

## ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation:           DOUBLE-MOBILIZATION: TRANSNATIONAL  
ADVOCACY NETWORKS FOR CHINA'S  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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This dissertation investigates the nature of transnational advocacy networks and the impact of domestic structures on the development and political relations of such networks. Drawing upon the theoretical frameworks built by Margaret Keck, Katherine Sikkink and Sanjeev Khagram, I, though, challenge the conceptual bias embedded in this body of literature emphasizing contentious political relations between advocacy actors and targeted governments. I use the method of in-depth comparative case studies, and focus on two transnational advocacy networks in nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China to illustrate my three-fold argument: First, it is necessary to relax the theoretical bias in existing transnational advocacy literature, and recognize that the triangular relationship among the state, local society and international NSAs varies both over time and across issue areas. The two cases studied reveals a what I call the “double-mobilization” character of such networks. This Double-mobilization pattern emphasizes that international advocacy actors endeavor to engage, collaborate with, and advocate around the state, even as they

establish connections and solidarity with local societal groups. I propose this double-mobilization concept to capture the gradual, consensual, and sustainable aspect of transnational activism. Second, it is not sufficient to use political regime type as the main causal variable to examine the emergence and evolution of transnational activism and advocacy networks. Evidence from China has shown that the politics generated by international NSAs in a non-democratic country is complex, and despite strict macro-structures, transnational advocacy networks are emerging. Third, I argue that two domestic micro-level structures—decentralization within the state, and interconnections within existing civil society groups—strongly influence the political relations of transnational activism and networks. With decentralized environmental governance, and a strong and connected local environmentalist community, international NGOs have been able to generate, expand, and consolidate their mobilization networks in both governmental and societal domains in nature conservation. While transnational NGO linkages and networks are surfacing in HIV/AIDS preventions in China, both the scope and level of deepening of such networks are still limited.

DOUBLE-MOBILIZATION:  
TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS FOR  
CHINA'S ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

by

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*To my parents, Wu Zhigui and Ge Yumei*

献给我的父亲母亲，吴志桂、葛玉梅

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## NOTES

- 1) All Chinese names are kept in the format of last name first and first name second, except wherever is specially noted.
- 2) Currencies: RMB—China Yuan, UKP—U.K. pound, USD—U.S. dollar



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS—Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
CSW—commercial sex workers  
CITES—Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species  
EPA—(provincial and local) Environmental Protection Bureaus  
HIV—Human Immunodeficiency Virus  
GONGO—government organized non-governmental organization  
IDU—Intravenous Drug User  
NPC—National People’s Congress  
MoH—Chinese Ministry of Health  
MSM—men have sex with men  
MTCT—mother-to-child transmission  
NGO—Non-governmental organization  
NSA—non-state actors  
PLWHA—People Living with HIV/AIDS  
SARS—Syndrome of Acute Repertory Syndrome  
SEPA—Chinese State Environmental Protection Administration  
SFB—Chinese State Forestry Bureau  
UNAIDS—United Nations AIDS Programme  
VCT—voluntary counseling and testing (for potential HIV+ patients)

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTERNATIONAL NON-STATE ACTORS, TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISM, AND CHINA: AN INTRODUCTION

*A good rain does the proper season know,  
And as spring comes, it comes to fall also.  
Along with wind it steals into the night,  
Bathing the earth in a way most light.*

— *Du Pu (late Tang Dynasty), The Heartening Spring Rain*

The Caohai Lake, located in western Guizhou province, is the winter home to many migratory birds, including the exceedingly endangered black-necked crane. During the Great Leap Forward period, the lake was converted to arable land for agricultural production. By 1972, the lake ceased to exist. The Guizhou provincial government decided to restore the lake in the early 1980s; while, at the same time, the county government began to contracting the land in the region to individual families. In 1982, the provincial government ordered to re-flood half of the lake, and declared the lake and surrounding areas a nature reserve in 1985. Having watched their agricultural products washed away, enraged local farmers responded to the establishment of the nature reserve with protests and open hostility, going so far as to throw reserve staff into the lake. They boycotted the idea of conservation by continuing to hunt and fish. The Caohai Reserve staff replied by burning their nets and catches.

In 1993, with funding from the Ford Foundation, two international non-governmental non-profit organizations—International Crane Foundation (ICF) and

the Trickle Up Program—decided to launch micro-credit programs in the Caohai region. With the consent from the local government, the ICF/Trickle Up team established a system to offer small loans (100 USD) to local families to set up businesses that are compatible with conservation goals. In two years, a number of Community Trust Funds were established, each consisting of 10 to 15 families. Like the small loans, such funds provided a means for both poverty relief and conservation of the wetlands. Today, this Caohai model is recognized by both the Chinese government and the international conservation community as a best practice of participatory conservation in China.

In Yunnan, Guizhou's neighboring province, HIV/AIDS emerged as an acute public health problem, particularly among drug users in the southern bordering counties and large cities, by the end of 1980s. While the central and provincial governments were still in denial of the scope of the problem, a group of international non-governmental organizations and foundations (e.g., the Ford Foundation, the Red Cross Australia and Save the Children U.K.) started to promote public awareness of the disease around the mid-1990s. Even though they were constrained in many ways (e.g., with whom and where they are allowed to work), these organizations introduced peer-education concept into the AIDS field in China. Daytop (an American private non-profit organization) provided the first funding to Yunnan provincial government to establish a drug rehabilitation center separate from the regular prison system.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Drug users used to be treated as criminals in Yunnan. However, this initiative was not carried out until 1998 when both the provincial government and Daytop finally agreed to use the money to build the center.

Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, Doctors without Borders) Holland<sup>2</sup>, at the same time, recognized that HIV/AIDS had become widely spread among the general public through unsafe sex and decided to conduct direct behavior intervention programs in Yunnan.<sup>3</sup> However, when MSF Holland staff and volunteers distributed free condoms on the streets in Kunming (capital of Yunnan province) on the World AIDS Day in 1999, local police attempted to arrest them. Provincial authorities did not provide any further support to MSF's programs. Despite such obstacles, MSF Holland experimented with providing treatment directly to HIV+ patients, most of whom were unidentified drug users. However, without the cooperation from provincial and local health bureaus, MSF Holland encountered great difficulty in maintaining contacts with HIV+ patients. They eventually retreated from China with deep frustration.

The above two accounts both suggest that in the context of China's domestic social-economic reforms, a particular group of international non-state actors (NSAs)—most importantly, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—have played a unique role in solving emerging social problems and bringing new political dynamics between local communities and governmental authorities. This group of actors, represented by the IFC, the Trickle Up Program, Daytop, and MSF, usually mobilize resources transnationally, operate at grassroots levels, and carry out

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<sup>2</sup> MSF is a network of individual country-based branches and technical support units. Four MSF branches have worked in China at different times, i.e., Holland, Switzerland, France and Belgium. Only MSF France and Belgium are currently operating in China.

<sup>3</sup> Prior to this initiative, the Chinese government granted MSF Holland to implement disaster relief work in the country

solutions by building up various networks with domestic actors. Their budget and scale of activities may look small compared with multilateral or bilateral assistance agencies, yet their influence are extensive and lasting within the local political context. With effective demonstration projects and support from peer organizations and local allies, they can even “trickle up” to expand their influence in other parts of the country by persuading higher level governmental bodies and giving inputs in new policy-making.

However, a puzzle is surfacing here: Why do international NGOs bring about different political dynamics within the seemingly constant political context of strong state control over both domestic and international affairs? In other words, the Chinese government seems to be more susceptible to external advocacy and persuasion in some issue areas, but not the others; and international NGOs and NSAs are more likely to integrate their work with local communities, and have sustainable impact in some issue areas than the others.

Therefore, the first goal of this research is to identify and map the community of international NSAs and NGOs in China: Who are the main actors of this community? What do they mostly do? What is distinctive about them? By what means, and to what extent are they able to influence local populations and higher level policy makers? Moreover, do the international NSAs generate different patterns of political relations across issue areas? If so, what are the main causes? What can we learn about NSAs in general in transnational relations based on the experience of China, for international NGOs and networks are anything but exclusively related to China?

Based on many other countries' experiences, international relations scholars have constructed relevant theoretical frameworks to understand the political dynamics of NSAs in changing state behavior and local politics through transnational networks, coalitions and social movements. Yet, they did not predict a vibrant transnational advocacy community would emerge in China. I hope to provoke reflection on the complex and dynamic political relations generated by NSAs, and the influence of domestic micro-level structures on the emergence and development, based on the findings from environmental and public health fields in China.

In this introduction chapter, I first give a brief review of international NSAs in China in history to distinguish international NGOs and transnational advocacy networks from other types non-traditional state related actors. I then provide the working definitions and theoretical frameworks applied in the dissertation, and explain why a cross-issue area comparative study, focusing on one country, is needed to improve theory-building on the topic. At the end, I outline the main findings and arguments, and the organization of each chapter.

### **International Non-state Actors and China**

I agree with Charles Tilly's view that non-state actors and transnational activism are not novel or epiphenomenal matters in world affairs.<sup>4</sup> International legal scholars noted that international NGOs have played a role in international law and governance

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<sup>4</sup> Introduction in *Coalitions across Borders: Transnational Protest against the Neoliberal Order*. Joe Bandy and Jackie Smith eds. 2005. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.



for the past two centuries, and their participation is increasingly expanding.<sup>5</sup> As for China, a large body of works documented the social and political influences left by transnational missionary communities and movements in the middle and late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> Before the Japanese invasion in the 1930s, a few international humanitarian charities and non-profit organizations had already established connections and operations in China, e.g., the Salvation Army. According to Margaret Keck and Katherine Sikkink's archival research, the anti-footbinding movement in the 1910-20s was the fruit of a transnationally collaborated effort by Western missionaries, Western non-Christian women's rights activists, and Chinese reformist intellectuals.<sup>7</sup> Western philanthropic foundations also initiated and funded a large number of modern scientific projects in China at that time. As part of the Rockefeller Foundation's global mission in medical science, the China Medical Commission (followed by the China

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<sup>5</sup> Charnovitz, Steve. 1997. "Two Centuries of Participation: NGOs and International Governance." *Michigan Journal of International Law*. 18: 183. Afsharipour, Afra. 1999. "Empowering Ourselves: The Role of Women's NGOs in the Enforcement of the Women's Convention." *Columbia Law Review*. 99, 1: 129-72. Mertus, Julie. 2000. "Considering Nonstate Actors in the New Millennium: Toward Expanded Participation in Norm Generation and Norm Application." *New York University School of Law Journal of International Law and Politics*. 32: 537. Peel, Jacqueline. 2001. "Giving the Public a Voice in the Protection of the Global Environment: Avenues for Participation by NGOs in Dispute Resolution at the European Court of Justice and World Trade Organization." *Colorado Journal of International Law and Policy*. 12: 47.

<sup>6</sup> Varg, Paul A. 1958. *Missionaries, Chinese, and Diplomats: The American Protestant Missionary Movement in China, 1890-1952*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Price, Allen Thomas. 1932. *American Missions and American Diplomacy in China, 1830-1900: A Study of the Relations of American Missionaries, American Missions, and the American Missionary Movement to the Official Relations between the United States and China to 1900*. [microform]. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Lodwick, Kathleen L. 1996. *Crusaders against Opium: Protestant Missionaries in China, 1874-1917*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky. Gomez, Edmund Terence and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao eds. 2004. *Chinese Enterprise, Transnationalism, and Identity*. London, New York: Routledge.

<sup>7</sup> Keck, Margaret, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp 60-74.

Medical Board, CMB) was established in 1914 to develop modern western medicine in China. The Peking Union Medical College was established in Beijing in 1917 as a research center as well as a medical school under the CMB's program. The College produced the first generation of western-style medical professionals for China. Today, it is still one of the leading Chinese medical institutions. It is estimated that before 1947, the Rockefeller Foundation had invested 45 million USD in medical programs in China.<sup>8</sup>

After 1949, most international NGOs and charities retreated from the Mainland China. Some moved to Hong Kong and Taiwan to continue their relief and social activism work. Before the People's Republic of China officially obtained membership in the United Nations in 1972, most international NGOs only recognized the Republic of China resided in Taiwan.<sup>9</sup> Entering the reform era led by Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese government gradually welcomed international exchanges among scholars and scientists. Occasionally, individual experts from international NGOs were invited to share information and help with domestic problems. For example, conservationists from World Wildlife Fund (WWF)<sup>10</sup> were among the first group of international experts invited by the government during the panda crisis in the

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<sup>8</sup> Ma, Quisha. 2002. "The Peking Union Medical College and the Rockefeller Foundation's Medical Programs in China". In William H. Schneider ed. *Rockefeller Philanthropy & Modern Biomedicine - International Initiatives from World War I to the Cold War*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Ninkovich, F. 1984. "The Rockefeller Foundation, China, and Cultural Change". *Journal of American History*, 70, 4: 799-820.

<sup>9</sup> Chan, Gerald. 1989. *China and International Organizations: Participation in Non-Governmental Organizations Since 1971*. Hong Kong: Oxford University.

<sup>10</sup> Now the international headquarter has changed the name to World Wide Fund for Nature, but kept the abbreviation as WWF.

early 1980s. The government also began to accept funding from large western non-profit foundations (e.g., the Ford Foundation) in research and academic exchanges in natural sciences.

In January 1988, for the first time, the Chinese government officially granted a small group of international NGOs and foundations the right to open offices in China and conduct international assistance, charity and poverty relief work. Since then, in spite of the lack of regulations for international NGOs to obtain legal non-profit status in China, the community of international NGOs has been growing steadily.<sup>11</sup> As the China Development Brief—an NGO devoted to research on both domestic and international NGOs' activities in China—reported in its 2005 Special Issue, there are over 200 international NGOs and foundations operating in the country.<sup>12</sup> In Yunnan province alone, there are over 30 international NGOs currently working in rural development, health, women's rights, environment and many other fields. The provincial government speaks highly about their contribution to local environmental protection and social development.<sup>13</sup>

The growth of the international NGO community is reflected not only in the above numbers, but also in the scope of work they are able to conduct, and the multi-level networks sprouting around them. Take the Ford Foundation as an example. Its grantees in China have expanded from two national research institutions in Beijing to hundreds of governmental and non-governmental organizations at all levels and in

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<sup>11</sup> Up to date, China still does not have regulations for international NGOs and charities. Such organizations are mostly registered as international businesses.

<sup>12</sup> Available online: <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.com>, accessed on 1 November, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Yunnan provincial government officials in Kunming, August, 2004.

most provinces. WWF China Program has also grown from nine staff working on four projects, to a team of over 60 specialists and support staff 30 on projects covering forestry, renewable energy, climate change, water, species conservation, and many other environmental protection related fields. It has now established 15 regional offices across the country.

Besides poverty relief, rural health, and conservation, international NGOs and foundations are even involved in many issues areas that are normally conceived as politically sensitive such as village direct election and international relations. The International Republican Institute, the Carter Center, and the Ford Foundation together assisted in the implementation of a number of village elections and self-governance reforms in China. The MacArthur, Rockefeller, Luce, and Rockefeller Brothers foundations have joined the Ford Foundation in supporting exchanges of international relations studies between China and the United States. Participating institutions in China included four main think-tank institutions in China's foreign relations and three leading university departments of international politics.<sup>14</sup> Program activities included advanced training in the United States for Chinese scholars, short courses in China taught by American professors, study tours, conferences and meetings, and library development.

The rise of international NGOs in China's current affairs is not an isolated matter. In fact, it shall be viewed as a part of the internationalization and opening-up

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<sup>14</sup> These institutions include: the State Council Research Center on International Studies, Institute of International Studies (in China Academy of Social Sciences), Beijing Institute of International Strategic Studies, Shanghai Institute of International Studies, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and the departments of international politics at Fudan, Beijing, and Renming universities.

of post-Mao China. As China achieves miraculous economic development and assumes its role in the global market entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century, scholars pointed out the emergent businesses elites and networks, even though it is still difficult to make a uniform argument about the political role and impact of this community.<sup>15</sup> Hongying Wang successfully illustrated how informal personal networks became prominent in facilitating and constraining foreign business and investment in China when formal legal institutions failed to function in the early 1990s.<sup>16</sup> David Zweig's more recent studies on the emergence of "developmental communities" in the coastal region also evidenced the effects of transnational alliances through commerce and trade on the internationalization of rural China.<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Economy, from another angle, found that transnational scientific and diplomatic linkages and networks played a crucial role in China's environmental policy-making at the central level.<sup>18</sup>

However, international NGOs and advocacy groups are distinguished from the types of business, scientific, or policy networks mentioned above. They come together under principled ideas, aim at changing existing governmental policies and practices, and tend to form strong coalition with local activists groups. Before we go into the

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<sup>15</sup> Pearson, Margaret. 1997. *China's New Business Elite*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>16</sup> Wang, Hongying. 2001. *Weak State, Strong Networks: The Institutional Dynamics of Foreign Direct Investment in China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>17</sup> Zweig, David. 1995. "'Developmental Communities' on China's Coast: The Impact of Trade, Investment, and Transnational Alliances". *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 27, No.3: 253-274. Also 2002. *Internationalization China: Domestic Interests and Global Linkages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

<sup>18</sup> Economy, Elizabeth. 1997. "Chinese Policy-making and Global Climate Change: Two-Front Diplomacy and the International Community." In *The Internationalization of Environmental Protection*, edited by Miranda Schreurs and Elizabeth Economy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Economy, Elizabeth. 1998. "China's Environmental Diplomacy." In *China and the World*, edited by Kim, Samuel S. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

working definitions of NGO and networks, I would like to point to the piece by the famous classic Chinese poet Du Pu quoted at the beginning. Not to romanticize the influence of these NSAs, I use the image of “spring rain” to visualize the timing, the gradual spread, the penetrative and sustainable effects, and the character of their political mobilization in improving the social and political development in today’s China.

### **International NGOs and Transnational Advocacy Networks: Definitions**

In practice, NGOs can take up various forms, ranging from national security think-tanks, independent research institutions, hobby clubs, religious associations, labor unions, independent media, to community-base support groups. Even crime networks and secret societies can claim to be NGOs. In addition, each government has its own rules in regulating various types of NGOs. For example, the asset requirement to register as an NGO varies substantially from the United States to the Great Britain. However, in this research, I adopt Lester Salamon’s approach in studying NGOs. An NGO, according to Salamon, has five essential characteristics: organized, private, non-profit-distributing, self-governing, and voluntary.<sup>19</sup> I will refer to an organization

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<sup>19</sup> Salamon, Lester and Helmut K. Anheier. 1997. *Defining the Nonprofit Sector*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. pp: 33-34. This approach is also widely adopted by Chinese social scientists (esp. the NGO Research Center at Tsinghua University) who research on the topic of NGOs. e.g., Wang, Ming, ed. 2000. *Zhongguo NGO Yanjiu (Research on NGOs in China)*. Beijing: UNCRD Research Report Series. For other approaches on NGOs, see: Stiles, Kendall. 2000. "A Rational Choice Model of Grassroots Empowerment." In *Global Institutions and Local Empowerment*, edited by Stiles, K. New York: St. Martin's Press. Boli, John, and George M. Thomas, eds. 1999. *Constructing World Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Fisher, Julie. 1998. *Non-Governments: NGOs and the Political Development in the Third World*. United States: Kumarian Press.

as an NGO, regardless of its nominal status, only if:

- 1) it has some organizational reality to itself;
- 2) it is institutionally separate from the state apparatus;
- 3) it does not return any profits generated to its owners or director;
- 4) it has its own internal procedures for governance and is not controlled by outside entities; and
- 5) it involves some meaningful degree of voluntary participation, either in the actual conduct of the organization's activities or in the management of its affairs.<sup>20</sup>

International NGOs, in short, are those NGOs that operate across country borders. In theory, they still have the five basic features that an NGO ought to have. The only difference is that they either mobilize resources, or deliver services in more than one country, e.g., WWF, MSF, World Resource Institute, and Amnesty International. International NGOs may or may not interact with foreign governments. By being non-governmental-based themselves, they are essentially more transnational than international. However, I use the term "international" instead of "transnational" when speaking of *individual* NGOs in this research to highlight the difference between Chinese domestic NGOs and foreign NGOs operating inside China.

International NGOs first caught IR scholars' attention for their mounting appearance at international meetings and involvement in international politics since the 1980s, particularly in human rights,<sup>21</sup> environmental protection,<sup>22</sup> and world

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<sup>20</sup> Even though I do not stress legal/formal status of an organization to be studied as an NGO, I exclude secretive societies or crime/organized violence groups for the research purposes here.

<sup>21</sup> Nanda, Ved et al, eds. 1981. *Global Human Rights: Public Policies, Comparative Measures, and NGO Strategies*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Clark, Roger S. 1981. "The International League for Human Rights and South West Africa 1947-1957: The Human Rights NGO as Catalyst in the International Legal Process." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 3, 4: 101-36. Thakur, Ramesh. 1994. "Human Rights: Amnesty International and the United Nations". *Journal of Peace Research*. 31, 2: 143-60.

peace and security.<sup>23</sup> Scholars argued that professional expertise, mobilization skills, and ability to link the local with the global enable international NGOs to be norm entrepreneurs, negotiation facilitators, public educators, and practitioners in international norm and regime building. The community of international NGOs is rising as a “third force”—besides sovereign states and corporations—in the evolving global governance, filling gaps, improving the “checks and balances”, and reshaping principles.<sup>24</sup>

Beyond their role at the international/global level, empirical research also evidenced that international NGOs are introducing new dynamics in national and local politics. Scholars noted that international NGOs can exert their influences on national and local governments and societies by being more accountable to grassroots populations and changing local social behaviors directly,<sup>25</sup> innovating institutional

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<sup>22</sup> Lipschutz, Ronnie and Ken Conca eds. 1993. *The State and Social Power in Global Environmental Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press. Princen, Thomas, and Matthias Finger. 1994. *Environmental NGOs in World Politics: Linking the Local and the Global*. New York: Routledge. Raustiala, Kal. 1997. “States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions”. *International Studies Quarterly*. 41, 4: 719-40.

<sup>23</sup> Rotberg, Robert I., ed. 1996. *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C., Cambridge, MA: Brooking Institution Press and World Peace Foundation. Carey, Henry F., and Oliver P. Richmond, eds. 2003. *Mitigating Conflict: The Role of NGOs*. London, Portland: F. Cass.

<sup>24</sup> Weiss, Thomas G., and Leon Gordenker, eds. 1996. *NGOs, the UN, and Global Governance*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. Charnovitz, Steve. 1997. "Two Centuries of Participation: NGOs and International Governance." *Michigan Journal of International Law*. 18: 183. Rosenau, James. 1997. *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in A Turbulent World*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press. Florini, Ann M. 2000. *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>25</sup> Wapner, Paul. 1996. *Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics*. New York: State University of New York Press.



arrangements,<sup>26</sup> and socializing global norms domestically.<sup>27</sup> A more synthetic framework has thus been proposed, taking a network perspective, and projecting that NSAs are “restructuring world politics” by building up transnational advocacy networks and coalitions, and organizing transnational movements.<sup>28</sup>

“Transnational advocacy networks” is a conceptual framework on how NSAs work in international affairs, first crystallized by Margaret Keck and Katherine Sikkink based on studies of transnational activism in human rights, environmental protection, and women’s rights fields.<sup>29</sup> They adopted the view that “networks are forms of organization characterized by voluntary, reciprocal, and horizontal patterns of communication and exchanges”.<sup>30</sup> Political actors are able to form various types of networks, e.g., ethnic, social identity-based and policy networks.<sup>31</sup> For Keck and Sikkink, advocacy networks are formed for promoting particular causes, principled ideas, and norms. Transnational advocacy networks are mostly generated by international NGOs, activists, and activist-minded professionals (e.g., journalists,

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<sup>26</sup> Potter, David, ed. 1996. *NGOs and Environmental Policies: Asia and Africa*. London and Portland, OR: F. Cass. Schreurs, Miranda, and Elizabeth Economy, eds. 1997. *The Internationalization of Environmental Protection*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>27</sup> Risse, Thomas, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. 1999. *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*. Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press. Chan-Tiberghien, Jennifer. 2004. *Gender and Human Rights Politics in Japan: Global Norms and Domestic Networks*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

<sup>28</sup> Khagram, Sanjeev, James V. Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. 2002. *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

<sup>29</sup> Keck and Sikkink. 1998.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p8.

<sup>31</sup> Watts, Nicole F. 2004. "Institutionalizing Virtual Kurdistan West: Transnational Networks and Ethnic Contention in International Affairs." In *Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*, edited by Migdal, Joel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Marin, Bernd, and Renate Mayntz, eds. 1991. *Policy Networks: Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Considerations*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag.

professors, World Bank officials, and policy experts) across borders. Each group of networks is identified by a specific issue domain, particularly in “value-laden” issue areas, e.g., human rights, indigenous people’s rights, children’s health, and environmental protection. This concept stresses *fluid* and *open* relations among *committed* and *knowledgeable* actors and organizations.

Keck and Sikkink also observed a Boomerang pattern explicating political dynamics of transnational advocacy networks: When channels between domestic groups and their governments are blocked or hampered, or such channels are ineffective for resolving a conflict between the two parties, domestic activists pursue networking and international resources. Via conferences and other forms of international contact transnational networks are consolidated among domestic and external advocates. International advocates would then lobby a powerful government or international organization to place pressure back onto the repressive government for changing domestic policies and practices.

### **Studying Transnational Advocacy Networks in China**

While I started with Keck and Sikkink’s approach to study the community of international NGOs and advocacy networks in China, I found it unsatisfactory in explaining the political complexities on the ground. Following the Boomerang theory, little transnational activism and few advocacy networks would emerge in China due to its authoritarian regime, lack of domestic social activism, and long-time isolation from international politics. However, my field work in the environmental and public

health fields indicated that transnational advocacy networks are emerging in China. In addition, I found noticeable variance in political relations among the Chinese state, local communities, and external advocacy actors across issue areas. Therefore, I revisited the existing literature, and contend that there is a conceptual bias embedded in this body of literature emphasizing contentious political relations between advocacy actors and targeted governments. I suggest comparing transnational advocacy networks across cases within a single country to better understand the topic and identify most relevant domestic factors that shape the trajectories and political patterns of the networks.

Current literature on transnational advocacy networks and other forms of transnational social activism is mostly built upon evidence from quasi-democratic or transitional countries, e.g., Central and Eastern European new democracies, and Latin American countries. Theories developed from empirical studies of these regions assumed three things: the zero-sum nature of state-society relations in domestic politics, the cooperation and solidarity among local and international NSAs, and the pressure-compliance relationship between a sovereign state and the transnational advocacy networks. The complexity of the form of contention among the state, local societal groups and transnational networks, however, needs to be reconsidered. Comparative Politics scholars have provided alternative models and explanations of state-society relations.<sup>32</sup> The zero-sum perspective is greatly challenged by the

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<sup>32</sup> Most important alternative perspectives on state-society relations include “corporatism”, “embedded autonomy”, and “developmental state”. Schmitter, Philippe, et al eds. 1979. *Trends towards Corporatist Intermediation*. Beverly Hills: SAGE. Wiarda, Howard J., ed. 1991. *New Directions in*

argument on the state-society synergy, which emphasizes that the state and society are mutually-empowering.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, the relationship between the state and international advocates, and that between international advocates and domestic society are not as clear-cut as assumed. Keck and Sikkink pointed out that targeted actors must be vulnerable either to material sanctions from foreign governments or IGOs, or they must be sensitive to external pressures because of their stated commitments.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, their work does not consider what might happen if targeted states or actors are not susceptible to external pressures or normative accusations. In other words, when leverage politics fail to change state behavior, do activists and non-state-actors simply dissolve their efforts? This seems to be contrary to what the word “advocacy” connotes.

The third pillar of the Boomerang model is the ideological solidarity and dense information flows among domestic and international activist groups and NGOs—the main participants of transnational advocacy networks. This argument has been contested by many authors who are more critical about the international NGOs’

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*Comparative Politics*. 2 ed. Boulder: Westview Press. Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). Migdal, Joel. 1988. *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. White, Gordon, ed. 1988. *Developmental States in East Asia*. New York: St. Martin's Press. Woo-Cumings, Meredith, ed. 1999. *The Developmental State*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Evans, Peter, ed. 1997. *State-Society Synergy: Government and Social Capital in Development*. Berkeley: University of California. Migdal, Joel, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds. 1994. *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>34</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. p29.

accountability to local communities.<sup>35</sup> There seem to be power hierarchies within the networks, and asymmetric relations between local and external groups. Even among international groups and NGOs, the strategic alliances involve more complex interest overlap and conflict, rather than ideological uniformity.

The China case, however, presents a different situation from the countries that are frequently referred to in the existing literature, for in China the state is powerful in both domestic and international politics, and civil society is relatively weak. Nevertheless, it is not unique in terms of exhibiting qualitatively different forms of transnational networks in terms of the triangular relations among the state, domestic society, and international NSAs. Labor rights movement in Latin America and women's rights movements in Eastern Europe initiated by American activist groups, and transnational environmental advocacy networks in Japan did not perform the Boomerang leverage politics.<sup>36</sup> As this research will present, even within a single country, i.e., China, political relations involving transnational advocacy networks differ. There is a need to revisit the theoretical assumptions applied by transnational advocacy networks literature, and further explain the variations across cases.

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<sup>35</sup> Fox, Jonathan, and L.David Brown, eds. 1998. *The Struggle for Accountability: The World Bank, NGOs, and Grassroots Movements*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press. Chapin, Mac. 2004. "A Challenge to Conservationists". *Worldwatch Magazine*, November/December Issue. pp17-30.

<sup>36</sup> Ricker, Tom. "Boomerang, Battering-Rams, and Sustainable Solidarity: Transnational Advocacy and the Struggle for Workers Rights in Nicaragua's Maquila Industry." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2001. McMahon, Patrice C. 2000. "Building Civil Societies in East Central Europe: The Effect of American NGOs on Women's Groups." Paper prepared for delivery at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., August 31-September 3. Reimann, Kim D. 1999. "Building Networks from the Outside In: International Movements, Japanese NGOs and the Kyoto Climate Change Conference." Winner of the Fred Hartmann Award for the Best International Studies Paper Delivered by a Graduate Student at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the ISA-NE.

In their book, Keck and Sikkink concluded that domestic structures and politics are among the most crucial factors to the emergence and success of transnational advocacy networks, along with leadership and issue characteristics.<sup>37</sup> Based upon in-depth and first-hand sources, Sanjeev Khagram highlighted and explained how domestic political structures lead to different trajectories of anti-dam advocacy networks and movements across country cases. His main argument is that democratic regime and high level of social mobilization facilitate the transnationalization of anti-dam activism.<sup>38</sup> While Keck and Sikkink began bridging International Relations and Comparative Politics fields by mapping and conceptualizing various advocacy networks, Khagram's single issue cross-country research substantially advanced this theoretical endeavor by systematically assessing the association between domestic politics and the emergence of transnational advocacy networks.

However, the weakness of Khagram's approach is noticeable, due to its relying solely on macro-level variables (i.e., level of democracy and social mobilization). Khagram attributed the non-existence or failure of transnational anti-dam advocacy networks in China (specifically, the Three Gorges Dam) to its non-democratic regime, which in turn caused the low level of social mobilization. But this argument does not explain why transnational advocacy networks are actually emerging in a few issue areas other than dam (e.g., women's rights and village election) in China. Nor can it

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<sup>37</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. Introduction, and pp72-74.

<sup>38</sup> Khagram, Sanjeev. 2004. *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

explain changes in transnational activism and advocacy networks when the macro-level variables remain constant. In 2004, Chinese anti-dam activists, with the help from international NGOs, successfully lobbied the government, organized public exhibitions, and called on media campaigns against a new dam project on the Nu River in Yunnan province. My research suggests that by holding international and national macro-level factors constant, we can see that domestic micro-level variables (particularly intra-state bureaucratic structures, local state autonomy, and civil society structures defined by issue area) have important effects on the patterns of transnational advocacy networks. Therefore, this research proposes to apply a cross-sectoral comparative case study method, focusing on a single country, to examine how transnational advocacy networks diverge in forms when they arrive in different domestic political contexts.

The sectoral perspective is not uncommon in comparative politics or China studies. In fact, the sectoral division, *tiao*, is considered a defining character of the Chinese state apparatus.<sup>39</sup> Recent research in China's economic development and industries pushes the argument even further to the local level.<sup>40</sup> My analysis of the environmental and public health sectors, however, includes not only bureaucratic and

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<sup>39</sup> The Chinese word "tiao" is used to describe the vertical relations within each sector, in contrast to "kuai" which refers to the horizontal relations across sectors at different administrative levels. *Tiao* and *kuai* together consist of the complex web of power relationships within the Chinese state. Lampton, David, ed. 1987. *Policy Implementation: Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California. Lieberthal, Kenneth, and Michel Oksenberg. 1988. *Policy Making in China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Lieberthal, Kenneth, and David Lampton, eds. 1992. *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

<sup>40</sup> Segal, Adam, and Eric Thun. 2001. "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Local Governments, Industrial Sectors, and Development in China". *Politics & Society*, Vol. 29, No.4: 557-588.

local-central relations, but also varying factors emerging from the civil society community within each sector.

Hence, my contribution to China studies is to incorporate societal factors into the analysis of a sector, or a policy issue area.<sup>41</sup> Even though state control is still a predominant feature in China's political arena, scholars have noted that the level and form of such control actually fluctuates across issue areas, and the state's social control mechanisms are undergoing changes.<sup>42</sup> In the last two decades, hundreds of voluntary, organized, and not-for-profit social groups have gradually emerged in all fields of social welfare. While some hold doubts about the political implications of various social associations in current China, Kenneth Foster's recent empirical research has demonstrated that many independent social associations are capable of seeking the state's recognition and support, or to be "co-opted", to achieve organizational goals.<sup>43</sup> The state is rather uncertain as to deal with such social organizations beyond blind oppression.<sup>44</sup> Particularly in the fields of poverty relief, women's rights, and environmental protection, Tony Saich argued that civil society sector in China is not only emerging, but also has learned how to negotiate with the

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<sup>41</sup> While the body of literature on societal factors and civil society in China is growing, research that incorporate both state and societal factors in a sector is still limited.

<sup>42</sup> Ton, Yanqi. 1994. "State, Society, and Political Change in China and Hungary." *Comparative Politics*. 26, 3: 333-53. Brook, Timothy, and Michael Frolic, eds. 1997. *Civil Society in China*. New York: M.E.Sharpe. Nathan, Andrew J., ed. 1997. *China's Transition*. New York: Columbia University Press. Goldman, Merle, and Roderick MacFarquhar, eds. 1999. *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>43</sup> Foster, Kenneth W. 2001. "Associations in the Embrace of an Authoritarian State: State Domination of Society?" *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 35, 4: 84-109.

<sup>44</sup> In certain areas, e.g., the cracking down of the Falung Gong religious movement, the state certainly leaves no room for any kind of negotiation.



state, and gained bargaining power via various means of resource mobilization.<sup>45</sup> Many keen observers have begun to realize that due to the Chinese state's lack of capacity in coping with the growing social inequality and problems after 20 years of economic reform, civil society organizations have found a niche to influence new policy formation and policy implementation.<sup>46</sup>

In this research, I push the argument on civil society in China further, arguing that as civil society has developed in China, and that noticeable variations are emerging. For instance, the scope of NGO activities, the density of information sharing among different groups, and the strength of a shared social identity differ visibly across issue areas. Societal structures in China, therefore, cannot be uniformly portrayed. Instead, I suggest identifying more indicators to examine the increasingly vibrant and diversifying civil society sector in China, with special attention to internal networking and common identity building.

### **Nature Conservation and HIV/AIDS Prevention in China**

The two sectors and issue areas chosen in this study are environmental protection (specifically, nature conservation) and public health (specifically, HIV/AIDS prevention), for they offer both commonalities and variance. Because my purpose is to give an historical-institutionalist account for preliminary theory building, the

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<sup>45</sup> Saich, Tony. 2000. "Negotiating the State: The Development of Social Organizations in China." *The China Quarterly*. 161: 125-41.

<sup>46</sup> Young, Nick. 2001. Introduction in "Searching for Civil Society: 250 NGOs in China". Hong Kong: China Development Brief. Kwong, Julia. 2004. "Educating Migrant Children: Negotiations between the State and Civil Society." *The China Quarterly*. 180: 1073-88.

number of cases in this research is small. This is a conscious decision to apply the method of most similar comparison to examine the consequences of missing key factors.<sup>47</sup>

Countering to the conventional wisdom on transnational activism, the past 10 to 15 years have witnessed a significant growth of attention to China within the international NGO and foundation community. Despite of policy barriers and the lack of Chinese counterparts, the total number of international environmental and health NGOs operating in China is continuously growing. International NGOs have been traveling around and establishing offices in all parts of China, and incubating networks for public education, social activism, and policy change. Despite this commonality, the nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention cases also present noticeable differences, as evidenced by differential scope and nature of the working partnerships, collaborative research, policy implementation pilot projects, and large-scale public education campaigns generated by international NGOs, together with local societies, and state agencies. In the field of nature conservation, international NGOs, funding agencies and activists have mobilized a substantial amount of human, material and technological resources to promote ideas such as biodiversity and “eco-hot spot” in southwestern China. Many international advocacy groups such as the Ford Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature, the Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, Oxfam U.S., Wildlife Conservation Society, and

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<sup>47</sup> Przeworski, Adam, and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: John Wiley and Sons. Collier, David. 1993. "The Comparative Method." In *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, edited by Finifter, Ada W., 105-19. Washington, DC: APSA.

International Fund for Animal Welfare have established solid partnerships with Chinese authorities at different levels and a large number of civil society organizations. They sponsored related field surveys, public education programs, training for officials and Chinese environmentalists, and demonstration projects to push for new policy formation and implementation in various parts of the country. Together, these organizations have formed widespread networks that reach from central and provincial governmental agencies to Chinese NGOs and local community-based groups.

In the case of public health and HIV/AIDS prevention, the international NGO community has slowly emerged since the late 1970s. While things have changed dramatically since 2003, for a long time, international NGOs were restricted from certain provinces or areas, or releasing information about China's AIDS situation. A few international NGOs have experienced difficulty in overcoming political obstacles when trying to go the most-devastated regions or directly deliver medical services. Such as the story of MSF Holland mentioned at the beginning. By 2004, there are dozens of international NGOs and foundations that are active in AIDS relief, care and treatment in China. Like the nature conservation case, these organizations formed various connections with each other, local NGOs and governmental agencies. In the wake of the SARS crisis, the state completed the reform of China's disease control governing system, and slowed the decentralization of the health governance. Local governments are becoming more constrained in deciding whether they can or not collaborate with external health organizations in AIDS-related issues. Such factors

have constrained the development of international advocacy groups to strengthen their mobilization work with local and non-governmental actors, even though their engagement and advocacy work with governmental agencies have continued to grow.

### **Main Findings and Three-fold Argument**

Based on participatory observations and in-depth field research in the two cases, I have arrived at the following main conclusions:

1) Despite the non-democratic character of the Chinese regime, a community of international NGOs and advocacy networks has emerged and noticeably expanded across issue areas in the country since the mid-1990s, in terms of not only the total number of organizations and the scope of their work, but also the density of their connections with the Chinese state and society. Evidence from environmental and public health sectors shows that, with professional skills, innovative policy solutions, and the ability to transfer resources, international NGOs and advocates are able to engage both governmental and non-governmental actors in China with new ideas, practices and policy measures. In many cases, they have introduced significant practical changes in nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention at both local and national levels.

2) Unlike what most of the literature on transnational activism has emphasized, international NGOs and networks have achieved the goal of mobilizing the Chinese state even when the possibility of applying confrontational means or leverage politics is limited. They often mobilize the Chinese state by sharing information, collaborating

in research, partnering in policy implementation, providing advice for policy making, and assisting in institutional innovations.

3) International NGOs and advocates are able to network with Chinese activists and NGOs to promote bottom-up campaigns and actions for improvement in nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in the country. Most international NGOs see supporting Chinese civil society groups as not only morally right but also practically necessary to reach their own goals. More international NGOs are able to identify Chinese civil society groups to work with who share similar visions on sustainable development, equal access to public health, or other social justice issues. On the one hand, many Chinese NGOs have survived and endured due to the financial and technical support from international NGOs. On the other, international advocates can gain more access to local communities to sustain their work, and to governmental authorities to influence policy changes through their contacts and coalitions with Chinese activists and NGOs.

4) Given the political context in China, more importantly, international advocates have created many communication opportunities between the Chinese state and society, and introduced tentative forms of public participation through their projects. Instead of confronting or criticizing the Chinese government's top-down mentality and organizational culture, many international NGOs have been able to engage Chinese governmental officials in demonstration projects, thereby convincing them of the value of public participation. Moreover, they have been able to lead governmental agencies through each of the steps to incorporate NSAs in policy

implementation. In a few cases, international NGOs have played a unique role in modifying state-society relations at local levels, and made the communication between local authorities and social groups more possible and productive.

5) Despite the above commonalities, there are also substantial disparities between the transnational advocacy networks in the two issue areas studied here. One may point out that it is obvious that history of transnational activism against the AIDS epidemic in China is much shorter than that of activism against environmental degradation. However, this is only partially true. Some AIDS-related international NGOs, in fact, started working in public health (particularly in reproductive health and the rural health-care system) in China as early as the late 1970s. And, many entered China before the mid-1990s. Therefore, the real difference between China's experience with conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention international NGO community does not lie in the length of their histories, but the temporary trajectory of their development. International NGOs and advocacy groups remained very few, and with limited access and influence in both conservation and public health fields throughout the 1980s. Around 1995, the conservation community gained momentum and expanded rapidly. However, when the AIDS crisis was uncovered at the beginning of 2000s, there were far fewer international NGOs working in public health in China than that in conservation. By the time this research was conducted, the total number of international NGOs in the two fields has reached almost the same, but the level of maturity of transnational activism differed in various aspects.

6) In general, international advocacy actors have made more effort to engage

and support the Chinese government in the AIDS field, unlike those in nature conservation. Even though about half of the international AIDS-related NGOs work with both governmental and non-governmental partners, around same number of international NGOs collaborate exclusively with Chinese governmental agencies. While, very few international conservation NGOs exclusively collaborate with governmental bodies. Among other factors, high level of central control in China's health governance and weakness of Chinese civil society groups contributed most to the uneven triangular relationship among the state, society and external advocates in the HIV/AIDS prevention field.

7) The two cases not only exhibit qualitatively different features in terms of the triangular relationship, but also in external advocates' engagement with governmental bodies and social organizations independently. For example, international NGOs have not yet been able to directly influence policy-making in HIV/AIDS prevention as often and extensively as in conservation. In both cases, international NGOs have provided considerate financial and technical support to strengthen local capacity and promote social activism. However, there is only a minimal sign of solidarity established among international and Chinese NGOs, and no enduring transnational campaigns have emerged so far in the HIV/AIDS prevention field. Bureaucratic politics, local-central relations, and structures of civil society are of great importance to explain different characteristics of transnational NGO mobilization across the two cases.

My main argument in this dissertation is three-fold: First, it is necessary to

relax the theoretical bias in existing transnational advocacy literature, and recognize that the triangular relationship among the state, local society and international NSAs varies both over time and across issue areas. In other words, the Boomerang Pattern defined by Keck and Sikkink depicts only one type of political dynamics associated with transnational networks and NGO activism, one with relatively high levels of contention. The two cases studied here evidence a different pattern, revealing what I call the “double-mobilization” character of such networks. This double-mobilization pattern emphasizes that international advocacy actors endeavor to engage, collaborate with, and advocate around the state, even as they establish connections and solidarity with local societal groups. This concept also points out the role played by international NSAs in bridging the state and society, something missing in the Boomerang analogy. International NGOs often create new channels linking the state and society. Instead of transnationalizing domestic contention, they intend to experiment with state-society partnerships, introduce new avenues for public participation, and alleviate domestic contention. I propose this double-mobilization concept to capture the gradual, consensual, and sustainable aspect of transnational activism.

Second, it is not sufficient to use political regime type as the main causal variable to examine the emergence and evolution of transnational activism and advocacy networks. Evidence from China has shown that the politics generated by international NSAs in a non-democratic country is complex, and despite strict macro-structures, transnational advocacy networks are emerging.



Third, I argue that two domestic micro-level structures—decentralization within the state, and interconnections within existing civil society groups—strongly influence the development of transnational activism and networks. With decentralized environmental governance, and a strong and connected local environmentalist community, international NGOs have been able to generate, expand, and consolidate their mobilization networks in both governmental and societal domains in nature conservation. While transnational NGO linkages and networks are surfacing in HIV/AIDS preventions in China, both the scope and level of deepening of such networks are still limited.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation consists of five additional chapters. The second clarifies conceptual and methodological questions. I first review of the scholarship on NSAs in the field of IR to bring the immediate empirical puzzles of my research on China back to the broader theoretical context—the transnationalism tradition in IR, and particularly, transnational activism and contentious politics. I then focus on Keck and Sikkink's work on transnational advocacy networks for its relevance to the empirical questions dealt with in this dissertation. With careful examination of the Boomerang pattern, I introduce the concept of "double-mobilization", which features the non-contentious activities transnational advocacy employ to modify state behavior, policy-making processes and societal practices. I then review the literature on domestic structures and transnational advocacy networks in general, as well as domestic state and society

structures in China in particular in order to lay out the main hypotheses of my research.

In the rest of Chapter 2, I address research design questions. Mapping, measuring, and comparing transnational mobilization generated by NGOs and networks are my central tasks in this research. Detailed descriptions and interpretations of individual international NGOs involved in the networks are provided to map the complex interactions, collaborations, and negotiations between them and Chinese governmental and non-governmental actors. I develop four indicators to capture the forms of international NGOs' mobilization of the Chinese state—information dissemination, involvement in policy implementation, direct policy-making input, and institution building. I also apply three indicators to measure international NGOs' mobilization of the Chinese society—public education, training and capacity building, and promotion of social activism. I discuss why these indicators are suitable, what are to be measured, and what cannot be quantitatively measured, but qualitatively inferred.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I present detailed case studies of transnational advocacy networks in nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China. There are three parts to each chapter. The first two parts elaborate the issue background, particularly international, state, and societal responses to the policy issue. In the third part, I first analyze the international NGO community and networks as a whole that shed light on the similarities and differences between the two cases. I then introduce a group of international NGOs involved in the transnational advocacy networks to demonstrate

the development trajectory of the networks in China, and the nested political relations surrounding individual NGOs. I give detailed descriptions and interpretations of these NGOs, including their history in China, and illustrative examples of their interaction with Chinese governmental bodies and social groups.

I then systematically compare the political relations of the two networks at the aggregate level, and provide explanations of the commonality and variances in Chapter 5. In both cases, transnational networks gradually developed over the past 15 years. While the conservation case took off and blossomed around the mid-1990s, the AIDS community did not gain such momentum until 2000. Despite this five year time-lag, both communities have formed partnerships and interactive relationships with Chinese governments and social groups, which supports the double-mobilization hypothesis. However, the triangular relationship among the state, society and international NGOs is more balanced in the nature conservation case. Moreover, the density and character of transnational NGO mobilization varies across the two cases. International NGOs in nature conservation have been more able to promote social activism, and establish new communication channels between the state and society.

Not surprisingly, state structures prove to be relevant to the above variation. Three factors stand out—internationalization of the leading state agencies, bureaucratic cooperation and competition, and local state autonomy. More importantly, societal structural factors also appear to be crucial in these cases. On the one hand, transnational networks' social mobilization is fundamentally affected by the degree of networking and collective identity building within domestic civil society. On the other,

international NGOs and networks can gain more access to local state, and sometimes even central ministries, when domestic NGOs and groups can mobilize a wide range of professionals, sympathetic officials, and mass media.

In the concluding chapter, I summarize the character of transnational activism, mobilization, and advocacy networks in contemporary China, and recapitulate the importance of domestic micro-level state and society structures to the development trajectory of these political matters. I also outline the implications for studies of contemporary Chinese and transnational politics from this research. For scholars interested in transnational activism and bridging the two sub-fields of political science (International Relations and Comparative Politics), I offer a few suggestions for further investigation of domestic causal variables and testing alternative explanations. For scholars in China studies, many findings in this research offer new material to reflect on questions related to state-society relations, local state autonomy and civil society development in China. Especially the findings of interconnectivity among Chinese NGOs and grassroots voluntary groups

### **A Note on the Participatory Action Research Approach**

This is not a history or sociology project. I do not intend to give the readers the impression that the organizations and individuals discussed in this research complete the list of those who have been involved in improving China's environment and public health. Nor do I assume that all sources have been exhausted to document every relevant event. I have made the most effort to study the most important

organizations with regard to transnational activism, advocacy and mobilization, and events that are the most politically relevant.

To achieve these goals, I traveled between China and the United States many times to follow closely the two cases of transnational networks during the past four years. I conducted numerous in-depth interviews with activists, researchers, NGO representatives, and governmental officials in both countries, some of whom, unfortunately, must remain anonymous in this dissertation.<sup>48</sup> I also attended many conferences, official meetings, rallies, strategic planning roundtables, brain-storm sessions, social events, and “kitchen talks”, without which I would be unable to accurately interpret the political relevance and trace the dynamic relations of the two networks.

In April 2001, I assisted the organization of the first *Environmental NGO and Journalism Forum in Mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan*, which brought over 60 environmentalists together to share experiences and reflections on social activism. As my research proceeded, I found myself trusted by many activists as part of the networks, and occasionally called upon to give a talk, share opinions, and provide advice. Invited by a group of local journalists, I facilitated the formation of *Shanghai Environmental Journalist Salon* in 2003. Through me, the Salon became a grantee of the Global Greengrants Fund, an international NGO devoted to strengthening local capacity in environmental protection in over 70 countries. From January to August,

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<sup>48</sup> My interpretive analysis of their work is strictly my own, and those I interviewed may not necessarily agree. Nevertheless, I am very grateful to their generosity in sharing their time and opinions.

2004, I spent eight consecutive months in China, during which I was a part-time research fellow of a Chinese environmental NGO in Beijing (the Global Environmental Institute). I also served as an in-country advisor for the AIDS Relief Fund for China, a small American proactive charity based in San Francisco, searching for grassroots Chinese NGOs working in HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Both experiences allowed me to travel extensively in China, and observe transnational activism and NGO linkages as an insider.

The subject matter of this research sits at the intersection of IR and CP fields in politics science, and its contribution to theory-building is based upon in-depth comparative case studies. I applied classic comparative methods, and endeavored to form a “thick description” of the networks studied.<sup>49</sup> During the research years, I was conscious about and constantly reflected upon the extent to which I should be involved in the actual activism and networking. As I finished writing this dissertation, I had the opportunity to have some exchanges with a group of scholars/scholar-activists in the field of transnational social movements at International Studies Association 2005 conference roundtables “Transnational Social Movements and Scholar Activism”, including Jackie Smith, and Teivo Teivainen—leading figures in both the movement of World Social Forum and the research of the movement.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> “Thick description” became a terminology in political science methodology after Clifford Geertz’s works on political culture, religion, and society in Southeast Asia and Northern Africa. Geertz, Clifford. 1968. *Islam observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1973. *An Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>50</sup> Jackie Smith, professor in sociology, University of Notre Dame, editor of *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics* (1997, Syracuse University Press), *Globalizing Resistance: Transnational Dimensions of Social Movements* (2002, Rowman & Littlefield), and *Coalitions across*

During the panel, scholars and researchers from Europe, Latin America, and United States engaged in a heated discussion of not only the ethical, but also methodological justifications and criticisms of the Participatory Action Approach in studying transnational activism and social movements. My own thoughts on the methodological questions in this research were thereby further clarified.

The Participatory Action Approach emerged from “engagement on the part of activists and scholars in various emancipatory struggles and social transformation in the Third World, having its roots in liberation theology, Paulo Freire’s theories of education, neo-Marxist theories of development, Frankfurt School Critical scholarship, feminism, and liberal human rights activism”.<sup>51</sup> Scholar-activists working in this tradition are not only committed to participatory observation, but also feel responsive to the actual needs of local people. The research project then becomes one of self-discovery and of learning together from action as well as history, a process undertaken *within* activism and history, in the form of *accompaniment*. The researcher is no longer a mere recorder, outside critic, controller, or conductor from above, but

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*Borders: Transnational Protest against the Neoliberal Order* (2005, Rowman & Littlefield), and author of many journal articles and books chapters on the topic. Teivo Teivainen, Director of Global Democratic Transformation Program, Universidad Nacional Mayor de san Marcos, Peru, founding member of the World Social Forum—a transnational social movement against the Neoliberal International Order. World Social Forum, first held in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in 2001, is a “peoples’ movement” to “provide an open platform to discuss strategies of resistance to the model for globalisation formulated at the annual World Economic Forum by large multinational corporations, national governments, IMF, the World Bank and the WTO.” [http://www.wsfindia.org/whoweare.php]

<sup>51</sup> Reitan, Ruth. 2005. “The Personal is Methodological (as Well as Political): The Co-Constitution of Normative Commitments and Methodology”. Paper prepared for ISA Annual Convention roundtable “Transnational Social Movements and Scholar Activism II: World Social Forum”, Honolulu, 1-5 March.

an insider.<sup>52</sup> Those who have applied this approach argue that the benefits of being a “committed insider” outweigh the disadvantages of being a supposedly “objective outsider”, specifically noting the access to resources and informants, the trust and rapport gained, and the ability to support and accompany this activist network in its efforts for social change.<sup>53</sup>

Political scientists who follow the footsteps of Clifford Geertz and James C. Scott, and apply anthropological methods in their field work would fully appreciate the necessity of long-term, in-depth, personal involvement in the political matters under investigation.<sup>54</sup> A solid comparative research design requires both external validity (i.e., the measurements hold consistent across cases) and internal reliability (i.e., the measuring values correspond to the actual meanings within a case).<sup>55</sup> To ensure the latter, or in other words, to form “scientific inferences”, one needs to be well versed with the symbolic meanings of focused political matters/measurements in

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<sup>52</sup> Kemmis, Stephen, and Robin McTaggart, “Participatory Action Research,” in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln eds. 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage. pp575-7. Whitmore, Elizabeth and Maureen Wilson. 1999. “Research and Popular Movements: Igniting Seeds of Fire,” *Social Development Issues*, 21: 19-28. McTaggart, Robin ed. 1997. *Participatory Action Research: International Contexts and Consequences*. Albany: SUNY Press. Borda, O. Fals, and M. A. Rahman, eds. 1991. *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action-Research*. New York: Apex.

<sup>53</sup> Desmarais, Annette A. 2003. *The Via Campesina: Peasants Resisting Globalization*. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Geography, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. (quoted in Ruth Reitan, 2005.)

<sup>54</sup> Scott, James C. 1976. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>55</sup> Przeworski, Adam, and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: John Wiley and Sons. Ragin, Charles C., and Howard S. Becker, eds. 1992. *What Is A Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



the particular context.<sup>56</sup> My own research experience strongly confirmed the value of participatory work. The process of applying existing theoretical frames to the empirical studies in China in this research was not completed at once, but gradually formulated after field observations took place.

This research approach would not particularly cause controversies within the academic community except for the “action” part. The “action” part refers to not only one’s awareness of the normative commitments attached to the research project, but also the willingness of putting such commitments into action as affirmation. I do agree with the first half of this point of view. Even though Weberian positivism still dominates the contemporary social science enterprise, the theme of moral neutrality is constantly contested. Political philosophers have warned us that extreme positivism would inevitably lead to nihilism.<sup>57</sup> I have come to see social science research as reflexive and dialectical processes. To study political matters is to grasp the meanings of them, and also to be enlightened by what is seen and experienced. My commitment to my research subjects reflects my normative belief in the legitimacy of civic engagement. I am now able to articulate and defend these commitments with a greater clarity and certainty than I would have at the start of the research.

