

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The births of International Studies in China

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## Abstract

This article explores how International Studies as a scientific discipline emerged and developed in China, against the background of a Sinocentric world order that had predominated in East Asia for a long time. The argument of this article is threefold. First, the discipline relied heavily on historical, legal, and political studies, and placed a heavy focus on the investigation of China's integration into the Westphalian system. Second, studies of International Relations were grounded in a problem-solving approach to various issues China was facing at various times in the course of modernisation. Third, the historical development of International Studies in China has had a profound impact on the current IR scholarship in both the PRC and Taiwan, including the recent surge of attempts to establish a Chinese School of IR theory in China and the voluntary acceptance of Western IR in Taiwan. By way of conclusion, the article suggests that there is still an indigenous Chinese site of agency with regards to developing IR. This agency exists despite the fact that in the course of the disciplinary institutionalisation of IR Chinese scholars have largely absorbed Western knowledge.

**Keywords:** Post-Western IR; Historiography; Chinese Jurisprudence; Chinese Diplomatic History; Chinese IR

## Introduction

International Relations (IR) as a discipline developed over the course of the twentieth century to predominantly focus on the concerns of powerful Western states and to elaborate conceptual frameworks that could be applied elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> One important critique of this Western-centric nature of IR is that it privileges Western thought over all other forms of thought and makes Western reason the sole criterion for 'correct' and 'universal' knowledge. Mainstream IR scholarship thus reflects the identity and interests of the West – specifically the Anglo-American world – by encouraging its scholars to exclude non-Western systems of thought and using its theoretical perspectives to justify and perpetuate Western hegemony.<sup>2</sup> The non-Western world's subjectivity is often missing or ignored. Hence, over the past two decades, there has been an emerging post-Western quest in IR that urges IR scholars to 're-world' the subaltern voice.<sup>3</sup> One of the main goals of this quest has been to rediscover the lost historical and contemporary voices of

<sup>1</sup>See Steve Smith, 'The United States and the discipline of International Relations: Hegemonic country, hegemonic discipline', *International Studies Review*, 4:2 (2002), pp. 67–85; Ole Wæver, 'The sociology of a not so international discipline: American and European developments in International Relations', *International Organization*, 52:4 (1998), pp. 687–727.

<sup>2</sup>See John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760–2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Sanjay Seth, 'Postcolonial theory and the critique of International Relations', *Millennium*, 40 (2011), pp. 167–83.

<sup>3</sup>See Arlene B. Tickner and David L. Blaney (eds), *Thinking International Relations Differently* (London: Routledge, 2012); Meghana Nayak and Eric Selbin, *Decentering International Relations* (London: Zen Books, 2010); L. H. M. Ling, *Postcolonial International Relations: Conquest and Desire between Asia and the West* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

the subalterns. More specifically, post-Western IR scholarship urges IR scholars to ‘re-world’ subaltern sites by examining how Western discourses on IR have been interpreted and appropriated on each particular site. The quest for post-Western IR accordingly attends predominantly to the rediscovering of agency at the subaltern site for adaptation, feedback, and reconstruction of the Western influence encountered.<sup>4</sup>

A rising China has inspired great interest in the studies of International Relations from the Chinese perspective. Plural Chinese scholars in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have argued there should be a Chinese School of IR Theory, and there have been various attempts to establish the Chinese theory of International Relations over the past decades.<sup>5</sup> Despite different focuses on the methods, concepts, and approaches that characterise the Chinese School, all of them have tried to deperipheralise China in the world of theory. By incorporating China’s historical experiences and ideas – derived from indigenous traditional philosophies and traditions – scholars attempt to understand, explain, and interpret world politics in a distinctively Chinese way. Nevertheless, the potential for a Chinese understanding of international relations is *not* taking a hold in the Republic of China (ROC, or Taiwan), which is also deeply influenced by traditional Chinese culture.<sup>6</sup> They remain far more receptive to Anglocentric/Western IR. Although there seems to be some efforts by Taiwanese scholars to go beyond Western approaches,<sup>7</sup> generally speaking, they have a relatively low voice throughout Taiwan’s IR community. As Shih observed, ‘Taiwan’s mainstream IR at all times mimics the development of American IR.’<sup>8</sup>

Why do the academic circles of PRC and Taiwan embark on these two completely different routes? To answer this question, it is necessary to look into how International Studies developed as a field of study in Modern China, including the Qing Dynasty, the Republic in Beijing and Nanjing, and contemporary China and Taiwan. Thus, this article aims to look to the Chinese site for an origin of non-Western sources upon which the site could improvise a composite and hybrid kind of global IR. It will explore how International Studies as a scientific discipline emerged and developed in modern China, against the background of a Sinocentric world order that had predominated in East Asia for a long time. Specifically, it will address the following questions. Firstly, how did the ideas of the ‘international’ travel to China, through what channels, and how were they initially received in China? Secondly, how did people, ideas, and institutions come together to form a distinct scientific discipline of International Studies in China? And finally, combining these two, what are the legacies of the development of the International Studies in PRC and Taiwan? By ‘International Studies’ as a scientific discipline I am referring to a field of study in which intellectuals and experts – practitioners, translators, historians, legal scholars, political theorists/scientists – are sustained by institutionalisation in their pursuit of systematic knowledge on world politics.

The traces of the development of the disciplinary institutionalisation and professional affiliation of their subjects in China resonate the call for better understanding as to how IR arrived and developed in the non-Western world. In IR historiography, Western-centric disciplinary narratives of IR cause a ‘selective amnesia about IR’s past’.<sup>9</sup> For instance, the mainstream narrative of IR’s disciplinary history completely evades the fact that some of the earliest debates in the nascent

<sup>4</sup>Chih-yu Shih and Yih-jye Hwang, ‘Re-worlding the “West” in post-Western IR: The “theory migrant” of *Sun Zi’s the Art of War* in the Anglosphere’, *International Relations of the Asia Pacific*, 18:3 (2018), pp. 421–48.

<sup>5</sup>Among others, Yan Xuetong’s moral realism, Zhao Tingyang’s conception of the *Tianxia* system, and Qin Yaqing’s relational theory of world politics are the most representative and influential.

<sup>6</sup>Some even argue that Confucian legacy is considerably better preserved in Taiwan in comparison with China’s. See Chun-chieh Hwang, *Confucianism and Modern Taiwan* (Beijing: Chinese Social Science Press, 2001).

<sup>7</sup>Shih Chih-yu is the most prominent scholars who constantly challenge the mainstream IR. He has proposed the ‘balance of relations’ theory to impugn the long-standing classic idea of ‘balance of power’ in Western IRT. See Chih-yu Shih et al. *China and International Theory: The Balance of Relationships* (London: Routledge, 2019).

<sup>8</sup>Chih-yu Shih, ‘China rise syndromes? Drafting national schools of International Relations in Asia’, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, XXII:1 (2013), pp. 9–25.

<sup>9</sup>Vineet Thakur and Peter Vale, ‘The empty neighbourhood: Race and disciplinary silence’, in Jenny Edkins (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Critical International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 34–48; Robert Vitalis, *White*

field of IR were not about idealism *vis-à-vis* realism but imperialism *vis-à-vis* internationalism; they were not about 'peace and war' but 'race and empire'.<sup>10</sup> They further noted that there is still very little knowledge about how IR arrived and developed in the non-Western world. Thus, one could say that the field of IR historiography today has yet to appreciate how key processes that shape the knowledge and practice of international relations elsewhere can tell us more about world politics as a whole.

The argument of this article is threefold. First, many ideas and theories had travelled to China before International Studies was recognised as a discipline. In the beginning, Chinese intellectuals did not recognise International Studies as a coherent discipline. The discipline relied heavily on historical, legal, and political studies and placed a heavy focus on the investigation of China's integration into the Westphalian system. As time went by, the discipline was gradually understood as an independent discipline. The transplanted ideas and theories represented various genealogical lines of discourses and they inevitably constitute the multiple origins of International Studies in China. Second, studies of International Relations were grounded in a problem-solving approach to various issues China was facing at various times in the course of modernisation. This approach is inherited from the Confucian ideal of statecraft pragmatism (*jīngshì zhiyòng*), which can be traced back to the Utilitarian School of Confucianism during the Song Dynasty (960–1279).<sup>11</sup> Scholars, thinkers, and practitioners under the Imperial Qing, Republican, and Communist regime all upheld the ideal of statecraft pragmatism.<sup>12</sup> As a scholar, their academic thinking was always inseparable from the current reality. To paraphrase Robert Cox's renowned statement – 'International Studies as a field of study is always for someone and for some purpose' – Chinese IR is always for the Chinese nation, state, and its regimes. As a result, International Studies as discipline aimed to theoretically and empirically understand international relations from the Chinese perspective. Third, this article will further suggest that the historical development of International Studies in China has a profound impact on the current IR scholarship in both the PRC and Taiwan, including the recent surge of the attempts to establish the Chinese School of IR Theory in China and the voluntary acceptance of Western IR in Taiwan.

In what follows, this article will first discuss the development of diplomatic thought in China in the late nineteenth century amid the collapse of Chinese traditional world order. Subsequently, it will explore how International Studies was developed in the fields of international jurisprudence, diplomatic history, and IR respectively. By way of conclusion, the article will suggest that there is still an indigenous Chinese site of agency with regards to developing IR and IR Theory despite the fact that in the course of the disciplinary institutionalisation Chinese scholars has largely absorbed Western IR. It is noted that my coverage of International Studies writings is

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*World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018); Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception*.

