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China's Rise and the Confucius Institutes: Chinese and American Perspectives
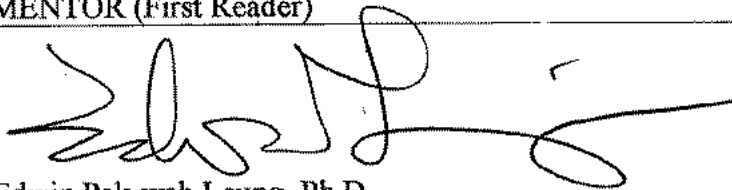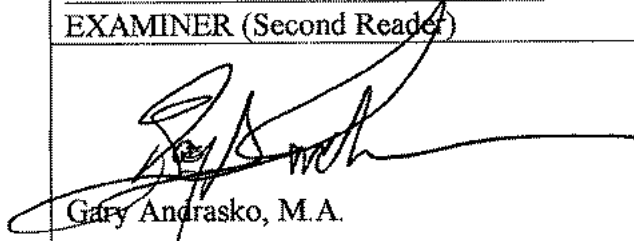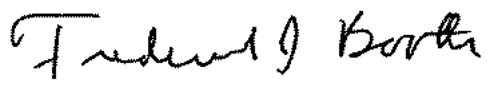
Shryll Whittaker
shryll.whittaker@student.shu.edu

CHINA'S RISE AND THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES:

CHINESE AND AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES

BY
SHRYLL WHITTAKER
B.A., UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, PITTSBURGH, PA, 2003

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THESIS TITLE

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APPROVED:	MONTH, DAY, YEAR
Dongdong Chen Dongdong Chen, Ph.D MENTOR (First Reader)	12|19|13
[signature] Edwin Pak-wah Leung, Ph.D EXAMINER (Second Reader)	1�/19/13
[signature] Gary Andrasko, M.A. EXAMINER (Third Reader)	12|19|2013
[signature] Frederick J. Booth, Ph.D HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	12|17|13

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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ABSTRACT

CHINA'S RISE AND THE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES:
CHINESE AND AMERICAN PESPECTIVES

Shryll Whittaker

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Dongdong Chen, Ph.D,
Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

The Confucius Institutes are Chinese government-backed nonprofit organizations that promote Chinese language and culture. They are housed on collegiate campuses and designed to complement Chinese language and cultural studies by providing teachers, curriculums, textbooks and other educational materials. Their establishment has been a source of controversy, especially in the United States, due to the institutes' close ties with and the financial, administrative, and political support they receive from the Chinese government. Critics have had two primary concerns: that the Confucius Institutes provide the Chinese government access to increase soft power by issuing propaganda and that their presence on American collegiate campuses interferes with academic independence.

How are the Confucius Institutes being received in the United States? Are they effective in enhancing Chinese soft power? Does *Hanban* funding unduly influence American college administrators and educators and/or restrict academic independence?

This thesis will illustrate that the debates surrounding the Confucius Institutes on American collegiate campuses are driven more by international systemic changes and increasing competition between China and the United States than concerns of preserving academic integrity. Furthermore, it will show that the influence of Hanban and the Confucius Institutes does not significantly threaten academic integrity at those institutions. This thesis will contribute to existing academia by providing a comprehensive overview of the Confucius Institutes and how they operate, surveying the theories that affect various viewpoints in the debates over the Confucius Institutes and analyzing how coverage on the Confucius Institutes is framed in academic literature and mass media.

Keywords: China's rise, soft power, Confucius Institutes

Chapter One: Introduction

The Confucius Institutes are non-profit institutions established by the Chinese government in foreign countries with the stated intent of promoting Chinese language and culture in those countries.[1]   Directed by the Beijing-based Office of Chinese Language Council International (*Zhongguo Guojia Hanyu Guoji Tuiguang Lingdao Xiaozu Bangongshi*, or as colloquially known, *Hanban*), the Confucius Institutes support local teaching of the Chinese language in foreign countries by providing teachers, curriculums, textbooks and other resources and materials. The Confucius Institutes also administer the *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* (HSK), a Chinese standardized language examination which tests proficiency for non-native speakers. Finally, the Confucius Institutes also facilitate cultural exchanges by hosting Chinese cultural festivals and cultural lecture series.

The establishment of these institutes has been controversial, especially in the United States, for various reasons. First, unlike many of their international counterparts, the Confucius Institutes are not non-governmental organizations; they were founded and remain funded and directed by the Chinese government through *Hanban* and the Department of Education.   Second, the Confucius Institutes tend to operate on American university and college campuses. These first two reasons combined raise concerns that, at best, academics and administrators at institutions hosting Confucius Institutes will engage in self-censorship in order to maintain *Hanban* funding or, at worst, the Chinese government will use the Confucius Institutes to engage in foreign espionage. Finally, some observers, especially in foreign policymaking circles, have

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[1] Confucius Institute Online, "Confucius Institute Headquarters," Confucius Institute Online, http://english.chinese.cn/confuciusinstitute/article/2011-05/31/content_339769.htm (accessed February 01, 2012).

raised concerns about the Confucius Institutes as an indicator of China's growing soft power and a tool of the so-called Chinese "charm offensive."[2]

This thesis will illustrate that the debate surrounding the Confucius Institutes at American universities is driven more by changes in the international system and increasing competition between China and the United States rather than concerns of preserving academic integrity. It will also show that, while the risk of self-censorship exists among academics and administrators at institutions that host Confucius Institutes, the influence of Hanban and the Confucius Institutes does not significantly threaten academic integrity at those institutions.

This chapter will serve as an introduction to this thesis. It will begin with an overview of China's economic and military rise and how it has been perceived both internationally and domestically in China. It will then continue with a brief introduction to interplay between Chinese nationalism, Chinese soft power and the Confucius Institutes. This chapter will conclude by providing an outline to this thesis and highlighting the research questions that will be explored throughout it.

1.1   China's Rise

Since the 1980s, the Chinese government has pursued an export-oriented trade strategy and policies of trade liberalization. They have taken steps to stabilize the People's Bank of China and the Chinese financial system at large, primarily by massively lowering interest rates, maintaining a closed capital account,[3] and implementing a system of state-owned enterprises and

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[2] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007): 68; Geoffrey York, "Beijing uses Confucius to lead charm offensive," *The Globe and Mail*, September 9, 2005, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/beijing-uses-confucius-to-lead-charm-offensive/article986321/ (accessed November 25, 2013).
[3] Dani Rodrik, "Trading in Illusions," in *Debates in International Political Economy*, ed. Thomas Oatley (Boston: Longman, 2010): 290-293.

select privatization to provide competitive advantages internationally and promote profitability.[4] Though this has led to accusations by some international competitors of unfair trade practices by the Chinese government, there is no doubt that this strategy has resulted in massive economic success for China. Since the end of the Cold War, China has generally enjoyed fast, double-digit year-on-year GDP growth. According to World Bank data, China's growth remained impressively steady throughout the last two decades, especially when compared to many of its more developed Asian neighbors; this culminated in China surpassing Japan as the world's second largest economy in 2010. In fact, during the Asian financial crisis in 1997, China's economy continued to grow while the rest of the major Asian economies contracted.[5]

Along with its rapid economic development, scholars have noted China's fast growth in military spending since the end of the Cold War. In its 2013 annual report on the military power of China, the U.S. Department of Defense estimated that China's actual defense expenditures potentially doubles its official budget, which has ballooned from under USD 10 billion dollars per year during the mid-1990s to approximately USD 114 billion dollars in 2013.[6] Another cause for concern among some security analysts is China's ongoing efforts in military modernization, as it continues to invest in "advanced short- and medium-range conventional ballistic missiles, land-attack and anti-ship cruise missiles, counter-space weapons and military cyberspace capabilities that appear designed to enable anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) missions;"

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[4] Feng Chen, *Economic Transition and Political Legitimacy in post-Mao China: Ideology and Reform* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995): 150-153.
[5] World Bank, "GDP Growth (annual %), World Bank, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG (accessed 02/19/2013).
[6] United States Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China, 2013*, prepared by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2013): 45.

analysts point to China's acquisition and/or deployment of cruise and ballistic missiles, aircraft

carriers, submarines, combat drones, air fighters and bombers as indicators of a growing threat

and increasingly offensive Chinese military posture.[7]

The combination of fast economic and military growth has fueled the international debate

on China's rise and potential threat among analysts. Some argue that China has become a real

and imminent threat to the status quo in the current international system and to American

interests.[8] These analysts borrow from Organski's power transition theory, which argues that

war is cyclical and emphasizes the aspirations of rising powers and their potential to launch wars

against the existing powers they catch up with in order to achieve those aspirations.[9] Differential

rates of economic growth and how they shift the distribution of world power among states is

especially important, as policymakers are more likely to miscalculate if rising powers grow

rapidly and policymakers have less time to adjust to change. If applied to China, this pessimistic

and alarmist theory would posit that China, which has quickly caught up as a major economic

and military world power, is now in a position to challenge the United States as the dominant

superpower.[10] Proponents of this viewpoint are concerned that once this happens, China will use

its power to revise the international status quo, which will have grave implications for the United

States and others that benefit from the current system and distribution of power.

If China's economic rise and recent advances in strategic weaponry are accompanied by

the desire to revise the international status quo, one facet that could be impacted is China's

nuclear policy. Since becoming a nuclear power, Beijing has touted their "no first use" nuclear

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[7] United States Department of Defense 16.

[8] Bernstein and Munro; J. Michael Cole, "China Advertises Itself," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 153; Elizabeth Freund Larus, *Politics and Society in Contemporary China* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012): 391; John J Tkacik, Jr., "Panda Hedging: Pentagon Report Urges New Strategy for China," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010): 122-128.

[9] Jacek Kugler and A. F. K. Organski, "The Power Transition: A Retrospective and Prospective Evaluation," in Handbook of War Studies, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989): 174-175.

[10] Tkacik, Jr., 123-125.

policy[11] and participated in international organizations that work to limit the global nuclear threat,

such as the UN, IAEA, and NSG.[12] However, some security analysts have pointed to recent

public statements and shifts in China's nuclear policy as evidence of Beijing's desire to revise

the international status quo.[13] Chinese military aggression towards Taiwan also raises the

potential for conflict, especially with the United States,[14] as Washington has displayed an interest

in protecting Taiwanese sovereignty since the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979.

Recent developments in Chinese-Taiwanese relations, such as the increase in trade and tourism

and efforts to remove landmines from the Taiwan Strait, have led some to believe that tensions

are significantly decreasing between China and Taiwan.[15] Analyst J. Michael Cole has argued

that, despite the appearance of easing tensions, China has been increasing its pressure on Taiwan

in a very menacing way in order to get Taiwan to submit to reunification.[16] He states that "[the]

only reason we have been hearing about 'peace' in the Taiwan Strait since [KMT candidate Ma

Ying-jeou] came into office [in 2008] is that unlike the DPP, his government has allowed itself

to be intimidated by China's saber rattling."[17] However, most security analysts believe that

Chinese aggression against Taiwan would be deterred by 'the virtual certainty of U.S.

intervention."[18]

Finally, Sino-Japanese relations have sharply deteriorated over disputed islands in the

East China Sea – the Diaoyu to the Chinese and Senkaku to the Japanese. Sovereignty over the

uninhabited islands, located next to a continental shelf believed to contain oil, has been difficult

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[11] Richard H. Ullman, "No first use of nuclear weapons," *Foreign Affairs* 50:4 (Jul 1972): 669-683.
[12] Xiaohui (Anne) Wu, "Engage China in Nuclear-Proliferation Issue," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 139.
[13] Tkacik, Jr., 125.
[14] John Bryan Starr, *Understanding China*, 3e (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010), 351.
[15] Clifford Coonan, "Slow Thaw in China-Taiwan Relations," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 155; Larus 387-388.
[16] J. Michael Cole, 153.
[17] J. Michael Cole, 153.
[18] Tkacik Jr., 127.

to determine due to competing historical records and different interpretations of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[19] On September 11, 2012, the Japanese government agreed to nationalize three islands that had been privately owned for ¥2 billion; China expressed outrage over the move and deployed patrol vessels to the disputed area. Nationalist demonstrations have occurred on both sides and tensions between China and Japan have risen to the highest level since WWII, increasing the possibility that the territorial dispute may escalate violently.[20] If the dispute does become violent, there are also implications for the relationship between China and the United States given the ongoing security relationship between the United States and Japan, as outlined in the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security.

Others dispute this pessimistic assessment by challenging the assumption that China is currently in a position to be a real threat to the international system.[21] These critics generally do not deny the possibility that relations between the United States and China could worsen – however, they insist that this outcome is neither definite nor unavoidable. Former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew argued that while Sino-American relations are "both cooperative and competitive," "[competition] between them is inevitable, but conflict is not."[22] Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger would agree with this assessment, as he has stated that the

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[19] Erica Strecker Downs and Phillip C. Saunders, "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism," *International Security* 23:3 (Winter 1998/1999): 124-125.

[20] Victor D. Cha, "Ripe for Rivalry: Has Asia's moment of reckoning finally arrived?" *Foreign Policy*, December 12, 2002, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/12/ripe_for_rivalry (accessed December 13, 2012).

[21] Doug Bandow, "China's Military Rise Means End of U.S. Hegemony?" in China, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 133-134; Martin Malin and Hui Zhang, "US and China Must Stand Up to N. Korea," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 148; Susan Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 255; Wu 139.

[22] Lee Kuan Yew, "Speech by Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew at the US-ASEAN Business Council's 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner in Washington DC, 27 October 2009" (lecture, Washington DC, October 27, 2009) http://www.usasean.org/Multimedia/MM_Speech.pdf (accessed Feb 16, 2013).

"crucial competition between the United States and China is more likely to be economic and social than military."[23]

Analyst Doug Bandow has argued that China's military build-up is not menacing towards the United States because China's interests are limited to being a regional hegemon in Asia. Therefore, the United States is capable of alleviating tensions with China if it abandons its policy of being a military hegemon in Asia.[24] Bandow recommends that the United States should adjust its foreign policy towards China by "reducing U.S. international ambitions rather than increasing military spending... [and replacing] dominance with defense as the core of its foreign policy."[25]

The analysts who are more optimistic about China's intentions and future role in the international system argue that increased participation and success in the current international system have caused China to learn that it can benefit from participation in the current system.[26] They argue that China's ongoing status as a responsible "no first use" nuclear power means that it could play an important role in nuclear nonproliferation, especially in checking North Korean aggression, nuclear weapons development and proliferation. Indeed, the relationship between China and North Korea has seemed strained in the last few years, with Chinese leadership recently rebuking a North Korean envoy for withdrawing from the diplomatic nuclear peace talks:

> In telling the North it should return to the negotiating table, Mr. Xi appeared to strike a stern tone, saying, "The Chinese position is very clear: no matter how the situation changes, relevant parties should all adhere to the goal of

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[23] Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011), 525.
[24] Bandow, 133.
[25] Bandow, 134.
[26] Yong Deng, "Reputation and the Security Dilemma: China Reacts to the China Threat Theory," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, eds. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, 186-214 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 186; Harry Harding, "China's Co-operative Behaviour," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, eds. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995): 399.

denuclearization of the peninsula, persist in safeguarding its peace and stability, and stick to solving problems through dialogue and consultation."[27]

From this view point, China's hesitation in increasing pressure on North Korea thus far is due to their worries that increased American involvement in the region will exacerbate China's own security dilemma. Despite their obvious interests in promoting security and stability in East Asia, "China is worried that the Korean nuclear and missile crisis will provide a pretext for accelerating the deployment of a joint US-Japanese missile defense shield, which undermines China's own modest deterrent force."[28] However, even proponents of this view argue that cooperation is still possible between the United States and China; China would need to be more supportive of UN sanctions and exert their influence over North Korea, while the United States would need to make it publicly clear that it has no intentions of moving its own forces to areas along the North Korean-Chinese border.[29]

Other analysts take a more moderate approach – that while China is not yet powerful enough to overthrow the current international system, it is currently in a position to cause conflict within it. This viewpoint is most often expressed in terms of relationship between China and North Korea. One analyst suggests that China has been driving North Korea's menacing stance against the United States and South Korea and points to China's inaction in dealing with North Korea as indicative of China's true intentions:

> China could cut off North Korea's oil. China could shut the border to trade. Or China could take the opposite tactic and open the border: Refugees would flee and the regime would crumble, much as East Germany did 20 years ago… Instead, it has maintained trade relations, kept the oil flowing, built up its border fences and

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[27] Jane Perlez, "China Bluntly Tells North Korea to Enter Nuclear Talks," *New York Times* (May 24, 2013), http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/25/world/asia/china-tells-north-korea-to-return-to-nuclear-talks.html?partner=rss&emc=rss (accessed 05/24/2013).
[28] Malin and Zhang, 148.
[29] Ibid.

paid lip service to the international efforts to block the North Korean nuclear
program […], all the while hunkering down to watch what happens.[30]

She argues that China's inaction is indicative of their ambitions to become the regional hegemon

in Asia, along with China's increase in military spending and modernization. In this case, using

North Korea as a proxy to stymie American interests in Asia would be beneficial to China while

preventing open conflict with the United States. China's relative inaction in restraining North

Korean aggression could also be explained by the potential of a refugee crisis if the Kim regime

is overthrown and North Korea collapses. They are concerned that "the trickle of North Koreans

currently crossing the border would turn into a flood, leaving China with a messy humanitarian

situation on its hands."[31]

Domestically, China's rise and continued economic growth have become sources of

national pride for many people, which led to the emergence of what Michel Oksenberg dubbed

as China's "confident nationalism"[32] – a form of Chinese nationalism that specifically links

China's rise to national survival. As such, China's growth and recent economic success have

also been a means to domestic stability; the Chinese government is acutely aware that its own

legitimacy and relatively peaceful relationship with the masses rests on continued economic

prosperity translating into international standing and national pride.[33]

> The regime's legitimacy seems to rest on three main pillars: 1) It has brought
> social order after a century and a half of upheavals; 2) people's incomes are
> growing rapidly (even if the growth is unevenly distributed); and 3) Chinese enjoy

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[30] Anne Applebaum, "Shadow Boxing in Pyongyang," in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010), 142.
[31] Jonathan Levine, "North Korea's Statecraft of Suicide," *The National Interest* (March 8, 2013), http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/north-koreas-statecraft-suicide-8197 (accessed 04/09/2013); Matt Schiavenza, "Can China Stop North Korea?" *The Atlantic* (April 3, 2013), http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/04/can-china-stop-north-korea/274626/ (accessed 04/07/2013).
[32] Michel Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism," Foreign Affairs 65:3 (1987): 501-523.
[33] Stefan Halper, *The Beijing Consensus* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 140.

a sense that the Beijing government is restoring China to its rightful place of prominence in the world.[34]

1.2　　The Confucius Institutes

The Confucius Institutes are nonprofit organizations designed "to satisfy the need of people who are interested in Chinese learning all around the world, promoting the understanding of Chinese language culture, enhancing the educational and cultural cooperation between China and the world, developing the friendship between China and other countries, to help developing a multicultural environment and building up a harmonious world."[35] However, the Confucius Institutes have had a mixed reception, among both their host audiences abroad and with the domestic Chinese public. In the United States, many educational administrators have welcomed the opportunity to host Confucius Institutes, citing the greater access to resources and the official funding that *Hanban* provides.[36] Other administrators have expressed their concern over the presence of Confucius Institutes on their campuses and the effect they would have on academic freedom.[37] Aside from overt interference in academic curriculums by the Chinese government, some scholars and administrators are also concerned about the risk of academic self-censorship at universities that host Confucius Institutes – that educators would be unwilling to risk to a

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[34] Henry S. Rowen, "When Will the Chinese People Be Free?" in *China*, ed. Noah Berlatsky (Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2010): 37.

[35] Confucius Institute Online, "About Us," Confucius Institute Online, http://english.chinese.cn/article/2011-09/27/content_342613.htm (accessed February 1, 2012).

[36] Falk Hartig, "Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17 (2012): 53-76; Falk Hartig, "Cultural Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics: The Case of Confucius Institutes in Australia," *Communication, Politics & Culture* 45 (2012): 256-276; Elizabeth Redden, "Confucius Says: Debate over Chinese-funded institutes at American universities," *Inside Higher Ed*, Jan. 4, 2012, http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/01/04/debate-over-chinese-funded-institutes-american-universities (accessed March 12, 2012).

[37] D.D. Guttenplan, "Critics Worry About the Influence of Chinese Institutes on U.S. Campuses," *The New York Times*, March 4, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/us/critics-worry-about-influence-of-chinese-institutes-on-uscampuses.html?_r=2&sq=Confucius%20Institute&st=cse&scp=1&pagewanted=all (accessed March 20, 2012); Redden.

major source of program funding by critically examining Chinese history or government

policies.[38]

Domestically, the success of the Confucius Institutes may serve as a source of national

pride. Therefore, Beijing's support of the initiative may bolster its political legitimacy by

"restoring China to its rightful place of prominence in the world."[39] However, the current

economy may limit Chinese public support for the Confucius Institutes. Price stability has been

a major issue in China. Food prices rose over 11 percent between 2009 and 2011 and inflation

averaged at 5.53% in 2011.[40] Though it lowered to 2.62% in 2012[41], Chinese inflation hit an

eight month high in October 2013 and food prices rose 6.5% over October 2012 levels.[42] The

speed of China's economic growth has led to this stubbornly high inflation, which has caused

CCP leadership to worry that China's current economic growth model is "unbalanced,

uncoordinated, and unstable."[43] Rapid economic growth has also disturbed the societal balance

in China, as the income generated has not being distributed evenly – it has widened both the

poverty gap among individuals and the economic gap geographically, especially between the

richer coastal provinces and the inland territories.[44] Meanwhile, there are Confucius Institutes in

over 300 colleges in over 90 countries, with about 70 of those branches being in the United

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[38] Jocelyn Chey, "The Gentle Dragon: China's 'charm offensive,' through Confucius Institutes, wins allies around the globe," *YaleGlobal Online*, November 29, 2007, http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/gentle-dragon (accessed September 28, 2013); Guttenplan; Hartig, "Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China"; Hartig, "Cultural Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics: The Case of Confucius Institutes in Australia"; Redden.
[39] Rowen, 37.
[40] "Historic Inflation China – historic CPI inflation China," inflation.eu, http://www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/china/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-china.aspx (accessed November 22, 2013).
[41] Ibid.
[42] Xiaoyi Shao and Kevin Yao, "China inflation hits eight-month high amid tightening fear," *Reuters*, November 9, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/11/09/us-china-economy-cpi-idUSBRE9A801X20131109 (accessed November 22, 2013).
[43] "Don't Worry, Be Happy," *Economist* 398, Issue 8725, March 19, 2011, 49.
[44] "Income gap widening in China: survey," *China Daily*, April 15, 2013, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2013-04/15/content_16407532.htm (accessed November 22, 2013).

States.[45] *Hanban* spends a large amount of money providing educational materials and direct

funding – some estimates ranging from $100,000 to $150,000 – to each of these institutions on a

yearly basis.[46] Given the economic situation, and the fact that reportedly as many as 400 million

people in China are unable to speak Mandarin[47], the Chinese public may feel that governmental

financial support would be better spent on domestic, rather than international, programs.

