institutes in Mexico is an area of opportunity for research, in order to have a broad and complete vision of their development and influence, their diversities and local differences, as well as their social impact.

Furthermore, it is necessary to carry out a comparative study with Confucius institutes from other Latin American countries that share some similarities in political and social circumstances with those of Mexico, which will help to understand the influence and typology of Chinese foreign policy in Latin America. In addition, it is necessary to carry out a comparative study with Confucius institutes of other Latin American countries that share some similarities in political and social circumstances with those of Mexico, which will help to understand in a focused way the international operation, influence, the specific forms of operation and the typology. of Confucius Institutes in Latin America. Or also, a case study of the Confucius Institutes of more than two Latin American countries to have a broad knowledge of the influence of Chinese foreign policy in Latin America. Since there is a lack of comparative studies and case studies of Confucius Institutes in Latin America.

Additionally, it is important to mention that surveys and attitude surveys are necessary to measure the real impact of Confucius Institutes in countries with hard data, from different perspectives; politics, economy, general population, businessmen or student community. Since quantitative data from surveys are complementary to qualitative data investigations.

References

Acuerdo Especifico de Cooperación Académica y Cultural entre la Universidad de Estudios Internacionales de Beijing de la Republica Popular de China y la Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua del Estado de Chihuahua de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. (n.d.). Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores. Retrieved December 7, 2020, from https://coordinacionpolitica.sre.gob.mx/images/stories/documentos_gobiernos/rai/chh/chihua39.pdf

Ang, I., Isar, Y. R., & Mar, P. (2015). Cultural diplomacy: beyond the national interest?. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21(4), 365-381.

Bahamón Rojas, J. (2012). *Análisis del proceso de transformación de la política China, a través del modelo de apertura económica* (Doctoral dissertation, Universidad del Rosario).

Bartesaghi, I. (2015). El Foro CELAC-China¿ respuesta al Libro Blanco de China para las relaciones con América Latina y el Caribe?. *Relaciones políticas e internacionales 2017*.

Beard, D. S. R., & Menechelli Filho, P. (2019). Chinese Cultural Diplomacy: instruments in China's strategy for international insertion in the 21st Century. *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 62(1).

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods, 4th Edition* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Confucius Institute. (n.d.). Haban. Retrieved November 30, 2020, from http://english.hanban.org/node_7880.htm

Conoce el Instituto Confucio | Coordinacion General de Cooperacion e Internacionalizacion | Rectoria. (n.d.). Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán Global. Retrieved December 5, 2020, from <http://www.uadyglobal.uady.mx/index.php?modulo=contenido&id=143&tempId=238>

Cornejo, R. (2008). México y China: diplomacia, competencia económica y percepciones. *Foro Internacional*, 330-351.

Cornejo, R. (2018). *La política cultural de China en América Latina*. El Colegio de Mexico AC.

Cornejo, R., & Martínez, I. (2018). MÉXICO EN LA DIPLOMACIA CULTURAL DE CHINA. In Cornejo R. (Ed.), *La política cultural de China en América Latina* (pp. 105-156). Ciudad de México, México: Colegio de Mexico. Retrieved October 28, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv8bt143.6>

Cull, N. J. (2009). *Public diplomacy: Lessons from the past* (No. s 12). Los Angeles, CA: Figueroa Press.

Cummings, M. C. (2003). *Cultural diplomacy and the United States government: A survey*. Center for arts and culture.

Delage, F. (2007). De Deng Xiaoping a Hu Jintao: Treinta años de reformas en China.

Digital., T.-L. N. (2018, November 26). *Manda Instituto Confucio de la UACH a 20 chihuahuenses a China*. Tiempo. http://tiempo.com.mx/noticia/160570-chihuahua_instituto_confucio_uach_20_personas_china/1

Ding, S. (2008). *The dragon's hidden wings: how China rises with its soft power* / Sheng Ding. Lexington Books.

Durand, J. P., Rodríguez, R., & Ramírez, J. J. (2017). Internacionalización en la Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua. *La internacionalización en las instituciones de educación superior mexicanas. Experiencias de vinculación con Asia, México, CINVESTAV-RIMAC*, 163-180

d'Hooghe, I. (2007). *The rise of China's public diplomacy*. The Hague, Netherlands: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

d'Hooghe, I. (2011). The expansion of China's public diplomacy system. In *Soft Power in China* (pp. 19-35). Palgrave Macmillan, New York. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230116375_2

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1991). Better stories and better constructs: The case for rigor and comparative logic. *Academy of Management review*, 16(3), 620-627.

Encuesta Crical 2015. (2015, February 17). CRICAL. https://www.crical.org/?page_id=650&

García, T. D. J. P., & Tello, O. A. S. (2019). Soft power y nueva diplomacia china en el siglo XXI con países del sur global: el caso latinoamericano. *Online Journal Mundo Asia Pacífico*, 8(14), 28-44.

George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. mit Press.