<sup>10</sup>Thakur and Vale, 'The empty neighbourhood'; David Long and Brian C. Schmidt (eds), *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (New York: SUNY, 2005).

<sup>11</sup>In the Confucian Classics, no Confucian could be a true superior man, or *jūnzǐ*, without carrying out the complementarity of both 'self-cultivation' (*xiūshēn*) and 'the ordering of the world' (*zhìguó píngtiānxià*). In other words, the superior man can achieve completeness only if he cultivates himself in order to serve the general public. However, in real practice, different camps of Confucians tended to emphasise the primacy of one side over the other. During the Song dynasty, some utilitarian Confucians advocated political reforms and insisted that their reforms embodied the realisation of 'the ordering of the world'. They were often criticised by their opponents as ignoring 'self-cultivation'. At the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1636–1912), a group of intellectuals represented by Gu Yanwu, Huang Zongxi, Wang Fuzhi and others, after experiencing the collapse of the Ming Dynasty (1638–1644), wanted to focus on practical uses of knowledge to improve 'the ordering of society', that is, 'protecting the country and enriching the people'. Benjamin I. Schwartz, 'Some polarities in Confucian thought', in Arthur F. Wright (ed.), *Confucianism and Chinese Civilization* (New York: Atheneum, 1964); Hoyt C. Tillman, *Utilitarian Confucianism: Ch'en Liang's Challenge to Chu Hsi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

<sup>12</sup>Benjamin A. Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship: The Chang-chou School of New Text Confucianism in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis: Search for Order and Meaning, 1890–1911* (California: University of California Press, 1987).

not exhaustive, however, I have endeavoured to capture the overall tendency of the development of the discipline by focusing on a few key individuals and their works.

### The collapse of Chinese traditional world order and the development of diplomatic thoughts in the Qing Empire

For China, the concept of ‘international’ is a Western introduction.<sup>13</sup> The ideas and theories, such as sovereignty, were transplanted to China sporadically via periodicals and translation practices. Nevertheless, that does not mean that China never had any form of international studies. Various traditional schools of thought such as Confucianism are all concerned about China’s relations with the outside world, though they are very different from modern Western International Relations and are mainly preoccupied with Chinese traditional world order.<sup>14</sup> This section will firstly introduce China’s idea of ‘international’ from a Sinocentric perspective and its fall. It will then elucidate various diplomatic thoughts developed in China in the late nineteenth century in response to the Western encroachment.

The so-called Chinese world order is built upon the establishment of a Sinocentric hierarchy in the tributary system. For the tributary states, China did not interfere in their internal and external affairs, as long as they agreed with Sinocentric order and practiced its ceremonies and rituals. As Sinologist Yang Lien-sheng notes,<sup>15</sup> ‘[i]n theory, it should have been hierarchical in at least three ways, China being internal, large, and high and the barbarians being external, small, and low’. Moreover, its external relations are always reflected in its domestic social and political order, and are manifested in the Chinese notion of legitimacy, which is grounded in the pre-modern political idea – the mandate of heaven.<sup>16</sup>

The mandate of heaven ties in with the propriety of the ruler, or the ruler’s virtue. It is important to note that the ideal of a ruler’s virtue was not merely an ideological construct, but required actual material benefits for the populace.<sup>17</sup> The way for rulers to secure the ‘hearts of the people’ was not only to possess ‘benevolence’, but also to perform their duties well by assuring people’s welfare. The legitimacy of rulers was thus to a large extent performance-based. Moreover, the ‘benevolence’ performed by the rulers (that is, emperors) not only refers to the imperial subjects (that is, the Chinese people) but also to ‘foreigners’ – that is, tributary states and people living beyond the circle of tributary states. It signified an ‘attraction’ of the outer fringes of Chinese civilisation to become part of the Sinocentric system. Chinese emperors were considered to be ‘Sons of Heaven’, governing not just China but ‘all under heaven’. Foreign countries that wished to have relations with China were expected – and when possible – obliged to be integrated into this system and became tributary states, and the trade system was used to maintain this patriarchal relationship.<sup>18</sup> In such a way, China’s external order was perceived as part of its internal order. As a consequence, the traditional Chinese world order cannot be called ‘international’.<sup>19</sup>

Does that mean the Chinese had no idea about other civilised peoples in the world at all? As Yang noted,<sup>20</sup> it is inaccurate to claim so. China did have an idea of ‘international’ before

<sup>13</sup>Yongjin Zhang, ‘China’s entry into international society: Beyond the standard of “civilization”’, *Review of International Studies*, 17:1 (1991), pp. 3–16; Gerrit W. Gong, ‘China’s entry into international society’, in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>14</sup>Richard Louis Walker, *The Multi-State System of Ancient China* (Hamden, CT: The Shoe String Press, 1954).

<sup>15</sup>Lien-shen Yang, ‘Historical notes on the Chinese world order’, in John King Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 20.

<sup>16</sup>Dingxin Zhao, ‘The mandate of Heaven and performance legitimation in historical and contemporary China’, *American Behavioural Scientist*, 53:3 (2009), pp. 416–33.

<sup>17</sup>Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Asian Values and Human Rights: A Confucian Communitarian Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

<sup>18</sup>John King Fairbank, ‘Introduction’, in John King Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China’s Foreign Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 4.

<sup>19</sup>Fairbank, ‘Introduction’.

<sup>20</sup>Yang, ‘Historical notes’, pp. 20–2.

1800.<sup>21</sup> Firstly, the term *wai-guo*, literally meaning ‘foreign countries’, does not originate from the nineteenth century but in fact had a long history and can be traced back to the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD). In the Song dynasty (960–1279), the term ‘*waiguo liechuan*’, literally means ‘accounts of foreign countries’, and was one of the categories in historical writing at that time. Secondly, the concept of *guo*, literally meaning ‘countries or states’ also had a long history going back to the Zhou dynasty (c. 1046 BC–256 BC). According to Mencius, the three treasures of a state ruler can be identified as land, people, and government, which is in practice defining what the state was at that time. Thirdly, Sinocentrism does not mean that the concept of boundary or border did not exist. As Yang explained, the Chinese historical writing record numerous cases of territorial dispute and settlement between China and its neighbours, though the boundary need not always be a line. ‘It might be a belt of land in which both sides refrained from occupancy and cultivation, or a zone in which the people belonged to both countries, or a buffer state.’<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, it’s safe to assume that the idea of ‘international’ in the Western sense does not exist in China theory of Sinocentrism, ‘because the Son of Heaven was in any case superior to all rulers and peoples and their status therefore might easily shift back and forth through various degrees of proximity to his central authority’.<sup>23</sup>

As a result, there was no centralised institution similar to the modern Western institution of a foreign ministry prior to the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> The foreign affairs service that the Qing Dynasty inherited from other dynasties was authorised by the emperor to local officials in China’s borderlands on an *ad hoc* basis where foreign affairs occurred with the neighbouring countries. General Heilongjiang (or the Amur), for instance, were involved in matters such as business with Russia. They were also scattered in some departments in the central government office in accordance with their respective administrative responsibilities. For example, the Board of Ceremonies (*libu*) involved the reception of tributary envoys. The Court of Colonial Affairs (*lifan yan*) involved the communication of Russian. The Board of War (*bingbu*) was involved in the security of tributary envoys. The Board of Revenue (*hubu*) was responsible for the trade with tributary states in the designated areas in China.<sup>25</sup> It was not until 1861 after the defeat in the Second Opium War, that the Qing Empire established a government office, *Zongli Geguo Shiwu Yamen* (or *Zongli Yamen*) – literally meaning ‘office in charge of the affairs of the various nations’ – that was in charge of foreign affairs.<sup>26</sup> The establishment of the *Zongli Yamen* and foreign legations in Beijing signified the victory of the expanding the Westphalian system in the East. By the mid-1870s, China started sending its diplomatic envoys abroad, and began to train its Western-style diplomats and established its professional diplomatic education in the late Qing Dynasty.<sup>27</sup>

The responses by the Qing Empire to Western encroachment were greatly influenced by a line of thinking that sees power as an irreducible element of the political sphere, similar to realist thinking. As Hsu observed:

Historically, the Chinese had always felt that external troubles were a manifestation of internal weakness. If China was strong, barbarian problems would be solved before they arose. Self-strengthening was therefore a more important and basic solution to the barbarian problem.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Claudio Cioffi-Revilla and David Lai, ‘War and politics in Ancient China, 2700 B.C. to 722 B.C.: Measurement and comparative analysis’, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 39:3 (1995), pp. 467–94.

<sup>22</sup>Yang, ‘Historical notes’, p. 22.

<sup>23</sup>Fairbank, ‘Introduction’, p. 13.

<sup>24</sup>Minshu Liao, *A New Aspect of China’s Foreign Relations in the Qing Dynasty* (Taipei: National Chengchi University Press, 2013).

<sup>25</sup>For an analysis of the division of labour and operating mechanisms of central and local diplomacy in the Qing Dynasty, see *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>James Rudolph, *Negotiating Power in Late Imperial China: The Zongli Yamen and the Politics of Reform* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2008).

