American Studies in China:
A Case Study of the Center for American Studies, Fudan University

Sun Zhe
Professor and Deputy Director
Center for American Studies, Fudan University

Introduction

American Studies in China, to a large extent, reflects Chinese people’s views on the United States in a changing environment. This article attempts to summarize the development of American Studies in China since 1979, and, in the meantime, to introduce the evolution of the Chinese people’s views on the United States. The author uses a case study of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University (hereinafter the CAS), to illustrate the achievements, puzzles and challenges for American Studies as a discipline in China.

The reason to choose Fudan as the specific case lies in the fact that the CAS established in 1985 is the first institute for American studies in mainland universities. In December 2000, the CAS was designated by the Chinese Ministry of Education as one of the key research institutes of the Humanities and Social Sciences in China. In 2005, the CAS became the “State Innovative Institute for American Studies”. Over the past years, the CAS has developed in conducting its research work, promoting academic exchanges, building up its teams and providing policy consultations to various government agencies. For instance, at present its research work is highly recognized in the following fields: regional security and arms control, the American Congress, the Sino-American relations, American religions, and the IRT (international relations theory). Although there are much opportunities for the CAS to further consolidate its position in the future, it also has to face up to new academic challenges as well as problems commonly found in other research institutions. By studying this case, we can have a better understanding on the real status quo of American Studies discipline in Chinese academia, and foresee the potential development of the field in China.

1. “Academic Environment” of American Studies in China

1.1 Inception and development of American Studies in China

In China, American Studies is defined as “a discipline with the United States as its study subject. It includes all subjects related to the politics, economy, society, culture, ideology, philosophy, history, geography, religion, military, diplomacy, as well as any other subjects relevant to the United States.”¹ In essence, the American Studies in China is the research on another national polity. This decides the different nature and focuses between American Studies

¹ Yan Weiming, ed., Comparative American Studies, Xi’an Jiaotong University Press, 1999, p. 3.
in China and that in the US. In the U.S., American Studies is a discipline studying the country itself; while in Mainland China, American Studies is in most cases “extroversive”, for it studies an external object which is still strange yet important for Chinese people. This is the very reason why American Studies in Mainland China focuses more on politics and Sino-American relations, rather than on culture, which is a major theme in the studies in US. Historic and cultural studies, undoubtedly, account for a considerable proportion in the American studies in China. However, most of these researches involve, either directly or potentially, some political implications. “Most researchers, with a close eye on the reality, hope to make their researches contributive to China’s social and economic development, policy making and even diplomacy. 2 ”

As a sub-discipline of international studies, American Studies in China emerged in the 1980s, followed by an arduous time of “growing from nothing”. In general, the short history of the discipline from 1979 to 2005 can be further divided into four major stages:

First, from 1979 to 1989, American Studies gained a rapid and stable development, mainly focusing on introducing the U.S. to Chinese audiences.

From the founding of the PRC in 1949 to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1979, the three decades is almost a blank for American Studies in China. During that period, most Chinese people regarded the US as an enemy, called it as “American devil” or “paper tiger”. The year of 1979 marked a new page of Sino-American relations. In 1979 alone, 163 papers about the U.S. were published. Chinese people began to look at the US as a modern country or “beautiful America”.

Second, from 1989 to 1996, the Sino-American relations underwent a series of crises. American Studies, however, still achieved rapid advancement with more focus on analyses. In this period, the Chiense view on the US began to turn negative.

After 1989, the Sino-US relations experienced dramatic deterioration, marked by the the immediate US sanction on China, the following debate on annual MFN and human rights issues, and Li Denhui’s visit in 1995, etc. All these events and crises had frozen the bilateral relations to an ice point since 1979.

Such circumstances did not stop the American Studies in China grow; instead, Chinese scholars realized the importance of the US and that sense of urgency had actually promoted the booming of the research. Academic papers and books published in this period surged in terms of quantity. Most Chinese scholars showed a grave concern and even anxiety. View on the U.S. among Chinese people turned out to be more negative in this period.

Third, from 1996 to 2000, bilateral relations between China and the U.S. experienced ups and downs, yet the American Studies in China continued to make progress. Scholars focused

---

their attention on the intertwined relationship between the domestic politics foreign policy in the
U.S.. Research in this period played an important role in shaping the Chinese people’s views on
the U.S.