In addition to this conflict of economic interests, the public may also be confused by the

current official support of the Confucius Institute, which promotes Confucius as a representative

of traditional Chinese culture. Since the fall of the Qing Dynasty, there have been numerous

iconoclastic political campaigns vilifying Confucian philosophy. Recent governmental actions

that have promoted Confucius as a prestigious figure and embraced him as a symbol of

traditional Chinese history may have been largely misunderstood by the Chinese public.[48]

Much of the discourse on the Confucius Institutes tends to be heavily biased and focuses

on narrow aspects of the program, depending on the sources' point of view. The concerns of

administrators involved with the program at universities that house the Confucius Institutes may

be more related to long-term issues like the program's finance or sustainability. Teaching staff

may have more day-to-day concerns involving "relations with the Chinese partner university."[49]

Observers not directly involved with the Confucius Institutes, such as policymakers or pundits,

tend to raise concerns of more political nature. Expressing concern over having these

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[45] Redden.

[46] Ibid.

[47] "Say what? China says 400 million can't speak national language," *The Straits Times*, September 5, 2013, http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/asia/story/say-what-china-says-400-million-cant-speak-national-language-20130905 (accessed September 11, 2013).

[48] "Rectification of Statues," *Economist*, January 20, 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/17969895 (accessed March 13, 2011).

[49] Don Starr, "Chinese Language Education in Europe: the Confucius Institutes." *European Journal of Education* 44:1 (2009): 78.

government-funded institutes on university campuses, their criticism ranges from maintaining

academic freedom to enabling Chinese governmental espionage:

> The issue of academic interference was raised in Sweden in March 2008 when
> some staff at Stockholm University, host to the Nordic Confucius Institute,
> demanded an end to the current arrangement and the separation of the CI from the
> university. The argument was framed in terms of academic freedom: that the
> Chinese Embassy in Stockholm was using the Confucius Institute to carry out
> political surveillance, covert propaganda and inhibit research on sensitive areas
> such as the Falungong. The CI project coordinator refuted absolutely these
> suggestions.[50]

This wide range of concerns and biases has both academic and political implications. The

discourse impacts whether university administrators will initiate plans to house Confucius

Institutes or maintain the ones that are already on their campuses. Policy is not created in a

vacuum: academic literature regarding the Confucius Institutes may also impact whether

policymakers will pursue policies that are friendly to the program or erect barriers against it. A

comprehensive study of the Confucius Institutes that both examines the program's structural

design and functionality and evaluates the existing literature regarding the program is necessary.

1.3   Summary

This thesis will provide a comprehensive analysis of the Confucius Institutes by

surveying the various controversies – both internationally and within China – on the rise of

China and the establishment and support of the Confucius Institutes. Chapter two will explore

the debate on China's rise from various academic disciplines. It will begin with an overview of

how China's rise has been perceived, both by international observers and domestically by the

Chinese population. It will then review the theories that tend to be used in scholarship to frame

China's rise – specifically focusing on the realist, liberalist, and constructivist schools in

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[50] Don Starr 78-79.

international relations, Joseph Nye's theory on soft power, and various typographies of nationalism. Chapter two will conclude with a discussion on how the various theories interplay to frame the debate on China's rise.

Chapter three will begin by detailing the history of the Confucius Institutes. It will then explore how the Confucius Institutes have been received by the Chinese public domestically, including discussions on the rehabilitation of Confucius as a national figure, the Confucius Institutes as symbolic of China's rise and a source of national prestige, and Chinese governmental and financial support for the Confucius Institutes. Chapter three will conclude with discussion on the procedures to establishing Confucius Institutes internationally, particularly on American college campuses.

Chapter four will focus on American foreign policy towards China and how the Confucius Institutes have been received in the United States. It will begin with a discussion on the interplay between political legitimacy, public opinion, and mass media, and how the three impact American policymaking. It will then analyze published articles and radio and television news segments to determine the extent to which American mass media has covered the Confucius Institutes and how the controversies surrounding the Confucius Institute – particularly the roles it plays in increasing Chinese soft power and potentially limiting academic freedom on American college campuses – are framed.

This thesis will conclude with a discussion on Chinese grand strategy, the government's objectives for this project, their use of public diplomacy and their success at enhancing Chinese soft power. It will also show how the Confucius Institutes have affected their host institutions and communities. Finally, it will discuss the validity of the prominent criticisms of Confucius Institutes being hosted at American universities.

Chapter Two: Theories on China's Rise

The rapid rise of China has been the subject of vigorous debate among international relations and Asia scholars. The debate reached a high point when *Foreign Affairs* published Richard Bernstein's and Ross H. Munro's "The Coming Conflict With America" – an article that argued that China, "[driven] by nationalist sentiment, a yearning to redeem the humiliations of the past, and the simple urge for international power," is taking steps to replace the United States as the hegemonic power in Asia.[1] Since then, analysts have disputed many facets of China's rise, including their current and future capabilities and their foreign affairs grand strategy. The literature covers a range of theories, which include nationalism, realism, liberalism, constructivism, and the concept of soft power. Cognizance of how these studies on China's rise are theoretically grounded is of practical importance because these academic studies are not produced in a vacuum: they have very real and important consequences for how state decision-makers construct and implement political policy. Scholars should "understand – and work through – how conclusions and recommendations might translate into policy and think about how the various meanings that could be assigned to such conclusions, recommendations, and policies."[2]

This chapter will provide an overview of the theories that ground the available literature on China's rise. It will outline the dominant and relevant theories and approaches that have been used to discuss China's rise, including various international relations schools of thought, and

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[1] Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, "The Coming Conflict with America," *Foreign Affairs* 76:2 (Mar/Apr 1997): 19.

[2] Cecelia Lynch, "Critical Interpretation and Interwar Peace Movements: Challenging Dominant Narratives," in Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 299.

Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, and nationalism. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on how these theories frame scholarship on China's rise.

2.1   International Relations Theories

Realist Perspective

Realist theory in international relations is primarily focused on power. It assumes that the cause of conflict in the international system is the environment, which is characterized by anarchy.[3] When there is no worldwide government to dictate or measure the behavior of states, power is paramount. Classical realists tend to think of power as the ends in itself, while structural realists focus on power as the means to gain security. As a result, international relations realists generally place the importance of personal morality, utopianism, or cooperation below either power or security. Hans Morgenthau, a classical realist, declared that "[international politics], like all politics, is a struggle for power."[4] Due to the inherent selfish nature of human beings and anarchy in the international system, states will ultimately define their interests in terms of power. Morgenthau critiqued liberal theory, arguing that abstract ideals cannot change the realities of power interests and that state morality is not comparable to individual morality.[5]

John Mearsheimer, a proponent of offensive structural realism, based his international relations philosophy on the assumption that powerful states prefer offense because hegemony is their ultimate goal.[6] Unlike Morgenthau, human nature was not considered in Mearsheimer's political outlook. Rather, due to the nature of anarchy in the international system, and the fact

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[3] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, The State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959): 182.

[4] Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6e, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 31.

[5] Morgenthau and Thompson, 6.

[6] John J. Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), 21.

that the true intentions of states can never be known by other states, the only way for a state to

achieve its primary goal – assurance of its own survival – is for that state to eliminate its relative

competition by becoming a hegemon.[7] States would only have an interest in the global

promotion of democracy and protection of natural rights if it were a means to gaining security; if

those goals conflict with the state's security, they would be discarded by policymakers.[8]

The "security dilemma" is a concept in international relations theory that explains how

tensions can spiral between countries. In the classic security dilemma, the actions taken by one

state to assure its own security tend to threaten the security of other states.[9] The responses of

those other states then threaten the security of the first state as well, and could possibly spiral

into an unintended international conflict. Defensive realists like Kenneth Waltz and Robert

Jervis have argued that security dilemmas exist due to the existence of anarchy in the system and

the fact that states must rely on themselves for their own security. "Because some states may at

any time use force, all states must be prepared to do so – or live at the mercy of their militarily

more vigorous neighbors."[10]

Robert Jervis explored the nature of security dilemmas and the conditions under which

states will pursue compatible security policies and posited that the two main variables that

determine the types of security policies pursued by states are the offense-defense balance and

whether weapons and security policies can be distinguished between offensive and defense.[11]

The answers to these questions will ultimately determine which of four possible worlds are

applicable to the current situation between two states – which, Jervis argued, will be highly

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[7] Mearsheimer, 2.
[8] Mearsheimer, 52-53.
[9] John Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2:2 (1950): 157-180.
[10] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2007): 102.
[11] Robert Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma," in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 10th e, ed. by Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis (Boston: Pearson Education, Inc, 2010), 93.

indicative of the likelihood of conflict between those two states. He summed up the offense-defense balance as whether it is easier for one state to maintain its own security by attacking their opponents rather than by defending their own borders.[12] He argued that determining where the offense-defense balance lies is necessary because a scenario in which offense is either cheaper or easier will naturally lead to more aggression and conflict among states.[13] In defense-dominated scenarios, however, "not only will the security dilemma cease to inhibit status quo states from cooperating, but aggression will be next to impossible, thus rendering international anarchy relatively unimportant."[14]

Jervis also argued that it is important to determine whether weapons and policies employed by a state can be distinguished as offensive or defensive, because when they are distinguishable, much of the tension created by the security dilemma will be ameliorated.[15] The difficulty in distinguishing between the two lies in determining intent; Jervis argued that "the only way to discover whether arms are intended for purely defensive purposes or are held in a spirit of aggression is in all cases to inquire into the intentions of the country concerned."[16] However, determining the intentions of a country is very difficult; although domestic politics tend to drive foreign policy, rhetoric can be deceptive and the foreign policy intentions of a country are never truly known by anyone but the leaders of that country. Lacking the ability to know exactly what another country's intentions are, countries determine other countries' postures by examining the weapons and policies employed by those countries. Some weapons, such as fortifications, are limited by their lack of mobility, and as such, would be used mostly for defensive purposes. Conversely, while situations may exist where mobile, offensive weaponry

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[12] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 93.
[13] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 94.
[14] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 94.
[15] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 103.
[16] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 103.

would be used by states for defense or deterrence, weapons that "are particularly effective in reducing fortifications and barriers" or "depend for their effectiveness on surprise" favor the offensive.[17]

Jervis concluded that the combination of the above factors determine where cases will fall in four different scenarios involving the security dilemma. The most volatile of scenarios (Jervis' "First World") would be where offense has the advantage and it is difficult to determine whether a country's posture is offensive or defensive – in these cases, arms races are likely, and states would be more likely to pursue offensive strategies to achieve quick and decisive victories.[18] The most stable of scenarios (or "Fourth World") would be where defense has the advantage and countries are able to determine whether another country's posture is offensive or defensive because there would not be "a reason for a status quo power to be tempted to procure offensive forces, and aggressors give notice of their intentions."[19] Unfortunately, the prevalence of misperception makes the most stable of scenarios highly unlikely. The scenario where offense has the advantage but posture is distinguishable ("Third World") provides some stability because states can openly pursue defensive weaponry. However, this scenario still has the risk of conflict because defense is less desirable and more costly. The "Second World," as Jervis described it, is actually the scenario most commonly found in history. In this scenario, defense has the advantage, but posture is not distinguishable. Although states can never be sure of the intentions of other states, the fact that defense has the advantage makes conquest and aggression less likely. In these scenarios, Jervis argued that "empathy and skillful statesmanship can reduce [the] danger" caused by uncertainty of posture.[20] In sum, a scenario where offensive has the

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[17] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 106.
[18] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 108.
[19] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 110.
[20] Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma", 109.

advantage and intent is uncertain would lead to more volatility and be more likely to erupt into violence than a scenario where the primary actors are more focused on defense and are fully aware of each other's intentions.

How policymakers envision intentions and interpret the above scenarios also has significant implications on the nature of the foreign policy they will ultimately choose. In his article "Deterrence, the Spiral Model, and Intentions of the Adversary," Jervis discusses how the application of the deterrence model or the spiral model is determined by how a state perceives the intentions of his adversary. In the deterrence model, a state would be wary to give concessions easily to avoid sending the message to aggressive adversaries that the state is weak – instead, they would prefer to make it clear to their adversaries that, if necessary, they are ready and willing to engage in war in order to preserve their security. The spiral model is essentially the misapplication of the deterrence model by one state against another state that they incorrectly perceive to be aggressive – the increase in the first state's security diminishes the security of the second. In the spiral model, the security dilemmas, such as arms races, are unintended – "states often share a common interest, but the structure of the situation prevents them from bringing about the mutually desired situation."[21] The problem, as Jervis describes it, is that states must "learn to approach issues from a problem-solving perspective rather than from a competitive one" and "work together to further and develop their common interests."[22] Otherwise, countries risk engaging in unnecessary and costly wars based on false premises and misperceptions.

Liberal Perspective

Liberal theory in international relations is founded in the works of John Locke and Jeremy Bentham. Unlike realists, who assume human nature to be inherently selfish and evil,

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[21] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 66.

[22] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 82.

Locke rationalizes that humans are cooperative by nature because they have the capacity for reason and that the state of war is the result of aggressive actors intervening to take advantage of human society. Despite Locke's high level of moral idealism, he is frequently viewed as a liberal bridge to realist theory – he believes that while peace exists, it would be a "troubled peace" hampered by "inconveniences," such as the general ignorance and partiality of human beings, and how the actions to combat aggression are constrained by weakness and fear.[23] Bentham addresses these inconveniences by advocating for participation in international organizations because cooperation among countries would be essential in campaigns to combat ignorance, partiality, and fear in order to protect Lockean natural rights.[24]

Immanuel Kant is frequently described as one of the most influential classical liberal thinkers. Although more famously known for his contributions to moral philosophy and the categorical imperative, in his article "Perpetual peace: A Philosophical Sketch," Kant outlines three conditions (or "definitive articles," as he refers to them) necessary in order to achieve peace among states – (1) the first presence of a republican states that (2) form a voluntary federation and (3) act with "universal hospitality."[25] Prior to that, Kant offers preliminary articles, which Doyle describes as being "designed to build the mutual confidence and respect that establishing a true peace will require."[26] If mutual confidence exists, then cooperation between states – especially through international institutions like the United Nations, which is a primary component of liberal international relations theory – can take place.

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[23] Michael W. Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1997), 223-224.
[24] Doyle, 227-228.
[25] Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, trans. M. Campbell Smith, (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1903), 120-137.
[26] Doyle, 256.

Constructivist Perspective

The constructivist perspective in international relations focuses on how actors perceive themselves and others, and how these perceptions define the interests of these actors.   It operates on two basic tenets: "that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces and…that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideals rather than given by nature."[27] The realist school in international relations theory tends to view anarchy in the international system as a given condition and the primary cause of conflict, since the absence of an overarching power leads to competition between actors in the system. The liberal school in international relations theory views information and learning as the potential cause for cooperation between states. Therefore, proponents of liberalism tend to promote international institutions to facilitate the sharing of information between actors.   Constructivism differs from realism and liberalism in that it views social interaction, identity and interests as endogenous to the causality in the theory.

Under constructivism, the predictions of both realist and liberal international relations theory can occur without the causality provided by those two theories: conflict or cooperation between actors depend on how those actors have defined themselves. Conflict may exist between two actors, not for the deterministic reason of anarchy in the international system leading to competition, but because the two actors have defined their interests in a zero-sum manner. States may cooperate with each other, not because they believe cooperation maximizes their own prosperity or security, but because they have positively identified with one another so that the security of each is perceived as the responsibility of all.

Some scholars have criticized the utopian nature of constructivism and its usefulness as an international relations theory. Some scholars have argued that constructivist theory, much

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[27] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

like realist theory, relies too much on the assumption of a unitary state – a criticism to which

Alexander Wendt, one of constructivism's main proponents, concedes.[28] However, Wendt and

other constructivists maintain that realist and liberal institutionalist theories are flawed in their

overreliance on structural arguments.

Examples oft cited by constructivists include anti-militarism displayed in Germany and

Japan following World War II.[29] After the massive disarmaments at the end of the war, many

skeptics pointed to certain checkpoints, such as the economic and/or political recovery of either

country, which would bring about the remilitarization of both countries. However, despite the

economic and political recovery of both countries, both Germany and Japan remained largely

anti-militaristic. The realist explanation for the continuation of anti-militarism is that both

countries responded to their primary interest, security in the international system, by

"bandwagoning"[30] or forming close ties with the United States. However, realist theory loses its

explanatory power after the fall of the Soviet Union, when America's primary competitor was

removed from the international system, potentially making the United States less interested in

guaranteeing German and Japanese security, but both countries still failed to remilitarize. The

liberal explanation for continued German and Japanese anti-militarism is that the international

institutions established at Breton Woods at the end of World War II have allowed Germany and

Japan to learn to cooperate with other countries and not resort to remilitarization. Though liberal

theory has explanatory power over the cases of Germany and Japan, it fails to explain why other

countries that participate in liberal institutions, such as the United States, Britain and France, are

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[28] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46:2 (Spring 1992): 424-425.
[29] Thomas U. Berger, "Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (NY: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 317-356.
[30] Stephen Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9:4 (Spring 1985): 4.

not equally anti-militaristic. Constructivism covers these theoretical gaps by arguing that the

trauma of WWII showed that militarism was not a preferable strategy and led to a redefinition of

identity and interests for both countries. Thus, constructivist theorists would argue that the anti-

militarism of Germany and Japan following World War II is better explained by focusing on

their process of *defining* interests rather than the *structure* of how those interests are defined.

2.2   **Soft Power**

When "power" is referred to in international relations, it means one state having the

ability to change the behavior of other states in order to get what it wants. Most international

relations realists refer to power in the direct sense – that power is exercised or commanded by

states directly over other states. This direct power can take a hard or soft form. An example of a

hard form of direct power would be one state changing the behavior of another state by directly

threatening them with their large military. An example of a soft form of direct power would be

one state changing the behavior of another state by enticing them with aid packages or loans.

However, "soft power," a term originally coined by Joseph Nye in his book *Bound to

Lead*, is different from direct forms of power because it is exercised indirectly over states:

> The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible power
> resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions. This dimension can be
> thought of as soft power, in contrast to the hard command power usually
> associated with tangible resources like military and economic strength.[31]

To utilize soft power, it is not necessary for states to act directly with other states in order to

change their behavior – "[a] country may achieve the outcomes it prefers in world politics

because other countries want to follow it or have agreed to a system that produces such

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[31] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power,* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), 32.

effects."[32] In other words, soft power not only has the capacity to ultimately change a state's

behavior, but their preferences and interests as well. Nye refers to this as "co-optive" power,

because it "can rest on the attraction of one's ideas or on the ability to set the political agenda in

a way that shapes the preferences that others express."[33]

More than a decade later, Nye expanded on the concept of soft power in *Soft Power: the*

Means to Success in World Politics and how soft power "uses a different type of currency (not

force, not money) to engender cooperation – an attraction to shared values and the justness and

duty of contributing to the achievement of those values."[34] In *Soft Power*, Nye criticized recent

American foreign policy for paying too much attention to hard or direct power. Instead, he

argues, American foreign policy should look to *co-opt* people rather than *coerce* them – that

"…it is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force

them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions."[35] Nye argued that this

should not be a foreign concept to American policymakers, because it frequently occurs in the

domestic politics of democratic nations – democracy is essentially based in the preferences of the

majority, and the "ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets

such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are

seen as legitimate or having moral authority."[36]

According to Nye, "[the] soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its

culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at

home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral

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[32] Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead,* 31.
[33] Nye, Jr. *Bound to Lead,* 31.
[34] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 7.
[35] Nye, Jr., *Soft Power*, 5.
[36] Nye, Jr., *Soft Power*, 6.

authority)."[37] Two examples of where culture acts as a source of soft power would be the United

States and Japan; American and Japanese popular culture are sometimes received by other

countries as exciting, trendy or innovative, and can contribute to a more positive overall view of

the United States or Japan in those countries. Political values and government policies can also

attract or repel, as democracy in practice is generally valued as a positive thing while "[narrow]

values and parochial cultures are less likely to produce soft power."[38] Nye argues even

governments that do not value or practice democracy should be aware of how they use or

squander soft power because of the possible impact on their economic objectives.[39]

The utility of soft power is not limited to governmental entities – corporations,

universities, international organizations, churches, and other nongovernmental groups can also

develop and wield soft power. In some cases, nongovernmental entities have a greater degree of

freedom than governments to do so:

> These flexible nongovernmental organizations and networks are particularly
> effective in penetrating states without regard to borders. Because they often
> involve citizens who are well placed in the domestic politics of several countries,
> such networks are able to focus the attention of the media and government on
> their issues. They create a new type of transnational political coalitions.[40]

There are occasions where the objectives of states and nongovernmental entities are not aligned.

When states cannot rely on being able to utilize nongovernmental entities as a tool or the

nongovernmental entities actually obstruct the states' efforts, states have to be more concerned

with how they wield soft power, because they "compete for credibility not only with other

governments, but with a broad range of alternatives including news media, corporations,

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[37] Nye, Jr., *Soft Power*, 11.
[38] Nye, *Soft Power*, 11.
[39] Nye, *Soft Power*, 20.
[40] Nye, *Soft Power*, 91.

nongovernmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and networks of scientific communities."[41]

The utility and widespread applicability of the concept of soft power have been cited as some of the theory's major weaknesses. Yet, unlike other international relations theories that were deemed too academic to be of pragmatic use to policymakers, the concept of soft power has been readily adopted by many, notably by American and Chinese policymakers and pundits. David Kearn argued that the reason that it has been accepted – because the ambiguity of the concept makes it a useful "catch-all" phrase, especially in the media – makes the concept itself even more ambiguous:

> Furthermore, by becoming entrenched in the public lexicon of foreign affairs, through its transformation into mainstream policy jargon, the concept has become more vague and diluted. In fact, one could make the albeit overly simplistic argument that soft power has been reduced to a shorthand for what historically would be called "prudent diplomacy" or perhaps "public relations management" in an international context.[42]

This is especially evident in the way soft power is viewed in China, where policymakers and pundits largely focus on culture as the primary source of soft power; Wang Huning, the Chinese scholar credited with China's first article on soft power, once stated that "if a country has an admirable culture and ideological system, other countries will tend to follow it."[43] Whereas Nye intended "soft power" to be sourced by political values and foreign policy in addition to culture, the Chinese tend to use "soft power" as shorthand for "cultural diplomacy."

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[41] Nye, *Soft Power*, 106.
[42] David W. Kearns, Jr., "The hard truths about soft power," *Journal of Political Power* 4:1 (Apr 2011): 66.
[43] Bonnie S. Glaser and Melissa E. Murphy, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate," in *Chinese Soft Power and its Implications for the United States: Competition and Cooperation in the Developing World: a Report of the CSIS Smart Power Initiative*, ed. Carola McGiffert (Washington, D.C.: CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), 2009), 12.