<sup>27</sup>Li, *The Emergence of the Modern Chinese Diplomats*.

<sup>28</sup>Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *China’s Entrance into the Family of Nations: The Diplomatic Phase, 1858–1880* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 144.

In the 1860s, China began its Self-Strengthening Movement, which started introducing Western technologies and ideas domestically on a large scale. It also put efforts into the training of foreign affairs talents. The *Tongwen Guan* (or the School of Combined Learning) was established in Beijing in 1862,<sup>29</sup> an official school that aimed to teach Western languages and knowledge. The Qing Court also regularly sent Chinese students and officials abroad.<sup>30</sup> However, the principle behind the Movement is the idea of ‘Chinese learning as substance, Western learning for application’ (*zhōngtǐ xiyòng*).<sup>31</sup> This idea was initially proposed by Feng Guifen in 1861, who argued for China’s self-strengthening and industrialisation by using Western technology and military systems, while retaining core Confucian principles. Therefore, all Western learning in this vein were merely a means of learning merits from the foreign to conquer the foreign and not passively absorb Western knowledge.

During that period, China’s mainstream diplomatic thought was based on the balance of power, alliance formation, and the active utilisation of international law to protect China’s national interests.<sup>32</sup> For instance, the main diplomatic tactic of Li Hongzhang – one of the main foreign policy decision-makers in the late Qing Empire – is twofold.<sup>33</sup> The first one is the tactic of ‘*yiyi zhiyi*’ – literally meaning ‘using one foreigner to constrain another foreigner’.<sup>34</sup> The idea is that the ways to maintain peace can be through manipulating power balance among foreign powers in China, dividing them and using the contradiction of their interests as a way to secure China’s interests. For instance, Li persuaded Korea to sign trade contracts with Western countries to constrain Japan’s ambition, and persuaded Vietnam to sign the trade contract with Britain and Germany to counterbalance France.<sup>35</sup> The second one is to abide by international law and international treaties, avoiding unilateral breach of international law and international treaties so that the foreign powers could not take opportunities to take advantage against China.<sup>36</sup> Li’s diplomatic tactic was the most representative diplomatic thinking in China during that period. However, whether such diplomatic tactics could be successfully implemented depended on whether the external environment was beneficial to China and whether China can provide sufficient incentives for other countries to intervene. Both the situation and the intervention were beyond the control of China, and the result was often the loss of more rights and interests. For this reason, the conventional wisdom of Chinese diplomacy was also being challenged and criticised. Yuan Shikai’s diplomatic thoughts represent the main alternative to Li. Yuan was a Chinese military and government official who rose to power during the late Qing dynasty. He was a key advocate for the modernisation projects. He became the first official president of the Republic of China in 1912.

At first glance, Yuan’s diplomatic thought is similar to Li’s, though closer inspection reveals some fundamental differences. Firstly, while Li’s compliance with the international law and international treaties is to avoid causing troubles at China’s end, Yuan believes that China can actively enter and abide by the treaties and use the provisions of the international law to maintain order and protect its own interests. Secondly, Yuan did not believe in the importance of public

<sup>29</sup>Melissa Mouat, ‘The establishment of the Tongwen Guan and the fragile Sino-British peace of the 1860s’, *Journal of World History*, 26:4 (2016), pp. 733–55.

<sup>30</sup>Jenny Huangfu Day, *Qing Travellers to the Far West: Diplomacy and the Information Order in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

<sup>31</sup>The concept was widespread among intellectuals in China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. See Jana S. Rošker, ‘Modernization of Confucian ontology in Taiwan and mainland China’, *Asian Philosophy*, 29:2 (2019), pp. 160–76.

<sup>32</sup>Linda Pomerantz-Zhang, *Wu Tingfang (1842–1922): Reform and Modernization in Modern Chinese History* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1992).

<sup>33</sup>While serving as Governor of Zhili for 25 years since 1870, Li was the de facto minister of foreign affairs of the Qing Empire.

<sup>34</sup>Chengren Wang and Tiejun Liu, *Research on Li Hongzhang’s Thought System* (Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 1998).

<sup>35</sup>Seo-Hyun Park, ‘Changing definitions of sovereignty in nineteenth-century East Asia: Japan and Korea between China and the West’, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, 13:2 (2013), pp. 281–307.

<sup>36</sup>Wang and Liu, *Research on Li Hongzhang’s Thought System*.

international law, the balance of power, and the concept of alliances. Yuan stated in his memorial to the Qing Court that when the countries' powers were similar they could start speaking of international law; when countries could peacefully coexist they could begin relying on the statute; and when countries could offer something they could rely on their allies.<sup>37</sup> After the defeat of the First Sino-Japanese War, these conditions did not exist according to Yuan. Therefore, public international law, treaties, and alliances could not assure China's security. In his view, China was no longer able to use the tactic of 'yiyi zhiyi'. Instead, only large amounts of wealth and strong armies could fundamentally improve the predicament China was facing. However, Yuan also realised that China was not able to become a rich country with strong armies in the short term. Therefore, especially after the Boxer Rebellion, Yuan also upheld a pragmatic view on public international law and treaties.

In short, Yuan's view on international law was echoed by other diplomatic practitioners at the time. Many of them observed that the Western countries often do not abide by the international law and do their best to benefit from it. They therefore concluded that when China was weak, in order to avoid incessant harm, the international law should be used tactically to protect national interests. However, when China established itself as a powerful state, it would not need to conform to international law.<sup>38</sup>

### The introduction of international law to China and its receptions

Modern international law developed as part of the emergence of the European states system from the seventeenth century onwards. When the Western system of international law – with its ideas of sovereignty and sovereign equality – was introduced to China after the 1840s, it represented a severe challenge to the Sinocentric world order. However, just like the idea of 'international' discussed in previous section, there were also codes of conduct in the interstate relations that formed in ancient China. During the spring and autumn and Warring States Periods for instance, some diplomatic etiquettes and diplomatic rules were clearly observed in the interaction among states at that time. Despite that, China was indeed not aware of the existence of the modern international law before it was introduced to China by Western missionaries in the late Qing Dynasty. At the time it was regarded as a branch of *xixue* – a broad term literally meaning Western learning – that also included Western natural and social sciences at that time.

In 1839, the American missionary Peter Parker, at the request of Lin Zexu (1785–1850), translated some chapters of Swiss legal scholar Emer de Vattel's 1758 work *The Laws of Nations* into Chinese.<sup>39</sup> As Hsu noted,<sup>40</sup> 'the translation was not literal but paraphrastic, and the translator's comments were in a laboured and unliterary style'. Parker's translation undoubtedly influenced Lin's decision-making when dealing with the British government over the issue of opium. Lin later acted along the lines discussed in the text. He first declared opium contraband in 1839 and demanded the British government order the cessation of opium trade. After these measures failed, he turned to the use of force. Lin believed that his actions were morally and legally correct, even in the context of Western international law.<sup>41</sup>

With the dismissal of Lin in 1840 and the end of the Opium War in 1842, the Chinese interest in international law began to fade. It was not until twenty years later when China was defeated during the Second Opium War and signed the Convention of Beijing in 1860, that the Chinese

<sup>37</sup>Shenhua Lu, *Research on Yuan Shikai's Diplomatic Strategy in the Late Qing Dynasty (I)* (Taipei: Hua Mulan Culture Press, 2011).

<sup>38</sup>Xue Fucheng (1838–1894), for instance. See Yuebin Liu, *Research on Xue Fucheng's Diplomatic Thought* (Beijing: Xueyuan Press, 2011); Fenglin Ding, *Biography of Xue Fucheng* (Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 1998).

<sup>39</sup>For the introduction and translation of international law in the late Qing period, see Rune Svarverud, *International Law as World Order in Late Imperial China: Translation, Reception and Discourse, 1847–1911* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

<sup>40</sup>Hsu, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations*, p. 123.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 125.

began to realise the necessity of having some knowledge of international law when dealing with the West. After that time, the number of international legal texts translated by Western missionaries increased.<sup>42</sup> Among others, American missionary A. T. William Martin's translation of the book *Law of Nations* (1894) was the first complete translation of an international law work in China. He was convinced that he was dedicating the best achievements of European civilisation to China, and through his work the Chinese government could be taken one step closer to the Christianity.<sup>43</sup> Martin later also served as the President and Professor of International Law at *Tongwen Guan* in Beijing from 1868 to 1894, and the first chancellor at the Imperial University of Beijing from 1898 to 1900. During his time at *Tongwen Guan*, Martin, together with his students, translated and published a number of other works on international law.<sup>44</sup>

Entering the twentieth century, with an increasing number of law students from China who studied abroad from the late Qing Dynasty, as well as the Western powers' promise of removing the system of extraterritorial legal power in China when the modern legal system of China became more sound, the process of introducing international law to China was further accelerated.<sup>45</sup> By 1949, a total of 1,045 translations and textbooks of international law were published in China, though this did not yet include various international conventions and bilateral treaties, United Nations conference documents, reports, proposals, agreements, etc.<sup>46</sup> In addition, during this period, about 540 papers on international law were published in Chinese academia.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, in higher education, studies of international law were significantly advanced and became a model subject that drove education in other disciplines concerning international relations. As early as 1867, William Martin taught a course titled 'Public Law of the Nations' at the Imperial University of Beijing. Later, international law was also a major subject in the courses offered by the Imperial School of Law (*jīngshī fǎlǚ xuétáng*), founded in 1906 during the New Policies of the late Qing Dynasty (1901–12).<sup>48</sup>

With the efforts mostly made by traditional scholars and missionaries in the late Qing Dynasty, studies of international law became more and more popular in China. After the Republic was established in 1912, a group of scholars tried to make international law a professional discipline. They aimed to establish a Western-style academic discipline in Chinese higher education. Among others, the founding of the Association for International Law Studies (*guójìfǎ yánjiū huì*), initiated by Lu Zhengxiang (1871–1949) was one of the most important efforts. As early as 1898, some reform-minded literati founded the Public Law Society (*gōngfǎ xuéhuì*) in Hunan. However, they faced opposition from the conservative faction led by Empress Dowager Cixi. As the Reform Movement of 1898 failed, the Public Law Society came to an abrupt halt.<sup>49</sup> More than ten years later, Lu took another initiative, trying to open up another path to scientisation and professionalisation of the studies of international law in China.