This period witnessed the 1995-96 Taiwan Straight Crisis and the 1999 bombing of the
Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia, as well as two waves of “China Threat” arguments in the U.S.
Such an unstable Sino-American relation, however, enhanced China’s American studies to a new
level. Books about the U.S. totaled 65 from 1989 to 1996 and the annual number averaged at 13,
almost two folds of the figure in 1989-1996. Take 1998 as example. Among the 495 papers about
American politics published in 1998, 334 focused on US foreign policy, including 175, more
than half of 334, on the Sino-U.S. relations. The volatile nature of the bilateral relationship had
exerted a very negative impact on Chinese people’s views on the US. The famous book “China
Can Say NO” was a case in point.3

Fourth, in aftermath of the “9.11” in 2001, the hitherto turbulent Sino-US relations came to
a strategic turning point toward stable development and restructuring. American Studies in China
began to deepen, as researchers began to visualize and create a comprehensive and profound
research map of American domestic politics.

In terms of quantity, the number of books published in this period had not rise remarkably.
However, the quality and change in content indicated the sound development of the American
Studies in China. As research deepens, Chinese people’s view on the US is turning towards more
rational, more objective and more comprehensive. In general, today Chinese people show an
antipathy to the US “hegemony”, in particular, in its foreign policy. On the other hand, some
significant positive changes occur in Chinese people’s understanding on the American domestic
policy, political system, social pattern, as well as values imbedded in them.

In sum, the development of China American Studies is closely intertwined with the
evolution of Sino-US relations and the Chinese people's changing view of the US.

1.2 Institutions and participants of American Studies in China

In 1981 the American Studies Institute of the CASS (the Chinese Academy of Social
Sciences) was established, and in 1987 it began to issue its academic journal--- American
Studies. A year later, this institute set up the Chinese Association of the American Studies. In
Shanghai, the Center for American Studies at Fudan University was founded in 1985, though it
had actually worked in late 1980s as an institute in charge of affairs with American visitors.
Nevertheless, the establishment of these two institutes marked a symbol of formations in China’s
own American studies. In the following years, more and more American studies institutions

孙哲等著：《美国国会与中美关系：案例与分析》，时事出版社，2004年，第253-254页。
emerged with the number of researchers and research subjects growing and diversifying quickly.

First, in terms of institutions, the American Studies in China has gained a spectacular development since 1979, and lots of platforms were set up. Take university as an example. Besides such famous universities as Beijing University, Fudan University and Renmin University, many other universities or colleges have also set up their own American Studies centers, departments, or offices. Please refer to Table 1 for the details.

Table 1 Universities and Colleges with Center for American Studies (CAS)\(^4\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institute Name</th>
<th>State Innovative Institute</th>
<th>Set by Ministry of Education</th>
<th>Member of Chinese Association of the American Studies</th>
<th>University-Level</th>
<th>Department-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Fudan Univ.</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Beijing Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Beijing International Studies Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Beijing Foreign Studies Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Northeastern Normal Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Jiujiang College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Xi’an International Studies Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, Renmin Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS, PLA Foreign Language Univ.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Chinese and American Studies, John</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) Source: information collected through websites by the author.
### Table: Chinese Institutions for American Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Hopkins Univ-Nanjing Univ</th>
<th>Center for American History and Culture Studies, Nankai Univ.</th>
<th>CAS, Jinan Univ.</th>
<th>Center for American Political Science and Law Studies, Univ. of Political Science and Law</th>
<th>Center for American Law and Political Science, Southwest Univ. of Political Science and Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
<td><img src="%E2%88%9A" alt="Checkmark" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is also worth noting that there are other institutions belonging to the military system and other state agencies such as Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and the Xinhua News Agency.

Second, since the 1980s, research participants in the American Studies in China have diversified and increased quickly. Participants are expanding from mere scholars to a broad range including scholars, graduate and PhD students, Chinese students in the US and other professionals. Introducing and studying the US is no longer limited to academia; instead, people used to visit the U.S. such as public servants, journalists and the like also do research on the U.S.

### 2. A Case Study: Academic Activities by the CAS at Fudan

#### 2.1 About the CAS, Fudan

The CAS, Fudan is a special case need to be examined in China’s American Studies. In 1960s, Fudan University became a national key university focusing on studying western countries. As of 1990s, American Studies has obtained constant development in Fudan, based on the strength of the university’s IR studies.

The CAS at Fudan, established in 1985, is one of the major research institutions for American studies in China. Prof. Xie Xide, the late President of Fudan University and founding director of the CAS, made critical contributions to the establishment and development of the Center. The CAS has been greatly facilitated by support from the American Schools and
Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program under the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). A grant of US$ 8 billion has been devoted to the infrastructure of the CAS since 1990s. The Ministry of Education and Fudan University have also provided great financial support to the CAS. After 21 years of development, the CAS now has an independent building about 8,000 square meters, with well-functioned library and database. The CAS has provided pleasant facilities for both in-house and visiting researchers.