However, on the second part of the “action” principle, which requires a researcher to be not only an inside observer, but also an active participant of the

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<sup>56</sup> King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

<sup>57</sup> Strauss, Leo. 1959. *What Is Political Philosophy and Other Studies*. New York: The Free Press. “What is Political Philosophy?” pp9-55; “Political Philosophy and History,” pp56-77; “On Classical Political Philosophy,” pp78-94.

movement, campaign, or other political actions that are under investigation, I have my reservations. I appreciate Ruth Reitan's reflections on her three-year long dissertation research on the World Social Forum and transnational social movement against the Neoliberal World Order: "This insider perspective, however, is strengthened by being able to shift between the inside and outside, the individual and collective."<sup>58</sup> She noted the danger of researchers over-identifying with certain groups, and being blind to their own prejudice. During my own research, I remained mostly as a friend with the activist groups and activist-minded professionals, sometimes a peer researcher to share thoughts and reflections, but never an igniter, leader, or backbone of political action. It was important for me to resist the temptation of being "pro-active", which might have caused me to miss the correct interpretation of the political dynamics. Needless to say, there were many emotionally conflicting moments. But, by the end, this approach suited me well.

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<sup>58</sup> Reitan, 2005.

## CHAPTER 2

### TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN THEORY

In this chapter, I clarify relevant theoretical questions by four steps. First, in order to bring the focus of my research back into the broader theoretical context, I will introduce the school of transnationalism, and particularly, theories of non-state actors (NSAs) and transnational activism in International Relations field. Different from earlier work on transnationalism, scholarship on transnational activism appreciates many concepts from the contentious politics literature in Comparative Politics, and highlights the effects of information, norms and ideational factors.

In the second part, I discuss Margaret Keck and Katherine Sikkink's theory of transnational advocacy networks in greater detail. I challenge their assumptions about the contentious nature of transnational advocacy politics and the type of political power that international NSAs possess. I propose a Double-mobilization model to understand transnational advocacy networks, which by contrast emphasizes the activities such networks conduct when aiming at more gradual and sustainable effects on domestic societies, as well as the type of power they exercise over governmental authorities through persuasion, demonstration, and consensus building. The Double-mobilization model also underlines the dynamic triangular relationship among the state, society, and international NSAs, and the complexity of this triangle marked by the co-existence of various forms of engagement or confrontation between the state and individual international NSAs.

In the third part, I discuss potential causal variables for the emergence and evolution of transnational advocacy networks. In the existing literature, Khagram's cross-country historical comparative study of anti-dam movements provides the best existing example of how to systematically search for domestic explanatory factors on the topic. Drawing upon both Thomas Risse's work on domestic structures and preliminary findings from my field work, I suggest a cross-sectoral comparative approach, focusing on one country, to distinguish micro-level variables that would offer a better understanding of the impact of domestic political context on the form of transnational networks.

The case of China offers rich theoretical potential. China first exhibits a very different, yet not entirely unique, situation from what has been depicted in most of the existing literature on transnational advocacy networks, where the state is not easily susceptible to external pressures and moral criticisms. More importantly, China is in the midst of a grand transformation, where both its state and society are undergoing fundamental and rapid changes, and Maoist uniformity is fading away rapidly. Sectoral variations are present due to the fact that different new problems are emerging, new political actors and alliances are in formation, and new political ideas and institutions are being tried in each issue area. Based on both comparative and Chinese politics literature, I identify a set of indicators to examine main domestic state and society structures defined by an issue area, and how these structural factors have influenced transnational networks.

## NON-STATE ACTORS IN TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONS

The concept of transnational advocacy networks was first defined by those scholars who are interested in non-state actors in world affairs, and linkages between domestic and international politics. Hence, a review of related literature, especially transnationalism in IR theory, helps to better understand what is special and essential about the term “advocacy networks” in interpreting transnational relations.

### **Transnationalism in International Relations Theory**

Theories of non-state actors and transnational activism have their intellectual roots in the tradition of linkage politics—the linkage between domestic and international politics.<sup>1</sup> Most IR scholars used to focus on interactions among states, regardless their disagreement on whether the system is composed of an international society<sup>2</sup> or a group of individual states, and whether the states are survival-seekers or utility-maximizers.<sup>3</sup> The sole unit of analysis was for them the sovereign state. Those who were interested in international-domestic linkages, instead, attempted to understand domestic sources of

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenau, James N. 1969. *Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems*. New York: Free Press.

<sup>2</sup> This tradition in IR field is known as the English School (Bull, Hedley. 1977. *The Anarchical Society*. New York: Columbia University Press), and more recently has been enriched by IR constructivism: Katzenstein, Peter J., ed. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identities in World Politics*. Edited by J. G. Ruggie, *New Directions in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press. Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>3</sup> The term “survival-seeker” is often used to refer to neo-realist perspective, and “utility-maximizer” to Neoliberal-institutionalist perspective. Baldwin, David A., ed. 1993. *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*. New York: Columbia University Press. Keohane, Robert O., ed. 1986. *Neorealism and Its Critics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

international affairs, or international environmental causes of domestic politics. On the one hand, the unit of the state is disaggregated, and non-state actors (e.g., supra-national organizations and sub-national groups) are taken into serious consideration as both agents and structures of changes. On the other hand, the transnationalism literature does not suggest the total retreat of national governments. Unlike the globalist perspective, which tends to entirely replace political boundaries with ecological, technological, economical, or sociological fault lines, transnationalism still sees the state as a main political actor and political arena in world politics.<sup>4</sup> Summarized nicely by Peter Gourevitch, the rationale for transnational relations inquiries is to better understand state behavior by studying “international and domestic politics simultaneously”.<sup>5</sup>

Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye first conceptualized the complexity of transnational relations with their theory of interdependence, capturing the multi-level interactions among multiple actors in multiple issue areas.<sup>6</sup> They pointed out that classic IR literature overlooked the great amount of interactions either between one state and societal actors in another state, or between inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and societal forces within a state. James Rosenau, in his writings on “turbulence” in world

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<sup>4</sup> This way of classifying the three branches of the IR field (i.e., international, transnational, and global) is more ontological than epistemological. Representative scholarship taking a globalist approach includes: Held, David et al. 1999. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pirages, Dennis. 1989. *Global Technopolitics: The International Politics of Technology and Resources*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole. Strange, Susan. 1996. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Boli, John, and George M. Thomas, eds. 1999. *Constructing World Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Gourevitch, Peter. 1978. “The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics.” *International Organization*, 32 (4): 881-912.

<sup>6</sup> Keohane, Robert O. and Joseph S. Nye. 1972. “Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction.” In *Transnational Relations in World Politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

politics, underlined and summarized the importance of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in transnational relations.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from the point that transnational relations scholars conceive of the world in a way different from state-centric and globalist IR perspectives, they also relax the urgency to develop a parsimonious grand theory of the field. Instead, they have pursued many alternative middle-ground explanatory theories. These theories are less aimed at a metaphor of transnational relations than at *processes* of interactions, and nuances of the causal mechanisms, for example, transnational bureaucratic connections, political party coalitions across countries, and double-edged diplomatic negotiations.<sup>8</sup>

In this tradition, Peter Haas first outlined the concept of epistemic community based on his research of the Mediterranean Sea multilateral pollution control treaty.<sup>9</sup> This concept portrayed a particular group of political actors linking domestic and international

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<sup>7</sup> Rosenau, James N. 1990. *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. 1997. *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in A Turbulent World*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>8</sup> For a review on this point see Robert Keohane, and Helen Milner eds. 1996. *Internationalization and Domestic Politics*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. Robert Putnam's work on double-edged diplomacy in international negotiations provided a provocative framework to understand the state's decision based on the comparison and calculation between both domestic and international bargaining outcomes. This institution-based framework has been enriched by various empirical applications, such as Elizabeth Economy's studies on China's environmental diplomacy in global climate change negotiations. (Putnam, Robert. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games". *International Organization*, 42, 3:427-460. Evans, Peter B., Harold K. Jacobson, and Robert D. Putnam eds. 1993. *Double-edged diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Economy, Elizabeth. 1997. "Chinese Policy-making and Global Climate Change: Two-Front Diplomacy and the International Community." In *The Internationalization of Environmental Protection*. Miranda Schreurs and Elizabeth Economy eds. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.)

<sup>9</sup> Haas, Peter. 1989. "Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control". *International Organization*, 43, 3:377-403.

politics—those who have the authority over knowledge—scientists and policy experts, and has since inspired a large body of empirical research across various topics and geographic regions.<sup>10</sup> IR scholars' attention was called to re-examine the leverage of science and knowledge in international politics, and the respect, mobilizing capacity, and persuasive power that scientists and experts possess, in contrast with traditional political actors. More importantly, the epistemic community theory pointed out the importance of loose yet semi-institutionalized networks among those scientists and experts, formed through their official activities as representatives of their own governments, as well as their personal communications based on shared professional knowledge. Such networks usually play a central role in setting both domestic and international agenda for science based international negotiations and regime building, e.g., global warming.<sup>11</sup>

I specifically bring up the epistemic community concept here not only because it raised many relevant questions which provided inspiration for further research on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy networks in transnational relations, but also because of the confusion over the differences between epistemic communities and transnational advocacy networks. Both of them emphasize non-traditional agents in international relations, and share an appreciation of the networks perspective. Nevertheless, the two are qualitative different from each other. Even though the epistemic community theory illustrates how non-state actors can form connections

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<sup>10</sup> Haas, Peter ed.1992. *Knowledge, Power, and International Policy Coordination. International Organization* (Special Issue), No. 46.

<sup>11</sup> Karen Litfin's critique on the epistemic community model led to some re-assessment of structural constraints on the political leverage that the scientist community can possess. (Litfin, Karen. 1995. "Framing Science: Precautionary Discourse and Ozone Treaties," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 24, 2: 251-277.)



and networks outside/beyond formal political settings which, in turn, modify state and international decision-making processes, its explanatory power is limited to those political actors that have *direct* access to state decision-making processes. The very reason that an epistemic community can be effective is that the policy experts and scientists are either officially or partially *inside* the state apparatus. The genesis of linkage politics, crossing the domestic and international arenas, seems to be from *within* the state and the state-system. International NGOs and advocacy networks infused with voluntarism and bottom-up activism, however, generate a different kind of political dynamic as they intend to change state behavior from *outside* in. In addition, the transnational activism and advocacy literature emphasizes the power not of scientific knowledge, but of information and principled ideas.<sup>12</sup> Participants of an advocacy network are not necessarily scientists or experts, but committed individuals and organizations for a specific cause.<sup>13</sup> In brief, epistemic communities are persuasive and capable of changing a state's political agenda because they are considered to know better about what is more efficient and beneficial. Transnational advocates, on the other hand, are capable of mobilizing for political changes, because they are committed to what is more just and better for the public.

### **International NGOs and Transnational Activism**

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<sup>12</sup> The boundary between pure scientific evidence and normative principles often gets blurred in practice. Activists and advocacy groups care about scientific research and findings for different reasons, but they do so for different reasons than researchers. Or, at least, they care more about the social justice implications of such findings. And, they are more involved in the translating of scientific findings into common languages and accessible information for the general public than the actual discovery of the findings.

<sup>13</sup> Advocates can include activist-minded scientists and experts.

NGOs are distinguished from other non-state actors (e.g., corporations, research institutions) in that they are organized, private, voluntary based, and autonomous.<sup>14</sup> International NGOs are those independent organizations that mobilize resources, deliver services, and conduct projects across country borders. In reality, international NGOs can take on various outlooks, and sometimes are described as being Janus-faced in that their private, non-state character is not as clear-cut as in theory. Scholars have pointed out that international NGOs' autonomy and accountability is constantly challenged by their donors, such as international development agencies, governmental foreign assistance agencies, and corporate foundations.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, many but not all international NGOs are advocacy-focused and committed to social activism. Nevertheless, they are the most important transnational actors in confronting sovereign states' violation of human rights and problems embedded in the neo-liberal international economic order. In this section, I will review the merging of the scholarship on international NGOs and that on domestic social movements. This synthesis of research approaches from different sub-fields in political science has greatly improved the understanding of new dynamics in world affairs.

Since the early 1990s, international NGOs have drawn increasing attention from IR scholars. This is due, first, to international NGOs' growing involvement in international negotiations and conferences. In the fields of human rights, women's rights,

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<sup>14</sup> See footnote 14 in Chapter 1 for more discussion on the definition of NGO.

<sup>15</sup> Salamon, Lester M., ed. 1999. *Global Civil Society: Dimensions of the Nonprofit Sector*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies. Stiles, Kendall, ed. 2000. *Global Institutions and Local Empowerment: Competing Theoretical Perspectives*. New York: St. Martin's Press. Fox, Jonathan, and L.David Brown, eds. 1998. *The Struggle for Accountability: The World Bank, NGOs, and Grassroots Movements*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press.

and environmental protection, international NGOs' influence on agenda setting, negotiation procedures, and final agreement drafting became evident.<sup>16</sup> One of the most studied examples is the International Committee to Ban Landmines and international regime building to ban the use of landmines.<sup>17</sup> In 1992, a half dozen concerned international NGOs founded ICBL with the hope to ban the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of landmines.<sup>18</sup> Within four years over 1,400 religious, humanitarian and development NGOs joined ICBL in the course against landmines. Activists and NGOs lobbied, mobilized, and campaigned at the international level, as well as targeted individual governments. The speed and momentum of the movement was unprecedented, culminating in December 1997 in the *Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and On their Destruction*. The ICBL, as well as key individuals involved in the movement were rewarded with the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. By October 2004, 143 states have acceded to the Ottawa Convention worldwide.

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<sup>16</sup> Spector, B., G. Sjostedt and I. Zartman ed. 1994. *Negotiating International Regimes: Lessons learned from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)*. London: Graham & Trotham/Martinus Nijhoff. Jennifer Clapp. 1994. "Africa, NGOs, and the International Toxic Waste Trade", *Journal of Environment and Development*, Vol. 3, No. 2. Ann Marie Clark, Elisabeth J. Friedman, and Kathryn Hochstetler. 1998. "The Sovereign Limits of Global Civil Society: A Comparison of NGO Participation in UN World Conferences on the Environment, Human Rights, and Women." *World Politics*, 51.

<sup>17</sup> Motoko Mekata. 2000. Chapter Six in Ann Florini eds. *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Edwards, Michael, and John Gaventa, eds. 2001. *Global Citizen Action*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

<sup>18</sup> The six NGOs that formed the initial steering committee of the ICBL were Handicap International, Human Rights Watch, Medico International, Mines Advisory Group, Physicians for Human Rights, and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation.

Equipped with advanced information, specialized expertise, and professional mobilization skills, international NGOs also gradually become important public educators, facilitators, and norm and policy entrepreneurs in the development and implementation of global governance.<sup>19</sup> Some recognize them as the “third force”—next to states and corporations—in the complex system of the global governing structures.<sup>20</sup> Despite shortcomings, international NGOs have taken major roles in nurturing democratic principles, supporting democratic consolidation, and preventing sub-national conflicts.<sup>21</sup> Scholars pointed out three trends in the expanding scope of the international

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<sup>19</sup> The idea of a “norm entrepreneur” was raised by Martha Finnemore, and Kathryn Sikkink in "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization*. 52, 4: 887-917. (1998) For the role of international NGOs in global governance, see: Princen, Thomas, and Matthias Finger. 1994. *Environmental NGOs in World Politics: Linking the Local and the Global*. New York: Routledge. Weiss, Thomas, and Leon Gordenker, eds. 1996. *NGOs, the UN, and Global Governance*. Series. London: Lynne Rienner. Lipschutz, Ronnie and Ken Conca eds. 1993. *The State and Social Power in Global Environmental Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press. Clark, Ann Marie. 1995. "Non-Governmental Organizations and Their Influence on International Society." *Journal of International Affairs*. 48, 2: 507-26. Murphy, Craig N. 1994. *International Organization and Industrial Change: Global Governance Since 1850*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>20</sup> Florini, Ann M. ed. 2000. *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

<sup>21</sup> Kumar, Chetan. 2000. Chapter Five in *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*. Florini, Ann M. ed. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Mendelson, Sarah, and John Glenn. 2000. "Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies". Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment of International Peace. Quigley, Kevin. 1997. *For Democracy's Sake: Foundations and Democracy Assistance in Central Europe*. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press. Lasota, Irena. 1999. "Sometimes Less Is More." *Journal of Democracy*. 10, 4: 125. MacDonald, Laura. 1997. *Supporting Civil Society: The Political Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Central America*. London: MacMillan Press. Shelley, Becky. 2000. "Political Globalization and the Politics of International Non-governmental Organizations: The Case of Village Democracy in China." *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 35, 2: 225-38. Rotberg, Robert I., ed. 1996. *Vigilance and Vengeance: NGOs Preventing Ethnic Conflict in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C., Cambridge, MA: Brookings Institution Press and World Peace Foundation.

NGO community. First, the total number of international NGOs has exploded since the 1970s—from 2173 in 1972, 4518 in 1988, and over 6000 by the end of 1990s—covering a wide range of social political issues, e.g., human rights, environment, development, indigenous peoples’ rights, North-South divide, anti-war, and global public health.<sup>22</sup> Second, the number of international NGOs representing transnational social movements has increased from 1983 to 1993 by 73 per cent (from 319 to 533), which indicates that the local populations and constituencies that international NGOs are accountable to have grown considerably.<sup>23</sup> Third, the development of international NGOs took place in parallel to, yet recently surpassed the establishment of IGOs. From the 1950s to 1970s, the ratio of international NGOs to IGOs grew very slowly, from less than 5 international NGOs per IGO to 7-9 international NGOs per IGO, while in 1988, the UN counted 4518 international NGOs and 309 IGOs, a ratio of over 14 to 1.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast to the above more international regime formation focused perspective, the second generation of scholarship on international NGOs incorporated more concepts and frameworks from comparative studies of domestic social mobilization and political changes. This body of literature, which I summarize as “transnational activism”, shares at

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<sup>22</sup> Rosenau, James N. 1990. *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press: p409. (quoted in Risse-Kappen, Thomas, ed. 1995. *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-state Actors, Domestic Structures, and International Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: p10) Also see: Boli, John, and George M. Thomas, eds. 1999. *Constructing World Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Princen, Thomas, and Matthias Finger. 1994. *Environmental NGOs in World Politics: Linking the Local and the Global*. New York: Routledge. Keck, Sikkink, and Jackie Smith’s account of the numbers, however, is 183 in 1973, and 631 in 1993, covering human rights, world order, international law, peace, women’s rights, environment, development, ethnic group rights, Esperanto and other fields. (Keck and Sikkink, 1998. p11)

<sup>23</sup> Risse-Kappen, ed. 1995. p11.

<sup>24</sup> Rosenau, 1990. p409 (quoted in Risse-Kappen, ed. 1995. p11)

least three major arguments: first, transnational societal linkages, represented by NGO connections, networks, and coalitions across borders, are emerging and having significant impacts on local, national, and world politics; second, these linkages are most crucial when the aim is to empower local people and to overcome domestic policy blockages in order to change state behavior; and third, information, normative principles, and ideational factors are crucial for these NGOs and advocates to substantiate their pressure and leverage over targeted political authorities. These three principal points differentiate the transnational activism literature from other studies of non-state actors in transnational politics. As Keck and Sikkink point out, this body of literature highlights “a subset of international issues, characterized by the prominence of principled ideas and a central role for NGOs.”<sup>25</sup> In this subset of issues, non-state actors form coalitions to carry out and articulate specific principles, translate them into policy debates on the ground, and lobby for external pressure for domestic enforcement of these norms and rules. They also try to change the balance of power in domestic political struggles to make states change existing policies by mobilizing large-scale demonstrations and campaigns across country borders.

The main types of transnational activism are transnational advocacy networks, transnational coalitions, and transnational social movements. Transnational advocacy networks and transnational coalitions have much in common in that both are configurations of individual activists, NGOs, movements, and grassroots groups, promoting changes in a clearly identified policy issue area. The notion of transnational advocacy networks, first constructed by Keck and Sikkink’s in *Activists beyond Borders*,

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<sup>25</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p199.

stresses “fluid and open relations among committed and knowledgeable actors working in specialized issue areas.”<sup>26</sup> In contrast, Sanjeev Khagram, James Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink argued that a transnational coalition involves a greater level of coordination and requires shared strategies and tactics.<sup>27</sup> The transnational networks around violence against women, for example, became a transnational coalition in early 1990s when women’s groups developed two strategies transnationally: an international petition drive and the “sixteen-day” campaign—coordinating activism in different countries in the same sixteen-day period.<sup>28</sup>

The notion and discussion of transnational social movements was popularized by Sidney Tarrow’s book *Power in Movement*.<sup>29</sup> Built upon analysis of and conclusions about domestic social movements, Tarrow pointed out that changes in political opportunities and constraints (both domestic and international) will trigger episodes of social contention. By strategically employing a repertoire of collective action and constructing dense social networks and mobilization structures, social movement organizations frame contention and mobilize people across borders. He also differentiated

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<sup>26</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p8.

<sup>27</sup> Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink, 2002. pp7.

<sup>28</sup> Thompson, Karen B. 2002. "Women's Rights are Human Rights." In *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, edited by Sanjeev Khagram, James Riker and Kathryn Sikkink, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp 96-123.

<sup>29</sup> Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movement and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Tarrow, Sidney. 2002. "The New Transnational Contention: Organizations, Coalitions, Mechanisms." Paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, August 29 September 1.

transnational social movements from other types of transnational activism by emphasizing the massive scale and temporal continuity of the former.<sup>30</sup>

The above three types of transnational activism can be briefly differentiated as ascending levels of transnational collective action.<sup>31</sup> In short, they ascend is in both senses of scope and depth of contention and mobilization.<sup>32</sup> Hence, transnational advocacy networks, transnational coalitions and transnational social movements together have provided a new account for the role of NSAs in world affairs, by underlining the transnationalization of domestic contention and specifying the various mechanisms employed by domestic and international NGOs and advocates to advance this transnationalizing process. This approach is distinctive from other works on international relations and NSAs due to its emphasis on the meaning of purposeful individuals coming

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<sup>30</sup> Drawing upon multiple cases in Latin America, Jackie Smith improved transnational social movement theory by emphasizing that transnational social movement organizations will provide new and ongoing opportunities for marginalized groups to seek to influence local, national, global political changes. Transnational social movement organizations help bring together local constituencies to national level politics, and guide a transnational public discourse and debate around global problems. (Smith, Jackie. 2000. "Social Movements, International Institutions, and Local Empowerment." In *Global Institutions and Local Empowerment*, edited by Stiles, K. New York: St. Martin's Press.) Donatella della Porta et al built upon Tarrow and Smith's studies and argued that transnational social movement is a multi-level game, where international political opportunity and constraint, diffusion of norms and discourses, and mobilization structures are all relevant. (della Porta, Donatella, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Dieter Rucht. 1999. *Social Movements in A Globalizing World*. New York: St. Martin's Press.)

<sup>31</sup> Khagram, Riker, and Sikkink, 2002. pp9.

<sup>32</sup> It is difficult to imagine and to find empirical evidence that a transnational movement will emerge without prior networking or campaigning. As to the level of contention, however, it is challenging to ask whether the assassination of an activist is less contentious than the massive protests organized by international NGOs. Thick description and accurate interpretation are needed to compare these cases. Thus, to differentiate the three types of transnational activism from each other and to identify a particular transnational activism case more accurately, one still needs to look into the specific context and details of each case.



together across geographic boundaries, forming consolidated networks and shared solidarity, and disseminating and putting into action principled ideas through intensive and continuous media campaigns, petitions, public demonstrations, and lobbying for international pressure.

### **Transnational vs. Global Civil Society**

To better understand transnational activism in theory, it is worth pointing out the distinction between two related concepts: transnational civil society and global civil society. Despite the common appreciation of the political relevance of non-state actors in world affairs, these two terms differ in many ways, thus shedding light on theories of transnational activism.

The ontological division between the two terms— transnational vs. global civil society— is rooted in the transnationalist vs. globalist debate in the IR field. The global civil society framework blurs the political boundaries of societies, and assumes that civil society in each country shares the same characteristics, such as autonomous NGOs, commitment to the market economy, civic engagement in political decision-making, and a voluntary spirit.<sup>33</sup> Scholars who prefer this framework argue that besides lobbying governments and playing a role in international regime formation, NGOs have other power derived from diffusing normative principles, changing local practices, and creating

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<sup>33</sup> For example, since 2001, the Center for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics and Political Science has published issues of the *Global Civil Society Yearbook*. (London: LSE Press) Based on some uniform definitions and measurements, the Yearbook is intended to offer a statistical overview, via tables, maps and diagrams, of global civil society's dimensions and contours. It is now frequently referred to by the researchers who are interested in the topic.

a global civic political culture.<sup>34</sup> Paul Wapner attempted to illustrate the politics of global civil society by showing how international environmental NGOs and multi-national corporations introduce social behavior changes via day-to-day communications and interactions. Such communications and interactions do not take place in the forms of protest, strike, boycott or other confrontational means.<sup>35</sup>

Keck and Sikkink are not satisfied with the concept of global civil society, yet “much more comfortable with a conception of transnational civil society as an arena of struggle, a fragmented and contested area where ‘the politics of transnational civil society is centrally about the way in which certain groups emerge and are legitimized’.”<sup>36</sup> They argue that international non-state actors are not purely enactors of new norms. On the contrary, preferences and identities of actors engaged in transnational civil society are mutually transformed through their interactions with each other, and resistance against pre-existing political authorities.<sup>37</sup> Where those actors come from, and against whom

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<sup>34</sup> Edwards, Michael and John Gaventa, eds. 2001. Salamon, Lester M., ed. 1999. Smith, Jackie. 1998. "Global Civil Society." *American Behavioral Scientist*. 42: 93-108. Lipschutz, Ronnie. 1996. *Global Civil Society and Global Environmental Governance*. Albany: SUNY Press.

<sup>35</sup> Wapner, Paul. 1996. *Environmental Activism and World Politics*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

<sup>36</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. p33. Jackie Smith’s study of transnational social movements came closer to the global civil society notion in that she points out the importance of a global public discourse, e.g., environmental protection and its power to inspire and mobilize grassroots resistance, demonstration and protests. (Smith, 1998) The normative and ideational dimensions of transnational factors are put forward. However, what differentiates Smith from Wapner is that the former brings back the question of the leverage of social movements on political changes, in addition to social changes. Neither transnational advocacy networks nor transnational social movement scholars suspend the consideration of political changes resulting from social mobilizations. On the contrary, the state-society interaction and balancing are among the topics that interest them most.

<sup>37</sup> Price, Richard M. 2003. “Transnational Civil Society and Advocacy in World Politics Review.” *World Politics*, 55, 4: 579-606.

they stand, always matter. In other words, activists can go beyond borders, but cannot go *without* a target of struggle (e.g., a specific policy, a government or an international organization). Transnational civil society is an arena for committed individuals to form new collective identities so to debate and articulate the implications of certain normative principles, exemplify the practical embodiment of such principles, and build up institutions to ensure the execution of these principles. The causal chain for political changes is much clear and shorter in the transnational civil society framework than in the global civil society framework.

I contend that the transnational civil society perspective provides a trenchant response to a central puzzle in IR concerning the relationship between civil society and contemporary nation states in an era of globalization. It constitutes a powerful theoretical alternative not only to state-centric theories, but also to variants of neo-liberal IR theories, such as those privileging market forces and interdependence. My own research shares with the scholars of transnational activism their vision of a “tightly knit” globalization process,<sup>38</sup> which is not an inevitable “steamroller” but the composite of thousands of decisions and actions made by groups of purposeful individuals and organizations.<sup>39</sup> However, I also draw upon the scholarship on globalism and stress NSAs’ non-contentious activities to change state behavior and domestic politics. In other words, international NSAs and transnational networks are situated in complex political struggles and contention cross country borders; however, their ways of solving problems and modifying existing political alliances and balances are not uniformly contentious.

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<sup>38</sup> Tarrow, 1998. Chapter 11.

<sup>39</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. Conclusion chapter, p213.

**DOUBLE-MOBILIZATION:  
TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS THEORY REVISITED**

Among various theories on non-state actors in transnational relations, Keck and Sikkink's conceptualization of transnational advocacy networks is best suited to analyze the empirical questions in my research. In this section, I will first explicate the meaning and implications of the concept of transnational advocacy networks, and particularly the causal mechanism of these networks—the Boomerang model, offered by Keck and Sikkink. I then argue that there is a contentious politics bias embedded in the Boomerang model which leads to a partial description of the political dynamics involved in transnational advocacy networks. I further propose a complementary model—Double-mobilization—in order to draw attention to the direct and various interactions between external advocacy actors and targeted governments that are missing in the Boomerang model. The Double-mobilization model builds upon the discursive theory of political power in international relations, and emphasizes that domestic state-society relations are not static but evolve along with the development of transnational advocacy politics.

The contribution of Keck and Sikkink's work *Activists beyond Borders* is that it first clarified what are advocacy networks, and how, why, among whom, and to what end transnational advocacy networks emerge. It created a new research vocabulary for the IR field. Based on a range of historical in-depth case studies covering human rights advocacy networks in China and Africa at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, environmental networks in tropical forestry regions in current Brazil and Malaysia, and transnational networks against domestic violence and women's rights, Keck and Sikkink argued that transnational advocacy networks are fluid, open, voluntary-based, and loosely

coordinated groups of committed individuals and NGOs for a specific course. Each network is identified by a specific issue area. International and grassroots NGOs are essential participants of transnational advocacy networks. Individuals from different backgrounds (not formally affiliated with NGOs) can sometimes play a critical role in facilitating the development of a network. They include professional activists, officials at multilateral institutions, scientists or policy experts. NGOs and advocates of a network are loosely coordinated and connected under one umbrella of a general principled idea or an agenda to dealing with a particular social justice problem. What is novel in these networks is the ability of non-traditional political actors to assemble first-hand information and to use such information strategically at different levels to help create new issues and categories, to mobilize resources transnationally to lobby other powerful actors, and to gain leverage over much more powerful organizations and governments. They are not always successful in their efforts, but they are increasingly important players in policy debates at national, regional and international levels.

Keck and Sikkink pointed out that advocacy networks are particularly common in value-laden issue areas, such as human rights, the environment, women, and indigenous peoples. It is implied that these are also the issues that are situated in or can be framed within a transnational context. It can be a local issue yet with noticeable transnational consequences, e.g., coal burning in city X and its effects on regional acid-rain rate. It can also be related to an internationally recognized problem or norm, which is expected to be internalized by individual governments and implemented at local levels, e.g., equal access to treatment for AIDS patients. And sometimes, these two scenarios can overlap in one case, e.g., conservation of the sources of transboundary rivers, which also happen to

be the land of ethnic minority peoples. Furthermore, Keck and Sikkink argued that issue characteristics (i.e. whether the issue is directly linked with human bodily damage) as one of the most important factors that decide the emergence of transnational advocacy networks.<sup>40</sup>

Their theory also identified four main strategies through which transnational advocacy networks can effectively mobilize for political changes: 1) information politics—to quickly and credibly generate and disseminate politically usable information; 2) symbolic politics—to make sense of a political situation to a large audience by calling upon symbols, or sensational stories; 3) leverage politics—to strategically identify and call upon more powerful actors to affect a political situation;<sup>41</sup> and 4) accountability politics—to hold targeted actors to their previously state policies or international commitments.<sup>42</sup> Information, repeatedly noted by the two authors, is essential to all these strategies. Keck and Sikkink consider transnational advocacy networks to be unique political actors particularly in that groups and individuals in a network share values and *frequently* exchange information. In fact, the sense of solidarity and a dense web of connection shared within these networks are revealed in frequent and continuous flows of information.

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<sup>40</sup> Another crucial factor is actor characteristics, i.e. leadership within the networks.

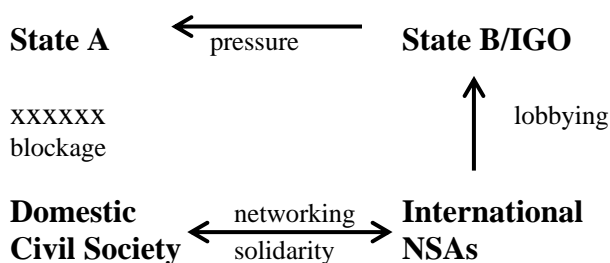
<sup>41</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. pp16-25. Particularly, moral leverage which is played out in the form of “mobilization of shame”, holding up targeted political actors to the light of international scrutiny.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. Such a targeted actor is usually a repressive or corrupted governments which violates or refuses to recognize rights, and where individuals and domestic groups often have no recourse within domestic political or judicial arenas.

## The Boomerang Pattern and Its Limitations

Based on empirical findings, Keck and Sikkink constructed the analogy of Boomerang to crystallize the causal mechanism through which transnational advocacy networks affect state decisions and actions. Figure 2.1 illustrates this mechanism: State A blocks redress to its domestic social groups and NGOs in a particular issue area. Domestic NGOs and activists, therefore, look for assistance through networking with overseas NGOs and other international NSAs. International NSAs lobby their own state (State B), or, if relevant, a third-party organization (usually an IGO), which in turn pressures State A to lift political obstacles or compensate domestic victimized groups.

**Figure 2.1. The Boomerang Model (Keck and Sikkink, 1998)**



IGO: Inter-governmental organization; NSA: non-state actors

Recognizing transnational advocacy networks as agents enmeshed in existing social-political structures, this Boomerang model assumes three things: the zero-sum nature of the state-society relation in domestic politics, the cooperation and solidarity among local civil society groups and international NSAs, and the pressure-compliance relationship between a sovereign state and transnational advocacy networks (through a powerful third party). The model implies that if an advocacy network emerges, it will inevitably strengthen local social forces and get involved in some form of confrontation

with the state. Building up local capacity and providing solutions to local injustice will automatically put transnational advocates into conflict with the state.

However, recent empirical studies have shown that there are qualitatively different causes and forms of transnational advocacy networks. Transnational advocacy networks do present a Boomerang pattern in some cases—the Algerian women’s rights movement and the establishment of the Ivory Trade Ban, for instance—but not always.<sup>43</sup> Some start from outside, such as the labor rights movement in Latin America initiated by American NGOs;<sup>44</sup> while, some start by some initiatives taken by the developmental states in East Asia.<sup>45</sup> In some other cases, networking and mobilization do not work out or cannot be sustained, and this cannot be seen as irrelevant to the assessment of the nature of transnational advocacy networks.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Lloyd, Catherine. 1999. “Organizing Across Borders: Algerian Women’s Associations in A Period of Conflict.” *Review of African Political Economy*. 82, 26.

<sup>44</sup> Ricker, Tom. "Boomerang, Battering-Rams, and Sustainable Solidarity: Transnational Advocacy and the Struggle for Workers Rights in Nicaragua's Maquila Industry." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2001.

<sup>45</sup> Lee, Yok-Shiu F., and Alvin Y. So. eds. *Asia's Environmental Movements: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by New York: M. E. Sharp. Reimann, Kim D. 1999. “Building Networks from the Outside In: International Movements, Japanese NGOs and the Kyoto Climate Change Conference.” Winner of the Fred Hartmann Award for the Best International Studies Paper Delivered by a Graduate Student at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the ISA-NE. In the case of Japan, it was not until the Japanese government engaged in global environmental affairs and started promoting and supporting domestic NGOs that there emerged active interactions among green NGOs transnationally. Therefore, the Japanese government actually played the role of facilitator in transnational activism.

<sup>46</sup> Different forms of transnational advocacy networks will be discussed in the following section. Here, I offer two examples: McMahon pointed out that local NGOs became detached with their constituencies after excessive intervention by international NGOs. (McMahon, Patrice C. 2000. “Building Civil Societies in East Central Europe: The Effect of American NGOs on Women's Groups.” Paper prepared for delivery at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., August 31-September 3.) Khagram documented that the transnational anti-dam movement could not be sustained in



Manifested in the above empirical discrepancies, the Boomerang model has explanatory limitations due to its biased theoretical assumptions, which have their roots in the research tradition of social movements and contentious politics. Keck and Sikkink conceive the political context of transnational advocacy networks as “an arena of struggle”. Even though Keck and Sikkink specifically pointed out that “the advocacy network concept cannot be subsumed under notions of transnational social movements” since the network framework blurs the boundaries among individuals, organizations, and movements, their theories drew upon the concepts of “framing” and “political opportunity structures” in the social movement literature constructed by sociologists and comparativists. More particularly, they concurred with Sidney Tarrow his view of dynamic contention and opportunity structures involved in transnational social struggles.<sup>47</sup>

However, the complexity of the form of contention among the state, local societal groups and transnational networks needs to be reconsidered. First, studies on transnational advocacy politics need to re-visit the theories on domestic state-society relations.<sup>48</sup> For example, based on excellent comparative studies of nine countries in

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China due to the lack of domestic social mobilization. (Khagram, Sanjeev. 2004. *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.)

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p7, 33. On a theme panel of the 2002 American Political Science Association meeting, Keck, Tarrow and Robert Keohane debated and agreed on the need to bridge comparative studies of domestic social mobilization, and political opportunity structure with IR studies of transnational relations. August 31-September 3, Boston, U.S.

<sup>48</sup> Examples of alternative perspectives on state-society relations include “corporatism” (Schmitter, Philippe, et al eds. 1979. *Trends towards Corporatist Intermediation*. Beverly Hills: SAGE.), “embedded autonomy” (Evans, Peter. 1995. *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press), and “developmental state” (White, Gordon, ed. 1988. *Developmental States in East Asia*. New York: St. Martin's Press. Woo-Cumings, Meredith, ed. 1999. *The Developmental State*. Ithaca: Cornell

Asia, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America and across historical periods, Joel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue argued that the tie between state and society is not zero-sum, but potentially mutually empowering.<sup>49</sup> Social forces limit states, yet are themselves altered by the confrontations to which they necessarily find themselves influenced by their political environments. The state must be viewed as one more organization within society rather than as some omnipotent agent standing apart from it, and the boundaries joining the two are often blurred. My research also shows that, even in a non-democratic regime, domestic state-society relations are dynamic and always evolve. Furthermore, external actors can even create favorable conditions that facilitate and strengthen the communication and mutual-influence between the state and society.<sup>50</sup>

Secondly, the relationship between the state and international advocates is not as uniformly contentious as assumed in the Boomerang model. In their book, Keck and Sikkink noted that the targeted governments in their studies of effective transnational advocacy networks are usually susceptible to external moral pressures or material

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University Press). For reviews of theories of state-society relations see: Wiarda, Howard J., ed. 1991. *New Directions in Comparative Politics*. 2 ed. Boulder: Westview Press. Migdal, Joel. 1988. *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Introduction chapter.

<sup>49</sup> Migdal, Joel, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds. 1994. *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>50</sup> This argument draws insights from literature on the effectiveness of international regime, which explicates how international actors can play the role of re-arranging domestic political alliances and facilitates the learning and socialization of new norms and principles. (Young, Oran, ed. 1999. *The Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes: Causal Connections and Behavior Mechanisms*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.) Miranda Schreurs and Elizabeth Economy's work on the internationalization of domestic environmental political also illustrated how external actors can contribute the creation of new domestic institutions which bypass the old political hindrances and introduce changes. (Schreurs, Miranda, and Elizabeth Economy, eds. 1997. *The Internationalization of Environmental Protection*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.)

sanctions.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, on the one hand, the Boomerang does not include the situation where the targeted governments are not vulnerable to international interference and pressures. On the other hand, there is a large body of literature on the non-contentious interactions between governments and international advocacy groups. The Boomerang analogy seems to be a snapshot of transnational advocacy networks at one historical moment. Scholarship on the human rights movement actually documented that there is a long-term process of domestic norm socialization paralleling with transnational campaigns in each targeted country.<sup>52</sup> Kathryn Hochstetler suggested investigating what happens after the Boomerang, based on her empirical work on transnational environmental activism in Brazil.<sup>53</sup>

The third main point of the Boomerang model is the dense information flows and exchanges of ideas among domestic and international activist groups and NGOs. There are two kinds of critiques of this point. First, authors who are critical of the international NGOs' accountability to local communities have pointed out that there seem to be power hierarchies within the networks, between indigenous and external groups.<sup>54</sup> International or local NGOs are not always trusting and accountable to each other. Second, even among international groups and NGOs, the strategic alliances involve more complex

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<sup>51</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. p29.

<sup>52</sup> Risse, Thomas, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. 1999. *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*. Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press. Chan-Tiberghien, Jennifer. 2004. *Gender and Human Rights Politics in Japan: Global Norms and Domestic Networks*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

<sup>53</sup> Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2002. "After the Boomerang: Environmental Movements and Politics in the La Plata River Basin." *Global Environmental Politics*. 2, 4.

<sup>54</sup> Fox, Jonathan, and L.David Brown, eds. 1998. Chapin, Mac. 2004. "A Challenge to Conservationists". *Worldwatch Magazine*, November/December Issue. pp17-30.

interest overlap and conflict, rather than ideological uniformity. Actually, international NGOs and advocates are often caught in between conflicting values and principles.<sup>55</sup> Tom Ricker found in his lengthy study of transnational networks supporting workers in Nicaragua's maquila industry that even among the international NGOs, it is too early to claim that they are allied under one common principle: "While interests (of the organizations involved) intersected over the struggle for workers' rights, the underlying motivations differed across each of these groups".<sup>56</sup>

### **A Double-mobilization Model**

Hence, I propose a differential yet complementary model—Double-mobilization—to better explain the dynamics of transnational advocacy networks, by relaxing the assumptions on state-society relations, and the contentious nature of transnational advocacy politics. (Figure 2.2) In this model, international non-state actors directly interact with the targeted repressive regime (State A), as well as respond to the outcry of domestic civil society groups. The role of a third party (either a powerful State B or an IGO) is not as crucial as in the Boomerang pattern.<sup>57</sup> Transnational advocacy networks

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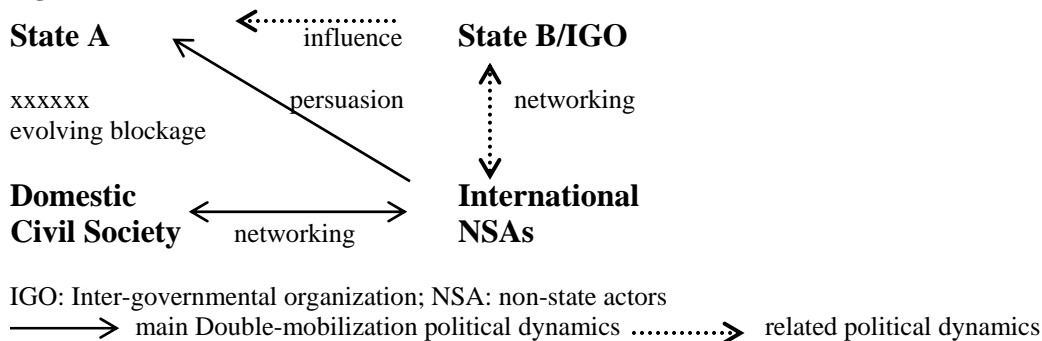
<sup>55</sup> Avant, Deborah. 2003. "Conserving Nature in the State of Nature: Tragic Choices for INGO Policy Implementers". Paper presented at American Political Science Association annual meeting. Philadelphia, 29-31 August.

<sup>56</sup> Ricker, Tom. "Boomerang, Battering-Rams, and Sustainable Solidarity: Transnational Advocacy and the Struggle for Workers Rights in Nicaragua's Maquila Industry." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2001. p298.

<sup>57</sup> The Double-mobilization model, however, doesn't deny the potential influence State B/IGO could have over State A, and the networking activities between international NSAs and State B/IGOs. The point rather is that regardless of State B/IGO's stances, external advocates will strive to modify State A's perceptions and practices. The formation and meaning of transnational advocacy networks does not solely depend on the success of leverage politics through a third party. More will be discussed in the following sections.

exert their influence to change domestic politics through a more gradual and sustainable way by engaging, educating, and mobilizing both domestic governments and civil society groups—therefore, it is called “double-mobilization”.

**Figure 2.2. The Double-mobilization model**



This Double-mobilization model emphasizes that international NSAs form networks to engage, educate and mobilize both the state and the public at once. In addition to seeking material and normative leverage through a third party (a foreign government or IGO), international advocates also strategize to translate their normative principles into practical practices, and implement demonstration projects in order to persuade the targeted state. They often prefer to negotiate with the state rather than to pressure it to comply with their visions and plans of solution. They also care about the sustainability of their activism. Besides contentious means, they employ training, public education and capacity building strategies to deepen norm socialization in both governmental and non-governmental domains. (Table 2.1)

**Table 2.1. Comparing main strategies applied by transnational advocacy networks**

Causal mechanisms of transnational advocacy networks	Strategies
Boomerang	Information politics, symbolic politics, accountability politics, and leverage politics
Double-mobilization	Mobilizing the state: persuasion, demonstration, collaboration, and negotiation Mobilizing the society: raising public awareness, capacity building, and promoting social activism

The most distinctive feature of the Double-mobilization model, in contrast with the Boomerang, is that external NSAs conduct *extensive* activities to persuade and build up consensus with the targeted state. (Table 2.2) Such activities can take the form of project partnership, research collaboration, and policy recommendation, as well as open criticism and protest. The relationship between the targeted state and international NSAs are not necessarily uniform, but diverse. This model indicates that besides networking with domestic activists and activist-minded IGO officials, international NSAs also endeavor to *directly* influence targeted states for attitude, conceptual and policy changes. Furthermore, while it does not challenge the solidarity between domestic and international advocacy groups, it calls for a more careful assessment of the intricate overlap and conflict of interest among them. It also points out that domestic state-society relations may evolve while transnational advocacy networks are emerging, which would potentially add complexity to the politics involved.

**Table 2.2. Comparing theoretical assumptions of the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models**

<b>Transnational advocacy networks</b>	<b>State-international NGO relations</b>	<b>International-domestic NGO relations</b>	<b>State-society relations</b>	<b>Political power</b>
Boomerang	contentious	high level of solidarity	zero-sum, static	hierarchical (both material and normative)
Double-mobilization	vary from collaborative to contentious	collaborative, varying level of solidarity	mutually empowering, dynamic	hierarchical (material and normative) and consensual (normative)

The last major distinction in theoretical assumptions between the two models lies in that the Double-mobilization model adopts a communicative approach to understanding power in transnational relations. The philosophical foundation of this

approach was developed by Jürgen Habermas.<sup>58</sup> The Habermasian view of power, summarized by Karen Litfin, is more the ability to act in concert through *consensual* communication than the ability to obtain goals by coercion or strategic means.<sup>59</sup> In the IR field, scholars have long accepted the idea that power has many “faces”<sup>60</sup>, e.g., soft vs. hard power,<sup>61</sup> Hegel-Gramscian hegemonic vs. Rosenau-Grotian legitimizing power,<sup>62</sup> material structural vs. ideational structural power.<sup>63</sup> The communicative view on power is

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<sup>58</sup> Main books on the topic include: Habermas, Jürgen. 1998. *On the Pragmatics of Communication*. Edited by Cooke, Maeve. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 1978. *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. Translated by McCarthy, T. Boston: Beacon. Other authors, e.g., Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, have also contributed to the communicative/discursive approach.

<sup>59</sup> In her studies of international negotiations for preventing ozone depletion, Karen Litfin gave a good summary of the communicative approach on power in international relations. (Litfin, Karen. 1994. *Ozone Discourses: Science and Politics in Global Environmental Cooperation*. New York: Columbia University Press.)

<sup>60</sup> Boulding, Kenneth E. 1989. *Three Faces of Power*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. For reviews of different approaches to studying the notion of power in international relations, see: Barnett, Michael, and Raymond Duvall, eds. 2005. *Power in Global Governance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Baldwin, David A. 1979. "Power Analysis and World Politics." *World Politics*. 31: 162-63.

<sup>61</sup> Traditionally in IR, “hard” power is calculated in military terms; while, sources of “soft” power can come from the market (e.g., Strange, Susan. 1996. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press), knowledge (e.g., Haas, Ernst. 1990. *When Knowledge is Power: Three Models of Change in International Organization*. Berkeley: University of California Press), ideology/ideas (e.g., Hall, Peter, ed. 1989. *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism across Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press), and normative principles (e.g., Burgerman, Susan. 2001. *Moral Victories: How Activists Provoke Multilateral Action*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Clark, Ann Marie. 2001. *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

<sup>62</sup> Femia, Joseph V. 1981. *Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Piccone, Paul. 1974. “Gramsci’s Hegelian Marxism”. *Political Theory*, 2, 1:32-45. Frank, Thomas M. 1990. *The Power of Legitimacy among Nations*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ikenberry, G. John, and Charles A. Kupchan. 1990. "Socialization and Hegemonic Power." *International Organization*. 44, 4: 283-315.

<sup>63</sup> Waltz, Kenneth. 1959. *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia

thought-provoking because it fundamentally challenges the intuitive understanding of power as hierarchical in essence. It offers a new way to look at non-materialistic, “soft” power, and the process of power generation and execution. Power can be generated through a process of consensus building rather than confrontation, rebellion, or even resistance.<sup>64</sup> Applying this approach, I argue that NSAs are able to modify state behavior particularly because of their ability to make the state *agree on* and *accept* new ideas.<sup>65</sup> Unlike states and IGOs, NSAs do not possess materialist or structural power in the international system. In addition, their seemingly authority over moral issues does not always give them the ability to force states to change.<sup>66</sup> Their real specialty is to form broad networks to translate normative principles into negotiations, collaborations, demonstration projects, and practices so that the targeted state will eventually consent to change.

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University. Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Relations, Cambridge Studies in International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>64</sup> On small-scale and continuous resistance as a way for the “powerless” to generate power, see scholarships on peasants’ everyday resistance and intellectual dissident movement in Eastern Europe: Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University. Havel, Václav, and et al. 1985. *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens against the State in Central-eastern Europe*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe. Tismaneanu, Vladimir. 1993. *Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel*. 2 ed. New York: The Free Press.

<sup>65</sup> Thomas Risse first applied the Habermasian view of consensual power in studying norm socialization in IR. Risse, Thomas. 1999. "International Norms and Domestic Change: Arguing and Communicative Behavior in The Human Rights Area." *Politics & Society*. 27, 4.

<sup>66</sup> To push this point further: If we assume that activists and advocacy organizations are the ones that have the authoritative interpretation of human rights and are entitled to defend good courses, and therefore it is right to pressure governments and make them conform, we are refuting the premise of the power of knowing and being enlightened. The underlining iron here is that what we assume for non-state actors is not applicable for state actors. The accusation of governments’ monopoly of moral discourses in domestic context, therefore, backfires onto the accusers.



Furthermore, the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models differ in their demonstration of the temporal dimension of transnational advocacy networks. They underline different key factors in each phase of networks formation. (Figure 2.3) While the Boomerang starts with a repressive regime, yet susceptible to external pressures, the Double-mobilization model stresses the situation where the targeted state has little history and contact with international agencies, and its domestic political alliances are not easily affected by external factors.<sup>67</sup> In addition, domestic social forces are not as activated and organized in the Double-mobilization model as in Boomerang. (Phase I)

Because of this relative weakness of civil society in domestic political context, the Double-mobilization model highlights the proactive character of external advocacy actors in initiating contacts with domestic social groups. The level of mutuality in information sharing between external and local activists in Double-mobilization is not as high as that in Boomerang model. In addition, while the Boomerang model projects activists (local and international) quickly form dense webs of communication, the Double-mobilization

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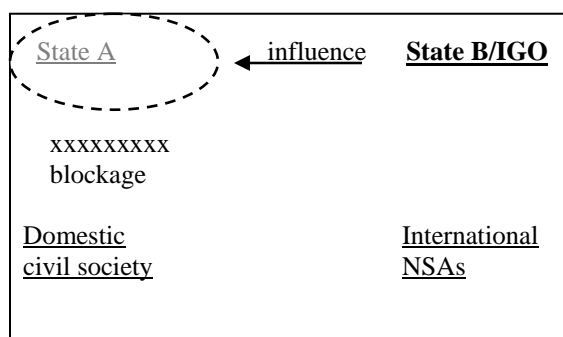
<sup>67</sup> Even though some may argue that the case study in this dissertation (i.e., China) represents a country, whose structural position in the world system allows it to bear/reject international pressures, the relative isolation from the outside world can be caused by various reasons (e.g., geographic distance, history of isolation). On the one hand, many seemingly small, weak countries, in fact, have exhibited the ability to resist outside pressures, even during extremely turbulent times, e.g., Cuba, North Korea, Iraq before 2003, and Rwanda in 1994. On the other, the states that appear to be greatly influenced by international organizations and foreign governments are not necessarily structurally disadvantaged, e.g., Ukraine after 1989. This argument on states' vulnerability in face of external leverage is drawn upon the literature of international dimensions of domestic regime change: Whitehead, Laurence, ed. 2001. *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Dawisha, Karen, ed. 1997. *The International Dimension of Post-Communist Transitions in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe. Pridman, Geoffrey et al, eds. 1994. *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratization in Eastern Europe*. New York: St. Martin's. O'Donnell, Guillermo, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds. 1986. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. (vol. 4) Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

model points out that external advocates make significant effort in engaging the targeted government during the same period of time. (Phase II)

**Figure 2.3. Comparing the temporal dimension of the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models**

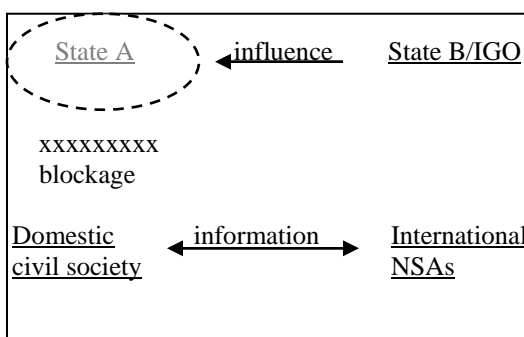
### 2.3.1. Boomerang model

#### Phase I



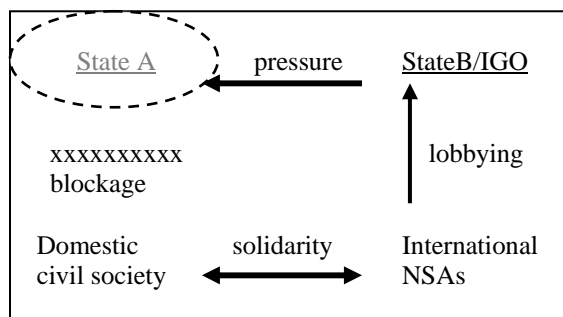
- 1) Domestic political blockage in country A
- 2) Regime A susceptible to external influence from IGO(s) or a hegemonic power (State B)
- 3) Strong domestic civil society and social activism

#### Phase II



- 1) Domestic activist groups reach out for international NSAs
- 2) International NSAs and advocates respond to domestic activist groups, and start form networks for information exchanges

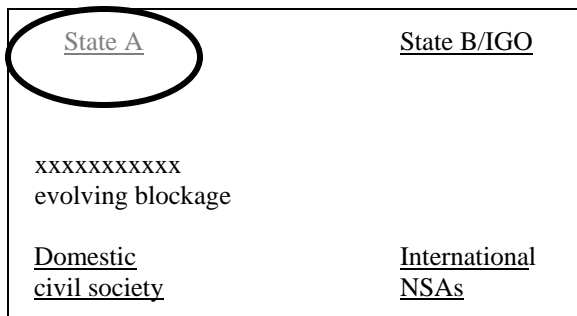
#### Phase III



- 1) International NSAs lobby IGOs/State B to pressure State A
- 2) Transnational advocacy networks are formed among domestic civil society groups and international NSAs

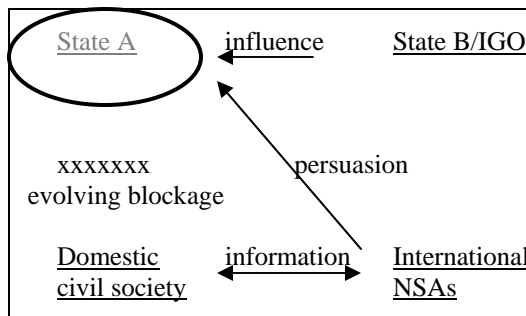
### 2.3.1. Double-mobilization model

#### Phase I



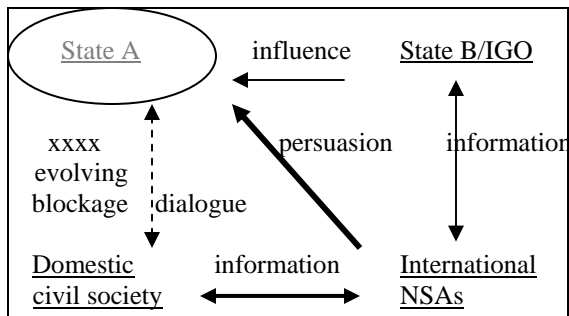
- 1) Domestic political blockage
- 2) Strong non-democratic regime A, not susceptible to international forces
- 3) Weak/lack of domestic civil society

#### Phase II



- 1) Domestic activists/victim groups reach out for international attention and support
- 2) International NSAs respond to domestic problems by direct delivery of service and information to both governmental and non-governmental actors
- 3) IGO and foreign governments start engaging State A
- 4) Domestic state-society contention evolves

#### Phase III



- 1) International NSAs and advocates influence domestic changes by mobilizing both State A and local civil society groups
- 2) Transnational networks among international and domestic advocacy actors are strengthened
- 3) Domestic state-society contention evolves with new communication channels
- 4) State A become more connected and familiar with international actors and principles

In the final phase, the Boomerang model shows that international NSAs develop solidarity with local activist groups, and successfully lobby a third party with significant political leverage to place pressure onto the targeted regime—thus, the Boomerang is completed. By contrast, the Double-mobilization model rather stresses the effects of

direct mobilization and persuasion of the targeted state by external advocates. The ideal outcome of effective Double-mobilization is that through transnational networks, local and external advocates and NSAs can translate principled ideas into the languages suitable for domestic application, and combine them into practical demonstrations to persuade both the state and general public. Domestic changes are introduced based on congruent opinions among various governmental and non-governmental actors. (Phase III)

Even though the main actors are similar, the relationship among these actors and the development path of transnational networks are differently depicted by the two models. The Double-mobilization model further underlines three features of transnational advocacy politics. First, political relations of transnational advocacy networks are complex and dynamic. Both the level and form of contention undertaken by individual actors involved in the networks vary across cases and over time. Second, the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models are complementary in explaining the complexity of transnational advocacy politics. Third, while domestic repression and social control can trigger transnational activism and networking, international NGOs can also, in turn, contribute innovative thinking and institution building to resolve social resentment and improve public participation in an issue area. Domestic state-society relations are not static, and transnational actors can introduce new dynamics by bridging the two.