Lu graduated from *Tongwen Guan* in 1892 and immediately went to St Petersburg to work as an interpreter for the Chinese Embassy. Since then, he spent most of his time in Europe. After Yuan Shikai became the President of the Republic in 1912, Lu returned to China and took charge

<sup>42</sup>Svarverud, *International Law as World Order*.

<sup>43</sup>Hsu, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations*, p. 126.

<sup>44</sup>Qinhua He, 'Birth and growth of modern Chinese international law', *The Jurist*, 4 (2004), p. 50.

<sup>45</sup>For a review of the development of international law during the Republic, see He, 'Birth and growth'; Dong Wang, *China's Unequal Treaties: Narrating National History* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005).

<sup>46</sup>He, 'Birth and growth', p. 53.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>The New Policies were a series of cultural, economic, educational, military, and political reforms that were implemented in the last decade of the Qing dynasty after the Boxer Rebellion. Among them, education reform was the most extensive and in-depth one. Chinese imperial examinations system was abolished in 1905 and replaced by the Western educational system that aims to promote and teaches 'Western learning'. The Qing Court particularly promoted the modern legal and political education.

<sup>49</sup>John Hsien-hsiang Feng, 'A preliminary study of the International Law Association and its history (1912–1916)', *Journal of History of the National Chengchi University*, 51 (2019), pp. 58–9.



of the Republic's diplomatic affairs. In mid-August 1912, due to the fierce political dispute between Yuan and Sun Yet-sen's the Nationalist Party (or Kuomintang, KMT), Lu resigned as prime minister and left the Beijing government. Afterwards, Lu, with the assistance from Zhang Qing, the leader of the constitutional movement in the late Qing Dynasty, established the 'Association of International Law Studies' (*guójīfǎ yánjiūhuì*) that aimed to promote research on international law in China.<sup>50</sup>

In Article 2 of its draft constitution it is stated that the purpose of the association was to promote international peace and international law studies.<sup>51</sup> In Article 3, it proposed a more detailed research agenda for the association, which included studies of public and private international law, China and international treaties, international treaties in general, China's disputes with foreign countries, and issues in international relations. As Feng argued,<sup>52</sup> this research agenda broke down China's foreign relations into the following four categories: (1) the code of conduct that China and other countries must abide by; (2) the international treaties signed by China (the unequal treaty system); (3) how to handle foreign affairs; and (4) the international situation facing China. Moreover, the constitution stipulated two qualifications for membership: the first is those 'relevant in diplomatic circles', and the second is those 'specialised in law and politics at universities in China and abroad'. All those who wished to join the association had to be introduced by two members of the association and approved by the association. From this stipulation one can discern that Lu's aim is to establish the association as a specialised group with academic goals.<sup>53</sup>

It should, however, be noted that for Lu academic research was both an end and a means.<sup>54</sup> The establishment of the association coincided with the founding of the Republic. While the new Republic was just being established, Lu tried to further advance the process of Westernisation, as well as the adoption of the Westphalian system in the newly formed Republican government. To Lu, international law is an extension of the Westphalian system. The purpose of setting up such an academic association in China was to place China in a Western-dominated international political landscape and study China's foreign relations from the perspective of Westphalian system. In other words, the association was an attempt by Lu to transplant Westphalian discourse system to China via academic research. The purpose of conducting research on international relations in China is therefore instrumental in essence. Moreover, as Feng argues,<sup>55</sup> Lu also gave the association a deeper meaning: the pursuit of civilisation. Lu urged China to follow European and American civilisation norms. Only by accelerating the process of its civilisation could China obtain the equal relations with foreign countries and change the constraints of the inequality inherited from the late Qing Dynasty. The association should therefore be placed in the historical context of the China's modernisation and its pursuit of equal relations with the West.

The association had a very short life. It was incorporated into the 'Chinese Society of Society and Politics' in 1916.<sup>56</sup> Lu was the chairman of both associations. Yet, with the joint efforts of the academic community, modern international jurisprudence began to emerge and grow from then on. By the end of the 1930s, the discipline was fully established in China. Most research areas and topics in the discipline were extensively studied, with a considerable number of works being published.<sup>57</sup> In short, it was a long period from the time when the Qing government came across Western international law for the first time to the time when China finally accepted the Westphalian system. The birth and growth of China's modern international jurisprudence

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 55–82.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 60–1.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 64–7.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 55–82.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 71–3.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>57</sup>He, 'Birth and growth'.

followed a path of transplanting Western international jurisprudence that then became increasingly localised and academicised. China's modern international jurisprudence was grounded in a problem-solving approach to various issues China was facing in the course of its modernisation.

### Studies of diplomatic history in China

The idea of national history was formed in the first ten years of the twentieth century, along with China's process of integration to the nation-state system.<sup>58</sup> The concept of 'Chinese history' as national history did not exist in premodern China. There was only the history of dynasties rather than the history of the nation.<sup>59</sup> A large number of historical materials were compiled during that time and published in the 1930s.

Among others, Jiang Tingfu is one of most important scholars of modern Chinese diplomatic history. Jiang was born in China in 1895. He was sent to study in the United States in 1911 at the age of 16, where he attended the Park Academy, Oberlin College, and Columbia University. He received a doctorate degree in philosophy at Columbia University in 1923. Subsequently, Jiang returned to China and went to Nankai University, teaching Western history, modern history of Chinese diplomacy, and served as Chair of the Department of History for six years. In 1929, Jiang moved to Tsinghua University. Meanwhile at the invitation of Hu Shi, he lectured on 'History of China's International Relations' at Peking University. In the autumn of 1934, Jiang was supposed to take a year of sabbatical and planned to go abroad to collect diplomatic materials about China in the archives of various countries in Europe. At this time, Chiang Kai-shek invited him to research Soviet issues for the government and explore the possibility of improving Sino-Soviet relations. He therefore went to the Soviet Union, and later to Germany, Britain, and other countries in Europe. As a result, he left Tsinghua University and began his political and diplomatic career. He first went to Nanjing in 1935 to serve as the Chief of Administration of the Executive Yuan. Afterwards, he was appointed to the Ambassador to the Soviet Union on the eve of the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War.<sup>60</sup>

Jiang's research on the history of modern foreign relations in China in the six years at Nankai University made him an expert in this field. Between 1929 and 1931, Jiang copied the diplomatic archives of the Grand Council (or *junjichu*) of the Qing Dynasty, and published two volumes of historical materials, 'Collection of Materials on Modern Chinese Diplomatic History' (*jindai zhongguo waijiāoshī zīliào jìyào*, or CMMCDH) in 1931 and 1934 respectively. In these two volumes, Jiang set the agenda for studies of the modern diplomatic history of China. In the 'introduction' to each chapter of these historical archives, Jiang briefly commented on the theme of each chapter which reflect his view of modern Chinese diplomatic history. Through studying these documents, Jiang aimed to explore Chinese diplomacy in the late Qing Empire and the reasons why it prevented China from adapting to modern Westphalian system. To Jiang, the publication of this material was meant to rectify the then studies of Chinese diplomatic history that were largely dominated by the Western perspective.<sup>61</sup>

It was noted in the 1920s and the 1930s that must-read works for studying China's diplomatic history and the history of China's international politics were three volumes of *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, written by Hosea Ballou Morse (1910–18). Although Morse's works were mainly based on British archives as the only available information, it provided most scholars at that time – including both Western and Chinese scholars – with a research framework for studies of the diplomatic history of China. And looking at China from a

<sup>58</sup>Shin Kawasaki, 'Research on Chinese diplomatic history since the 20th century: A Japanese perspective', *Social Science Research*, 1 (2011), p. 137.

<sup>59</sup>Dynastic history is the most commonly used method by Chinese historians in ancient times. They are all monarchy-based polities.

<sup>60</sup>See Ting-fu Jiang, *Memoirs of Jiang Tingfu* (Changsha: Yuelu Books, 2003).

<sup>61</sup>Jianjun Li, 'Jiang Tingfu's perspective on diplomatic history', *Anhui Historiography*, 3 (2000), p. 81.