The CAS at Fudan follows a guideline of combining teaching and research, academic exchange and participation in policy-making activities. It has gained reputation in the following fields: regional security and arms control, the American Congress, the Sino-American relations, American religion, and IRT (international relations theory). Two key research programs, US Congress and Arms Control, have produced a series of academic results: the Congressional studies program has held dialogues with eight delegations from the Congress, and the Arms Control program has played an active role in China’s arms control negotiations.

In the future, the CAS targets at further contributing to the development of China’s American Studies by cross-discipline, cross-institution, and cross-border academic exchange and cooperation. The aim is to develop the CAS into a first-class think tank which would combine different tasks in research, teaching, academic exchange, information and data, and consultation service.

2.2 Personnel in the CAS

At present, there are 18 full-time personnel in the CAS, including 8 professors, 5 associate professors, 3 assistant professors, and 3 stuff members. In addition, there are 5 part-time research fellows, 12 academic advisors and 7 members of the academic committee. Please refer to Table 2, Professors in the CAS, Fudan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Research Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shen Dingli</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>China-U.S. Relations; Nuclear Arms Control and Nonproliferation; Regional Security; Export Control; China’s Foreign and Defense Policy; Nuclear Weapons Policy of China and the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ni Shixiong</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>Sino-U.S. Relations and the Taiwan Issue; U.S. Foreign Policy; Western International Relations Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Title, Degree</td>
<td>Research Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu Xinbo</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>China's Foreign and Security policy; Sino-US Relations; Asia Pacific Politics and Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Zhe</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>US Congress; Comparative Politics; US-China Relations and the Taiwan Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xu Yihua</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>History of Protestant Theological Education in China; Religions in the US; Religion and International Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhu Mingquan</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Professor, Ph. D. Adviser</td>
<td>International Security; US Security Policy; Arms Control and Nonproliferation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan Rui</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Sino-US Relations, Sino-US Economic and Trade Relations; American Foreign Policy in Post Cold War Period; Decision-making Process of US Foreign Policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 15 full-time researchers in the CAS all have experience in studying in the U.S. for at least a year. Besides the full-time, the CAS Academic Committee and its academic advisors are composed by famous scholars and practitioners in the field. For example, members include Mr. Wang Daohan, late Mayor of Shanghai, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Vice Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, Professor Wang Jisi, Yuanming, Harry Harding, Ezra Vogal, and Nelson Jiang.

2.3 Academic activities of the CAS

Like other research institutions in mainland universities, academic activities of the CAS focus on the following four themes.

First, research and teaching are the most important work for the CAS.

From 2001 to 2004, the CAS has carried out 28 state/provincial/ministry-level research projects, publishing over 30 books, 57 academic papers on authority or core journal (including 32 on CSSCI journals and 25 in English) and hundreds of newspaper articles. In addition, the CAS has submitted 12 internal reports to Beijing or relevant departments in Shanghai.

---

5 For details of publications of the CAS, please refer to the website [http://www.cas.fudan.edu.cn/production.en.php](http://www.cas.fudan.edu.cn/production.en.php).
As for teaching, courses on the US offered by the CAS at Fudan cover wider topics as compared with that of Beijing University and Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS). Table 3 shows the difference in courses among the three leading institutions for American Studies in China.

Table 3  Comparison of Courses offered at Fudan, Beijing Univ, and CASS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Course</th>
<th>CAS, Fudan Univ.</th>
<th>CAS, Beijing Univ.</th>
<th>Institute of American Studies, CASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studies of Sino-U.S. relations</td>
<td>Studies of Sino-U.S. relations</td>
<td>American Issues Studies</td>
<td>American Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Economic History, American Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American foreign policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Arms Control and Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern American history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>History of Sino-US Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies of American Religion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies on Sino-U.S. relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses for Undergraduates</td>
<td>American defense policy</td>
<td>American Society and Culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Government and Diplomacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second type of academic activities by the CAS of Fudan is policy consultation and participation in special-designated national research programs.

The CAS has undertaken a number of national or municipal research programs. Some of these programs are shown in Table 4.