The Double-mobilization model highlights the complex and dynamic political relations transnational advocacy networks generate, marked by the evolving triangular relationship among sovereign states, domestic civil societies, and international non-state actors. While we tend to be attracted by the most sensational and contentious episodes

related to transnational activism, NGOs and networks conduct much more work largely unnoticed, such as fostering norms in the general public, winning the support of key contacts within the government, and coordinating strategies with local partners. In fact, these activities mostly take place at the same time as the networks organize protests, symbolic demonstration, and leverage politics through a powerful foreign government. Once we desegregate the networks, such complexity becomes more obvious. Different participants of the networks employ a basket of strategies and norms to interact with states or peer organizations. Even for an individual organization, its partnerships and political relations may vary at different times.

This point does not mean that there are no rationalized common goals and mutual understanding within the networks, but it emphasizes the multiple layers and facets of advocacy activities and political relations generated by the networks. Jennifer Chan-Tiberghien's case study of normative changes in domestic violence, child prostitution, racism, and other human rights related issues in Japan documented that advocacy networks initiated and conducted human rights education at the grassroots level on a regular basis, while they were also building political coalitions, organizing NGO rallies at international conferences, and seeking external pressure through a third party.<sup>68</sup> In Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink's model of norm socialization driven by transnational activism actors, moral consciousness-raising parallel with strategic bargaining, persuasion with mobilization of shame, and habitualization with institutionalization. There are many stages, rounds, and components involved in the

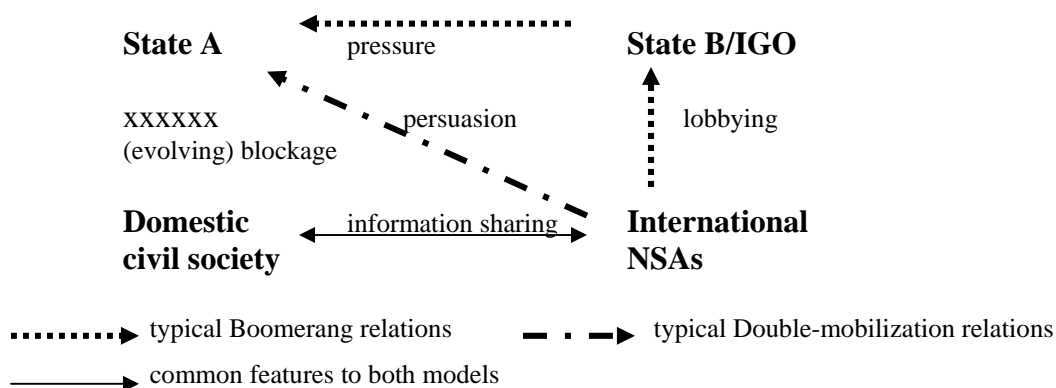
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<sup>68</sup> Chan-Tiberghien, 2004.

whole process of making changes.<sup>69</sup> Findings from my own research evidence that when coming together under general principles (e.g., protection of biodiversity and preventing AIDS in China), individual NGOs naturally understand that each organization plays a different role to contribute to the entire network and final goals. While they respect other organizations' strategies and efforts, they maintain their own working style and believe in what they are good at. Some may focus on norm socialization and public education at the grassroots level, e.g., fighting stigma against AIDS patients, and raising public awareness of the value of wetlands. Others may see their strength lying in the ability to get access to key governmental officials, to "erode" the political impediment, and to provide direct input to policy-making. Changes in particular conservation and AIDS prevention problems did not happen overnight, but after long-term, continuous, and various efforts by international NGOs communities.

Secondly, the Double-mobilization argument does not refute but completes the Boomerang model in explaining transnational advocacy networks. (Figure 2.4) My research suggests that both patterns often co-exist in transnational networks.

**Figure 2.4. A synthesis of the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models**



<sup>69</sup> Risse, et al eds. 1999. pp6-17.

The Boomerang model captures advocacy networks' ability to confront states' wrong-doings, and utilize leverage politics to pressure states to change existing policies. The Double-mobilization model instead emphasizes the more cumulative, and non-contentious work that international NSAs do to prepare for or maintain the results of more eye-catching and symbolic campaigns and protests, build up trust with domestic activists and indigenous groups, and create channels to exert influence on the state bodies.

Different networks situated in different political context may exhibit the two patterns to varying degrees. Some might appear to be more confrontational, targeting the state more directly and publicly. Yet, without the consolidation of norm socialization within both governmental and social arenas, the effects of advocacy work cannot be sustained. Other networks may seem to be dormant, yet still involved in political struggles with high level of contention. Under authoritarian regimes, for non-state actors to remain in existence—even in silent existence—can mean to resist political authority, and continuing advocacy education at grassroots levels can be the most effective way to mobilizing for changes.

Finally, I argue that state-society relations evolve along the way with the formation and development of transnational activism. Transnational advocacy networks can contribute to the bridging and trust building between the state and society, as well as elevate the disagreement between the state and society. The Amazon anti-deforestation movement is an important example.

A word of caution: On the one hand, I do not claim that transnational advocacy networks determine domestic state-society relations, but I point out that, with favorable

circumstances, they are able to re-shape or modify the way state agencies interact with social groups by acting as the third-party moderator, sponsoring communication events, and introducing public participation mechanisms. On the other hand, I am aware of the criticism of over-praising international NGOs and the merit of their work in collaborating with governments to establish local democratic practices. There are usually two kinds of criticism here, one on the cooptation of international NGOs, and the other on the lack of accountability of international-domestic NGO networks. The first point is concerned that too much collaboration with governmental agencies will cost international NGOs organizational autonomy. The latter questions the deep impact of international NGOs on domestic democratization of only relying on building new domestic NGOs or supporting civil society development. With excessive financial support and little monitoring and evaluation, international NGOs could create an environment where their domestic partners and grantees become solely accountable to donors, but detached from the general public and local society.<sup>70</sup> Both kinds of criticism are valid, to a certain extent. However, deficits in the actual effects cannot be used to refute the arguments on political relations. The Double-mobilization model is not an evaluation tool-kit, but a conceptual framework to map the triangular relationship among the state, domestic society and international non-state actors.

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<sup>70</sup> McMahan, Patrice C. 2000. Carothers, Thomas. 1999. "Western Civil-Society Aid to Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union." *East European Constitutional Review. International Social Science Journal*, Special issue "NGOs in the Governance of Biodiversity", 2003, 55, 178: 593-616. Note that this criticism on international NGOs' assistance to build domestic democracy is different from the one on official democracy assistance sponsored by governmental agencies, e.g., USAID, or inter-governmental organizations, e.g., Organization of American States. (Carothers, Thomas. 1996. *Assessing Democracy Assistance: The case of Romania*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment Book.)



## DOMESTIC STRUCTURES AND TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS

The proposed Double-mobilization model and many empirical studies quoted suggest that there are qualitative different forms of political dynamics involved in transnational advocacy politics. While both international and domestic structures matter to the variation of transnational networks in the big picture, the former is the focus of this research.<sup>71</sup>

### **From Two-level Opportunity Structures to Domestic Structures**

Keck and Sikkink concurred with Tarrow that both domestic and international structures matter to transnational advocacy networks.<sup>72</sup> Tarrow particularly pointed out that rather than being the antipodes of transnational contention and activism, inter-governmental institutions offer resources, opportunities, and incentives for the formation of transnational actors.<sup>73</sup> Sanjeev Khagram, James Riker and Kathryn Sikkink in their recent edited volume proposed to look into the domestic and international political opportunity structures as a two-level interacting synergy.<sup>74</sup> This argument appears to be an important breakthrough from previous literature. They highlight the *relative* openness of

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<sup>71</sup> However, this is not to underestimate the relevance of leadership, choices of strategy, organizational characteristics and particular timing to the success of each advocacy network. Whether there is a leading NGO, a well-known expert, or a charismatic activist within the network sometimes does matter. However, in order to evaluate the meaning of transnational advocacy networks as a whole, as a coherent agent in international affairs, we ought to search for the patterns of existing domestic and international structures and probe the impacts they have on the networks.

<sup>72</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998. p7.

<sup>73</sup> Tarrow, Sidney. 2001. "Transnational Politics: Contention and Institutions in International Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 4: 1-20.

<sup>74</sup> Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002. pp19.

international opportunity structures, yet cautiously challenge the assumption of the close or conflicting nature in domestic state-society relations. David Meyer's empirical study of the anti-nuclear movement in New Zealand demonstrates this two-level interactive perspective. He argues that political institutions are nested in a larger international context, and that the tightness or looseness of such nesting affects the range of possible alliance and policy options available for political actors.<sup>75</sup>

While such a synthetic perspective seems to be very helpful to analyzing individual cases, scholars are still searching for cross-system variables which can effectively explain the striking variations in the actual local forms of transnational activism and advocacy. In other words, transnational networks and coalitions share most of the international dimensions of their activities (e.g., lobbying inter-governmental institutions), yet once they land in individual countries, they diverge dramatically in their outlooks and substances. The idealized view of transnational advocacy networks seems to overlook the salience of societal cleavages and domestic political institutions. On the contrary, Laura MacDonald's study on international NGOs in Central America, particularly in Guatemala and Nicaragua, suggests that because of class-divisions within these countries, transnational NGO networks are heavily polarized, influenced by existing structures of power in both public and private sectors.<sup>76</sup> In his study of cultural politics of the successful 1999 Khomani San land claim in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa, Steven Robins shows how strategic narratives of community solidarity, social

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<sup>75</sup> Meyer, David S. 2003. "Political Opportunity and Nested Institutions." *Social Movement Studies*. 2, 1: 17-35.

<sup>76</sup> MacDonald, Laura. 1997. *Supporting Civil Society: The Political Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Central America*. London: MacMillan Press.

cohesion and cultural continuity were produced by claimants and their lawyers, stalwartly supported by international donors and NGOs during the process. In the post-settlement period, however, social fragmentation and intra-community conflict between San people and “western bushmen” rebounded and became increasingly evident. Robins insightfully highlights that the external community’s double vision of the San people—as both “First Peoples” and modern citizens-in-the-making—contributed to rather than alleviated these intra-community divisions and conflicts.<sup>77</sup> Both studies essentially challenged the assumed power, form, and sustainability of transnational networks and solidarity across cases.

Findings in Lisa Aubrey’s research on the women’s organization Maendeleo Ya Wanawake (MYWO) in Kenya (1952-1996) demonstrates that the more financial, technical and other direct assistance MYWO received from international NGOs, the less autonomy it enjoyed to formulate and implement its indigenous agenda, and hence the less successful its development projects would be.<sup>78</sup> Even though the women’s rights movement did successfully forge alliances to change states’ policies in many other countries, as documented by Keck and Sikkink, it appears as though the intimacy between domestic and international non-state actors was detrimental to local political processes in Kenya. The triangle-game played among external NGOs, the Kenya government and MYWO is more complicated and dynamic than what theory has predicted. This point of view is also shared by scholarship on western NGOs’ support to

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<sup>77</sup> Robins, Steven. 2001. "NGOs, 'Bushmen' and Double Vision: The Khomani San Land Claim and the Cultural Politics of 'Community' and 'Development' in the Kalahari." *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 27, 4: 833-53.

<sup>78</sup> Aubrey, Lisa. 1997. *The Politics of Development Cooperation: NGOs, Gender and Participation*. London and New York: Routledge.

women's rights movement in Eastern Europe after 1989.<sup>79</sup> Grassroots women's organizations in these countries are becoming more accountable to international NGOs than their own people, which in the long run weakens rather than fosters the strength of civil society. Thus similar international institutional frameworks, issue characteristics, and non-state actors, different stories of transnational advocacy happen in different societies.

### **Domestic Regime Type and Level of Social Mobilization**

By focusing on one single issue—the anti-dam movement—Sanjeev Khagram conducted a historical comparative study to solve the above puzzle.<sup>80</sup> Holding other factors constant, Khagram first used a periodization strategy<sup>81</sup> to demonstrate how changes in domestic social mobilization affect the development trajectory of transnational networks and movements against large dams on the Narmada River in India from 1940s to 1990s. Based upon in-depth, ethnographic, and process-tracing research, he found that domestic social mobilization almost did not exist before the 1970s, and was inefficient in independently challenging the proposed dam projects. It was only after a transnational coalition of international NGOs and grassroots tribal peoples' groups was forged in 1980s, and conducted a five-year campaign, that the Indian government and the World Bank reformed their policies and practices on resettlement related to the dam project.

Khagram further conducted a comparative cross-country analysis of anti-dam movements in Brazil, China, Indonesia and South-Africa/Lesotho, and developed a

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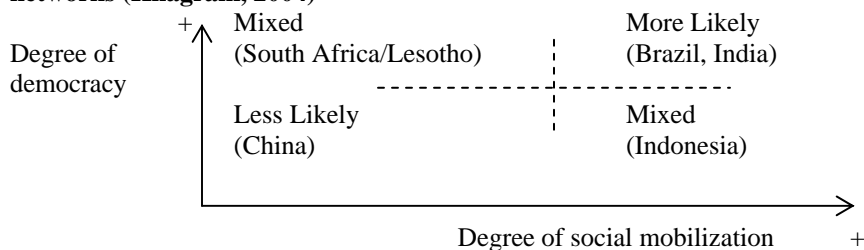
<sup>79</sup> McMahan, Patrice C. 2000.

<sup>80</sup> Khagram, Sanjeev. 2004.

<sup>81</sup> Lieberman, Evan. 2001. "Causal Inference in Historical Institutional Analysis: A Specification of Periodization Strategies." *Comparative Political Studies*. 34, 9: 1011-35.

two-by-two typology of the relationship between domestic structures and transnational advocacy politics. (Figure 2.5)

**Figure 2.5. Impact of domestic democracy and social mobilization on transnational advocacy networks (Khagram, 2004)**



In short, for Khagram, transnational advocacy networks are more likely to emerge, form domestic coalitions, and change existing policies, if a country is more democratic and domestic social mobilization has reached a higher level. This typology is helpful in that it narrows down the complexity of the research question by grouping countries into four categories. The two-by-two typology can potentially be used to conduct a first round of case selection. However, the weakness of this approach is considerable due to its exclusive reliance on macro-level variables (i.e., level of democracy and social mobilization). Applying such variables entails the risk of overlooking the complexity of transnational advocacy networks. In addition, it does not capture the dynamic nature of advocacy networks, the variations across issue areas, and the co-evolution of transnational networks and domestic politics. For example, Khagram attributes the non-existence and failure of transnational anti-dam advocacy networks in China (specifically, the Three Gorges Dam) to its non-democratic regime. However, despite the non-democratic macro-structural constraint, transnational advocacy networks are actually emerging in the fields of women's rights and environmental protection. In recent years, a network of domestic and international activists successfully lobbied the

Chinese government to put a halt on the proposed Nu River Dam project. Khagram's theory fails to explain such variations and changes by only looking at macro-level domestic factors.

### **Domestic State and Society Structures Re-examined**

To re-examine the idea of domestic structural variables, my research draws insights from Thomas Risse's works on domestic structures and transnational relations in general, as well as from scholarship on state and society structures in China.<sup>82</sup> Findings from Risse and colleagues strongly suggested that there is not either a continuum or a dichotomy of domestic structures. What the concept of domestic structures indicates is not merely the strength of a state or civil society in a country, but the combined nature of the two. Hence, the key is not whether a regime is democratic or repressive, but whether it is consensual or fragmented; not whether domestic social forces are strong or weak, but whether the society is organized or polarized; and, not whether the state or society hold more influence over a policy issue, but whether they are closely linked and there are channels of communication between them.

In the book *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In*, Risse argues that under similar international conditions, differences in domestic structures determine the variation in the *policy impact* of transnational actors. Domestic structures here refer to political institutions, societal structures, and the policy networks linking the two. In a situation where decentralized political institutions, politicize civil society and institutional channels linking the two are found, transnational policy networks seem to be most

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<sup>82</sup> Risse-Kappen, ed. 1995.

effective. So, if transnational actors want to have leverage on domestic politics, the key is not only networking, but also gaining *access* to the political system, and to generate and/or contribute to “winning” policy coalitions in order to change decisions in the desired direction.

It should be noted here that the transnational coalitions and networks studied in this edited volume emphasize “regularized contacts among specific transnational actors” in interacting with the state—“from exchanges between human rights and peace groups, between U.S. and Soviet intellectuals and scholars, to transgovernmental coalitions, international NGOs, and multi-national corporations.”<sup>83</sup> Even though these regularized contacts are similar to those focused on this dissertation, the central effort was devoted to evaluate the policy input of transnational actors. This dissertation, however, pays more attention to political relations rather than the actual policy impact of transnational networks. The central puzzle raised in my research is not how effective transnational actors are in term of changing state decisions; but the triangular political relations among the state, local society, and transnational advocacy actors, and the various forms of mobilization activities transnational actors are able to employ to introduce changes in both formal political and social arenas.

With this note, despite the underlying differences in research agendas, many of the hypotheses and suggestions raised by Risse and other contributors to the book are very useful to examine domestic structures and their effects on transnational advocacy networks. Risse and his collaborators analyze the structures of the state—formal political institutions—in terms of the level of centralization and fragmentation. This approach to

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid. p281.

examining the state is probably not more useful than Khagram's when we have both clearly democratic and non-democratic states in our research, since division of power and decentralization of policy making are among the defining features of democratic regimes. Yet, in political reality, a lot more countries do not fall into the either of the above two categories and can instead be described as "mixed regimes", than the ones that do. Further, it is as important and theoretically challenging for political scientists to discern the differences between the British and the Japanese state structures as between the Cuba and the U.S. The centralization/fragmentation concept suggested by Risse and colleague better reflects the continuous character of state structures. Political access provided by each state system, in this sense, vary on a continual scale rather than in between two options (i.e., democratic vs. non-democratic). I find this approach suitable to understand why transnational advocacy networks are able to locate opportunities to interact with and convey new ideas to relatively close and strong states. It also sheds light on why networks can mobilize the state more in some cases than the others.

Following this approach, society structures are examined in Risse's edited volume with regard to the internal polarization in terms of ideological cleavages. "Strong" societies are then characterized by a comparative lack of ideological cleavage, by comparatively "politicized" civil societies, and by centralized social organizations such as business, labor, or churches, which can be easily mobilized for political causes. I found this concept of social structures particularly relevant when examining the relationship between domestic and international NGOs and activist groups. Regardless of policy outcome, the stronger a society is, the easier for transnational actors to connect with



domestic social groups, and such connection is determined by the way in which the society is “politicized.”

The nature and strength of policy networks is depicted as either consensual (characterized by strong intermediate organizations operating in a compromise-oriented decision-making culture) or polarized (characterized by distributive bargaining which often leads to decision stalemates). This concept, in a way, recalls the problematic assumption of static and zero-sum state-society relations. It suggests that state-society relations are not uniform, but vary across political systems.<sup>84</sup>

### **Micro-structures and Cross-sectoral Comparison**

When concluding on how domestic structures constrain or facilitate transnational networks, Risse hints that even within a country domestic structures seem to vary depending on the issue-area. “In sum, one should not expect the same TNA [transnational non-state actors] impact on state policies across issue-areas in a given country.”<sup>85</sup> My research explains why networks of advocacy actors vary even within a single county. I use a cross-sectoral comparative method to explore state and society structural factors at micro-levels, and trace how these factors condition the political relations surrounding non-state actors and advocacy networks.

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<sup>84</sup> Even though I do not include this variable as one of the major causal factors when addressing the empirical questions related to transnational networks in China due to little variation across cases, I do explain that in cases where state-society linkages are significantly lacking, transnational networks can actually contribute to building up new channels rather than simply aggravate the disconnection by exclusively allying with either state or civil society actors.

<sup>85</sup> Risse-Kappen, ed. 1995. p307.

The sectoral perspective is often applied in comparative political economy to study various industries.<sup>86</sup> In the field of Chinese politics, the vertical-functional division, *tiao*, is in fact considered a defining characteristic of the Chinese state apparatus.<sup>87</sup> Recent research in China's economic development and industries even push the argument further to the local level. Adam Segal and Eric Thun argue that even at the local level there is no "one size fits all" development policy: different industrial sectors have different developmental needs, and policies that work for one sector will not necessarily work for another.<sup>88</sup> I, however, use the terms "sector" and "issue area" interchangeably in this dissertation referring to the whole domain of governing structures, institutions, and actors related to a specific social problem (e.g., nature conservation, HIV/AIDS prevention).

Drawing upon Risse's notion of domestic structures, my analysis of the individual sector and issue areas includes not only state-related variables (e.g., bureaucratic and local-central relations), but also the emerging distinctive qualities in the civil society communities within each sector. This inclusion of social factors is not new to the transnational activism literature, which always underlines the importance of domestic civil society organizations and level of social mobilization. However, it has not been widely applied in the study Chinese politics.

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<sup>86</sup> Kitschelt, Herbert. 1991. "Industrial Governance Structures, Innovation Strategies, and the Case of Japan: Sectoral or Cross-National Comparative Analysis?" *International Organization*. 45, 4: 453-93.  
Atkinson, Michael M., and William D. Coleman. 1989. "Strong States and Weak States: Sectoral Policy Networks in Advanced Capitalist Economies." *British Journal of Political Science*. 19, 1: 47-67.

<sup>87</sup> See note 39 in the Introduction Chapter.

<sup>88</sup> Segal, Adam, and Eric Thun. 2001. "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Local Governments, Industrial Sectors, and Development in China". *Politics & Society*, Vol. 29, No.4: 557-588.

Though some are still skeptical of the status of civil society and political relevance of voluntary associations in current China, many have noted that the state's social control mechanisms are undergoing changes and civil society in China is emerging.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, scholars have identified how civil society actors interact with the state and are able to achieve changes with limited resources under the regime. Kenneth Foster's recent empirical research of business associations has demonstrated that many independent social associations are capable of seeking the state's recognition and support, or to be "co-opted", to achieve organizational goals.<sup>90</sup> In other words, such associations are not merely subjected to state control, but are able to maneuver in between existing institutional structures and make the surrounding political milieu more favorable for them. Particularly in the fields of poverty relief, women's rights, and environmental protection, Tony Saich argue that civil society in China is not only emerging, but has also learned how to negotiate with the state, and gained bargaining power via various means of resource mobilization.<sup>91</sup> Social organizations are able to minimize state penetration, and reconfigure the relationship with the state in more beneficial terms that can allow for policy input or pursuit of members' interests and organizational goals. Many practitioners/researchers, with first-hand experiences from China, have begun to realize

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<sup>89</sup> The debate has gone beyond whether civil society exists in China or not, and is more of what are the key causes of the emergence of civil society: market (e.g., Goldman et al eds, 1996), consequences of state reforms (e.g., Frolic, 1997), and genuinely bottom-up citizen actions (e.g., Perry, 2003). Some have also pointed out the importance of taking a middle-group approach, and exploring the grey area in between the state and society for the origins of civil society development. (e.g., Ding, 1994; Wu, 2003)

<sup>90</sup> Foster, Kenneth W. 2001. "Associations in the Embrace of an Authoritarian State: State Domination of Society?" *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 35, 4: 84-109.

<sup>91</sup> Saich, Tony. 2000. "Negotiating the State: The Development of Social Organizations in China." *The China Quarterly*. 161: 125-41.

that due to the Chinese state's lack of capacity in coping with the growing social inequality and other problems after 20 years of economic reform, civil society organizations have found a niche to influence new policy formation and policy implementation.<sup>92</sup>

In my research, I push the argument on civil society in China further, arguing that as civil society has developed in China, noticeable variations are emerging. Civil society structures in China, therefore, cannot be uniformly portrayed. Instead, I suggest identifying more indicators to examine the increasingly diversifying civil society sector across issue areas in China, with special attention to whether it is fragmented or coordinated. Civil society defined by an issue area is fragmented if there is a high level of internal friction and lack of inter-organizational exchange; it is coordinated if it manifests dense inter-organizational networks, repeated collective actions, and a sense of common identity. I argue that it is important to examine whether civil society actors within an issue area are closely connected or scattered about and disengaged when speaking about the differential qualities of civil society sector across cases. The strength of civil society is built up by increasing interconnectivity, social networks, and the rise of a shared group identity.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Young, Nick. 2001. Introduction in *Searching for Civil Society: 250 NGOs in China*. Hong Kong: China Development Brief. Kwong, Julia. 2004. "Educating Migrant Children: Negotiations between the State and Civil Society." *The China Quarterly*. 180: 1073-88. Turner, Jennifer. 2004. "Small Government, Big and Green Society: Emerging Partnership to Solve China's Environmental Problems." *Harvard Asia Quarterly*. VIII, 2.

<sup>93</sup> This view in particular draws upon Russell Hardin's notion of "coordinated political action", which, he argues, is the defining factor to examine collective political actors. Hardin, Russell. 1995. *All for One: The Logics of Group Identity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.

## STUDYING TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN CHINA

To systematically examine how transnational advocacy networks are conditioned by domestic structures, I suggest two steps. The first step is to identify relevant structural factors with in-depth, small-n cases studies to explicate the causal linkages between the independent and dependent variables. The second is to validate the co-variation between the variables through multiple comparative studies. This dissertation research is devoted to the first step of theory building. I select two seemingly similar cases of transnational networks, and explore all related intra-state, central-local, and society structural variables specific to each individual case, while holding international and national macro-level factors mostly constant. I then juxtapose the two cases to examine the disparities between them, and to sort out the key factors that can explain the divergence between the cases. In this section, I clarify which micro-level structural variables are focused on, and which specific indicators are used to assess these variables. I will also provide a list of working hypotheses on the impact of domestic state and society structures on the emergence and development of transnational advocacy networks.

### **The China Case**

In addition to fill the empirical knowledge gaps, I focus on China to study how domestic politics affects transnational advocacy networks for two main theoretical reasons. First, most case studies of transnational advocacy networks have covered semi-democratic or transitional countries, where state and societal forces are or are becoming equally strong (e.g., Central European countries). Other works have selected countries where autonomous organizations have been sustained throughout the history, in spite of a

temporarily repressive political regimes (e.g., Latin American countries). In both cases, the targeted state is relatively more subject to pressures and influences from IGOs or regional powers, and development of domestic civil society has reached the degree that it can endure the long-term, open confrontation with its government. However, the China case presents a different situation, where the state still has dominant power over both domestic and international politics. As Hongying Wang accurately noted in spite of a strong desire in the international arena to socialize China with neo-liberal norms, such as multilateralism, there is little evidence that the Chinese state is internalizing these norms.<sup>94</sup> In the wake of the extensive crack-down on the Falung Gong group in 1998, there is no evidence of nation-wide and lasting social movement organizations, in spite of increasing incidents of civil disobedience, demonstrations, protests, and political riots at the local level.<sup>95</sup> While existing literature predicts little possibility for transnational networks to emerge in China, I have found evidence that transnational NGO linkages and activist networks are emerging in the environmental and public health fields. Hence, the China case provides opportunity to bring in new theoretical puzzles and understandings of transnational advocacy politics.

Second, the Chinese polity is undergoing fundamental changes, and increasingly diversifying, which offers great theoretical potential to explore the variance in micro-level domestic political factors. Despite the fact that the state is still in control of most aspects of politics, state control in China is in fact losing its uniformity as a result of

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<sup>94</sup> Wang, Hongying. 2000. "Multilateralism in Chinese Foreign Policy: The Limits of Socialization". *Asian Survey*, Vol. 40, No.3: 475-491.

<sup>95</sup> For example, Jim Yardley's report "Rural Chinese Riot as Police Try to Halt Pollution Protest", *New York Times*, 14 April 2005.

the grand-scale reforms started two decades ago. Many scholars argue that the state is becoming fragmented and disjointed, and this trend is enhanced by bureaucratic bargaining and fiscal decentralization.<sup>96</sup> Inter-departmental relations at the center and central-local relations vary across sectors. How the politics of air pollution control in China operates is not the same as that of water pollution.<sup>97</sup> Political economy of IT

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<sup>96</sup> “Fragmented authoritarianism” is a model developed by scholars to describe the status of the state in China: First, authority below the very peak of the Chinese political system is fragmented and disjointed; Second, the fragmentation is structurally based, and; Third, it has been enhanced by reform policies regarding procedures. While this model has since been challenged, including by the authors who first conceptualized it (e.g., Lieberthal, Kenneth, and David Lampton), and more recently by the “regulatory state” model, it fleshed out the trend of weakening uniformity within the Chinese state apparatus. The fragmented authoritarianism is beyond merely bureaucratic politics analysis. It stresses the presence and impact of the interactive and dynamic processes among the constituent elements within the Chinese polity.

Some representative works applying the fragmented authoritarianism model include: Chung, Jae Ho. 1995. "Studies of Central-Provincial Relations in the People's Republic of China: A Mid-Term Appraisal." *China Quarterly*. 142: 487-508. Lieberthal, Kenneth, and Michel Oksenberg. 1988. *Policy Making in China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Lampton, David, ed. 1987. *Policy Implementation: Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California. Perry, Elizabeth J., and Christine Wong, eds. 1985. *The Political Economy of Reform in Post-Mao China*. Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies/Harvard University. Lieberthal, Kenneth, and David Lampton, eds. 1992. *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Main works on China’s regulatory state: Yang, Dali. 2004. *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan: Market Transition and the Politics of Governance in China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pearson, Margaret. 2003. "Mapping the Rise of China's Regulatory State: Economic Regulation and Network and Insurance Industries". Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, New York, March 27. Yang, Dali. 2003. “State Capacity on the Rebound.” *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 14, No.1. Lu, Xiaobo. 2002. “From Players to Referees: The Changing Role of the State and Bureaucracy in China.” Paper prepared for the annual conference of the Association of Asian Studies. Washington, D.C., April, 7.

<sup>97</sup> Air pollution control is very centralized, with SEPA being the highest and major governing body. Water pollution control, however, is much more decentralized, and fragmented. Not SEPA but the National Water Resource Bureau is the main player. However, there are several regional inter-provincial water commissions, which are in charge of particular water basin governance. For more on environmental governance and pollution control in China, see: Ross, Lester. 1988. *Environmental Policy in China*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Lieberthal, Kenneth. 1997. “China’s Governing

(information technology) industry in Shanghai differs considerably from that in Guangdong.<sup>98</sup>

On the society side, societal structures in China should not be uniformly portrayed as minimal and penetrated by state power. Numerous voluntary, self-organized, or professionalized social associations are emerging in some issue areas (e.g., migrant workers' rights, environmental protection and disabled/marginalized people's welfare).<sup>99</sup> In other fields (e.g., HIV/AIDS prevention, land tenure, water pollution), various victim and dissent social groups are emerging and have tried to organize collective actions protesting governmental politics. For example, protest is becoming a common means for farmers and urbanites to protect their own properties and wellbeing from industrial pollution. Government sponsored research recorded that 88 and 47 environmental disputes took place before the mid-1990s.<sup>100</sup>

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System and its Impact on Environmental Policy Implementation". *China Environmental Series*, Issue 1. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center. pp3-8. Nickum, James. 1998. "Is China Living on the Water Margin?" *The China Quarterly (Special Issue: China's Environment)*, 156: 880-98. He, Kebin et al. 2002. "Urban Air Pollution in China: Current Status, Characteristics, and Progress." *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment*. Vol. 27, Issue 1: 397-431. Dudek, Dan et al. 2001. "Total Emission Control of Major Pollutants in China". *China Environmental Series*, Issue 4. Chen, Sulan, and Juha I. Uitto. 2003. "Governing Marine and Coastal Environment in China: Building Local Government Capacity through International Cooperation." *China Environment Series*, 6: 67-80.

<sup>98</sup> Segal, Adam, and Eric Thun. 2001. "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: Local Governments, Industrial Sectors, and Development in China". *Politics & Society*, Vol. 29, No.4: 557-588.

<sup>99</sup> According to China Development Brief 2001 report "Searching for Civil Society: 250 NGOs in China", civil society groups are most active in these fields.

<sup>100</sup> Shanghai Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau. 1994. *Huanjing Wuran Changqun Maodun Yu Chuli Duice (Environmental Pollution, Conflict between Factories and Residents, and Resolution Measures)*. Shanghai: East-China Politics and Law College Press. Zhao, Yongkang, ed. 1989. *Huanjing Jiufen Anli (Selected Cases of Environmental Disputes)*. Beijing: China Environmental Science Press. Xie, Zhenhua, ed. 1994. *Zhongguo Huanjing Dianxing Anli Yu Zhifa Tiyao (Typical Cases of Environmental*



In sum, both state and society structures in China are going through deepening changes, and becoming more diversified.<sup>101</sup> This dynamic situation provides research potential to explore the theoretical puzzle related to transnational activism and advocacy networks.

### **Mapping and Measuring Transnational Advocacy Networks**

The Double-mobilization model suggests that transnational advocacy networks are complex amalgamations of individual actors who while allying with each for a specific course, maintain their own working style and strategies to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, I apply three steps to map the networks: I start with a few most visible and core advocacy organizations, and then I locate other key participants of the networks. I do not *decide* over which group is in, and which is out. These organizations decide themselves whether they are part of the networks. My selection of cases is based on the connections present in between them and the core groups.

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*Violations and Guidelines of Environmental Law Enforcement in China*). Beijing: China Environmental Science Press. Quoted in: Jing, Jun. 2000. "Environmental Protests in Rural China." In *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, edited by Perry, Elizabeth and Mark Selden, 143-60. New York: Routledge.

<sup>101</sup> A more comprehensive overview of domestic structures in China shall also include the interactive channels in between the state and society. However, the variation in this aspect has not emerged yet, and institutionalized mechanisms for public participation are still lacking across issue areas. For state-society relations in China, see: Unger, Jonathan, and Anita Chan. 1996. "Corporatism in China: A Developmental State in an East Asian Context?" In *China After Socialism: In the Footsteps of East Europe or East Asia?*, edited by Barret McCormick and Jonathan Unger, 95-129. Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe. Zhang, Yunqiu. 1997. Pearson, Margaret. 1997. *China's New Business Elite*. Berkeley: University of California Press. "From State Corporatism to Social Representation." In *Civil Society in China*, edited by Timothy Brook and Michael Frolic. Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe. Yep, Ray. 2000. "The Limitation of Corporatism for Understanding Reforming China: An Empirical Analysis in A Rural County." *Journal of Contemporary China*. Vol. 9, No. 2.

I then disaggregate the networks and trace individual organizations' political relations and the content of their engagement with both governmental and societal forces for two purposes: 1) to provide a rich account of the political dynamics of the networks, which otherwise would be overlooked by compacting different organizations into one agent, and overlapping their political relations; 2) to form an accurate interpretation of individual international NSAs' work, their relationship with local communities and governmental agencies, as well as the causal chains among different political events, in order to give further explanations of the patterns at the aggregate level.

Lastly, I examine the combination of organizations, their activities, and political relations as a whole again. I offer an in-depth narrative about the main features of the two networks (in terms of the political relations among the state, local society, external NSAs) and the political context they are situated in.

To sort out the key variables that condition transnational networks at the aggregate level, I compare the two networks in terms of the patterned relations that they are characterized by, and the relative strength and scope of such patterned relations. In addition to qualitative inference, I also develop a set of crude quantitative indicators that can give snapshot-type illustrations of these questions. A word of caution: What is to be measured is not the actual impact, but the political features of transnational networks marked by the triangular relationship among the state, local society, and external NSAs. I compile a dataset of the working partnership of international NGOs (as main representatives of the external advocacy groups) to capture the triangular relationship I focus on.

To better illustrate and compare international NSAs' mobilization work and their interactions, at the aggregate level, with domestic governmental and societal actors, I further construct three sets of indicators.<sup>102</sup> (Table 2.3)

**Table 2.3. Measuring state and social mobilization of transnational advocacy networks**

<b>Double-mobilization</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
State mobilization	Information dissemination (Information sharing; research collaboration; training)
	Policy implementation
	Policy-making input
	Institution building
Social mobilization	Public education
	Local capacity building
	Promoting social activism (Technical & financial support; Creating new local NGOs & networks)
Bridging state & society	Informal channels
	Non-institutionalized public participation
	Institutionalized public participation

I identify four types of work that international NGOs perform to mobilize the state: information dissemination, policy implementation, policy input, and institution building:

1) *Information sharing*. By providing higher quality information to the government, advocates can entice the state to re-consider and modify its existing perceptions and policies. Besides establishing new understanding and knowledge at the fundamental level through research, advocacy actors can also organize and provide targeted policy-making officials and state affiliated professionals with specific learning opportunities and practical training courses.

<sup>102</sup> I identify these variables based upon both literature on international NSAs and domestic effects of international regimes. Particularly: Young, Oran, ed. 1999. *The Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes: Causal Connections and Behavior Mechanisms*. Global Environmental Accord: Strategies for Sustainability and Institutional Innovation, Choucri, Nazli. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

2) *Policy implementation.* Advocacy actors can introduce to governmental agencies new ideas and methods for solving problems by taking part in the policy implementation process. (“Learning by doing”.) By demonstrating the difference between new and old practices, advocates may change policy-makers’ perceptions and attitudes.

3) *Policy input.* Providing policy recommendation to decision-makers, or being involved in policy-making processes present a much shorter causal chain than the previous two indicators in explaining how advocacy actors can mobilize the state and introduce changes.

4) *Institution building.* Through institution building, advocacy actors can maintain the effects of their advocacy work in the long-run, and push for deepening of norm socialization within the state apparatus.

To measure the relationship between external advocacy actors and local civil society groups and communities, I identify three main types of activities that international NGOs perform in social mobilization: public education, local capacity building, and promoting social activism:<sup>103</sup>

1) *Public education.* One of the most common ways for activists and NGOs to disseminate information related to a principled idea is through public education. In most cases where transnational networks emerge, domestic social groups are completely cut

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<sup>103</sup> I develop these variables based upon the body of literature on international NGOs in general, and particularly in China: Knight, Denise, Robert Taylor, and Pam Baldinger. 2002. "Powering Up the Dragon: World Bank and NGO Energy Efficiency Projects in China." Paper presented at the China Environment Forum Meeting, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., Feb. 1. U.S.-China Environmental Working Group. 1998. "Financing Environmental Protection in China: The Role of Foundations and NGOs (Working Group Summaries)." *China Environment Series*, 2. Young, Nick. 2004. "NGOs: The Diverse Origins, Changing Nature and Growing Internationalization of the Species." *China Development Brief*.

off from access to information. Providing direct access to accurate information is important and necessary for any further social mobilization by external NSAs.

2) *Local capacity building*. External advocacy actors often provide training, funds, and technologies to strengthen local people's self-capacity. Advocates create opportunities for them to coordinate among themselves, and help them to obtain and mobilize more resources to defend their own interests and voice their own opinions.

3) *Promoting social activism*. When civil society organizations are lacking and level of social activism is low, external advocacy groups support individuals with vision and social entrepreneur skills as key local linkages of transnational networks. Through these individuals, external advocates promote the rise of local activism that can sustain norm socialization and behavior changes in the long-term. A strong local activist community, in turn, strengthens the whole advocacy network.

To explore whether external advocacy actors aggravate or alleviate domestic contention, I develop three deepening indicators: *creating communication channels*, *experimenting with project-based public participation*, and *institutionalizing public participation*. Despite political blockage and policy barriers, external advocates and NGOs can create ice-breaking opportunities for governmental authorities and social groups by organizing informal or semi-formal gatherings and meetings. They can introduce partnering and collaborating mechanisms for governmental and non-governmental actors in their own projects. Through small-scale, short-term projects, the two sides can have the chance to better know each others' intentions and be familiar with different ways to negotiate and reach agreement. If external advocacy groups can facilitate the process of institutionalizing state-society communication and public

participation channels, they are actually lessening rather than intensifying domestic contention to bring about changes in state behavior.

### **Domestic Micro-level Structures Defined by Issue Area**

Drawing upon both Chinese and comparative scholarship, I identify five main domestic factors that potentially constrain or facilitate the emergence and development of transnational advocacy networks in China. (Table 2.4) The first three factors are related to the Chinese state: 1) the level of internationalization of a governing system defined by the policy issue; 2) horizontal inter-departmental relations at the central level; and 3) vertical central-local relations within the governing system defined by the focused issue area. The final two factors are related to civil society structures defined by issue area, level of interconnection among civil society groups and level of social identity building.

**Table 2.4. Domestic micro-level structures**

<b>Domestic structures</b>	<b>Micro-level variables</b>
Governing structures defined by an issue area	Level of internationalization
	Bureaucratic relations
	Local state autonomy
Civil society structures defined by an issue area	Level of interconnectedness
	Group identity building

*Internationalization of governing structures.* I use this variable to assess whether the governing bodies defined by an issue area are acquainted with international discourses, standards and practices, whether they are, to some extent, involved in international collaborations and regime building, and whether they are used to deal with criticism, advice, and conditioned assistance from the international community. Many factors contribute to the internationalization of governing structures (e.g., party of international treaties and organizations, receiving official development assistance), and I

pay particular attention to governmental agencies' knowledge of and attitudes towards external actors, and the frequency and density of the interactions between domestic governmental and international agencies (multilateral and bilateral only).

*Horizontal bureaucratic relations.* This variable is intended to describe various characteristics of inter-departmental relations within the state. Such relations can be centralized vs. fragmented, depending on the number of key bureaucratic agencies involved and the fact whether the political power is concentrated within one or few agencies. Inter-departmental tension can be caused by over-lapping interests and functions of multiple governmental departments. Bureaucratic agencies in an issue area can form collaborative or competitive relations due to the lack or presence of such tension.

*Local state autonomy.* Central-local relationship is a common variable in comparative political studies, and particularly relevant to the study of Chinese politics.<sup>104</sup> In theory, under the current political regime in China, the central government endeavors to maintain its overall control of provincial and even local affairs. However, in reality, on the one hand, the center is giving up its control by reforming fiscal systems;<sup>105</sup> and, on

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<sup>104</sup> In the field of China studies, there is a tradition of studying "locality of authority", "local stateness", and "local variance". e.g., Remick, Elizabeth. 2004. *Building Local States: China during the Republican and Post-Mao Eras*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Oi, Jean C. 1999. *Rural China Takes Off*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Oi, Jean C. 1995. "The role of the local state in China's transitional economy," *The China Quarterly*, 144: 1132-49. Shue, Vivienne. 1988. *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

<sup>105</sup> Wang, Shaoguang. 1995. "The Rise of the Regions: Fiscal Reform and the Decline of Central State Capacity in China." In *The Waning of the Communist State: Economic Origins of Political Decline in China and Hungary*, edited by Walder, Andrew, 87-113. Berkeley: University of California Press. Wong, Christine. 1991. "Central-local Relations in An Era of Fiscal Decline: The Paradox of Fiscal Decentralization in Post-Mao China." *China Quarterly*. No. 128: 1-32.

the other, with new social, environmental, and health problems emerging, the central government cannot afford maintaining a comprehensive social welfare system, and has begun to rely on provincial and local authorities to mobilize more resources.<sup>106</sup> I include this variable to make the research design more suitable to examine the empirical materials from China. Moreover, this is precisely the type of domestic micro-structures that vary greatly under a seemingly constant political regime. Local governments enjoy differential levels of autonomy over its own constituencies across issue areas due to central-local regulatory, fiscal and personnel relations.

Civil society structures defined by an issue area describe not only the aggregate scope of civil society groups (esp. local NGOs) and their activities, but more importantly, the characteristics of patterned relations among them.<sup>107</sup> Once civil society groups have emerged, they can move on in very different directions, with rare interactions among each other. Therefore, the sheer number of NGOs and data of their work cannot give accurate picture of the nature of the whole community. The key is to identify whether individual activists and NGOs are webbed together, whether they are converging towards similar ideas and coordinating their work to reach common goals, and whether there is some level of solidarity and group identity emerging within the community.

*Level of interconnectedness.* Civil society actors are usually connected through informal forums, salons and social gathering. The level of interconnectedness among

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<sup>106</sup> Sargeson, Sally, and Jian Zhang. 1999. "Reassessing the Role of the Local State: A Case Study of Local Government Interventions in Property Rights Reform in a Hangzhou District," *China Journal*, 42: 77–99. Unger, Jonathan, and Anita Chan. 1999. "Inheritors of the Boom: Private Enterprise and the Role of Local Government in a Rural South China Township," *China Journal*, 42: 45–74.

<sup>107</sup> NGOs are important actors in civil society. See Appendix 2.1 for a lengthy discussion on NGOs in China.



them rises significantly if they take some kind of collective actions and collaborate in projects.

*Group identity formation.*<sup>108</sup> This is the defining factor to discern whether a community is somehow united, conscious about its role in the society, and able to rationalize a common goal for practical and policy changes. Group identity formation takes time, and requires organizing symbolic events, leadership, common experiences of actions, and repeated self-reflections within the community.

### **Working Hypotheses**

#### ***Hypothesis 1. Domestic structures and the emergence of transnational advocacy networks***

1.1. A higher level of internationalization of the governing structures in an issue area facilitates the emergence of transnational advocacy networks.

Transnational advocacy networks are more likely to emerge in a relatively more internationalized issue area. International NSAs need some minimal entry points to form networks under a non-democratic regime. Domestic activists and NGOs also need some opportunities to reach out to external advocacy networks. Transnational networks are more likely to emerge if the governing structures in an issue area have becoming more

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<sup>108</sup> For this variable, I draw upon literature on national, social, and interest group identity building. e.g., Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Community*. London: Verso. Migdal, Joel S., ed. 2004. *Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Dunleavy, Patrick. 1988. "Group Identities and Individual Influence: Reconstructing the Theory of Interest Groups," *British Journal of Political Science*, 18, 1: 21-49.

open to external influences, and policy makers are more familiar with international actors and discourses.<sup>109</sup>

1.2. A higher level of civil society development in an issue area facilitates the emergence of transnational advocacy networks.

The formation of transnational networks requires some minimal level of domestic social mobilization and development of civil society organizations. International NSAs need local contacts for first-hand information and to get access to local communities. With local advocacy partners, international NSAs can translate normative principles into suitable practical solutions and form advocacy strategies.

*Hypothesis 2. Domestic structures and the development of transnational advocacy networks (marked by the evolving triangular relationship among the state, local society, and external advocacy actors)*

2.1 A higher level of bureaucratic decentralization in an issue area enables transnational advocacy networks to mobilize governmental agencies.

Advocacy actors are more able to locate contacts inside the governing body, and form mobilization connections, in an issue area where power is not monopolized by one state ministry, but shared by multiple state agencies, and where decision-making processes involves multiple players. Decentralization within the governing structures does not guarantee that advocacy networks will be effective, but creates favorable conditions for

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<sup>109</sup> They do not necessarily agree with international norms, but they are acquainted with what these norms are about and which organizations are involved.

advocacy actors to expand and deepen their interactions with and mobilization of the state.

2.2 A higher level of local state autonomy in an issue area enables advocacy actors to consolidate and expand their networks.

Local governmental authorities are crucial for advocacy actors to maintain and strengthen their mobilization work with local communities, as well as to bring to fruition their advocacy work. Particularly under a non-democratic regime where state-society linkages are greatly curtailed, local governmental autonomy offers opportunities for advocacy actors to strengthen their social mobilization work at the grassroots level, and use their connections with local governmental bodies to communicate with and mobilize higher level authorities.

2.3 A higher level of interconnections among civil society groups in an issue area facilitates to the mobilization of domestic society through transnational advocacy networks.

Transnational networks' social mobilization depends not only on the sheer scope of domestic advocacy groups but on the interconnections among them. Internal friction among civil society groups within an issue area not only constrain the development of solidarity within advocacy networks, but also prevent the deep integration of transnational networks into local politics.

## CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I explained the meaning of Double-mobilization of transnational advocacy networks and why it is a useful conceptual framework to understand the political dynamics involving the state, domestic civil society groups, and external activists and NGOs. This Double-mobilization model underlines the extensive interactions between advocacy groups and targeted governmental authority aiming at consensus building. It completes the Boomerang model to capture the deepening interaction between transnational networks and domestic political actors. I also pointed out the need to assess micro-level domestic structural variables to better understand the variance in transnational networks across cases. Drawing insights from both Chinese and comparative politics literature, I developed sets of variables and indicators that are suitable for examining state and society structures defined by an issue area which are most relevant to the emergence and development of transnational advocacy networks.

This chapter emphasizes the deductive logic of my research design. However, the process of generating conceptual terms, measurements, and working hypotheses in this research also involved numerous inductive reflections. For example, I interviewed Zhang Ye, Director of the Asia Foundation China Programs (since 1994), in April 2003, when she was spending a summer at the Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. and writing a policy analysis paper on the development of civil society in China for the international policy think-tank community. Zhang is among the few chief representatives of international non-profit foundations operating in China who have published multiple articles to explain to the Western world the meaning of civil society in today's China, and

what kind of influence international foundations have had on the development of civil society in China.<sup>110</sup> She answered my question regarding the politics surrounding international NGOs and advocacy groups in China as follows:

To examine international foundations and NGOs' impacts in China, one should not only look at the projects implemented by them, but also at the whole process of their interaction with the governments. We try to bring out some changes in the government's general attitudes towards non-governmental activism and voluntary actions during our collaboration at different levels...There are certainly mutual influences between Chinese NGOs and international organizations working in China. Meanwhile, we also have to recognize the potential double marginalization of Chinese NGOs—gaps between local populations and these NGOs, and that between them and international NGOs.

Many of my other interviewees in this research concurred with Zhang's observations. In a way, these practitioners' comments manifested the theoretical frameworks and conceptual terms that I touched upon here.

This chapter does not seek to constrain thinking but to provide some benchmarks for the reader of the dissertation. When presenting each case of transnational advocacy networks, I make the best effort to give the reader a comprehensive picture with rich nuances. I include materials related to possible alternative explanations and intervening factors, such as issue characteristics, leadership, and opportunity structures at the international level. Indeed, in the following two chapters, we will see that the processes and political relations of transnational advocacy networks are actually "messy", and do not fit theory perfectly. I include many incidental factors that are relevant for fully understanding the complex webs of advocacy groups in China, for my first purpose is to

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<sup>110</sup> Zhang, Ye. 2003. "China's Emerging Civil Society". Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute. 2002. "Migrant Women Workers and The Emerging Civil Society in China." Beijing: Asia Foundation China Programs. 1995. "Chinese NGOs: A Survey Report." In *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community*: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, JCIE and The Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium.

call scholarly attention to this newly emerging community and specify the political context it is situated in. In Chapter 5, I then apply a more systematic comparative approach to crystallize the linkages between my theoretical arguments and empirical findings.

### CHAPTER 3

## TRANSNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN CHINA

*There is a great deal of coordination among international and Chinese NGOs, and these international groups are mostly staffed with Chinese people. They (international NGOs) are Chinese groups at heart.*

— Wen Bo

*Coordinator in China, Global Greengrants Fund,  
and Pacific Environment Resource and Center<sup>1</sup>*

According to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, the Hengduan Mountain region in southwest China is one of the world's most important ecological hotspots.<sup>2</sup> Three Chinese provinces, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region intersect here, and many great rivers flow through the region, including the Yangtze and the Mekong. With its extremely rugged terrain, varied climates and rich biodiversity, it occupies 1.5% of the world's surface, yet is home to more than 12,000 species of higher plants, of which 29 percent are unique to this hotspot. The region is also economically disadvantaged. Within the areas in Yunnan alone, more than three million people are living under the national poverty level. The natural resources in the region have been increasingly degraded as a result of poverty, low education, and the continued practice of some environmentally harmful traditional resource use

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<sup>1</sup> Interviewed in San Francisco, May 2003.

<sup>2</sup> The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of the Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank, focusing on providing strategic assistance to nongovernmental organizations, community groups and other civil society partners to help safeguard Earth's biodiversity hotspots.

methods.<sup>3</sup> The integrity of major rivers flowing into Myanmar, Laos and Thailand is dependent on the stability of the region's natural resources. Thus, the conservation strategies adopted in northwestern Yunnan will shape the environmental quality and well-being of not only the populations within the region, but also millions more in mainland Southeast Asia.

As of 2004, dozens of international NGOs have entered this region. They mobilized substantial support from various multilateral and bilateral agencies, and launched various types of conservation projects, partnering with both local governments and social groups. One of such projects is the Yunnan Great Rivers project, a multi-million project initiated by The Nature Conservation (TNC) and Yunnan provincial government. Conservation International (CI) and World Wide Fund for Nature's China Program (WWF China) have also arrived at agreements with the Sichuan government to launch community based conservation projects in the province. Oxfam America developed a watershed conservation project in Northeast Yunnan to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and to promote transparency in local conservation policy-making. Some have used these projects as examples to point out that transnational advocacy networks are not only emerging, but also have been able to effectively change local practices in nature conservation in China.<sup>4</sup> Wen Bo—a

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<sup>3</sup> Such as using original woods for building houses, cooking and heating.

<sup>4</sup> Istenič, Saša. 2004. "Politics of Wildlife Protection in China." *Leeds East Asia Papers (University of Leeds)*. 64. Yang, Guobin. 2004. "Global Environmentalism Hits China: International and Domestic Groups Join Forces to Combat Environmental Woes." *Yale Center for the Study of Globalization*. Turner, Jennifer. 2004. "Small Government, Big and Green Society: Emerging Partnership to Solve China's Environmental Problems." *Harvard Asia Quarterly*. VIII, 2. Litzinger, Ralph. 2004. "The



veteran Chinese environmentalist and Coordinator in China of Global Greengrants Fund and the Pacific Environment Resource and Center has commented that a few international conservation groups are interconnected with local NGOs and communities. “There is a great deal of coordination among international and Chinese NGOs, and these international groups are mostly staffed with Chinese people. They (international NGOs) are Chinese groups at heart.” This observation sheds light on how much external advocacy groups have localized their activities and the level of integration within the networks.

This chapter maps the international advocacy groups in nature conservation in China, and examines the triangular relationship among them, the Chinese government, and local environmental groups. I trace how individual international NGOs and advocacy actors form partnerships and connections with various organizations in China. I also explain the governing bodies, international factors and civil society structures related to the issue of nature conservation in order to pinpoint the causal linkages between these factors and the development of transnational networks.