Western perspective, most important issues were all related to the issues of trade and the spread of Christianity. Jiang instead craved for the establishment of the archives on the Chinese side. Jiang's two volumes of CMMCDH are the first diplomatic history material compiled from a Chinese perspective, which had a huge impact on Fairbank's research. Fairbank came to China in 1932 and visited Jiang at Tsinghua University. Jiang prepared a set of historical materials from the Chinese perspective for Fairbank. As Fairbank recalled, after twenty years, he was still studying these documents and taught his students how to use them.<sup>62</sup>

On the one hand, Jiang's approach to history was influenced by empirical research and positivism. In the preface of the first volume of CMMCDH, Jiang stated that his motivation for editing that book was not to explain how foreign countries 'bully' China and how unequal treaties should be abolished. Rather, his motivation was to *study* China's diplomatic history and academicise Chinese diplomacy.<sup>63</sup> In his article 'Diplomatic History and Historical Materials',<sup>64</sup> Jiang further noted that:

The world we are in now does not allow us not to do diplomacy. But we must remember that studying the history of diplomacy is not doing diplomacy and is not doing propaganda. It is studying and learning. The two must not be mixed.

Many scholars in China at that time published numerous empirical works on the history of Chinese diplomacy, and the mushrooming of empirical research was mainly due to the publication of those historical materials compiled by Jiang. This trend continued even after Jiang left academia and devoted himself to politics.

On the other hand, Jiang pointed out the cultural background to studies of diplomacy. He believed that natural science may be universal, but because of regional and cultural differences, Western social sciences are not suitable for explaining China's problems. In the 'Introduction' of the second volume of CMMCDH, he asked what the relationship is between diplomacy and culture? As he noted:<sup>65</sup>

There is an era of diplomacy in every age. Studies of diplomacy need to be a reflection of the times and spaces. Each country has a country's diplomacy, not only because of the different status of each country, but also because each country has its own specific culture.

It should be noted that in the 1930s, a considerable number of Chinese scholars who studied abroad returned to China and taught at universities. According to Jiang, those scholars simply duplicated courses from European and American universities, introducing, and copying Western theories they learned while studying abroad, and did not make substantial contributions to China's political, economic, social, and historical problems. This made social science in China an extension of Western academic circles, lacking its own subjectivity.<sup>66</sup> Jiang was very dissatisfied with this, and called on his colleagues at that time to study China's politics, economy, society, and history, so that China's social science could establish a systematic theoretical explanation for China and provide China's own problems – the necessity and importance of China's modernisation. To Jiang, the modern China has only one issue: whether and how can China be modernised?<sup>67</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Zhiyun Zhang, Yanbo Hou, and Yijun Fan, 'Understanding the key historical materials of Chinese-Western interactions: The compilation and distribution of "Chóubàn yí wù shǐmò"', *Ancient and Modern Essays*, 24 (2013), p. 88.

<sup>63</sup>Ting-fu Jiang, *Collection of Modern Chinese History: Selected Works of Jiang Tingfu's Diplomatic History* (Taipei: Xinrui Wenchuang, 2017), pp. 108–09.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., pp. 323–4.

<sup>66</sup>John Hsien-hsiang Feng, 'Different approaches to Sinicization of social science(s): A contrast between Jiang Ting-fu and Xiao Gong-quan', *Bulletin of Academia Historica*, 44 (2015), p. 95.

<sup>67</sup>Jiang, *Collection of Modern Chinese History*, p. 4.

From this perspective, Jiang's view on the studies of Chinese diplomatic history was still greatly influenced by the rise of Chinese nationalism. Take Jiang himself as an example. When the Versailles Peace Treaty handed over German privileges in Shandong to Japan in 1919, Jiang travelled around the United States and gave speeches at various occasions to protest against the decision.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, in 1928, he translated his PhD supervisor Carlton J. H. Hayes' work 'Essays on Nationalism' with a group of his students. In the preface, Jiang said:

Hayes' attitude towards nationalism is reserved, critical, and even opposing my personal attitude is roughly the same as Hayes but slightly different. Although I know the shortcomings of nationalism, I do think Chinese people's political psychology can only be cured by nationalism ... [If] China is not baptized by nationalism rapidly ... China itself will become the second place on the Balkans, and it will become the object of militarism and imperialism.<sup>69</sup>

Jiang contributed to China's diplomatic historiography and social science significantly in his limited academic career. During the period when Western knowledge was widely introduced to and institutionalised in China, he raised the issue of Sinicisation of diplomatic historiography and social science in China. He believed that China should not uncritically imitate Western knowledge and must pursue Chinese knowledge that can provide explanations for Chinese problems (that is, modernisation). Interestingly, this position is mirrored by a group of contemporary IR scholars in the PRC who advocate for the establishment of the Chinese School, which will be discussed in the following section. Jiang himself did not return to academia. After the Second Sino-Japanese War, he was the ROC's Representative to the United Nations and the Ambassador to the United States. He died in New York in 1965. However, the empirical tradition of diplomatic history research Jiang created and his view on the Sinicisation of social science were inherited by scholars in Taiwan. The historian Guo Tingyi of the Institute of Modern History in Academia Sinica used the archives transferred to the institute for research – including those from 'The Zongli Yamen Archive' and 'Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives' – to conduct a series of research projects on China's diplomatic history.<sup>70</sup> More recently, there are a number of important works being produced by historians in Taiwan, including Li Enhan, who studies the topic of 'revolutionary diplomacy', Zhang Qixiong, who investigates the 'principle of the Chinese world order', Zhang Li, who explores Chinese diplomacy in the League of Nations, etc., and Tang Qihua, who researches the Beijing government during the early years of the Republic.

In addition, a group of social scientists from the Academia Sinica in the 1980s also began to reflect on the question of what the Sinicisation of social science means for Taiwan. They held an interdisciplinary conference on the Sinicisation of social and behavioural science research in 1980, and subsequently published a collection of essays in 1982.<sup>71</sup> This conference is marked as the beginning of Taiwan's social science indigenisation movement. The purpose of the conference, according to the organisers Yang Kuo-shu and Wen Chung-i, is to study the important and unique issues of Chinese society based on China's history, culture, and social characteristics, so as to make a breakthrough in the problems, theories, and methods of social science research in Taiwan, as well as to escape its periphery status to American social science.<sup>72</sup> However, after Taiwan's democratisation in the 1990s, the term 'Sinicisation' has been gradually replaced by the term 'indigenisation' or 'Taiwanisation'. It even ironically turned to the trend of 'anti-Sinicisation' or 'de-Sinicisation',<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup>Li, 'Jiang Tingfu's perspective', p. 80.

<sup>69</sup>Le-su Cai and Fu-jun Jin, 'Study on the Tsiang T'ing-Fu's diplomatic thoughts', *Journal of Tsinghua University*, 1 (2005), p. 38.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., pp. 138–9.

<sup>71</sup>Kuo-shu Yang and Chung-i Wen (eds), *Sinicization of Social and Behavioral Science Research in China* (Taipei: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, 1982).

<sup>72</sup>Kuo-shu Yang and Chung-i Wen, 'Preface', in Yang and Wen (eds), *Sinicization*, pp. i–vii.

<sup>73</sup>Chyuan-Jenq Shiau, 'The indigenization of social sciences in Taiwan', *Political Science Review*, 13 (2000), pp. 1–26.

given that Taiwan subjectivity after democratisation has been highlighted by the oppositional relationship between Taiwan and China. Accordingly, the connotation of academic indigenisation has converted from getting rid of the over-dependence on the West to breaking free of 'China'. This transformation can be observed in the works of Hsiun-Huang Michael Hsiao, a prominent sociologist who has spared no effort in promoting academic indigenisation of social science research in Taiwan. In Hsiao's contribution to Yang and Wen's 1982 edited volume, he mentioned that Taiwan's social science research is too Westernised and therefore needs to be 'Sinicised'.<sup>74</sup> However, when he compiled an article in 2013 on the development of indigenisation of sociology in Taiwan,<sup>75</sup> the term 'Sinicisation' completely disappeared, and was superseded by the term 'indigenisation with liberalisation'. And interestingly, Hsiao uses the term 'liberalisation' in the sense of liberalisation of the Sinocentric ideology of the KMT regime. In other words, both indigenisation movements (that is, Sinicisation and Taiwanisation) are pursuing academic subjectivity of Taiwan's social science research, but the 'subjectivities' pursued by both movements are mutually exclusive.

Compared to Taiwan, the study of Chinese diplomatic history in the PRC was not so much a legacy of Jiang but more based on the CPC's narrative of anti-imperialism and socialist inevitability.<sup>76</sup> In a nutshell, it was strongly 'ideology-oriented'.<sup>77</sup> For example, in the study of Sino-Soviet relations, Peng Ming's *History of Sino-Soviet Friendship*, published in 1957,<sup>78</sup> described the relationship between the two countries under the name of 'friendship'. However, after the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations the narrative changed. The book *History of Russia's Invasion of China*, edited by the Institute of Modern History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, positioned the Soviet Union as an aggressor.<sup>79</sup> Since the late 1980s, with the deepening of China's relations with the outside world, as well as the academic exchanges between China and foreign countries, the research on the history of China's foreign relations has flourished. In particular, the funding provided by the Ford and Asia Foundation play an influential role in facilitating the scholarly exchange between China and the United States.