Table 4  Major Research Programs of the CAS in 2000—2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Outlay (10 thousand Yuan)</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Congress and American Diplomacy</td>
<td>National Social Science Fund</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2002—2004</td>
<td>Sun Zhe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Congress and Cross-Straight Relations</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2002—2005</td>
<td>Sun Zhe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Congress: Institutional Transformation and Cultural Tradition</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2003—2006</td>
<td>Sun Zhe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Security and Arms Control</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2001—2004</td>
<td>Shen Dingli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and American Society</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2003—2006</td>
<td>Xu Yihua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison Studies of Chinese and Shanghai Social</td>
<td>Shanghai Social</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2002—2004</td>
<td>Ni Shixiong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These programs, directed by experienced experts in the specific fields, have produced remarkable research results. For instance, the project of American Congress and Sino-US relations, jointly directed by Professor Ni Shixiong and Sun Zhe has published 14 books and provided important consultation services to Chinese authorities.

In general, by participating these official programs and other events, many members at the CAS have played the role of policy advisers. About 50 departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, receive regular internal reports from the CAS.

Third, members of the CAS have also served as messengers or second trackers in diplomatic negotiations in Sino-U.S. dialogues.

Members of the CAS not only cherish their academic activities but also wish to participate in the making of China’s foreign policy. So, besides trying to influence government policy with their books and research reports, opinions and advice, many members of the CAS attend conferences, seminars, academic exchanges and events held by foreign embassies and consulates. On these occasions, they communicate, either in public or private, with Chinese foreign decision makers as well as foreigners, so as to collect information and then release the information as “tossers”. For example, as Taiwan factor in the Sino-US relations raises more concern from all the three sides, some scholars of the CAS attended the “Roundtable Conference” held by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy for times, playing a role that cannot be played in official capacity. The so-called “Second Track” has been widely regarded as a channel for foreign communication. The scholars, when participating in the second track activities, are not limited by official policy though they actually have close connection with the Chinese government. In essence, it has a strong semi-official nature. When negotiation between governments is not smooth enough, some scholars of the CAS are quite ready to shuttle among the three places, acting as an academic ambassador to maintain the normal contact between China, the US and Taiwan.
Last but not least, as an important think tank, the CAS encourages its faculty to publish articles in newspapers and journals, participate in TV programs and interviews to spread knowledge about the Sino-U.S. relations as well as to explain the Chinese foreign policy. Now, some researchers of the CAS have their columns in some influential newspapers and do regular TV programs on the U.S.. There are multiple reasons to explain this. First, international forums in such newspapers as Global Times and Nanfang Weekend are also must-reads for many officials and researchers. That encouraged members of CAS to do so; Second, their comments and interviews on mainstream media would help enlightening the social awareness on the US, making “International Relations” and “American Studies” most popular disciplines in China. Third, a side product of these activities is to offer the researchers themselves an opportunity to know the society and form their own academic network with all walks of the society. Of course, to seek academic subsidy is also an important consideration for these researchers to take part in these kinds of activities other than research and teaching.

3. Major Characteristics of the American Studies in China: Lessons Learned from the Case

American Studies is a field that deserves most attention and input. However, most of the American Studies institutions in China are faced with difficulties in infrastructure, personnel, funds, research direction and quality. This results in a fact that China, up till now, fails to establish an independent discipline of American Studies. An overall discipline is yet to be formed, and researches in many institutes need to avoid “same-level and low-level repetitions”.

Through the case study of the CAS at Fudan, we can arrive at some conclusions about major characteristics of the American Studies in China.

First, the American Studies in China is growing in an imbalanced manner in terms of both geography and personnel allocation.

Beijing and Shanghai are two major cities for American Studies in China. In Beijing, institutes for American Studies include those affiliated with the Party or the central government such as Development Research Center of the State Council, International Strategy Institute of the China Central Party School, and Institute of American Studies of the CASS; China Institute of International Studies and Foreign Affairs College under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; China Institute of Contemporary International Relations and University of International Relations under the Ministry of Security; institutes in Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Renmin University and University of Political Science and Law; seven institutes affiliated with the military system. Besides, Chinese People’s Institute of Foreign Affairs, Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Xinhua News Agency, People Daily, China Daily and Global Times all have their team on American Studies. In Shanghai, there are also some famous institutions such as Shanghai Institute for International Studies, Center for American Studies of Fudan University and Shanghai Pudong Center for American Economic
Studies. However, except these two cities, institutions focusing on American studies are rather scarce and dispersed in China.

Second, most Chinese scholars study American affairs and care about China’s own national interests, though the influence of ideology has faded.

Since the end of the Cold War, Chinese Scholars have been debating about America’s China Strategy: engagement, containment, or both? Such a debate started from the end of the Cold War and can still be identified in discussion about Bush’s second-term China policy. Though taking China interests as a starting point, Chinese scholars no longer see the States with black-and-white ideology; instead, they have realized the positive side of the US. For instance, there is an opinion that Washington’s China policy generally maintains continuity, for the States has insisted on One-China, three joint communiqués, and engagement rather than isolation.