Since the early 1980s, the emergence of transnational advocacy networks has undergone three stages. First, a handful of major international NGOs and foundations focused on persuading and engaging the Chinese government to recognize the importance of nature conservation. Second, more international conservation groups entered China and expanded their networks with more local authorities and social groups. Third, in recent years, not only the number of international NGOs has

mounted considerably, but also the density of transnational advocacy networks has increased embodied in more transnationalized social campaigns and more participation in institutional building in nature conservation. The rise of grassroots environmentalism the greening progress within a few key governmental agencies have created a relatively favorable environment for international advocacy actors to build up their networks, in spite of many other political and practical obstacles.

## THE NATURE CONSERVATION CRISIS

### The Development-Conservation Conflict

China is home to approximately 10% of the world's biodiversity, and ranks first in biodiversity in the northern hemisphere.<sup>5</sup> It has at least 30,000 species of vascular plants, and its *Fauna Sinica Catalogue* stretches to 150 volumes.<sup>6</sup> With one-fourth of China's total species endangered, this richness is diminishing at an alarming rate. China has 156 out of the 640 species listed as endangered under the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Flora and Fauna (CITES), and *The World Conservation Union 2002 Red List* places China among the countries with the most threatened birds and mammals. At least eight large mammal species are thought to have been extirpated from China in the last century alone, and it is predicted that 33 will become extinct during this century.<sup>7</sup> Ecosystems in China have degraded

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<sup>5</sup> Liu, Jianguo. 2003. "Protecting China's Biodiversity." *Science*. Vol. 300, Issue 5623: 1240-1241.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Harkness, James. 1998. "Recent Trends in Forestry and Conservation of Biodiversity in China." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment: 912.

drastically in the past 50 years due to rapid population growth, urbanization, and large-scale government sponsored development projects such as dam constructions.<sup>8</sup> 90 percent of China's grasslands are withdrawing to varying degrees, and glaciers in parts of the Tibetan plateau are retreating almost 20 meters every year.<sup>9</sup> In the Sanjiang Plane (in northeastern China) and the Poyang Lake regions (in central China), some of the largest wetlands on the earth are disappearing due to excessive land reclamation since the 1950s.<sup>10</sup> Every year, northern provinces suffer from multiple dust storms because of the severe desertification in the region.<sup>11</sup> China has now at least 85,000 dams (22,000 are large and medium)—only two rivers in the country are still dam-free.<sup>12</sup>

Conserving wildlife and biodiversity in China is related to interrelated problems that affect not only species and their habitats, but also the well-being of millions of people and thousands of communities. Recall the above accounts of the Hengduan Mountain region. Protected areas and nature reserves in China usually are populated and impoverished, with local communities maintain that maintain

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<sup>8</sup> Edmonds, Richard. 1994. *Patterns of China's Lost Harmony: A Survey of the Country's Environmental Degradation and Protection*. New York: Routledge.

<sup>9</sup> Yang, Xin, (Sichuan GreenRiver Environmental Conservation Promotion Society). 2001. "NGO Conservation Work in Tibet and Western Sichuan." Talk at the China Environment Forum Meeting, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., Sept. 5.

<sup>10</sup> WWF China project report on Central Yangtze watershed conservation. I also thank Professor Ma Zhong for sharing his research of wetlands in the Sanjiang Plane.

<sup>11</sup> "Dangerous Asian dust storms increase fivefold from Chinese desert", *Associated Press*, 31 March 2004. "Dusty weather to linger in north China in coming days", *Xinhua News*, 29 March 2004. "Dust: prime pollutants in Chinese cities", *Xinhua News*, 17 September 2003. [Accessed through LexisNexis, 10 December 2004]

<sup>12</sup> World Commission on Dams report. [Available at: <http://www.dams.org/kbase/consultations/esea/stats.htm>, last accessed on 15 March 2005]

traditional economies and depend on raw natural resources. The incidence of rural poverty in the most forested areas in China (esp. Northeast and Southwest) where biodiversity is also rich is in between 17.7 – 22.9%.<sup>13</sup> (Maps 3.1, 3.2) The need for rural development and poverty relief in protected and forested areas adds pressure to local ecosystems. Chinese scientists and biodiversity experts have pointed out “[China’s] biodiversity suffers from the explosive increase in the intensity and extent of human activities.”<sup>14</sup> For instance, the human-elephant and human-bird conflicts in various parts of Yunnan.<sup>15</sup>

**Map 3.1. Forested areas in China (1997)**



Source: Chinese Ministry of Forestry

**Map 3.2. Poverty in China (1996)**



Note: Darker color indicates worse poverty situation  
Data is not available for Inner Mongolia  
Source: World Bank Poverty Assessment 2000

<sup>13</sup> World Bank. 2000. “China: Overcoming Rural Poverty”. [Available online: <http://www.worldbank.org>, last accessed 15 March 2005]

<sup>14</sup> Liu, Jianguo, and Ouyang, Zhiyun, et al. 2003. “Protecting China’s Biodiversity”. *Science*, 300, 5623: 1240-2.

<sup>15</sup> Zhang, Aster and Wang Ning. 2003. “An Initial study on Habitat Conservation of Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), with a Focus on Human Elephant Conflict in Simao, China.” *Biological Conservation*, 112, 3: 453-60. Lan, Daoying and Robin Dunbar. 2000. “Bird and Mammal Conservation in Gaoligongshan Region and Jingdong County, Yunnan, China: Patterns of Species Richness and Nature Reserves”. *Oryx*, 34, 4: 275-87.

Even though the central government has made some steps in protecting biodiversity in recent years (e.g., expansion of the nature reserve system and ratification of the national “logging ban”), conservationists are not optimistic. With over a decade experience of working in China’s nature conservation, Jim Harkness (Director of WWF China) warned that there is “a deepening crisis in biodiversity and forest management”.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the lack of public participation and local capacity which is common across sectors in China, disjointed governing institutions and contradictory policies related to nature conservation have exacerbated human-nature conflicts and local resistance of nature reserves in various parts of the country. In this section, I present evidence from China’s forestry and nature reserve systems to illustrate the political obstacles faced by both Chinese and international conservationists and advocacy groups as they work to alleviate the nature conservation crisis in the country.

### **Fragmented Governance in Nature Conservation**

The most significant obstacle to conserving China’s biodiversity is the lack of a synthesized and substantiated governing system. Though China’s environmental governance has been substantially enhanced since Mao’s times with the creation of National Environmental Protection Administration (NEPA, and now SEPA) and environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) at all levels, there is a sharp gap between

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<sup>16</sup> Harkness, 1998.

the state's responses to pollution control and that to ecological degradation.<sup>17</sup> Under the leadership of SEPA, China has formulated prompt policy measures to curb down industrial pollution control (e.g., creating two national acid rain monitoring and control zones).<sup>18</sup> In contrast, the governing system in nature conservation is fragmented, and there is a lack of suitable policies to cope with China's ecological distress. Such fragmentation in governance is marked by three features: bureaucratic deadlock at the central level, lack of institutionalized coordination among nature reserves at local levels, and a parallel administrative system within the forestry sector.

### ***The SEPA vs. SFB stalemate***

The total number of national-level nature reserves in China has increased rapidly in recent years from around 590 in 1992 to 980 in 1998, and almost doubled to 1757 in

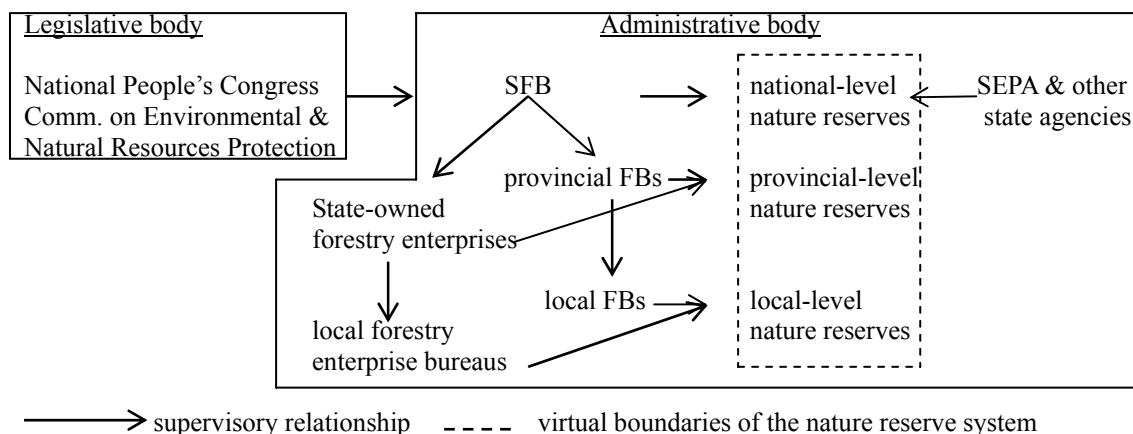
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<sup>17</sup> This distinction in environmental policy is common across countries, and usually referred as "brown" versus "green" issues. On the developments in China's environmental governance in general, see: Economy, Elizabeth. 2004. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapter 4: 91-128. Edmonds, Richard L., ed. 1998. *Managing China's Environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Palmer, Michael. 1998. "Environmental Regulation in the People's Republic of China: The Face of Domestic Law." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment. Ross, Lester. 1998. "China: Environmental Protection, Domestic Policy Trends, Patterns of Participation in Regimes and Compliance with International Norms." In *Managing China's Environment*, edited by Edmonds, Richard L. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ross, Lester. 1988. *Environmental Policy in China*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Jahiel, Abigail. 1998. "The Organization of Environmental Protection in China." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment: 757-87. Beach, Marilyn. 2001. "Local Environmental Management in China." *China Environmental Series*, 4. Smil, Vaclav. 2004. *China's Past, China's Future: Energy, Food, Environment*. New York: Routledge Curzon.

<sup>18</sup> He, Kebin et al. 2002. "Urban Air Pollution in China: Current Status, Characteristics, and Progress." *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment*. Vol. 27, Issue 1: 397-431. He, Kebin, and Chang Cheng. 1999. "Present and Future Pollution from Urban Transport in China". *China Environmental Series*, Issue 3. Dudek, Dan et al. 2001. "Total Emission Control of Major Pollutants in China". *China Environmental Series*, Issue 4. Vermeer, Eduard. 1998. "Industrial Pollution in China and Remedial Policies." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment: 952-85. Lu, Yingzhong. 1997. "The Role of Nuclear Energy in the CO<sub>2</sub> Mitigation Strategy of the People's Republic of China". *China Environmental Series*, Issue 1.

2003, covering 16% of the country's land area.<sup>19</sup> However, the governing authority over nature reserves is not clearly defined at the national level. Even though the *1998 State Council Notification on Strengthening Nature Reserve Management* sanctioned SEPA as the sole supervisory body over the reform of the nature reserve system, it has limited power and resources to oversee national-level reserves, not to mention provincial and county level reserves. Of the existing national level nature reserves (around 2000), over 1200 in fact belong to the forestry sector, and the rest are individually governed by State Bureaus of Oceanic Affairs, Geology, Tourism, Water Resources, and SEPA.<sup>20</sup> (Figure 3.1)

**Figure 3.1. Governing bodies related to nature conservation in China**



Because of the importance of forests to biodiversity conservation, and the traditional status of the forestry authority within the Chinese state, the Ministry of Forestry (now the State Forestry Bureau or SFB) was once the leading state agency in

<sup>19</sup> Harkness, 1998. Cyranoski, David. 2003. "Biodiversity Schemes Take Foot in China". *Nature*, 425: 890.

<sup>20</sup> SEPA directly governs around 80 national nature reserves.

charge of issues related to nature conservation.<sup>21</sup> In the *1994 State Council Regulation on Nature Reserves*, SFB and other state agencies, but not SEPA, were sanctioned to enforce the Regulation in the reserves belonging to their own systems. SEPA did not (and still does not) have the administrative channels to manage nature reserves at different levels. Since the central administrative reform in 1998, the power balance between SEPA and SFB has shifted, and SEPA has been given more authority to monitor nature reserves.<sup>22</sup> However, no coordinating mechanism has been established among the various state agencies related to nature conservation, or between SEPA and SFB. According to some insiders the situation between the two agencies over the issue of nature reserve management reform has nearly been a stalemate between since 1998. For instance, the Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources Protection of the National People's Congress is currently drafting a national law on biodiversity conservation. Both SEPA and SFB are lobbying for their own interests and have drafted two versions of the new law.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Bottom-up nature reserve establishment mechanism***

Provincial and county-level governmental authorities can for the most part plan and establish provincial and lower level reserves with approval by upper echelon

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<sup>21</sup> Even though Ministry of Forestry (now SFB) was first created as a supplier of raw materials for national economic development, it has always been, and expanded its role in nature conservation in China. In October 1956, the MoF issue the "Draft Plan for the Designation of Areas for National Forestry Reserve", and over the next years, the first group of total 19 reserves in China were set up. In the early 1980s, China's National Wildlife Protection Association is established with SFB. Currently, wildlife protection agencies at all local levels are usually affiliated with local forestry bureaus.

<sup>22</sup> In 1998, while NEPA was promoted to the full-ministry ranking as SEPA, MoF was demoted to the deputy-ministry ranking as SFB.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Chen Qing, expert consultant for force-coming law on nature reserve management, in Beijing, April 2004.



governmental authorities. This bottom-up mechanism has given local officials incentives to propose nature reserve plans for the purpose of attracting tourism and income-generation, instead of ecological protection and recovery. After visiting a number of nature reserves in China, Lawrence Glacy observed that “local government prioritizing of economic growth has allowed for the proliferation of commercial activities within nature reserves and hindered effective implementation of pollution control and natural resources protection policies.”<sup>24</sup> Many nature reserves in China are also located in the poorest areas, where local farmers and ethnic minorities live with traditional agricultural and hunting methods and directly extract raw materials from the surrounding ecosystems. Conservation experts point out that the boundaries of nature reserves do not coincide with that of ecological districts, and nature reserves in China are designed primarily in order to reduce conflict with humans rather than to maximize conservation of biodiversity.<sup>25</sup> In some cases, establishment of nature reserves has even intensified the competition for natural resources (e.g., timber, fish, and arable land) and triggered local resistance and political crises.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, under the existing nature reserve governing structures, neither central nor provincial governments provide sufficient funds or human resources for

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<sup>24</sup> Glacy, Lawrence. 2002. "China's Nature Reserves: Protecting Species or Generating Profits?" *China Environment Series*. 5: 69-73.

<sup>25</sup> For the spread of 3 eco-domains, 13 eco-regions and 57 eco-districts in China, see: Fu, Bo-Jie et al. 2004. “Ecoregions and Ecosystem Management in China”. *International Journal for Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 11, 4: 397-410.

<sup>26</sup> Emily Yet documented how community-based ownership, rights, and social distribution systems complicates the issue of nature conservation, which lead to local conflicts. Yeh, Emily T. 2000. "Forest Claims, Conflicts and Commodification: The Political Ecology of Tibetan Mushroom-Harvesting Villages in Yunnan Province." *The China Quarterly*. 161: 264-78.

newly created nature reserves. Nature reserve staff are poorly paid. When I visited the Xinkai Lake Nature Reserve in Heilongjiang province in May 2004, I was told that reserve staff had not been paid for six months. In addition, no national systematic and enforceable standards exist regarding eco-tourism, eco-research, or agroforestry within the reserves. At least 40 percent of the reserves have not performed baseline assessments due to the lack of financial, technical and human resources.<sup>27</sup> There are few connections and no professional associations established among different the local reserve staff. Individual nature reserves in China are virtually operated in a *state of nature*.

#### ***Parallel system within the forestry sector***

Besides the above factors, a dual system of state-owned forestry enterprises and forestry bureaus within the forestry sector worsens the disjunction in the governing structures of nature conservation. China's forests are governed by two functionally similar yet administrative systems—one, state-owned forestry enterprises, the other, forestry bureaus.<sup>28</sup> Forestry bureaus operate as other bureaucracies, and manage 4446 forestry units (*lin chang*) and reserves through administrative measures. Like other state-owned industrial enterprises, state-owned forestry enterprises manage forests and wood processing industries in a quasi-corporate fashion. There are 135 of them across the country, and most of them are gigantic in terms of the size of their forests and the

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<sup>27</sup> Harkness, 1998. p920.

<sup>28</sup> Sources in Chinese: *50 Years of China's Forestry*. State Forestry Bureau. Jia, Qian et al. "Studies of Forestry Production: State Forests in the Northeast and Collectively-owned Forests in the South", in *China's Forestry Enterprise*. 2002 (6), pp3-8. "Production Structural Changes in Daxing'anling Forested Region", in *China Green Times*, 26 July 2004.

number of their employees.<sup>29</sup> A single forestry enterprise usually controls multiple forests, and sometimes covers an even larger territory and possesses more assets than a provincial forestry bureau. In general, the quality of the forests belonging to forestry enterprises is the highest in the country. Thus, in the provinces that are rich in forests (esp. in the northeast), forestry enterprises can be more powerful than forestry bureaus in local politics.<sup>30</sup>

Both forestry enterprises and bureaus govern forestry reserves, yet they function separately, even when their reserves are geographically contiguous to each other. For example, the Heilongjiang Provincial Forestry Bureau has no authority over the forests and reserves under the Longjiang Forestry Group—a forestry enterprise, located inside the Heilongjiang province. The Longjiang Forestry Group is only accountable to the SFB and State Council. Even though the central government is transforming the forestry sector's mandate from production to conservation, the mandate of state-owned forestry enterprises is still geared toward generating market revenue. Therefore, the SFB is not able to enforce conservation-related regulations in the forestry reserves that are managed by state-owned forestry enterprises. The parallel operation of the forestry bureaus and forestry enterprises within the forestry

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<sup>29</sup> Most state-owned forestry enterprises were established during 1950s for the purpose of intensive exploitation of original forests in China. Such forestry enterprises are forest communes in reality. Residents of the whole community (sometimes as large as a county) became employed loggers and service personnel for the enterprise. The enterprise is the center of social life within the community, and bears all kinds of social welfare burdens. The governing body of the enterprise is also *de facto* political authority of the community.

<sup>30</sup> The 10 southern provinces have privatized all forested areas by 2003, so there is so gigantic state-owned forestry enterprises in the south.

sector has created more barriers to the establishment of a coordinated governing system over forests and nature reserves in China.<sup>31</sup>

### **Discrepancies in Recent Policies Related to Nature Conservation**

The lack of a coordinated governing structure over the issue of nature conservation from central to local levels has led to the lack of an effective regulation making and implementation mechanism. Despite the *1994 China Biodiversity Conservation Plan* and other State Council notifications related to nature reserves, nature reserves are poorly managed and short of staff, funds, and conservation expertise. Moreover, because no state ministry is directly responsible for conservation policy-making and implementation, other policies often get prioritized by the state which overlook or contradict the purpose of land protection and biodiversity conservation. An example is the land tenure reform in forested areas in the 1980s. Even when the state made new policies to protect biodiversity such as the 1998 national “logging ban” and recent reforestation policies, the results were not as positive as intended due to a lack of consistency and the neglect of the needs of local people.

Land tenure reforms in the 1980s have led to increased prosperity in rural China, particularly in the eastern provinces. In the Southwest where topography is rugged yet forestry coverage is relatively high, provincial governments privatized and distributed the right of use of all forested areas and wastelands (*huan shan huan di*), as well as arable lands to individual families. However, the type of land tenure

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<sup>31</sup> Wu, Fengshi et al. 2005. “Prospectus of Innovative Financing in China’s Forestry Sector”. Working paper series of Global Environmental Institute, Beijing, China.

arrangements that worked for arable lands have proved to be unsuitable for non-arable, forested lands, or wastelands. The life-cycle of forests is much longer than agricultural products, and each patch of divided forested land is usually too small for local people to profit from forest management and timber sales. Therefore, villagers with access to forested or wasted land had little incentive to re-cultivate or maintain forests.<sup>32</sup> According to a comprehensive study conducted by the Center of Community Studies, the land tenure reforms in the 1980s and the early 1990s contributed to considerable land conversion and forest and biodiversity loss in the southwestern provinces.<sup>33</sup>

To avert the dire degradation trend in the forestry sector, the central government led by then-Premier Zhong Rongji enacted a callous forestry conservation policy in 1998, known as the national “logging ban.”<sup>34</sup> While the Logging Ban has put a halt on commercial logging, it has created new dilemmas for the communities that are situated inside or nearby forested areas. Local people of these communities, many of whom are ethnic minorities, still depend on wood for domestic heating, cooking, and energy use, and therefore, the logging ban has created tension between local people and forestry bureaus.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Also, harvesting, transport, logging permit and sale all entail taxes and fees that could add up to 90 per cent of the market value of the timber. By comparison, farmers’ property rights over agricultural products and crops are much more clear and with few taxes and fees. (Harkness, 1998. p929)

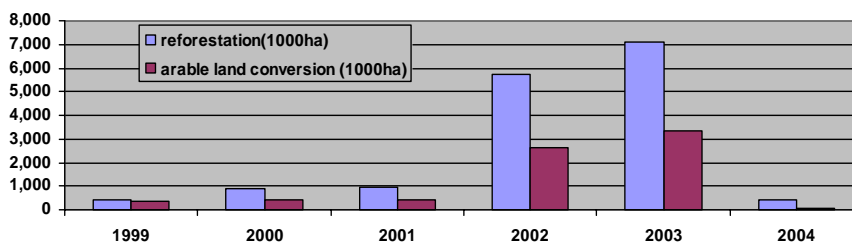
<sup>33</sup> Zheng, Baohua eds. 2003. *Studies of Non-arable Land Tenure in Southern China*. Sponsored by the Community Development Center (Yunnan). Beijing: China Books Press.

<sup>34</sup> *State Council Notification on Strengthening Forestry Management*, 5 August 1998.

<sup>35</sup> Many activists have voiced this point. I also observed such tension during my field trips to forestry reserves in Heilongjiang in May 2004. Local forestry bureaucrats now see themselves as forest police, and they have the power to imprison individuals who log without a legal permit. In addition, logging

Since 1999, reforestation programs have been sponsored by the central government and implemented by SFB across the country. The total scale of reforestation per year has increased rapidly from around 447,000 ha in 1999 to 7133,000 in 2003. (Figure 3.2) Almost half of the newly forested areas were converted from arable lands, and this has caused increasing resentment from local farmers who were forced to give up crop harvesting. At the beginning of 2004, in order to lessen local resentment, the central government suddenly changed the plan of reforestation for the year and dropped the targeted total to 400,000 ha, significantly reducing the ratio of arable land conversion to total forestation was also reduced significantly from 47% in 2003 to 17% in 2004.

**Figure 3.2. Data on reforestation (total size and the part converted from arable lands, 1999-2004)**



Source: Office of Reforestation, State Forestry Bureau, 2004.

Though this policy response took local people's interests serious, it still showed the inconsistency in central government's long-term plan of forestry conservation and management. In addition, such a top-down measure of reforestation still downplays local needs and repeats the mistake of "one size fits all". Hundreds of local farmers in Gansu province who had already prepared their land for seedlings

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permit has become a new source of "rent-seeking" for wood processing businesses, and corruption within local forestry authorities.

were devastated when the news came that they would have to go back to planting crop that year, reported by the *Caijing* magazine.<sup>36</sup>

On top of ecological causes, the challenge of nature conservation in China is notably aggravated by the lack of political will at the top and disjointed governing structures over nature reserves and biodiversity protection-related issues, as well as low levels of public awareness and participation. The government prioritizes development and pollution control over wildlife and ecosystem protection, and has not clearly defined the governing authority of these issues at the central level. Overlap of functions and conflict of interests among related bureaucracies has delayed the reforms of nature reserves and the enforcement of nature conservation policies.

### **Multilateral and Bilateral Responses to China's Nature Conservation**

Multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies have mobilized considerable resources to assist the Chinese government in coping with the domestic environmental degradation crisis.<sup>37</sup> It is estimated that 1.2 billion USD worth of foreign capital was invested in environmental protection between 1991 and 1995. However, official environmental assistance is skewed towards energy efficiency and pollution control rather than nature conservation.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Caijing*, 24 July 2004.

<sup>37</sup> However, Turner pointed out that international recognition of the problem that pollution and natural resource degradation in China would severely impact the global environment had been "belated". (Turner, 2004)

<sup>38</sup> In fact, official assistance to China always prioritized development over environmental issues. During the period of 1993-1996, two-thirds of a total 9 billion USD of IBRD loans to China spent on infrastructural projects and 11% was spent on the environment; of an approximate total of 3 billion USD of IDA loans, 22% was spent on the environment; while, less than 7% of 4.5 billion ADB loans

Since the 1980s, the World Bank, together with the Asia Development Bank, has provided some 800 million USD in environmental loans to China annually. China in fact is the World Bank's largest recipient of environmental reconstruction and pollution prevention project loans.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, among the 130 existing and completed Bank loan projects in China, only 12 are related to water, forestry and eco-system conservation.

In the mid-1990s, the G7 governments agreed to assist in environmental areas in China. Since then, bilateral aids to China's environmental sector have also grown noticeably. Similar to the pattern of multilateral environmental assistance, individual governments gave more to China for infrastructure building and energy and pollution control than to nature conservation related issues. Between 1993 and 1998, Japan alone gave nearly 353 million USD to set up 30 projects in China to demonstrate clean production and energy efficiency technologies.<sup>40</sup> There are bilateral cooperation agreements with aid organizations from the U.S., Korea, Canada, Japan, Germany, Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Estimates of bilateral environmental aids to China reached about 4 billion USD during 1996-2000, while China's own expenditure was 6.3 billion USD in 1996. However, only a small portion of bilateral funds were designated for nature conservation related issues, with the exception of Korea's and Japan's large grants for preventing desertification in northern China.

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was spent in environment-related areas. (Vermeer, Eduard. 1998. "Industrial Pollution in China and Remedial Policies." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment: 952-85.)

<sup>39</sup> Turner, Jennifer. 2004. "Emerging Partnership to Solve China's Environmental Problems." *Harvard Asia Quarterly*. VIII, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Evans, Peter. 2001. "Japan-U.S. Environmental Cooperation: Promoting Sustainable Development in China". Paper presented at the Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C., November 21.



Since 2004, new trends in official environmental assistance have emerged due to China's policies related to Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). On 30 June 2004, the State Council established a National CDM Committee and enacted the National CDM Provisional Measures in order to take advantage of international funds that became available after the Kyoto Protocol for reducing carbon dioxide emissions was established.<sup>41</sup> In the following February, the National CDM Committee added afforestation and reforestation to the list of the prioritized areas for international collaboration in CDM in China. This policy change has propped a group of official assistance agencies, including the World Bank, to adjust their funding policies related to forestry and land use in China. For example, the Australian international aid agency has initiated an Inner Mongolia Grassland Management Project with SFB. This and other programs provide evidence of an increase in inter-governmental collaborative efforts to support nature conservation in China in the next few years.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Brief history on CDM and China: In 1992, U.N. adopted the Convention on Climate Change and international negotiations on stabilizing GHG like carbon dioxide in the atmosphere began. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, which commits industrialized country signatories (Annex I countries) to reduce their carbon emissions by an average of 5.2 percent compared with 1990 emissions in the period 2008-2012. Three market-based mechanisms were proposed to implement the Protocol: joint implementation between Annex I and transition economies, emission trading among Annex I countries, and CDM between Annex I and development countries. In 2001, Marrakesh Accords explicated the procedures of land-related CDM projects. China rectified Kyoto Protocol in 2003, and thereby started institution building for international cooperation in CDM. The State Council first only included energy efficiency related categories in the national list of prioritized CDM project types. SFB lobbied the State Council to add land-related projects into the list.

<sup>42</sup> Wu, 2005. During June to July 2004, I was part of the expert team invited by SFB to give advice on CDM and later training courses for forestry officials from all provinces.

In summary, the challenge of nature conservation in China can be characterized as follows:

1) Over the past two decades, economic development has been a national priority. Both governmental and public awareness of biodiversity conservation is very low in spite of dreadful environmental degradation across the country. Bottom-up initiatives are emerging, as I will explain in the following section, but public participation in this area in general is lacking;

2) Nature conservation is made increasingly complex at local levels by the issues of land tenure, subsistence farming, the rights of ethnic minorities, and local state-society relations. In many cases, nature conservation is a highly sensitive issue, and has the potential of causing local political contention;

3) Although the total number of nature reserves has grown considerably, the governing structures responsible for nature reserves in China are highly fragmented. This disjointed governing system has led to discrepancies and inconsistencies in recent state policies related to nature conservation;

4) Nature reserve staff in China lack the capacity to effectively implement conservation policies. Individual reserves are in great need of financial, technical, and human resources support.

5) Even though official environmental assistance as a whole has grown significantly and inter-governmental collaboration has played a role in China's environmental governance since the 1990s, multilateral and bilateral agencies have

only recently began paying more attention to China's biodiversity and ecosystem protection,.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CIVIL SOCIETY IN CHINA

Unlike the environmental NGOs in developed countries which are highly specialized, majority of Chinese environmental NGOs and social groups only focus on either urban pollution, or nature conservation issues, or both.<sup>43</sup> The rise of grassroots activism in response to conservation problems is linked directly to the rise of environmentalism in general in China.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the lack of institutional channels for public participation in China, bottom-up environmentalism has gradually matured in the past decade. Pioneer Chinese environmental activists called for public environmental awareness during the movement against the Three Gorges Dam in the 1980s.<sup>45</sup> While the phenomenon of NGO and social activism is not unique to the environmental field, it is one of the most

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<sup>43</sup> Economy, 2004. Yang, 2005. Economy also pointed out that a small number of NGOs, in fact, promote democratic principles. I argue that more and more Chinese environmental NGOs are informed and become conscious about the political implications of being non-governmental actors under the Chinese political context. Democracy is gradually becoming an un-said underlining principled idea for Chinese environmental NGOs. I thus only divide them by their main activities, i.e., urban pollution (including air, drinking water, and industrial pollution), and nature conservation (including species, habitats, watersheds, wetlands, and forests).

<sup>44</sup> This point is important for comparing the two civil society groups studied in this dissertation. Theoretically, Chinese AIDS-related NGOs are also part of the whole civil society sector in public health. However, because these NGOs in HIV/AIDS prevention are in fact pioneers of civil society actors in the field of health, they are not just part of, but significant majority part of the whole community at the current stage.

<sup>45</sup> Economy, Elizabeth. 2004. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapter 5: 138-145.

vibrant fields in China in terms of the growth, outreach, and political recognition of NGOs and their activities. When former U.S. president Bill Clinton requested to meet with Chinese NGO leaders during his 1998 state visit, the Chinese central government arranged a meeting of four NGO representatives, two of which were from the environmental field. The emergence of environmentalism in China is also evidenced by the substantial volume of scholarly work conducted on the topic. Environmental NGOs are probably the most studied Chinese NGOs by Western researchers.<sup>46</sup>

There is also evidence that a “green” civil society is emerging in China, and some argue that environmental activists and NGOs are political *avant-gardes* who push the envelope of grassroots citizen actions and challenge existing governing norms.<sup>47</sup> To support this view, I assert that as environmental activists and NGOs increasingly reflect upon their role in civil society and share their experiences, a new

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<sup>46</sup> Environmental NGOs were highlighted in the three earliest field reports and empirical research done on the topic of civil society and NGO development in China. (National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. 1994. “The Rise of Nongovernmental Organizations in China: Implications for Americans”. New York; Zhang, Ye. 1995. “Chinese NGOs: A Survey Report.” In *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, JCIE and The Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium; Raab, Michaela. 1996. “Social Development NGOs in China”. New York: Ford Foundation.) In two important scholarly works which identified the new dynamics of civil society development in China beyond the traditional focus on intellectual elites and democratic movements, environmental NGOs and protests were used as important illustrative cases. (Jing, Jun. 2000. “Environmental Protests in Rural China.” In *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, edited by Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden, 143-60. New York: Routledge. Saich, Tony. 2000. “Negotiating the State: The Development of Social Organizations in China.” *The China Quarterly*. 161: 125-41.) For more recent and comprehensive review of Chinese environmental NGOs, see: Yang, Guobin. 2005. “Environmental NGOs and Institutional Dynamics in China.” *The China Quarterly*. 182: 46-66. Schwartz, Jonathan. 2004. “Environmental NGOs in China: Roles and Limits.” *Pacific Affairs*. 77, 1: 28-49. Turner, Jennifer, and Fengshi Wu, eds. 2001. *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum: A Meeting of Environmentalists from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

<sup>47</sup> Turner, Jennifer. 2004. “Small Government, Big and Green Society: Emerging Partnership to Solve China's Environmental Problems.” *Harvard Asia Quarterly*. VIII, 2.

group identity is emerging. This feature is crucial for grasping the political meanings of environmental NGOs in China, and examining variances in civil society structures across issue areas.

In this section, I give a brief review of the rise of environmentalism in China, and then focus on elaborating the dense and vibrant connections and networks among Chinese environmental NGOs and activists. I show that Chinese environmental NGOs have learned how to negotiate and reach common ground with governmental authorities through continual trial and error. Moreover, I point out that a shared group identity is in formation among these NGOs and environmentalists, and is enhanced by condensed networks, shared experiences in political actions, and self-reflections on the role of civil society in Chinese politics by key activist leaders.

### **The Rise of Environmentalism**

Since the 1980s, environmental activism has risen and gone through two main phases. There was relatively slow growth driven by a few leading activists interspersed with governmental crackdowns throughout the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s. From the mid-1990s to date, there has been significant development in terms of the number of institutionalized NGOs, the geographic spread of activist groups, and the building of networks and the formation of a collective identity within the community.

“Men conquer nature” was a core idea of Maoist ideology. Shapiro’s research has shown that Mao was able to convey this idea to the masses through waves of

political and social campaigns throughout the 1950s and the 1960s.<sup>48</sup> The Culture Revolution generation internalized Mao's view of the world and progress. Even though many of the generation ultimately became disillusioned with Maoism, they still retain Marxist dialectics and historic materialism. This partially explains why it was not difficult for Deng Xiaoping, when he returned to power in 1978, to use the slogans "to be rich is glorious", "four modernizations", and "development is the hard truth" to mobilize for his master plan of economic development in China. Marxist and Maoist ideologies did not leave any ethical doubts to prevent pragmatism and the spirit of modernization to flourish in post-Mao China. The 1980s for China was a decade of progress, characterized by large-scale, top-down economic re-structuring, the introduction of modern technologies and machineries, and the rapid increase of foreign capital investment. Public awareness of environmental protection remained low.<sup>49</sup> Materialistic views even prevailed among environmental protection bureaucrats.<sup>50</sup> When Dai Qing, a well known environmental and democracy activist, attended a meeting with the new generation of environmental activists to prepare for the establishment of China Rivers Network in the summer of 2004, she reflected on environmental activism and the Three Gorges Anti-Dam movement in the 1980s. She

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<sup>48</sup> Shapiro, 2001.

<sup>49</sup> Edmonds, Richard L. 1998. "Studies on China's Environment." *The China Quarterly*. 156, Special Issue: China's Environment: 725.

<sup>50</sup> Wong, Koon-Kwai, and Hon S. Chan. 1996. "The Environmental Awareness of Environmental Protection Bureaucrats in the People's Republic of China." *The Environmentalist*, 16. This situation, however, has changed drastically since then. Among the provincial and local EPB officials I have met and interviewed during the period of 2001-2004, majority conceived themselves as countering forces against the administrative sectors associated with production and industrial development.

commented that the timing for an anti-dam campaign is better now than before because the public is better informed with environmental problems and ideas.<sup>51</sup>

The Three Gorges Anti-Dam movement, led by elite activists such as Dai Qing and hundreds of Chinese scientists, alerted for the first time the general public to environmental problems in China.<sup>52</sup> Chinese society was, however, to a large extent, silenced for a few years after the Tian'anmen movement. Activists, public intellectuals, and other social entrepreneurs were not able to reenergize the public sphere and civic life in China until the mid-1990s. In the early 1990s, many individuals took initiative in promoting environmental awareness independently. In 1993, Tang Xiyang, a former *Beijing Daily* reporter, published *A Green World Tour*—a personal account of eight-month travels through nature reserves in Europe, the former Soviet Union, and North America. This book elevated Tang become a spiritual and philosophical leader among the young generation of Chinese environmentalists.<sup>53</sup>

Yang Xin, a national hero who canoed along the Yangtze river in the late 1980s,

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<sup>51</sup> The Green Earth Volunteers (GEV, a small NGO in Beijing) and other environmental activists successfully lobbied some open-minded SEPA officials to fight together against the dam plans on the Nu River, and Premier Wen Jiabao issued a note in February 2004 to temporarily halt the dam construction. In the summer, several meetings were called by Wang Yongchen (founder of the GEV) to rally environmental activists, NGOs, journalists, concerned professional, and some officials to establish a China Rivers Network to sustain the activism surrounding dam issues, inspired by the International Rivers Network, and supported by other international conservation NGOs. The author sat in on most of these meetings and informal gathering as well. Both Dai Qing and Liang Xiaoyan, leading environmental and democracy activists in China, were frequently present and giving advice at these meetings. (see Appendix 3.2)

<sup>52</sup> On Three Gorges anti-dam movement, see: Economy, 2004. p142-145. Khagram, 2004. p170-176. International Rivers Network. 2003. "Human Rights Dammed off at Three Gorges," [Available online: <http://www.irn.org/programs/threeg/3gcolor.pdf>. Accessed in January 2003]

<sup>53</sup> Economy, 2004. p138-141. Yang, 2005.

became a full-time advocate for nature conservation.<sup>54</sup> Both Tang and Yang remain very influential and active in the environmental NGO community today. Many common citizens also started to promote environmental awareness on their own. Ma Fangkui, an old farmer from Gansu, started planting trees in the degraded land around his home village in 1990. To call public attention to environmental protection, Yang Jingui, a Shanxi farmer, bicycled solo for ten thousands kilometers in 1995. Wang Minghai, a senior business manager, quit his job and became a volunteer tree planter in the deserts of Inner Mongolia.<sup>55</sup> Meanwhile, the central government began to organize large-scale public campaigns to promote environmental awareness.<sup>56</sup>

The establishment of the NGO the Friends of Nature (FoN) in 1994 is a milestone in the history of environmental activism in China.<sup>57</sup> Around the same time, a dozen other environmental groups also obtained formal status in Beijing and various parts of the country. Examples include: the Global Village of Beijing, the Chongqing Green Volunteers, the Green Civil Association of Weihai City (Shandong), and the Farmers' Association for the Protection of Biodiversity of the Gaoligong Mountains in

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<sup>54</sup> Interview with Yang Xin in Hong Kong, April 2001.

<sup>55</sup> Turner, Jennifer, and Fengshi Wu, eds. 2001. *Green NGO and Environmental Journalist Forum: A Meeting of Environmentalists from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Xiao, Guangling, and Xiumei Zhao. 2002. *Beijing Huanjing Feizhengfu Zuzhi Yanjiu (Beijing Environmental NGOs Studies)*. Beijing: Beijing Publishing House: 17-21.

<sup>56</sup> For example, the annual "China Environmental Protection Millennium Journey" started in 1993. Each year, over 3000 journalists participated in this event by reporting bad examples, and praising good ones in environmental protection in 28 provinces.

<sup>57</sup> The historical importance of Friends of Natures is mentioned in almost all works related to environmental NGOs in China. e.g., Economy, 2004. Ho, 2001. Knup, 1997. Schwartz, 2004. Tunner, 2004. Yang, 2005.



Yunnan.<sup>58</sup> The next few years saw a rapid growth in the number of environmental social groups, along with increased interaction and networking among these groups. The number of formally registered environmental social organizations in Beijing alone doubled from nine to 18 in the period from 1995 to 1996.<sup>59</sup> Despite mixed signals from the central government in terms of tolerating NGOs, particularly the nationwide crackdown of Falung Gong exercisers and sympathizers in 1998, the environmental community has not only survived but also has grown steadily for the past decade.<sup>60</sup> Guobing Yang documented that at least 69 grassroots environmental groups (43 of which are university student associations) were formed between 1997 and 1999.<sup>61</sup> Based on first hand experience in leading university student environmental activism in China, Lu Hongyan's research showed that the number of student environmental groups grew from 10 in 1996 to 182 in 2002.<sup>62</sup> In a March 2000 report, the U.S. Embassy in Beijing identified over a dozen "genuine" environmental NGOs across the country.<sup>63</sup> In November 2002, as the designated coordinator for the NGO Forum of the Global Environmental Facility's bi-annual

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<sup>58</sup> Documented by Xiumei Zhao, and quoted in Peter Ho's "Greening Without Conflict? Environmentalism, NGOs, and Civil Society in China." *Development & Change*. 2001. 32, 5: 907.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in Ho, 2001. p901.

<sup>60</sup> SEPA has always been supportive to Chinese environmental NGOs. Senior SEPA officials have attended NGO events. e.g., Qu Geping used to attend Global Village of Beijing's TV environmental education programs. However, the general regulations for NGOs are still strict. It was very difficult for any organization to register from 1998 to 2004. There were many incidents of governmental censorship. e.g., in 2003, one of FoN's Board member was forced to leave for his political opinions.

<sup>61</sup> Yang, 2005. p50.

<sup>62</sup> Lu, Hongyan. 2003. "Bamboo Sprouts After the Rain: The History of University Student Environmental Associations in China." *China Environment Series*, 6: 55-66.

<sup>63</sup> U.S. Embassy Beijing. 2000. "Birth of An NGO? Development of Grassroots Organizations in the Land of Big Brother". [Available online: <http://www.usembassy-china.org>. Last time accessed Oct. 2000]

conference in Beijing, FoN identified and invited over 60 grassroots environmental NGOs.

Besides FoN, four other environmental NGOs, Beijing's Global Village of Beijing, and Green Earth Volunteers, and Sichuan's Green Rivers and Chongqing Green Volunteers have also made important contributions to promoting environmentalist values and advocating policy changes at local and national levels. They have organized numerous public education activities at grassroots levels and petitions and media campaigns against polluting factories. Furthermore, they have promoted citizen awareness of environmental rights and justice and established conservation projects in various parts of the country.<sup>64</sup> While many governmental agencies organized public education campaigns during the same time, environmental NGOs' education programs were more focused and better designed for local communities, and have therefore had more lasting influence.

### **From Forums to Campaign Networks: Interconnections within the Green Civil Society**

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<sup>64</sup> Jane Sayers studied mass tree-planting campaigns in China, and pointed out participants of such campaigns (e.g., high school teachers and students) usually lack of motivations. (Sayers, Jane. 2003. "Environmental Action as Mass Campaign." *China Environment Series*, 5: 77-79.) Examples of government organized public environmental education campaigns during in the 1990s included: NEPA organized "Zero Point Action" in 1997. Over 60 CCTV journalists spend two months in the riparian provinces of the Huai River interviewing factories and communities, and they published volumes of articles on pollution incidents, and local industries' compliances with environmental regulations. All China Women's Federation started promoting recycling program since 1996. Sponsored by UNDP, it also collaborated with NEPA to establish a nation-wide Women and Environment Network. The Communist Youth League organizes mass campaign each year on World Environment Day (June 5). In 1995, 210,000 youth volunteers participated in the "free of white pollution" campaign along major four railways.

Chinese environmentalists have been able to form and strengthen the connections within the activist community through creating salons and gatherings. Through these channels, they share information on regular basis, organize thematic roundtables and brain-storm sessions for new collaborative plans, and create regional hot-hubs for environmental activism. They also provide support to each other through project implementation (e.g., public education, feasibility research, pilot conservation project) and have coordinated a number of collective actions (e.g., media campaign, policy advocacy, internet petition). More importantly, some leading environmental activists are consciously making efforts to expand grassroots social activism and promote the spirit of democratic political engagement within the green community.

In addition to numerous conferences organized by international NGOs, there are a number of regular mechanisms established by Chinese environmentalists for NGOs, concerned individuals, researchers, and journalists to meet, exchange information, and integrate resources. In Beijing, for example, there are Green Island (a journalist salon), Beijing NGO Salon (maintained by a group of young NGO leaders), and BINGO (Beijing Integrated NGO). In Shanghai, the Grassroots Community (a registered NGO) holds monthly public talks on environmental topics and hosts social events for activists and professionals from and beyond the city. Environmental NGOs in Kunming (e.g., Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge, Community Development Studies Center) maintain an NGO Forum to support social activism in a variety of issues in the province.

Three regional clusters have emerged among student environmental associations, and several college groups have taken up leadership within each region. This has greatly accelerated the development of student activism in the environmental field. The China Green Student Forum, initiated by a group of Beijing-based college student activists at the end of the 1990s, was intended to be the umbrella organization for all college student environmental groups and has been influential in the northern part of China. The Nanjing University Green Stone group has been the center of student environmental activism in southeastern China. In 2004, it became the executor of a mini-grant program for the Finnish Embassy in China, and has since then expanded its outreach among college groups in more provinces. Through a seed fund mechanism (Green SOS Fund), the Environmental Volunteers Association of Sichuan University, created in 1994, has become the focal student organization in the western Region. It has administrated small environmental protection grants to dozens of college student groups in the past three years.

New environmental NGOs and networks are sprouting out in recent years because a few leading NGOs and activists have made a particular effort to encourage bottom-up initiatives. The importance of FoN is not limited to its symbolic status as the first officially registered Chinese environmental NGO. To some extent, FoN became the boot-camp of Chinese environmental activists and the cradle of environmental NGOs. Partially due to the leadership of its founder—Professor Liang Congjie, FoN has attracted thousands of concerned citizens across the country to be

its registered members since its foundation.<sup>65</sup> Among FoN members, many are university professors, scientists, governmental officials, journalists and social entrepreneurs. A dozen FoN members have moved and established their own organizations such as the Green Earth Volunteers (Beijing), the Green Plateau Institution (Yunnan), the Brookings Institute (Beijing), and the Green Island (Beijing).

Like the FoN for other environmental NGOs, the Green Camp has been the incubator of the younger generation of environmental activists and college student environmental groups in China. Established in 1994 by Tang Xiyang and his wife Ma Xia, the Green Camp gathers a group of devoted young environmentalists each year to conduct a field trip to some of the most polluted or degraded areas of China. Among the most famous young environmentalists and leaders of college green groups in China, the majority are alumni of the Green Camp, including Wen Bo, Hu Jia, Yan Jiong and Yan Baohua.

Networks among Chinese green NGOs mature most by taking collective actions. In the late 1990s, Chinese environmentalists successfully organized two cross-regional campaigns for saving wildlife and habitats—the Golden Monkey and Tibetan Antelope movements.<sup>66</sup> The frequency of such wide-spread campaigns and

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<sup>65</sup> Liang Congjie, a former professor in history, has a legendary family background. His grand-father, Liang Qichao, was a leading intellectual and reformist politician in late Qing Dynasty. His father, Liang Sicheng, became a leading architect of the People's Republic of China, and designed many major monumental public buildings in the country, including the Tian'an Square and the People's Congress Hall. What is also unique about the Friends of Nature is that two of its founding members were main actors involved in the Tian'an Men movement in 1989. This factor also makes FoN appealing to public intellectuals, concerned citizen, young activists, and social entrepreneurs.

<sup>66</sup> Economy, Elizabeth. 2004. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp. 149-156.

movements has noticeably increased in recent years. During the time when Beijing was bidding for the 2008 Olympic Games, environmental NGOs rallied together and organized many public meetings to voice their opinions and criticisms. In 2003, with support from Beijing-based green NGOs, a group of environmentalists in Shanghai launched a demonstration against a construction of golf courses sponsored by the municipal government. In the summer of 2004, over a dozen Beijing-based green NGOs stood by each and launched the “26°C Campaign”.<sup>67</sup> Since August 2003, environmental activists from both Beijing and Yunnan, together with international NGOs, have successfully mobilized a large number of Chinese media, NGOs, and professionals to join the campaign against the plan for dam construction on the Nu River in northeastern Yunnan.<sup>68</sup>

### **Political Learning and Group Identity Building**

I make two main arguments based on the evidence of the expanding networks and increasing number of collective actions within the environmental civil society. First, activists have learned how to promote their agenda through frequent exchanges of information, and multiple trials of actions. Second, a shared social identity is emerging in this community through recurrent experience of collective actions and frequent reflection on their own activities and the political relevance of NGO community as a whole.

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<sup>67</sup> This campaign mobilized local media to monitor air-condition use and conserve electricity in all public facilities in the Beijing city.

<sup>68</sup> Appendix 3.2 gives a chronology of the anti-dam movement on the Nu River. I will discuss this movement again in other parts in the dissertation, particularly the part on international conservation NGOs, since external advocates also played important role in the entire movement.

Though there is consensus that the scope of the environmental NGO community is growing fast in China, scholars disagree sharply on the interpretation of the political relevance of this community. On the one hand, some argue that grassroots environmentalism in China is fragmented and highly localized, and therefore unable to mobilize enduring demonstrations opposing governmental policies. Peter Ho points out that because the Chinese government has become greener, “environmentalism was also robbed of the opportunity and urgency to openly confront the Chinese government”.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, some observe that Chinese environmental NGOs and activists are delicately dealing with political constraints, and in fact have been able to achieve their goals, overcome policy obstacles, and convince the government of their intentions through non-contentious means. Tony Saich summarizes this type of micro-politics as “negotiating with the state”, Jennifer Turner calls this as “pushing the envelope”, and Kevin O’Brien interprets this as “boundary-spanning contention”.<sup>70</sup>

I agree with the latter argument that environmentalists in China are aware of the government’s concern about social activism, and that, in a way, remaining non-

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<sup>69</sup> Ho, Peter. 2001. “Greening Without Conflict? Environmentalism, NGOs, and Civil Society in China.” *Development & Change*. Vol. 32, Issue 5: 893-921. In the paper, Ho even calls Chinese environmentalism have a “female mildness”—a greening without conflict, and environmentalism with a safe distance from direct political action. (p916) Lo and Leung’s research on environmental politics in Guangzhou arrived at similar conclusions. They argue that the regime’s lack of a democratic tradition imposes tremendous institutional constraints on the further pursuit of a popular approach to environmental governance. There is no independent non-government green group for organizing fragmented public opinion into a powerful political force. (Lo, Carlos W., and Sai Wing Leung. 2000. “Environmental Agency and Public Opinion in Guangzhou: The Limits of a Popular Approach to Environmental Governance.” *The China Quarterly*. 163: 677-704.)

<sup>70</sup> Saich, 2001. Jennifer, 2004. O’Brien, Kevin J. 2003 “Neither Transgressive Nor Contained: Boundary-spanning Contention in China,” *Mobilization*, 8, 1: 51.

confrontational is the best way for them to survive and make changes sustainably. I share with Guobing Yang's point that the use of non-confrontational methods is a strategic choice for environmental NGOs at a fledgling stage of growth.<sup>71</sup> Ho's interpretation of Chinese environmental NGOs' lack of boldness is not accurate, and this results from both the error in his selection of cases and a mis-understanding of the nature of social activism in China. Instead of focusing on self-organized grassroots NGOs, Ho included government-organized quasi-NGOs in his research. Under the current political context, taking noncontentious actions does not mean NGOs are "courting" the government.<sup>72</sup> Environmentalists make their conscious decisions to keep their presence in the local communities, thereby maintaining their autonomy from governmental control and reaching their goals gradually. The essential question is not whether environmental NGOs should or should not take contentious actions, but whether they are able to achieve their own goals by persuading local authorities and communities to change attitudes towards environmental degradation.

I further argue that environmentalists are pioneers of experimenting with many collective actions to voice their opinions and advocate for policy change in China. They have learned from their experiences and have become increasingly effective in employing various strategies to coordinate large-scale campaigns.<sup>73</sup> This is particularly relevant to studying changes in current Chinese politics. Having lived in

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<sup>71</sup> Yang, 2005. p55.

<sup>72</sup> Ho, 2001. "Green social organizations are increasingly *courting* government approval and influence in policy-making, rather than seeking a potentially dangerous confrontation with the national state." (p916, emphasis added)

<sup>73</sup> Yang, 2005. p52. Yang summarized such feature as "mixed-repertoires".



China and observed the rise of environmentalism first hand, development expert Nick Young stresses that “environmental activists have an important role of *exploring* the boundaries of advocacy in China.”<sup>74</sup> Jennifer Turner, a long-time observer of the Chinese green civil society, also points out that Chinese environmentalists are conscious about their inevitable involvement in politics. “Regardless of whether an NGO is only focusing on educating local farmers about black-necked cranes, or advocating the stop of a dam project, such a bottom-up action and direct participation approach is a new phenomenon in Chinese politics.”<sup>75</sup>

Environmentalists have explored the boundaries of advocacy through multiple trials of mobilization strategies. In April 2001, a group of Beijing-based environmentalists and NGOs, led by FoN and GVB, invited a senior level official of the Beijing municipal government to “discuss” the plan of paving all river beds in the city. Their goal actually was to turn the meeting into a press conference and confront the official with critical questions related to this plan. Journalist friends were called up, and the meeting was conveyed. Shocked and offended, the official left immediately, and reported to the central government the activists’ “scheme”. It was only through personal connections of a few sympathetic officials that the environmentalists involved in the meeting escaped political repression.<sup>76</sup> The environmental NGO community has since taken this incident as a serious lesson in dealing with governmental officials. In September 2004, Wang Yongchen, the main activist of the

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<sup>74</sup> Young, 2001.

<sup>75</sup> Turner, 2004.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with GVB staff in Beijing, August 2002. Specific names are kept anonymous for political reasons.

anti-dam movement on the Nu river, came to Washington, D.C. and gave a public talk on how to organize public campaigns in China. She particularly pointed out the importance of cultivating contacts within the government, building alliance with sympathetic and activist-minded officials, and developing wide networks with mass media before openly putting forward policy criticism.<sup>77</sup>

Besides dense webs of connections among NGOs and activists, what also distinguishes the civil society sector in environmental protection in comparison with other issue areas is that a few leading activists have always promoted open discussions and political reflections within the community. Several China scholars have noticed that within the environmental community there are a number of democracy movement activists or activists who also promote social justice and civic engagement.<sup>78</sup> Tang Xiyang, a leading environmentalist and founder of the Green Camp, puts forward the idea of democracy forcefully when he writes that “without real democratic life, there will not be everlasting green rivers and mountains.”<sup>79</sup> FoN publishes a monthly magazine on topics related to the environment and environmental activism, and there are constantly articles related to the role of NGOs in a country’s social and political affairs. I have attended dozens of gatherings and meetings of environmental activists in China, and “civil society”, “democracy” and “participation” are some of the most debated and discussed topics. As Turner noted, environmental NGOs in China are not puppets of governmental environmental agencies and they

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<sup>77</sup> Interview with Wang Yongchen in Washington, D.C., September 2004.

<sup>78</sup> Economy, 2004. Turner, 2004. Yang, 2005.

<sup>79</sup> Quote in Yang, 2005.

have their own visions, goals and scope of influences.<sup>80</sup> They pay intensive attention to the government and policy changes; they are aware of the reasons why NGO activities could be sensitive under current Chinese system; and, they see themselves as a legitimate and necessary social force in China's environmental politics.

Environmental activism has emerged in China since the mid-1990s, and environmental NGOs are becoming important players in China's environmental politics. They are important not only because they have made notable achievements in public education and conservation, but also because they are increasingly connected with each other and a group identity is forming. As they continue to share experiences of policy advocacy and public campaigning, environmentalists identify themselves as a part of a green civil society—an independent force in China's environmental politics.

#### **INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY ACTORS AND NETWORKS IN NATURE CONSERVATION IN CHINA**

International NSAs' advocacy and mobilization started in China by collaborating with the Chinese government around the beginning of the 1990s. Throughout this decade, international advocates carried out pilot projects, supported the government in research and state capacity building, and provided policy recommendations in order to build up connections and introduce new ideas and solutions.

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<sup>80</sup> Turner, 2004.

As the international environmental NGO community continues to grow, and internationalization of the state and the development of civil society deepens in the country, more international NGOs have been able to get access to local reserves and provide direct support to local conservation works, in addition to providing assistance to the governmental agencies in Beijing.