Gil, J. (2017). *Soft Power and the worldwide promotion of Chinese language learning: the Confucius Institute project*. Multilingual Matters.

HanBan-Confucius Institute/ClassRoom-About Confucius Institute/ClassRoom. (n.d.). Hanban. Retrieved December 4, 2020, from http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm

Hanban-News. (2017, October 26). Hanban. http://english.hanban.org/article/2017-10/26/content_703508.htm

Hanban-News. (2018, January 31). Hanban. http://english.hanban.org/article/2018-01/31/content_717088.htm

Hanban-UNAM, "Collaboration Agreement between the National Office for the Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language of China (HANBAN) and the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)", held in Mexico City, on November 22, 2006, registration number 19310-1595-13-XI-06. http://economia.unam.mx/deschimex/cechimex/chmxExtras/Convenios/ConvenioHanban19310-1595-13-XI-06_esp.pdf

Hartig, F. (2014). New Public Diplomacy Meets Old Public Diplomacy – the Case of China and Its Confucius Institutes. *New Global Studies*, 8(3), 331–352. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ngs-2014-0029>

Hartig, F. (2016). *Chinese public diplomacy: the rise of the Confucius Institute / Falk Hartig*. Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa business.

Hartig, F. (2016). How China Understands Public Diplomacy: The Importance of National Image for National Interests. *International Studies Review*, 18(4), 655–680. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viw007>

Hartig, F., & Hartig, F. (2012). Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China. *Chinese Journal of Political Science*, 17(1), 53–76. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-011-9178-7>

Hu, J. “Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all.” *Report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, October 15, 2007. <http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm> [Accessed 19 Oct 2020].

Hubbert, J. (2014). *Ambiguous States: Confucius Institutes and Chinese Soft Power in the U.S. Classroom*. *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 37(2), 329–349. <https://doi.org/10.1111/plar.12078>

Informes Anuales de Gestion. (2019, October 16). Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua. http://transparencia.uach.mx/informacion_publica_de_oficio/fraccion_xvii.html

Informe anual, CELE-UNAM. (2019). Universidad Autonoma de Mexico. <http://enallt.unam.mx/index.php?categoria=9&contenido=160>

Instituto Confucio UACH. (n.d.). UACH Instituto Confucio. Retrieved December 9, 2020, from <https://uach.mx/instituto-confucio/?fbclid=IwAR1nTOMDFGIwGDxMRs8QqdQgmrpVupanxJJNKCxPUF9COotcfkXOR9kRjkY>

Jakhar, B. P. (2019, September 7). *Confucius Institutes: The growth of China's controversial cultural branch*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49511231>

Kang, H. (2013). Reframing cultural diplomacy: international cultural politics of soft power and the creative economy. URL: <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/academy/content/pdf/participant-papers/2011-08-loam/Reframing-Cultural-Diplomacy-International-Cultural-Politics-of-Soft-Power-and-the-Creative-Economy-Hyungseok-Kang.pdf>.

Kurlantzick, J. (2007). *Charm offensive: How China's soft power is transforming the world* / Joshua Kurlantzick. Yale University Press.

Kong, L. (2019). *Exploring China's Soft Power: Manifestations of the Chinese Dream in Contemporary Practices of Cultural Diplomacy* (Doctoral dissertation, University of York).

Lenczowski, J. (2008). Cultural diplomacy, political influence, and integrated strategy. *Strategic influence: Public diplomacy, counterpropaganda, and political warfare*.

Li, C. (n.d.). *Vigorously Promoting the Guiding Thought of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China*. Qiushi Journal Online. Retrieved October 20, 2020. http://english.qstheory.cn/magazine/201201/201203/t20120331_149055.htm

Lo, J. T. (2014). Pan, S. (2014). 'Confucius Institutes and China's Soft Power: Practices and Paradoxes'. *Compare*, 1-17.

Mark, S. (2009). *A greater role for cultural diplomacy* (pp. 1-51). Clingendael: Netherlands Institute of International Relations.

Melissen, J. (2005). *Wielding soft power: the new public diplomacy* (p. 4). Netherlands: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2.^a ed.). Sage Pubns.

Mingjiang, L. (2008). *China Debates Soft Power*. Chinese Journal of International Politics, 2(2), 287–308. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/pon011>

Ministerie van Algemene Zaken. (1987, June 22). *Culture and Diplomacy*. Report | The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy. <https://english.wrr.nl/publications/reports/1987/06/22/culture-and-diplomacy>

Mohajan, H. K. (2018). Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7(1), 23-48.

Montiel, E. (2010). *Diplomacia Cultural Un Enfoque Estrategico de Politica Exterior para la era Intercultural*. Guatemala: UNESCO.

Nye, J. S. (2003). Propaganda isn't the way: Soft power. *The International Herald Tribune*, 10.

Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power and American Foreign Policy*. *Political Science Quarterly*, 119(2), 255–270. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20202345>

Nye, J. (2004). *Soft power : the means to success in world politics* / Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (1st ed.). Public Affairs.