The increasingly objective view on the US among the academy reflects a more reasonable view among Chinese people. A young scholar believes that Chinese people have two Americas in their mind: one is a disgusting hegemonic America, and the other is a modern and advanced America.

Third, with increasing research institutes, the American Studies in China has larger improvement in quantity rather than quality.

To some extent, the American Studies in China now enters an embarrassing period, for papers and books, if we may say so, are actually of “high quantity and low quality”. According to a survey, in 2000, only about 5% of American-issue papers written by Chinese scholars are of some influence. In terms of style, introductory articles facing the mass dominate. As for contents, most researches focus on comprehensive studies related with American political system, Sino-US relations, American diplomacy and American history, which are all of practical significance. Other aspects, accordingly, account for a minor proportion. In 2000, Chinese journals published 95 papers about American political system, but there was not a single paper discussing interest group, worker movement, youth movement, or woman movement. In 2005, this phenomenon was much less the same nad had not improved much. This indicates that China’s American Studies are imbalanced in topics, with some discussed too much and others that are not unimportant getting no attention at all.

---

9 Ibid., p. 20.
Related with the “high quantity and low quality” are the facts that Chinese American studies still lack independent thinking and creative works. The problems of low-level repetition and “one paper’s multiple publications” should be addressed; and there must be more innovative research programs.

Fourth, some important institutions are troubled with leadership reshuffle and shortage of research personnel.

A case in point is the Institute of American Studies of the CASS, the most important institute in China. As its former director Wang Jisi transferred to Beijing University one year ago, this institute falls to lows, which is incomparable to its hey days when Mr. Li Shenzhi was the director of the Institute and also the vice president of the CASS. 10 A further study on many other institutes shows that researchers really devoted to American Studies are always less than 5 in one institute. Take Shanghai Institute for International Studies as an example. This institute now has three researchers: two doctors and one master, together with a graduate student and a Ph.D. intern from East China Normal University. 11

In recent years, Ph.D. and graduate students in China begin to enter the team of China’s American Studies. They take American Issues as their major and some of them continue their American researches after graduation. This helps China’s American Studies to improve the age structure of its researchers, and expand the fields of researches. On the other hand, however, most young scholars in many institutes obtain their Ph.D. degree just from these institutes, which causes the defect of “inbreeding”.

Last, Sino-American exchanges facilitate the development of China’s American Studies.

Among the students going to the States after China’s reform, many are studying US politics, diplomacy and Sino-US relations. A large part of them have returned to China for American Studies, including Prof. Jia Qingguo in Beijing University, Prof Yan Xuetong and Chu Shulong in Tsinghua University, Prof. Sun Zhe and Xu Yihua in Fudan University, and so on. Besides them, some others, though not returning to China, also promote the development of China’s American Studies by publishing their books in China or cooperating with domestic researchers. Prof. Hao Yufan, Wang Jianwei, Yu Bin are all good examples of this kind.

It is worth noting that most America-studying institutes in China have no periodicals. This has prevented them from raising their international influence and reputation. The CAS, Fudan University, has realized this problem. It is now seeking funds for building in three years a practical and large-scale electronic platform including a database for American Studies, an academic website, and a comprehensive information center for American Studies.

---

10 In July, the Institute of American Studies has its new director.
11 This is according to the author’s survey on the institute.
At present, the CAS has set up a research website (http://www.cas.fudan.edu.cn) covering basic information of the CAS. Also, the program of “American Congress and Sino-US relations” has an independent website (http://www.csp.fudan.edu.cn) offering major data in this field. In the future, the CAS will cooperate with other institutions in China to establish a American Studies database first-rate in China. Included will be databases for American officials, members of Congress and important assistants, as well as a detailed database for American Studies and Teaching.

5. American Studies in China: Potentials and Challenges

As Sino-U.S. relations become the most important bilateral relationship in the world, Chinese government attaches great importance to American Studies, for building a theoretical system of American Studies is regarded as a major channel to enhance China’s diplomacy toward the U.S. The significance of further development of China’s American Studies includes the following three aspects.

First, the evolvement of international conditions demands the development of American Studies, as the U.S. is the sole superpower in the world and will exert a far-reaching influence on international affairs and public opinions in the long run. Second, a deep analysis on changes in the American domestic politics and diplomacy is an urgent necessity for China to improve the Sino-U.S. relations and create favorable factors for China’s peaceful rise. Third, a comprehensive exploration of major projects in American Studies can help promote international studies and educate competent professionals.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to continue our studies on the CAS at Fudan University, which we think is a window to observe the further development of the American Studies in China in the future.