Soft power is also limited in scope and utility. For example, if soft power is meant to condition "target nations to voluntarily do what soft power nations would like them to do,"[44]it would seem to require that the nation utilizing soft power and the target nations have a shared understanding or social context.[45] It relies heavily on the liberal Foucauldian assumption that participation in institutions will construct the primary interests of nations in such a way that international cooperation is not only possible but preferable. Due to the intangible nature of soft power, theorists are also skeptical over whether the efficacy of soft power is comparable to hard power or even verifiable.[46] Moreover, theorists continue to debate the extent to which hard and soft power are capable of reinforcing and/or detracting from each other.[47]

The Development of Chinese Soft Power

Increasingly, there has been scholarly attention paid to the government's increasing focus on projecting soft power.[48] In *Soft Power*, Nye noted the rising status of China as a state that may be capable of effectively wielding its soft power by pointing out examples of its recent expansion in soft power – Gao Xingjian winning China's first Nobel Prize for literature, the international success of Hong Kong cinema, the popularity of Yao Ming, Beijing hosting the 2008 Summer Olympics, China's recent investment in manned space flight, and the spread of

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[44] Giulio M. Gallarotti, "Soft power: what it is, why it's important, and the conditions for its effective use," *Journal of Political Power* 4:1 (Apr 2011): 28.
[45] Kearns, 71.
[46] Kearns, 72.
[47] Gallarotti, 33-35; Kearns, 74-76.
[48] Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, "Sources and Limits of Chinese 'Soft Power,'" *Survival* 48:2 (Summer 2006): 17-36; Bonnie S. Glaser and Melissa E. Murphy, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate," in *Chinese Soft Power and Its Implications for the United States: Competition and Cooperation in the Developing World: A Report of the CSIS Smart Power Initiative*, ed. Carola McGiffert (Washington, D.C.: CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), 2009), 10-26; Gregory G. Holyk, "Paper Tiger? Chinese Soft Power in East Asia," *Political Science Quarterly* 126:2 (2011): 223-254; Nye, *Soft* Power; Joel Wuthnow, "The Concept of Soft Power in China's Strategic Discourse," *Issues and Studies* 44:2 (June 2008): 1-28; Weihong Zhang, "China's Cultural Future: From Soft Power to Competitive" National Power," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 16:4 (2010): 383-402.

large expatriate Chinese communities.[49] Aside from the cultural aspects of Chinese soft power, the Chinese government has also wielded diplomatic and economic soft power by taking steps to improve its reputation and diplomatic relations with many of its Asian developing neighbors by combining its "peaceful rise" rhetoric with an increase in foreign aid programs, regional trade, and participation in regional multilateral organizations like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the East Asia Summit (EAS).[50] Some analysts argue that rather than using tactics of coercion through private, forceful diplomacy, the Chinese government has attempted to increase their influence and power with more persuasive tactics by using a combination of "culture, diplomacy, participation in multinational organizations, businesses' actions abroad, and the gravitational pull of a nation's economic strength."[51] Beijing is shifting to a policy of attraction, hoping that the use of public diplomacy can create a positive public opinion of China in other countries that will assist in China in its desired foreign policy.

The Confucius Institutes are a prime example of a government-sponsored organization designed to implement China's policy of improving public opinion abroad. Following his official state visit to the United States in January 2011, President Hu Jintao paid a highly-publicized visit to Walter Payton College Prep, a high school in Chicago that also houses a North American branch of the Confucius Institutes. In addition to heavily supporting the Confucius Institutes and other similar international outreach programs, the Chinese government has also stepped up its efforts in inviting foreign students to study in China; the Chinese government

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[49] Nye, *Soft Power*, 88.
[50] Gregory G. Holyk, "Paper Tiger? Chinese Soft Power in Asia," *Political Science Quarterly* 126:2 (2011): 225.
[51] Kurlantzick, Joshua, *China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Policy Brief No. 47, 2006), 1, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/PB_47_FINAL.pdf (accessed February 14, 2011).

committed to 10,000 "Bridge Scholarships" for American students in response to the US

government's May 2010 launch of the "100,000 Strong" initiative.[52]

Skeptical analysts view China's increase in soft power as dangerous and are suspicious of

the intentions driving Beijing's pursuit of soft power. Shogo Suzuki argued that China's charm

offensive towards the Third World, especially in Africa, is rooted in their desire to trade for

natural resources and other valuable commodities, as well as to "gain valuable Third World votes

in order to avoid international censure over its poor human rights record."[53] Joshua Kurlantzick

cynically argued that China's charm offensive is largely aimed at improving its standing in Asia:

> One of China's primary goals is simply to maintain peace on its periphery. Peace allows China's economy to grow and provides opportunities for Chinese companies looking for outlets. Beijing also may wish to gain bases along Southeast Asia's sea lanes, dominate Asia's inland waterways, and ultimately, gain control of the South China Sea. Beijing also wants to reduce Taiwan and Japan's influence in Southeast Asia, pushing them out of regional diplomacy; since 1994, Beijing has pursued a policy it calls "[using] all economic and diplomatic resources to reward countries that are willing to isolate Taiwan."… Finally, Beijing may want to shift influence in Southeast Asia away from Washington.[54]

Implicit in Kurlantzick's viewpoint is the assumption that China is a revisionist state that may be

seeking soft power in order to "remake the world"[55] – that the pursuit of soft power may simply

be a transparent ploy to shore up its own security, achieve reunification, and diminish US

hegemony in East Asia. Seizing this idea as proof of a possible Chinese threat, many theorists in

US-foreign-policy think tanks have already begun developing strategies to protect American core

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[52] U.S. Department of State, "100,000 Strong Initiative," U.S. Department of State, http://www.state.gov/p/eap/regional/100000_strong/index.htm (accessed March 28, 2012).
[53] Shogo Suzuki, "Chinese Soft Power, Insecurity Studies, Myopia and Fantasy," *Third World Quarterly* 30:4 (2009): 779-780.
[54] Kurlantzick, *China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power*, 4.
[55] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 8.

interests while "Beijing [tries] to convince the world of its peaceful intentions, secure the resources it needs to continue its soaring economic growth, and isolate Taiwan."[56]

Other analysts argue that the perception of a dramatic increase in Chinese soft power coinciding with a steep decline in American soft power is premature and exaggerated. "Although Chinese soft power is much stronger in Southeast Asia than in East Asia, China has a long way to go in obtaining the level of soft power that the United States historically and currently enjoys."[57] While there is some evidence to indicate that China has had some global success in their "charm offensive," they have also been relatively less successful in promoting a positive image in the United States.[58] As such, China has faced "serious constraints in translating [its soft power] into desired foreign-policy outcomes."[59] Nye noted that the difficulty in using culture and narrative to create soft power that are inconsistent with domestic realities may be the reason China is seeing limited returns on its efforts to increase soft power:

> The 2008 Olympics were a success, but shortly afterwards, China's domestic crackdown in Tibet and Xianjiang, and on human rights activists, undercut its soft power gains. The Shanghai Expo was also a great success, but was followed by the jailing of the Nobel peace laureate Liu Xiaobo and the artist Ai Weiwei. And for all the efforts to turn Xinhua and China Central Television into competitors for CNN and the BBC, there is little international audience for brittle propaganda.[60]

If China wanted to make major gains in soft power among Western liberal democracies, Holyk argues that it would need to move "beyond the general promotion of Chinese culture, diplomatic

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[56] Esther Pan, *China's Soft Power Initiative*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2006), http://www.cfr.org/china/chinas-soft-power-initiative/p10715, (accessed February 14, 2011).
[57] Holyk, 247.
[58] Holyk, 243.
[59] Gil and Huang, 17.
[60] Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Why China is Weak on Soft Power," *New York Times* (January 17, 2012), http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/18/opinion/why-china-is-weak-on-soft-power.html (accessed January 23, 2012).

neutrality, and no-strings-attached foreign aid" to developing countries and focus on boosting its attractiveness in the "areas of political and diplomatic soft power."[61]

2.3   Domestic Perception of China's Rise

Typologies of Nationalism

Despite a large amount of scholarly research over the last few decades, it continues to be difficult to provide a generally agreed upon definition of the nation and nationalism. The definitions used in contemporary scholarship tend to be modern in that they view nationalism as a social construct rather than as primordial. However, these definitions range from objectivist to subjectivist, instrumentalist to non-instrumentalist, civic to ethnic. Understanding how nationalism is defined is important because definitions are assigned with some kind of value and relevant scholarship, embedded with these implications and assumptions of value, may significantly impact policymaking.

Objectivist definitions tend to frame nations geographically and linguistically.   In "The Nation," Joseph Stalin offers a modern, yet largely objective definition, arguing that the nation is "a historically constituted community of people,"[62] with a common territory, administration, economy, and language that has, over time, led to a common psychological make-up or culture. Subjectivist definitions, such as the seminal one provided by philosopher Ernest Renan, are not limited to common objectifiers like language; they tend to require an implicit understanding of shared identity and a sense of belonging by the people who constitute the nation:

> To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have accomplished great things together, to wish to do so again, that is the essential condition for being a nation… A nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the

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[61] Holyk, 247.

[62] Josef Stalin, "The Nation," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 18.

sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again.[63]

Another important method for classifying definitions of nationalism is whether they are instrumentalist or non-instrumentalist. Instrumentalist scholars, such as Hugh Seton-Watson, Eric Hobsbawm, and Anthony Smith, and Ernest Gellner, tend to view nationalism as a political tool used by societal elites. Seton-Watson argued that societal elites tend to utilize some combination of "state power, religion, language, social discontents and economic pressures" during nationalist movements in order to form and articulate a burgeoning national consciousness.[64] Hobsbawm notably argued that political elites engage in "social engineering"[65] for the purposes of gaining legitimacy and consolidating power by "inventing traditions"[66] and using primary education, public ceremonies, and public monuments as symbols in their favored narrative on the nation's history, trials and aspirations.[67] Smith provided a clear instrumentalist definition of nationalism, stating it to be "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation.'"[68]

Ernest Gellner, one of the greatest contributors to scholarship on nationalism, argued that societies naturally produce nationalism as they modernize.[69] Since the bureaucracies of modernizing societies require a common language and a certain level of literacy in order to support industrialization, they institute centralized public education systems, which leads to the

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[63] Ernest Renan, "Qu' est-ce qu'une nation?" in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 17.
[64] Hugh Seton-Watson, "Old and New Nations," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 137.
[65] Eric Hobsbawm, "The Nation as Invented Tradition," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 76.
[66] Hobsbawm, 76.
[67] Hobsbawm, 77-78.
[68] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 1991): 73.
[69] Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism and Modernization," in *Nationalism,* eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1994, 56.

creation and dissemination of a shared high culture with a codified written and verbal language.[70]

Language and the education system are essential, because their ability to unify is what ultimately

distinguishes national loyalty from loyalty to other smaller units, such as towns, tribes or clans:

"modern loyalties are centred on political units whose boundaries are defined by the language (in

the wider or in the literal sense) of an education system […] and that when these boundaries are

made rather than given, they must be large enough to create a unit capable of sustaining an

educational system."[71] The irony, as Gellner described it, is that romantic ideals embedded in

nationalism frequently serve utilitarian ends: nationalism has the tendency to use symbolism

"drawn from the healthy, pristine, vigorous life of the peasants" when it is actually "the general

imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of

the majority" by an excluded elite or intelligentsia as a means to engender mass loyalty.[72]

Non-instrumentalists focus less on the role of nationalism as a political tool, possibly by

focusing more on national identities and the process by which national consciousness comes into

being. Benedict Anderson, in his seminal work on nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, took a

historical approach to explain nationalism as a relatively modern phenomenon by tracing how it

originated and spread through language or literacy, religion, the decline of kingship, and

colonialism. In that sense, Anderson's definition of the nation is derivative of Gellner's,

especially with the focus on nationalism being a relatively modern phenomenon driven by

language and literacy. Many nationalist scholars use history as the framework for the evolution

of nationalism, arguing that the development of national consciousness and rise of nationalist

movements were driven by the systemic changes caused by the Enlightenment, the Industrial

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[70] Gellner, "Nationalism and Modernization," 59.
[71] Gellner, "Nationalism and Modernization," 59.
[72] Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism and High Cultures," in *Nationalism,* eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1994, 65.

Revolution, the Reformation, capitalism, and other significant historical events. Though he discussed how history progressed – how religion and religious communities used sacred texts and language to tie the community together, how societal coherence shifted away from religiously organized systems to systems based on kingship, then how the Enlightenment diminished the authority and legitimacy of kings – Anderson was unique in his approach, stressing that the evolution of nationalism should not be thought of as "simply growing out of and replacing religious communities and dynastic realms.[73] In actuality, it was possible for nationalism to develop because there was a fundamental change in the way people perceived the world and time. People began to change in how they understood time, viewing it as simultaneity of past and future in an instantaneous present."[74]

However, Anderson's definition was subjective, as he defined the nation as "imagined" due to the spread of print capitalism.[75] Anderson's study, inspired by the tomb of Unknown Soldiers as a monument to national identity and a symbol of what one is willing to fight and die for, was also less instrumentalist. He noted that many political ideologies, specifically Marxism and Liberalism, which are not generally concerned with concepts like fatality and immortality, fail to adequately explain the nationalist phenomena present in the tomb of Unknown Soldiers.[76] Therefore, in this sense, nationalist fervor, as symbolized through the tomb of Unknown Soldiers, is more similar to religious fervor than ideological or political.

Anderson's concept of a nation is subjectivist and less instrumentalist because it involves how the concept of the nation is shared by members of the community and how they are understood through the experience of each individual. In addition to the change in how people

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[73] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, revised ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 22.
[74] Anderson, 24.
[75] Anderson, 36.
[76] Anderson, 10.

understood time, another development that particularly shaped the advent of nationalism, was the technological development of print-capitalism.[77] Once people began having regular access to the newspaper, they were able to read about and sympathize with the plights of people. They began to imagine themselves as part of a community with the people that they were reading about in their newspapers. In short, Anderson argued that the nation is imagined simultaneously by its members in its boundaries and its membership, and the creation of the nation was possibly only when men were able to look past certain historical cultural assumptions – on particular languages or religious communities having a monopoly on truth, the natural order of monarchs, and the way time was conceived.

Anderson's critics may argue that his concept of nationalism relies too heavily on the subjectivist approach – that there are tangible characteristics and trends that can objectively be noticed in nationalist movements. According to these critics, "an adequate account of such modern social forms as nationalism must capture the dynamic interplay between sociohistorical processes and the embodied, constituting character of everyday practices and cultural categories of understanding."[78] While Anderson tried to close that gap in *Imagined Communities*, Goswami argued that his attempt was undermined by his methodology – "[by] conceptualizing modularity as a universal process of mimesis (of self-identical repetition through time and across space) rather than a historically constituted systemic dimension of the modern nation form."[79] Goswami argued that trying to bridge this gap between subjectivist and objectivist is especially important because of the implications it has for the future of nationalist studies in the context of globalization. "The apparent erosion of the territorial correspondence between culture, territory,

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[77] Anderson, 36.
[78] Manu Goswami, "Rethinking the Modular Nation Form: Toward a Sociohistorical Conception of Nationalism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44:4 (Oct 2002), 770.
[79] Goswami, 772.

people, and economy has imposed, according to this view, novel constraints on territorial sovereignty and the inherited nation-state project of homogenization. How to think through the spread of nationalism, in tandem with global capitalism, remains both conceptually difficulty and politically urgent."[80] Goswami argued that her approach "[provides] analytical leverage and comparative perspective on the present"[81] by "[emphasizing] the possibility of reconstitution based upon a historically constituted range of possibilities and the contradictory spatio-temporal dynamic of capitalism."[82]

However, there are not many scholarly works currently available, especially regarding Chinese nationalism, that take this dualist approach. Therefore, another important concept to consider given the abundance of objectivist approaches to case studies in nationalism is the common distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism. In civic definitions of nationalism, notions of national unity are to be viewed positively by members – this tends to lead civic nationalism to be characterized as individualistic, liberal, inclusive and universal. If individuals choose to adopt the principles of a nation and participate as citizens, then they are accepted as citizens regardless of their birthplace or ethnicity. Conversely, membership tends to not be viewed positively in cases of ethnic nationalism, as ethnicity, and thus, membership, is not chosen by individuals but ascribed to them. As a result, cases of ethnic nationalism are generally characterized as being collectivistic, illiberal, exclusive and particular. The values assigned to examples of nationalism and automatically assumed on the basis of their classification become especially evident in the civic versus ethnic distinction – scholars who use this distinction also frequently note that civic nations tend to be democratic and developed while ethnic nations tend to be authoritarian and have greater issues with development.

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[80] Goswami, 795.
[81] Goswami, 795.
[82] Goswami, 783.

While it is unusual for scholars to define nationalism exclusively on civic or ethnic terms, many tend to sway towards the ethnic. Though Renan's focus was on the existence of solidarity and not necessarily how that solidarity was qualified, there was an implied ethnic slant in his definition of a nation – that the nation was constituted by a shared past and "the actual consent, the desire to live together, the will to continue to value the heritage which all hold in common."[83] Max Weber concedes that nations "need not be based upon common blood," he stresses that "the idea of the 'nation' is apt to include the notions of common descent and of an essential, though frequently indefinite, homogeneity."[84] However, as states and their political systems evolve, so too may the nature of nationalism. Clifford Geertz argued that while "primordial ties," such as kinship, language or culture may fuel some many nationalist movements, "[to] an increasing degree national unity is maintained not by calls to blood and land but by a vague, intermittent, and routing allegiance to a civil state, supplemented to a greater or lesser extent by governmental use of police powers and ideological exhortation."[85]

Hans Kohn's work is sometimes perceived as overlapping with theory that distinguishes between civic and ethnic nationalism, with some scholars arguing that he simply applied a geographical space to the same concept.[86] Kohn distinguished the Western versus Eastern forms of nationalism, specifically comparing Western European and Central or Eastern European countries. Kohn argued that the difference between Western and Eastern concepts of nationalism is caused by how two major cultural and religious movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, were interpreted in those regions. In Western countries, Kohn argued that those

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[83] Renan, 17.
[84] Max Weber, "The Nation," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 22.
[85] Clifford Geertz, "Primordial and Civic Ties," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 31.
[86] Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 133.

movements had a much greater impact and actually created new societies. However, in Germany

and other Central and Eastern European countries, the Renaissance and the Reformation were

largely viewed as mere "scholarly or theological events"[87]. According to Kohn, the difference

between the two forms of nationalism is that the Western form emerged "in an effort to build a

nation in the political reality and the struggles of the present without too much sentimental

regard for the past" while other forms of nationalism emerged "out of the myths of the past,

devoid of any immediate connection with the present and expected to become a political

reality."[88]

Rogers Brubaker argued that the entire civic-ethnic distinction "overburdened"[89] because

the terms are too ambiguous and lead to confusion. A narrow understanding of either "civic" or

"ethnic" will leave the other too large and heterogeneous to be meaningful as a classifier, and a

broad understanding of both would mean that the two terms are no longer mutually exclusive.[90]

He also disputed the notion that civic nationhood is more inclusive than ethnic, stating that they

were "differently inclusive (and exclusive)."[91] Furthermore, he argues that the ethnic-civic

distinction unfairly leads to implications on countries' ability to adapt to change and whether

development is possible without also changing identities.[92] Brubaker suggests that a more

meaningful way of analyzing and classifying nationalism while reducing ambiguity would be to

have the state as the "cardinal point of reference" instead of citizenship. Therefore, nationalism

should be categorized as "state-framed" or "counter-state" instead of "civic" or "ethnic."[93]

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[87] Hans Kohn, "Western and Eastern Nationalism," in *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 165.
[88] Kohn, 164.
[89] Brubaker, 146.
[90] Brubaker, 139.
[91] Brubaker, 142.
[92] Brubaker, 142-143.
[93] Brubaker, 144.

As discussed above, the definitions of nationalism used in contemporary scholarship range from objectivist to subjectivist, instrumentalist to non-instrumentalist, civic to ethnic. The distinctions between the definitions matter because implicit values are assigned to those definitions. For example, if a particular nationalism is perceived as subjective or civic, then nationalism is not assigned at birth; in other words, the national chooses to belong and remain with the nation and the nationalism of individuals can less easily be classified by where they were born. If policymakers perceive a nationalism to be non-instrumentalist, then they are less likely to fear that nationalism will translate into that country's official policy. However, if policymakers perceive a country's nationalism to be objectivist, instrumentalist, and ethnic, they may feel threatened and formulate combative policies against that country. In this case, nationalist sentiment would be ascribed to a group of people by virtue of shared geography and language, making it more immutable. Furthermore, this nationalist sentiment could be subject to elite predation, as it could be wielded by the government as a political tool for popular mobilization.

Chinese Nationalism

In much of the literature on Chinese nationalism, especially as it concerns Chinese foreign policy, Chinese nationalism tends to be framed as Eastern and/or ethnic. However, even within this framework, Chinese nationalism takes on a multitude of characteristics. In his study on the development of Chinese nationalism in the late 20th century, Michel Oksenberg provided a useful framework for categorizing Chinese nationalism: (1) "self-pitying, self-righteous, and

aggrieved;" (2) "strident, xenophobic, and isolationist;" (3) "militant, rigid, assertive, and occasionally muscular;" and (4) "confident."[94]

The first form of nationalism can simultaneously display admiration and a deep mistrust of the outside world; it is also characterized by public hypersensitivity to perceived offenses and the tendency "to claim that the outside world owes China a debt" due to the century of humiliation at the hands of imperialist powers.[95] The second form of nationalism is embodied by values of self-reliance. As displayed in movements such as the Boxer Rebellion and Cultural Revolution, this form of nationalism attributes Chinese national weakness to a "loss of ideological purity" due to foreign influences in China during the century of humiliation, and thus argues that "national salvation must be attained through exclusive reliance upon indigenous virtue, strength, and ideas."[96] The third type – militant, rigid, assertive and occasionally muscular nationalism – tends to "attribute Chinese weakness to external economic exploitation and cultural infiltration but recognize the useful role of the outside world, particularly its technology, in their quest for modernity."[97] Thus, this type of Chinese nationalism tends to manifest in irredentist disputes of national sovereignty, such as Taiwan, the Diaoyu Islands and the South China Sea. The last type, confident nationalism, focuses on steady growth as the means to addressing Chinese national weakness. This form, which has largely developed following Deng Xiaoping's regime, is based on the strategy of modernization and the importation of technology to ensure national survival.[98]

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[94] Michel Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs* 65:3 (1986): 503-505.
[95] Oksenberg, 504.
[96] Oksenberg, 504.
[97] Oksenberg, 504.
[98] Oksenberg, 505.

2.4   Summary

While examples of Chinese nationalism tend to display many of the characteristics outlined in Oksenberg's framework, much of the Western literature itself on Chinese nationalism tends to be ethnic and instrumentalist. Samuel Huntington claimed that the Chinese government's use of nationalist rhetoric is an example of China "[acting] in classic fashion as a regional hegemon…[and] attempting to minimize obstacles to its achievement of regional military superiority."[99] He also implicitly labels Chinese nationalism as a form of ethnic nationalism, stating that "Chinese identity, subject to so many onslaughts from the West in the twentieth century, is now being reformulated in terms of the continuing elements of Chinese culture"[100] – which he later compares to Wilhelmine Germany, immediately conjuring images of a closed society and widely perceived in the West as a negative phenomenon.[101] Given the comparisons to pre-WWI Germany and the blend of self-pitying, aggrieved, isolationist, and muscular nationalism alluded to by Huntington, the realist implication for American foreign policy is that Chinese nationalism has become a threat that the United States cannot ignore and the United States must work towards preventing Chinese regional hegemony.