Nye, J. (2004). *Power in the global information age: from realism to globalization* / Joseph S. Nye, Jr. Routledge.

Nye, J. (2008). Public Diplomacy and Soft Power. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1).

Nye, J. (2011). *The future of power* / Joseph S. Nye. (1st ed.). PublicAffairs.

Odinye, I. S. (2020). CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE: A TOOL FOR CHINESE CULTURAL DIPLOMACY. *NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF AFRICAN STUDIES (NJAS)*, 2(1).

Objetivos y Funciones – CRICAL // Centro Regional de Institutos Confucio para América Latina. (n.d.). CRICAL. Retrieved December 1, 2020, from https://www.critical.org/?page_id=56

Oqubay, A., & Lin, J. Y. (Eds.). (2019). *China-Africa and an Economic Transformation*. Oxford University Press.

Organigrama 2019. (2019). Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán Global. http://www.uadyglobal.uady.mx/files/file/Organigrama_2019.pdf

Pan, S. (2013). *Confucius Institute project: China's cultural diplomacy and soft power projection*. *Asian Education and Development Studies*, 2(1), 22–33. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20463161311297608>

Peterson, R. (2017). *Outsourced to China: Confucius Institutes and Soft Power in American Higher Education. A Report by the National Association of Scholars*. National Association of Scholars. 221 Witherspoon Street 2nd Floor, Princeton, NJ 08542-3215.

Peters, E. D. (2015). *China's Evolving Role in Latin America: Can it Be a Win-Win?*. Atlantic Council.

Qin, Y. (2011). Development of International Relations theory in China: progress through debates. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 11(2), 231-257.

Reporte Anual del Instituto Confucio de la UADY 2019. (2019, November 15). Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán Global. <http://www.uadyglobal.uady.mx/index.php?modulo=contenido&id=294>

Rhoads, R. A., Wang, X., Shi, X., Chang, Y., & Baocheng, J. (2014). *China's Rising Research Universities: A New Era of Global Ambition.* Johns Hopkins University Press.

Saddiki, S. (2009). *The role of cultural diplomacy in international relations.* Revista CIDOB d'afers internacionals, 88, 107–118.

Shixue, J. (2006). Una mirada china a las relaciones con América Latina. *Nueva Sociedad*, 203, 62-78.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice.* SAGE publications.

Song, X. (2012). Elementos fundamentales del marco teórico de la política exterior de China. *China en América Latina. Bogotá, Colombia: Universidad Externado de Colombia*, 89-100.

Thomas, G. (2011). A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411409884>

UNAM-ULCB, articles III and IV of the “Collaboration Agreement between the National Autonomous University of Mexico of the United Mexican States and the Beijing University of Language and Culture of the People's Republic of China”, with registration number: 21306-083-19 -II-08. <http://www.economia.unam.mx/deschimex/cechimex/chmxExtras/Convenios/BLCU21306-083-19-II-08.pdf>

UNESCO. (n.d.). *The Soft Power of Culture.* Retrieved November 3, 2020, from http://www.unesco.org/culture/culture-sector-knowledge-management-tools/11_Info%20Sheet_Soft%20Power.pdf

Wang, Y. (2008). Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 257–273. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207312757>

Wastnidge, E. (2015). The Modalities of Iranian Soft Power: From Cultural Diplomacy to Soft War. *POLITICS*, 35(3-4), 364-377.

White Paper on Peaceful Development Road Published. (2005, December 22). China.Org. <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm>

Wilson, E. (2008). Hard Power, Soft Power, Smart Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207312618>

Wu, Y. (2018). The Rise of China with Cultural Soft Power in the Age of Globalization. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 8(5), 764–765. <https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5836/2018.05.006>

Xi, J. (2014a, January 1). *China to promote cultural soft power - Chinadaily.com.cn*. China Daily. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-01/01/content_17208354.htm

Xi, J. (2017, November 4). *Full text of Xi Jinping's report at 19th CPC National Congress - China - Chinadaily.com.cn*. China Daily. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thcpcnationalcongress/2017-11/04/content_34115212.htm

Xiaoping, S., Contardo, M., Ricardo, M. L., Bacchiega, J., & Bogado Bordazar, L. L. (2014). Las relaciones entre China y América Latina y los enigmas de los lazos históricos.

Yang, Y. (2020). Looking inward: How does Chinese public diplomacy work at home? *British Journal of Politics & International Relations*, 22(3), 369–386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148120917583>

Zamorano, M. M. (2016). Reframing cultural diplomacy: The instrumentalization of culture under the soft power theory. *Culture Unbound*, 8(2), 165-186.

Zhang, G. (2017). *Research outline for China's cultural soft power / by Guozuo Zhang*. Springer Singapore.

Zhao, Y. (2006). La globalización económica de China y su colaboración con la economía europea. *CLM. Economía*, (9), 321-346.

Zhao, K. (2015). The motivation behind China's public diplomacy. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 8(2), 167-196.