In short, the research agenda of the studies of the diplomatic history of modern China in the Republic was very much influenced by Jiang, who regarded history as the pool of resources for China's endeavour for modernisation so as to survive in international relations. The research orientations of the historical studies in the PRC were strongly consistent with CPC's ideology. Overall, the field of modern diplomatic history was again motivated by the pragmatic needs of China in the course of modernisation, albeit with different imaginations of 'modernity'.

### Studies of political science in China and the establishment of the Academic Institute of International Relations in Taiwan and the PRC

The concept of Political Science was introduced to China in the late nineteenth century, when a group of the reform-minded literati such as Zheng Guanying and Kang Youwei tried to transplant a body of Western governmental knowledge, so that the Qing Court could replicate the Western political institutions to solve China's problems.<sup>80</sup> In the late nineteenth century, a series of reform efforts took place to modernise the imperial institutions. One reform included the abolishment of the traditional civil service examination and replacing it with a Western-style higher

<sup>74</sup>Hsin-huang Michael Hsiao, 'Structural issues in the Sinicization of sociology: A preliminary study of the paradigm division of labour in the world system', in Yang and Wen (eds), *Sinicization*, p. 70.

<sup>75</sup>Hsin-huang Michael Hsiao, 'The triple turn of Taiwanese sociology', *Global Dialogue*, 3:2 (2013), pp. 19–20.

<sup>76</sup>Sheng Hu, *Imperialism and Chinese Politics* (Hong Kong: Joint Bookstore HK, 1950).

<sup>77</sup>Kawasaki, 'Research on Chinese diplomatic history', p. 139.

<sup>78</sup>Ming Peng, *History of Sino-Soviet Friendship* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1957).

<sup>79</sup>The Institute of Modern History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (ed.), *History of Russia's Invasion of China* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1978–81).

<sup>80</sup>John Hsien-hsiang Feng, 'Political Science', in Howard Chiang (ed.), *The Making of the Human Sciences in China: Historical and Conceptual Foundations* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

educational system. This change led to the establishment of the Imperial Peking University in 1898. The university offered courses on Western governmental knowledge, which marked the origins of Political Science in China.<sup>81</sup> Political Science as a discipline was thus a by-product of this pragmatic response to China's needs during modernisation. The discipline was further institutionalised and gained robust momentum to grow during the Republican regime. By 1936, 31 universities/colleges out of 108 institutions of higher education in China had a Political Science department.<sup>82</sup>

The discipline of Political Science at that time had a much narrower range and did not include studies of International Relations, since the discipline was meant to analyse 'the natural and man-made things within the sovereign boundaries of the state, compare various cases, and formulate the generalisations of governmental phenomena' in a scientific way.<sup>83</sup> According to Feng Ziyou, one of main advocates of the discipline at that time, Political Science was a field of study of 'the nature and functions of the state'; it was 'an amalgamation of different sciences including geography, ethnology, economics, and the like'.<sup>84</sup> The scope of the studies in the discipline did not increase in the early years of the Republican period. In 1935, when Tao Xisheng – a political scientist and the member of the KMT – wrote a letter to Chiang Kai-shek, he said:

The Political Science Department at Peking University is now studying three themes: (1) The organisation and administrative procedure in each ministry of the central government after the Qing dynasty was established ... (2) The organisation, status, and jurisdiction of the provincial government ... (3) The study of the magistrate government after the Qing dynasty.<sup>85</sup>

The professionalisation and institutionalisation of International Studies in social sciences and its merging into Political Science was grounded in a problem-solving approach to the issues China and the KMT regime was facing at various times. In the 1930s, there were several intelligence units that provided advice on diplomacy in the government such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense. However, they were mostly a mix of domestic and international intelligence. After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, intelligence gathering pertaining to Japan became highly urgent. Therefore, in early 1938, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the establishment of the 'Institute of International Studies' (*guóji wèntí yánjiūsuǒ*), mainly conducting intelligence work against Japan.<sup>86</sup> The institute was directly under the Military Commission and chaired by a Japanese expert Wang Jisheng. It was mainly engaged in Japan's domestic affairs and military and intelligence and counter-intelligence work, foreign affairs, and international economy. During the eight years of the war, the institute extensively collected information on enemies and allies, analysed the international situation, made assessments and provided information on major events such as the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, etc. The institute was, however, a temporary institute responding to the country's crisis. It was established because of the war with Japan, and Japan's surrender also meant that the institute was no longer needed. It was officially disbanded in 1946.<sup>87</sup>

After the end of the Second World War, the KMT government was defeated by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and retreated to Taiwan in 1949. In 1953, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the establishment of the 'Policy Research Office' (*Zhèngcè yánjiūshì*) under the Presidential Office's

<sup>81</sup>Feng, 'Political Science', p. 382.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 348.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Cited in *ibid.*, p. 391.

<sup>86</sup>Philip Hsiaopong Liu, 'Assembling scholars in the face of the enemy: The prequel to the Institute of International Relations, 1937–1975', *Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History*, 82 (2013), pp. 147–9.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., pp. 153–4. See also Wen-shuo Liao, 'Intelligence and diplomacy: An archival study of Wang Pengsheng and the Institute of International Relations (1937–1946)', *Cheng Kung Journal of Historical Studies*, 56 (2019), pp. 91–131.

Information Team.<sup>88</sup> The office was intended to re-establish and reorganise the intelligence work related to the situation in mainland China and international relations. It was under the directorship of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek. Its main task was to collect and analyse intelligent information, making policy recommendations to Chiang Kai-shek. The office did not disclose its activities to the public; it only published periodicals titled *Issues and Studies* (*Wèntí yǔ yánjiū*) and *Communist Banditry Monthly* (*Fěiqíng yuèkān*), which were circulated internally.<sup>89</sup> In order to hide its intelligence service's role, at the beginning of its establishment the office used the name 'International Relations Research Society' (*Guójì guānxì yánjiū huì*) to the public. By 1958, the Office was registered with the Ministry of the Interior as a people's organisation in order to invite experts and scholars to participate in the seminar organised by the office. After 1961, the office was expanded and became an academic institution under the name 'The Institute of International Relations' (IIR), registered under the Ministry of Education.

According to the website of the IIR,<sup>90</sup> the original task of this institute was: (1) to provide information for enacting the political and security strategy; (2) to provide timely research reports and recommendations on major events that occurred at the time in the international relations and mainland China; and (3) to enhance the understanding and support of international community on the ROC through research. In other words, as Liu noted,<sup>91</sup> Chiang Kai-shek initially hoped that this institute would not only provide professional analysis of his enemy (that is, CPC), but also require research quality, academic exchange with foreign scholars, and publish influential international journals to enhance Taiwan's international publicity.

Although one of its goals was to improve international publicity and information exchange with the international community, when the Policy Research Office was established in 1953, the office devoted most of its time and energy to the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the CPC, as well as the long-range strategic plan for reuniting with mainland China. Therefore, it was a consulting unit of internal security and foreign policy. However, as Chiang's government was incorporated into the Western camp led by the United States, and as Beijing's diplomatic offensive increased in strength, Chiang increasingly paid attention to the functions of international communication and publicity of the office. Chiang and his son since the 1960s repeatedly urged the office (and the subsequent IIR) to liaise with international academic institutions and experts and scholars as a way to convince the world that the ROC represented the only legitimate government of China. In the end this desire unintentionally led to the academisation of International Studies.

In the process of academisation, the publication of an influential international journal was the most important. In 1961, the Chinese version of *Issues and Studies* and *Communist Banditry Monthly*, at the request of Chiang Ching-kuo, came available to the public. Since the 1960s the English version of both journals were published.<sup>92</sup> In addition to the publication of the academic journal, the then director of the IIR, Wu Juncai also believed that Taiwan should hold international conferences on mainland China issues, inviting well-known scholars from the West (specially the United States) to consolidate the existing relationship with American academia and policymakers.<sup>93</sup> The Sino-US 'China Mainland Symposium', which is still held

<sup>88</sup>Titus C. Chen, 'Constructing an inter-subjective imaginability: Analyzing Taiwan's Institute of International Relations and its China studies during the early Cold War (1953–1975)', *Journal of Social Sciences and Philosophy*, 28:1 (2016), pp. 61–104; Liu, 'Assembling scholars'; Philip Hsiaopong Liu, 'Gathering scholars to defend the country: The Institute of International Relations before 1975', *Issues & Studies*, 50:1 (2014), pp. 55–88.

<sup>89</sup>Chen, 'Constructing an inter-subjective imaginability'.

<sup>90</sup>Cited in Liu, 'Assembling scholars', p. 158.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 163–4.

<sup>93</sup>Titus C. Chen, 'The Cold War origins of the Sino-American Conference on mainland China: An obscure legacy of Chen-tsai Wu in trans-Pacific China studies', *Issues & Studies*, 50:1 (2014), pp. 89–121; Chen, 'Constructing an inter-

today, was held in Taipei for the first time in 1970. About sixty Chinese and foreign scholars, including many influential American scholars attended the conference.