Analysts holding this viewpoint also tend to be instrumentalist. Many of the earlier studies in Chinese nationalism following the Chinese Civil War suggested that nationalism is merely a tool utilized by the Chinese Communist Party to bolster popular support for its regime by inciting anger against other nations and assumed that the CCP invented nationalist myths or shaped Chinese identity to consolidate power.[102] Michael Ng-Quinn argued that "[through] the

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[99] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1996), 230.
[100] Huntington, 169.
[101] Huntington, 269.
[102] Bernstein and Munro, 19; Michael Ng-Quinn, "National Identity in Premodern China: Formation and Role Enactment," in *China's Quest for National Identity*, eds. Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim (Ithaca: Cornell

manipulation of ideologies and other symbols, the Chinese elite selectively and dynamically

moderated or intensified nationalism to secure domestic support for various national roles, a role

being understood as identity mobilized in a specific situation."[103] Willy Wo-Lap Lam concurred,

stating that "propagating patriotism, which in many areas overlaps with nationalism or even

xenophobia, is perhaps an easy way for the leadership to promote a sense of unity and common

purpose, which will also serve to prolong the party's mandate of heaven. Moreover, Beijing also

sees patriotism and nationalism as an antidote to the harmful and destabilizing effects of

globalization."[104] This line of reasoning, influenced by constructivist theory, also has significant

policy implications: by crafting a narrative of victimization and "making nationalism so central

to the claim to CCP legitimacy"[105] the CCP is antagonistically defining Chinese national

interests in direct opposition with those of the Western world. "The claim that only the CCP can

deliver the nation from humiliation by achieving certain goals in economic, unification and

foreign policy, is what determines the 'culture of international anarchy' for China in the global

era."[106]

This ultimately implies that Chinese nationalism, rooted in Western antagonism, is a

threat to American interests and a possible source of conflict between the two countries.

Furthermore, despite not being fully in control of nationalist discourse, the Chinese government

has shown that it is capable of utilizing nationalist sentiment or national pride as a policy tool, as

it did with the domestic anti-American public rallies following the American bombing of the

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University Press, 1993), 58; Michael Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs* 65:3 (1986): 504.

[103] Ng-Quinn, 58.

[104] Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "The Challenge of Nationalism, and Other Ideas and Trends for the New Century." In *Chinese Politics in the Hu Jintao Era: New Leaders, New Challenges*, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 213.

[105] Christopher R. Hughes, *Chinese Nationalism in the Global Era*, (London: Routledge, 2006), 152-153.

[106] Liu Guoli, "The Dialectic Relationship between Peaceful Development and China's Deep Reform," in *China's "Peaceful Rise" in the 21st Century: Domestic and International Conditions*, ed. Sujian Guo (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 156.

Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, the American-Chinese spy plane collision in 2001 and the brief boycott of French goods following President Sarkozy's meeting with the Dalai Lama in 2008. The perception that the government was willing and able to wield nationalism as a policy tool further supports the "China threat" theory advocated by some foreign policymakers and advisers, especially the United States[107]

There are arguments that counter the notion that Chinese nationalism will definitely lead to conflict between the United States and China. Peter Hays Gries warned:

> Realists are right – there are conflicts of material interests in U.S.-China relations today. A common interest in a stable East Asia likely outweighs any material conflicts, however. There more likely danger to bilateral relations lies in the possible emergence of what Kelman called "existential conflict," or the development of a zero-sum identity competition on both sides of the Pacific. Unless Chinese and Americans learn to affirm, rather than threaten, each others' national identities, their mutual benefit from a stable East Asia will not ensure peace in the twenty-first century.[108]

Jeffrey Wasserstrom argued that nationalism may not cause conflict between the US and China because attempts to utilize nationalism for political purposes can actually backfire on the CCP: "nationalism remains a double-edged sword, which does at times buttress the regime but can also develop in ways that threaten the political status quo."[109] However, both arguments still view nationalism as a tool, and do not view the evolution of Chinese nationalism as a historical process of repeated identification.

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[107] Bernstein and Munro: 19; Callahan: 201; Thomas F. Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," *Foreign Affairs* 75:5 (Sep/Oct 1996): 37; Sheng Ding and Robert A. Saunders, "Talking Up China: An Analysis of China's Rising Cultural Power and Global Promotion of the Chinese Language," *East Asia* 23:2 (Summer 2006): 28; Aaron L. Friedberg, "Hegemony with Chinese Characteristics," *The National Interest*, June 21, 2011, http://nationalinterest.org/article/hegemony-chinese-characteristics-5439 (accessed July 22, 2011). David Shambaugh, "Containment or Engagement of China? Calculating Beijing's Responses," *International Security* 21:2 (Fall 1996): 205; Guangqiu Xu, "Anti-Western Nationalism in China, 1989-99" *World Affairs* 163:4 (Spring 2001): 151-162.

[108] Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism and U.S.-China Relations in the Twenty-First Century." In *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 150.

[109] Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, China in the 21st Century: What Everyone Needs to Know, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 124.

While there appear to be fewer proponents of liberal international relations theory than realist theory – especially in literature concerning Chinese nationalism and Sino-American relations – there are some liberal theorists who counter the inevitability of Chinese-American conflict and offer suggestions for the governments of both countries to minimize the tensions between them. Li Qingsi made a classic liberal theory recommendation:

> First, the relations with the United States can be maintained as a contained struggle without breaking out, using struggle to seek cooperation. Joseph Nye said that if the United States takes China as its enemy, then it will be; the contrary is also true, though China-U.S. relations is not decided mainly by the Chinese… As long as both sides could fully appreciate the common interests in regional and world affairs and the profound need for both parties to cooperate in those areas, the two countries would find more benefits than costs in avoiding involving direct confrontation and becoming adversaries, which could help to maintain a stable and cooperative China-U.S. relationship.[110]

However, in arguments such as this, Chinese nationalism is still used as a tool by the government – however, for strictly domestic purposes of achieving and maintaining national unity rather than a means to project power, culture and values internationally.

If liberal international relations theory is to be applied, then determining Chinese foreign policy intentions – whether China is a revisionist or status quo power – becomes very important. One way to determine their intentions is to examine their participation in the current international system. While there is never a high degree of certainty when evaluating the intentions of other states, accusations on China being a rising revisionist power, nefariously using its might to gain territorial concessions and controlling the actions of North Korea in order to achieve global domination,[111] are unconvincing. It has become fairly obvious over the last few decades that China actively participates in international institutions. "China already belongs to some seventy

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[110] Li Qingsi, "The International Conditions of China's Peaceful Rise: Challenges and Opportunities." In *China's "Peaceful Rise" in the 21st Century: Domestic and International Conditions*, ed. Sujian Guo, (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 156.
[111] Applebaum.

international institutions and will likely seek a louder voice in the major ones, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations and its associated bodies. These groups offer China a platform from which to put forth its agenda as well as to cooperate with other countries."[112] There may be complaints over various aspects of Chinese foreign policy, such as their propensity to prefer protecting national sovereignty above all else and their relative reluctance side with Western members of the permanent United Nations Security Council to authorize humanitarian interventions, but China mostly subscribes to international norms and standards, especially when compared to rogue states like North Korea.

Another means to determining Chinese foreign policy intentions is to examine Chinese domestic politics. While there may be some examples of nationalism in Chinese domestic politics that some security analysts may find threatening, especially when territorial claims with Japan or in the South China Sea are concerned, it is often directed towards economically strengthening and modernizing China. Therefore, though Western states should continue to monitor Chinese domestic politics to the greatest extent possible to remain informed if significant shifts in Chinese foreign policy intentions occur, both the West and China currently have more to gain by being cooperative with each other rather than hostile.

There have been some attempts within academia to provide alternative discourses on theories of Chinese nationalism. Lowell Dittmer and Samuel Kim reluctantly dismiss the notion of nationalism existing simply as a tool of the political elite by stating "identification with the national essence is to some extent a variable rather than a constant."[113] Douglas Woodwell raised the viewpoint of immigrants by discussing the stress of estrangement on immigrant

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[112] Elizabeth Freund Larus, *Politics and Society in Contemporary China* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012): 438.
[113]Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim, "In Search of a Theory of National Identity." In *China's Quest for National Identity*, eds. Lowell Dittmer and Samuel S. Kim, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 22.

communities and the search for national identity in the context of the need for linkages back home.[114] However, the most impressive attempt at studying nationalism using Goswami's methodology would be Yingjie Guo's study tracing the evolution of the national myth of Zeng Guofan, the Confucian scholar and military general who raised and commanded an army for the Qing Empire during the Taiping Rebellion. In that study, Guo concludes:

> So as far as national identity is concerned, what is essential is a sense of common history, no matter whether that history is rediscovered or invented and no matter how garbled or mythical it may be… In a word, there is no denying that national histories are often constructed narratives that serve clear ideological, political, and other purposes… Moreover, the re-narration of history is in itself an act of political empowerment: it is a demand for the right and freedom to say who 'we' are and who 'we' have been as well as the exercising of that right and freedom. This right and freedom is important not simply because who 'we' think 'we' are is in itself important, but also because national identity gives people a moral perspective on the world that provides interpretations of the world and of themselves and because national identity serves as a basis upon which a nation decides how or how not to conduct its collective life.[115]

In this analysis, Guo uses both the objectivist and subjectivist approach – taking trends into account and the stories of Zeng Guofan change in response to the historical context of the evolution of the shared conception of the modern Chinese nation, while still maintaining the importance of nationalism has evolved through repeated exercises in self-identification. A similar methodology would be useful in approaching a future study concerning the Confucius Institutes and their impact on Chinese identity through the export of Chinese language and culture and the retelling of Chinese narratives.

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[114] Douglas Woodwell, *Nationalism in International Relations*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 115.
[115] Yingjie Guo, "Rewriting National History: the 'Zeng Guofan' Phenomenon." In *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity Under Reform*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 65-66.

Chapter Three: The Confucius Institutes

For thousands of years, the Chinese language has been used as a tool to promote national unity. In the 1950s and 1960s, the CCP took several initiatives to promote the concept of a unified national language:

> The issue of language standardisation became a priority for the Communist government soon after it assumed power in 1949. It moved to standardise grammar and vocabulary, and officially adopted the term putonghua 'common speech' for the national language in 1955.[1]

The government has also required that *putonghua* be used in school and mass media.[2] The Constitution of the People's Republic of China, initially adopted in 1982 by the 5th National People's Congress, included language to promote *putonghua* nationally; since then, "[*Putonghua*] was made the compulsory medium of instruction in universities"[3]

The Chinese government also promotes the use of its simplified script. While there are approximately 10 Sinitic languages with potentially thousands of dialects, there are currently only three Chinese scripts in use worldwide:

> Until the middle of the 20th century Chinese script existed in a standard form throughout East Asia. This was first breached by the Japanese, whose post-war reforms included the definition of a limited standard set of Chinese characters to be used in Japanese, the *jōyō kanji*, and the introduction of simplified forms, with fewer brush strokes than standard characters. This process was taken much further by the mainland Chinese government in the 1950s with the publication of a series of radical simplifications of characters and elements of characters. This has had the effect of creating three different Chinese scripts: the original version which continues to be used in Hong Kong, Taiwan and most of the Chinese diaspora, the mainland Chinese simplified version and the Japanese simplified version.[4]

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[1] Don Starr, "Chinese Language Education in Europe: the Confucius Institutes," *European Journal of Education* 44:1 (2009): 67.

[2] Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996: 304.

[3] Don Starr 68.

[4] Don Starr 68.

The Chinese government promotes its linguistic preferences for three reasons. The first is primarily to pursue domestic stability through social unification and politics of identity. For example, in certain regions that are heavily populated with China's non-Han minorities, their languages are officially recognized along with *putonghua*. However, the CCP has been applying additional pressure to these regions to adopt *putonghua* for tertiary education. The theory behind this logic is that the use of *putonghua* will diminish the overall differences between the Han majority and the ethnic minorities. Starr describes this as "an attempt to make rebellious areas such as Xinjiang and Tibet unequivocally Chinese, and to cater for the large number of Han immigrants, encouraged to go there in order to change the demographic balance in these sensitive regions."[5]

The second reason is to legitimate CCP rule to international audiences. Until the twentieth century, China was highly xenophobic and largely unwilling to teach Chinese to foreigners; "[t]he imperial court of China had spurned engagement with the outside world as a deliberate policy of defensive isolation."[6] However, "[t]hroughout human history, various languages have served as media for the transmission of cultural knowledge, assisted in the formation of global-local power structures, and functioned as shibboleths for determining friend from foe."[7] The CCP recognized this when it assumed power in 1949 and soon undertook Chinese foreign language (CFL) initiatives, primarily in the socialist and so-called "Third World" countries that the PRC had diplomatic relations with:

> In 1950, in response to the request to exchange students with those from socialist countries, beginning with Poland and the former Czechoslovakia, in Eastern Europe, the Chinese government commissioned Tsinghua University to prepare to

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[5] Don Starr 68.

[6] Hongqin Zhao and Jianbin Huang, "China's policy of Chinese as a foreign language and the use of overseas Confucius Institutes," *Educational Research for Policy and Practice* 9 (2010): 130.

[7] Sheng Ding and Robert A. Saunders, "Talking Up China: An Analysis of China's Rising Cultural Power and Global Promotion of the Chinese Language," *East Asia* 23:2 (Summer 2006): 3.

teach the exchange students Chinese... The first academic paper concerning CFL
– Some Issues in Teaching Chinese to Non-Chinese Students – appeared in 1952
in China. The first CFL textbook – Chinese Teaching Textbook – to be taught in
the former Soviet Union was published in 1958 by Beijing University.[8]

As China adopted the Open Door Policy in the late 1970's and throughout the 1980s,

CFL policy and determining which linguistic preferences are internationally accepted as being

"Chinese" became high priorities for the reforming CCP government. In addition to promoting

the use of *putonghua* and its simplified Chinese characters, the CCP also introduced its own

standard in the romanization of Chinese characters, *pinyin*, which has since become the world

standard (as opposed to the previous French and British methods of romanization and the *zhuyin*

fuhao utilized by Taiwan).[9] "In [1978], the Ministry of Education first introduced CFL degrees

at four universities: Beijing Languages University, Beijing Foreign Languages University,

Shanghai Foreign Languages University, and Huazhong Teachers University, followed by

master's degrees; the highest level in this subject is now a doctoral degree at some universities,

featuring the academic research area of CFL curriculum, as well as implying a potential

educational market."[10] When Beijing established the *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* (HSK) in 1984,

China's standardized international language examinations which test Chinese proficiency for

non-native speakers using *putonghua*, the simplified characters, and *pinyin*, it further reinforced

the CCP's linguistic preferences internationally.[11] Setting the linguistic standard for learning

Chinese abroad is one method the CCP uses to assert externally that it is the sole legitimate

representative of China and official transmitter of Chinese culture.

Finally, and most obviously, the CCP promotes its linguistic preferences in order to

facilitate China's international trade:

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[8] Zhao and Huang 130.
[9] Don Starr 68.
[10] Zhao and Huang 131.
[11] Don Starr 68.

As China continues with its rapid economic development, expands its share of world trade, and hones its diplomatic prowess, the value of the Chinese language likewise increases. Today, Chinese is more than just the language associated with the country's 5,000-year civilization and oriental philosophical thought; it is also a fast-developing commercial lingua franca in the Pacific basin. Its practical value has surpassed that of French, German, and even Japanese in much of the world and its future opportunities seem limitless.[12]

Therefore, the Chinese government promotes its linguistic preferences in order to provide competitive advantages to the Chinese business and trade in international markets.

This chapter will focus on the Confucius Institutes – the primary organization that the Chinese government uses to promote its linguistic preferences internationally. It will begin by providing a history of Confucianism in China and discussing the significance of choosing Confucius as the organization's namesake. It will then provide a history of the Confucius Institutes and discuss how they have become a source of Chinese national prestige. Finally, this chapter will outline the procedures to establishing Confucius Institutes and how the government supports the Institutes financially and politically.

3.1   The Rise, Fall and Rehabilitation of Confucius

Confucius (551-479 B.C), one of the greatest civil officials, educators and philosophers of his time, is widely considered to be one of the founding fathers of Chinese civilization:

He was said to have 3,000 students and 72 disciples, with whom he travelled the vassal states in ancient China for 14 years. He collated and compiled many ancient books, including the Book of Songs, the Book of History, the Book of Rites, and the Book of Music. He also wrote the Spring-and-Autumn Annals, and the preface for the Book of Changes. His thoughts and doctrines left a profound influence on the following generations, and he is still revered today.[13]

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[12] Ding and Saunders 19.

[13] "Confucius," *China Today*, May 2005, http://search.proquest.com/docview/235863948?accountid=13793 (accessed August 20, 2013).

Confucius served as "Minister for Public Works and Minister for Justice in Lu, a state in northeastern China.[14] However, he was able to have such widespread influence by serving as a teacher to Chinese rulers. As previously mentioned, prior to the later years of the Zhou dynasty and the Qin dynasty, Chinese society was largely feudal. "Confucianism began as a means of bringing social order out of the chaos of a period of warring states."[15] As feudal princes competed with each other for power and hegemony, Confucius and other scholars maintained schools that taught these rulers principles of good conduct and proper governance, rooted in the concept of the Mandate of Heaven. The Mandate of Heaven is a concept developed during the Zhou dynasty that stipulated that the legitimacy of Chinese rulers is determined by their conduct:

> According to the classic Book of History, the wickedness of the last ruler of the Shang, who was a tyrant, caused Heaven to give a mandate to the Chou to destroy him and supplant his dynasty, inasmuch as the Shang people themselves had failed to overthrow the tyrant. As later amplified, this ancient idea became the famous 'right of rebellion,' the last resort of the populace against tyrannical government. It emphasized the good conduct or virtue of the ruler as the ethical sanction for preserving his rule. Bad conduct on his part destroyed the sanction. Heaven withdrew its Mandate, and the people were justified in deposing the dynasty, if they could.[16]

Confucius' teachings were rooted in the idea that the good conduct of men would bring social harmony and harmony with nature. In other words, "man is so much a part of the natural order that improper conduct on his part will throw the whole of nature out of joint," so "man's conduct must be made to harmonize with the unseen forces of nature, lest calamity ensue."[17] Good conduct in relationships between people was determined by two concepts: *ren* and *li*. *Ren* was the ideal of humaneness or benevolence. *Li* referred to etiquette or rituals

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[14] John Dotson, "The Confucian Revival in the Propaganda Narratives of the Chinese Government," *U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission Staff Research Report*, July 20, 2011, http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Confucian_Revival_Paper.pdf (accessed July 15, 2013): 5.

[15] John King Fairbank, *The United States and China*, 4e (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983): 54.

[16] John King Fairbank, "The Old Order," *In The Chinese: Adapting the Past, Building the Future*, Eds. Robert F. Dernberger, Kenneth J. DeWoskin, Steven M. Goldstein, Rhoads Murphey, and Martin K. Whyte (Ann Arbor, MI: University of MIchigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1986): 30.

[17] Fairbank, *The Old Order*, 31.

according to status. As a result, Confucian teachings "emphasized court etiquette, state

ceremonies, and proper conduct toward one's ancestors and in the famous five degrees of

relationships."[18] Larus summarizes the five hierarchical and reciprocal Confucian

relationships:

> The five Confucian relationships are between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friend and friend. For example, a father would raise, nourish, and educate his son the son would be filial (xiao) to his father, obeying him and giving him a commendable funeral. Note that of the five relationships, three were kinship oriented. In traditional Chinese society, the individual's primary duty was to the family rather than to the state.[19]

Confucianism provided the basis for both Chinese society and governance. At an

individual level, the teachings of Confucius emphasized the importance of education, self-

cultivation, and self-discipline, observing public rituals and maintaining hierarchical and

properly ordered family and social relationships.[20] Maintaining hierarchical relationships clearly

served political purposes by ensuring that the Chinese public remained loyal to the Emperor, as

long as the Emperor virtuously and benevolently ruled. Over time, Confucianism was integrated

into Chinese governance:

> During the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), Confucianism was adopted as the official state ideology, and an imperial academy was founded for the cultivation of Confucian scholars. During the Sui Dynasty (581—618 CE), this official patronage evolved into an examination system for public office that was grounded upon study of the Confucian classics.[21]

Though Confucius' influence was widespread throughout Chinese society, his influence

has been most evident and significant in the Chinese education system; in fact, the

aforementioned nationwide civil service examination system almost lasted until the fall of the

Qing Dynasty. "Education in China has been an outgrowth of Confucian ethics and values since

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[18] Fairbank, *The Old Order*, 31.
[19] Elizabeth Freund Larus, *Politics and Society in Contemporary China* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012): 18.
[20] Dotson 5.
[21] Dotson 5-6.

Confucius established the country's first school, ca. 521 BCE; by the time of the Qing Dynasty, the main goal of Chinese educational institutions was to impart Confucian ethics and values."[22] The Confucian education system established a meritocracy in Chinese governance: for hundreds of years, **"the government was staffed by scholar-officials who gained their positions through competitive imperial examinations [and] the emperor ruled with the Mandate of Heaven and was conscious of rites and rituals as well as the need to meet the needs of his people."[23]**

Confucianism was challenged as the basis for Chinese governance and society when China was forcibly opened to the West; China's vulnerability to Western military power during the First Opium War (1839-1842) and Second Opium War (1856-1860) and the resulting losses of sovereignty led many to doubt the old Confucian order and the embattled Qing Dynasty that had been propagating it. Leaders in the Taiping Rebellion, the civil war in southern China that lasted from 1850 to 1864, rebelled against the Qing Dynasty and rejected Confucianism in favor of their own form of Christianity. However, there remained Confucian elements in the Taiping Rebellion, despite its formal rejection of Confucianism; though its leader, Hong Xiuquan, "considered himself Christian and even destroyed Confucian temples, his creative 'misunderstanding' of Christianity revealed his Confucian upbringing."[24] Though the Taiping Rebellion was eventually crushed by the Qing Dynasty with the help of Western militaries, it would inspire the intellectual movements that would ultimately cause the downfall of the Qing:

> The radical critique of traditional culture led directly to the spawning of new
> political movements, often inspired by trends in the West and Japan, to remedy
> what were seen as social injustices and oppressive institutions in China. These

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[22] Su-Yan Pan, "Confucius Institute project: China's cultural diplomacy and soft power projection," *Asian Education and Development Studies* 2:1 (2013): 26.

[23] Larus 54-55.