In the past few years, a third generation of international conservation advocacy groups has arrived and formed strong solidarity with Chinese environmentalists. They have experimented with transnationalizing domestic local campaigns and called for international pressure for domestic policy changes. Meanwhile, those international NGOs with a long history of working with the Chinese government have continued to interact with and persuade the government, and have helped to consolidate the presence and influence of external advocacy in the environmental field in China.

### **International Conservation Advocacy Groups in China**

There are over 50 international NGOs working in China in various fields related to environmental protection, including air pollution control, environmental management, energy efficiency, and nature conservation. This chapter focuses on 34 international environmental NGOs and several private foundations from this group that either focus on nature conservation or include conservation as a primary working domain.<sup>81</sup> (For a full list of international advocacy groups studied in this chapter, see Appendix 3.1.)

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<sup>81</sup> For this research purpose, I did not include the types of international environmental NGOs that specifically identified non-conservation activities as organizational priorities. For example, the Natural Resource Defense Council has been working in fuel cell vehicle and green building in China, and Environmental Defense in sulfur dioxide emission control. I also did not include universities, scientific

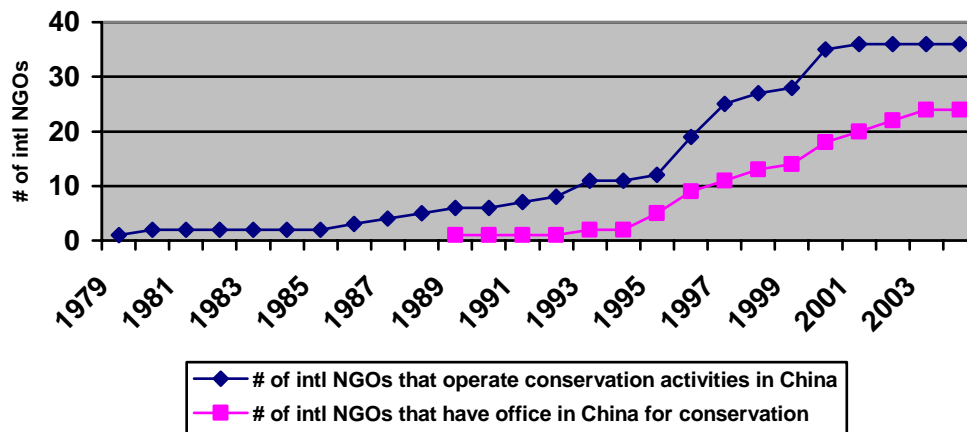
Figure 3.3 below first shows the temporary trajectory of the development of international conservation NGOs in China from 1979 and 2005. International conservation NGOs and other advocacy actors did not emerge in China all at once, and the growth of this community was actually slow in the first 15 years. Throughout the 1980s, even though the *Open Door Policy* was speedily implemented in economic sectors, a handful of international NGOs and charity foundations were allowed to operate in China. Not until the mid-1990s was there a significant growth in the numbers of international NGOs conserving China's biodiversity and ecosystems. This momentum continued until 2000. In the past few years, even though the sheer number of organizations has remained almost the same, the community has been expanding and consolidating its connections and influences in China. Networks among local conservationists, international NGOs, and activist-minded governmental officials and professionals are growing denser and stronger. Figure 3.3 also reveals a time-lag between when international NGOs arrived in China and when they began to establish offices in China.<sup>82</sup> This confirms the point that the international advocacy community in China did not emerge overnight, but has gradually been developed over time.

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research institutions, or NGOs only focusing on theoretical research (and using China as one of the cases) here, for the reasons explicated in Chapter 2. For example, the Center for International Earth Science Information Network at Columbia University, and the China Environment Project at Harvard University. In general, I do not consider poverty relief and development NGOs as part of the nature conservation transnational networks. However, in this case, a couple of non-environment-specific NGOs, e.g., Oxfam (U.S.), Trickle Up, and the Bridge Fund, were partnering with other conservation organizations and had made crucial contribution to nature conservation in a particular region. Therefore, they are included here.

<sup>82</sup> Exceptions do exist. International Crane Foundation, to date, still has not set up an office in China. While, it operates multiple conservation projects in almost all of the provinces where cranes are found by well-cultivated partnerships with the State Forestry Bureau, the State Environmental Protection

Figure 3.3. Growth of international NGOs in nature conservation in China



The international NGO community in China is represented by a broad spectrum of different types of organizations. Some, such as the International Snow Leopard Trust, the International Crane Foundation, and the Wild Camel Protection Foundation are single species focused. Others, such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are financially gigantic with comprehensive conservation blueprints. Organizations such as the Pacific Environment and Resource Center and the Yunnan Ecology and Culture Organization are very low-key and progressive, pursuing goals at grassroots level and mostly through personal contact with Chinese civil society organizations. Others such as TNC connect primarily with ministry level government agencies.

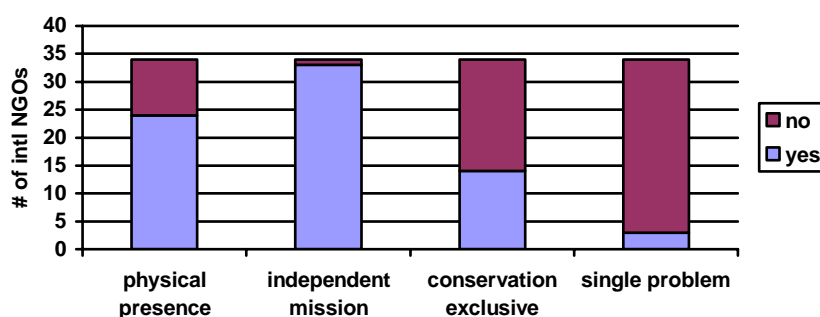
As a whole, this is a fairly localized community, with over half of the organizations having physical presence in the country. Currently, very few organizations included in this study are in China merely because of multilateral or bilateral cooperation frameworks. In other words, these international NGOs have

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Administration, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Bird Banding Center, the China Ornithological Society and a number of local community-based groups.

independent missions separate from formal commitments with the Chinese government.<sup>83</sup> Though over half the organizations have a physical presence in China, this is also a widely spread community in terms of their project networks and working relationships. Only three organizations have limited their work to a fixed geographical location. But, even for these NGOs, e.g., the Mountain Institute in southern Tibet, Oxfam America in northeast Yunnan, a fixed geographical focus can mean a vast space, and they are still engaging with a large number of local populations and complex social-political relations. The fact that fewer than half of all international NGOs here are conservation specific organizations also indicates that they are nested in dense politics across multiple issue areas. Figure 3.4 below shows the general characteristics of all international NGOs engaged in nature conservation in China.

**Figure 3.4. General characteristics of international NGO community in nature conservation in China**



In the following, I will introduce a few most visible international NGOs and private foundations working in nature conservation in China with particular attention to their role in the historic development of transnational activism in this field and the

<sup>83</sup> Some international NGOs first came to China as invited foreign experts by the Chinese government, especially those early ones, but later on expanded their work and outreach in the country independently.

complexity of the political relations in which they are involved. I give an in-depth account of how individual external advocacy actors interact with Chinese governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, and how advocacy groups as a community have grown and evolved in the nature conservation field in China.

**Saving Cranes, Pandas and Trees:  
The First Encounter of International Conservationists and NGOs**

*International Crane Foundation (ICF)*<sup>84</sup>

In November 1979, International Crane Foundation Co-founder George Archibald traveled to China for the first time after 1949 as a guest of the Chinese Academy of Science's Institute of Zoology. During his six-day visit to Beijing, Archibald met with prominent Chinese ornithologists and discussed collaboration in crane conservation between the ICF and the Institute of Zoology. These initial discussions laid the foundations for ICF's China Program. In the following 25 years, ICF has worked with Chinese national and local governments, NGOs, and local community-based conservation groups in almost all of the provinces where cranes are found. By collaborating with SFB, SEPA, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Bird Banding Center, and the China Ornithological Society, ICF has helped to conserve cranes and the wetland and grassland ecosystems on which they depend. It also has developed measures to enable local populations to survive and thrive without the over exploitation of natural resources.

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<sup>84</sup> Information of ICF is collected through its website and exchanges with staff members. I also thank Shaun Dotterer from University of Maryland for sharing his research on Caohai Lake and black-necked crane conservation.



ICF's most visible contribution to China's environment through solving development-conservation conflict is the Caohai Lake project. The freshwater Caohai Lake, located in western Guizhou province (bordering Yunnan province), is one of the most vital winter sites for many migratory birds, including the endangered black-necked crane. Over 60% of the lake is covered with aquatic plants, explaining the name Caohai which means "sea of grass" in Chinese. Of the world's remaining six thousand black-necked cranes, over four hundred currently reside at Caohai from October to March each year. The Chinese government has listed this species as *National-I Endangered Species*. Despite its wildness, there are over 25,000 people living in the areas around the lake. The struggle between economic development for human basic needs and nature conservation has been a long-lasting problem in the lake region. This problem has been dramatically exacerbated in the past 50 years.

The lake was partially drained and converted to farmland during the Great Leap Forward period to increase the region's agricultural productivity. By 1972, this 45 km<sup>2</sup> lake ceased to exist. Ironically, and unfortunately, most lands converted from the lakebed were either too dry or too wet for agriculture. David Newbart described the environmental condition of the lake region as follows: "What appeared to be a fertile basin between the mountain ranges was in fact poor farmland. The land was rocky and frequently flooded. Brutal winds swirled, massive soil erosion caused dust storms and insects plagued the region."<sup>85</sup> This massive land reclamation also

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<sup>85</sup> Newbart, David. 2001. "China's Crane Experiment". *International Wildlife*, 31, 1.

drastically altered the habitat of the black-necked crane, whose population in the Caohai Lake fell to 35.<sup>86</sup>

Recognizing the ecological consequences, the Guizhou provincial forestry authority decided to restore the Caohai Lake in the early 1980s. At the same time, however, the county government, implementing land tenure reforms initiated by the central government, began to contract the land in the region to individual families. In 1982, shortly after local farmers had plowed and prepared their “own” fields, the provincial government ordered to re-flood 20 km<sup>2</sup> of the lake. Between 30 to 70 percent of the contracted arable land was drenched. The provincial government declared the lake and the surrounding areas a nature reserve in 1985, and restricted any form of fishing, hunting, or farming inside the reserve.

Having watched their efforts and agricultural products washed away, local farmers responded with protests and open hostility, going so far as to throw reserve staff into the lake. They boycotted the idea of the nature reserve by continuing to hunt and fish; and, the reserve staff, equally spirited, replied by burning their nets and catches.<sup>87</sup> Such drama continued until the early 1990s, when the situation finally caught the attention of international organizations working in China, including ICF.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Bishop, Mary Anne. 1996. “Black-necked Crane”. In Curt D. Meine et al eds. *The Cranes: Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan*. Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center. [Available online: <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/birds/cranes/grusnigr.htm>]

<sup>87</sup> Newbart, 2001.

<sup>88</sup> Other international organizations that have supported conservation work in Caohai include the Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund, Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation, and Oxfam International.

ICF launched its Caohai Lake project in 1993, with funding from the Ford Foundation and partnership with the Trickle Up Program (a U.S. NGO specialized in community-based poverty relief). The ICF/Trickle Up team, working with the local government, first established a micro-credit system to offer 100 USD grants to groups of three to five local villagers to set up or expand small businesses. The essential condition of such loans was that they must be used for the businesses that were compatible with the conservation goals of the Caohai Reserve. After two years of success with micro-loans, ICF scaled up its efforts by introducing the Community Trust Fund (CTF) mechanism. Each CTF consists of 10-15 families who develop the operational rules of the Fund themselves, consistent with the general guidelines laid down by ICF and other donors. The total funding of all CTFs was shared by ICF, poverty relief funds from the Chinese central government, and the contributions of each CTF member. Local governments were involved in the financial transactions and the administration of the funds, but not in the rule-setting and daily operations of each CTF.

At the same time, a series of public education programs, technical training, and participatory assessment sessions were organized by ICF and many other international NGOs to achieve conservation goals. By 2000, a voluntary-based farmers' association emerged with the endorsement from all parties. According to Deng Yi (a former local governmental official and later a consultant for many internationally sponsored sustainable conservation programs in Caohai), the reason that ICF has successfully promoted its principles among Caohai people and

governmental agencies is that ICF staff recognized that unless the people living in Caohai are truly mobilized to participate in conservation activities out of their own will, all effort would be in vain.<sup>89</sup> From micro-loans to the development of the farmers' association, Caohai people have gradually taken over the central role in local conservation projects. Even though new issues are still emerging after a decade's effort of a transnationalized group of concerned organizations and individuals, the Caohai experience has been well received by the Chinese government and public. It is now considered to be a model for other nature reserves to follow.

ICF has also greatly expanded its reach in China by sponsoring a large number of research, public education, and community development projects. Unlike many other international NGOs currently work in China, IFC still does not have a permanent office in China. Dr. Li Fengshan, coordinator of ICF's China Program (based in Wisconsin, U.S.) explained as the following: ICF needs to be cost-efficient, and there are a lot of good and capable people in China that can effectively carry out ICF's projects. He pointed out that there is tremendous human resource potential at the grassroots level. ICF finds suitable governmental and non-governmental partners to achieve conservation goals together without an office inside the country. More importantly, he emphasized that by working *with* Chinese officials or NGOs, instead of hiring them as ICF's contractors, ICF can actually help them improve their capacity at both personal and organizational levels. "We can improve the quality of our 'presence' by strengthening the capacity of our partners", said Dr. Li.

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with Deng Yi in Beijing May 2004.

Since China's opened up to the international community at the end of 1970s, international exchanges in scientific research have produced a high volume of international cooperation initiatives, and many have opened Chinese branches. Some of these new Chinese offices have failed, and few have been able to develop effective working networks like ICF. ICF achieved its success by maintaining its friendly relationships with national level research institutes, and cultivating partnerships with local groups. More importantly, ICF facilitated socialization and cooperation at the local level by encouraging farmers' self-organized associations and strengthening the capacity of local NGOs. In other words, they do not claim the total ownership of the projects, but invite local people and NGOs to be part of the projects. This is how they created strong connections with various actors in China.

### ***World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)***

The World Wide Fund for Nature is probably the most important international environment NGO in China due to its long history of working in China, in-depth connections with the forestry sector and nature reserves across the country, a wide-range of activities in environmental protection, and close relationships with many Chinese environmental NGOs.

At the beginning of the 1980s, massive bamboos die-offs in southwest China greatly endangered the lives of giant pandas. Dr. George Schaller, WWF staff conservationist, was invited to China by the Chinese government during this panda crisis. He worked with Chinese scientists to conduct field studies of the behavior and

ecology of the giant panda.<sup>90</sup> Since then, WWF has played a growing role in conserving China's wildlife and environment.

Early on WWF faced "not only the problems of carrying out field research in the panda's rugged, inaccessible mountainous home, but also the cultural and political challenges of engaging with Chinese governing bodies in the early days of the country's opening to the outside world".<sup>91</sup> Its main partner at that time was the Ministry of Forestry at that time (now the SFB). Throughout the 1980s, WWF sponsored panda surveys, satellite imagery analysis, and the establishment of a breeding centre for pandas in the Wolong Nature Reserve. The most significant outcome of the first decade of cooperation between WWF and China's Ministry of Forestry was the creation of a comprehensive management plan for the species, adopted by the State Council in 1992.

Another important aspect of WWF's work in China during the 1980s was to provide training for China's first generation of professional nature reserve staff and conservation specialists. In addition to receiving classroom and field-based training in China, hundreds of Chinese nature reserve staff attended reserve management and wildlife management courses at the Mai Po Marsh Education Centre managed by WWF Hong Kong. Dr. Lü Zhi, a biologist from Beijing University, and now a world-

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<sup>90</sup> Interview with the China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA) staff in Beijing, August 2000. CWCA was created by the Ministry of Forestry during the panda crisis to receive international assistance and coordinate conservation work. The author also consulted with Mr. Jim Harkness, the WWF China Programme Director (1998-2004), about the early history of WWF in China.

<sup>91</sup> WWF China Programme website: <http://www.wwfchina.org>. Last accessed in March 2005.

famous panda specialist, is among the many specialists who also benefited from the learning opportunities provided by WWF during that time period.

In 1996, WWF opened its China office in Beijing. This office has since grown from nine staff and four projects, to a team of over 60 specialists and support staff and over 30 projects, with regional offices in 15 provinces of the country. Its recognition among the Chinese public and influence on local environmentalists has grown considerably. By 2003, WWF China had opened a dozen online chatting rooms for people concerned with environmental issues in China, and there were more than 300 registered members from Shanghai alone. People who identify themselves as “friends of WWF” in Shanghai have organized field trips and meetings and become regular participants of environmental gatherings organized by the Grassroots Community (a local environmental NGO) and the Shanghai Environmental Journalist Saloon.<sup>92</sup>

Meanwhile, WWF China continued to expand its relations with various Chinese governmental agencies.<sup>93</sup> The WWF China team considers this relationship suitable to the Chinese context in that it “offers the possibility for rapid and widespread replication of new approaches in fields where cooperation is successful”.<sup>94</sup> WWF’s over 20 years collaboration with the SFB system has brought about many notable changes in the forestry sector. For example, the Forest

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<sup>92</sup> I was invited to give a public talk for Shanghai environmentalists organized by Grassroots Community in August 2003. Also see Fengshi Wu. 2002. "Shanghai Greenies." *China Environment Series*, 5: 99-100.

<sup>93</sup> However, the discussion on WWF’s relationship with the Chinese government here does not mean to overlook its recognition and significant support to Chinese environmental civil society, which will be explained in the following parts.

<sup>94</sup> WWF China Programme website: <http://www.wwfchina.org>. Last accessed in March 2005.

Stewardship Council (FSC) certified a state-owned forest in China for the first time in April 2005.<sup>95</sup> Since the early 2000s, WWF has promoted the concept of forestry certification in China. As of 2004 they have provided over 300 training sessions to forestry officials, managers and other professionals. They also helped three state-owned forest units go through the procedures required for international-level certification.<sup>96</sup> To create more incentives for individual state-owned forests to seek internationally recognized sustainable forestry certification, WWF China recommended these three pilot certification forest units to be the suppliers of IKEA, via WWF International's alliance with major wood products companies. When the proposal was accepted, WWF China staff assisted the forest units as they progressed through the entire process of certification.

I interviewed Dong Ke, the current project officer of forestry certification at WWF China and a former SFB official, in summer 2004 to get an insider's view on WWF's role in China's forestry and wildlife conservation, as she has been involved in process of introducing forestry certification to China from the beginning. Dong was truly passionate about WWF's missions, and commented: "Having worked in both institutions (i.e., WWF and SFB), I found the Fund's working style and principles refreshing and valuable to China's situation. I don't know any other international agency working in China's forestry field as persistent as the Fund. To some extent, the

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<sup>95</sup> FSC—Forest Steward Council, one of the leading international agencies that certify sustainable forests.

<sup>96</sup> All the expenses involved were shared between the forest units and WWF China.



Fund has contributed (to China's forestry) in a significant way. Forestry certification is only one example.”

WWF China's former director, Jim Harkness, once used an anecdotal example to explain to me how WWF China, as an NGO, sometimes is able to convince Chinese forestry officials about new ideas and ways to solve problems. WWF China began working with forestry bureaus in Sichuan province at the beginning of 1990s, and intended to introduce participatory approach to forestry management. It was very difficult to show the forestry official hard data and to convince them of the benefits of this approach within a short period of time. Little progress was achieved. However, when a German bank reviewed the local forestry bureau's loan application, which applied many conservation concepts from WWF's frameworks, e.g., participatory approach, they approved the loan immediately. The local forestry officials were impressed, and returned to WWF for more advice.

### ***Ford Foundation (FF)***

The Ford Foundation was founded in the U.S. in 1936, and since its creation has been an independent, non-profit, non-governmental philanthropic organization. As Becky Shelly hinted by accurately pointing out that its board of trustees includes more individuals from non-U.S. countries than some other internationally influential charities, FF appears to know how to bring about good governance to very different kinds of political regimes across the world.<sup>97</sup> As of the China case, some may

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<sup>97</sup> Shelley, Becky. 2000. "Political Globalization and the Politics of International Non-governmental Organizations: The Case of Village Democracy in China." *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 35, 2: 225-238.

suggest that the FF itself deserves a dissertation to fully appreciate its significant contribution to the development of state capacity, civil society and other social-political changes in China. In the past half century, FF has given millions of dollars of support to hundreds of Chinese governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals from various disciplines, including environment, health, gender equality, education, and foreign relations. I will focus on one consistent method that FF has applied to improve environmental conservation in the country—providing training and learning opportunities for local nature reserve staff and officials.

FF's relationship with China started long before it was granted the legal status to operate in China. In the years between 1952 and 1979, FF donated over 40 million U.S. dollars (USD) in many western countries to promote China studies. The U.S. National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, for example, benefited from FF's support during the Cold War days, and played a role before and after the 1972 U.S.-China top leader summit. By the end of the 1970s, FF had directly supported research projects at the Chinese Academy of Social Science and Chinese Academy of Agriculture. In the 1980s, FF was able to expand its assistance to many research institutes affiliated with the State Council and state ministries. Between 1979 and 1988, FF invested over 18 million USD in China related research and assistance work.<sup>98</sup>

FF was among the first group of international NGOs that were granted legal status to open an office in China by the government in 1988. By 2001, the FF China

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<sup>98</sup> Guo, Yong. "Case Study of the Ford Foundation's Poverty Relief Work in China". From the China National Poverty Relief Information, sponsored by the Poverty Relief Office at the State Council. [Available online: <http://www.help-poverty.org.cn/helpweb2/ngoyj/ngoyj21.htm>. Last time accessed 3 January, 2005.]

Office had recruited more than 300 supporting staff and provided support to environmental protection, development, education, cultural diversity, gender, reproductive health, civil society development, public policy, and many other social welfare fields. Its current average budget in China is in between 10-13 million USD per year. Among all the international charities or NGOs working in China, FF programs address the most issues.

Solving local poverty problems by improving nature resource management is a strategy used by FF in charity work around the world, as well as in China. In the early 1990s, FF first convinced the forestry sector in Yunnan to explore the possibility of improving nature conservation.<sup>99</sup> In a way, FF has gone beyond the regular role of a donor in supporting Yunnan in the past two decades. It not only provided scholarships and learning opportunities for local officials, but also selected certain specialized international NGOs and issued grants for them to come to China to demonstrate conservation methods for Yunnan forestry authorities. FF was the first to support projects in Yunnan through applied micro-loan and participatory conservation mechanisms, before similar projects funded by the World Bank other inter-governmental agencies.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Interview with Jim Harkness in Beijing, summer 2004, who was involved in FF's early nature resource management projects. The central government at that time initiated a major effort to strengthen the regulation of logging, reduce forest loss due to fire and disease, and prevent erosion by large-scale afforestation. This explains why FF decided to support the forestry sector at the very beginning of its nature resource management program in China.

<sup>100</sup> For more about FF's support in community-based forestry management in Yunnan, see a review article by Kenji Kitamura and Guangxia Cao: "Community Forestry in Yunnan Province." In *China Environment Series*, 6: 116-19. 2003.

After supporting individual governmental officials to receive graduate degrees in Philippino, Thai and American universities for a few years, FF found that China still lacked of leadership and the unifying force necessary to create a critical mass among these returned officials and environmentalists in Yunnan.<sup>101</sup> Counting on Winrock International's experience in building capacity among local professionals and conservationists in the Asia-Pacific region, FF invited Winrock to design and manage a regional training program for the Yunnan Upland Management (YUM) Project. Winrock designed programs to address the lack of information and the lack of qualified nature resource management staff in the region. Since 1993, researchers, educators and administrators involved in YUM received various language and conservation methods training and scholarships for graduate-level studies overseas. Moreover, the program has also established a network of all the trainees—Yunnan Rural Participatory Approach (RPA) Network—and organized conferences for them to brainstorm and initiate new ideas together. Yunnan RPA Network has soon grown into an institutionalized venue for various local NGOs and activists to meet and exchange information. Each member organization holds the presidency of the RPA Network in turns. Under the framework of this RPA Network, Yunnan local environmental NGOs have taken part in various international and domestic rural development projects collectively. When we met during the intermission of a Yunnan

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<sup>101</sup> Though, some FF sponsored environmentalists have emerged as the new generation of NGO leaders in Yunnan. Currently, there are two well-established and professionalized Chinese conservation NGOs in Yunnan, the Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge, and Center for Community Development Studies. The founders of these two NGOs, Xu Jianchu, Zheng baohua, and Zhao Yaqiao, are all receivers of Ford Foundation graduate scholarship in early 1990s.

RPA meeting, August 2004, Ms. Gu from the Winrock Kunming office convinced me that a critical mass of young professionals who are well trained in rural development and conservation is now present in Yunnan.

The FF model ushered in a wave of environmental grant-giving by other international foundations. Besides FF, other big donors that give significant sums to environmental projects in China include: the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the W. Alton Jones Foundation (now Blue Moon Fund), and the Mac-Arthur Foundation. According to Jennifer Turner, Senior Project Associate of the China Environment Forum at the Wilson Center and a keen observer and long-term researcher of China's environment, China lacks a developed philanthropic community. Thus most international as well as Chinese NGOs doing environmental work in China depend on private international foundations for support. Notably, these foundations, as illustrated by the FF case above, often act as partners with their grantees to define and execute their projects in China.<sup>102</sup> In other words, international private foundations are important actors in the transnational advocacy community in China.

ICF, WWF, and FF are the three main international advocacy groups that started working in China before the 1990s when the government was still relatively closed to outside world. Though their earliest efforts were focused on the Chinese government, they all have since established extensive networks with non-governmental actors. I here group them together to highlight how external advocacy actors can break the ice and initiate communication channels with a strong and non-

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<sup>102</sup> Jennifer, 2004.

democratic regime as the beginning point of further activism and mobilization. These three examples have demonstrated that through information sharing, collaboration, negotiation, and providing learning opportunities to governmental officials, international NSAs are able to build trust with governmental agencies and later persuade them to modify their existing practices and principles. Under certain situations, especially when the governmental agency is motivated to learn about international standards, the advice and policy input of international NSAs is often sought after. International NSAs have become an important part of the internationalization of China's environmental governance.<sup>103</sup>

International advocacy groups differ in their own approaches in spite of the connections and shared norms among them. Even in the early stage of transnational activism, diversity and complexity is present within individual advocates' political relations and strategies.

### **Moving from the Center to Local, from the State to Society: Development of Transnational Conservation Networks in China**

Although ICF, WWF, and FF all have made substantial achievement in the 1980s through the early 1990s, it was until the mid-1990s that transnational activism picked up the momentum and expanded rapidly in China. Between 1995 and 1997, the number of international NGOs working in nature conservation in China jumped from 12 to 25. In 1998 and 2001, two major conservation NGOs—The Nature Conservancy and the Conservation International—opened offices in multiple cities in southwest

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<sup>103</sup> Chan, Gerald. 2004. "China's Compliance in Global Environmental Affairs." *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*. 45, 1: 69-86.

China. By 2004, despite the noticeable preference of southwest China (esp. Yunnan), international NGOs have left footprints in most provinces across the country.

Due to the political reality in China, many of this new wave of international conservation groups still pursued friendly relationship with the Chinese central government. They see this is the only way to secure their presence in China and to obtain further access to local communities. Some of them moved on and obtained higher level of autonomy by creating an independent office, recruiting Chinese staff, building connections with provincial and lower level governments, and getting in touch with Chinese environmentalists and activists.

More recently, quite a few international NGOs decided to start at local levels, after reviewing the political constraints and opportunities related to nature conservation in China. Among those who preferred to locate a niche at local levels, many partnered with local governments and research institutions due to the weakness of civil society, yet some persistently searched for civil society groups. When international advocates realized the need of capacity building for Chinese NGOs, they provided assistance in this aspect and considered it necessary for nature conservation in the long-term. Moreover, not only the networks between international and Chinese NGOs grew stronger during this period, but connections and alliances among international advocates also become more common. Together, Chinese and international conservationists and activists successfully organized several cross-regional, nationwide, or even international public campaigns. In this section, three

international NGOs will be discussed in greater details to illustrate the trickling down, deepening, and condensing processes involved in transnational advocacy politics.

*International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)*<sup>104</sup>

In 1993, out of curiosity, Jill Robinson (IFAW staff based in Hong Kong at that time<sup>105</sup>) took a trip to Guangdong, southern China, because she happened to hear the news about bear farming and bile extraction for traditional medicine use in that region. When she eye-witnessed what was said in the news on a bear farm, she was appalled. Robinson soon investigated and publicized the fact that over 10,000 Asiatic black bears<sup>106</sup> were captured in cages under terrible conditions in China. Images of these caged bears were projected around the world by international print and television media, and kicked off a worldwide campaign. “Dirty infected catheters could clearly be seen protruding from the bears’ abdomens, through which bile was being extracted for use in Traditional Medicine.”<sup>107</sup> This campaign brought mounting pressure from outside and within China to solve the problem. In 1995, the Guangdong Provincial Forestry Bureau closed down the original farm which Robinson had exposed, and handed the bears to her and the bear rescue team. Surgery and rehabilitation followed and in December 1996, seven of these bears were released into an IFAW funded sanctuary in Pan Yu, Sichuan.

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<sup>104</sup> Information about IFAW’s work in China is gathered through the interview with Grace Ge Gabriel (IFAW China Office Director at that time) in September 2001.

<sup>105</sup> Jill Robinson later founded the Animals Asia Foundation (AAF, registered in Hong Kong) in 1998, and carried on the Moon Bear campaign and rescue work.

<sup>106</sup> Also known as Moon Bear.

<sup>107</sup> Rescue Bear Diary, AAF website: <http://www.animalsasia.org>.



Through 1997 and 1998, intensive negotiations proceeded between the Chinese forestry authorities and the IFAW/Robinson team. “From that moment, negotiations with the Chinese government began and I found myself in the middle of a complex, emotional issue which, not only concerned the welfare of the bears but, surprisingly that of the people who raised them. As meetings with officials and practitioners and consumers of oriental medicine took place, a greater understanding was evolving on both sides, with growing recognition that, although bear bile had held a significant place in Chinese medicine, there was no doubt that it could now easily, and cheaply, be replaced with herbs”, recalled by Robinson.<sup>108</sup> IFAW funded public opinion polls and surveys on bear bile market in 1998 and 1999. The results of these surveys showed that the demand for bear bile in China is limited and that more education of consumers is needed to raise the awareness of the mistreatment of bears. IFAW was therefore able to use the findings from bear bile alternative research to educate consumers, traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, and international travelers about CITES<sup>109</sup> regulations and consumer responsibilities. Meanwhile, IFAW continued close communication with the State Forestry Bureau, China Wildlife Conservation Association, CITES China Office, and Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine to promote the herbal alternatives for bear bile in Traditional Chinese Medicine. All effort finally led to an official agreement signed by the Chinese

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<sup>108</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

government to cooperate on a major rescue of 500 bears in Sichuan Province with the long-term goal of ending bear farming in China.<sup>110</sup>

If international pressure and negotiation with the government were the key factors for the success in the Moon Bear campaign, IFAW soon recognized the limits of what it can achieve in China without connections at the grassroots level. Grace Ge Gabriel moved to Beijing in 1998 to lead IFAW's work in China, especially the campaign to save the endangered Tibetan antelope. Recalled by Gabriel, the campaign progressed very quickly at the beginning. IFAW organized an international conference, bringing in experts from Switzerland, Germany, the U.K., the U.S., India and Nepal to China to address the issue of Tibetan antelope. This conference resulted in increased funding for anti-poaching equipment and other needs.

However, during the same time, the situation in Kekexili (western Qinghai) where most poaching took place continued worsening. Zhawa Dorje, the second leader of the Wild Yak Brigade—a self-organized anti-poaching team in Zhiduo County, was found dead in winter 1998. His brother-in-law, Gisang Sonam Dorje, the founder of the Wild Yak team, a former local forestry official, was killed by poachers in 1994.<sup>111</sup> A group of Chinese environmentalists, including Liang Congjie (Friends of Nature), Yang Xin (Green Rivers), Xi Zhinong, Shi Lihong and Zhi (Shi and Lü

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<sup>110</sup> This agreement was signed between the Chinese government and AAF. In 1999, AAF investigators accepted an invitation from Chinese authorities in Beijing to accompany them to 11 Bear Farms in Sichuan Province. Negotiations commenced in relation to a new bear farming agreement and a major bear rescue. In June 2000, the agreement was signed in Beijing, Sichuan and Hong Kong between Chinese officials and AAF.

<sup>111</sup> Economy, Elizabeth. 2004. *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp153-154.

both were WWF China staff at that time), started mobilizing resources to assist the situation, and formed the Tibetan Antelope Network in the early 2000.<sup>112</sup>

Through the activists in Beijing, IFAW got in touch with the Wild Yak Brigade, and established a direct support strategy to conserve the antelopes. IFAW provided the Wild Yak team patrol equipment, supplies, and funding. Information sharing, moral support, and training opportunities were provided as well, as Gabriel recalled in 2001. In 2003, local government took over the Wild Yak Brigade. Instead of announcing it illegal, local forestry authority granted it official status and funding at the price of organizational autonomy.<sup>113</sup> Many team members left afterwards, but IFAW maintained its education effort in the region. Through directing providing education materials to local forestry policy and anti-poaching offices, IFAW has been able to reach the local populations in the habitats of the antelope.

As part of the Tibetan antelope campaign, IFAW also organized consumer awareness campaigns, and supported CITES enforcement at different levels in China.<sup>114</sup> In May 2001, IFAW and the State Forestry Police jointly held the first

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<sup>112</sup> The environmentalists chose the word “network” for in Chinese it is also a metaphor of eradicating all the bad guys. They established a website to publicize the updates of the Wild Yak Brigade (<http://www.taic.org.cn>), and invited Wild Yak team members to Beijing to give public talks. WWF China and GGF provided financial funding to this project.

<sup>113</sup> Interviews with Chinese environmentalists in Beijing summer 2003. There were a bit of controversies involved in the treatment of the Wild Yak team. Under some extremely difficult situations (i.e., lack of funding and life support), the team decided to slaughter few antelopes for cash. They confessed about this to Yang Xin in the documentary film *Balance*. Local authorities used this as one of the justifications to strengthen the regulation of voluntary anti-poaching teams. When IFAW staff found about this, they were placed in quandary and felt the pressure due to the accountability to hundreds of private donors.

<sup>114</sup> After China joined the CITES internationally, CITES offices are created inside the forestry bureaus at all administrative levels in most provinces.

intelligence sharing at a CITES training workshop at the Police Academy in Nanjing, which brought together 30 officers from Tibet, Qinghai, and Xinjiang.

A main lesson learned from the Tibetan Antelope campaign is that Chinese environmentalist community and local governments are important partners for IFAW to deepen its work in China. With the help of the Chinese activists, IFAW can have new access to local communities and better identify implementation partners. The role played by the local governments is very tricky. They certainly complicate the politics. But, they are much closer to the local communities than the ministries in Beijing. When local capacity is extremely underdeveloped, they are the sole potential partners left for international NGOs to work with. And, to ensure sustainable conservation results, international NGOs cannot simply exacerbate local confrontation. This lesson is well taken in IFAW's new conservation project in southern Yunnan.

To address the human-elephant conflict in the Simao area of Yunnan, in July 2000 IFAW initiated the Asian Elephant Project.<sup>115</sup> Instead of the conventional compensation mechanism, IFAW provided funding to local governments to develop community economic programs in order to ease the pressure on farmers caused by elephant activities. The funding, however, was distributed in the form of micro-credit loan, and directly to the rural families in Simao. Local governments were in charge of the distribution with the guidelines from IFAW, while, local farmers were in charge of the spending. By such a mechanism, IFAW introduced a new institution to local political dynamics. Meanwhile, IFAW also provided various training for both local

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<sup>115</sup> 2002 Inventory of Environmental Work in China, China Environment Series, Issue 5. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

officials and farmers of farming techniques, human safety awareness, wildlife protection and habitat conservation. IFAW was also able to initiate the negotiation of creating a new protection area and ecological corridors for elephants in Simao by conveying the idea to the local communities that research had proved that construction of salt licks in the forest can attract elephants away from crops.

When delivering a public talk in Washington, D.C. on IFAW's work in China over the past decade, Gabriel particularly noted IFAW's commitment to partner with grassroots organizations.<sup>116</sup> Many of IFAW's small and local education activities, in fact, have always been made possible by local Chinese NGOs. In turn, IFAW supported Chinese NGOs by offering assistance in fund raising and grant application writing. Gabriel saw this relationship mutually beneficial, for Chinese NGOs need help with capacity building, and IFAW can gain more access to the Chinese public and enhance the sustainability of conservation efforts.

### *The Nature Conservancy (TNC)*<sup>117</sup>

The case of IFAW is helpful for tracing the dynamics of international NGO's mobilization in China from central to local, and from the state to society. It also happens to be a fairly positive case, in terms of the mutual recognition and trust developed gradually over the time between governmental agencies and IFAW, and between IFAW and Chinese activist groups. The Nature Conservancy, however, has

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<sup>116</sup> Grace Ge Gabriel, "NGO Conservation Work in Tibet and Western Sichuan", talk at the China Environment Forum Meeting, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C., Sept. 5, 2001. [Available online: <http://wwic.si.edu>]

<sup>117</sup> Information about TNC's work in China is gathered through many interviews with TNC staff members in Beijing, Kunming, and Lijiang during July-August 2004.

stirred quite much criticism from Chinese conservationists and environmental NGOs. Nevertheless, the case of TNC itself is illustrative for understanding the politics of NSAs in current China.

According to Professor Ralph Litzinger's first-hand investigation, the initiator of TNC's work in China is Vickrom Kromadit, a Bangkok real estate developer who first traveled to Yunnan in 1993 in the hope of developing a ski resort on one of the upper reaches of the Yulong Mountain. Kromadit provided a six-figure donation to launch the project. By November 1997, TNC advisors who included Hank Paulsen, a Goldman Sachs executive and the co-chair of TNC's Asia/Pacific Council were introduced to top officials in China. With this high profile introduction, TNC opened an office in Kunming, capital of Yunnan, in the following year.<sup>118</sup>

For the first five years, TNC concentrated its resources in Yunnan, and the result is now known as the Yunnan Great Rivers Project (YGR project).<sup>119</sup> This YGR project site is huge, encompassing an area of 15 counties and cities in four prefectures, about 66,000 km<sup>2</sup>, approximately the size of Ireland and eight times the size of Yellowstone National Park.<sup>120</sup> This region also coincides with part of the "ecological hot spot" identified by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, which occupies 1.5%

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<sup>118</sup> Litzinger, Ralph. 2004. "The Mobilization of 'Nature': Perspectives from North-west Yunnan." *The China Quarterly*. 178. pp 488-504. Litzinger's article documented in details the origins of TNC's Yunnan program and early politics between TNC and Yunnan local conservationists.

<sup>119</sup> The name, "Yunnan Great Rivers Project," is derived from the fact that four of the great rivers of Asia—the Salween (*Nu*), Mekong (*Lanchang*), Yangtze (*Jingsha* in Chinese), and Irawaddy (*Yalong*), from west to east—flow off the Tibetan Plateau within 75 kilometers of each other into the northwestern part of Yunnan. The topographic extremes are immense, with an elevation range that can change 3 to 4 km within 10 to 20 km.

<sup>120</sup> Litzinger, 2004.

of the world's surface, yet holds 60% of the world's biodiversity. About 17 ethnic minority peoples, including Tibetan, Yao, Miao, Bai, Dai, Dongba, and Naxi, have inhabited here for centuries and produced opulent cultural wonders.

The Yunnan Great Rivers Project (known as the Northwest Yunnan Conservation and Development Action Plan in the Chinese official language) was established at the end of 1998 by a joint agreement between the Yunnan provincial government and TNC. Both pledged to invest 3 and 2 million USD. Moreover, the two parties set up a joint project office in Kunming, which would coordinate over 200 Chinese and U.S. experts during the initial feasibility and planning studies. By December 2000, these studies and reports led to the creation of an extensive conservation and development plan. After finishing the master action plan, the provincial government held several consultative meetings at various levels to solicit input for revising the plan. In May 2001, a provincial-level meeting was held, and experts from various research institutions and government agencies not only expressed their satisfaction with the YGRP master action plan, but also recommended the plan be integrated into the province's Tenth Five-Year plan.<sup>121</sup>

In the following years, the TNC team has not only worked closely with the Yunnan provincial government to envisage the overall goals and measures of the YGR project, but also opened four other local offices inside the project site. Staff members

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<sup>121</sup> Ou, Xiaokun. 2003. "The Yunnan Great Rivers Project." *China Environment Series*, 5: 74-76. Ou, an conservation expert affiliated with the Yunnan government, detailed communication problems that emerged between TNC staff and Yunnan governments after the project was implemented. In the paper, he called the project was first initiated by the provincial government, which, in a way, reflects the complex political rhetoric involved.

traveled to remote and poor villages to train locals how to install and maintain bio-gas facilities as a means to alleviate as well as to conserve the region's forests.<sup>122</sup> TNC has also sponsored many international conferences to brainstorm for developing sustainable eco-tourism in Yunnan, by which they intended to promote integrating local knowledge into policy recommendations.<sup>123</sup> By 2003, TNC opened an office in Beijing to strengthen its relationship with the central government. In November that year, then-President Jiang Zheming met with TNC's China Program Director. TNC soon signed official MoU with State Forestry Bureau.

Of TNC's experience in China, the most distinctive aspect appears to be its strong partnership with Yunnan provincial government. Rose Niu, TNC China Program's current director, is a Yunnan native and a graduate from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Ford Foundation sponsored many local officials and state-affiliated researchers from Yunnan to attend graduate courses in AIT. AIT later became a hub of Chinese conservationists. Many Chinese graduates from AIT are now senior level officials or researchers back in Yunnan, and their shared experience at AIT is valuable for resource mobilization. Familiar with local political and social context, Niu effectively made TNC a trustworthy partner for Yunnan governmental agencies at different levels. When I

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<sup>122</sup> Though, the number of biogas plants built by TNC is less than 10% of the number that were built by the local government over the years.

<sup>123</sup> For example, the International Workshop for Meili Snow Mountain Conservation and Development held in Deqin, October 2000, which made to the *China Daily*, the leading national newspaper in English.



interviewed some Yunnan provincial officials in summer 2004, TNC is obviously the most well known and praised international NGO besides the Ford Foundation.<sup>124</sup>

Most of TNC's full-time staff members are locals, some of whom used to work within the provincial governmental system, or participated in multilateral or bilateral projects in Yunnan. Each local office inside the YGR project site is staffed by locals as well. This explains a great deal why TNC can build up an extensive network in Yunnan to assist conservation work deep into the mountainous regions.

With its unrivaled salary offer, prestigious reputation, and ambitious plans in Yunnan, TNC attracted many local conservationists and new college graduates. This has increasingly caused somewhat a local "brain-drain" effect, and stood out TNC against the rest of the conservation community in Yunnan. Even though TNC made some effort to provide small grants to local NGOs and invite them to be part of its own project implementation, some Yunnan local NGOs, particularly those voluntary-based small organizations, have complained about how TNC competed for human resources with Chinese NGOs.<sup>125</sup>

TNC's intimate relationship with governmental agencies at different levels in Yunnan also caught attention from local critical intellectuals. Professor Guo Jing from the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences has openly boycotted TNC, because he

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<sup>124</sup> Interviews conducted with officials from Yunnan provincial forestry bureau, environmental protection bureau, and development and planning commission, August 2004.

<sup>125</sup> I was affiliated with a Chinese environmental NGO from January to August 2004, during which time I had a number of opportunities to communicate with local NGOs from Yunnan.

believed that TNC “failed to acknowledge the ‘intellectual property rights’ of the local people and had succumbed to the wishes of some local government officials”.<sup>126</sup>

TNC is not unique in terms of its troublesome relationship with local conservationists. A senior practitioner of the international conservation NGO community, Mac Chapin published an alarming article in the November/December 2004 Issue of the *Worldwatch* magazine, “A Challenge to Conservationists”, in which he mainly warned the unhealthy power of The Big Three—WWF, TNC, and Conservation International. He pointed out that big international conservation NGOs tend to not collaborate with local people as much as they should.<sup>127</sup> “(Indigenous groups) are not—contrary to what many of them have been advertising—suitable allies because they, like most other people, are not even good conservationists.”<sup>128</sup> At current stage, TNC is somehow caught in between its grand conservation plans—which requires it to form strong relationship with various governmental agencies and absorb local experts—and its supposed moral responsibility as an NGO to supporting local social forces.

TNC’s attempt to be friend with the SFB and other central governmental agencies is even more of controversy. An insider shared his insights with me as: “The central government does not really have impact in local policy making or

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<sup>126</sup> Litzinger, 2004, p500.

<sup>127</sup> Chapin, Mac. 2004. “A Challenge to Conservationists”. *Worldwatch Magazine*, November-December Issue. pp17-30. Chapin has spent 35 years in the conservation field, and currently is affiliated with WWF, and directs a local Native American NGO, Cultural Survival. Dumoulin, David. 2003. “Local Knowledge in the Hands of Transnational NGO Networks: A Mexican Viewpoint.” *International Social Science Journal*. 55, 178: 593-616.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid*, p18.

implementation. But, good relationship with Beijing ministries certainly helps with TNC's interaction with Yunnan provincial government."<sup>129</sup> Recognition from the center is an addition to TNC's leverage in local politics.

However, TNC's recent moves in Beijing are not merely for window dressing or leverage politics. In Nov. 2003, TNC, together with other international and Chinese NGOs in Beijing, invited SFB officials to attend an international workshop on innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable forestry. By July 2004, TNC has been able to propose and sponsor informal meetings, roundtable discussions, and a book project on forestry and global climate change, partnering with the SFB departments and other non-state parties.<sup>130</sup> Negotiations about using state-owned forests in Yunnan as pilot project sites for China's first trial of land-related Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) took off in August.<sup>131</sup> At that time, SFB was busy communicating with the National CDM Commission to take the potential of carbon-sink projects, e.g., afforestation, more seriously, and TNC's expertise and assistance

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<sup>129</sup> Interview in Beijing July 2004.

<sup>130</sup> Because of my research in global climate change and working affiliation with a Beijing NGO, I was invited to participate in many of these meetings, which usually took place in TNC Beijing office and SFB building in turns.

<sup>131</sup> CDM is one of the three mechanisms created by the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 to realize the emission reductions goals set by the U.N. Convention on Climate Change. CDM allows Annex I countries (usually OECD countries) to invest in developing countries to achieve green-house-gas emission reduction, and eventually buy the emission reduction credits from developing countries to fulfill their own commitments to the Kyoto Protocol. It is designed as a win-win mechanism for both developed and developing countries. By May 2004, a National CDM Commission was created to be in charge of all CDM related regulations. In Feb. 2005, the National CDM Commission announced that land-related project, i.e., afforestation and reforestation, is one of the prioritized fields the China would explore for CDM potentials.

in identifying pilot site was very desirable. On the side of TNC, it managed to push forward its own blueprint in Yunnan by fully engaging in SFB's CDM agenda setting.

Professor Litzinger is perceptive on TNC's presence in Yunnan by pointing out: "The presence of international actors such as TNC does not then signal the retreat of the state, nor does it suggest that the central state has turned everything over to local cadres. The Chinese Communist Party and the many bureaus of the government continue to exercise their authority and manage the everyday affairs of the diverse locales and peoples in north-west Yunnan. But this exercise of authority and the politics and processes of everyday management—especially when matters of conservation and development are at stake—is increasingly carried out *in conjunction with* international organizations and agencies."<sup>132</sup> I would add to his observation that international NGOs are even able to maneuver and mobilize at the central level and, in turn, boost up its leverage at local levels. This is not unique to the case of TNC. With incomparably large amount of resources, TNC certainly is an amplified version of the general characteristics of the politics of transnational advocacy, which is meant to better illustrate the nuances.

### ***Conservation International (CI)***<sup>133</sup>

The organizational history of Conservation International can be viewed as a concise account of the connections and tensions within the international conservation

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<sup>132</sup> Litzinger, 2004. p504.

<sup>133</sup> Information about CI's work in China is gathered through many meetings and exchanges with CI Beijing Office staff in summer 2004. Also see Jake Brunner (CI Washington D.C. Office), "NGO Conservation Work in Tibet and Western Sichuan." Talk at the China Environment Forum Meeting, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C., Sep. 5, 2001. [Available online: <http://wwic.si.edu>, accessed in September 2004.]

community. CI began in what Mac Chapin called “dramatic fashion” in 1986: Virtually, the entire international program team of TNC bolted and transformed itself into CI. In 1989, CI brought in yet another group of defector—this time from WWF, and expanded its work dramatically around the world to the extent that it “has become the envy of all of its competitors”.<sup>134</sup>

Such love-and-hate relations among the three major international conservation NGOs—WWF, TNC, and CI—are more or less mirrored in their interactions in China. First of all, at individual level, chief leaders and staff members of these three NGOs’ China programs know each other well. CI China’s director, Dr. Lü Zhi, for example, used to lead WWF China’s panda conservation project for years before she left for a year fellowship at Yale. After Yale, she joined CI. WWF opened an office in Yunnan by the end of 1990s, and CI has found a specialist to partner with in Yunnan as well. All of these local officers of WWF and CI are part of the same professional community in Yunnan, which most TNC staff members also belong to.

Secondly, there is overlap in their conservation work in China, even though not necessarily the entire scope of all activities. All of these three NGOs, as well as many others (e.g., Wetland International, Winrock, Oxfam America) have emphasized the high ecological value of Southwest China—the “eco-hot spot”. To avoid redundancy or conflict of interest, geographical fault-lines have been drawn tacitly among these NGOs. In March 21-26, 2000, the three NGOs and Sichuan provincial government held a conference to identify the most important areas within the hotspot

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<sup>134</sup> Chapin, 2004. p18.

region.<sup>135</sup> The results coincided with the three focused areas of the three NGOs. TNC so far only works in northwest Yunnan, CI in Tibetan prefectures of western Sichuan, and WWF in the Min mountain region of Sichuan. (Map 3.3)

Thirdly, they are often competing for the same funding sources, and it becomes inevitable for them to communicate and collaborate in China. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) has allocated 6.5 million USD to assist conserving the eco-hotspot in China in 2002. Not only do all the three NGOs become grantees of this funding, but also CI is the coordinator of all CEPF funded projects in China.

**Map 3.3. WWF, TNC and CI conserving the eco-hotspot in southwest China**



Notes: 1. The red line in the two maps is the boundary of the eco-hotspot identified by CEPF; 2. In the map on the left, the boundaries of WWF (yellow), TNC (brown), and CI (blue)'s conservation work are drawn by the author according to the information provided by the three organizations.

Nonetheless, the competitive element in the non-profit world is still much less visible or characteristic than that in the business world. The three conservation NGOs have co-sponsored a few workshops and shared working experiences in China. For example, the TNC-CI conference on Yunnan Snub-nosed monkey conservation, the

<sup>135</sup> CI report "CEPF Ecosystem Profile: Mountains of Southwest China Hotspot", June 12, 2002.

CI-WWF conference on giant panda conservation in October 2003, and the TNC-CI-WWF international conference on eco-tourism in November 2003. The above accounts shall be read as a brief introduction of the context of CI's entry to China, and the internal dynamics of the international conservation NGO community in China. Such dynamics illustrate the nested relations within the transnational advocacy networks, and confirm the point that networks are amalgamations of various actors and complex relations among them.

In October 2000, CI signed an MoU with the Sichuan provincial government, which led to the establishment of a principal counterpart agency of CI within the Provincial Development and Planning Committee. Like the State Development and Reform Committee (formerly the State Development and Planning Committee) as the chief decision-making and coordinating agency at the central level, Provincial Development and Planning Committee is usually the most powerful among all provincial governmental agencies. That the MoU was signed between the Provincial Development and Planning Committee, instead of the Provincial Forestry Bureau, is a sign of Sichuan government's strong interest and trust in CI's proposal, expertise and capacity. Moreover, CI initially proposed to the provincial government that 9 to 10 percent of the Tibetan prefectures in southwest Sichuan be protected; while, the Sichuan government eventually committed to increase that level of protection to 25 percent (about 40,000 km<sup>2</sup>).

After feasibility studies and exchanges with local communities, Tibetan monasteries, NGOs, governmental bodies and international partners, CI initiated a

program that supports the revival of Tibetan cultures and values and engages local Tibetan communities in land, forestry and biodiversity conservation. This program will be carried out in partnership with TNC, Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge (a Kunming based Chinese NGO), Snowland Great Rivers (a Qinghai based Tibetan-Chinese NGO), and Daji Group Corporation (a Chinese corporation). From this list of partners shows that CI has made effort to encourage direct participation of Chinese local NGOs in internationally sponsored large-scale conservation program.

At the central level, CI's main partners are SEPA, SFB, and the Biodiversity Working Group of the China Council for International Cooperation in Environment and Development. CI endorses the three programs related to nature conservation launched by the central government from 1999 to 2001, and frames its work as to support the successful implementation of these plans.<sup>136</sup> However, these partnerships are newly developed, and not the strongest points of CI's work in China.

In many of my meetings with Chinese environmental activists and conservation NGOs, I was given the impression that among all the international NGOs, CI has done most to support them, and presented least prejudices over them. This became not surprising to me after I learnt more about CI's China team. The team is led by Dr. Lü Zhi, a former Beijing University biology professor and WWF China officer. She is worldwide known giant panda expert, and used to spend months

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<sup>136</sup> See CI China program's mission statements. The three national plans are The Natural Forest Protection Program, the Conservation of Sloping Cultivated Land to Forest, and Grassland Program, and the Endangered Plant and Wildlife Protection Plan.



camping in mountainous panda habitats. She is unconventional and determined in what she is pursuing. All her staff members are young and energetic Chinese, who are a part of the critical mass of environmental movements in China. They are not only environmentally conscious, but more importantly, politically reflective as well. Acquainted with the liberal democratic ideas, they see the value of supporting local NGOs and community leaders beyond protecting trees and mammals.

Compared with other international conservation NGOs working in China, CI is probably the most localized. It has been localized not merely in terms of its staff composition, since most international NGOs now are run by Chinese: it is the most closely connected with the bottom-up environmental activism in China. CI has the potential to be the most relevant external NGO to the development of environmentalism in China, for it has been engaged in—besides being the main financial sponsor—a couple of most recent nation-wide public campaigns initiated by Chinese environmentalists, including the anti-dam movement on the Nu River.

From individual conservationist celebrities to a group of over 30 organizations, international NSAs have gone through a history of from ensuring their own survival in China to collaborating with various governmental and non-governmental partners at all levels. Clusters of international NGOs have emerged in many provinces, especially in Beijing and southwest. Besides the NGOs discussed in this section, the Mountain Institute, Bridge Fund, World Resource Institute, Wildlife Conservation Society, IUCN, Greenpeace, Winrock and many others all have made visible contribute to China's nature conservation at different levels. Provincial and local

governments are becoming more familiar with international NGOs and foundations. With the assistance from capable Chinese NGOs partners, external advocates have been able to gain more access to local communities and operationalize innovative conservation mechanisms.

### **Promoting and Transnationalizing Local Conservation Activism**

As the international environmental NGO community continues to grow in China, together with the deepening of the internationalization of the state and the development of grassroots social activism, more international NGOs have achieved to directly support local environmental NGOs and conservation campaigns, in addition to their assistance to the governmental agencies in Beijing. In this section, I want to highlight the situation that international NGOs persistently try to search for non-governmental partners in conservation in China, and sometimes even consciously support the creation of new activism-oriented conservation groups as a way to confront and change existing policies. When opportunity is mature, international NGO even achieve to transnationalize local activism and movement, and help local groups gain some political strength by pressuring the Chinese government from the international arena. This is the closest form of the Boomerang analogy in the politics of transnational advocacy in China.