The Cold War structure made the KMT government's diplomatic efforts possible. The antagonism of the Cold War ideology caused the PRC to be excluded and isolated from the Western camp of the international community. Beijing also severely restricted the exchanges between the Chinese mainland and the Western world, with the consequence that Western governments, scholars, and experts lacked a more direct and comprehensive understanding of the situation in mainland China. Contrarily, Taiwan still maintained its intelligence network in mainland China, and therefore could provide more insightful analysis and prospect assessments of mainland China. By providing reliable, confidential, and authoritative intelligence analysis on the CPC to specific Western experts and scholars, Taiwan could dominate the information and its interpretation. Through controlling the content of Chinese intelligence and knowledge, as Chen argued,<sup>94</sup> Taiwan believed that it could control the perception of China in the international community, thereby ensuring the ROC as a sovereign state being recognised by the international community. The legitimacy of the KMT regime could be improved by the well-designed academic exchanges.

With these strategic and diplomatic needs, the IIR embarked on a journey of institutional transformation and functional expansion after the mid-1960s. Beginning in the late 1960s, Chinese experts and scholars in Western countries began to visit the Institute regularly.<sup>95</sup> They inspected the CPC archives at the institute and exchanged ideas with the staff from the institute. This academic exchange and cooperation were mutually beneficial: while Western scholars could obtain CPC intelligence and knowledge that were not available to the outside world at that time, Taiwanese scholars learnt how to use new social science research methods and apply them to the Chinese context. The institute cooperated with many renowned academic institutions in the world, including the Hoover Institution of Stanford University, Harvard Yenching Library, Kyoto University of Japan, etc.<sup>96</sup> The IIR undoubtedly became one of the most important centres for China Studies.

Nevertheless, from the mid-1970s, the institute lost its significance rapidly. First of all, Western countries changed their views on China, especially after H. Kissinger's and R. Nixon's visit to mainland China in the early 1970s.<sup>97</sup> Secondly, because PRC was gradually opening up, the information once exclusive to Taiwan started to become available internationally. Beijing gradually allowed Western scholars to enter mainland China for fieldwork after the mid-1970s. After Taiwan's democratisation in the late 1980s, the institute needed to be further reformed. It was completely merged into the management of National Chengchi University in 1996.

The academisation of International Studies has developed differently in PRC, albeit also largely facilitated by the pragmatic needs.<sup>98</sup> In the early years of the PRC, large-scale adjustments were made to its higher education. This led to the official abolishment of Political Science in 1952, as the subject was regarded as the pseudo-ideology of the bourgeois.<sup>99</sup> Individual courses from the field of Political Science that were believed to be of value were merged into the Department of

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subjective imaginability'; Chien-Wen Kou, 'The changing role of the Institute of International Relations in Taiwan's China studies: Trajectories and dynamics', *Issues & Studies*, 50:1 (2014), pp. 9–53.

<sup>94</sup>Chen, 'Constructing an inter-subjective imaginability'.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

<sup>96</sup>Liu, 'Assembling scholars', p. 167.

<sup>97</sup>Chen, 'Constructing an inter-subjective imaginability'.

<sup>98</sup>The development of International Studies in the PRC has already been extensively discussed in the existing literature. See Yaqing Qin, 'Why is there no Chinese International Relations theory?', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 7:3 (2007), pp. 313–40; David Shambaugh, 'International Relations studies in China: History, trends, and prospects', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 11 (2011), pp. 339–72; David Shambaugh and Jisi Wang, 'Research and training in International Studies in the People's Republic of China', *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 17:4 (1984), pp. 6–14; Gerald Chan, 'International Studies in China: Origins and development', *Issues & Studies*, 33:2 (1997), pp. 40–64.

<sup>99</sup>Feng, 'Political Science', p. 393.



Law and History.<sup>100</sup> Compared with other branches of Political Science, International Studies was valued from the beginning after the founding of the PRC.<sup>101</sup> The PRC established the Institute of International Relations (*guójiè guānxì xuéyuàn*) in 1949 to train its cadres in foreign languages and foreign affairs.<sup>102</sup> At the beginning of the establishment of the Renmin University of China (RUC) in 1950, the Department of Diplomacy was also established, offering nearly thirty courses in International Relations, international law, Chinese diplomatic history, PRC's foreign policy, etc.<sup>103</sup> The department expanded in 1955 and became an independent university, named 'The China Foreign Affairs University' (*wàijiāo xuéyuàn*, CFAU).

The CFAU is the most important academic institution for the teaching and research of International Studies in the early period of the PRC. It has been under the administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) since its establishment. On 2 June 1953, the MOFA drafted 'Several Recommendations on the Training of Diplomatic Cadres in the Future', in accordance with the instructions of Premier Zhou Enlai, and proposed to establish an independent college for training diplomatic cadres for the first time. In 1955, CFAU was formally established. Most of the staff members and students from the Department of Diplomacy of the RUC were transferred to the CFAU. According to some biographies and memoirs by Chinese diplomats and officials,<sup>104</sup> the establishment of the CFAU was carried out under the instruction and specific leadership of several officials of the CPC, including Zhou Enlai, Chen Yi, Zhang Wentian, etc. Among them, Zhang Wentian is the most important.

Zhang joined the CPC in 1925, and afterwards he went to the Soviet Union for study. He returned to China in 1930. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, Zhang served as Director of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the CPC and the Academy of Marxism-Leninism in Yan'an. After the founding of the PRC, Zhang was mainly engaged in diplomatic work and was the Ambassador of the PRC to the Soviet Union. In 1955, he became the Deputy Minister of MOFA, wherein he started to prepare for establishing the CFAU.<sup>105</sup> Zhang's overall vision of the CFAU was manifested in his remarks at the ministerial meeting of the MOFA on 3 February 1956, wherein he suggested that the plan for training diplomatic cadres should include: (1) training a group of talents to become experts who are proficient in international issues; and (2) training another batch to be capable diplomatic and administrative staff. To him, diplomatic work needs the support of an entire discipline of International Studies and other related fields.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, Zhang paid great attention to the discipline construction within the framework of the CFAU.

Along with the CFAU, Zhang also suggested the establishment of a research institute for International Studies. Zhang had first considered setting up the institute under the CFAU.<sup>107</sup> Later, it was envisaged that 'the institute should be located in the campus of CFAU to facilitate cooperation in the training of diplomatic cadres and scientific research'.<sup>108</sup> In 1956, the Institute

<sup>100</sup>By 1960, the dispute between the PRC and Soviet Union was made public. China felt the need for a large number of theorists who have a better understanding of Marxism-Leninism and could promote its ideology (that is, Maoism), so many universities across the country re-established the Department of Political Science.

<sup>101</sup>Yue Chen, 'Chinese political science from a universal perspective with domestic care', *Teaching and Research*, 1 (2009), p. 40.

<sup>102</sup>The school was briefly merged with the CFAU between 1961 and 1965. In 1983, it was transformed to a comprehensive university and renamed as 'University of International Relations'.

<sup>103</sup>Lili Zhang, 'The construction of and research into the discipline of diplomacy of New China', *Journal of Foreign Affairs College*, 3 (2003), pp. 36–43.

<sup>104</sup>See Yang Xiao, 'Zhang Wentian and CFAU', *Foreign Affairs Review*, 6 (2005), pp. 101–05; Xinren Chen, 'Recall the teachings of Premier Zhou Enlai and several seniors on the teaching issues of the CFAU', *Foreign Affairs Review*, 3 (1998), pp. 7–11; Zhongyuan Cheng, *Zhang Wentian Zhuan* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo Chubanshe, 1993); Peisen Zhang, *Zhang Wentian Nianpu* (Beijing: Zhonggong Dangshi Chubanshe, 2000).

<sup>105</sup>Cheng, *Zhang Wentian Zhuan*, pp. 623–7.

<sup>106</sup>Zhang, *Zhang Wentian Nianpu*, p. 1011.

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1006.

<sup>108</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1015.

of International Relations of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (*zhōngguó kēxuéyuàn guóji guānxì yánjiū suǒ*) was officially established. In 1958, it was decoupled from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and renamed ‘Institute of International Relations’ (*guóji guānxì yánjiū suǒ*).<sup>109</sup> The institute aims to conduct mid- and long-term strategic research on foreign affairs, and provide real-time analyses, opinions, and suggestions for the MOFA.<sup>110</sup> In May 1959, the institute published the monthly journal of the ‘International Studies’ (*Guóji wèntí yánjiū*) under the suggestion of Zhang, which is China’s first academic journal of this kind.

The ten-year Cultural Revolution caused serious harm to China’s International Studies research. At the start of the Cultural Revolution, the normal teaching of the CFAU was forced to suspend. Zhang himself was persecuted, under house arrest, and died during the Cultural Revolution. In the spring of 1979, Deng Xiaoping was faced with a China that was stagnating in related academic fields. Therefore, he noted that the research work of the International Studies and Political Science needed to make up the time lag as soon as possible. Since then, International Studies have mushroomed in China to the point ‘where only the United States matches China in terms of the size of IR research and education’.<sup>111</sup> In addition to the reinstatement of the CFAU, and the Department of International Politics at Peking University, Renmin University and Fudan University that were built in the early 1960s, many other national and local universities have also begun to set up related courses. Also, all major IR works in the West have been translated into Chinese language, which has made China’s IR research absorb a lot of Western political philosophy, IR theories and research methodology.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, this is also a period where the Chinese IR academic community has reached a basic consensus on the establishment of Chinese School of IR Theory. In August 1987, at the first National Congress of International Relations Theory held in Shanghai, the establishment of China’s own theoretical system of International Relations became the core issue of the meeting. From this point, the call for IR theories with Chinese characteristics, the Chinese perspective and the Chinese School have appeared one after another. For these advocates, the Chinese IR community needs not only to develop a set of epistemological systems in understanding international relations from the Chinese perspective, but also involves what kind of world order China wants.<sup>113</sup> For them, the core of constructing the Chinese School is to examine IR theories through Chinese experiences and incorporate more Chinese perspectives and traditional thinking – including the Confucian worldview, the practice of the tributary system, modern revolutionary thought and practice, reform and opening up, etc.<sup>114</sup> As Pan Wei noted,<sup>115</sup> ‘the Chinese School is not a school of the Chinese people and is not limited to the contributions of Chinese scholars, but it must require a deep understanding of Chinese particularities’.