[24] Edwin Pak-wah Leung, *Managing China's Modernization: Perspectives on Diplomacy, Politics, Education and Ethnicity* (Paramus, NJ: Homa and Sekey Books, 2011): 119.

were essentially intellectual movements, without popular support, but they had a profound influence on members of the educated elite who became leaders of revolutionary parties.[25]

After the Taiping Rebellion, Chinese intellectuals attempted to institute a series of self-strengthening reforms (*tzu-chiang*), preferring to preserve Confucian values and traditions while learning to utilize Western technology. However, it soon became apparent that these limited reforms were not going to have a drastic impact on China's modernization:

> The first response of Chinese intellectuals was to accept the guns, railroads, and factories and reject the ideas – the scientific and philosophical systems – that had given rise to them. Maintaining a 'Chinese essence' while borrowing 'practical things' from the West was a last-ditch defensive stance against the threat of wholesale Westernization. It was quickly overwhelmed, and Western ideas about social and political relationships soon damaged the credibility of the Confucian canon to the point that it could no longer serve to underpin the mounting of a new dynasty and the restoration of the old order. Instead, restoration gave way to a long, intensely painful process of revolution.[26]

By the late 19th century, it became clear that "China was no longer a land of complacent Confucian scholars cherishing a comfortable belief in the moral superiority of Chinese civilization in the face of impending national disaster."[27] Chinese intellectuals began searching for new methods to build a strong Chinese state and society that would survive and prosper – methods that did not necessarily include preserving old Confucian traditions. By the time the Wuchang Uprising succeeded in overthrowing the Qing Dynasty in October 1911 and Yuan Shikai, the Chinese general leading the Beiyang Army, assumed the presidency, intellectuals were already participating in new political and philosophical movements. "Among these, anarchist, egalitarian, and feminist movements in the early decades of the twentieth century

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[25] William Theodore De Bary and Richard Lufrano, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 389.

[26] John Bryan Starr, *Understanding China*, 3e (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010): 53.

[27] Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic*, 3e (New York: The Free Press, 1999): 12.

contributed to the ferment and discontent that stirred the founders of the Chinese Communist Party."[28]

One of the most significant of these movements was the New Culture Movement; led by the Chinese scholars who would become the founding fathers of the Chinese Communist Party, the New Culture movement "called for a revolution against Confucianism because of its failure to address China's current problems and transform China into a modern society, and its replacement with a new Chinese culture based on democracy and science."[29] "It was the climax of a mental awakening that had begun in 1915, or in those early years following the 1911 Revolution that had overthrown the Qing dynasty but failed to establish a new social order."[30]

Meanwhile, the opportunistic and corrupt Yuan Shikai had taken steps to reinstate Confucianism as the state religion and the basis of the education system for the sole purpose of consolidating his new power.[31] He died from kidney failure in June 1916 after a brief, abandoned attempt to restore the Chinese monarchy with himself as the emperor. Yuan's death resulted in a power vacuum, exacerbating the regional militarism that had already been rising since the Opium Wars and the fall of the Qing dynasty. The ensuing era, the Warlord Era, began in 1916 and ended in approximately 1928 with the success of the Kuomintang's (KMT) Northern Expedition. During this period in Republican China, Confucianism became even further removed from Chinese life, especially among intellectuals:

> While republican politics floundered in a sea of warlordism and economic dislocation, the estrangement of Chinese intellectuals from the traditional ideals and institutions deepened. This process, which began with concessions to Westernization by even would-be defenders of Confucianism, had reached a climax well before the republican revolution with the abandonment of the

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[28] De Bary and Lufrano 389.
[29] Pan 26.
[30] Edwin Pak-wah Leung, *Essentials of Modern Chinese History: 1800 to the Present* (Piscataway, NJ: Research and Education Association, 2006): 63.
[31] Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990): 285-286.

traditional curriculum for the civil service, long the institutional stronghold of Confucian ideology... Instead now of intellectuals serving as defenders of tradition, they had become its most implacable critics. Thus Confucianism had lost not only its bureaucratic function but even the basis of its intellectual life in the school.[32]

The May 4th Movement in 1919 is largely revered as the turning point in modern Chinese history and the genesis of China's intellectual revolution. During World War I (1914-1918), Shandong, the birthplace of Confucius was occupied, first by Germany then by Japan. Though China did not contribute troops to allied forces during the war, it did provide engineers and other workers to repair infrastructure abroad; their contribution of workers, plus the prevailing international norms of sovereignty and self-determination, led the Chinese government and population to believe that the international community would return control of Shandong to China after the war. When they discovered that control of Shandong was exchanged to Japan as a condition for its participation in the League of Nations, the shocked Chinese delegation attending the Versailles Conference refused to sign the Versailles Treaty. When news of the treaty was reported in China on May 4th, 1919, 5,000 students held demonstrations at the Japanese embassy in Beijing, protesting China's unfair treatment by the international community and the Republican government's inability to defend Chinese interests internationally. Students were later joined by other intellectuals, such as professors and journalists; attempting to find alternatives to the weak democracy in place and solutions to save China, these intellectuals began to swing from liberalism to radicalism and nationalism.

The Communist Party rose in China against the backdrop of incompetent and corrupt governance under Yuan Shikai, the Warlord Era that followed, and foreign oppression. Early Communist leaders were highly anti-traditionalist and anti-Confucianism, blaming the old order for China's current weakness.   Chen Duxiu was one of the earliest Chinese academic converts to

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[32] De Bary and Lufrano 397.

Communism. His experience studying abroad in Japan and France exposed him to Western culture and ideals of individual freedom and inspired him to found the influential magazine *Xin Qingnian* (known as *New Youth* in English and *La Jeunesse* in French).[33] He became increasingly critical of Confucianism, arguing that it was too antiquated a discipline for Chinese society to follow:

> Confucius lived in a feudal age. The ethics he promoted is the ethics of the feudal age. The social mores he taught and even his own mode of living were teachings and modes of a feudal age. The objectives, ethics, social norms, mode of living, and political institutions did not go beyond the privilege and prestige of a few rulers and aristocrats and had nothing to do with the happiness of the great masses. How can this be shown? In the teachings of Confucius, the most important elements in social ethics and social life are the rules of decorum and the most serious thing in government is punishment.[34]

Anti-Confucianism was further exacerbated among Communists during Republican China because the KMT government under Chiang Kai-shek seemingly embraced it. "When the Nationalist Kuomintang government centralized governance of the national education system, in 1929, then President Chiang Kai-shek (1943) prescribed the Confucian moral precepts of "loyalty, filial piety, humanity, love, faithfulness, harmony, and peacefulness (*zhong*, *xiao*, *ren*, *ai*, *xin*, *yi*, *heping*)" as guiding principles for educational institutions throughout the country."[35] Chiang further advocated a return to Confucianism, believing that it should be made the basis of modern reforms – this belief was essentially codified in the New Life Movement that Chiang initiated in 1934.[36]

Communist antipathy toward Confucianism would persist, beyond the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War and founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and

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[33] Meisner 14.

[34] Chen Duxiu, "The Way of Confucius and Modern Life," in *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From 1600 Through the Twentieth Century*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, 2e., Vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 355-356.

[35] Pan 26.

[36] John King Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution 1800-1985* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987): 61.

reach its zenith over 15 years later during the Cultural Revolution. In August of 1966, Mao

Zedong and his leftist supporters, frustrated by what they viewed as increasing revisionism and

political stagnancy, launched the Cultural Revolution against CCP moderates like Liu Shaoxi

and Deng Xiaoping, accusing them of having lost their revolutionary zeal. Believing that it was

insufficient for the new generation of Chinese youth to simply read theoretical and historical

works and sing the revolutionary songs, Mao and his supporters pushed for the youth to

participate as active citizens in the Chinese nation by making iconoclastic revolution, just as Mao

and his generation had.

At a mass meeting held in Tiananmen Square for National Day in October 1966, Mao

mobilized the Red Guard by appealing directly to them, calling on them to destroy the "Four

Olds": old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas. He closed the schools and ordered the

Red Guards to go forth, challenge Party officials, and attack anything bourgeois and traditional;

to that end, the Red Guards were encouraged to destroy old buildings, temples, and art objects in

their towns and villages. In Shandong Province, Red Guards "swept through Qufu, the

birthplace of Confucius, damaging every relic associated with the sage, thus perpetrating their

'thorough crushing of the Confucian establishment.'"[37] Mao's goal was to ideologically reform

Chinese society in a way that "explicitly rejected Confucian humanist universalism and moral

self-cultivation in favor of intense class consciousness and class struggle."[38]

However, for all practical intents and purposes, Confucianism had already been largely

discarded by Chinese society prior to the Cultural Revolution:

> 'Confucianism,' though a prime target of attack, had long since been eclipsed
> educationally and politically – largely replaced by Western-style learning in the
> first decades of the century and then, post-1949, by a Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist

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[37] Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution*, Trans and ed. D.W.Y. Kwok (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996): 89.
[38] De Bary and Lufrano 426.

ideology and curriculum in the schools. Except among a few remnants of the older generation, Confucianism was perceived negatively through the anti-Confucian diatribes of the New Culture and May 4 Movements.[39]

As a result, Confucius, as a figurehead, had to be re-imagined to play a useful role in Cultural Revolution propaganda:

> The historical discussion soon came to focus on the role of Confucius during the transitional era, with general agreement not only that Confucianism was a reactionary philosophy in modern times but that Confucius himself had been a reactionary in his own time, the author of a doctrine that had impeded the historically progressive transition from 'slavery' to 'feudalism.'[40]

When recast under this anti-Confucian light, Qin Shihuang, the First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty, who had previously been popularly vilified as a brutally oppressive tyrant, was suddenly portrayed as a "great unifier."[41] "The scholars argued that even such Draconian actions as his burning of the Confucian books and burying alive of the scholars had been necessary in order to consolidate the 'dictatorship of the landlord class.'"[42]

In May 1973, Mao proposed a "Criticize Confucius" campaign at a working session of the Party Central as a means to implicitly criticize Zhou Enlai.[43] This led to an increase in articles directly attacking Confucius and Confucian traditions being published in the summer of 1973. By the end of the summer, after the Tenth Party Congress, the propaganda campaign against Confucius was linked to the disgraced general, politician and Mao's one-time likely successor, Lin Biao, who died in a plane crash in 1971 while allegedly fleeing to Mongolia after an attempted coup to overthrow Mao. Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, launched a nationwide campaign by commissioning "a booklet known as the *Lin Biao and the Way of Confucius and Mencius*, based on a cache of documents and materials left by Lin Biao in his Maojiawan

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[39] De Bary and Lufrano 545.
[40] Meisner 392.
[41] Meisner 393.
[42] Spence 636.
[43] Yan and Gao 438-439.

residence."[44] Lin Biao became the "modern personification of the old Confucian scholars...who had set themselves against the progressive forces of history, promoting political factionalism, territorial separatism, outmoded ideas, and antiquated social relationships."[45] This campaign, known as "Criticize Lin, Criticize Confucius" ("*Pi Lin, Pi Kong*"), "was made the focus for mass rallies and intense group discussions in party cells and universities, in the PLA and the local militia units, in communes and factories"[46] and dominated Chinese governmental propaganda and the political narrative for over a year before fading away.

By the time the Cultural Revolution ended, in September 1976 after Mao's death, over 70 percent of Beijing's cultural or historic landmarks were destroyed; one of the most famous historic landmarks in Beijing, the Forbidden City, was "reportedly saved only by Zhou Enlai's personal intervention."[47] Jiang Qing and the rest of the Gang of Four, who were largely responsible for instigating much of the iconoclastic destruction during the Cultural Revolution, were arrested and tried. The two most powerful political figures immediately following Mao's death and the arrest of the Gang of Four were Hua Guofeng, the man who claimed to be Mao's designated successor, and Deng Xiaoping. Though both leaders initially pursued politics of social stability (*shehui wending*) and maintaining social order (*shehui zhi'an*),[48] by 1978, Hua, who advocated reforms that adhered closer to Maoist ideals, was politically outmaneuvered by Deng, who pursued more pragmatic reforms.

Once Deng Xiaoping consolidated power, the Chinese government "no longer invoked Marxist revolutionary morality and class struggle (as in the Cultural Revolution) to guard the gates against Western liberal decadence, but instead leaned toward a conservative brand of

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[44] Yan and Gao 430.
[45] Meisner 393.
[46] Spence 636.
[47] Henry Kissinger, *On China* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011): 194.
[48] Dotson 5.

Confucianism to buttress the status quo."[49] In a sense, Confucianism not only filled an

ideological vacuum after the Cultural Revolution, but it was attractive to CCP leadership "for the

same reasons that Chinese imperial dynasties initially found it attractive: it "provides an

ideological pillar of support for the ruling political order, while simultaneously allowing the

regime opportunities to dress itself in the themes of benevolence and

humanitarianism."[50] Furthermore, it is a non-religious ideology that no longer presented a threat

to the CCP. To support this ideological shift, the Chinese government supported a conservative

form of nationalism – one that celebrated rather than vilify China's traditional history and

cultural heritage. While this ideological shift was primarily directed at a Chinese domestic

audience, its impact was also felt in Chinese foreign relations. While China was largely

xenophobic under Mao, Deng's regime was considerably more extroverted, especially "in terms

of tourism, printed and visual media, and the performing arts."[51]

Confucius was once again resurrected and re-imagined to be the popular symbol of what

Oksenberg described as "confident Chinese nationalism."[52] In 1984, Deng's central government

supported the establishment of the Confucius Foundation of China, an organization that

fundraises and promotes Confucius, Confucianism, and Chinese traditional research in order "to

strengthen the building of socialist spiritual civilization and material civilization, to promote

international cultural exchanges and promote world peace, unity and progress of career

services."[53] In October 1989, this organization staged an elaborate celebration of the 2,540th

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[49] De Bary and Lufrano 582.
[50] Dotson 22.
[51] Thomas W. Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy 1940s-1990s," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, Eds. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994): 580-581.
[52] Michel Oksenberg, "China's Confident Nationalism," Foreign Affairs 65:3 (1987): 501-523.
[53] China Confucius Foundation Secretariat, "China Confucius Foundation Introduction," China Confucius Foundation, http://www.chinakongzi.org/bhxx/bhjj/ (accessed October 15, 2013).

anniversary of Confucius's birthday in Beijing.[54] The timing of this event was significant, as it

was only a few months after the violent crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in

Tiananmen Square. At the event, Gu Mu, a close adviser of Deng Xiaoping, gave a speech

endorsing Confucian values as a means to Chinese societal harmony and discipline:

> As is known to all, the idea of harmony is an important component of the Chinese
> traditional culture. As early as the last years of the West Zhou dynasty three
> thousand years ago, ancient scholars elucidated the brilliant idea of 'harmony
> making for prosperity.' Later Confucius and the Confucian school put forward
> the proposition of 'harmony above all' and established theories on the
> coordination of interpersonal relations, the protection of the natural environment,
> and the maintenance of ecological balance. These thoughts not only made
> positive contributions to the prosperity of ancient Chinese society but also have
> profound practical significance for the survival and development of mankind
> today.[55]

Since then, the government has sponsored annual commemorations of the anniversary of

Confucius' birthday; the "annual September festivals in Qufu have also featured conferences

highlighting the resurgence of academic study of Confucius and Confucianism," while "[major]

symposia were scheduled at five-year intervals to draw scholars from abroad as well."[56] Over

the years, these commemorations have expanded into grander affairs:

> Manifestations of this conservative cultural nationalism included a highly
> publicized international conference held in 1994 to celebrate the 2,545th birthday
> of Confucius, the reintroduction of Confucian teachings in the schools, and the
> establishment of an 'International Association of Confucian Studies' in Beijing –
> which, appropriately, selected as its honorary president Lee Kuan-yew, the neo-
> Confucian dictator of Singapore. And perhaps even more bizarre were the quasi-
> official ceremonies of worship, including kowtowing and the burning of incense,
> performed at the 'tomb' of the mythical Yellow Emperor.[57]

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[54] De Bary and Lufrano 581.

[55] Gu Mu, "Confucianism as the Essence of Chinese Tradition," in *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From 1600 Through the Twentieth Century*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, 2e., Vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000): 582-583.

[56] Julia K. Murray, "The Global Rebranding of Confucius," in *China in 2008: A Year of Great Significance*, eds. Kate Merkel-Hess, Kenneth L Pomeranz and Jeffrey N Wassterstrom (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009): 265.

[57] Meisner 525-256.

Under the leadership of Jiang Zemin, who succeeded Deng Xiaoping after he relinquished the last of his leadership posts, Chinese "foreign relations discourse [expressed] an increasingly modernist appreciation of China's cultural traditions as a basis of Beijing's interactions with the world."[58] Miller and Liu note that "[although] neither Qian Qichen nor Jiang Zemin has cited Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, or Mao in presentations of PRC foreign policy to the United Nations in the 1990s, they have several times referred to adages of Confucius and other sources of Chinese tradition."[59] Furthermore, though *Hanban* was established during Deng's regime, Jiang's regime oversaw the expansion of state support for other language and cultural promotion organizations. This support, as well as the overall rehabilitation of Confucius, has carried on into the fourth and fifth generations of Chinese leadership, under Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, respectively. The ideological shift away from Maoism has been more noticeable in these generations:

> Confronting the new challenges of the twenty-first century, and in a world where Leninism had collapsed, Hu and Wen turned to traditional wisdom. They described their reform aspirations not in terms of the utopian visions of Mao's continuous revolution, but by the goal of building a 'xiaokang' ('moderately well-off') society – a term with distinctly Confucian connotations.[60]

Confucian values have even been reformed to the point where they represent good, virtuous governance again. Confucius is frequently referred to by Chinese officials when discussing anti-corruption or austerity measures. Frugality has long been identified as a desirable aspect of Confucian governance:

> One early-eighteenth-century emperor, for example, declared a permanent freeze on tax rates as a show of Confucian thriftiness. (Although this policy eventually backfired: the tax ceiling hampered the government's ability to generate revenues

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[58] H. Lyman Miller and Liu Xiaohong, "The Foreign Policy Outlook of China's 'Third Generation' Elite," in *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001): 148-149.
[59] Miller and Liu 148-149.
[60] Kissinger 491.

for the remainder of its 200 years in power.) Campaigns against corruption –
including arrests of senior ministers – were a regular feature of late imperial times.
Even the major political upheavals of the twentieth century turned on questions of
corruption and frugality. The Nationalist Party of Chiang Kai-shek, who took over
as head of state of the Republic of China after Sun Yat-sen's death in 1925,
quickly earned a reputation for corruption. Chiang responded by promoting neo-
Confucian values as part of what he called his New Life movement, which made
'simplicity and frugality' one of its core virtues. But he ultimately fell to Mao
Zedong, who promoted an even more radical notion of the austere state. Mao
demanded that Communist Party cadres reject the slightest hint of bourgeois
comfort, including by wearing a uniform of a nondescript Mao suit. Although
Mao ended up living more like a Roman emperor than a Spartan soldier, he was
effective at creating the perception that the Communists were incorruptible, in
stark contrast to the Nationalist Party's reputation for graft. As Confucius would
have predicted, this helped the Communists win the "hearts and minds" of the
people.[61]

Most recently, the Chinese government under Xi Jinping has displayed its respect for Confucian

values in public service by implementing anti-corruption measures like banning extravagance at

official gatherings like the National People's Congress: these gatherings would no longer have

all-you-can-eat buffets or serve seafood.

The successful rehabilitation of Confucius's image among China's domestic audience

made him a prime candidate to represent popular Chinese culture and national pride on the

international stage. Praised "as the heart of China's glorious civilization," Confucian

iconography "now bolsters rather than threatens the national self-esteem of Chinese cultural

nationalists."[62] As such, the government has directed the "restoration or complete reconstruction

of buildings all across China that had once served as temples of Confucius but later were

[damaged during the Cultural Revolution or] converted to other uses."[63] During the opening of

the 2008 Summer Olympics, Hu Jintao opened his welcome speech with a famous Confucian

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[61] John Delury, "Austerity with Chinese Characteristics," *Foreign Affairs*, August 7, 2013,
http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139629/john-delury/austerity-with-chinese-characteristics?cid=rss-asia-
austerity_with_chinese_charact-000000 (accessed August 13, 2013).
[62] Peter Hays Gries, "Identity and Conflict in Sino-American Relations," in *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, eds. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 325.
[63] Murray 266.

line from *Lun Yu*, or the *Analects*: "To have friends come from afar, is it not a joy?"[64] The

opening ceremonies also featured "a massive choir dressed as disciples of Confucius, waving

bamboo slips of text and chanting quotations from The Analects."[65] In 2009, a state-owned film

company produced an expensive historical film promoting Confucius that featured international

film star Chow Yun-Fat. In January 2011, a 31-foot statue of Confucius was erected in

Tiananmen Square; though the statue was suddenly moved a few months later to a less

prominent position on the west side of the National Museum,[66] its original placement in

Tiananmen Square was especially symbolic, as the only other Chinese figure to be honored in

Tiananmen Square is Mao Zedong, whose mausoleum is located on the premises and portrait is

on the Forbidden City. The Confucius brand has even been applied to a fine-dining trend, as

restaurants in Qufu, Shandong are making moves to open up the regional tourist industry by

offering "Confucius cuisine" – dishes that are supposedly creative re-imaginations of dishes

developed over the centuries in Qufu.[67]

Confucius' brand has been used to garner prestige for international awards. In late 2005,

the Chinese government and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO) joined forces to establish the Confucius Literary Prize. "The purpose

of the Confucius Literary Prize is to reward nongovernmental organizations that are working to

promote literacy among disadvantaged people, such as rural adults and youths who are not in

school, and particularly women and girls."[68] However, Confucius' brand has also been used less

successfully to promote a Chinese international peace prize. The Chinese government was

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[64] Murray 263.
[65] Dotson 8.
[66] Dotson 13-14.
[67] "With 'Confucius cuisine', they cook to order," *South China Morning Post*, September 12, 2013, http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1308358/confucius-cuisine-takes-sage-whole-new-level (accessed September 12, 2013).
[68] Murray 267.

reportedly involved with establishing the "Confucius Peace Prize" in December 2010 in response

to the awarding of that year's Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese political dissident Liu Xiaobo:

> The identity of the nominally private Chinese organization that awarded the prize was never made clear in media accounts, and it remains an opaque institution. However, the group's chairman reportedly acknowledged that the group had a close relationship with the PRC.[69]

The award's first recipient was former Taiwanese Vice-President and Kuomintang Party

Chairman Lien Chan, who was recognized for his efforts in improving cross-strait relations with

mainland China. However, their efforts at countering the Nobel Peace Prize "prompted far more

derision than admiration" internationally,[70] as Lien himself was not present at the ceremony and

officially disassociated himself from the transparent, politically-motivated award.[71]

Some also suspect that the government-directed revival and promotion of China's

Confucian heritage is designed to send a political message to China's neighbors. Believing that

"Confucian" culture acts as shorthand for "Chinese" culture, heritage, or identity, Murray argues

that "one motive was to encourage closer relations with Hong Kong and Taiwan, whose leaders

had never repudiated Confucius or traditional Chinese culture."[72] Furthermore, she argues that

"China's re-embracing of Confucius and government-funded revivals of traditional ceremonies

and structures are also intended to create a positive climate to attract overseas Chinese back to

the motherland and foster closer relations with East Asian nations that share some form of

Confucius heritage."[73]

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[69] Dotson 17.
[70] Dotson 18.
[71] Dotson 17.
[72] Murray 266.
[73] Murray 266.