#### ***Pacific Environment and Resource Center (PERC)***

Unlike large organizations such as CI and WWF, the Pacific Environment and Resource Center represents many smaller, low-key international NGOs working in

China, and very active in supporting grassroots activism emerging in nature conservation. PERC started working in the Tumen River basin region, northeast China, in 1996. The Tumen Environmental Initiative has four basic components, all of which are designed to facilitate the development of bottom-up conservation efforts: to create and distribute a comprehensive directory of environmental advocates working in Tumen; to provide direct funding for Russian, Chinese, and North Korean individuals and environmental organizations working on scientific, policy and education efforts in Tumen; to establish a Russian-Chinese-North Korean exchange program for environmental advocates; and, to improve public participation in national and international agency decision-making.<sup>137</sup>

In September 2001, PERC officially hired an outstanding Chinese environmentalist, Wen Bo, to strengthen its direct support to Chinese grassroots conservation groups.<sup>138</sup> Since then, PERC has supported the publication of a training guide for college student environmentalists, Earth Day activities by student environmentalists in the city of Dalian, a youth project to investigate development alternatives in Shanghai, conservation and education programs for the endangered

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<sup>137</sup> Information collected in the Inventory on Environmental Works in China. 1999. In *China Environmental Series*, Issue 2.

<sup>138</sup> Wen Bo, a former journalist for the *China Environmental News*—China's authoritative national daily environmental newspaper, emerged as one of the leaders of China's environmental movement in the mid-1990s. As a college student, he was an admirer of the Greenpeace Rainbow eco-activists. And in early 1990s, he became the main contact for Greenpeace to start an office in China. Currently, he works for both PERC and GGF (coordinator for GGF's grants to China). He backpacks to remote corners of the country to find passionate conservationists, and coordinates dozens of transnationally mobilized projects in his Beijing office-home. He was the founding member of many Chinese NGOs, including the Green Student Forum, Dalian Bird Liberation Front, and Xinjiang Conservation Fund. More about Wen's early activist work, see Economy, 2004, pp166-167.

Saunders' Gull in Panjin (Liaoning province), and Seberian tiger conservation in Jilin province. PERC's past and current partners include some most respected and effective Chinese NGOs, e.g., Friends of the Nature, and Green Plateau Institute. However, more importantly, it provides crucial support to many of the emerging independent groups, e.g., Green Web of Beijing, Rongchen Swan Protection Association (Fujian province), Xinning County Environmental Volunteer Association (Hunan province), Zhaotong Volunteers' Association for Black-necked Crane Protection (Guizhou). PERC also sees the value of connecting Chinese environmentalists from different regions, and help to create a sense of community. They have supported the nationwide umbrella organization for all college student environmental groups—China Green Student Forum, center group of student environmental organizations in southeast China—Green Stone of Nanjing University, and Guizhou Environmental Student Network Initiative Group.

Most recently, PERC supported the initiative by some Chinese environmentalists to form Saving China's Seas Network (SCSN). SCSN aims at information sharing and coordinating outreach campaigns to mobilize a marine conservation movement in China. As a top priority, it will develop strategies to address the trade in endangered marine species that is rampant in China's coastal regions. In addition, SCSn will also address the disconnection between environmental research and activism. As many of PERC's Chinese NGO partners reflected on the development of environmentalism in China, they pointed out that grassroots NGOs still lack scientific data to back up their conservation campaigns. They felt they had

not acquired the necessary credibility to influence government policy. Through SCSN, PERC intends to build a bridge between these two sectors.

The case of PERC exemplifies that, with the help from key Chinese environmentalists, international NGOs are able to explore the limited political space in China, and facilitate the growth of grassroots environmental activism. On the one hand, being non-governmental themselves, international NGOs can transfer the skills and “soft” resources they have to Chinese counterparts. Besides conservation effects, international NGOs are actually teaching Chinese NGOs how to mobilize resources, network with peer organizations, and build up communication channels with other social sectors. On the other hand, being outsiders, international NGOs can employ a reflective eye on the development of Chinese NGOs, and provide extra opportunities for Chinese NGOs to grow mature by organizing conferences, creating new conservation projects, and advocating the Chinese government. Because conservation NGOs like WWF, CI and PERC all concur on that science, government relations, grassroots involvement, and popular understanding are all necessary element for long-term conservation goals, they are gradually helping to strengthen Chinese NGOs, and form coalitions among these historically detached social sectors in China, either through their actual work in the field, or their support to Chinese partners.

### ***Small grants and seed funds***

In this section, I will further specify two mechanisms used by international NSAs to support local Chinese environmental activists and their work: innovative funding and incubating new local NGOs.

Not peculiar to China, funding is an issue for NGOs and other civil society groups across the world. Currently, China does not have tax or other policy incentives for private philanthropy or corporate social responsibility, fund-raising and fund-raising in an efficient and transparent way is one of the greatest difficulties faced by Chinese NGOs. Both ECOLOGIA and Global Greengrants Fund have applied innovative means to help with this problem.<sup>139</sup>

ECOLOGIA, just as its full name stands for—Ecologists Linked for Organizing Grassroots Initiatives and Action—has always been a close supporter of Chinese green NGOs since its entering in China in 1996. ECOLOGIA cooperates with a broad range of China's environmental social organizations, ranging from informal volunteer groups, student groups, to some government affiliated organizations. Through the Virtual Foundation, ECOLOGIA has been able to locate donors from all over the world for volunteer-based environmental projects in China.<sup>140</sup> For example, ECOLOGIA is currently helping to secure travel grants for the famous Chinese anti-dam activist, Wang Yongchen, to attend an international peace conference in the U.S. in 2005.

ECOLOGIA first introduced the concept of seeds fund to Chinese environmental community. In 1997, a Green SOS Small Grant project was initiated by ECOLOGIA. Through this project, ECOLOGIA can transfer financial resources overseas, and allocate them to the most needed Chinese groups in a most cost-

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<sup>139</sup> In addition, both WWF (over 200,000 USD) and CI have allocated substantial amount of funding to support Chinese NGOs.

<sup>140</sup> Created in 1996, the Virtual Foundation essentially is an online search engine for private donors to select the project that they are interested in helping with. <http://www.virtualfoundation.org>.

efficient way. Instead of handing this project idea to the Chinese government, ECOLOGIA's President, Randy Kritkauský, found a very capable environmentalist in Sichuan—Lu Hongyan. Lu founded the Environmental Volunteers Association (EVA) of Sichuan University during graduate school years, and developed the Association into one of the best-established student green groups in the country. EVA has gradually become the engine of environmental activism in southwest China. The opportunity of administering the Green SOS project greatly improved EVA's self-capacity. During each funding cycle, EVA collects and reviews grant applications from dozens of colleges and universities in the western provinces. They have created a set of criteria to evaluate the practical effects and organizational credibility to allocate the grants. This unique experience has provided EVA members the chance to form a broad view over environmental activism among the youth in China. Lu has since given many talks and published papers on the topic, and won respect for the new generation of Chinese environment activists.<sup>141</sup>

Similar as the concept of the Green SOS project, Global Greengrants Fund (GGF) has delivered small grants (100-5000 USD) directly to Chinese environmental since 1998. Instead of creating a separate project in each country, GGF invited a group of leading environmental activists to form an Advisory Board to identify local grantees and channel funding from the headquarter to over 70 countries in all continents. GGF's China advisors (2002-2004) included Wen Bo, Hu Kanping (China

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<sup>141</sup> For example: Lu Hongyan. 2003. "Bamboo Sprouts After the Rain: The History of University Student Environmental Associations in China." *China Environment Series*, 6: 55-66. I have known Lu in person since April 2001, and since have kept in touch about the development of Green SOS.

Green Times), Li Hao (Beijing Earthview Environmental Education and Communication Center), and Lü Zhi (Conservation International China). The number of GGF's Chinese grantees, all of which are non-governmental voluntary groups, has grown from five in 1998 to over 40 in 2004. It is not exaggerating to argue that the history of China's environmental movement is, to some extent, reflected in GGF's expanding grantee list over the years.

Owing to its responsive and efficient grant-making structures and procedures, many Chinese activists and NGOs got financial support from GGF at the most crucial moments. As we briefly touched in other places previously, in between 1999 to 2000, Chinese conservationists successfully campaigned for protecting Tibetan antelopes, and established the Tibetan Antelope Information Center, whose first grant was from GGF. Within few months at the end of the year 2003, the Nu River anti-dam movement was on rise in both Yunnan and Beijing. By early 2004, over 5000 USD grant was issued to support Green Watershed and Green Earth Volunteers, two leading Chinese NGOs in the movement. Like PERC and ECOLOGIA, GGF consistently support Chinese student environmental organizations, and regional umbrella forums of these student groups. For example, the China Green Student Forum (since 1998), Guizhou Student Network (since 2001), Green Stone Fund for student environmental activism (since 2003), and Shanghai Green Student Forum (since 2004).

To some extent, GGF plays a role of incubating new Chinese NGOs not only by securing the start-up and administrative funding, but also by linking the name of GGF to these new NGOs, and provide certain level of credential and publicity for



them. In 2001 and 2002, GGF China Advisory Board member started visiting and identifying grantees in Xinjiang, and eventually came to the decision to form an independent organization to focus on conservation issues in Xinjiang, which is now known as the Xinjiang Conservation Fund.<sup>142</sup> GGF provided the first two years' operational cost of Xinjiang Conservation Fund, and allowed this new-born organization to have some time to develop its networks, personnel, and capacity. Two of the GGF China advisors were also on the Board of the Xinjiang Conservation Fund. By 2004, Xinjiang Conservation Fund has already developed an informative website, co-hosted series of meetings on biodiversity conservation in Xinjiang, and coordinated field research related to Snow Leopard.<sup>143</sup>

Similarly, the Blue Moon Foundation (BMF) shares GGF's passion in incubating new Chinese NGOs.<sup>144</sup> However, BMF prefers to support more professionalized and research and solution oriented NGOs, which requires more financial resources than supporting a student group. BMF (formerly the W. Alton Jones Foundation) is a typical American private charity, and it funds biodiversity conservation project worldwide. What distinguishes BMF's grant-making in China from other international private foundation is in that BMF emphasizes the importance of independent research and professional institutions for China's future. With an insightful grant-making team, BMF has been able to identify a group of professionals,

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<sup>142</sup> Details about some of these trips can be found in Wen Bo's commentary "Xinjiang: A Trip to the New Territory", China Environmental Series, Issue 5: 66-68.

<sup>143</sup> I visited the office of Xinjiang Conservation Fund in May 2004.

<sup>144</sup> I first came to know BMF during an interview with a Chinese NGO in summer 2000, when BMF grant officer was paying his regular visit to the grantee organization. Since then, I have followed BMF's work in China.

former governmental officials, or government affiliated researchers who are bold enough to step out of the formal system and form their own NGO. When interviewed in 2000, BMF's Vice President, Dr. Zhang Jiqiang, explained their funding strategies in China as followings:<sup>145</sup>

Local NGOs should dare to raise different opinions from local governments in environmental protection. Chinese NGOs should recognize their own strength and advantage when applying for funding. Our foundation's partnership with local NGOs does not stop at financial terms, or simple contacts. We try to provide local NGOs chance to be involved in large-scale project, and encourage them to 'advertise' themselves and build up self-capacity. During the implementation of such projects, local NGOs can obtain the opportunity to speak out their own ideas, develop their own networks, and establish their own reputation within and beyond the local community.

In the mid-1990s, BMF was part of the initiating team of the South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (SNISD); and, in 2003, BMF again successfully helped to establish the Global Environmental Institute (GEI) in Beijing. Both SNISD and GEI have grown quickly, and gained international recognition. For its independent status and expertise, SNISD has been invited by the People's Congress to submit an independent report for the forth-coming legislation of China's biodiversity conservation law. Since its commencement, GEI has been one of the active players involved in Chinese government's policy making on global climate change and its implications for forestry reforms. As a donor, BMF has gone beyond its role, and became a major supportive force for the emerging environmental civil society in China.

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<sup>145</sup> Interviewed in Beijing, July 2000.

Through small grants, NGOs and funding organizations such as ECOLOGIA, GGF and BMF have been able to effectively transfer resources to Chinese NGOs; through seeds funds, they even have been able to assist the establishment of new local NGOs. These examples show the depth of involvement and impact of international NSAs on the development on domestic social activism.

### ***Transnationalizing domestic activism and campaigns***

Through their grantee networks, ECOLOGIA, GGF, and BMF are already creating opportunities for information exchanges among Chinese environmentalists and green NGOs. This section focuses on the aspect of international advocacy groups that some of the international NSAs that organized meetings and conferences in particular for Chinese NGOs to network with each as well as with western NGOs, such as the China Environmental Forum (CEF) at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. In December 2000, CEF held a one-week workshop on environmental advocacy, NGOs and Journalism in Greater China. CEF invited representatives of grass-roots NGOs and environment journalists from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, introduced them to their American counterparts, and organized meetings and discussions among them to exchange ideas, information, and experiences. The main purposes of this workshop were to provide Chinese NGOs more opportunities to network internationally, learn about NGO financing and self-capacity building. In the following April, CEF brought together over 60 environmentalists from the mainland, HK and Taiwan. The meeting was first of its kind in history and had symbolic meanings by presenting Chinese green groups as a whole in an inter-regional setting.

Most recently, international NGOs have experimented with organizing public campaigns and supporting Chinese environmentalists to expand their campaigns. Such work has even more impact on strengthening the connections among various Chinese and international advocacy groups, as exemplified by IFAW's involvement in the Tibetan antelope movement and CI and International Rivers Network (IRN)'s support to the Nu River movement.

In September, 2003, after learning about the Nu River dam project, Wang Yongchen, a long-time environmental activist and the founder of the Green Earth Volunteers, contacted a large number of environmentalists and journalists in Beijing, and started the Nu River anti-movement. Local environmentalists and NGOs in Yunnan, particularly the Green Watershed led by Yu Xiaogang, organized farmers from the Nu River dam site to visit other dam sites and relocated communities in order to better inform them about ecological and social consequences of large dams. CI and IRN sponsored Wang and other 20 activists, scientists and journalists to conduct a comprehensive field investigation of the Nu River dam site during 16-24 February, 2004. Meanwhile, Wang's activist and media friends in Beijing have managed to submit a policy recommendation letter to the Office of Premier Wen Jiabao. Finally, on February 18<sup>th</sup>, Premier Wen informed SEPA and called for a new round of environmental assessment the Nu River dam before the construction starts. To date, even though the large energy companies are still backing up the Nu River dam proposal, the total scale of the dam has been reduced from 13 to 11-level. More Chinese and international NGOs and environmentalists are joining Wang to continue

protesting against the proposal. CI, GGF, ECLOGIA and IRN have kept supporting Wang and other activists to attend international meetings and strengthen their domestic campaign visibility.

As the anti-dam movement on the Nu River has shown, through these cross-regional public campaigns, external and Chinese activists combined their resources and confronted the Chinese government together. International NSAs supported with their wide connections outside the country. Such transnational coalitions are still rare across issue areas in China, which indicates the relatively high level maturity of transnational advocacy networks in the nature conservation field.

When ICF and WWF conservation experts were first invited to China in the late 1970s, they faced many dilemmas. Neither the government nor local communities were receptive to the concept of nature conservation. Economic distress exacerbated the human-nature conflict in many biodiversity-rich areas. Nature conservation even became a politically sensitive question when it challenged local authorities' decisions over land use, population relocation and natural resource exploitation. Throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s, international conservation NGOs continuously provided learning opportunities to governmental officials at different levels in order to foster environmental awareness within the governmental body. Some also helped the government to implement many conservation demonstration projects, through which new methods and principles were introduced, such as community-based participatory forestry conservation. In recent years, more international conservation NGOs have

become involved in local, provincial and central governmental policy-making processes, such as establishing new nature reserves. International NGOs even created programs to train the staff for the new reserves to ensure the sustainability of conservation initiatives. In a way, the international advocacy community has formed wide networks with the Chinese government from central to local, and walked governmental agencies through each step of nature conservation.

In addition, international NGOs and foundations have also played a crucial role in the development of Chinese green civil society. Despite the recent development of grassroots environmental NGOs, civil society in China in general is still in its nascent stage, and most Chinese NGOs or NGOs-to-be lack resources. Moreover, there is a lack of political opportunity for Chinese NGOs to participate in conservation. With this background, a few international NSAs (e.g., GGF, PERC) have started to focus on transferring financial, technical and human resources from the international arena to support the development of Chinese NGOs in recent years. Some even applied innovative funding methods to best suit local NGOs' needs, helped to create projects for Chinese NGOs to exercise their muscles, and encouraged local activists to form their own organizations and to sustain their activism. Through their own project and grantee connections, international NSAs further strengthened green civil society in China by facilitating the communication and networking among various Chinese activist groups and NGOs. Represented by the Nu River anti-dam movement, international NGOs have begun to taking part in and transnationalizing

domestic environmental activism, which contributed to the consolidation of the group identity among Chinese environmentalists and green NGOs.

## CHAPTER CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have explained that it is an intricate task to promote nature conservation in China. Due to the lack political will from the top, China's governing structures in the nature conservation field are still not clearly defined. Official environmental assistance, in spite of its large volume, has not particularly pushed for the nature conservation agenda. International NSAs, in this case, are taking the lead in introducing new ideas and methods to the government and provide assistance to local communities. International conservation NGOs have roughly gone through three stages in terms of the development of their advocacy and mobilization networks. During the early years, they focused on persuading the Chinese government and get access to local governments and communities. Secondly, with the rise of bottom-up environmentalism and the emergence of Chinese environmental NGOs, they were able to consolidate their networks and work at the local level, and meanwhile, continue their communication and interaction with the higher levels of authorities.

Most recently, more international advocacy groups are able to identify civil society partners and provide direct support to promote environmental activism in China. They provided essential financial, technical and human resource assistance to Chinese NGOs for them to develop self-capacity and lead grassroots movements and

conservation projects. Networks among international and domestic conservationists, activists and NGO are growing stronger in this case through numerous venues for information exchanges, and recurrent collaborative activities. In Sichuan and Yunnan, international conservation NGOs have been able to launch large-scale conservation projects and partner with a large number of both governmental and non-governmental actors. In other cases, international advocates have joined domestic activists to confront Chinese government to protect wildlife and biodiversity and help local farmers to voice their needs. Transnational advocacy network, therefore, present a variety of political dynamics and relations related to nature conservation in China.



## CHAPTER 4

### TRANSNATIONAL HIV/AIDS PREVENTION ADVOCACY NETWORKS IN CHINA

*Local governments and communities (in rural China) are like young children. Outsiders shall not disturb or affect them without full consideration...On the one hand, local governments in Henan are not as evil as depicted by some media. They, at the end of the day, are part of the community, and have to care about the villagers. On the other hand, the local society is not as weak as we might have thought. The potential of some types of collective action by the villagers, as a matter of fact, has put pressure on the local government.*

— Pusi Chan

*Country Program Manager, the Salvation Army, Hong Kong & Macau Command*<sup>1</sup>

Like the case of nature conservation, HIV/AIDS control and prevention in China is not a simple matter of medical technology, but involves complex, interrelated politics and social problems. It has affected the welfare of over a million patients and their families in the country, and is capable of affecting more. The above quotes of the Salvation Army officer, to some extent, have alluded to the dilemma, miscommunication, confusion, and occasionally, hostility among local governments, local villages, and international media and advocacy actors. This is the very starting point and context for international non-state actors to assisting China's fight against AIDS.

The international health community (including both IGOs and NGOs) started mobilizing and working on AIDS prevention in China in the mid-1990s. Yet, only after a decade of indifference and reluctance did the Chinese government make major

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<sup>1</sup> Interviewed in Beijing, July 2004.

changes in its governing structures and policies on HIV/AIDS control. In the past two years, politics surrounding AIDS has evolved dramatically, and the government has shown strong political will to solve the problem and has implemented many bold measures. On 11 May 2005, the Ministry of Health and Merck & Co., Inc.—one of the largest HIV/AIDS pharmaceutical companies in the world—established the Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Cooperation Project. This is the first of its kind public-private partnership for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care in China.

Despite a checkered past of blocking media exposure, detaining of journalists and activists, and cracking down on local NGOs, bottom-up activism for HIV/AIDS prevention and questioning of ineffective governmental policies has survived in China. At the time this research was conducted, a number of college student associations, community-based self-help groups, and registered NGOs were emerging in many provinces.

With this background, I introduce a group of international health NGOs and private foundations that are actively promoting better practices and principles in HIV/AIDS prevention in China. Transnational advocacy networks, in this case, are evidenced by the increasing number of meetings and collaborative projects among international NGOs, Chinese activist groups, and medical professionals. The overall scope and depth of the state and society mobilization generated by these networks have not reached the level of that in the field of nature conservation. This chapter's

main purpose is to show the complex interactions and specific mechanisms involved in individual organizations' advocacy and mobilization.

## CHINA'S AIDS EPIDEMIC

### The "Western Disease"

Until now, China has gone through three phases of the AIDS epidemic.<sup>2</sup> From 1985 to 1989, relatively few people were tested HIV+, of which cases almost all were in major cities and attributed to foreigners traveling and residing in China.<sup>3</sup> Both the state and the public were indifferent to the disease due to lack of information. The government's ideologically-colored interpretation of the virus further prevented the public from being correctly informed. It was reported that official rhetoric and editorials referred AIDS as a "Western disease" during that period of time.<sup>4</sup> As an

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<sup>2</sup> Aixin Foundation. 2004. *A Chronology of AIDS Crisis in China*. Wu, Zunyou, Rou Keming, and Cui Haixia. 2004. "The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in China: History, Current Strategies and Future Challenges" (unpublished paper).

<sup>3</sup> China announced its first AIDS-related death on 6 June 1985 at the Peking Union College Hospital. The Ministry of Health stated that an Argentine tourist from the United States "died of severe lung infection and respiratory failure." *New York Times*, 30 July 1985, p. 5. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 2 May, 2005]

<sup>4</sup> For example, the *China Youth News* reported on 22 July 1987 that according to Minister of Health, Chen Minzhang, HIV/AIDS in China can be checked because homosexuality and promiscuity, "which is how the disease is spread", are limited in China. *Xinhua News Agency*, 22 July 1987, "Minister Chen acknowledged that illegal importing of blood and the lack of disposable syringes, and Chinese women having illegal sex with foreigners could spread the disease in China. Chen urged moral and sex education for young people, and the establishment of a reporting system to track AIDS." Also, reported by Donna Anderson, "In a commentary on the 'decadent' American society, the *Beijing Review* stated that 'rampant disastrous drug taking, alcoholism, robbery, homicide, suicide, divorce, prostitution, homosexuality, syphilis, AIDS, and other social ills...come from their ideology', in "Peking Daily Cautions Against Western Threats of AIDS, Drugs", Associated Press, 4 February 1987. [All accessed through LexisNexis on 2 May, 2005]

immediate policy measure, the central government re-drafted its laws regulating blood products importing and instituted HIV tests for foreigners traveling to China.<sup>5</sup>

The second phase of the epidemic spanned from 1990 to 1995, during which a growing number of HIV positive cases were recorded among Chinese nationals, especially intravenous drug users (IDUs) and hemophilia patients. The central government, for the first time, was alerted about the potential impact of the disease when 146 HIV positive cases were discovered among drug users through one government organized test in Yunnan province in February 1990.<sup>6</sup> A National AIDS Prevention and Control Committee was formed in the next month. The state public healthy authorities started organizing large scale testing and conferences more frequently, and established AIDS hotlines, information centers, research labs and treatment clinics.<sup>7</sup> The number of total HIV/AIDS cases grew from 446 in 1990 to 2594 in 1995. The year 1995 alone added about 800 cases.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For example, HIV test were enforced at international airports. Yet, according to many foreigners who traveled to China during that time whom I interviewed, the policy did not last for long, and the tests were poorly conducted. Daniel Southerland, "China Starts AIDS Tests for Foreign Residents," *Washington Post*, 2 May 1987. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 2 May, 2005]

<sup>6</sup> "Yunnan AIDS Carriers Quarantined", *Xinhua News Agency*, 2 March 1990. "China unprepared for growth in Aids from drug abuse: Simon Long reports from Kunming on the 'Western disease' that is baffling authorities", *The Guardian*, 5 March, 1990. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 2 May, 2005]

<sup>7</sup> A Sino-American HIV Symposium was hosted in Beijing, reported by Xinhua News Agency, 9 November, 1991. "China opens first AIDS information center in Beijing", *Agence France Presse*, 30 November, 1991. "First AIDS clinic opens in Beijing", *Agence France Presse*, 3 December, 1991. "The second AIDS hotline opened in Beijing", *United Press International*, 7 March 1995. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 2 May, 2005]

<sup>8</sup> There are various versions of HIV/AIDS numbers in China. I am using the official numbers released in 2004, quoted in the speech by SHEN Jie, vice director (in charge of AIDS prevention) of the State CDC. That there are problems embedded in Chinese official data and statistics on AIDS is a separate issue, which won't be discussed in details here. For reference, see: Kaufman, Joan, and Kathrien Meyers. 2004. "Research for AIDS Policy in China and Data Gaps for Planning the Response". Paper

The third phase, 1995-2002, saw an outbreak of the AIDS crisis. An official statement in October 2002 said that there are 1 million HIV infections and AIDS patients in total, 160,000 of whom were already dead. In the same year, UNAIDS China Office estimated that “there could be an expected [increase of] 100,000+ patients with AIDS every year”.<sup>9</sup> The number of orphans left by AIDS patient could reach 100,000 to 300,000 according various estimates.<sup>10</sup> The virus has spread to every province of the country, via all transmission routes—unsafe sex, maternal infectivity, needle sharing, and blood contamination.

Despite various signs of a potential full-blown epidemic, the Chinese government, from central to local, restricted any dissemination of AIDS-related information to the public during this period. Media coverage, public awareness activity, and independent voluntary relief work were highly restricted. When the U.N. General Secretary Kofi Annan’s visited China in 2002, and spent most of his public speech on warning that “(f)or the truth is, today, China stands on the brink of an explosive AIDS epidemic”, the general Chinese public were greatly bewildered.<sup>11</sup>

According to the official records (Figure 4.1), the epidemiological development of AIDS in China was stable for 15 years, while, suddenly rocketed within a year’s time—the total number of HIV+ patients increased almost by 30 times

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presented at the conference “Social Policy and HIV/AIDS in China”, Harvard University (Kennedy School of Government, Medical School, and Dept. of Anthropology), May 2004.

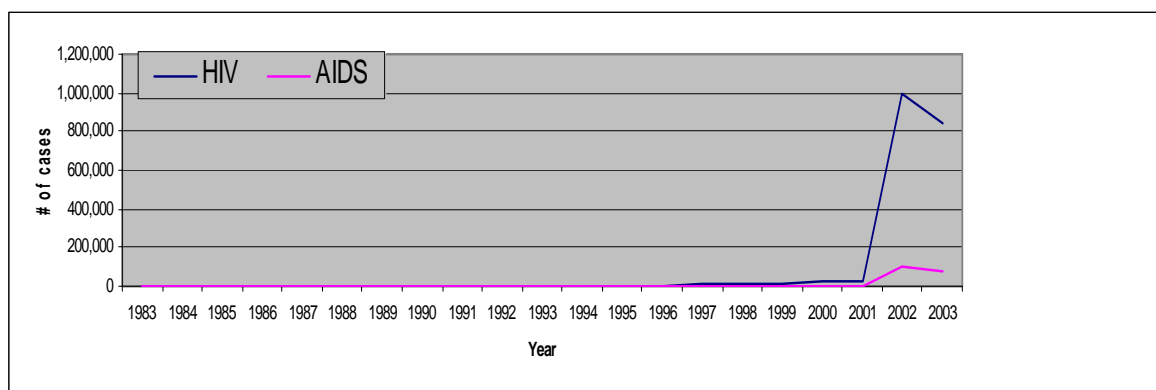
<sup>9</sup> UNAIDS China. 2002. “HIV/AIDS: China’s Titanic Peril (2001 Updates of the AIDS Situation and Needs Assessment Report)”.

<sup>10</sup> Jin, Wei. 2004. p43. UNAIDS, 2002, 2004 reports.

<sup>11</sup> Jin, Wei, 2004, pp: 210-214. Secretary Annan made the speech at Zhejiang University on 13 October 2002. This is the only public speech he made during that visit.

in 2001!<sup>12</sup> This helps to explain lack of awareness on the part of the Chinese and world's public was not aware of the problem until mid-2003. What could cause such a dramatic change in the AIDS situation in a country like China, where poverty prevails in most parts and drug use and commercial and extra-marital sex were morally condemned and harshly punished until very recent years? The official numbers reveals little about the reality of the AIDS crisis yet much about the government's denial and lack of tracking the epidemic. The Chinese government to date has not given a satisfactory explanation of the huge escalation in the scale of the AIDS crisis in the late 1990s and beginning of 2000s. This leads us to discuss the blood contamination scandal which took place in rural China in the 1990s.

**Figure 4.1. Official accumulative numbers of HIV and AIDS patients**



Sources: Prof. LI Dun, 2004; Prof. JING Jun, 2004; Aixin Foundation China AIDS Chronicle, 2004; SHEN Jie, China CDC, 2004.

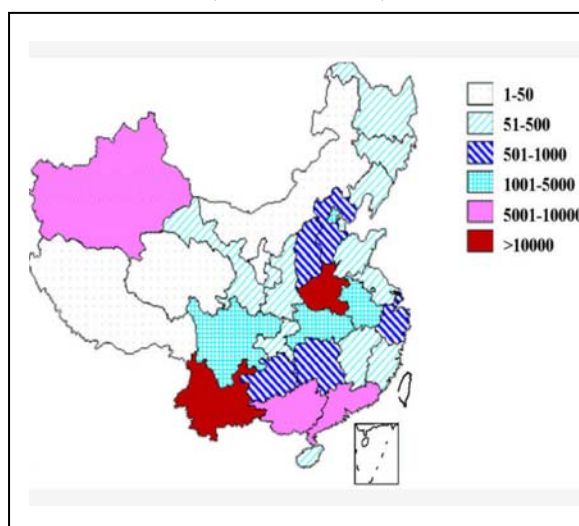
Geographically and epidemiologically, China faces not one, but two originally independent, yet becoming interrelated, AIDS epidemics.<sup>13</sup> (Map 4.1) The earlier epidemic started in the late 1980s and early 1990s, mostly restricted within northwest

<sup>12</sup> HIV+ 29,857 cases in 2001, and 870,000 in 2002; AIDS patients 1,596 in 2001, and 100,000 in 2002.

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, Andrew. 2004a. "China Faces Challenges in Effort to Contain HIV/AIDS Crisis". CSIS. Washington, D.C. Policy report.

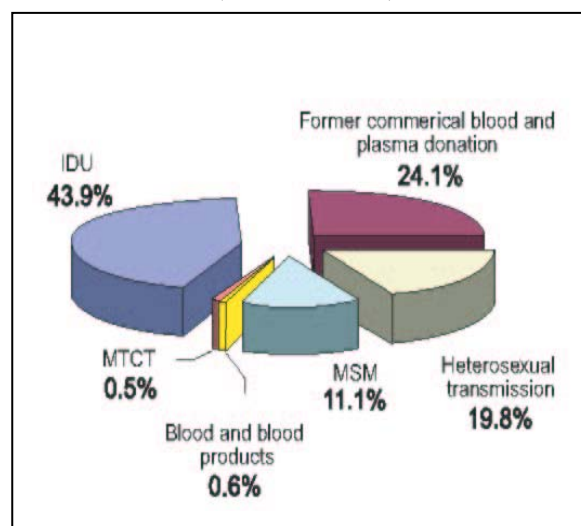
(esp. Xinjiang Uigur Autonomous Region) and southwest (esp. bordering areas between Yunnan province and the Republic of Myanmar) regions. It initially began via needle sharing among drug users, but was quickly accelerated by commercial sex.<sup>14</sup> The later epidemic was first concentrated in central-north rural China (esp. Henan province), but gradually spread to all provinces but Tibet, via blood transfusion. Earliest records of people infected through contaminated blood were dated 1994. The UNAIDS 2004 Report shows that at least 24% of the current HIV+ cases were infected through blood contamination.<sup>15</sup> (Figure 4.2)

**Map 4.1. Geographic distribution of HIV infection cases (2003 estimates)**



Source: Shen Jie, China CDC, 2004.

**Figure 4.2. Modes of transmission among HIV/AIDS cases (2003 estimates)**



Source: UNAIDS-China CDC 2004 Joint Report

Currently, the two epidemics are merging, and rapidly expanding to the general public via unsafe sex (including commercial heterosexual sex workers or CSW, and men have sex with men or MSM), needle sharing among IDUs, and

<sup>14</sup> Researches and my field work have both found there is significant overlap between female drug users and commercial sex workers.

<sup>15</sup> According to activists and non-governmental sources, this figure is too low to be true. See note 17.

mother-child transmission (MTCT).<sup>16</sup> In this regard, China shares many of the same challenges as other developing countries. However, what distinguishes the AIDS situation in China from that in the rest of the world is the significant portion of patients infected through commercial blood selling. No other country has been affected by the problem of illegal, mobile, and unclean blood stations (some of which are still operating in remote areas) as extensively and severely as China.

The key issue is not only for the government to acknowledge that blood contamination is one of the major causes for the current crisis, but also to admit that certain politicians are responsible for it.<sup>17</sup> Because private blood buying/selling was officially prohibited in 1995, the government is able to refute the accusation that a few governmental officials should be responsible for the policy failure in regulating unsanitary blood stations in Henan in the 1990s. When the issue came to light in 2001, hundreds of those infected by selling blood had already died. The government downplayed the significance of the blood scandal or the current composition of the HIV/AIDS demography, and repeatedly announcing that over 90% of HIV+ cases in China are among drug users. The official number dropped to 67% only at the end of

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<sup>16</sup> Thompson, Andrew. 2004d. "Injecting Drug Use Fueling Spread of HIV in China". CSIS. Washington, D.C. Policy report.

<sup>17</sup> AIDS activists disagree with the Chinese government or UNAIDS on the interpretation of the data on the different modes of transmission given by the 2004 joint report. In Figure 4.2, it looks like blood contamination is not the weightiest cause of the spread of HIV/AIDS. This is because a) many patients infected by blood selling have already died, b) many patients infected by blood selling do not participate in government organized testing, and c) many IDU, CSW, and MTCT cases are originally caused by commercial blood selling. Activists argue that the impact of the blood scandal is lessened by such data on current HIV+ patients.



2003.<sup>18</sup> The changing official numbers of the percentage of HIV patients infected through needle sharing is only one example of how the government has been covering the blood scandal.

### **The Blood Scandal**

In the late years of the 1980s, some state ministries and provincial governments, seeking economic profits from manufacturing blood products, gradually started establishing blood stations and businesses in rural China.<sup>19</sup> Illegal blood stations run by individual blood vendors (*xue tou*) quickly mushroomed due to the high revenues in the market. Because of their population density, a few provinces (e.g., Henan, Anhui, and Sichuan) became centers of this industry at that time.<sup>20</sup> Local peasants and farmers, already devastated by the declining agricultural economy, saw this as a

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<sup>18</sup> The number was always higher than 90% until 2002. It dropped to 70% in 2003, and less than 45% in September 2004.

<sup>19</sup> My narration of the blood contamination scandal is based on numerous interviews with activists and rural patients, Chinese newspaper articles, documents compiled by the Beijing Aizhixing Institute, and publications by Jing Jun, Jin Wei, and Wu Zhuyou. (Jing et al, 2003; Jin ed, 2004; Wu et al, 2001; Wu, et al 2004)

<sup>20</sup> At the beginning, the blood industry was just another example of the typical top-down mobilization in China from the central to local governments. For example, Shanghai was among the first where blood donation was promoted by the government in the end of the 1980s. Situation in Henan gradually became the worst, partially because of its large population supplied many blood sellers, yet more importantly, because of the ineffective control over illegal blood stations. The Ministry of Health tightened the regulation of government-run blood station in 1993 by passing the National Regulation of Blood Supply and Management. After that most government sponsored blood stations were gradually closed down. Henan provincial government official banned commercial blood donation in 1995. However, because one of the chief provincial leaders (Liu) and his wife were involved in and continued benefiting from the blood businesses, a large number of “blood hunting networks” survived in Henan. Blood hunters even went to other neighboring provinces to recruit blood sellers. In some cases, blood sellers were grouped together and transported via buses to sell blood in Henan.

crucial source of household income.<sup>21</sup> Many adult males and females then began to sell their blood at these stations on regular basis. Some blood sellers sold their blood more than 30 times per month.<sup>22</sup> Usually 800 milliliters of peripheral blood was drawn for each plasma donation. After the plasma was separated from the whole blood, the red blood cells were re-injected back into the donor intravenously (usually 10-12 people per group). Thereby, such problematic methods soon turned these blood stations into an efficient mechanism to spread all kinds of blood related diseases, including HIV/AIDS, TB, and Hepatitis B.

When I visited some villages in Henan in the spring of 2004, I was told that in the early 1990s, local governments motivated local people to sell blood by painting large slogans on the walls, such as “To Donate Blood is To Grow Wealthy” (*xian xue zhi fu*), and “To Donate Blood is To Be Glorious” (*xian xue guang rong*).<sup>23</sup> In between 1991 and 1995, even the major newspaper in Henan province, *Henan Daily*, promoted blood donation a few times.<sup>24</sup> The Henan provincial People’s Congress declared that in 1994, true voluntary blood donation—without payment—only counted for 2-3% of all blood donated in the province, while 50% was through commercial blood selling.<sup>25</sup> When interviewed by the *Southern Weekend*—a major critical newspaper in China—in 2001, a few Henan provincial health officials confessed that Henan had become the

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<sup>21</sup> Individual blood sellers could earn around 50 RMB (6USD) for each plasma sale, and 200 RMB for each whole blood sale.

<sup>22</sup> Extreme cases were as frequent as three times a day. According to the national regulation, the shortest interval allowed between each donation was 15 days for plasma and 3 months for whole blood.

<sup>23</sup> These slogans are imitations of the famous Deng Xiaping’s line: “To be rich is glorious.”

<sup>24</sup> Archival research of *Henan Daily* from 1991 to 1995 by an activist in Beijing.

<sup>25</sup> *Henan Daily*, 24 June, 1994. Information collected by an activist from archives in Beijing Library.

center of the blood products industry by 1993, and many governmental bureaus and sectors were involved in setting up countless blood stations.<sup>26</sup> All of this evidence serves as testimony that the blood industry thrived in central China, particularly Henan province, both legally and illegally.

Since 1994, HIV infection cases have been occasionally recorded in local hospitals across rural China. At that time, the Ministry of Health (MoH) toughened regulations over unclean blood stations and businesses, and many provincial governments quietly shut down both legal and illegal blood selling networks.<sup>27</sup> Even the Henan provincial government officially banned and condemned blood vendors.<sup>28</sup> However, no information on HIV infection due to blood contamination was released by any governmental agencies or hospitals at that time.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, governmental authorities intimidated Chinese media not to touch the topic. A young journalist, Zhang Jicheng, first uncovered the story of AIDS villages in Henan in 2000. But his editor, sensing the potential troubles the article could cause, decided not to publish his article. When he finally found an outlet to get the story published in another province, his home newspaper was immediately ordered by provincial authorities to fire him.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Jin, Wei ed. 2003. *Handbook for Party Leaders on AIDS Prevention and Policies*. Beijing: China Central Party School Press. pp 240-247.

<sup>27</sup> National Regulation of Blood Supply and Management, enacted on 1 July, 1993; National Regulation of Blood Stations, enacted 1 October, 1998.

<sup>28</sup> Same as note 21.

<sup>29</sup> At first there was a lack of knowledge on the linkage between poor plasma collection methods applied by all blood stations at that time and the spread HIV infection. But when a local doctor, Wang Shuping, discovered the problem in 1994, she was blocked from doing more research and even fired from her job by provincial health official. For more details see the section on Wang Shuping below.

<sup>30</sup> Jon Cohen, interview with Zhang Jicheng, *Science* magazine, Special Issue on HIV/AIDS in Asia, Vol. 304, June 25, 2004. For further information see the section on Zhang below.

Even though a few academics and foreign journalists were able to “get the story out”, the taboo of criticizing the blood management policies in the 1990s has not been officially lifted inside China until now.<sup>31</sup> The exact number and locations of unclean blood stations opened in rural China during the 1980s and 1990s remain unknown to the public.

### **The Turning Point**

In 2001, the silence on China’s AIDS epidemic and the blood scandal was finally fully broken due to the continuous effort of Chinese activists, foreign news media, and international organizations. During his official visit to China in January 2001, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan emphasized the need for intensified AIDS prevention in China during a meeting with China’s then-President Jiang Zemin.<sup>32</sup> Also in that year, Dr. Gao Yaojie, a courageously activist/doctor who has been providing care and support for HIV/AIDS patients among poor farmers in Henan, was given the Global Health Council’s Jonathan Mann Award.<sup>33</sup> The State Council

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<sup>31</sup> As early as 6 June 1998, the South China Morning Post published an article on the spread of HIV via massive blood selling. The most important foreign media coverage on the issue was done by Elizabeth Rosenthau, New York Times correspondent in China in the 1990s through the early 2000s. She published a series of articles in American and Canadian newspapers in late October 2000, which first uncovered the increasing deaths of AIDS patients in Henan, and caught a wave of international attention. (e.g., “In Rural China, a Steep Price of Poverty: Dying of AIDS”, New York Times, 28 October, 2000.) In 2001, China’s chief scientist in the AIDS field, Wu Zhunyou published a paper on HIV/AIDS epidemic in eastern rural China via blood selling in a professional journal in English. (Wu, Zunyou et al. 2001. “Prevalence of HIV Infection among Former Commercial Plasma Donors in Rural Eastern China”. *Health Policy and Planning*, 16, 1: 41-46.)

<sup>32</sup> UNAIDS China 2001 Yearly Report. “2001: The Year of Breaking the Silence on AIDS in China”.

<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, Dr. Gao was denied of a passport from local authorities, and did not receive the award in person from the hands of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the award ceremony in Washington, D.C.

promulgated the “China Plan of Action to Contain, Prevent and Control HIV/AIDS (2001-2005)” in May, and the “Control the HIV/AIDS Epidemic through the Implementation of a Five-year Action Plan in China” in August. In addition, the First China National AIDS/STD Conference was held from 13-16 November in Beijing.

However, 2001 was followed by a quite contentious 2002. In June, UNAIDS China Office published an assessment report on the AIDS epidemic in China, “HIV/AIDS: China’s Titanic Peril”, also known as the “Titanic Report”. In this report, UNAIDS estimated the total HIV/AIDS infections in China in between 800,000-1,500,000.<sup>34</sup> Given that the official number of HIV/AIDS was always below 300,000, this UNAIDS estimate caused uneasiness on the part of the Chinese government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a special press conference to criticize the “inaccuracy” of the Titanic Report, and demanded a formal apology.<sup>35</sup> On July 1, the Aizhixing Institute in Beijing, the most active NGO in the AIDS field at that time, was shut down by the state. The founder of Aizhixing Institute, Wan Yanhai, “disappeared” on August 24<sup>th</sup> for about a month. The reason provided by the public security agency was that he “illegally” forwarded an email to a large number of people including all those on the Aizhixing mailing list, in which a leaked governmental document on the AIDS situation in China was attached. In this leaked

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<sup>34</sup> UNAIDS China 2001 Assessment Report. “HIV/AIDS: China’s Titanic Peril”. Published in June 2002.

<sup>35</sup> Ang, Audra. “China Rejects U.N. Report Warning of AIDS Epidemic.” *Associated Press*, 28 June 2002. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 20 November 2003]

document, for the first time, the government declared that there were 840,000 HIV/AIDS infections in China.<sup>36</sup>

### **SARS and Recent Changes in State's Responses to AIDS**

The world's memory of China in 2003 will always be marked by SARS. There were important effects of the SARS crisis on AIDS prevention governance:

1) The health authorities at various levels became more familiar with interacting with international health organizations (e.g., World Health Organization, UNAIDS), and more open to external inspections and policy recommendations;

2) The appointment of the Vice Premier Wu Yi as the Health Minister, in the Chinese political context, elevated the political power of the health sector within the state apparatus;<sup>37</sup>

3) During the SARS crisis, the Chinese disease control system completed its structural reform begun in 1998, and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at all levels obtained considerable financial and political resources from the central government.<sup>38</sup>

However, the newly established CDC system is not entitled independent status, but is a part of the existing health system. In a way, the status and power of the health

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<sup>36</sup> Personal exchanges with the Mr. Hu Jia, Executive Director of the Aizhixing Institute of 2003. Also, "Chinese AIDS activist freed after confessing to 'leaking secrets'", *Agence France Presse*, 20 September 2002. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 30 March 2005]

<sup>37</sup> Wu Yi stepped down as Health Minister in May 2005.

<sup>38</sup> The current disease control system in China is based on a system of preventive medicine research institutions at different levels. The newly created Centers of Disease Control (CDCs) combine the functions of academic research, clinical trial, and policy implementation. This reform was initiated in 1998.

system is elevated by combining the research capacity and human resources from CDCs.

4) By the end of SARS, China had reconstituted central control of the public health system. The 1998 central administrative reform resulted in a decentralized budgetary relationship within the health sector. Funding for provincial and lower-level health bureaus are only from corresponding governments, not the central budget; to a large extent, the MoH ceded much power over health issues to local governments.<sup>39</sup> With consecutive health crises—SARS, bird flu, and AIDS—the central government increased the financial resources for MoH. Therefore, the MoH was given the opportunity to toughen policy implementation by directly providing funds to local AIDS offices.<sup>40</sup>

In the wake of the SARS crisis, a fundamental shift took place in the Chinese state's reaction to the AIDS epidemic, manifested by changes in the attitudes of the highest level politicians, governing structures, and policies. On the World AIDS Day that year, the news of Premier Wen Jiabao's shaking hands with AIDS patients was broadcasted by all major national news media. In December 2003, Vice Premier and Minister of Health, Mdm. Wu Yi, paid a visit to the most famous AIDS village—Wenlou village in Henan province—and held a private meeting with the famous

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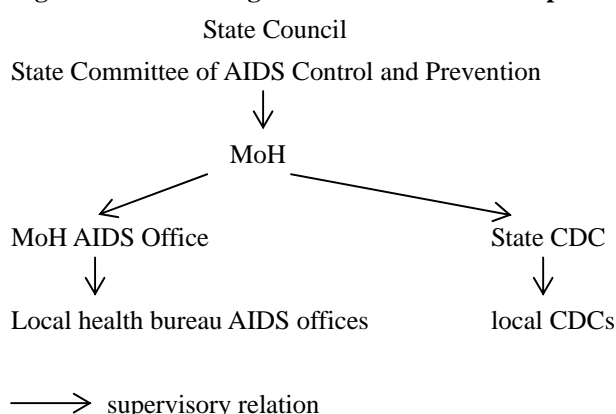
<sup>39</sup> Interview with Gao Weizhong, Deputy Director, Department of Policy and Regulation, MoH, 4 August 2004.

<sup>40</sup> Such funds are called “designated funds” (*zhuan kuan zhuan yong*). In general, the general health budget at local levels is mostly financed by local governments after 1998. Currently, MoH is in charge of large funds for AIDS prevention and control, and distributes them directly to AIDS offices at each level. Therefore, the AIDS offices at local levels are more accountable to central AIDS policies than to local governments or health bureaus.

outspoken activist, Dr. Gao Yaojie. In early 2004, Mdm. Wu Yi restructured the highest authority over the AIDS issue, and set up the State Committee of AIDS Control and Prevention (State AIDS Committee).<sup>41</sup> (see Box 4.1) With the completion of CDC reform and the centralization of health governance, the state has formed a tightened governing body over AIDS issues. (Figure 4.3) Meanwhile, the rapidly increased central budgetary commitment (from 15 million RMB in 2000 to over 600 million RMB in 2004) and international assistance in AIDS prevention made such structural changes possible. (Table 4.1, 4.2, 4.3).

<b>Box 4.1. Structure of the State Committee of AIDS Control and Prevention (2004)</b>	
<u>Director:</u>	Wu Yi (Vice Premier, Minister of Health)
<u>Deputy Directors:</u>	Gao Qiang (Executive Vice Minister of Health) Xu Shaoshi (Deputy Secretary-General, State Council)
<u>Members:</u>	23 Vice Ministers from relevant ministries and organizations; 7 provincial governors
<b>The Council Office is located in the Ministry of Health</b>	
<u>Director of the Office:</u>	Wang Longde (Vice Health Minister)
<u>Deputy Directors of the Office:</u>	Qi Xiaoqiu (MoH); SHEN Jie (China CDC)

**Figure 4.3. Governing structures in HIV/AIDS prevention in China**



<sup>41</sup> Compared with the former National AIDS Committee, the new State AIDS Committee has an actual office and staff situated within the MoH to coordinate policy-making across 23 administrative sectors and all provinces on a regular basis.



**Table 4.1. China's Central Budgetary Commitment on HIV/AIDS Control and Prevention**

Year	Budget (million, RMB)	Increase Rate	Year	Budget (million, RMB)	Increase Rate
2000	15	n/a	2003	390	220%
2001	100	567%	2004	600	54%
2002	122	22%	Total	1227	

Source: Yu Dongbao, State CDC. 2004.

By the end of 2003, the State CDC launched the China CARES Program (Comprehensive AIDS RESponse) to cover 51 counties worst hit by AIDS in 11 provinces. In 2004, the second phase of this Program expanded to cover 128 counties in 28 provinces. Health bureaus in these counties received extra-budgetary funds designated for AIDS treatment and care.<sup>42</sup> A national condom promotion strategy was jointly issued in July 2004 by six ministries and departments to encourage 100% condom use among high-risk behavior populations. There was a dramatic change in policy and response strategies for the prevention of HIV transmission through IDUs, covering methadone maintenance treatment of drug users and free needle exchange programmes. A range of interventions aimed at MSM, migrant workers, and CSW have also been initiated in several provinces. With more international assistance, the Chinese government is mobilizing from within to cope with every aspect of the AIDS epidemic, and to ensure the effectiveness of policy implementation.

### **Multilateral and Bilateral Responses to China's AIDS Crisis**

Similar to the situation in the field of environmental protection explained in the previous chapter, the international community responded to the AIDS situation before

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<sup>42</sup> Free antiretroviral therapy (ARV) drugs to all rural AIDS patients and urban residents who are in financial distress; Free voluntary counseling testing (VCT) services in high prevalence areas; Free education to children orphaned by AIDS; Free prevention of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) services for pregnant female patients; and, Care to AIDS patients who are in financial distress.

the Chinese government fully committed to it. Many multilateral and bilateral organizations have transferred funds and expertise to prevent the spread of AIDS in China since the late 1980s. Inter-governmental assistance in AIDS increased more rapidly after the Chinese high-ranking officials showed political will in recognizing and solving the problem.<sup>43</sup> Budgeted international support coordinated by UNAIDS alone jumped from 256 million RMB in 2003 to 421 million RMB in 2004.<sup>44</sup>

Total multilateral assistance to China for AIDS prevention exceeded 300 million USD by 2004. (Table 4.2) Through its loans to China's health sector, the World Bank became involved in HIV/AIDS education and prevention. In the 1990s, the World Bank's health sector activities grew substantially, and its health loans far exceeded World Health Organization's (WHO) total budget. The Bank has become the largest external financier of health projects in low and middle-income countries.<sup>45</sup> In the case of China, Bank funds for HIV related issues have grown considerably during the past decade.<sup>46</sup>

Besides the World Bank, China is becoming a popular recipient for main international health organizations. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), founded in 2000 under the U.N. framework to accelerate

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<sup>43</sup> The Hu Jintao-Wen Jiabao regime.

<sup>44</sup> UNAIDS report 2004.

<sup>45</sup> Poku, Nana and Alan Whiteside. 2002. "The Global AIDS Fund: Context and Opportunity". *Third World Quarterly -Journal of Emerging Areas*. Vol. 23, No. 2: 283-298. Yamey, Gavin. 2002. "Why Does the World Still Need WHO?" *British Medical Journal*. Vol. 325, No. 7375.

<sup>46</sup> While the actual size of health related loans has decreased due to the Bank's general policy of trying to fund greater number of smaller projects, the percentage of spending on prevention of HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases (STD) has grown from less than one percent to more than one third of the total project budget. Appendix 4.1 gives more details of World Bank's lending to China's health and AIDS-related fields.

the response to these deadly infectious diseases at the global level, has been consistent in supporting the Chinese government in AIDS prevention since Round Three (2003). Before the UNAIDS China office opened in 1996, various U.N. agencies had already been involved in China's reproductive health governance. Currently, UNAIDS China coordinates a large number of AIDS-related projects implemented by U.N. agencies, including WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, and UNFPA.<sup>47</sup>

Entering the 2000s, many OECD governments added HIV/AIDS prevention into their official development assistance priorities. The 20 million UKP China-UK HIV and AIDS Prevention and Care Project, launched in 2000, is so far the earliest and largest bilateral initiative to combat the AIDS epidemic in China. Since 2002, the U.S., Canadian and Australian governments also made major commitments to assist the Chinese government in AIDS prevention. (Table 4.3)

**Table 4.2. Multilateral funding for China's AIDS control and prevention.**

Multilateral agencies	Funding programs	Amount (million USD)
Global Fund	Round Three	98
	Round Four	64
World Bank	Multiple projects since 1991	> 55 (up until 2004)
Other U.N. agencies	Various projects coordinated by UNAIDS	30 (year 2003), 50 (year 2004)
Total		> 300 (up until 2004)

Sources: Global Fund, World Bank, and UNAIDS data.

**Table 4.3. Bilateral funding for China's AIDS control and prevention**

Country	Program	Schedule	Total budget (million)	Focused region
U.K.	China-UK HIV and AIDS Prevention and Care Project	2000-2006	20 UKP	Sichuan, Yunnan
U.S.A.	Global AIDS Program	2003-2007	15 USD	general
	Greater Mekong Initiative	2003-2008	5 USD	Guangxi, Yunnan
Canada	Capacity Development in HIV/AIDS Prevention	2005-2010	5 CAD	Sichuan
Australia	Xinjiang HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care Project	2002-2007	15 AUD	Xinjiang

Sources: Bilateral assistance agencies' websites, and multiple interviews in China in 2004.

<sup>47</sup> Appendix 4.2 gives information on U.N. agencies' AIDS-related work in China.

Even though the total volume of assistance from multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies is substantial (almost triple China's total national budget on AIDS prevention from 2000 to 2004), these agencies were limited in terms of choosing project implementing agencies, exerting their own principles into the implementation plans, and monitoring the implementation process. The Chinese government has set up a seamless system to deal with inter-governmental assistance. All funds from the World Bank and UNDP (historically the two major multilateral agencies sponsoring public health projects in China) have to go through the Ministry of Commerce (MoC). When interviewed, Wang Jing, the division director in charge of UNDP AIDS related projects at the China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchange (under MoC) commented: "UNDP officials do not know the particular context in China. They need us to find them the perfect location and governmental partners for their projects... Their goals sometimes are too idealistic, which can hardly be accepted by local governments. We are the middlemen in between UNDP and the local implementing agencies, and help with the communication between the two. We help UNDP to modify their objectives attached to the funded projects to better suit the local situation."<sup>48</sup> She also explained to me that UNDP sponsored some AIDS related poverty relief projects in Henan around the time of mid-1990s, but the provincial government later rejected any further funding. And it was the MoC who found the Shanxi provincial government, who had a more open attitude, for UNDP to continue its projects. The MoC official intended to use this case to illustrate to me how

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<sup>48</sup> Interviewed in Beijing, 18 March 2004.

important her own agency is in the process of a multilateral project. I would add that it also exemplifies how little power multilateral agencies ultimately have over their own projects in China.

Both World Bank health projects implemented after 1995, with HIV/AIDS control as one of their main objectives, failed to touch the blood scandal or situation in Henan, which implicitly reveals the political sensitivity surrounding these issues and the limitation of the Bank's leverage in China.<sup>49</sup> The Disease Prevention Project (1995-2004), an eight-year special project was created to deal particularly with STD/HIV control; it had a budget of 13 million USD. However, it was only implemented in Yunnan Province.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, the Health Nine Project (1999-2006) documents explicitly stated that the project would tackle the problem of commercial blood and plasma transactions. However, Henan was skipped among the four provinces identified as the most affected regions.<sup>51</sup>

Other U.N. agencies, besides the Bank and UNDP, all have designated Chinese governmental agencies as their partners in China. For example, UNESCO's counterpart is China's National Commission for UNESCO. The State Council formed

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<sup>49</sup> No specific information on HIV/AIDS control and prevention is available for the newest TB Control Project passed by the Bank in 2002.