To sum up, the history of the early development of the IIR and CFAU clearly shows that International Studies was the product of the pragmatic needs of state leaders in Taipei and Beijing. While Chinese IR scholars have nowadays moved from simply introducing Western theories to China to innovating theories from the Chinese perspectives, Taiwan’s IR still follows the trends of the West closely because they need to utilise a specific set of IR knowledge as an international communication channel in order to gain the support from the West.

<sup>109</sup>The institute is now called ‘China Institute of International Studies’. See its official website, at: {<http://www.ciis.org.cn>}.

<sup>110</sup>In addition to the above-mentioned institutions, there are other channels for training IR experts in PRC. For instance, the PLA has its independent personnel training systems. The People’s Liberation Army Institute of International Relations was established in Nanjing in 1951.

<sup>111</sup>Qin, ‘Why is there no Chinese International Relations theory?’, p. 316.

<sup>112</sup>Chen, ‘Chinese Political Science’, p. 40.

<sup>113</sup>Pang, ‘Open and independent development’, pp. 24–5.

<sup>114</sup>See Yaqing Qin, ‘A Chinese school of International Relations theory: Possibility and inevitability’, *World Economics and Politics*, 3 (2006), pp. 7–13.

<sup>115</sup>Wei Pan, ‘Demonstrating the unique spirit of the Chinese School’, *Economic Herald*, 11 (2017), pp. 17–19.

## Conclusion

In 1981, Robert Cox in his seminal article 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders' famously noted that 'Theory is always for someone and for some purpose', which leads him to make a distinction between 'problem-solving theory' and 'critical theory'.<sup>116</sup> To Cox, problem-solving theory is 'status quo orientated'. Critical Theory, by contrast, focuses on the possibilities of social change. Accordingly, Cox believes that the mainstream IR theories are to solve various problems facing the West. They are to maintain the world power system dominated by the West and make it run smoothly and effectively. While criticising mainstream IR theories, Cox hopes to establish a theory that aims at liberating humanity and fundamentally solve the problems of the capitalist system. As this article has shown, studies of International Relations were largely grounded in a problem-solving approach to various issues China and its regimes faced at various times. This approach was inherited from the Confucian ideal of statecraft pragmatism, in particular during the Imperial Qing and the early Republic. With this attitude and through academic activities and knowledge production, they actively promoted modernisation, enlightened the people, and uphold China as the nation and/or state. They all wanted to extend their discursive power from the academic community to the governments. Entering the Cold War, IR knowledge was still perceived as instrumental. The government elites in Taiwan used IR research as an international communication channel to maintain the survival of the ROC and the international legitimacy of the KMT regime. In the PRC, the discipline of IR was mainly established for training foreign affairs experts so as to provide real-time analyses, opinions, and suggestions for the government's decision-making reference. Chinese IR has always been for the Chinese nation, state, and its regimes. Nevertheless, is Chinese IR scholarship 'status quo orientated' in a Coxian sense,<sup>117</sup> aiming to legitimise prevailing social and political structures?

Certainly not. When Cox stated that '[t]here is no such thing as theory in itself, divorced from a standpoint in time and space',<sup>118</sup> he rightly pointed out that the *problematic* – a historically conditioned awareness of problems and issues – that generates theory is temporal and spatial. In other words, the recognition and cognition of the 'problem' is necessarily adopted and adapted to a specific social, cultural, geographical, and temporal perspective. Arguably, the *problematic* (that is, capitalism system) behind his critical theory and the 'social change' he would like to bring about is also located in specific time and space. As Yaqing Qin noted,<sup>119</sup> different problems come from different perspectives, and different perspectives come from specific representation systems of time and space. From this point of view, modern China must have its own particularistic worldviews and historical experiences, which in turn affects the awareness of their 'problems'. Therefore, as far as the development of the IR discipline is concerned, the *problematic* they generate must be different from the Western experience. Whether in the PRC or Taiwan, they must aim to meet the challenges they face at different times in the course of modernisation, focusing on their own interests and needs for its relations with the outside world. Indeed, the problem solving is a key determinant of international studies research in different regimes of modern China, and yet it does not mean that they legitimise prevailing social and political structures. Rather, they provided 'similar but different' imaginations of (the path to) modernity. The process of *problematic* formation is also the process of subject construction. Hence, even though the general development of international studies in China is very much one of Chinese/Taiwanese scholars absorbing Western theories, this does not mean that there is no indigenous site of agency.

<sup>116</sup>Robert W. Cox, 'Social forces, states and world orders: Beyond International Relations theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 10:2 (1981), pp. 126–55.

<sup>117</sup>Anthony Leysens, *The Critical Theory of Robert W. Cox. Fugitive or Guru?* (London: Palgrave, 2008).

<sup>118</sup>Cox, 'Social forces', p. 128.

<sup>119</sup>Yaqing Qin, 'Core problematic of International Relations theory and the construction of a Chinese School', *Social Sciences in China*, 3 (2005), p. 168.

The possibility of the antithesis with mainstream IR theorising is crystal clear in the case of the PRC. While the Chinese School of IR has to large extent replicated Western IR, albeit for specifically Chinese reasons, there has clearly been creative adaptations of Western IR where a Chinese agential input can be discerned. As I discussed elsewhere, while Chinese School scholars also use, or ‘mimic’ the same ‘vocabulary’ and the same ‘categories’ (that is, realism, liberalism, and constructivism) as the mainstream IR theorists use, their respective drawing on and mimicking different theoretical perspectives of the mainstream IR also disturb and undermine the mainstream IR scholarship by alternating the original connotations of the concepts, ideas, and tenets mainstream IR scholars are using, such as ‘power’, ‘relationality’, ‘globalism’, etc. Thus, those various attempts to establish the Chinese School of IR can be interpreted as a continuation of a constant process of restructuring of knowledge in IR, characterised by the use of Chinese history, culture, and philosophy in developing theories that fit China’s traditional worldview and political system. Whether in support or in opposition, mainstream (Western) scholarship has been forced to respond to various ideas, concepts, and approaches to world politics and the study of it proposed by Chinese School scholars.

The mimicking of Western knowledge is clearly observable in IR scholarship in Taiwan. In order to gain the support from the West, ‘they’ need to speak Western ‘languages’, while retaining core *problematics*/problems Taiwan is facing at various times. In some ways, this trend may be interpreted as an implementation of ‘Chinese learning as substance, Western learning for application’, the principle behind the Self-Strengthening Movement of the 1860s as discussed earlier. ‘Taiwanese problem as substance, Western knowledge for application.’ Moreover, as shown earlier, Taiwan’s social science indigenisation movement is looking for – and integrating – Taiwan’s subjectivity in different historical periods, combining the social science research they construct with the actual reality that Taiwan faces, knows, and experiences. Just as scholars of the Chinese School in PRC believe that Western IR theories cannot explain the spatially different ‘Chinese’ international relations, so do scholars in Taiwan. Taiwan’s IR scholars may believe that the ‘Sinicised’ theory of IR cannot fully explain the peculiarities of Taiwan after long-term separation with China and rapid changes in Taiwan’s politics and international relations. Western IR in this vein has turned into a potential comrade-in-arms in Taiwan’s pursue of its subjectivity of international studies research, defined in terms of the de-Sinicisation or anti-Sinicisation.

As Helen Louise Turton and Lucas G. Freire noted,<sup>120</sup> non-Western peripheral scholars can still make novel and innovative contributions to the literature of IR through hybridisation, mimicry, the modification of the initial notions (or the denationalisation of ideas). Thus, the argumentations of peripheral scholarship are ‘similar but different’ from the mainstream IR scholarship. It is those tactics of hybridity, mimicry, and the modification of ideas that could elicit dialogue, conversation, and exchange of ideas with the IR scholars from the core. Chinese IR is a clear case that can be read as an example of hybridity and mimicry, ‘a feature that, once noticed, helps us identify diversity on the periphery, and, more importantly, agency in marginal theory-making and theory-testing’.<sup>121</sup> At the same time, International Studies research in China also verified that the European experience is also a local experience. To conclude, by tracing the historical development of international studies in China the article wishes to rediscover the agency at the Chinese site for adaptation, feedback, and reconstruction of Western influence.

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<sup>120</sup>Helen Louise Turton and Lucas G. Freire, ‘Peripheral possibilities: Revealing originality and encouraging dialogue through a reconsideration of “marginal” IR scholarship’, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 19:4 (2016), pp. 534–57.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 552.

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