3.2 History of the Confucius Institutes

The Confucius Institutes are the primary tools the Chinese government uses to execute its language policies internationally. The Confucius Institutes are non-profit institutions established in foreign countries with the stated intent of promoting the Chinese language and culture in those countries.[74] The scope of Confucius Institute activities currently include "teaching Chinese, training teachers of Chinese, administering the HSK international Chinese language qualification and other examinations, teaching Chinese culture courses, holding film shows and similar activities, acting as consultants for individuals interested in China, such as business people, and maintaining a reference library."[75]

Initially, China's external language policy was carried out by the Beijing Language Institute. Established in 1962 and officially named in 1964, the Beijing Language Institute focused on teaching Chinese to foreign students in China.[76] In 1987, China became much more active in teaching Chinese to non-native speakers when the Beijing-based Office of Chinese Language Council International (*Zhongguo Guojia Hanyu Guoji Tuiguang Lingdao Xiaozu Bangongshi*, or colloquially known as *Hanban*) was established. As the main objective of the government's CFL initiatives had shifted from "merely the education of foreign students to the development of a commercial education market,"[77] *Hanban's* primary responsibilities included "initiating policies, and sponsoring activities, of Chinese language studies, cultural exhibitions, and exchanges."[78] "After the establishment of Hanban, the speed of implementation of projects

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[74] Confucius Institute Online, "Confucius Institute Headquarters," Confucius Institute Online, http://english.chinese.cn/confuciusinstitute/article/2011-05/31/content_339769.htm (accessed February 01, 2012).

[75] Don Starr 71.

[76] Kyoungtaek Lee, "A Political Approach to China's Confucius Institute: An observation of its understanding of ethnicity, language and identity," 2: 1884-8575 (Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba, 2011), https://www.tulips.tsukuba.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2241/109621/1/IF_2-A5.pdf (accessed July 15, 2013), 10.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Zhao and Huang 129.

accelerated."[79] In 1996, the Beijing Language Institute was upgraded and renamed as the

"Beijing Language and Culture University"; in 2002, it was renamed again as "Beijing Language

University." In 1993, the "International Training Center of Chinese Language" was established;

in 2000, it would be renamed as the "College of Chinese Language and Culture."[80] However,

these initiatives were still internal because they were only directed at foreign students within

China; the most proactive of *Hanban's* external initiatives to teach Chinese as a foreign language

was the establishment of the Confucius Institutes.

The Confucius Institutes project was initiated in 2002, when the Chinese government

announced that it intended to set up Chinese language and cultural institutions overseas; the pilot

institute for this project was established on June 15, 2004 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. However,

the first official overseas Confucius Institute opened on November 21, 2004 in Seoul, South

Korea. Some analysts have argued that establishing the first official institute in South Korea was

a calculated move by the Chinese government:

> The choice of Seoul as the location of the first Confucius Institute sent messages
> to many people: the South Koreans (back in the Chinese fold), the North Koreans
> (do not count on fraternal Communist ties), the Japanese (China and Korea stand
> united against Japanese aggression) and the US (Korea is our sphere of influence).
> This CI programme is part of the message China is sending to the world that, in
> Hong Kong parlance, China has had several bad centuries but is now back as the
> 'central state' Zhongguo.[81]

Although the first Confucius Institutes established were geographically close to China,

they quickly expanded throughout the world. Prior to the opening of the Confucius Institute in

Seoul in November 2004, *Hanban* had already inked deals with the University of Maryland,

Stockholm University, and Nairobi University to build the first Confucius Institutes in the United

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[79] Lee, "A Political Approach to China's Confucius Institute: An observation of its understanding of ethnicity, language and identity," 11.
[80] Lee, "A Political Approach to China's Confucius Institute: An observation of its understanding of ethnicity, language and identity," 11.
[81] Don Starr 65.

States, Europe, and Africa respectively. As of 2013, according to *Confucius Institute Online,*[82]

there are 833 Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms, the Confucius Institutes' primary

and secondary education affiliates, worldwide: 127 in Asia, 241 in Europe, 399 in North and

South America, 30 in Africa, and 36 in the Oceania. Of those located in the Americas, 339 are

located in the United States.

Beijing modeled the Confucius Institutes after comparable cultural institutions for other

countries, such as France's Alliance Française, Germany's Goethe Institute, the United

Kingdom's British Council, Spain's Instituto Cervantes, Portugal's Instituto Camões, and

Japan's Japan Foundation, with the goal of developing Beijing's cultural diplomacy:

> France started its cultural diplomacy after its defeat in the war against Prussia
> (1870–1) and founded the Alliance Françoise in 1883 by "invoking her cultural
> patrimony as a means of rehabilitation". The British Council was set-up in 1934
> as a reaction to the success of official cultural institutions of France, Germany and
> Italy and "to counteract Nazi plans for global cultural hegemony". And
> Germany's Goethe-Institute was set-up with the initial idea to rehabilitate
> Germany's reputation after World War II. [The] Confucius Institutes, which are
> not only designed to teach language and promote culture, but are "also aimed at
> balancing the dominant American (popular) cultural influence". Furthermore, [the]
> Confucius Institutes also contribute, at least indirectly, to China's foreign policy
> agenda."[83]

The implications of Beijing's cultural diplomacy, linguistic policy and successful expansion of

the Confucius Institutes have not been lost on Beijing's neighbors. Taiwan recently took steps in

2011 to compete with Beijing in cultural diplomacy by creating "Taiwan Academies" –

international cultural centers that are similar to the Confucius Institutes but intended "to promote

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[82] Confucius Institute, "Worldwide Confucius Institutes," Confucius Institute Online,
http://www.chinesecio.com/m/cio_wci (accessed October 15, 2013).
[83] Falk Hartig, "Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 17 (2012): 57.

Taiwanese-flavored Mandarin and traditional Chinese characters, and also sponsor research on

Taiwan-related topics."[84]

The Confucius Institutes as a Source of National Prestige

One of the reasons that the Confucius Institutes themselves have become a source of

national prestige is that they are symbolic of Chinese greatness to cultural nationalists.

Academic articles that touch on the Confucius Institutes frequently do so in the same breath as

soft power and other cultural sources of Chinese national pride, such as the 2008 Beijing

Summer Olympics and the growing popularity of Chinese martial arts, sports figures, cinema and

literature.[85] The institutes use a distinctively Chinese philosophy as a symbol for self-

promotion. The Chinese language has been objectified to serve as a "symbol of the Chinese

nation" and as an "important agent for national cohesiveness" to instrumentalist cultural

nationalists[86]; the Confucius Institutes primarily focus on teaching the Chinese language, this

symbol of Chinese cultural greatness, to receptive audiences in their host communities. The

Confucius Institutes also work with the local host communities to promote other traditions that

objectify Chinese culture, such as "Chinese medicine, Kongfu, Qigong, calligraphy, Chinese

painting, Chinese songs and dances and Chinese cuisine."[87]

The Confucius Institutes also demonstrate internationally the extent to which Chinese

society and traditions value education. The quality of educational programs that they provide

internationally can be seen as an extension of the Chinese domestic education system and

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[84] "Soft Power Smackdown! Confucius Institute vs. Taiwan Academy," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 12, 2011, http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2011/08/12/soft-power-smackdown-confucius-institute-vs-taiwan-academy/ (accessed September 1, 2013).

[85] Ding and Saunders 15-20; Kissinger 491; Joseph S. Nye, "Why China is Weak on Soft Power," *The New York Times*, January 17, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/18/opinion/why-china-is-weak-on-soft-power.html (accessed February 10, 2012); Pan 23.

[86] Yingjie Guo, "Repossessing the Mother Tongue: Chinese Characters, Traditional Forms and Cultural Linguistics," in *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity Under Reform* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004): 105.

[87] Pan 28.

indicative of the domestic system's quality. According to former Minister of Education Zhou Ji, the Confucius Institutes help "Chinese higher education gain international recognition for its delivery of educational services in the global market and expand Chinese influence worldwide."[88] The institutes have worked hard to compete with other comparable language and cultural programs; Zhang Hong from *China Today*, a popular monthly magazine that tends to promote a favorable view of China to international and domestic audiences, wrote with implicit pride: "Akin to Germany's Goethe Institute and Spain's Institute de Cervantes in Beijing, Confucius Institute represents quality Chinese language training on an international stage."[89]

The actual success and rapid expansion of the Confucius Institutes have also become a source of national prestige in China. It is important to remember that the Confucius Institutes are language and cultural outreach programs designed to "spread a Chinese government-approved interpretation of China's heritage and encourage foreigners to understand and appreciate it."[90] The establishment of the institutes in 2004 is "the first time that China formulated and implemented a plan to popularize the Chinese around the world in a systematic way and on such a massive scale."[91] The high rate of proliferation of Confucius Institutes means that international audiences are positively receiving a Chinese cultural product that has been carefully crafted, packaged, and delivered by the Chinese government. It ultimately serves as a metric for measuring the rise of China and growing Chinese influence internationally.

Due to their successful expansion, with Confucius Institutes and Classrooms being established in about 100 countries and on every continent except Antarctica, the Chinese government has pursued aggressive goals in increasing the number of new Chinese teachers. In

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[88] Pan 23.
[89] Zhang Hong, "Confucius School, a National Strategy for Chinese Language Teaching," *China Today*, May 2005, http://search.proquest.com/docview/235888597?accountid=13793 (accessed August 20, 2013).
[90] Murray 267.
[91] Ding and Saunders 20.

2005, their goal was to train 100 million new Chinese speakers over the next five years[92]; at the time, there were approximately 30 million non-Chinese people in about 100 countries studying Chinese as a second language.[93] "The global demand for Chinese language education has kept pace with the country's economic development since China initiated its modernization process in early 1980s. According to a recent survey, 38 percent of human resource and financial directors in Europe—as well as Australia and New Zealand—expect Chinese to become the most valuable business language—other than English—in the near future."[94] The increased global demand for the Chinese language has necessitated recruitment campaigns for native Chinese speakers to go abroad to teach Chinese:

> Today, just 3,000 people hold the Certificate for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language issued by the Chinese Ministry of Education. However another 6,000 are doing the job on a full time or part time basis. With 60,000 foreign students in China, it's hard enough trying to find qualified teachers to work at home, never mind in Malaysia or the United States... In an effort to improve the situation, in 2004, the government staged the "China International Chinese teacher volunteer plan." The NOCFL set up a volunteer center to handle the recruitment, training and financing of suitable volunteers who wish to teach Chinese abroad. Around 30,000 people have so far expressed an interest in the volunteer program.[95]

Finally, the success of the Confucius Institutes is indicative of the rise of China and increased global competitiveness. "Learning Chinese isn't just a way for Americans to get jobs in China, but for them to do business with Chinese companies and compete with Mandarin speakers from other countries."[96] In other words, Chinese businesses and industries have become such a dominant force in the global marketplace that learning to communicate in Chinese has now become a profitable endeavor for foreigners. The Confucius Institutes, a

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[92] "Volunteers to the Rescue," *China Today*, May 2005, http://search.proquest.com/docview/235830161?accountid=13793 (accessed August 20, 2013).

[93] Zhang.

[94] Ding and Saunders 19.

[95] "Volunteers to the Rescue."

[96] Michael Erard, "The Mandarin Offensive," Wired 14.04, April 2006, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.04/mandarin.html (accessed August 26, 2013).

symbol of the rise of China, also use "benign activities to counter external pressures associated with the 'China threat theory.'"[97] In doing so they reinforce the government-promoted concept of *heping jueqi*, or "Peaceful Rise"[98] – the idea that China's rise will not change its status as "a 'responsible stakeholder' in the international system"[99]

3.3.   Procedures to Establishing a Confucius Institute

Scholars have identified three types of Confucius Institutes or Confucius Classrooms worldwide: ones that are operated entirely by *Hanban*, ones that are operated locally but licensed by *Hanban's* headquarters, and ones that are operated as a joint venture between *Hanban* and the local partners.[100] The joint venture is the most common type of organization for Confucius Institutes[101]; within the United States, these joint ventures are generally hosted on university campuses. Joint ventures are the most prevalent form of organization because they are mutually beneficial to *Hanban* and the local partners; universities are able to pursue Sinology programs that they otherwise may not have the money to do without funding from *Hanban*, while *Hanban* and the Confucius Institutes gain prestige and credibility from their association with universities as well as international partners to co-finance Chinese cultural diplomacy.[102]

In order to establish a Confucius Institute on their campus, interested universities must submit a proposal to *Hanban's* headquarters. Successful applicants will submit proposals that demonstrate the following:

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[97] Pan 29.
[98] Dotson 19.
[99] Bonnie S. Glaser and Melissa Murphy, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate," in *Chinese Soft Power and Its Implications for the United States*, ed. Carla McGiffert (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009): 24.
[100] Hartig, 60; Don Starr 70.
[101] Hartig, 60.
[102] Hartig, 60-61.

(i) There is a strong demand for Chinese language instruction in the university and local community;
(ii) The potential host organization is willing and able to contribute to the establishment and the growth of the CI both fiscally and physically; and
(iii) A partner organization has been pre-selected for the CI for this endeavor.[103]

In other words, host applicants need to demonstrate to *Hanban* that they have strong local demand and the resources, in terms of capital, facilities, personnel, and equipment, to establish and develop a profitable and sustainable institute at their location.

One factor not explicitly mentioned in the above list is that successful applicants will generally be located in areas of strategic importance to Chinese foreign policy. In his 2010 study, Lee determined that over 60% of active Confucius Institutes were concentrated in East Asia, the EU, and the US – the three regions of greatest geopolitical importance to the Chinese government.[104] Therefore, successful proposals are most likely to come from countries with large GDPs and population sizes because these factors indicate that these countries either already have strong trade and/or foreign direct investment relationships with China or the high potential to develop relationships.[105] Furthermore, since the lingua franca in the aforementioned areas of geopolitical importance tends to be English, successful applicants are more likely to come from countries that speak English.[106]

Once the proposal is submitted, *Hanban* will evaluate whether to approve the establishment of a new institute. Successful applications generally take about a year and a half to be reviewed. Once final approval is given by Hanban's headquarters, two contracts will be signed: one between *Hanban* headquarters and the host applicant and the other between the host

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[103] Donald Lien and Chang Hoon Oh, *Determinants of the Confucius Institute Establishment* (Working Paper Series, San Antonio, TX: University of Texas at San Antonio, College of Business, 2012), http://business.utsa.edu/WPS/eco/0045ECO-202-2012.pdf, 4.
[104] Kyoungtaek Lee, *Towards a New Framework for Soft Power: An Observation of China's Confucius Institute*. 1: 1884-8575 (Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba, 2010), https://www.tulips.tsukuba.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2241/107534/1/IF_1-A2.pdf (accessed July 15, 2013), 7.
[105] Lien and Oh 7-8.
[106] Lien and Oh 10.

applicant and its Chinese partner organization. Once the two agreements are signed, *Hanban*

provides the start-up funding for the new Confucius Institute. Though *Hanban* pays for the start-

up costs of the Confucius Institutes, subsequent annual funding for operation costs are shared

between Hanban and the host organization for the life of the contract. The contracts signed

generally range between three to five years, though *Hanban* is beginning to sign more long-term

contracts with newly-established Confucius Institutes.

Chinese Governmental Support of the Confucius Institutes

The Chinese government's increased attentiveness to China's national image is "not only

reflected in concepts such as Peaceful Rise/Development and Harmonious World,"[107] but also in

the cultural diplomacy initiatives that are part of the so-called "charm offensive"[108] designed to

combat the perception of the "China threat." One element of this "charm offensive" is

internationalizing Chinese media – "Xinhua, CCTV and China Daily receive vast sums of money

[from the Chinese government] to 'go out' and explain China's point of view to the world."[109] It

is also spearheading initiatives to improve China's national image from within other countries,

primarily through the funding of organizations like *Hanban* and the Confucius Institutes.

The Chinese government, though the Ministry of Education, provides a massive amount

of funding to finance the Confucius Institutes and other *Hanban* activities. As previously

mentioned, *Hanban* pays for the start-up costs of each institute plus 50% of the annual operation

costs for the life of the contract. The local partners' shares of annual operation costs are usually

provided in the form of local personnel and facilities while the Chinese partners provide

personnel (a co-director and additional instructors). *Hanban* provides its share in the form of

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[107] Hartig, 54.

[108] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

[109] Hartig, 54.

capital and equipment[110]; Starr estimates that *Hanban* provides about 3,000 books, other items of teaching materials, and pays the salaries of the instructors sent from China to teach at the Confucius Institutes.[111] Many analysts estimate that the start-up funds provided for each institute by *Hanban* average approximately USD $150,000.[112]

It has been especially difficult to estimate how much *Hanban* spends on each Confucius Institute on average annually. Though the "unique facilities-sharing arrangement with local institutions contributes to the better operating efficiency of the CI," Lien and Oh estimate that the annual operation cost for an average Confucius Institute, at approximately USD $500,000, is still relatively high when compared to the average start-up fund.[113] However, other studies have estimated that the average annual budget for Confucius Institutes to be much lower, ranging from USD $100,000 to USD $200,000.[114]

As it is difficult to assess the average annual budgets for the Confucius Institutes, it is also difficult to get an accurate account of how large *Hanban's* worldwide budget actually is. Some sources have reported *Hanban's* annual budget to range between USD $15-26 million,[115] while others have estimated that in 2010 alone, the Chinese government budgeted CNY ¥800 million (approximately USD $127 million) to support the Confucius Institutes worldwide.[116] While this high level of funding may lead to concerns about Chinese governmental spending on cultural diplomacy or international propaganda, it is important to note that the annual spending for comparable organizations is much higher; "the annual budget of the British Council is about [USD $1billion] and the budget of Germany's Goethe Institut in 2010

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[110] Hartig, 60.
[111] Don Starr 71.
[112] Lien and Oh 4-5; Pan 26.
[113] Lien and Oh 4-5.
[114] Hartig, 62.
[115] Hartig, 61.
[116] Pan 26.

was about [EUR €334 million, or USD $443 million] with roughly [EUR €223 million, or USD $296 million] donation from the German Federal Foreign Office."[117]

While non-academics may be concerned with Chinese cultural diplomacy or soft power initiatives and the political implications of high levels of governmental spending on the Confucius Institutes, some academics working with the local host universities have been primarily concerned with maintaining funding and the long-term sustainability of the program.[118] Though the Confucius Institutes are specified as non-profit organizations, the expectation with *Hanban* has always been that the Institutes would eventually become self-financing and charge course fees. However, as the contracts for most of the early-established Confucius Institutes were signed for only a three-year duration, there was initially some concern that three years would not be enough time for the Institutes to become self-sustainable. To address these concerns, *Hanban* has steadily increased the average contract duration, with many of the newly-established Confucius Institutes now signing five-year contracts. The concerns of local partners on long-term sustainability and funding have also been alleviated by the inclusion of the Confucius Institutes in the Ministry of Education's most recent Ten-year plan, the "National Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)."[119] As a result, local partners can now feel a greater degree of confidence that *Hanban* will match funding for their Confucius Institutes until at least 2020.

Hanban's relationship with the Chinese government is not limited to funding: *Hanban* is actually composed of "representatives from 12 ministries and commissions within the Chinese central government."[120] When it was first established, *Hanban* was primarily designed to be a

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[117] Hartig, 62.
[118] Hartig, 62.
[119] Hartig, 62-63.
[120] Hartig, 54.

language education institution that fell under the purveyorship of the Ministry of Education.

However, *Hanban* currently serves as an extension of CCP bureaucracy, as Beijing "gradually

expanded *Hanban's* functions to include cultural exchanges and placed it under the joint

governance of...different ministries and commissions collectively responsible for education,

culture, foreign affairs and strategic planning for long-term national development."[121]

Hanban's 'leading group' refers to "a group of officials seconded from various ministries

chaired by a State Councillor."[122] This essentially means that high-ranking members of the CCP

wield a great degree of control within *Hanban's* headquarters, which issues guidelines and

assessments to the Confucius Institutes worldwide. It has been argued that, with this type of

governance structure, the Confucius Institutes cannot possibly act as independent, non-

governmental institutions.[123] For example, the Confucius Institutes' first director, Chen Zhili,

was also a State Councilor and the Minister of Education. *Hanban's* last director, Liu Yandong,

is the highest-ranked female member of the Communist Party, currently serving as Vice-Premier

to Premier Li Keqiang; when she served as *Hanban's* director, she was also concurrently a

member of the CCP's Central Committee Political Bureau and State Councilor. Similarly, Xu

Lin, the current Director-General of the Confucius Institute Headquarters and Director of

Hanban, is also a State Councilor and former Assistant Director-General and Deputy Director-

General of the Finance Department of the Ministry of Education.[124] At least two of the four

Deputy Director Generals of the Confucius Institute Headquarters[125] under Xu Lin, Hu Zhiping

and Jing Wei, have also held high positions within the Ministry of Education.

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[121] Pan 25.
[122] Don Starr 70.
[123] Hartig, 59; Pan 26.
[124] Hanban, "Xu Lin," Confucius Institute Online, http://www.chinese.cn/conference11/article/2011-12/11/content_394742.htm (accessed October 15, 2013).
[125] Confucius Institute Headquarters, "About Us – Leadership Resume," Hanban, http://www.hanban.edu.cn/hb/node_38260.htm (accessed October 15, 2013).

3.4   **Summary**

The Chinese government has invested considerable resources to promote their written and spoken linguistic preferences internationally. They recruited Confucius, a Chinese historic figure that had been revered for hundreds of years in China but vilified during early CCP rule, to serve as the namesake for their international language and cultural outreach programs. They have heavily supported the institutes financially, politically and administratively by spending potentially over USD $125 million annually and providing leadership through high-level representatives from the Ministry of Education. The next chapter will focus on Confucius Institutes in the United States as an element of Chinese foreign policy and how these institutes have been received by the American public.

Chapter Four: Reception of the Confucius Institutes in the United States

In 2012, the Obama administration announced a shift in American foreign policy and grand strategy. Initiated in 2010, the shift was dubbed a "pivot" to Asia – "a shift in strategy aimed at bolstering the United States' defense ties with countries throughout the region and expanding the U.S. naval presence there."[1] The primary objective of the shift was to draw American resources and focus away from costly engagements in the Middle East. However, it was also conceived in response to a perceived increase in Chinese aggression, especially with Japan and Southeast Asian neighbors over territorial disputes in the East China and South China Seas and with Western nations over the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to the imprisoned Chinese human rights activist Liu Xiaobo.

Chinese policymakers fear this so-called "pivot" is nothing more than "a conspiracy to 'contain' China and deny the nation its proper place in the world despite its enormous economic and military progress."[2] However, this "pivot," or "rebalancing"[3] as it was later rebranded, could be understood in two ways: rebalancing American foreign policy priorities and rebalancing regional hegemonic power in Asia. American National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon explained that the shift in American foreign policy strategy responded "to the strong demand signal from leaders and publics across the region for U.S. leadership, economic engagement, sustained attention to regional institutions and defense of international rules and norms."[4] If this

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[1] Robert S. Ross, "The Problem With the Pivot," *Foreign Affairs* 91:6 (Nov/Dec 2012): 70.
[2] Robert Keatley, "How China Helps the Pivot," *The National Interest*, March 21, 2013, http://server1.nationalinterest.org/commentary/how-china-helps-the-pivot-8249 (accessed March 23, 2013).
[3] "Pivotal Concerns," *The Economist*, May 11, 2013, http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21577369-call-it-pivot-or-rebalancing-americas-pacific-policy-looks-little-wobbly-pivotal-concerns?fsrc=rss%7Casi (accessed May 21, 2013).
[4] Keatley.

is the case, then "[in] a few short months, China…managed to undo much of what it had gained through years of talk about its 'peaceful rise',"[5] especially in terms of soft power.