<sup>50</sup> Project document assessment reports. [Available online at: <http://www.worldbank.org>, last accessed August 2003.]

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. "In addition to those already infected with HIV/AIDS/STDs and other blood borne infections, many people are at risk of infection, especially those who engage in high risk behavior such as intravenous drug use, or provide commercial sex. Commercial blood and plasma donors have also infected or placed at risk patients, through unsafe blood or plasma collection practices. This population size varies from province to province as the modes of transmission differ in each place, but it is likely that, at a minimum, one to two percent of the population in these four provinces (note: Fujian, Guangxi, Shanxi, and Xinjiang) are at risk of HIV/AIDS, amounting to 1.3 to 2.6 million persons."

a Country Coordinating Group since China's application for the Global Fund was accepted. Such a counterpart system is meant to keep all multilateral collaborations in line with the central government's own policies. Incidents such as the "Titanic Report", therefore, are not common. In fact, to recover the relationship with the Chinese government after the "Titanic Report", UNAIDS China Office made an effort to invite the Chinese MoH and CDC to conduct a joint assessment on AIDS situation in China.

Bilateral collaborations in AIDS prevention are mainly conducted through MoH system. Compared with multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies may have more leeway in designing and implementing the projects, either via direct access to local authorities, or the opportunity to implement some parts of the program independently. For example, the China-UK Program allocated 30% of the budget for international NGO contractors to promote public participation in AIDS prevention. But, even such flexibility is limited, for the Program was only implemented in Sichuan and Yunnan, where provincial governments are much more open to international assistance than in Henan. Since China's central authority loosened its control over the question of blood scandal issue in Henan recently, more and more inter-governmental assistance is allowed to be implemented in the province. For example, U.S. Global AIDS Program (GAP) Beijing Office has started working with drug rehabilitation centers and the local CDCs in Henan.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with Mr. Ray Yip, director of the GAP Program Office in Beijing, August 2004.

In summary, the AIDS epidemic in China can be framed as a policy failure, which was first caused by a lack of information and proper medical technology in China, and was soon accelerated by the blood condemnation scandal and the government's belated response to the problem. A full-blown epidemic could have been prevented had the state not responded to bottom-up and external criticism by blocking media coverage, limiting public access to information, repressing grassroots activism, and delaying an official investigation of the blood scandal. Since 2002, the state has introduced fundamental changes in AIDS prevention policies, and established a governing system of AIDS control led by the newly strengthened Ministry of Health.

Multilateral and bilateral assistance have played a role during this process of changes in AIDS prevention practices, but their projects are also limited in terms of reaching to the most needed populations and addressing the most politically sensitive issues. The crisis of SARS had both direct and indirect effects on AIDS governance, and in particular has made Chinese health officials more comfortable in the face of international pressure and policy criticism. SARS also triggered a wave of centralization of the health system, and enhancement of the political status of the disease control system in the country. With this background, I will introduce two other groups of political actors in the politics of AIDS who are not usually as visible as UNAIDS or other IGOs; nevertheless, they have had a unique influence in the evolving politics of AIDS in China.

### SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION IN CHINA

Even though AIDS is a young disease in China, and the Chinese government was reluctant to face it for a long time, a recognizable societal and activist community surrounding this issue is emerging. Like the conservation case, this community is composed of a variety of actors, ranging from individual activists, professionals, NGOs, organizations led by people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), rural community-based groups, to university student associations.

Key individual activists in this field include Dr. Gao Yaojie, Dr. Gui Xi'en, and Wan Yanhai, who became symbolic faces of China's bottom-up activism against AIDS. It is simply impossible to include every expert who has contributed to the rise of AIDS activism, especially some leading medical professionals (e.g., Dr. Zeng Yi, on the Board of the State AIDS Committee), who many times sheltered or spoke up for AIDS activists. Nevertheless, this research does its best to point out those who have played a crucial role in *linking* the activist group with the public, the government, or the international community. As of the end of 2004, and in spite of political obstacles and social stigma, there are about 17 registered (or engaged in the registration process) independent voluntary organizations (including six PLWHA groups) that are actively working on AIDS related issues. They implement relief, public education, and prevention projects, and advocate for policy changes. In addition, with support from international and Chinese NGOs, many voluntary villager associations and university student associations are being formed. A few



environmental NGOs and religious philanthropic organizations are also expanding their working plan to include AIDS prevention and advocacy activities. Due to the central government's attitude and policy change on AIDS prevention, a number of AIDS Care Centers and AIDS Patients Associations have been established by local CDCs, especially in the 128 focused counties.<sup>53</sup> And, these centers and associations are becoming new seeds and potential sources of inspiration for local activism surrounding AIDS. They are alike the newly established environmental GONGOs in the previous case of nature conservation. Their impact could be significant in the future, but it is still too early to make conclusion about. Table 4.4 below gives an overview of the various social groups and individuals that will be discussed in detail as the essential components of the AIDS prevention civil society.<sup>54</sup>

**Table 4.4. An overview of AIDS activists and social groups**

Type	Main actors
Individual activists and professionals	doctors, professors, journalists and other professionals
Institutionalized NGOs (and NGOs-to-be)	PLWHA groups, exclusively AIDS NGOs, gay community groups, hemophilia associations, women's groups, and a few non-AIDS focused NGOs
Rural community-based groups	Voluntarily established in some villages of rural China
University student groups	Most are in Beijing, and others are spreading in 10 provinces

<sup>53</sup> Actual names of these centers and associations vary across locations, e.g., Home of Care and Love, but, in general, they are meant to provide some type of counseling, assistance, and training to AIDS affected population. They are physically situated within the local CDC office building, and formally operated by CDC staff. It is not unusual now for these centers to implement peer-training, and invite PLWHAs to be part of the regular staff team. They are usually formally staffed by doctors, medical professionals, and local governmental officials, and informally operated by local HIV+ patients and activists.

<sup>54</sup> Special thanks to Mr. Odilon Couzin, founder of the China AIDS Info. for sharing valuable data from the forthcoming Directory of Groups Working on HIV/AIDS in China, a project funded by the Ford Foundation.

## **Pioneers of AIDS Activism**

### ***Dr. Gao Yaojie***

Dr. Gao, a retired leading gynecologist in Henan, was drawn into AIDS work at the age of 70. A female patient was brought to her for her expert opinion on the uncommonly colored infections in her in early 1996. She had a suspicion of HIV related illness, and a blood test was ordered afterwards. After the case was confirmed, she was very puzzled by why this normal rural woman could ever be infected with HIV, and later found out that she got the infected via blood transmission during a surgery one year before. This incident of blood contamination struck Dr. Gao, and she decided to learn more about HIV and AIDS. When she realized that public education of AIDS had been skewed by only emphasizing sexual transmission, and completely omitting the possibility of direct blood contamination, she felt compelled to disseminate the correct information as soon as possible. By November that year, she had edited and printed 12,000 copies of AIDS education handouts. On the World AIDS Day, 1996, she and some helpers set off to public transportation centers. In three days, they went to all five long-distance bus stations in Zhengzhou city, and distributed over 800 handouts in person. At that time, Dr. Gao's sole intention was to increase public awareness of AIDS prevention. Never could she have imagined the death toll of AIDS patients in rural Henan that she would learn of one year later. When I met her in April 2004, she told me that: "I ran into this politics of AIDS totally by chance. I am a doctor, and all I knew at the beginning was that there were lots of patients in need of my help."

Since 1997, this elderly lady, with bonded feet, has visited thousands of HIV/AIDS patients from hundreds of villages in rural Henan. She sometimes goes under the cover of giving free medical check-ups of women's health, yet hands out basic medicines (e.g., antibiotics, cold medicines) to alleviate patient's pain and illness. In more recent years, because the issue became more politically sensitive, many times she had to sneak into the villages to speak to patients, and "escape" from local police or authority's harassment. She is supporting over 160 children orphaned by AIDS patients, and is in close contact with many of them. In 2004, she finished a new book, called "Ten Thousand Letters", which selected 200 out of the 10,000 private letters from HIV/AIDS patients who seek counseling, anonymous people who are at high risk, students who are curious, and activists who are willing to help.

It is really because of her continuous writing and speaking frankly about the patients she has seen that the story of the blood scandal and AIDS villages in Henan finally appeared in newspapers, websites, TV programs, and later caught the attention of foreign media and international organizations.<sup>55</sup> By the end of 2004, she has edited, printed and distributed 19 issues of the AIDS Basics and Prevention Newsletter, around 10,000 copies of each issue. She has also written two books on AIDS and STDs, and over 300,000 copies of them have been distributed to various education institutions, hospitals, and more impressively, individual readers—all from her

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<sup>55</sup> Many overseas Chinese first paid attention to China's AIDS epidemic by reading Rosenthau's reports in New York Times in October 2000. In fact, it was through Dr. Gao that Rosenthau got chance to see some patients in person.

apartment.<sup>56</sup> More recently, at the age of almost 80, she has not only accepted numerous newspapers and TV programs to her home for interviews, but has also taken trains and traveled to Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing to give public talks.<sup>57</sup> As the AIDS epidemic in Henan has become more exposed, it has attracted numerous activists, journalists, researchers, and NGOs coming to Henan to collect information, distribute relief goods, and coordinate AIDS support work. Dr. Gao's two-bedroom apartment in Zhengzhou has literally turned into a transit-station for all of these people who want to learn about and help with the AIDS situation in Henan.

In a way, Dr. Gao became the face of AIDS activism in China and the voice outside the government. Within the international AIDS community, Dr. Gao's impressive work has won wide recognition and much respect. She was awarded the Jonathan Mann Award of Health and Human Rights from the Global Health Council in 2001, and the Lameng Magasasa Prize for Public Service (known as the Nobel Prize of Asia) in 2003. News of these awards greatly inspired and encouraged other Chinese AIDS activists and groups. On Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, the Vice Premier, and Minister of Health, Mdm. Wu Yi and Dr. Gao had a private meeting in Henan. Chinese AIDS activists took this event as a significant signal of central government's attitude change. The Chinese Central TV (known as CCTV), the main propaganda instrument of the

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<sup>56</sup> Gao, Yaojie. 1997. *AIDS/HIV/STDs Prevention and Treatment*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Zhengzhou: Henan Science and Technology Press. 2003. *Unknown Stories: Popular Edition for AIDS and STDs Prevention and Treatment*. China Farmers Press.

<sup>57</sup> On 2003 World AIDS Day, Dr. Gao gave a speech at Tsinghua University, Beijing. In Feb. 2004, Dr. Gao was invited to Nanjing University. She spent a week in Shanghai in late March 2004. During that week, she gave four public speeches at universities and at Shanghai AIDS Legal Research Center, in addition to multiple media interviews. During these few months, she alone, in a way, generated a momentum of AIDS awareness in China.

central government, named her as one of the “Figures who Moved China” for 2003, together with Dr. Zhong Nanshan, who became nationally known during the SARS crisis. After this “public promotion” of Dr. Gao by CCTV, most activists felt a fundamental relief of political pressure on AIDS related voluntary work.

### *Dr. Gui Xi'en*

Like Dr. Gao, Dr. Gui Xi'en from Wuhan Central-South Hospital, Hubei province, is another pioneer in AIDS prevention in China, who started helping Henan AIDS patients in the late 1990s.<sup>58</sup> Unlike Dr. Gao, he has always been low-key, and remained silent with regard to governmental policies. But, it is because of this cautiousness that he has been able to offer hundreds of HIV+ patients from Henan and neighboring provinces the access to testing and treatment. When I visited several villages in central and southern Henan in 2004, I met many HIV+ patients who referred to Dr. Gui as their life-saver.

Because blood tests for AIDS patients (e.g., CT4 cell level) are still not available in every hospital in China, Dr. Gui has also become the help-line for other medical professionals who see HIV+ patients. For example, the Xiangfan Clinic of

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<sup>58</sup> In November 1999, Dr. Gui took a trip with one of his medical students to a village in central Henan, because many farmers had died within a short period of time of “a strange disease” in this village. They took 155 people’s blood samples back to the hospital laboratory, and found 96 of them were HIV positive. It is said that Dr. Gui, in his late 50s, burst into tears over the results. On that night, Dr. Gui decided to do his best to help these desperate farmers. Over the years, he has collected many villagers’ blood samples for testing in person, and encouraged more to go to hospitals for VCT. (Interview with one of the patients treated by Dr. Gui in Henan, 22 April 2004.)

MSF-Belgium has treated over 120 patients within 2 years, and all their blood samples were tested at Dr. Gui's lab.<sup>59</sup>

Dr. Gui has also conducted many research based on the cases he treated, the results of which, particularly those on mother-child transmission, and the vulnerability of women to HIV, have provided useful data and evidence for the AIDS activist community.<sup>60</sup> Particularly noteworthy as well is the actual number of farmers who were infected with HIV directly via blood transmission from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s. The official number is 260,000, but Dr. Gui's estimate is 700,000. His field research has shown that about 1.4 million people participated in blood selling/donation practices during this time period, and the HIV infection rate among them was as high as 50%.<sup>61</sup>

Even though they have adopted very different ways to raise public awareness of AIDS and to offer their generous help to the patients in rural Henan, Dr. Gao and Dr. Gui are aware of and pay great respect to each other's work. They often refer to each other in their public talks and writings. They are the leading figures of AIDS activism in the eyes of the public, and the state praises them to convince the public it supports such voluntary work. In Dec. 2003, Vice Premier, Mdm. Wu met with Dr. Gao in Henan, and in the following May, Premier Wen Jiabao visited Dr. Gui in Hubei.

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<sup>59</sup> Interviews with Xiangfan Clinic staff, 1 June 2004.

<sup>60</sup> Gui, Xi'en. 2003. "A Survey of Children with HIV/AIDS in Highly Affected Villages". *Chinese Journal of Pediatrics*, 41(8): 586-589. 2003. "A Study on HIV Transmission within Family". *Chinese Journal of Epidemic*, 24 (5): 396. 2004. "A Survey on Mother-Child Transmission of HIV and TTV". *China Public Health*, 20 (5): 583-584.

<sup>61</sup> Round-table on "AIDS in China", hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

*Wan Yanhai*

In contrast to Drs. Gao and Gui, Mr. Wan Yanhai has always been a very controversial figure inside and outside of the AIDS activist community because of his working style. He certainly is more of a professional activist than the two doctors. A graduate from a leading medical school in Beijing, Wan worked for the Institute for Health Education, part of the MoH system in early 1990s. His former colleague recalled that he was very vocal about gay rights, legalization of prostitution, and other progressive ideas related to sexual and reproductive health. He advocated for changes in China's public health education within the Institute, and was able to mobilize the entertainment community and participated in the opening of the first gay bar in Beijing. Such acts were unorthodox and unacceptable at that time, and Wan was ordered to stop any further involvement on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1993. The director of the Institute at that time was forced to retire in the following August because of his sympathy of Wan's activist work.<sup>62</sup>

Wan established the Aizhi Action Project (later registered as the Aizhixing Institute for Health Education) in March 1994, and in August he was forced to resign from his work. Wan then became a full-time activist advocating for policy changes (e.g., equal rights for gay, legalization of commercial sex) and public education of AIDS prevention. Aizhi organized discussions, public meetings, and street exhibitions, and became a center for information exchange and a gathering spot for concerned researchers. Professor Zhang Beichuan, one of the most known and respected Chinese scholars on gay issues in China, recalled Wan as the first one who "extended his help

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with Wan's former colleagues, Beijing, July 8, 2004.

to my research from Beijing”, and “introduced me to the gay community at that time”.<sup>63</sup> Wan also followed individual cases of discrimination against gays, and provided moral support. He published *Aizhi Newsletters* to disseminate information among the gay community, and co-organized conferences with professors from the Social Science Academy to promote new laws to protect basic rights for gay people and commercial sex workers.

Since 1999, Wan started his investigation of the blood contamination scandal, and support to AIDS patients in Henan and other rural parts of China. Since 2001, his activism has become more focused on AIDS, blood security, medical ethics, and patients’ rights issues. In early summer of 2002, a confidential report on the status of AIDS in Henan by the Henan provincial government was leaked to Wan, and he further distributed it to people concerned through a personal email. This was after the release of the UNAIDS “Titanic Report”, which for the first time challenged the official data on HIV/AIDS infections and the denial of blood contamination scandal. The report Wan distributed was the first time the Henan provincial government admitted to severe AIDS problems in the province, and documented the highly hit regions and estimated the number of people who participated in paid blood donation and the infection rate among them. Therefore, Wan was accused of leaking confidential governmental documents, and arrested on August 23, just three days before that year’s Barcelona World AIDS Conference. This incident immediately drew a wide range of criticism, petitions and demonstrations against the Chinese

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<sup>63</sup> Prof. Zhang Beichuan’s congratulation letter to Aizhixing’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April 2004.



government from the international community.<sup>64</sup> For example, about 60 people from groups like Human Rights in China (overseas Chinese group), Health GAP (AIDS lobbyist group) and ACT UP (gay activist group) took part in the peaceful protest in front of the Chinese consulate in New York on 19 September 2002.<sup>65</sup> The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and Human Rights Watch selected Wan as the recipient of their annual award for 2002.<sup>66</sup>

After Wan was released in October, Yale University granted him the World Fellowship to study in the U.S. During this time period, Wan met with a number of international organizations and media. Since 2003, substantial amount of assistance has become available to Wan, which made it possible for him to build up the new Aizhixing office in Beijing and to recruit full-time staff.

### ***Wang Shuping***

Wang Shuping is probably the first medical professional who became involved in the uncovering of the blood scandal in Henan. Dr. Wang used to be the chief physician of the Clinical Laboratory in Zhoukou Region Hospital in Henan.<sup>67</sup> In 1994, she started epidemiological research of Hepatitis and AIDS in the Zhoukou Region. In the summer of 1995, she found that out of over 400 blood samples, the HIV infection rate was 13%. By October, she submitted a report with the findings of her research to the

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<sup>64</sup> “Amnesty concerned over missing China AIDS activist”, *Agence France Presse*, 31 August 2002. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 30 March 2005]

<sup>65</sup> “Protest in New York against detention of Chinese AIDS activist”, *Agence France Presse*, 19 September 2002. [Accessed through LexisNexis on 30 March 2005]

<sup>66</sup> The award ceremony was held on September 13, which Wan was absent.

<sup>67</sup> Region is a level above County as administrative division in China. A Region sometimes can consist of as many as half dozen of counties.

local health authority.<sup>68</sup> Soon after that, Wang was told that she would not publish her report anywhere. Incidents of personal harassment followed. In Nov. 1996, a Party meeting was called by a provincial health official at the Zhoukou Regional Health Bureau, and local health officials were criticized for allowing Wang and her colleagues to research on AIDS. Wang's lab was soon closed down, and she had to leave her job. She brought the blood samples to Beijing and pursued support from the central health authorities. With the help of Zeng Yi, the leading scientist in HIV/AIDS in China and on Board of the National AIDS Commission, her research was preserved and acknowledged later.

### ***Zhang Jicheng***

A native of Henan, by chance Zhang Jicheng encountered two couples from the Wenlou village (now known as the most famous "AIDS village") on a train ride in October 1999. After speaking with them about their "illness", he decided to visit the village and conduct a thorough investigation. Shocked, as well as anguished, was Zhang; he believed he had found enough evidence to conclude that there were contaminated blood collection practices in Henan with dire results. He wrote an article based on his results, but it was blocked by his own newspaper; he went on and sent it to *Huaxi* (China-West) *Metropolitan News*, a daily paper in another province, Sichuan. On Jan. 18, 2000 it ran - "Strange Disease in a Henan Village Shocks Top Officials". Only, When Henan officials learned of the *Huaxi* article they ordered the

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<sup>68</sup> Wang's research showed an example of a local village of 1300 people. 900 blood samples were taken, excluding the old and the young, 300 of whom had donated blood before for compensation money. The HIV infection rate reached close to 50% among those who donated blood, and 20% among all the 900 samples.

immediate firing of Zhang; only thanks to the protection from his editor did Zhang keep his job. To Zhang's surprise, this story made it to the U.S. Embassy website within days, though the Chinese government turned a deaf ear to the stories in Henan. The Henan provincial government did its best to prevent more coverage of the AIDS outrage in the province. Attention from the central government was not called until October 2000, when The New York Times began in-depth reporting on Wenlou and AIDS villages in Henan.<sup>69</sup>

Like Liang Congjie, Liao Xiaoyi, and Wang Yongchen in the environmental field, Dr. Gao Yaojie, Dr. Gui Xi'en, and Wan Yanhai are *the* faces of China's AIDS activism. However, the difference is that Dr. Gao and Gui remained working independently, instead of creating opportunities for more civil society participation in the movement. Both of them were particularly careful about not being affiliated with any organization, and had no intension of establishing their own. Despite his strong intention to be the leader of the activist community, and much effort made to organize networking events and conferences among all social groups, Wan did not become the unifying force among all AIDS activists and social organizations. On the contrary, sometimes, he is even the source of agony and distrust within the community. Wang Shuping and Zhang Jicheng are examples of the professionals that were mis-treated by state authorities when choosing to directly confront official lies. However, both retreated from the central stage of AIDS activism soon after their personal mischief. Compared with the conservation case, the AIDS prevention activism still lacks

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<sup>69</sup> Cohen, Jon. "A Scoop of International Proportions", *Science (Special Report on HIV/AIDS in Asia)*, Vol. 304, 25 June 2004.

charismatic and practical leadership that can strengthen the interconnections within the community.

**Professors, Lawyers and Researchers:  
The Second Frontier of AIDS Activism**

In November 2003, 22 members of the National Academy of Science and Academy of Engineering submitted a letter to the State Council concerning AIDS and spoke against the social stigma toward AIDS patients and encouraged immediate state intervention. In the letter, they even quoted a mission statement from the environmental movement to support their opinion.<sup>70</sup> As we learned from the environmental movement in China (and indeed from many experiences of other non-democratic regimes), during the process of social mobilization for policy changes such collective actions taken by scientific and intellectual communities can alarm the state authority.

In the case of AIDS prevention in China, many scientists and experts have virtually joined bottom-up activism by reporting accurate research findings and publishing true stories from the field. Additionally, there are many medical professionals, journalists, lawyers, and scholars who are activist-minded, and have provided support to bottom-up activism. Sometimes, they help to justify the stance of AIDS activists by raising similar opinions as the grassroots activists. Other times, they document grassroots activism, and convey it to a broader audience by publication, teaching, and public speech. They are sometimes the only communication channels

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<sup>70</sup> Jin, Wei. 2004. pp258-260.

between the activist community and the state. Their sympathy has occasionally resulted in the political tolerance of AIDS activists. University professors also often take part in the rise of social activism. By only publishing in academic journals or mobilizing within defined circles, they can sustain their activism a little bit better. With moral support from international community, they sometimes even can overcome political obstacles and maintain their activism work.

Professor **Zhang Beichuan**, chief physician of the Center of Sexual Health, Qingdao Medical College Hospital, became concerned with homosexuality related health and social issues in the early 1990s, and was among the main researchers and activists on the subject at the time. He contributed greatly to AIDS prevention within the gay community by publishing extensively on the topic and through direct involvement in the initiation of gay hotlines and self-help associations in most major cities in China. In 1998, with support from the Ford Foundation and the Berry & Martin Trust, Zhang and other colleagues established the Friends project in Qingdao to “promote scientific knowledge of sexuality, health and love”. In 2001, he was given the first Berry & Martin Award. Zhang’s work and research in gay issues and AIDS is now well accepted by the Chinese government and often used in forming policies.

Like Professor Zhang, Professor **Pan Suiming**, Director of the Institute of Sexuality and Gender Research at Renmin University, first created an electronic magazine *Miss* to document the lives of and social problems related to commercial sex workers. At one point he had to change the magazine’s name to *Private Letters* to

keep it in existence because of pressure from the government.<sup>71</sup> With financial and moral support from the Ford Foundation, the magazine has survived and been distributed among a wide range of readers. Recently, it resumed its original name.

In current China, university professors, researchers in government sponsored institutions, and leading professionals are often invited to be on advisory boards of the government. Through such dual status, some professionals have been able to provide some support to activists, pass on opinions from the activist community to policy-making circles, and communicate policy changes better back to activist groups. A good example in this case is Professor **Jing Jun**, Director of Center for AIDS Policy Research at the Tsinghua University. Co-sponsored by the Clinton Foundation and Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center, Tsinghua University hosted the AIDS and SARS International Conference in November 2003. With the particular help by Jing, some HIV+ patients and activists had a chance to participate in the conference.

**Jin Wei**, a lecturer at China's Central Party School, started AIDS lectures (once every half year) for the Communist Party leaders since the end of 2001. She edited the *Handbook for Party Leaders on AIDS Prevention and Policies* (in Chinese) in 2003, which is still the main reference for governmental officials on the topic. She also conducted surveys on AIDS awareness among senior party officials from all provinces, and found that as many as 40% of the survey participants consider AIDS irrelevant to public policy. Since then, she has been very vocal on the urgency of AIDS education and the lack of awareness and political will of AIDS prevention

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<sup>71</sup> When the word "miss" (*xiaojie*) is used in China, people know that the magazine is about commercial sex workers. While, "private letters" is more indirect, therefore less sensitive.

among governmental officials. While remaining as a Central Party School lecturer, Jin has been in close contact with many AIDS activists including Dr. Gao Yaojie. She has accompanied Gao to investigate the AIDS situation and helped AIDS orphans in rural Henan and Shangdong.<sup>72</sup>

**Yang Shaogang**, Esq., serves as the leading legal expert for the Council of Shanghai Municipal Government. He initiated and became the leader of the AIDS Legal Research Center at Shanghai University. Due to his official affiliations and professional expertise, he was invited by the State AIDS Committee to provide advice on new AIDS related laws in April 2004. Before his meeting with Vice Premier Wu, he widely solicited opinions from the activist community.

There are many other important intellectuals and professionals that are worth noting: Xia Guomei, Director of the HIV/AIDS Policy Research Center in the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; Li Dun, professor of law, Tsinghua University; Zhang Konglai, professor of medical science, Peking Union Medical College, and Director of the AIDS Working Network (a Beijing based NGO); and Li Dongli, Associate Research Fellow at the China Population and Development Research Center. As I pointed out before, this group of activist-minded professionals is crucial for the development of social activism and civil society in that they are involved in activism, research and policy consultation at the same time, and consequently become the linkages between the state and civil society. They can be extremely helpful for the activist community in learning how to negotiate with the state. However, the

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<sup>72</sup> Interviews in Beijing, summer 2004.

journalist circle in the AIDS field is not as mobilized and connected with the activist community as in the conservation case. A large number of environmental journalists became activists, created their own NGOs, and utilized their communication skills and former connections within the media to organize public campaigns. This partially explains why activists in the AIDS field have organized very few media campaigns.

### **“Positive” AIDS Activists**

Some people knew of Song Pengfei years ago from reading his tragic story of being infected with HIV through a blood transfusion during a surgery when he was still a child. But most Chinese people learned about his name and courage more recently, when former U. S. president Bill Clinton accepted his challenging question, and hugged him at the Beijing AIDS-SARS Conference, Nov. 2003. On that day, Song challenged the Conference and its major celebrity speaker, Bill Clinton, with the fact that the whole PLWHA community was not represented. Up until today, Song is one of the very few faces of HIV/AIDS patients that the public has seen.

Like the impoverished minority farmers of the anti-dam movement in Southwest China, the community of people-living-with-HIV/AIDS has symbolic power in the AIDS movement. However, unlike those farmers, they are much more constrained in their activist work, public appearance, and even physical mobility due to social stigma and their own health condition. Despite such difficulties, some young and courageous “positive” people have taken up the task of erasing the mysterious and negative public view of HIV/AIDS patient. They have established PLWHA support groups in three major cities, Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, and their



work has reached multiple provinces. In rural areas of Henan, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guangxi provinces, where the epidemic has hit worst, some HIV+ farmers have also tried to form mutual-help groups, especially to take care of the children left behind by HIV/AIDS parents.

### *Urban PLWHA activism*

Due to their young age and energetic personality, Song Pengfei and Adam Li are the most liked PLWHA figures by the media. Song now has moved to Beijing with his father and is the Art Project Director of the Positive Art Workshop created by Jose Abad and Diana Valarezo at the hospice of You'an Hospital<sup>73</sup>. They organize exhibitions of artworks by PLWHA, design condom packaging for better public education of AIDS, and produce documentary films of the AIDS community.

Among all “positive” AIDS activists, **Adam Li** (also known as Li Xiang) is the one with visible. He travels in between international conferences, and sits on the China's Country Coordinating Team of the Global Fund. And, his story has a little heroic flavor. Li is a hemophiliac and received tainted blood in the mid-1990s. After recovering from a major life-and-death illness, he quit his well-paid information technology job and decided to work for the people with a similar experience. The Mangrove Support Group was then created with major support from Beijing Ditan Hospital and international organizations (e.g., Ford Foundation, Marie Stopes China). The main goal was to set up connections and facilities in the rural areas of four provinces, i.e., Henan, Sichuan, Xinjiang and Guangdong, so that traveling medical

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<sup>73</sup> You'an and Ditan are two leading hospitals specializing in treating infectious disease in China.

personnel could provide free medical consultation for HIV+ farmers. Mangrove also helps the setting up of AIDS hotlines in various cities, trains HIV patients to do voluntary work, and publishes the *Hand in Hand* newsletter of AIDS education. At its peak, Mangrove had six full-time HIV+ staff. However, Li's health has gone through ups and downs, which impacted the sustainability of Mangrove.

The Chinese government has never publicized personal stories of any PLWHA who got infected through unsafe sex. PLWHA activists are fighting against so salient stigma that they even keep their activist work unknown to their families. Thomas and Li Jiaming are the two famous activists in this group. **Thomas** started an HIV/AIDS support group, China AIDS Care, in Guangzhou city in 2002. Within two years, more than 130 participants joined the group, and they expanded their outreach to the neighboring Guangxi province. Thomas' group currently provides generic ARV drugs to poor PLWHA, and coordinates home-care voluntary work to help homeless and rural PLWHA. In addition, they publish and distribute a monthly newsletter, *AIDS Care Bulletin*, to communicable disease hospitals and other communities of PLWHA around China, and maintain a website to inform and provide counseling on HIV/AIDS. More recently, Thomas has made more public appearances. He has delivered speeches to university students and medical professionals, and participated in the Bangkok World AIDS Conference and the UNAIDS Theme Group meetings in Beijing.

**Li Jiaming's** online novel *The Last Proclamation of War* which tells his own experience of dealing with HIV alarmed hundreds of urban white-collars of the danger of HIV; they are the main consumers of commercial sex in China. However, Li

remained unknown except to a limited circle of friends and people concerned until a major decline of his health in 2004. He now decided to quit his regular job and start a PLWHA support group full-time in Shanghai. He has named this group AIDS Sunshine and plans to publish a magazine for the PLWHA community.

### ***Rural PLWHA activism***

In rural areas, particularly in Henan, Sichuan, and Yunnan, where most internationally engaged AIDS programs are located, local farmer patients have been inspired to organize their own support groups. For example, in Shangcai county, the most “famous” AIDS-hit county in the eyes of the Chinese and world’s public, a few local villagers now see it is their responsibility to document the AIDS situation in their neighborhood, monitor the implementation of the AIDS compensation policy, keep the connection with AIDS activists in Beijing, and assist outside donors and volunteers who want to help.<sup>74</sup>

**Zhu Jinzhong** is the central figure of the story “52 kids 1 dad” which once caught much media attention.<sup>75</sup> Zhu was one of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who decided to sell blood for some extra money for their families in Henan. Both he and his wife tested HIV+ by 2001. He went to Beijing contagious disease hospitals for help, and became one of the first HIV patients who participated in official AIDS treatment lab tests. He encountered activists in Beijing like Wan Yanhai who informed him about AIDS and what he can do to help with other PLWHA. He

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<sup>74</sup> Interviews in Shangcai, April 2004.

<sup>75</sup> Many Chinese and international news media covered Zhu’s story, including CCTV and South China Morning Post.

decided to tell his story to newspapers and TV programs. More importantly, he decided to break the silence and challenge the discrimination in his village: he turned his house into a new home for all the orphans left behind by his neighbors who died of AIDS. With the generous help of Yang Jie (Taiwan Harmonious Association), Zhu opened his house to 20 children, and became their adopted father. This story soon was reported by multiple Chinese and international media, and support arrived from all fields of work. Employees of the CCTV alone donated 1 million RMB to him. Zhu was excited to expand his Home of Care and Love for more children. However, local authorities (county governments) became nervous and agonized with this kind of publicity. On Jan. 29, 2004, they shut down Zhu's Home of Care and Love, and drove away all the children. The county government received the donation from CCTV, and invested an extra 1.8 million RMB. They built up a special school for children orphaned by AIDS within 18 days, and took charge of all those kid who used to live with Zhu. Despite such pressure, Zhu continued lobbying for better care of AIDS orphans in his home village. After an exhausting trip to Beijing for 20 HIV+ children to get treatment, Zhu passed away on Jan. 15, 2005. His death was symbolic and caused much reflection within the AIDS community.

Once informed of AIDS basics, patients in rural areas are as motivated as urban activists to increase public awareness of AIDS. They form support groups to help each other, advocate for better health services and treatment delivery, and pursue other activities to alleviate the impacts of AIDS. Thus, a number of farmers' AIDS support groups have emerged out of bilateral agency or international NGO's support

work, and more recently, local CDC's AIDS programs. For example, the China-UK AIDS Project started working in Zizhong county, Sichuan province in February 2000. By the end of 2003, 60 PLWHA came out public, and 20 of them performed a play based on their own experiences. They were received by the local society with great enthusiasm, and were invited to travel to neighboring province, Yunnan, to perform the play.<sup>76</sup>

*Activism among the "hidden population": Drug users and sex workers*

PLWHA associations are the least developed among IDUs and CSWs for obvious reasons—social stigma and lack of direct support. On top of the discrimination against AIDS, drug users and prostitutes are still seen as criminals in most parts of China. Rehabilitation centers of drug addiction and commercial sex are operated by the public security department with rules similar to prisons. It is hard for AIDS programs to reach these two groups without notifying the public security sector. In most cases, international assistance cannot go directly to IDUs and CSWs, but to governmental agencies for secondary distribution. Despite such obstacles, innovative measures (e.g., peer-education) have been pushed forward by progressive international NGOs and bilateral programs. Consequently, activism among IDUs and CSWs is emerging.

In Kunming, Yunnan, a young woman (HIV+ and former IDU) from a rural township, Wei Ping, has been recruited as the PLWHA project coordinator at the Provincial Red Cross. As early as 1995, Wei was invited to AIDS peer-education

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<sup>76</sup> Beijing Morning News, Dec. 1, 2003. Also interviews in Yunnan, Aug. 2004. Unfortunately, a few patients died before the performance could take place.

sessions organized by the Australian Red Cross at Yimen township. She was then encouraged to form a support group among all young people with a similar situation as her. Wei and her friends now coordinate and help with many PLWHA groups in Kunming city and nine counties in Yunnan. Her passion is visual arts, and her dream is to teach HIV+ friends how to paint and create just as healthy people. As part of the China-UK Project in Liangshan, Sichuan province, peer-education was organized also among CSWs. In 2004, the AIDS Relief Fund for China started supporting one of the best students of this program to reach more young women and continue the momentum.

The PLWHA community is a potentially important activist group. Because they are bearers of the disease or victims of the blood policies, they are genuinely passionate about AIDS prevention. However, they are constrained by their own health condition and social stigma, and this adds some uncertainty to their social activism in the AIDS field.<sup>77</sup> Most the HIV+ activists introduced here use pseudo names in public and have not allowed any media to take pictures of them.

### **NGOs and University Student Groups: The New generation of AIDS Activism**

The emergence of institutionalized NGOs is a key indicator of the development of social mobilization and civil society. After the “Titanic Report” and Wan’s arrest in 2003, we have witnessed the rise of a new generation of AIDS-related NGOs and activists. This new generation includes social organizations from diverse backgrounds,

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<sup>77</sup> Among all the well-known activists introduced above, Zhu Jingzhong died on 13 January 2005. Both Adam Li and Li Jiaming became very ill since the end of 2004.

ranging from PLWHA, gay community, women's rights, environmental justice and medical professionals. (Table 4.5) Compared with the environmental civil society in China, the AIDS community is still limited in terms of number and geographic spread. Among the 21 NGOs surveyed in this study—who are the majority of the most well-known Chinese NGOs in the field—most are concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, and Yunnan, where NGO activity in general is more active. (For all the organization names, see Appendix 4.3)

**Table 4.5. Breakdown of institutionalized AIDS-related NGOs/NGOs-to-be by organizational character (2004)**

Total	PLWHA-led	AIDS general	Gay	Women	Non-AIDS specific
21	6	6	3	3	3

Besides the activists mentioned before, the PLWHA activism community also consists of many hemophiliac associations. Many hemophilia patients became infected with HIV through contaminated blood and blood products. Activists of the Shanghai based Hemophilia Home of China have been advocating for governmental compensations for hemophilia-HIV patients. Due to their effort, 50 such patients in Shanghai have received compensations from the municipal government. However, in 2003, a hemophilia-HIV patient from Hunan traveled to Shanghai to pursue governmental compensations, but was rejected. According to Xu Zhenjun, an activist from Grassroots Community (a Shanghai based NGO), the hemophilia-HIV issue is becoming even more sensitive than the Henan blood scandal. Journalists have been

banned to report on the issue, and there is little attention from the international community.<sup>78</sup>

Besides the Aizhixing Institute, a few policy advocacy oriented NGOs have emerged. The Beijing Loving Source for Education and Research is an example.<sup>79</sup> The chief founding member of this NGO, Hu Jia, is a veteran activist in a variety of social issues, including human rights. Due to Hu Jia's outspokenness on sensitive human rights and democracy topics, he has been arrested and home arrested multiple times since April 2004. However, the organization has survived, and the other main member, Zeng Jinyan, has created a Pen Pal Club to connect college students with AIDS orphans in Henan. The number of volunteers participating in this Pen Pal Club increased from a dozen to over 80 within a year's time.

As HIV/AIDS is spreading to the general public, gay and women are identified as two most vulnerable populations. With support from the international community, particularly the Ford Foundation, the Berry & Martin Trust (UK) and Chi Heng Foundation (Hong Kong), gay rights movement activists in China (e.g., Zhang Beichuan, Wan Yanhai) have helped to establish hotlines and support-groups in almost all provincial capitals and major coastal cities. Recently, more international assistance has become available, and the Chinese government is more open to the gay issue. Consequently, many gay hotlines and support-groups have expanded and institutionalized their activism work. For example, the Beijing Gay Hotline became

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<sup>78</sup> Interviewed in Shanghai, March 2004

<sup>79</sup> Multiple interviews with Hu Jia and Zeng Jinyan, founders of the Loving Source Institute, in Beijing, summer 2004. This organization was registered as a private company in May 2004, but meant to operate as a non-profit organization according to the organizational by-laws.



the Beijing Gender Institute, which has received many grants from international organizations to implement AIDS awareness projects within the gay community.<sup>80</sup>

“Women” was the theme for 2004 World AIDS Conference. In China, rural women are identified as a high-risk population due to the lack of access to health information and services. Women’s rights is one of the most active issue area in civil society development in China. But, there are still not many women’s rights NGOs working in health or AIDS. The three women’s rights based NGOs included in this study are the earliest bottom-up initiatives in the AIDS field. They also perfectly illustrate the important role played by international NGOs in the development of Chinese social groups. The Women and Child Development Centre of Ruili was, in fact, initiated by Save the Children UK during its own comprehensive AIDS prevention project in the region. Both the Legal Assistance Center for Women and Children of Xishuangbanna in Yunnan and Qianxi Women’s Health Association in Hebei were founded by activist-minded former local Women’s Federations officials with substantial support from international foundations (e.g., the Ford Foundation and the Asia Foundation). During their grassroots, the Xishuangbanna group gradually found AIDS imperiling the lives of minority young women in the region. Starting from single case investigation, they have helped many individual patients and their families.<sup>81</sup> The Qianxi group has reached to over 200 villages and 10,000 rural women in the county, and provided health trainings for group leaders among these

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with Zhen Li, founding member of the Beijing Gay Hotline, in July 2004.

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Long Sihai, Director of the Legal Assistance Center for Women and Children of Xishuangbanna, in Wuhan, 3 June 2004.

women since its establishment in 2002. In 2004, the AIDS Relief Fund for China (a U.S. private charity) gave the Qianxi a small grant to start their first training in HIV/AIDS prevention. With the support, the staff members created educational materials suitable for local women and innovative programs to overcome the social stigma of AIDS. Another American NGO, the Aixin Foundation, is currently helping to publicize their achievement and replicate their work in other parts of rural China.<sup>82</sup>

Besides the above NGOs, a few non-AIDS focused NGOs are switching gears and joining their colleagues to promote public awareness of AIDS, for they see the epidemic is not a simple medical matter, but involves many social justice issues. There are three environmental NGOs currently active in the AIDS field, all of which have developed a solid societal foundation and relatively a high level of self-capacity.

The importance of university student groups to China's civil society development was demonstrated by the conservation case in the case of conservation. The AIDS field also is undergoing a rapid growth of university student groups since 2002. According to the survey conducted by the Loving Source Institute, by 2004 there were 24 university student groups engaged in AIDS awareness and care work.<sup>83</sup> Among these groups, ten are located in Beijing, and nine outside the three main cities (i.e., Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjing), spreading across Hubei, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangdong, Anhui, Xinjiang, Jiangsu and other seven provinces.

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<sup>82</sup> Interviews and follow-ups with the Qianxi Women's Association from June 2004 to January 2005.

<sup>83</sup> Special acknowledgement goes to Zeng Jinyan, Renmin University and Loving Source Institute, for sharing the information about university student groups working on AIDS related issues.

Social activism in HIV/AIDS prevention and nature conservation presents some commonalities. Both started to emerge in the mid-1990s by a group of courageous activists, and have undergone political suppression from the government. Professionals are crucial to the development of both communities. With the growth of university student groups, both are energized and prepared to building on successes of the past. International NGOs have provided important support to Chinese activists and NGOs in both fields.

However, social groups as a whole have not developed as many and as strong networks among each other in the AIDS field as in the conservation field. Even though meetings, social gathering, and exchanges are becoming more frequent among AIDS activists and NGOs, major nation-wide coalitions, public campaigns, or movements have not occurred in this field yet. There are only some minimal signs of collective actions taken by activists in this field.

In April 2004, Aizhixing Institute received a call for help from some dying HIV+ patients in rural Henan. They complained about being cheated into AIDS clinical trials by the Beijing Ditan Hospital. Aizhixing first took the lead in investigating the issue, and was later joined by many other activists and concerned professionals. In May, Lin Gu, an activist-minded journalist for the Xinhua News Agency wrote an article uncovering all related parties and politics, and the *Southern Weekend* featured the story on the front page. The Ditan Hospital eventually posted an announcement about the clinical trial on their official website. Even though the involved patients didn't get fair compensation, the symbolic success of the activist

community was evident. In another case, when a farmer couple in Henan who used to help a Beijing based Chinese NGO to deliver relief goods was arrested by local police in August 2004, many AIDS activists in Beijing coordinated their resources to help them. Activists from No-HIV, a web-based activist group, printed and disseminated black postcards in Beijing to protest the incident. In January 2005, Zhu Jinzhong passed away, and the Loving Source Institute, who kept in close contact with this villager activist received tens of letters/emails of condolence from the AIDS activism community. Such incidents did generate momentum for AIDS social groups to communicate with each other, and build up mutual-trust. More importantly, like what is seen in the conservation field, by going through these emergent or politically sensitive events together, AIDS activists are learning together how to interact and negotiate with authorities. However, among other things, due to the lack leadership and the low level of mobilization of the journalist circles, this learning process in the AIDS field has not proceeded as fast and recurrent as in the conservation field.

#### **INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY ACTORS AND TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION**

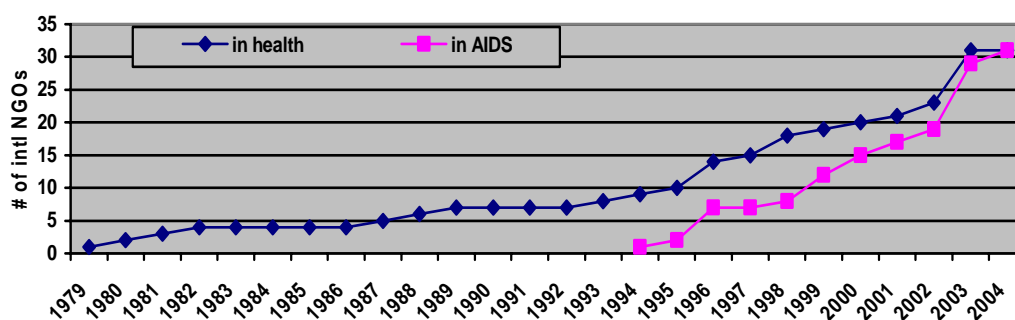
International NGOs started working in the field of reproductive health as early as the end of 1970s. In 1979, an American NGO, PATH (Program for Appropriate Technology in Health), accepted an invitation from the Chinese government to provide technical consultation for maternal and reproductive health in the country.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Interview with PATH senior program officer, Ms. GENG Qian, in Beijing, 18 April, 2004.

When the news of a large number of Chinese drug users testing HIV+ became known, international NGOs responded to the potential AIDS epidemic even earlier than most multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies. Red Cross Australia initiated negotiations with the Yunnan government on AIDS prevention in 1994, two years before UNAIDS was invited to the diplomatic compound in Beijing. To date, tens of international organizations and research institutions have implemented health related projects of various scales in China. (Figure 4.4)

**Figure 4.4. Growth of international NGOs working in health and AIDS in China**



Over the past decade, international NGOs, first recognized as specialists, public educators, and friends, have provided considerable moral, technical, and financial support to both Chinese governments and social groups. More importantly, unlike multilateral and bilateral agencies, international NSAs have been persistently advocating and trying to reach the worst hit areas beyond major cities, and more marginalized HIV+ or high risk populations rather than the patients who are already receiving treatment at state-run infectious disease hospitals. Through continuous communication and interaction with local authorities, a few external advocacy groups

have gradually overcome various political barriers and reached to the most remote, devastated, or discriminated populations.

Several international NGOs and activists have managed to implement relief, prevention, and care projects in Hennan province. Some have sustained close contacts with rural HIV/AIDS patients in many remote areas of Yunnan, Guangxi, Sichuan, and Xinjiang Autonomous Region. Some are targeting in particular the social groups that are normally overlooked by large donor agencies (e.g., rural community based groups, PLWHA self-help groups, CSWs, and migrating workers). For example, DKT International, a Washington, D.C.-based charitable organization that implements nine social marketing programs in nine countries, describes its specific mandate in China as supporting migrant workers.

### **International NGOs and Advocacy Groups in AIDS Prevention**

This research first focuses on 32 international NGOs that are currently operating in China. They have either exclusively focused on AIDS problems, or allocated substantial amount of their organizational resources to assist in AIDS prevention. Besides these project implementing NGOs, there are also a number of private foundations and charities that are providing financial assistance to combat AIDS in China. For example, three Christian church based groups recently also expanded their humanitarian work in China into the field of AIDS prevention. A few funding organizations, particularly the Ford Foundation, and two smaller private foundations, the Barry and Martin's Trust and the AIDS Relief Fund for China, will also be

discussed in details. They are included because of their close ties with Chinese NGOs and their substantial involvement in transnational advocacy in China.

I located these groups by attending UNAIDS Theme Group meetings (a main gathering venue for parties concerned with AIDS in China), interviewing leading Chinese activist and main international NGOs in the field, and meeting with advocacy groups at the Yunnan AIDS NGO Forum. (For the names of all the international NGOs and foundations, see Appendix 4.5.)<sup>85</sup>

This community of international NGOs is very diverse in terms of their organizational structure, personnel composition, financial resources, and working philosophies. Some are truly transnationalized, operated by hundreds of professionals in all continents of the world (e.g., Save the Children U.K., Médecins sans Frontières, and Marie Stopes International). Some are small non-profit philanthropies run by one or a few overseas Chinese (e.g., Chi Heng Foundation in Hong Kong and the Aixin Foundation in the U.S.). However, as explained in the theoretical chapter, I am more interested in observing the character of this group as a whole, so I will not go into details about each organization's specific features.

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<sup>85</sup> The main reasons for not including a few other organizations that have also done some work related to China's AIDS epidemic, besides the fact that they are not very much connected with the rest of the international NGOs in the field, are as followings: 1) They were invited by specific governmental agency to conduct one-time, short-term research or training course, e.g., in 2002, on request of the Chinese MoH, the International Center for Reproductive Health collaborated with Shanghai health governmental agencies and other research institutions on a AIDS related workshop and pilot course; 2) Their AIDS projects are still under planning, e.g., ActionAid, a U.K. NGO, has been working in China on rural development issues for years, and are currently designing projects related to AIDS prevention NGOs and activists. (Exchanges with ActionAid Beijing Office staff in Oct. 2004)

This community has had a shorter history than the conservation one. However, even though they started working on AIDS issues relatively recently, many of them have been working in health or other fields of social welfare in China since the 1980s. The total number of international NGOs in this community has gradually grown over the past 25 years.

Geographically, the international NGOs in this case present a similar tendency as in the conservation field. Around 16 NGOs work in the southwestern three provinces, and the rest are spread out across the country.

Also like the nature conservation NGO community, this is a fairly localized group. 23 of the 32 organizations have established their base in China, ranging from a modern office in Beijing equipped with the most advanced technologies and a dozen international experts, to one person performing “shuttle diplomacy” and leading local Chinese staff. (Figure 4.5) Among the eight NGOs that have not obtained a physical presence in China, some have, at least, formed strong personal relationships with Chinese activists and other NGOs. The Aixin Foundation, registered in Maryland, U.S., was founded by a group of American Chinese food and drug safety experts, who have considerable personal ties and contacts in China in the field of public health and AIDS prevention.

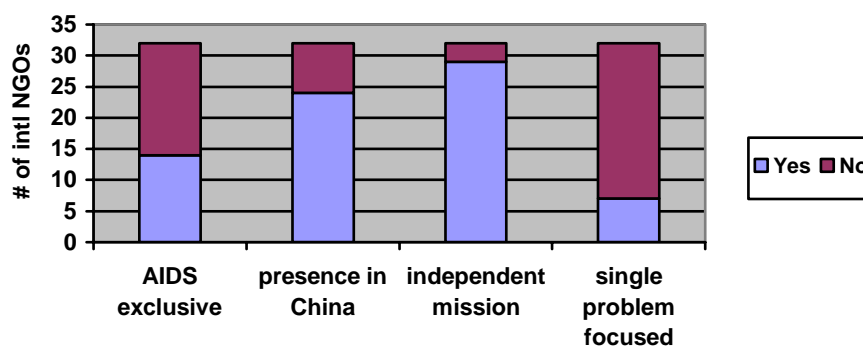
Three of the NGOs started operating in China only due to their involvement in large-scale bilateral or multilateral projects. For example, Family Health International established its office in China in 2003 as the chief coordinating agency to implement the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)’s Mekong Region Health



Project. The vast majority of NGOs, though, came to China with independent missions. Some have evolved into independence, even though they came to China as technical advisors for U.N. agencies like PATH and Marie Stopes. This is not to say that international NGOs have not taken advantage of connections with multilateral or bilateral organizations. On the contrary, many of them benefit from their close relationship with other AIDS assistance agencies, especially, the China-UK Programme, USAID, and UNAIDS, as they are critical to getting access to the Chinese government (this was certainly the case with the International HIV/AIDS Alliance).

7 organizations limit their work by only targeting a particular group of people within a specific geographic location. Most of them aim at either various HIV+ or high risk populations, or multiple locations. There is a global trend to link AIDS relief, prevention and treatment together and to take a multi-sectoral approach. Consequently, NGOs in the AIDS field tend to work in a comprehensive way even when dealing with a single problem and assisting a defined group of people.

**Figure 4.5. General characteristics of international NGO community in AIDS prevention in China**



The following section introduces a few of the most important international

NGOs in transnational politics surrounding AIDS prevention in China; it is hoped that this will allow readers to better grasp the analysis of the triangular relationship among international NGOs, the Chinese state, and Chinese social groups in the next chapter, and the nature of this transnational community in general. These NGOs are grouped partially according to when they first started working on China's AIDS problems, and partially according to the commonalities they share with each other. Such selections are meant to better illustrate individual organizations' interactions with various political happenings in China, as well as the historical dynamics of transnational advocacy and mobilization in this field.

#### **Forerunners: Red Cross Australia and Save the Children U.K.**

##### ***Red Cross Australia (RCAus)***<sup>86</sup>

Red Cross Australia, a member of the international family of Red Cross organizations, entered China in 1994, and was the first international NGO that worked in China with a specific mandate for AIDS control and prevention. Prior to RCAus' entrance, a major episode of HIV infection along the bordering areas between China's Yunnan province and Burma was exposed. 146 local Yunnan farmers and IDUs tested HIV positive. This incident shocked local communities as well as the provincial

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<sup>86</sup> The explanation of Red Cross Australia's AIDS prevention work in China is based on publicly available materials, and the following interviews: Ms. Audrey Swift, former Red Cross Australia technical advisor in Yunnan and Xinjiang (1999-2002) and current Regional Health Delegate and HIV/AIDS Coordinator of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, on 30 April 2004; Ms. Wei Ping, a former PLWHA peer-education participant and trainer, and currently a project officer of the Yunan Red Cross HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care Project, on 25 August 2004; and, Mr. WANG Yanbin, former staff of the Australia and Yunnan Red Cross joint office (1998-2003), on 26 August 2004.

government. Therefore, when the Yunnan health authorities learned about Red Cross Australia's inquiries through China National Red Cross, they welcomed the idea of establishing a joint program to prevent a potential AIDS epidemic.<sup>87</sup> The Yunnan government recognized the expertise that the Red Cross Australia team had, and hoped to develop its own capacity in dealing with AIDS through formal bilateral programs with them. However, as an NGO, Red Cross Australia preferred to work with a Chinese partner that was not a formal governmental agency. The final arrangement was to designate the Yunnan Red Cross<sup>88</sup> to be the only working partner of the Red Cross Australia, and all collaborative work would be implemented within the existing Yunnan Red Cross structures.

Over the years, Red Cross Australia has sent many public health specialists as technical advisors for AIDS control and prevention programs formally organized by the Yunnan Red Cross. They, for the first time, introduced AIDS peer-education to

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<sup>87</sup> All overseas Red Cross organizations have to coordinate through the China National Red Cross (CNRC) to operate inside China. Usually, CNRC first sends out "invitations" to all provincial Red Cross offices to find out who would like to accept "technical assistance" from international Red Cross partners. The Yunnan government responded quickest when Red Cross Australia initiated partnership search in 1994.

<sup>88</sup> A note on Red Cross offices in China: After 1949, the China National Red Cross was combined into the state health administration, and all local Red Cross organizations became affiliated with the health authorities at different levels. New Red Cross offices were even created in some provinces and cities to meet the uniformity of health governance across the country. Even though the Red Cross organizations became part of the health administrative system, there does not exist vertical or horizontal administrative ties among them. The National Red Cross Federation is not the central authority of all Chinese Red Cross organizations. It can provide professional guidance and technical support to the provincial and local Red Cross offices, but it is not responsible for their budget, personnel management and regular operations. Provincial Health Bureaus used to fully fund Red Cross offices under its jurisdiction. However, this has changed in recent years. And, the legal status of Red Cross offices varies. Some Red Cross offices remain as a part of the health administration, while others have obtained independent status as public enterprises, like the Yunnan Red Cross. But, in general, Red Cross offices across China are still closely tied with the corresponding health authorities.