The foreign policy strategy of most nations includes increasing economic and military power and projecting the nations' political and economic influence abroad as much as possible; these actions are meant to provide a favorable international environment in which the nation is secure and prosperous. China is no exception to this and Chinese policymakers would like the United States to change its foreign policy to reduce American influence in Asia as quickly as possible. "For a rising power like China whose growing economic and military might frightens its neighbors into counter-balancing coalitions, a smart strategy includes soft power to make China look less frightening and the balancing coalitions less effective."[6] In other words, successfully improving China's international image and increasing its soft power would be one way to downplay the need, with its neighbors and with the United States, for increased American regional engagement. Therefore, the success of the Confucius Institutes is even more important for Chinese public diplomacy and foreign policy strategy.

The Confucius Institutes have had mixed receptions in the United States. American academics, journalists and political pundits have debated over various aspects of the Confucius Institutes, from how they increase Chinese soft power to the extent to which their presence on university and college campuses hamper academic independence. These topics have been featured in academic journals and both written and broadcast national news media. Since domestic public opinion is a salient driving force in the creation of American foreign policy, how these cultural outreach programs are received in the United States will help to determine how

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[5] Ross 70.
[6] Joseph S. Nye, "What China and Russia Don't Get About Soft Power," *Foreign Policy* (April 29, 2013), http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/29/what_china_and_russia_don_t_get_about_soft_power (accessed April 29, 2013).

successful Chinese foreign policy strategies using soft power will ultimately be. It is important

to study how these topics have been framed and presented, as this may affect how the Confucius

Institutes are received by the American public.

This chapter will begin with a discussion on the relationship between political legitimacy,

media coverage and American public opinion, and how these ultimately impact American

foreign policymaking. It will continue with discussions of the primary debates surrounding the

Confucius Institutes, namely the soft power and academic independence debates. This chapter

will conclude with a media content analysis which will explore the extent to which the media has

covered the Confucius Institutes and how they have been portrayed to the American public.

4.1   Media Framing, Public Opinion, and Policy

In the United States, public opinion is shaped in large part by the choice in foreign policy

issues covered by mass media and how those issues are presented to the American public. This

ultimately impacts the American foreign policy process and whether the policies pursued by the

government are viewed as legitimate. Mass media has drastically evolved since the 1970s:

> Television usage increased even more dramatically during that same time period,
> with 94 million sets in use in 1994 compared to 59 million sets in 1970… Tied to
> this increase in television stations was the growth of cable television systems,
> spreading from 2,490 available systems in 1970 to 11,230 systems in 1994, an
> increase of 350 percent in twenty-five years.[7]

The dramatic increase in television usage and the emergence of 24-hour news stations

have led to what many have dubbed the "CNN effect" on American foreign policy.   The

argument is that the media has the power to affect policy by "shaping the public and official

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[7] James M. McCormick, "The Media, Public Opinion, and the Foreign Policy Process," in *American Foreign Policy and Process,* 3rd Ed. (Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1998): 523.

response to foreign events."[8] When particular foreign policy issues are raised in televised media, "[government] officials react to the pressure of publicity, and the result is often hasty, ill-conceived policies that play to the immediate impulses of the public rather than to the long-term interests of the country."[9] The oft-cited examples of the "CNN effect" in American foreign policy are the decisions regarding American troop deployment to Somalia in the early 1990s:

> The Bush administration's last minute decision to send the U.S. military on a humanitarian mission was driven in part by the strong public reaction to the images of starving children conveyed by evening news program. Similarly, the Clinton administration's subsequent and rather abrupt decision to abandon the military commitment was influenced by the visceral public reaction of outrage to the image of captured U.S. service personnel being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.[10]

Despite these anecdotal arguments, it is difficult to truly assess the ways in which increased telecommunications ultimately impact American foreign policy. Mass media heavily impacts public opinion, as most people use the media as efficient means to construct their social and political knowledge[11]; public opinion, or how they evaluate the information transmitted through the media, is then expressed through polls, elections, or meetings with elected representatives. However, the degree of agency afforded to mass media – in particular, how they choose the stories to report on – remains up for debate. One possibility is that the media is an independent actor that sets the American public agenda. This view gives mass media a high degree of agency because "policy makers and the public [are dependent] upon the media for

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[8] Michael Mastanduno, "The U.S. Political System and International Leadership: A 'Decidedly Inferior' Form of Government?" in *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 5th Ed., ed. G. John Ikenberry (Glenview, IL: Longman, 2005): 256.

[9] Mastanduno 256-257.

[10] Mastanduno 256-257.

[11] Karen Johnson-Cartee, *News Narratives and News Framing: Constructing Political Reality* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005): 4-6.

information about global events (and especially television, for instantaneous communication from around the world)."[12]

Another viewpoint is that the government directly influences public opinion through mass media. Under this viewpoint, American presidents, "[as] consummate politicians… both follow and lead public opinion."[13] Presidents have the ability to use mass media as a mouthpiece for the government's official agenda, because mass media outlets are dependent upon the government for access to information and willingly play this role in order to maintain that access. While some critics may accuse the American mainstream media of playing this role, especially with the Bush administration during the lead-up to the Iraq War in 2002[14], other analysts summarily dismiss the notion:

> News reporters do more than simply 'watch' and report facts about the government to their audiences. Rather, they will frequently take a bite out of those they are covering.[15]

The third, more moderate possibility is that mass media and American government share a more of a symbiotic relationship, where each party finds ways to benefit from the other. Though this possibility may seem more attractive to use in assumptions because it is more moderate, it can cause a theoretical loop make it more difficult to assess the direction of causation.

In addition to agenda-setting, how mass media frames news stories also shapes the public's news-gathering and processing. News is socially constructed through media framing and the media's creation of narratives, then is consumed by the public. "While agenda setting and priming deal with how news may promote issue prioritization or increase issue accessibility,

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[12] McCormick, 525.

[13] Edward R. Drachman and Alan Shank, "President Clinton's Decision to Use Military Force to Restore President Aristide to Office in Haiti," in Presidents and Foreign Policy: Countdown to 10 Controversial Decisions (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997): 337.

[14] Andrea Buffa, "Be the Media," in *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism,* eds. Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans (Makawao, Maui, HI: Inner Ocean Publishing, 2005): 135-139; Katrina Vanden Heuvel, "Heading into the Cave with a Torch," in *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism,* eds. Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans (Makawao, Maui, HI: Inner Ocean Publishing, 2005): 125-128.

[15] Karen Johnson-Cartee, 383.

media framing research examines how news content influences and affects news consumers;"[16] frames provide context through selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration, and then become the basis for cognitive shortcuts when evaluating individual positions.[17] In other words, they are "the raw materials from which people inevitably draw to form their own versions of reality."[18]

Some scholars on public opinion and foreign policy have theorized that, regardless of the degree of agency or underlying motives of the mass media outlets, foreign policy simply tends to not be a salient issue with the American public; if foreign policy is not a salient issue with the public, then the public will not take the steps to learn more about the issues and the degree to which the public can influence foreign policy becomes smaller. Indeed, it is conventional wisdom that American presidential candidates run more effective campaigns by focusing on domestic policy over foreign policy. Surveys have shown that the American public's interest in local and community affairs have historically trumped interest in international affairs; according to this viewpoint, "the public concern has largely been episodic and tied to particular international events, and because the public's knowledge of foreign policy questions has remained relatively low, its ability to influence policy has remained relatively weak."[19] Other theorists share these basic assumptions but arrive at a different conclusion – that though the American public tends to be uninformed in foreign policy issues, the threat of negative public opinion is still strong enough to constitute a major threat to the policies which the government may otherwise find desirable.[20]

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[16] Johnson-Cartee, 25.
[17] Johnson-Cartee, 24.
[18] Johnson-Cartee, 31.
[19] McCormick, 540.
[20] Ole R. Holsti, "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus," *International Studies Quarterly* 36 (December 1992): 442.

More recent research recommends taking a more nuanced approach, suggesting that the "foreign policy attitudes of the American public are not...irrelevant to policymaking."[21] Two useful sets of typologies on American foreign policy trends have been provided by Eugene Wippkopf and Walter Russell Mead. Wippkopf's "accommodationists" are similar to Mead's "Wilsonians" in that they tend to support cooperative international engagement and reject militant engagement, while the "isolationists" are most similar to the "Jeffersonians" in their shared tendency to reject cooperative and militant international engagement.[22] Wippkopf's "internationalists," who support both cooperative and militant international engagement, are somewhat similar to Mead's "Hamiltonians," who prefer maintaining a competent, yet not overpowering military capable of defending national economic interests, such as the expansion of trade[23]; the "hardliners" are most similar to Mead's "Jacksonians," who tend to pursue more muscular foreign policies and reject cooperative internationalism.[24]

Wippkopf argues that these typologies of the popular strains of American foreign policy tradition are significant because each group has steadily maintained a roughly equal share of the American population since the mid-1970s: the implication is that American foreign policymakers are more constrained than theorists had previously argued, as they now have to "gauge which groups will support or oppose particular foreign policy actions and must calculate the acceptable limits of their foreign policy actions."[25] If Thomas Graham is correct in his estimate that "public opinion must reach at least consensus levels (60 percent and higher) before it begins to have a discernible effect on decision making,"[26] then the case for public opinion

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[21] McCormick 545.
[22] McCormick 547; Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed The World* (New York: Routledge, 2009): 184.
[23] McCormick, 547; Mead, 103.
[24] McCormick, 547; Mead 224-225.
[25] McCormick, 549.
[26] McCormick, 562.

affecting policymaking is somewhat weakened given Woppkopf's typology. However, this also implies that if foreign policymakers want to shift foreign policy and push through new agendas legitimately, they will need to be able to garner significant support from at least three of the four segments.

Alexander George discussed problems with political legitimacy in foreign policy and identified two types of legitimacy: normative, which occurs when the proposed policies are in line with national values and objectives, and cognitive, which means that the proposed policies are practical and achievable.[27] He argues that when policies lack legitimacy, modern mass media and volatile public opinion combine to demand especially unreasonably quick results from what may otherwise be prudent foreign policies.[28] For example, it is arguable that though American foreign policy in the Middle East may have had a fair degree of normative legitimacy, in that the American public genuinely preferred to promote democracy in the Middle East, it lacked cognitive legitimacy. Democratization efforts took a long time to be noticeably effective in Afghanistan and Iraq, which prompted increased media scrutiny and volatile public opinion; in this context, the "pivot" to Asia can be interpreted as the impact the American public's impatience had on American foreign policy in the Middle East.

The impact media coverage, public opinion, and legitimacy have on American foreign policy towards China has yet to be determined. Current American public opinion towards China appears to be deeply ambivalent: though recent polls suggest that a fair majority of the American public are concerned with China's rise in economic power, the public is deeply

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[27] Alexander L. George, "Domestic Constraints on Regime Change in U.S. Foreign Policy: The Need for Political Legitimacy," in *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, 5th Ed., ed. G. John Ikenberry (Glenview, IL: Longman, 2005): 335.
[28] George 354.

divided on its perception of China as a military threat.[29] If the Confucius Institutes are framed

favorably in mass media and are successful in engaging with their host communities, they will be

a great asset to Chinese foreign policy in alleviating the American public's fears on China as a

rising power and military threat.

4.2   Coverage of the Confucius Institutes

Chinese Soft Power Debate

There is little doubt that the political agenda of the Confucius Institutes is to increase

Chinese soft power and present a benign, favorable image of China to the international

community. Ideally, increasing soft power will assist the Chinese government in attaining their

desired foreign policy objectives through co-option rather than coercion. China has had some

success in using business and culture to increase Chinese soft power and achieve foreign policy

objectives:

> Nations from Venezuela to Uzbekistan have proven increasingly willing to work
> with China, whether that means Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez vowing to
> reorient his massive oil industry toward Beijing and away from America, or
> Uzbek leader Islam Karimov tossing US forces out of bases in his country.
> Countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have increasingly cut off even their
> informal ties to Taiwan, which Beijing claims is a province of China. [30]

However, many analysts believe that concerns about rising Chinese soft power are

premature. Though China has dedicated resources to increasing their soft power and influence in

Africa and Latin America, and "the majority of people in both regions appreciate the influx of

Chinese science and technology, most are not impressed with the spread of Chinese ideas and

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[29] PollingReport.com, "China," *PollingReport.com*, http://www.pollingreport.com/china.htm (accessed May 23, 2013).

[30] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007): 9-10.

customs."[31] The government's efforts in increasing soft power in the United States also generally

continue to be met with concern about China as a rising power by the American public.[32] As a

result, most analysts believe that China will not be able to overtake the United States in terms of

soft power in the near future.[33]

Even though most analysts doubt that China will soon overtake the United States in soft

power, the primary concern in the debate involving Chinese soft power and the Confucius

Institutes is that these institutes will allow the Chinese government to use American academic

campuses to issue propaganda. The Confucius Institutes and their international counterparts (the

British Council, Goethe Institute, Maison Française, etc.) all work to increase their respective

countries' soft power by promoting their languages, cultures and ideologies. What makes the

Confucius Institutes unique and controversial versus their British, Spanish and German

counterparts is that the Confucius Institutes are primarily housed on university campuses and

partially subsidized by universities through matching funds and overhead costs.[34] This presence

of Confucius Institutes on American university campuses becomes especially sensitive because

of China's rising status as a world power. A recent international survey revealed that it is widely

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[31] Joanna Chiu, "US beats China in soft power stakes," *South China Morning Post*, July 19, 2013, http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1285275/africa-and-latin-america-admire-chinese-majority-dont-welcome-their (accessed July 25, 2013).

[32] Gregory G. Holyk, "Paper Tiger? Chinese Soft Power in East Asia," *Political Science Quarterly* 126:2 (2011): 243; James F. Paradise, "China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power," *Asian Survey* 49:4 (2009): 655-656.

[33] Chiu, "US beats China in soft power stakes"; Sheng Ding and Robert A. Saunders, "Talking Up China: An Analysis of China's Rising Cultural Power and Global Promotion of the Chinese Language," *East Asia* 23:2 (Summer 2006): 22; Gill and Huang, "Sources and Limits of Chinese 'Soft Power,'" *Survival* 48:2 (Summer 2006): 27; Joseph S. Nye, "Why China is Weak on Soft Power," *The New York Times*, January 17, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/18/opinion/why-china-is-weak-on-soft-power.html (accessed January 23, 2012).

[34] Elizabeth Redden, "Confucius Says: Debate over Chinese-funded institutes at American universities," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 4, 2012, http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/01/04/debate-over-chinese-funded-institutes-american-universities (accessed March 12, 2012): 3.

believed that China will eventually replace the United States as the leading superpower.[35]

Additionally, many analysts have noted the concurrent sharp decline in American soft power

with the rise of Chinese soft power in the early twenty-first century.[36] The Chinese government

having access to American academia through the Confucius Institutes has the potential to

exacerbate these already shifting power balances in hard and soft power; in other words, the

Chinese government would be able to wield American universities and colleges as tools against

the United States in their multifaceted international competition.

There is a fine line between public diplomacy (known facts) and propaganda (a mixture

of facts and untruths),[37] and the Chinese government unabashedly admits its desire to improve its

capabilities in both. The CPC's Central Propaganda Department has promised "to 'increase the

cultural soft power' of China through intensifying 'efforts to "export" cultural products and

services, and strengthen the international influence of Chinese culture.'"[38] The government has

also budgeted 45 billion yuan to improve its media capabilities by upgrading CCTV9, a Chinese

24-hour international television channel, to broadcast in English, Spanish, French, Russian, and

Arabic and opening new Xinhua bureaus worldwide.[39] The government's support of the

Confucius Institutes can be viewed suspiciously as an extension of these initiatives; Li

Changchun, a Politburo member and China's propaganda chief until November 2012, notably

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[35] Joanna Chiu, "China to replace America as the leading superpower, survey finds," *South China Morning Post*, July 19, 2013, http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1285264/china-will-replace-america-leading-superpower-global-attitudes-survey (accessed July 25, 2013).

[36] Bates Gill and Yanzhong Huang, 19; Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World*, 10.

[37] Falk Hartig, "Confusion about Confucius Institutes: Soft Power Push or Conspiracy?" 18th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Adelaide, 5-8 July 2010, Working Paper, http://asaa.asn.au/ASAA2010/reviewed_papers/Hartig-Falk.pdf (accessed September 5, 2013): 5.

[38] Bonnie S. Glaser and Melissa E. Murphy, "Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate," in *Chinese Soft Power and Its Implications for the United States: Competition and Cooperation in the Developing World: A Report of the CSIS Smart Power Initiative*, ed. Carola McGiffert (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009): 25.

[39] Glaser and Murphy 17.

referred to the Confucius Institutes as "a huge element of China's great plan of international propaganda."[40]

Academic Independence Debate

The other frequently raised concern with the Confucius Institutes is whether the presence of these Chinese government-funded organizations on American collegiate campuses would inhibit academic freedom. In principle, academics should not only have the freedom but be encouraged to conduct and share their research, regardless of how controversial the topic may be. This objectivity is ultimately what contributes to overall academia and human knowledge.

Accusations against the Chinese government for interfering with American academic freedom have even occurred at institutions that do not host Confucius Institutes.[41] For example, in the summer of 2013, New York University was placed under increased scrutiny when Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng accused the university of bowing to pressure from the Chinese government and forcing him out.[42] Chen, a prominent human rights activist and vocal opponent of China's one-child policy who garnered much attention in April 2012 when he escaped house arrest and sought refuge at the American embassy in Beijing, left China after received a visiting scholar fellowship at NYU in May 2012. Chen claimed that NYU prematurely terminated his fellowship due to pressure from Beijing.[43] Though he was offered another fellowship from the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton, NJ after leaving NYU, Chen's high profile case had already garnered a lot of media attention, prompting public statements against the Chinese government

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[40] Falk Hartig, "Cultural Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics: The case of Confucius Institutes in Australia," *Communication, Politics & Culture* 45 (2012): 261.

[41] D.D. Guttenplan, "Critics Worry About the Influence of Chinese Institutes on U.S. Campuses," *The New York Times*, March 4, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/us/critics-worry-about-influence-of-chinese-institutes-on-uscampuses.html?_r=2&sq=Confucius%20Institute&st=cse&scp=1&pagewanted=all (accessed March 20, 2012).

[42] "China activist Chen Guangcheng revives concern on US academic freedom," *South China Morning Post*, June 18, 2013, http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1263595/china-activist-chen-guangcheng-revives-concern-us-academic-freedom (accessed July 10, 2013).

[43] Peter Shadbolt, "Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng: NYU is forcing me out," *CNN*, June 17, 2013, http://edition.cnn.com/2013/06/17/us/chen-nyu/index.html (accessed July 10, 2013).

from high-ranking congressional members[44] and presidential candidates.[45] The case drew the

American public's attention to the potential for academic integrity being compromised by the

Chinese government and potentially influenced the reception of the Confucius Institutes.

Confucius Institutes are capable of both overtly and covertly stifling academic freedom.

One of the most outlandish of charges against the Confucius Institutes is that they act as fronts

that facilitate espionage by the Chinese government. Arthur Waldron, an international relations

professor at the University of Pennsylvania, warned:

> Once you have a Confucius Institute on campus, you have a second source of
> opinions and authority that is ultimately answerable to the Chinese Communist
> Party and which is not subject to scholarly review. [...] You can't blame the
> Chinese government for wanting to mold discussion. But Chinese embassies and
> consulates are in the business of observing Chinese students. Should we really be
> inviting them onto our campuses?[46]

David Matas, a prominent Canadian lawyer for B'nai Brith Canada, also received a fair amount

of publicity after delivering a speech at Cambridge University on China's human rights records

and abuses and warning that the Confucius Institutes could be used by the government to spy on

Chinese students studying abroad or other organizations that the government may find

subversive, such as the Falun Gong.[47] Some analysts also expressed concerns about espionage

when it was revealed that Zhang Baoyong, a board member of the Confucius Institute hosted by

the University of Texas at Dallas, also simultaneously served as executive vice president of

Huawei Technologies, a Chinese telecommunication company that some feel presents a danger

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[44] "China activist Chen Guangcheng revives concern on US academic freedom."

[45] Sarah Huisenga, "Romney blasts Obama administration's handling of Chinese dissident case," *CBS News*, May 3, 2012, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/romney-blasts-obama-administrations-handling-of-chinese-dissident-case/ (accessed November 30, 2013).

[46] Guttenplan.

[47] "Has BCIT sold out to Chinese propaganda?" *The Vancouver Sun*, April 2, 2008, http://www.canada.com/vancouversun/news/westcoastnews/story.html?id=179b4e77-f0cf-4608-a8b7-a9943116f489 (accessed November 29, 2013).

to U.S. cyber security.[48] However, concerns of spying have been largely dismissed by many academic administrators and observers.[49]

An oft-cited and more realistic concern is that *Hanban* would restrict research in topics that were deemed sensitive by the Chinese government at Confucius Institutes. As per the Constitution and By-Laws of the Confucius Institutes posted to *Hanban's* English website, the Confucius Institutes are prohibited from being involved or participating in "any activities that are not consistent with the mission of the Confucius Institutes."[50] Given that their mission includes "strengthening educational and cultural exchange and cooperation between China and other countries,"[51] that rule could be interpreted to mean that the Confucius Institutes are prohibited from sponsoring events that involve sensitive topics like China's human rights record, Taiwan or Tibet. Moreover, academics critical of the Chinese government or Chinese policies may not be welcome to share and discuss their research at a university that hosts a Confucius Institute.

There is the potential for censorship to happen more covertly as well. Many of the universities and colleges that agree to host Confucius Institutes do so because of the financial incentives; without *Hanban's* assistance, some of these institutions may not have had the funding or expertise needed to start up, expand or maintain their Chinese language and cultural programs. This leads to the risk of self-censorship among university administrators and academics, as they would not want to jeopardize their university's relationship with *Hanban* and any future assistance *Hanban* may provide. This self-censorship not only affects the universities at the

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[48] "Confronting Confucius," *Tribune-Review*, November 25, 2007, http://triblive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/opinion/columnists/datelinedc/s_539659.html#axzz2mc7sj0Vp (accessed November 30, 2013).
[49] "Widener, China joining to create cultural center," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 10, 2009, http://articles.philly.com/2009-09-10/news/25268924_1_chinese-government-cultural-center-beijing-university (accessed November 30, 2013).
[50] Hanban, "Constitution and By-Laws of the Confucius Institutes," *Confucius Institute*, http://english.hanban.org/node_7880.htm (accessed November 30, 2013).
[51] Ibid.

institutional level, but also may also have consequences for the careers of individual faculty

members:

> One junior faculty member at a U.S. campus with a Confucius Institute responded
> to a reporter's recent query with an e-mail explaining that to be identified as a
> critic could end his career: "I am an untenured professor in a department which
> receives a lot of money from a C.I., which is run by senior faculty that will vote
> on my tenure case." A colleague, who also did not want to be identified, said the
> pressure was subtle. "They aren't trying to stop debate," he said. "It's about the
> management of discussions, not the prevention of them."[52]

This risk of self-censorship has also influenced whether or not American educational

institutions decide to host Confucius Institutes. Reportedly, faculty members at the University of

Pennsylvania prevented the establishment of a Confucius Institute on their campus due to the risk

of self-censorship.[53] Additionally, 174 University of Chicago faculty members signed a letter

objecting to the establishment of a Confucius Institute on their campus:

> The letter described the institute as "an academically and politically ambiguous
> initiative sponsored by the government of the People's Republic of China," and
> asserted that, "Proceeding without due care to ensure the institute's academic
> integrity, [the administration] has risked having the university's reputation
> legitimate the spread of such Confucius Institutes in this country and beyond."[54]

Similar to those concerned over the increase in Chinese soft power, critics focused on

academic integrity also raise concerns about the Confucius Institutes and propaganda. Jocelyn

Chey, a former Australian diplomat and scholar with the University of Sydney, conceded that the

Confucius Institutes provided opportunities for universities to improve language and cultural

programs.[55] However, she warned of the Confucius Institutes expansion into academic research

beyond linguistics:

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[52] Guttenplan.
[53] Guttenplan.
[54] Redden 2.
[55] Tom Hyland, "Confucius say... universities at risk in link-up with Chinese Government," *The Age*, November 18, 2007, http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/11/17/1194767024579.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1 (accessed November 28, 2013).

"Universities must preserve academic objectivity. [...] If the [Confucius Institute] engages in university teaching or research, academic colleagues should beware of potential bias. The institutes' close links with the Chinese government and party, at best, could result in the dumbing down of research and, at worst, produce propaganda."[56]

Content Analysis

To study how the Confucius Institutes have been framed and presented to the American public, articles and transcripts of mass media broadcasts involving the Confucius Institutes have been pulled from academic journals, media websites and university websites. The types of sources were targeted because they are the most likely mediums through which the average American would have been exposed to the Confucius Institutes. Though it was not possible to obtain a written, digital copy of every single piece published or broadcast on the Confucius Institutes, the goal was to obtain a sizable sampling from each type of source in order to assess how the Confucius Institutes have been framed on average.

The phrase "Confucius Institute" was used to find relevant broadcast transcripts and printed articles for each type of source. The search for broadcast transcripts was limited to the websites of major news outlets based in the United States like NPR, PBS, ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, CNN and Fox News in order pull data from the mass media sources that were most readily available to the average American person. The search for newspaper and magazine articles was conducted through NexisLexis Academic and limited to U.S.-based newspapers. Finally, the websites of American universities and colleges that hosted Confucius Institutes were also searched for published articles on the Confucius Institutes. Unlike the mass media sources, academic journal articles were limited by topic rather than publication locations; otherwise, the sample size would have been far too small. However, for academic articles, only articles

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[56] Jocelyn Chey, "The Gentle Dragon: China's 'charm offensive,' through Confucius Institutes, wins allies around the globe," *YaleGlobal Online*, November 29, 2007, http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/gentle-dragon (accessed September 28, 2013).

mentioning Confucius Institutes hosted within the United States or discussing the organization as a whole were included in this analysis; in other words, articles that only focused on case studies such as specific Confucius Institutes in Europe, Australia or Africa were excluded. All together, 338 articles were pulled from the websites of 7 broadcast media outlets, 31 newspapers and periodicals, 3 think tanks, 13 academic journals and 2 colleges and 54 universities.

Next, various keywords or phrases that appeared in multiple sources were identified and sorted into various categories. One set of categories involved whether the words were positive or negative towards the Confucius Institutes. Words were classified as positive if they were frequently used to describe the beneficial functions of Confucius Institutes. Words were classified as negative if they were frequently used to signify the political or organizational threats Confucius Institutes may pose.

Another set of categories involved whether the words would likely be used to describe various topics; they would be classified as "political" if they tended to be used when discussing soft power or the rise of China or "academic" if they were used to discuss academic integrity at the universities or colleges that hosted Confucius Institutes. Then, the entire list of words was counted in the full text of the articles and transcripts that were gathered to determine the frequency in which the keywords appeared in the text. The chart in Figure 1 below shows how the keywords were assigned by categories and the frequency in which they appeared in the pool of articles.

Figure 4.1. Categorization of Keywords

Word Categories	Words	Count
Positive	culture/cultural	2123
	Language	1785
	teach/teaching	1162
	Education	712
	Promote	236
	Bridge	78
	Outreach	47
Sum of Positive		**6143**
Negative	Propaganda	132
	Threat	129
	Funding	62
	Nationalism	54
	charm offensive	43
	Legitimacy	33
	Criticism	27
	controversy/controversial	30
	censor/censorship/self-censorship	24
	spying	1
Sum of Negative		**535**
Political	soft power	896
	political	532
	diplomacy	312
	rise	293
	propaganda	132
	threat	129
	competition	100
	China's Rise/rise of China	47
	charm offensive	43
	legitimacy	33
	patriotic	6
	spying	1
Sum of Political		**2524**
Academic Integrity	propaganda	132
	freedom	59
	censor/censorship/self-censorship	24
	integrity	14
Sum of Academic Integrity		**229**

As the above chart displays, "language," "culture" and "cultural" were the positive words
most prominently used while "propaganda" and "threat" were the most-used negative words.
"Soft power" was overwhelmingly mentioned under the political category, while "propaganda"

was most-used in the academic category. It should be noted that there was intentional overlap with the keyword "propaganda," which appears in the "Negative," "Political" and "Academic Integrity" categories. The keyword could not selectively be assigned to either the "Political" or "Academic Integrity" category as it was used to discuss both concerns with increasing Chinese soft power and academic interference; however, its appearance in articles and transcripts signified that at least one of those aforementioned topics was discussed, meaning that the more negative or threatening aspects of the Confucius Institutes were being discussed.

Each article used for this analysis was also coded by type of source (i.e. whether it was an academic journal article, an article for a newspaper or magazine, a television or radio transcript, a university press release, etc.). When analyzed by source type (as seen in Figure 2 below), positive language was unsurprisingly overwhelmingly used for university newspaper articles and press releases.

Figure 4.2. Word Categories by Source Type

Words Counted (Classified by Source Type)	Positive	Negative	Political	Academic Integrity
Academic	2158	279	1599	100
Internet Article	243	47	121	35
Newspaper/Magazine	628	70	152	28
Radio Transcript	98	10	66	5
Think Tank	201	83	403	41
TV Transcript	58	13	43	12
University	2757	33	140	8
Grand Total	**6143**	**535**	**2524**	**229**

This data also suggest that the framing of the Confucius Institutes was fairly balanced in academic journals and television and radio broadcasts, as these sources used words that stressed the language and cultural aspects of the Confucius Institutes while also addressing political issues such soft power. However, it is notable that the articles found in academic journals had the highest frequency of vocabulary suggesting concerns of preserving academic integrity among

all the source types. Finally, think tank publications were the only category of source type where vocabulary suggesting political concerns was used more than the generally positive category of words that stress language and culture; in fact, they doubled the positive category.

Each article was also coded by author type (e.g. was the author a journalist, a professor, a policy analyst, a university representative or student writer, etc.). Analysis by the type of author (Figure 4.3) yielded similar results to source types.

Figure 4.3. Word Categories by Author Type

Words Counted (Classified by Author Type)	Positive	Negative	Political	Academic Integrity
Academic	2224	255	1552	107
Journalist	924	123	276	70
Policy	238	124	556	44
University	2757	33	140	8
Grand Total	6143	535	2524	229

Academics were the author type most concerned with academic integrity, policy analysts were most concerned with political issues, and university officials or student writers primarily used positive vocabulary in their coverage of the Confucius Institutes. Also notable in this analysis is that the Confucius Institutes were generally framed positively by journalists, though many also used words suggesting that political issues were raised in their coverage of the Confucius Institutes.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the think tank articles that were overtly expressed wariness over the presence of Confucius Institutes on American university campuses featured vocabulary that suggested that the author's concerns were primarily political. Between two of the articles,[57] the word "propaganda" is used 31 times and the phrase "soft power" is used 37

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[57] John Dotson, "The Confucian Revival in the Propaganda Narratives of the Chinese Government," U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission Staff Research Report, July 20, 2011, http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Confucian_Revival_Paper.pdf (accessed July 15, 2013); Joshua

times. A potential reason for this result is that think tanks have organizational interests; for example, a security studies think tank may have additional incentives to push their research towards identifying and analyzing perceived political and military threats and issuing more hawkish policy prescriptions.

4.3   Summary

The results of the content analysis of media coverage and academic articles on the Confucius Institutes emphasize two things. First, in the various types of coverage thus far, the Confucius Institutes have been framed neutrally, if not positively. Thus far, the overwhelmingly high use of words like "language," "culture," and "teach" indicate that the institutes have been framed to emphasize that they are cultural outreach programs rather than menacing organizations. Second, even when concerns are raised about the Confucius Institutes, the issue at hand tends to be related to soft power competition rather than concerns over preserving academic integrity.

However, drawing conclusions on how coverage of the Confucius Institutes affects the formulation of American foreign policy from this analysis can be difficult due to a theoretical loop with causality because it cannot be definitively determined whether mass media drives public opinion or public opinion drives mass media. There are also many other factors that drive public opinion and American foreign policy that have little to do with the Confucius Institutes or even Chinese foreign policy. For example, long military engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early twenty-first century and a prolonged economic recession have led to the American public being largely weary of American engagement in international affairs, military or

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Kurlantzick, *China's Charm: Implications of Chinese Soft Power* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Policy Brief No. 47, 2006), http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/PB_47_FINAL.pdf (accessed February 12, 2011).

otherwise.[58] Attitudes held by the American public on foreign policy in general resembles

Wippkopf's "isolationists" or Mead's "Jeffersonians" more now than they had in 2004 when the

Confucius Institutes were first established. This, rather than increased Chinese aggression in

Asian territorial disputes, may be the primary reason that the so-called "pivot" to Asia became an

attractive policy option to the Obama administration in 2010.

The efficacy of soft power as a foreign policy tool remains under debate. However, if

Chinese leadership decides that soft power will continue to be an element of Chinese foreign

policy, then policy prescriptions can still be made. The Confucius Institutes will be an integral

part of China's strategy to improve American public opinion on China, which may ultimately

shape American foreign policy towards China. The American public apparently still has deep

ambiguity over whether or not China presents an economic or military threat to the United States,

as evidenced by a recent Gallup poll on China's relationship with the United States.[59] If the

American public is still "on the fence" with its overall perception of China, then positively

framing the Confucius Institutes in media coverage will, at least, not hurt Chinese foreign policy

objectives. If met with less local resistance, the Confucius Institutes will be able to promote

Chinese language and culture more effectively, making China less threatening as a whole to the

American public .

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[58] PollingReport.com, "Foreign Affairs/Defense," *PollingReport.com*,
http://www.pollingreport.com/defense.htm#Affairs (accessed December 01, 2013).
[59] PollingReport.com, "China," *PollingReport.com*, http://www.pollingreport.com/china.htm (accessed December 01,
2013).

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The Confucius Institutes are Chinese government-backed nonprofit organizations that promote Chinese language and culture. The Confucius Institutes that are housed on collegiate campuses are designed to complement Chinese language and cultural studies at those colleges and universities by providing teachers, curriculums, textbooks and other educational resources and materials. The CCP established these institutes in 2004 and recruited the revered Chinese figure, Confucius, to serve as the organization's namesake. Confucius was specifically chosen to represent the organization to stress the organization's focus on education and culture.

However, the establishment of Confucius Institutes has been a source of controversy, especially in the United States. The controversy stems from the institutes' close ties with and the financial, administrative, and political support they receive from the Chinese government. Critics have had two primary concerns. The first is that the Confucius Institutes would provide the Chinese government access to increase Chinese soft power by issuing propaganda. The second concern is that the presence of Confucius Institutes on American collegiate campuses would interfere with American academia by issuing propaganda or either overtly or covertly preventing research in topics that are sensitive to the Chinese government.

This thesis extensively reviewed various theories on international relations and nationalism to show how studies on China's rise have been theoretically framed. International relations liberals have pointed to how China has responsibly participated in the international system; China will not attempt to change the current international system that has benefitted them so well in the latter 20th century. Constructivists would make similar arguments about

Chinese participation in the international system and how it has changed their identities and socialized them.

However, international relations realists tend to argue that tension will inevitably rise between China and the United States due to the changing structure of international power.[1] Even analysts who believe that China remains relatively weaker than the United States caution that miscalculations in relations between the two countries have the potential to escalate into crises.[2] Assertive Chinese nationalism is also a source of concern among realist observers, as "few aspects of a powerful China trouble Western leaders more than the emergence of an assertive nationalism under an authoritarian regime.[3] Realist analysts, who would be largely concerned with the threat that a rising China presents, would also apply their competitive, zero-sum world view to Chinese soft power as well: "[any] gain in Chinese soft power is interpreted as a loss of Western/US soft power."[4]

Others argue that this view is both unnecessary and problematic. Gries has stated that despite differing material interests between China and the United States, "[neither] the structure of the world system nor the cultural differences between China and America make conflict between China and the United States inevitable."[5] Suzuki has argued that "fears of challenges to Western/US primacy [have resulted] in myopia and fantasy within analyses of Chinese soft power."[6] As a result, these analysts have lumped together all of China's political leadership into

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[1] Aaron L. Friedberg, "Hegemony with Chinese Characteristics," *The National Interest*, June 21, 2011, http://nationalinterest.org/article/hegemony-chinese-characteristics-5439 (accessed December 14, 2011).
[2] Avery Goldstein, "China's Clear and Present Danger," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2013, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139651/avery-goldstein/chinas-real-and-present-danger?cid=rss-asia-chinas_real_and_present_danger-000000 (accessed August 23, 2013).
[3] Zhao, Suisheng. "The Olympics and Chinese Nationalism." *China Security* 4:3 (Summer 2008): 49.
[4] Shogo Suzuki, "Chinese Soft Power, Insecurity Studies, Myopia and Fantasy," *Third World Quarterly* 30:4 (2009): 781
[5] Peter Hays Gries, "Chinese Nationalism and U.S.-China Relations in the Twenty-First Century," in *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004): 140.
[6] Suzuki, 780.

a monolithic, revisionist entity[7] and "[glossed] over any diverse views on Chinese soft power which exist within the PRC in order to prove the existence of a 'China threat.'"[8] Instead, Suzuki makes a liberal argument, stating that China's search for soft power may be driven by its desire to counter negative Western opinion – to promote the "image of a 'responsible power' which upholds the international normative status quo."[9]

This thesis also reviewed theories on the relationship between media coverage, public opinion, and foreign policymaking. As the United States is a democracy, elected officials need to maintain a level of responsiveness to public opinion. The evolution of mass media has affected the methods and frequency in which information is presented to and processed by the American public. Therefore, understanding how the Confucius Institutes are being framed would be important to multiple affected groups: those involved with the establishment or administration of Confucius Institutes, academics and students at collegiate campuses that host the Confucius Institutes, and both Chinese and American policymakers.

Content analysis of coverage on the Confucius Institutes revealed that they have been framed neutrally, if not positively. "Positive" words like "language" and "culture" were used far more frequently than "negative" words like "propaganda" or "threat." It also revealed that political issues involving Chinese soft power were discussed far more frequently in coverage on the Confucius Institutes than concerns about preserving academic integrity at the campuses that host the Confucius Institutes.

The objective of this thesis was to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the Confucius Institutes were established and designed to function and to illustrate how the debates in the United States concerning the Confucius Institutes are driven more by the politics of

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[7] Suzuki, 786.
[8] Suzuki, 787.
[9] Suzuki, 785.

increasing competition between China and the United States rather than concerns about

preserving academic integrity. The review of the literature on China's rise and the theories that

frame it illustrated how analysts are focused on China's rising power and international status

relative to the United States and how many of these analysts view the rise of China as antithetical

to American interests. Soft power has become an especially salient topic among many Chinese

and Western analysts and policymakers concerned with increased competition between the

United States and China. The Confucius Institutes, despite their focus on less overtly political

issues such as language and cultural education, have gotten pulled into the larger debate over

Chinese and American competition in both hard and soft power. The content analysis of

coverage on the Confucius Institutes provides the most compelling evidence of this, proving that

issues of soft power are discussed significantly more frequently by critics than academic

integrity. Though the Confucius Institutes are undoubtedly soft power initiatives directed by the

Chinese government, their primary activities are educational rather than political. Being so

frequently associated with a topic that signals a threat to American interests not only negatively

affects Chinese foreign affairs and grand strategy, but also the academic institutions that rely on

the Confucius Institutes for language program funding.

One flaw with this study is how the articles and transcripts were aggregated for the

database. Most of the academic articles involving the Confucius Institutes that were published in

major journals were included in the database for analysis. However, though the other articles

included in the database represent a sizable sample of what was broadcast over radio and

television or published in American newspapers and university websites, by no means were all of

the available sources included. Furthermore, only the websites of universities that host

Confucius Institutes were searched for related articles. Future studies regarding the Confucius

Institutes in the United States would likely benefit from widening the search and updating the database, especially if articles regarding Confucius Institutes were written at colleges or universities that rejected establishing them.

Future studies could also gain valuable insight on how the Confucius Institutes actually function by conducting interviews with the administrators and faculty employed on American campuses that host Confucius Institutes. Unfortunately, available time and the intended scope of this project made conducting interviews a practical impossibility, as it would have required the involvement of the institutional review boards of multiple universities in order to comply with federal human research guidelines.

Finally, as China rises in power and international status, polls regarding American attitudes towards China are likely to be conducted more frequently. As more poll data becomes available, a study cross-referencing the evolution of American public opinion on China with a comprehensive content analysis of media regarding China and the Confucius Institutes over the same time period, may yield better analysis of the relationship between media framing, public opinion and policymaking.

Despite this study's limitations, recommendations or policy prescriptions can be made to involved parties based on the results of this study's content analysis. First, American policymakers should focus less on the Confucius Institutes as a source of a soft power controversy between the United States and China. There is no substantial evidence to support claims that the Chinese government is using the Confucius Institutes to spread falsehoods; the focus of most of the established institutes thus far has been on promoting Chinese language and culture. While some analysts may find Chinese initiatives to increase soft power and influence disconcerting for American interests, it would be a mistake to form policies that would try to

suppress these initiatives. The proliferation of Confucius Institutes can be viewed positively as it represents increased Chinese engagement in the international community. Moreover, soft power is driven by more than just the attractiveness of language and culture. Chinese soft power, though steadily increasing, is not yet in a position to overtake American soft power, even as American soft power has diminished in the early twenty-first century.

Though the increase in Chinese soft power and competition between China and the United States should not be an area of concern for American academics and collegiate administrators per say, academics and administrators should remain vigilant over preserving academic integrity at their institutions. Overt attempts to stifle controversial topics have been successfully averted by American universities in the past; officials at Stanford University infamously rebuffed Hanban's suggestion to refrain from discussing Tibet.[10] Covert suppression of controversial topics, namely through self-censorship, remains the more likely threat to academic integrity. However, this is not a unique situation presented by the establishment of Confucius Institutes. Academics must be self-reflective and have the ability to identify the ideologies and biases they apply in their research and observations. The establishment of Confucius Institutes on academic campuses and its potential to influence American academia is just one more layer that academics need to be aware of when conducting and sharing research.

To ensure the long-term success of the Confucius Institutes, Hanban should take steps to make them seem less threatening to international, and particularly American, observers. Increasing organizational transparency in terms of funding and curriculums should be a priority for Confucius Institutes and the collegiate organizations that host them. Though some American analysts may always view soft power in zero-sum terms between China and the United States,

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[10] D.D. Guttenplan, "Critics Worry about the Influence of Chinese Institutes on U.S. Campuses," *The New York Times*, March 4, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/05/us/critics-worry-about-influence-of-chinese-institutes-on-uscampuses.html?_r=2&sq=Confucius%20Institute&st=cse&scp=1&pagewanted=all (accessed March 20, 2012).

these analysts will have fewer sources for skepticism if they are able to trace exactly how the program's money is being spent and the program materials prove not to be propagandistic. The recent establishment of the Confucius Institute U.S. Center in Washington D.C.[11] presents an opportunity to increase organizational transparency: if Hanban empowers the new regional center to make decisions regarding finances and curriculum content for Confucius Institutes housed in American collegiate campuses, then analysts and policymakers may be less inclined to view the Confucius Institutes as a Beijing-driven propaganda mouthpiece. Confucius Institutes should also work to host more cultural events that are open to the general public, which will increase transparency and engagement with the local communities in which the institutes operate.

Finally, Chinese policymakers should remember to be patient. The Chinese government is spending a lot of financial and political resources on the worldwide establishment of Confucius Institutes and other soft power initiatives; however, soft power is not a foreign policy tool that yields immediate, observable results. If nothing else, the successful proliferation of Confucius Institutes that focus on promoting language and culture and continued cultural engagement between China and the United States provide opportunities to dispel what Suzuki refers to as myopia held by foreign policy analysts.[12]

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[11] "China inaugurates Confucius Institute U.S. Center in Washington," *Xinhua*, November 21, 2013, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-11/21/c_132906369.htm (accessed December 7, 2013).
[12] Suzuki.

Appendix: Content Analysis Tables

Figure 4.1. Categorization of Keywords

Word Categories	Words	Count
Positive	culture/cultural	2123
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	patriotic	6
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Sum of Political		**2524**
Academic Integrity	propaganda	132
	freedom	59
	censor/censorship/self-censorship	24
	integrity	14
Sum of Academic Integrity		**229**

Figure 4.2. Word Categories by Source Type

Words Counted (Classified by Source Type)	Positive	Negative	Political	Academic Integrity
Academic	2158	279	1599	100
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Figure 4.3. Word Categories by Author Type

Words Counted (Classified by Author Type)	Positive	Negative	Political	Academic Integrity
Academic	2224	255	1552	107
Journalist	924	123	276	70
Policy	238	124	556	44
University	2757	33	140	8
Grand Total	**6143**	**535**	**2524**	**229**

Figure 4.4. College/University Websites Searched

College/University Name	Type
Arizona State University	University
Bryant University	University
Cleveland State University	University
George Mason University News	University
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis	University
Kansas State University	University
Miami Dade College	College
Miami University	University
Michigan State University	University
Middle Tennessee State University	University
New Mexico State University	University
North Carolina State University	University
Pace University	University
Penn State University	University
Perdue University	University
Pfeiffer University	University
Portland State University	University
Presbyterian College	College
Rutgers University	University
San Diego State University	University
State University of New York at Binghamton University	University
State University of New York at Buffalo	University
State University of New York at Stony Brook	University
Texas A&M	University
Troy University	University
University of Akron	University
University of Alaska Anchorage	University
University of Arizona	University
University of California at Los Angeles	University
University of Central Arkansas	University
University of Chicago	University
University of Hawaii at Manoa	University
University of Iowa	University
University of Kentucky	University
University of Maryland	University
University of Massachusetts	University
University of Memphis	University
University of Michigan	University
University of Minnesota	University
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	University

University of New Hampshire	University
University of Oklahoma	University
University of Oregon	University
University of Pittsburgh	University
University of Rhode Island	University
University of South Carolina	University
University of South Florida	University
University of Texas at Dallas	University
University of Texas at San Antonio	University
University of Utah	University
University of Wisconsin-Platteville	University
Valparaiso University	University
Wayne State University	University
Webster University	University
West Kentucky University	University
Western Michigan University	University
Total Colleges	**2**
Total Universities	**54**

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    Katzenstein, 317-356.

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