China. Particularly, due to their continuous effort and persuasion, commercial sex workers, drug users, and HIV+ patients have been included in peer-education training sessions, which is far beyond the imagination and working methods of Chinese Red Cross staff.

The cooperation between these two organizations has led to achievements far beyond original expectations. The Yunnan Red Cross now has more than 20 full-time staff members, and over 30 contractors and volunteers. The Yunnan government expanded the Red Cross office's mandate and granted it administrative autonomy in 2004.<sup>89</sup> The size and funding of the Yunnan Red Cross is the third largest (after the ones in Beijing and Shanghai) among all the Red Cross offices in China. During his fifth visit to China, Kofi Annan, Secretary in General of the U.N., twice praised Yunnan Red Cross' work in AIDS prevention. They are now recognized as the flagship office among all Red Cross teams in China, and have been invited to various provinces to share their experience in AIDS prevention.

***Save the Children U.K. (SC)***<sup>90</sup>

Founded in 1919, Save the Children U.K. is a part of the International Save the Children Alliance, the world's leading children's rights advocacy organization. Based in London, SC now works in impoverished communities across 70 countries. SC provided relief to Chinese victims of natural disaster and war in the 1930s. After 1949,

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<sup>89</sup> Since 2004, Yunnan Red Cross is no longer a department of the Yunnan Health Bureau. Its administrative ranking is equivalent to the Health Bureau, and its director's ranks as a deputy provincial governor.

<sup>90</sup> Explanation of Save the Children UK's work in China is based on publicly accessible materials (e.g., program quarterly newsletters), and interviews with Ms. Lu Yiyi, former Beijing office representative of Save the Children UK China program, in July 2000, and Mr. Wang Yanbin on 26 August 2004.

SC worked in Hong Kong, and supported the development of social services. In the early 1990s, SC returned to the mainland, working mainly in southwestern China, and relocated its China Programme Office from Hong Kong to Kunming in 1995. In 1999, a representative office was established in Beijing to enhance advocacy, networking and central government partnerships. By 2004, SC's China Programme has had reached over 20 provinces, cooperating with different levels of governmental agencies and communities.

Equitable access to HIV/AIDS prevention, education, care and support for children and young people is identified as one of SC's three strategic issues in China. Like the Red Cross Australia, SC also emphasized and promoted AIDS peer-education as the first step to curbing the spread of the disease. What distinguishes SC's working style is that it has also been deeply involved in care, treatment, and policy advocacy in the field. Currently, with the success of its Ruili multi-sectoral AIDS prevention model, SC is not only replicating this model in two other counties, but is also restructuring its internal workings to integrate AIDS prevention work into all projects.

To some extent, Red Cross Australia and Save the Children UK are not only the forerunners among all international organizations—governmental or non-governmental—that are concerned with AIDS in China. They, for the first time, introduced many effective methods of behavior modification and community-based care delivery to prevent AIDS. More importantly, they established models of communication and interaction with the Chinese health authorities and local communities, which were later learned and explored by peer international NGOs. For

example, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) began its HIV program in China in 2001. Currently, IFRC HIV/AIDS programs are operating in Yunnan and Xinjiang with a budget of 1 million USD, and they are negotiating with four other provincial Red Cross offices in Henan, Hunan, Shangdong, Chongqing. Some of its programs are similar to what Red Cross Australia and Save the Children UK have conducted - peer education (among students, CSWs, and IDUs), small scale workshop for patients, and training for peer educators and counselors.

### **International NGOs as Technical Advisors, and Public Educators**

A few NGOs came to China under U.N. or bilateral cooperation frameworks; for example, Family Health International, Population Service International, and Futures Group Europe are implementing agencies for DFID and USAID's AIDS projects in Sichuan, Guangxi and Yunnan. These NGOs are granted more flexibility by the Chinese government. In other words, their mobility at local levels and access to China's public health system are safeguarded in advance. However, most international NGOs, including Red Cross Australia and Save the Children UK, have to garner trust from the Chinese government regarding their humanitarian principles. Many NGOs first established working relationships with the government in other health fields, and later moved into the AIDS prevention field: for example, PATH and Health Unlimited in maternal health, Marie Stopes in reproductive health, Daytop in drug addiction rehabilitation, and Médecins sans Frontières and Medecins du Monde in health emergency relief. Regardless of their specialty, in most situations, international NGOs have to first convince the Chinese government that they are sympathetic to the AIDS

situation in China and that they are willing to join the state to curtail its spread, before they can obtain access to the public health system. The Chinese government gradually recognizes the technical assistance and expertise that international NGOs are capable of bringing to China, and considers them technical advisors and public educators in the battle against AIDS. Once communication channels are established, these international NGOs have been able to demonstrate new principles and measures to the local or central governmental authorities. In many cases, they have succeeded in persuading the government to re-visit existing policies and consider changes.

**PATH** (Program for Appropriate Technology in Health) is an American NGO, headquartered in Seattle. In 1980s and 1990s, PATH collaborated with the State Family Planning Commission (now changed to National Population and Family Planning Commission - NPFPC) and provided technical assistance in improving maternal health. During that time, the U.N. Population Agency also funded PATH to conduct trainings for rural doctors (barefoot doctors) in inter-personal communication. Through many years' of collaborations in nutrition rice and vaccines for children, mutual understanding and a level of trust have been established between Chinese officials and PATH. Currently, PATH's main work in China is the Youth Productive Health program (since 2000), of which AIDS prevention among youth is an important component. Usually, PATH does not establish a country office to implement a project. But, because its work in China has grown substantially, particularly in HIV/AIDS prevention, PATH opened its Beijing office in 2004 with three full-time staff, one of which is based at State CDC office. This further indicates the depth of PATH's

connections with health agencies. Because of the trust from governmental authorities, PATH has been able to conduct project which can be perceived sensitive under normal circumstances: for example, AIDS awareness education for migrant workers in entertainment businesses.

Like PATH with its strong professional background, **Health Unlimited** (HU) started working in eastern China in 1993 organizing maternal and child health training and health awareness campaigns in eight provinces with a beneficiary population of 14 million people. Collaborating with the MoH and Yunnan provincial government, HU launched an integrated health care program in Yunnan in 1996, which covered the issue of HIV prevention.

Since 1998, **Marie Stopes International** (MSI) has been an executing agency for UNFPA's Reproductive Health Project, promoting informed choice and client orientated, high quality and integrated reproductive health services. In 2000, MSI officially established its local affiliate Marie Stopes China (MSC) in Beijing with a Chinese national as its chief director. Even though MSC initially experienced a legal dilemma when attempting to register as a non-profit international NGO representative office, it now has grown into a team of seven full time professionals, implementing a range of innovative programs and delivering sexual health care and education in multiple cities across China.<sup>91</sup> MSC's program incorporates advocacy, behavior change and communication, capacity building, partnerships and service provision.

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with MSC Director, Ms. Lily Liu, April 2004. Because China still has not established laws and tax regulations regarding international NGOs, MSC, like many other international NGOs, is currently registered as a multi-national corporation but with some tax exemptions.



MSC's partners in China range from central health authorities to individual activists and from major cities to villages in Henan. In particular, its support to HIV+ activists has been crucial to connect various HIV+ groups across China and unite their voices to be heard by health authorities.

**Daytop Village Foundation** (also known as Daytop), an American NGO, has been providing drug counseling services since 1963, making it the oldest and largest drug-free self-help program in the U.S. It is based on the therapeutic community concept: a highly structured, family environment where positive peer interaction is emphasized. On 28 Sep. 1998, Daytop opened a rehabilitation center in Kunming, Yunnan, which was later formally recognized by a bilateral agreement between the U.S. Department of State and the Chinese MoH, which the National Anti-Drug Trafficking Committee signed in 2003. Daytop Kunming is the first voluntary rehabilitation center in China for those who seek help with problems of substance abuse. It has also been involved in the China-UK AIDS Care program, China-Australia AIDS Care program, and China-U.S. AIDS collaborations to conduct specific AIDS peer education for drug users and training for AIDS-care social workers and counselors.

Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) and Medecins du Monde are among the international NGOs that are specialized in directly providing treatment and health services to populations in need. Across the world, they set up their own clinics to treat patients and victims of war, natural disasters and epidemics. MFS also endeavors to

“publicly bear witness to the plight of the populations they serve”.<sup>92</sup> Both organizations and their branches started working in China in disaster and emergency relief in 1980s. When they realized the potential devastation of an AIDS epidemic, they redirected most of their resources to find a niche in this field.

**Medecins du Monde** (MdM) was founded in 1980, and works to “treat physical and psychological traumas of those generally excluded from mainstream health services”.<sup>93</sup> MdM first provided emergency assistance to China in 1988. Since 1993, it has worked with the Shanghai Bureau of Health and the Centre for Disease Control, establishing an HIV/STD prevention program. MdM developed in 1999-2000 a program to prevent the transmission of STDs in six job-sites in the city of Chengdu through a mobile unit carrying information and engaging in prevention activities. They identified three groups that were particularly affected by STDs and HIV - injecting drug users, sex workers and the rural population arriving in the urban centers to look for jobs. Through their work, they provided drug users access to information regarding prevention of HIV and STD transmission.

As an international NGO, MSF has a network of subsidiaries in 18 countries. Each year, more than 3,000 volunteer doctors, nurses, other medical professionals, logistics experts, water/sanitation engineers, and administrators are sent to different parts of the world to provide medical aid. Four different MSF country offices have so far worked to China. MSF Holland and Switzerland came earlier, and later MSF

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<sup>92</sup> MSF organizational mission statement.

<sup>93</sup> Information on MdM was collected from its website and the China Development Brief’s description of its work in China.

Belgium and France followed. MSF Holland and Switzerland had some access to the local health system, and implemented some TV educational programs. However, unable to deliver health care directly, both organizations left with frustration in 2002.<sup>94</sup>

**MSF Belgium** arrived in China in 1989. In early years, they mostly provided relief work for victims of natural disaster, promoted water hygiene, and contributed to basic infrastructure building because their requests for access to public health system were always denied. They constantly received inquiries from medical technicians and doctors for assistance, but not from local or central governmental health agencies. Their first chance came with the SARS crisis. The vice mayor of Zhang Jiakou city (Hebei province) personally took the political risk to invite MSF Belgium to help with SARS.

During that time, MSF's reputation and their expertise in AIDS treatment gradually became known to central health agencies through various international conferences and some UNAIDS events. Finally, in 2003, MSF Belgium received an invitation from the local governments in Hubei to establish an AIDS treatment program.<sup>95</sup> When I visited the AIDS clinic that resulted from this invitation in Xiangfan, 128 HIV+ patients from Hubei and Henan were being treated there.

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<sup>94</sup> Interview with Mr. Luc Van Leemput, Head of Mission, MSF-Belgium, in Beijing, 27 March 2004.

<sup>95</sup> A senior official from the Hubei provincial CDC learned about MSF's work in the AIDS field in other countries when attending a UNAIDS conference in Yunnan early 2003. After that, he took the initiative and contacted MSF Belgium Beijing Office. The local CDC office in Xiangfan, a county in northern Hubei province, a few hours away from Henan by train, responded to the provincial CDC's idea most positively.

**MSF France**, another country branch of MSF International, began its aid to China in 1996 with a medical service program in Rongshui County, Guangxi province. In 2003, it expanded this primary health-care program and set up a medical clinic to provide care and treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS. It is reported that, by the beginning of 2005, 260 HIV+ patients had been received and treated in the clinic.<sup>96</sup> Up till now, the two AIDS treatment clinics established by MSF teams are the only ones of their kind in China—independent clinics which can provide alternative types of treatment and care to HIV/AIDS patients (in contrast with state-run AIDS hospitals) for free.

The above examples, especial the experience of MSF Belgium and France, represent the majority of international NGOs currently working in the AIDS field in China. The examples illustrate that it takes time for international NGOs to convince the Chinese government of their missions and noble intensions of working in AIDS prevention in China. Many of them have to adopt a dynamic strategy—working in another area first, and then switching to AIDS field. They can gain the trust of the Chinese government by first attaching their work in China to governmental agencies, and then move toward establishing an independent country office (which can, in turn, provide more choices in selecting partners and autonomy in deciding implementation plans).<sup>97</sup> Once the trust and working relationship is established, international NGOs

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<sup>96</sup> “MSF Gives HIV/AIDS Sufferers Free Help”. *China Daily*, 19 April 2005. p3.

<sup>97</sup> After 2003, the year when major shift in governmental policy on AIDS prevention took place, the Chinese health authorities became more receptive to international NGOs that have a specific agenda of AIDS prevention, and have granted more flexibility for them to implement programs either independently or together with Chinese governmental agencies. This change parallels with how the

are able to facilitate the course of AIDS prevention by sharing their expertise or directly providing health services and relief assistance. In many cases, as described above, international NGOs are the first ones who operationalize the policy goals, and present practical examples for Chinese governments and other international health agencies to follow or learn about.

### **Working under Pressure: Going to Henan**

Due to the political context of China, as often stated in this research, it is not surprising to find out that most international NGOs have had to interact with the Chinese government initially to secure their presence in China. Therefore, they are known to the government and health authorities, before they are known to local communities and general public. Nevertheless, a few NGOs, mostly Hong Kong and Taiwan-based, have taken a different approach—going straight to local communities. Their familiarity with social, cultural, and geographical contexts in China enabled them to do so. In this respect, these NGOs played a distinctive role in supporting and mobilizing local HIV+ patients. Particularly in the case of Henan province; HIV/AIDS patients were victims of the illegal blood industries and the lack of AIDS public education, and political forces historically blocked and refused any international assistance to this province. Before 2000, most of the multilateral AIDS assistance was used in Yunnan, Sichuan and Xinjiang.<sup>98</sup> It was not until 2004 that

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government has modified its approach in international cooperation in public health in general.

<sup>98</sup> Exceptions include UNICEF's work related to mother-child HIV transmission in Henan.

bilateral assistance agencies were allowed to work in Henan in the AIDS field.<sup>99</sup> A handful of Hong Kong and Taiwanese NGOs and Marie Stopes China were the only outside NGOs that had access and could deliver information, public education and financial assistance to AIDS patients in Henan during 2004 when this research was conducted.

### ***Chung To and Chi Heng Foundation***

During the New Year holidays of 2002, Dr. Gao Yaojie received an unusual guest at her apartment—who looked like an ordinary Chinese man, but spoke with a unique accent. Chung To, a Hong Kong native, San Francisco teenager, Columbia University graduate, and Harvard MBA, quit his investment banking job and became a full-time activist in AIDS prevention in his early 30s. He formed the Chi Heng Foundation in Hong Kong in 1998. Because of his extraordinary contribution to AIDS awareness promotion, the Hong Kong government named him one of the “Ten Distinctive Young People of Hong Kong” in 2003. In May 2005, the *Southern People Weekly* magazine named him one of the Distinctive Young Leaders of China.

After he read about the blood scandal in Henan in 2002, he decided to take a field trip to these villages. Once he saw with his eyes the patients lying in bed with absolutely no medicine, the orphans left with empty houses, and hundreds of new tombs in Henan, he lost sleep.<sup>100</sup> With the help from local activists, particularly Dr.

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<sup>99</sup> U.S. GAP Beijing Office is currently working with drug rehabilitation centers in Henan.

<sup>100</sup> To, Chung. 2004. “Help Needed for the Children: Problems Related to the Children Orphaned by AIDS in Central China”. Information about Chi Heng Foundation was collected from multiple meetings with Chung To in 2004.

Gao Yaojie, Chung To quickly got in touch with some villagers. He soon also realized how politically sensitive AIDS prevention could be in Henan. To best help the children affected by the AIDS epidemic, he signed agreements with local authorities that he would never invite media coverage of his work in Henan, and he would keep the names of the village that he will support unannounced. In 2002, he found 127 orphans to support in one county of Henan, and by 2004, he had already expanded his work to reach over 2000 orphans in seven counties across four provinces in central China. At the end of 2004, Chung To was building two offices, one in Shanghai, and one in Henan, and recruiting full-time staff, some of which would be PLWHA.

Besides the AIDS orphan issue, Chung To and Chi Heng Foundation have also done excellent work in promoting AIDS awareness within the gay community in many Chinese cities. His work in Henan is particularly important in China in that he worked under extreme political pressure, managed to deliver support to most the needy populations, and made the situation in Henan known to the outside world. Chung To has been able to communicate with the international AIDS prevention community about what is happening in Henan and central rural China, without offending the local authorities and risking his relief work. Many international organizations like the Center for Strategic and International Studies have invited him to give talks about his work in Henan, since first-hand information about the AIDS epidemic in this province is still rare. More importantly, he has made efforts to strengthen local people's self-help capacity by recruiting them to work with him. His

work serves as an model for other outside NGOs to use as a possible way of reaching out to Henan villages without being caught up in complicated politics.

### *“Sister Yang”*

Most activists and professionals working in the AIDS field in China had heard about the story about Zhu Jingzhong and his 52 adopted children. But very few actually knew who supported Zhu. Some said that was an artist from Taiwan, while others alluded to a philanthropist “Sister Yang”.

Yang Jie, owner of a flower shop in Taipei city, Taiwan, is the anonymous heroin behind the story. As a matter of fact, she is not a typical philanthropist with a large amount of wealth. Seven years ago, Yang opened her shop to host of some homeless AIDS patients in Taiwan. Instead of turning the shop into a hospice, she preferred to call it a “midway station”, because she hoped that all these patients would eventually return to society. When she read the reports on AIDS orphans on the mainland, she “heeded a new calling” according to a friend of hers.<sup>101</sup> She soon started to contact and support AIDS activists working on the mainland, including Chung To, and eventually made a trip to Henan on her own. During that trip, Yang found Zhu Jingzhong in Shuanmiao village, central Henan. From then on, she has supported most of Zhu’s expenses for the orphans, and a few other AIDS families in Henan. In 2003, Yang registered an NGO in Taiwan, the Harmony Home Association, to sustain and expand her work in mainland and Taiwan.

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<sup>101</sup> Field report by Humphrey Wou, Program Director of the AIDS Relief Fund for China, August 2004.



Like Chung To's Chi Heng Foundation, Yang's organization is small-staffed. However, exactly because of its small scale and low profile, in addition to personal determination and skills, it has achieved what most large international NGOs have not been able to do until very recently—helping HIV/AIDS patients in Henan.

### *Salvation Army Hong Kong*

The previous chapter introduced Hong Kong based NGOs and their contribution to the rise of environmentalism in mainland China. Hong Kong has a longer history of NGO development, and both the government and the public have more experience in interacting with NGOs. In the field of health, like the case of environmental protection, many Hong Kong NGOs as well as many local branches of international NGOs have emerged. Many of them have comprehensive agendas that include AIDS prevention on the mainland (e.g., Kadoorie Charitable Foundation, World Vision Hong Kong, Salvation Army Hong Kong and Oxfam Hong Kong). In 2004, the World Vision Hong Kong launched a one million USD, ten-year AIDS prevention related program in Yunnan. Prior to that, both Salvation Army Hong Kong and Oxfam Hong Kong have operated praise-worthy projects for preventing AIDS in Henan and other regions in mainland China.

The Salvation Army first reached Beijing in 1916 to provide humanitarian services for war refugees.<sup>102</sup> Services spread rapidly in China and work commenced in Hong Kong in 1930. By the 50s, when large numbers of refugees arrived, more

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<sup>102</sup> Information about the Salvation Army HK is collected from its official website and interview with Ms. Puisi Chan. China Country Program Manager, the Salvation Army, Hong Kong and Macau Command, Beijing, 29 July 2004.

services were developed which formed the base of today's services that operate in Hong Kong. The Army resumed its work on the mainland in 1998, starting with earthquake relief. Since then, it has conducted relief work, built basic infrastructure, and sponsored community based development projects.

The Salvation Army HK, with support from the Norwegian Government, has provided community-based counseling, health education and care (including AIDS) in Guangxi since 1999. Specifically on AIDS, the Army has opened two AIDS information and public education centers in Yunnan. One is located in Kunming, and the other in the more rural Longshan county. Such centers provide information, education materials, and basic training for HIV+ patients and their family members so that they will be able to organize mutual-help groups on their own. In Longshan, the Army cooperates with the Yunnan Provincial Office of Religious Affairs, and uses their networks to reach ethnic minority communities. For the Army's project officers it is important to win the trust of local governments in order to gain access to remote and impoverished communities.

In many ways, Henan is even a harder nut for the Army to crack than mountainous areas in the Southwest. Having learned lessons from other international NGOs, the Army, determined to get assistance to the devastated patients in Henan, started communicating with local authorities in early 2003. Staff members paid regular visits to county governmental offices and village committees. Meanwhile, they also frequently visited HIV+ patients and families affected by AIDS. "Sometime, we just listen to their stories and daily life, and laugh and cry with them. Just like

conducting group-counseling,” commented the chief project manager of the Army in Beijing. It is through such intensive interactions and mutual-learning processes that the local authorities were finally convinced of the “good intentions” of the Army. However, an agreement of “no publicity” was still required for the Army to operate any projects in the villages. Finally, in November 2003, a micro-loan project was launched with a group of six families in the Shuangmiao village. This project has grown into eight groups of local families within a year’s time, and local authorities have come to Salvation Army for advice of AIDS relief work.

This is a typical example of how external advocacy actors can persuade local authorities, conduct demonstration projects, and achieve the goals of introducing new ideas and methods. In addition, they, to some extent, also lessened the tension between local governmental officials and farmers.

### ***Oxfam Hong Kong***

Founded in the city of Oxford, Great Britain, in 1942, Oxfam took its name from the words “Oxford” and “famine”. Its early work centered on providing emergency famine relief: although this is still a major component of its programs worldwide, a large part of Oxfam’s work is now devoted to longer-term development initiatives. Oxfam Hong Kong is a member of the Oxfam International and an independent development and relief agency based in Hong Kong working with poor and disadvantaged people in Asia and Africa. It began supporting work on the mainland in 1987, even before it was officially registered in 1988.

Oxfam HK's early work in China was centered on integrated rural development projects in southwestern China. In 1997, it established its Northwest Programme in Gansu and Shaanxi engaged in rural community development. Now also it has offices in Beijing and Yunnan. Currently, it has five main objectives in China: sustainable livelihoods, basic services, workplace safety, public participation, and equity and diversity. Reproductive health and HIV prevention is becoming an important focus. It has operated HIV prevention work among drug users in Yunnan, and sponsored individual activists to attend international training and conferences.

Oxfam HK does not have an office or project team in Henan, so its work has been implemented by engaging a few local activists and giving financial support directly to them.<sup>103</sup> Ms. Liang Jun, a former official affiliated with the local Women's Federation in Henan, is such an activist. In 2002, she and her colleagues started visiting and delivering assistance to AIDS patients and families in the worst hit villages in central Henan. Despite occasional local government resistance, Xin's team has carried out Oxfam's mission in Henan, and eventually they formed their own organization (Henan Center for Community Education and Research) to expand AIDS relief work in more regions in Henan.<sup>104</sup>

The only international NGO not Hong Kong or Taiwan based that was able to go into Henan to conduct AIDS relief and prevention work is the Marie Stopes China Program (MSC). MSC is probably the most localized international NGO in AIDS

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<sup>103</sup> Exchanges with Mr. Wai Ming Yiu, Assistant Officer for China Program, Oxfam Hong Kong, March 2004.

<sup>104</sup> Talks given by DONG Lin and SUN Airon from Henan Center for Community Education and Research, at Wuhan ELM International Conference, 1-4 June, 2004.

prevention in China in that its chief officer has always been a Chinese national (a former official of the National Family Planning Association), and majority of its staff members are Chinese. Because of this background, MSC is better in tune with Chinese political and social contexts. Since 2003, MSC has been operating community-based AIDS education and prevention projects in multiple counties in Henan. They designed many innovative programs according to local needs. For example, they established “rotating AIDS education libraries” in some villages, encouraging local villagers to host meetings and discussion sessions at their homes. They supported a local Yu opera writer to write and direct a play on AIDS using a local dialectic.<sup>105</sup>

I joined one of MSC’s field trips to southern Henan villages in May 2004, where the HIV infection rate is not as high as the central part of the province (and therefore lacking media exposure). The central government’s “Four-Free One-Care Policy” was poorly implemented and public awareness of the disease was shockingly low. MSC is currently developing self-help groups among local HIV+ patients and distributing education materials to them, and through them to yet more patients. They are also communicating with county-level health offices to better provide information and necessary funds to local patients.

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, the AIDS epidemic, in a way, was exacerbated by the blood scandal in Henan and the provincial government’s extreme reluctance towards accepting any kind of international assistance (e.g.,

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<sup>105</sup> Special acknowledgements to GAO Qi, HIV Program Officer, Marie Stopes China, for sharing his experience and insights in AIDS prevention activism in China.

multilateral, bilateral, or non-governmental). Therefore, being able to work in Henan and deliver relief and assistance to local patients evidence was a unique contribution of international NGOs. In this aspect, they are not just technical advisors and public educators who facilitate and accelerate the process, but real risk-takers and hands-on practitioners who deal with problems in the field when no other resources are available and before the government sends out signals of opening up and addressing the issues.

### **Innovative and Progressive Giving**

Private foundations and philanthropic organizations, as illustrated by the conservation case, are closely connected with the NGO community and provide necessary resources to assist NGOs in their missions. In some cases (as with the Ford Foundation), funding organizations operate almost like quasi-NGOs because of their intimate relationship with their grantees and their well-designed grant-making strategies. Some foundations are not as resourceful and prestigious as the Ford Foundation, yet their mobilization ability at the grassroots level is considerable. They emphasize delivering assistance as directly as possible to AIDS affected populations, and see the importance of bottom-up activism. Most of their grantees are Chinese NGOs or community-based organizations, and they keep close contact with them. These grassroots-oriented donors (e.g., Barry and Martin's Trust, AIDS Relief Fund for China) are of strategic importance to map and examine international NGO networks.

***Ford Foundation*** <sup>106</sup>

General information about the Ford Foundation's work in China has been provided in the previous chapter. In terms of HIV/AIDS, they started supporting projects in the mid-1990s. The focus of Ford Foundation's AIDS grant-making in China has been on promoting research and sexual behavior interventions. Both of the two grants made before 1998 focused on research, conferences and information dissemination.<sup>107</sup> Since 1998, the Ford Foundation has greatly expanded its funding on gender, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS prevention. It is worth pointing out that the Ford Foundation has particularly emphasized supporting research and interventions on sensitive topics to demonstrate the effectiveness of HIV intervention strategies, e.g., commercial sex workers, intravenous drug users, men who have sex with men (MSM), and vulnerable groups such as youth, women and the poor.

Among all the grantees of the Ford Foundation, the vast majorities are university or government-affiliated research centers or GONGOs (e.g., Renming University, Institute for Gender and Sexuality Research), local medical science and research organizations (e.g., Yunnan Reproductive Health Research Association), public education organizations, and local branches of mass social organizations (e.g., Women's Federation, and Family Planning Association in this case). This is the typical Ford Foundation approach. However, increasingly, the Foundation has been

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<sup>106</sup> Information about the Ford Foundation's work in AIDS is collected from its website, and UNAIDS China annual reports from 1998 to 2002.

<sup>107</sup> In 1994: co-funded (with UNDP) a conference in Yunnan on social and economic impacts on the epidemic. In 1997: Harm reduction workshop in Yunnan with Don Desjarlais and Theodore Hammett introducing the evidence supporting clean needle programs for IV drug users.

providing funding to Chinese NGOs and individual activists. For example, Ford supported Prof. Zhang Konglai from the Beijing Union Medical College to form the China AIDS Working Network (CAWN) in 1993. In 2001, Ford sponsored a member of the CAWN to visit the International Center for Research on Women. Like in the environment field, the Ford Foundation has always provided necessary support for Chinese activists and NGO representatives to participate in regional and international AIDS conferences and learning opportunities.

Ford's support for the Friends Exchange project is very illustrative of how the Foundation strategically builds up connections with grassroots groups in China. In 1997, a Ford Foundation officer went and visited Prof. Zhang in Qingdao, Shandong, and listened to Zhang's research and concerns on gay and AIDS issues in China. In 1998, the Foundation began providing support to Prof. Zhang for the publication of *Friends Exchange*—a magazine for gay men which includes HIV prevention information. This magazine is widely circulated among communities of gay men throughout China. In the following years, Ford continued support Zhang to reach out to gay communities beyond major cities. In 2000, the China National Association for STD/AIDS Prevention and Control co-hosted with Prof. Zhang the first national conference on MSM and HIV, and thus for the first time officially granted legitimacy to HIV prevention efforts for this high-risk group.

***Barry and Martin's Trust (BM Trust)***<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Information and explanation of Barry and Martin's Trust's work in China were gathered from several meetings with its founder, Martin Gordon, O.B.E., in San Francisco, December 2004.



The Barry and Martin's Trust is a private British charity registered and founded in 1996, and it has been operating exclusively on AIDS issues in China ever since. At that time, the British governmental overseas assistance agency—DFID—was not interested in funding any AIDS-related projects in China yet. Founder of the BM Trust, Martin Gordon, O.B.E., first worked with a principal hospital in London, and sponsored exchanges of nurses and doctors in between U.K. and China. Later, BM Trust collaborated with the Chinese Preventive Medicine Academy (now transformed into the State CDC). Currently, it works primarily with You'an Hospital, one of two major infectious disease hospitals in China.

BM Trust's working philosophy is: "Small is beautiful, focusing on small projects, grassroots groups, integrity, minimum over-charge and transaction cost." The founders first met with Prof. Zhang Beichuan in 1997, and soon co-funded his work with the Ford Foundation. With the 5000 UKP from the BM Trust, Prof. Zhang established gay hotlines in over 10 major cities. Currently, BM Trust is funding numerous citizens' initiatives in AIDS prevention across the country with an annual budget of 100,000 UKP.

BM Trust's identification of grantees usually goes through personal networks in China. And, knowing the complicated situation with registering an NGO in China, the Trust does not require grantee groups have formal registration status.<sup>109</sup> They do not even follow large foundations or multilateral agencies in asking Chinese grantees to write grant proposal, mid-term evaluation, and project final report (most of the

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<sup>109</sup> This is allowed under the U.K. charity law.

times in English). They want to include as many grassroots groups as possible, and provide them with necessary assistance.

*AIDS Relief Fund for China (ARFC)*<sup>110</sup>

Similar to the BM Trust yet smaller (2004 annual budget: 30,000 USD), the AIDS Relief Fund for China adopts the approach of progressive giving. ARFC was initiated by a group of concerned citizens, mostly Chinese Americans, in the San Francisco Bay Area, and formally established in the fall of 2003. One of the co-founders, Humphrey Wou, had previously been involved with international assistance to environmental activism in China. So, by the time he decided to take up the AIDS prevention cause, he had a fairly clear notion of the importance of supporting bottom-up initiatives and the potential of the emerging social activism in China.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, ARFC's main grant-making strategy was to focus on start-up groups, pilot projects, and leadership development, with a particular emphasis on community-based solutions. ARFC's goal is to direct funding to "on-the-ground leadership and grassroots efforts". Members of ARFC believe that the enhancement of grassroots capacity is an indispensable component of the larger context of AIDS prevention in China. They also recognize that because of the particular political context in current China and the weakness of NGOs and grassroots groups, extra effort has to be made to take the risk of supporting emerging bottom-up voluntary initiatives and helping

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<sup>110</sup> I served as ARFC's in-country nominating advisor for the year of 2004.

<sup>111</sup> I came to know Humphrey Wuo in 2000 when following the environmental movements and advocacy networks in China. Special thanks to Humphrey for sharing his insights on both environmental and AIDS prevention issues all these years.

them to develop their own capacity. This is exactly the area where most multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies, and even the Ford Foundation, do not usually look into. Unless a Chinese NGO can get an English speaking staff or volunteer, the chance for it to get a grant from an international organization is slim.

Knowing this sub-culture of the grant-making world by heart, ARFC's leadership decided to only make two types of grants: small grants (1000-5000 USD) and micro grants (below 500 USD). In China, these small-scale grants can go a long way to help groups that work at the community level and cannot obtain funding from international agencies. In Shanghai, Jiaotong University students started their own AIDS peer education group. ARFC's grant of 500 USD enabled them to conduct 22 workshops in half a year.

ARFC makes the most effort to search for grantees at the grassroots level, and many times their grants served as emergency relief for these groups. For example, when ARFC was introduced to the Qianxi Women's Health Association in summer 2004, they found out that this women's group had done excellent work in promoting basic health awareness in the past two years, while its only funding (from the Asia Foundation) had ended. ARFC passed a small grant (2000 USD) to this group to do HIV/AIDS education among the rural population in Qianxi county. Because of the success of its HIV education work, the Qianxi group later was able to obtain more funding from other international organizations.

Within its first year of work, due to personal connections with AIDS prevention activists, ARFC was able to issue grants to 12 Chinese NGOs and

grassroots groups in eight provinces. Moreover, ARFC's support to local Chinese groups often included non-monetary support. Board members often met with activists and NGO leaders, and shared information and perspectives on best practices in AIDS prevention with them. ARFC organized brainstorm sessions in China, inviting many grantees and other AIDS prevention professionals to strategize together for innovative approaches.

The Ford Foundation, BM Trust and ARFC do not encompass all international donors that fund Chinese NGOs and grassroots groups working in AIDS. For example, the Asia Foundation has also supported AIDS related work among migrant women in Guangdong. However, there are certainly obvious differences between all the foundations mentioned above and another group of foundations currently interested in funding AIDS work in China, particularly the Gates Foundation, and the Clinton Foundation. These two large foundations that fight AIDS at the global level so far have paid most of their attention to the Chinese central government.

In the past decade, international NGOs and advocacy groups have played a unique role in changing domestic practices and politics in the AIDS field. First, they reacted to the rise of HIV infection in southwest China and introduced many innovative methods (e.g., peer-education, participatory workshops, community-based health care), before the Chinese government openly admitted the problem and multilateral and bilateral agencies identified an AIDS crisis in China. Second, taking great risk, a few international NSAs directly delivered treatment and health services to

the patients resulting from the blood scandal and continuously pushed for changes at local levels in Henan, where most external organizations were blocked from entering until 2004. Third, international NGOs and private organizations frequently, openly, and directly support individual activists and Chinese NGOs in HIV/AIDS prevention, which has been crucial to the rise of social activism in this field. In many cases, international NSAs provided the opportunity for marginalized groups (e.g., CSW, MSM, IDU) to voice their opinions and organize their own groups. Last but not least, together with local social groups, international NGOs have been able to design and implement effective programs that are suitable for specific high-risk populations with which governmental authorities are not familiar.

International advocacy groups achieved the above because of their ability to form broad networks within both the governmental body and local communities. To persuade the Chinese government to change existing policies or to adopt new ideas and measures, international advocacy groups often first engage the government in learning processes, provide assistance to solve specific problems, or implement pilot projects as demonstration for the government. They have to acquire the opportunity to get access into the governing body and communicate their principles with the government. They also have to learn how to sustain their presence and advocacy work in China, so that they can win the time to complete operationalizing their own principles in AIDS prevention and care, and continue negotiating and interacting with the government.

To consolidate their advocacy work among local communities and the general public, international advocacy groups seek opportunities to support and partner with Chinese NGOs. Through innovative grant making and interpersonal interaction, a few international NGOs and private foundations have been able to get access to the most devastated regions and populations, as well as to strengthen civil society capacity.

Such are the general features in terms of how individual external advocacy actors work and establish alliances in China. However, as a whole group, different actors apply different strategies around the same time. Engagement and protesting co-exist when networks among activists, NGOs, professionals, and open-minded officials grow.

#### CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Despite the Chinese government's long-time denial and lack of capacity, international NSAs have been able to gradually form effective governmental connections, and successfully introduce new ideas and solutions in HIV/AIDS prevention at local levels since the mid-1990s. With the growth of domestic civil society groups and activism against AIDS, there is a great potential for international NSAs to expand their advocacy work in local communities. However, with the centralization of the governing structures over AIDS-related issues, it is not clear whether local governments would enjoy the autonomy of collaborating with international organizations, and whether social groups will be incorporated into policy

implementations. While the community of Chinese AIDS-related NGOs and activist groups has grown substantially since 2002, not enough evidence can show that a collective social identity is emerging. Meanwhile, the AIDS situation in China is receiving mounting attention from the international arena, and large volumes of assistance have been granted to health authorities in China. During his speech at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. in November 2004, UNAID President Peter Piot repeatedly mentioned that China, India, and Russia are the major countries that compose the “second wave” of global AIDS epidemic. All of this has further complicated domestic political context in the AIDS field faced by external advocacy groups.

By tracing individual international NSAs’ history and working relations, I found that while networks are emerging, domestic and external advocacy actors in the AIDS fields are not as tightly tied together as those in nature conservation. Despite individual international NGOs’ unique and important contribution to alleviate AIDS crisis in Henan and many other places, external advocates have not consolidated their connections with each other and joined forces to promote changes beyond local levels. As a whole, transnational advocacy networks in HIV/AIDS prevention have not reached the level of maturity as in nature conservation. In the next chapter, I will explicate what and how particular political factors have caused this difference between the two cases.

## CHAPTER 5

### **DOMESTIC STRUCTURES AND TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY MOBILIZATION: A CROSS-SECTORAL COMPARISON**

In the previous two chapters, I focused on particular context, processes, strategies and political relations associated with individual international advocacy actors in China. This chapter examines and compares international advocacy actors' political relations in China at the aggregate level. I attempt to capture the patterns of political relations that transnational networks have generated and in which they are situated, marked by the triangular relationship among the Chinese state, domestic civil society groups, and international NGOs and advocates within a specific issue area. Again, for clarification purpose, what is to be measured here is not the actual impact of these international non-state actors on the decline of HIV infection rate or increase in the number of national parks in China, but the relational patterns and forms of interaction developed among the Chinese governmental agencies, international NGOs, and Chinese social groups.

To do so, I first examine the formal working relationships (i.e., project partnership) international NGOs have established with various state agencies and social organizations in order to give a snapshot of the triangular relationship addressed in this study. Results from this examination confirm the argument that international advocates engage with both the state and society to reach the goals of consensus building and policy changes. I focus on working relationships not to exclude those international NSAs that are not present in China yet are involved in



advocacy work in the international arena, but to highlight the deepening engagement of international NSAs in domestic politics. This variable—international NGOs' working partnership—is a crude indicator to depict the general and overall pattern of the complex relations surrounding the networks of international and domestic advocacy actors.

The second step is to further explore international NSAs' relations with the Chinese state and civil society sector separately, and the substance of advocacy mobilization they have generated targeting various governmental and non-governmental actors. I in particular explore four aspects of their work related to mobilizing the Chinese state (i.e., information dissemination, policy implementation, input in policy-making and institution building), and three related to social mobilization (i.e., public education, local capacity building and promoting social activism). I analyze the similarities and differences in international NSAs' state and social mobilization reflected in the compiled data.

To measure is to compare; and to compare is to better understand. By juxtaposing the similarities and differences arising in international NGOs' mobilization in environment and health in China, I attempt to distinguish the political factors that can best explain the triangular relationship among the state, society and international NGOs. A higher level of internationalization in environmental governance and development of environmental activism best explains why transnational advocacy networks emerged earlier in nature conservation than HIV/AIDS prevention. Central control within the governing structures and

interconnectivity among civil society groups stand out as the main factors that determine whether international advocates are able to expand and deepen state and social mobilization in China.

In the last part of this chapter, I use a set of deepening indicators to compare international NGOs' input in bridging the state and society in the two fields—creating new communication channels, experimenting with project-based public participation methods, and institutionalizing public participation together with the Chinese government and civil society groups. Findings from this comparison confirm my hypotheses in Chapter 2 that domestic state-society relations are evolving and that external advocacy actors can lessen domestic contention as well as elevate it through a third party. The double-mobilization concept emphasizes this dynamic aspect between transnational networks and domestic politics.

#### **OVERVIEW OF THE TWO CASES: HISTORIC TRAJECTORY AND THE CURRENT FORM OF THE DUAL PARTNERSHIP**

Chapters 3 and 4 have shown that transnational advocacy networks are emerging in both nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China. While both international non-state actors (NSA) communities seem to have grown to a similar scale, indicated by the total number of international NGOs and geographic spread of their work, there are important differences between the two cases. Existing domestic governing structures and civil society development have, to some extent, shaped the trajectory of transnational advocacy community in the two fields. I will illustrate such

effects by three findings from a comparison of the two cases:

1) There is a time-lag in the development history of the international NGO community in the AIDS field. This is due to the relatively late process of internationalization in China's health governing system and a lower level of interconnection among domestic civil society groups in the field;

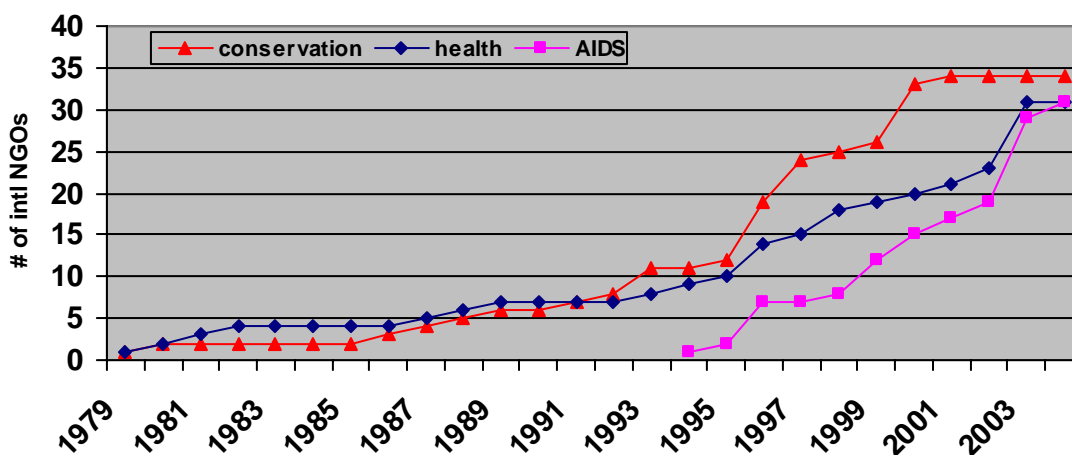
2) International conservation NGOs present a more balanced double-mobilization pattern, while international AIDS-related NGOs engage more with the Chinese state, reflected in their working partnerships. By the comparison of China's green civil society, domestic health and AIDS-related NGOs and other civil society groups are much less connected with each other. Therefore, a more matured domestic civil society sector has assisted international NSAs' social mobilization in the nature conservation field; and

3) Measured by international NGOs' dual partnership with both Chinese governmental and non-governmental actors at different levels, the nature conservation case presents evidence of the deepening of transnational double-mobilization. A relatively shorter history partially explains why such a deepening process has not yet emerged in the HIV/AIDS case. The visible expansion and deepening of transnational advocacy networks in the conservation field is mostly due to the bureaucratic relations at the central level, local forestry bureau autonomy, and a growing sense of collective identity within the Chinese environmental activism groups. In addition, recent changes in the health governing system also cast shadows on the development of transnational advocacy networks.

### What Delayed Transnational Advocacy in HIV/AIDS prevention in China?

Reviewing the historical developments of the two international NGO communities, reflected in the total numbers of international NGOs in each field, one will first notice that there is a significant difference in the numbers of total international NGOs working in the two fields for most of their history. The conservation international NGO community seems to have been much larger than that related to AIDS until very recent years. (Figure 5.1)

Figure 5.1. Growth of international NGOs in conservation, health, and HIV/AIDS prevention in China



Some may interpret this time-lag in the history of the two cases as simply due to the fact that AIDS is a newer issue than nature conservation. However, such an explanation is only valid for the period from 1994 to 1996. From 1996 to 2002, both international communities grew steadily, but the gap increased in the total number of international NGOs of the two sectors. If everything remained the same, and the only difference is the starting point, how do we explain this growing gap, and the substantial shrinking of it since 2003?

Moreover, as I mentioned in Chapter 4, many international NGOs currently working in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention actually started working in the area of China's public health system in the late 1970s. If we replace the line of the number of international NGOs in the AIDS field with that of international NGOs in reproductive and sexual health, the argument that "it is only about time" becomes even more problematic. The two international NGO communities, in fact, had a very similar history for the first 15 years. The total number of international conservation NGOs remained very small (below 10) until the beginning of the 1990s. Significant increase took place only after 1995. Many influential conservation NGOs within the community (e.g., The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International) did not arrive in China until the end of the 1990s. Similarly, the pre-1995 years did not see much growth of the international health NGO community, in terms of the total number of NGOs. However, during the period from 1995 to 2002, the development pattern of the two communities diverged greatly. While the international health NGO community mostly maintained its gradual pace, the conservation case exhibited noticeable jumps in 1996 and again in 2000, when the total number of international conservation NGOs increased by 58% and 27%, respectively. In 2003, the number of international health NGOs rocketed from 23 to 31, and by the end of the research period, the two communities once again converged in their general profile. Therefore, there seems to have been an almost seven-year lag between the two cases of conservation and reproductive health in the history of international NGO development (1979-2004), independent from the discovery of AIDS in China in 1985.

### *Alternative explanations*

How do we interpret the seemingly delayed arrival international NGOs in the case of HIV/AIDS prevention compared with that of conservation? Besides the above argument of timing, there are other potential explanations for this puzzle, such as resources at the international level, organizational strategies, issue characteristics, and leadership in advocacy networks.

First, some would argue that the cause originates from the international arena—there are simply not enough resources and a sufficiently favorable environment for international NGOs to mobilize for changing China's domestic policies. While I agree that international resources relevant for assessing transnational activism to protecting eco-systems and combating AIDS on a global scale, it does not appear to be true for the China case.<sup>1</sup> As I particularly pointed out in Chapters 3 and 4, multilateral and bilateral funding agencies responded to both environmental degradation and the AIDS epidemic after the problem was identified. The World Bank

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<sup>1</sup> Even at the global level, this resource availability/political opportunity argument has its limits. According to this view, it is because the history of global environmentalism is about 20 years longer, and there are much more inter-governmental agreements, funds and institutions available for international NGOs to strategize with than that in the field of HIV/AIDS. However, recent studies have shown that global environmentalism is on decline since the early 1990s, while the issue of HIV/AIDS is becoming a priority for the U.N. and most bilateral assistance agencies among the developed countries since the end of the 1990s. (On the decline of environmentalism: Finger, Matthias, ed. 1992. *The Green Movement Worldwide*. Series "Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change". Greenwich: JAI Press. Bramwell, Anna. 1994. *The Fading of the Greens: The Decline of Environmental Politics in the West*. New Haven: Yale University. On the rise of HIV/AIDS awareness: Mann, Jonathan, Daniel Tarantola, and Thomas Netter, eds. 1992. *AIDS in the World*. Boston: Harvard University Press. Mann, Jonathan, and Daniel Tarantola, eds. 1996. *AIDS in the World II: Global Dimensions, Social Roots, and Responses*. (The Global AIDS Policy Coalition). New York: Oxford University Press. Barnett, Tony, and Alan Whiteside. 2002. *AIDS in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. Eberstadt, Nicholas. 2002. "The Future of AIDS." *Foreign Affairs*. 81, 6.)

and U.N. agencies have provided considerable funds and opportunities in both cases. In fact, some intergovernmental factors can be interpreted as more favorable for international NGOs' mobilization for HIV/AIDS prevention. For example, the total multilateral and bilateral assistance to the Chinese government to control HIV/AIDS (by 2004) is more than triple the domestic budget on the issue. The five million USD from USAID to focus on AIDS issues in Guangxi and Yunnan is the largest initiative of U.S. official bilateral aid to China since 1989.<sup>2</sup> These factors could potentially allow international advocates to require accountability from and place pressures back onto the Chinese government.

The second alternative explanation is that there is a lack of successful strategies within the transnational health/AIDS advocacy community. As Heather Heckel's insightful research reveals, there are many internal coordination hurdles within the transnational health/AIDS advocacy community, which is composed of activists and professionals promoting diverse causes such as medical research in AIDS, human rights for PLWHA, equal access to HIV drug across countries, and AIDS orphan issues. Among these internal obstacles, the hierarchical structures embedded in and around the World Health Organization have greatly hindered the communication and collaboration between international and grassroots health/AIDS

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<sup>2</sup> After the Tian'anmen movement, USAID stopped any overseas assistance to China, due to its mission of "supporting democracy". Except for a small grant through the American Bar Association to promote environmental law education in China in 2002, the ongoing HIV/AIDS project, as part of the Greater Mekong Initiative, is the first major, and multi-year grant USAID issued to be implemented inside mainland China.

organizations.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it is not the case that transnational advocacy on HIV/AIDS has failed uniformly because of such internal problems and the lack of coordinated strategies. Rachel DeMotts and Lawrence Markowitz's comparative studies of Russia and South Africa showed that the internationally constructed discourses on HIV/AIDS diverge substantially once encountering domestic politics. The processes of domestic norm socialization are not unidirectional, according to the two authors.<sup>4</sup> Recent reports on AIDS in Ukraine, contrary to the criticism of transnational AIDS activism, have praised the work of two international NGOs, PATH and International HIV/AIDS Alliance.<sup>5</sup> Organizational variables at the international level seem inadequate to explain the variances across countries. Note that so far we are only examining the emergence of transnational advocacy networks, since organizational strategies will be discussed again when explaining the further development in scope and depth of networks' activities.

The third and fourth common explanations for the emergence or non-emergence of transnational activism and advocacy are the nature of the issue at hand and the role of leadership. In their book, Keck and Sikkink particularly highlighted these two factors as among the most important ones affecting the origins of

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<sup>3</sup> Heckel, Heather. 2001. "Limitations of Transnational Advocacy: The Failure of the HIV/AIDS Prevention Networks". Paper presented at American Political Science Association annual meeting in San Francisco.

<sup>4</sup> DeMotts, Rachel, and Lawrence Markowitz. 2004. "Framing the Epidemic: The Case of UNAIDS". Paper presented at American Political Science Association annual meeting in Chicago.

<sup>5</sup> Because of the Ukrainian government's ineffectiveness in executing the grants from the Global Fund, the Fund forestalled the processing of the remaining money, and selected PATH and International HIV/AIDS Alliance as new grant managing agencies. [Available at: <http://www.unaids.org>, last accessed 15 March 2005.]



transnational advocacy networks. They argued that issues involving bodily harm to vulnerable individuals would trigger a short and clear causal chain in which case it is easier to identify who is responsible, making transnational Boomerang-type advocacy more likely to emerge.<sup>6</sup> This argument is rooted in the concept of “framing” in the contentious politics literature. It seems that if a policy issue is directly related to personal welfare, it is easier for norm entrepreneurs and activists to frame, and in turn, to mobilize the masses. However, if anything, the two cases studied in this research presented opposite findings. Even though both over-exploitation of natural resources and ineffective public health policies cause millions of the poor to suffer, the “bodily harm” is more visible in the AIDS case. The Chinese government is more culpable for the AIDS crisis, particularly because of the blood scandal. Yet, the international NGO and advocacy community has not made full use of the “framing” value of the AIDS case in China to mobilize the large number of blood contamination victims.

As to the factor of leadership, after closely following the two networks for years, I can identify a number of key individuals in each case, but not particular individuals or international NGOs so distinctive that without him/her/it the whole advocacy community would fall apart. In fact, contrary to the common impression, I find that most so-called activists, or NGO leaders interviewed for this research prefer a low-profile working style. I did not find either of the two networks excessively depending on a small circle of individuals and their personal capacities, but rather a cumulative movement of a group of diverse organizations and actors.

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<sup>6</sup> Keck and Sikkink, pp26-28.

Networks are not like cells, atoms, or computer programs, but complex systems of actors, structures, and interactions. While I find none of the above explanations satisfactory for understanding the delay of transnational advocacy on HIV/AIDS prevention in China, my point is not to completely refute the value of these arguments. From my field work, however, two other variables stand out as better explanations—internationalization in governing structures, and development of domestic social activism—for the emergence of transnational advocacy networks within an issue area.

### *Internationalization of governing structures*

Internationalization of domestic governance matters to the emergence of transnational advocacy networks in that a minimal opportunity window is required for any external actors to grasp entry points into a polity. The level of internationalization of the governing structures of nature conservation is higher than that of HIV/AIDS prevention, because the environmental protection sector is distinctively more open to international influence within the Chinese state apparatus. This factor has created a more favorable condition for transnational advocacy to emerge in nature conservation.

#### 1) Level of internationalization in forestry and health sectors

The two main governing bodies in China's nature conservation and disease control—the forestry and public health bureaucratic systems—remained relatively closed to the international arena until recent years. International relations related to these two sectors for a long time were limited to research exchanges, receiving international

assistance, and bilateral inter-departmental cooperation. The level of internationalization in the forestry sector is slightly higher than that in public health in terms of the familiarity with international NSAs during the pre-SARS period. Since the early 1990s, WWF China has been working and collaborating with SFB and forestry bureaus in various provinces. Health authorities from central to local rejected international NGOs direct and independent intervention in HIV/AIDS prevention until very recently. The turning point was as recent as the SARS crisis in 2003.<sup>7</sup> When I conducted interviews at the International Cooperation Office of the MoH in summer 2004, officials were very familiar with the Global Fund, British DFID, U.S. CDC, and Clinton Foundation, but not any international NGOs or private foundations.<sup>8</sup>

Though SARS for the first time made the Chinese government open up its health system for international delegates and inspections, it also triggered a wave of centralizing the health sector within the Chinese state. The latter effect could potentially defeat the former to a degree. There is no doubt that the status and recognition of MoH at the central level, and health bureaus at all levels of governments have been rapidly elevated. It is not certain whether international NGOs and advocates can gain advantage in inserting their influence in the midst of the gigantic volume of multilateral and bilateral AIDS related assistance. This point will be touch upon again when analyzing the development of transnational networks.

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<sup>7</sup> Hu, Angang et al. 2003. *SARS in Perspective: Health and Development*. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Interviews with Li Mingzhu (MoH Bilateral Cooperation Department), Xing Jun (MoH Multilateral Cooperation Department) in Beijing, 4 August, 2004.

## 2) Level of internationalization in environmental protection

Despite a relatively lower level of internationalization within the forestry governing system, international NGOs and advocates were able to ally with environmental protection bureaus at different levels to raise awareness of nature conservation problems. China's environmental governing body—from SEPA to EPBs at different levels—is a relatively new sector compared with forestry and health sectors, which did not gain the full-ministry ranking until 1998. China's environmental protection sector is among the most internationalized administrative systems within the state apparatus:

1) It was exposed to international discourses from the every beginning of its history. In a sense, the idea of establishing an independent governing body in environmental protection was inspired by the national delegates to the Helsinki Conference in 1972;<sup>9</sup>

2) Since the establishment of SEPA, it has been a frequent participant in international environmental meetings and negotiations.<sup>10</sup> China's participation in inter-governmental environmental regime building is significantly higher than in other

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<sup>9</sup> Economy argued that international factors have always played a role in the emergence and evolution of the domestic environmental protection regime in China. After the deep frustration the Chinese delegation encountered during the 1972 Stockholm UN Conference, the Prime Minister at that time, Zhou Enlai, who headed the Chinese delegation to Stockholm, took the initiative to organize the first national environmental meetings after the Conference. A Working Group of Environmental Protection was set up in 1974. (Economy, 1998.)

<sup>10</sup> Chan, Gerald. 2004. "China's Compliance in Global Environmental Affairs." *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*. 45, 1: 69-86.

fields.<sup>11</sup> Currently, China is a party to 16 multilateral environmental treaties (including 7 related to nature conservation), and has been particularly active in global climate change regime building; and,

3) More importantly, led by SEPA, the environmental protection sector present much more informal channels and epistemic community activities and a higher level of internationalization of global environmentalism norms. For example, epistemic networks sprouted around the China Committee of International Cooperation in Environment and Development, established by both SEPA and the State Council as the highest level consultative body for environmental policy-making. In addition, SEPA has paid particular attention to providing overseas learning opportunities for its officials.

Therefore, even though there are many political obstacles in both cases for international NSAs to get access to China's governing agencies and go down to local levels to implement advocacy work, they found some windows of opportunity in nature conservation by connecting with environmental protection officials and agencies.

### 3) Bureaucratic relations: an intervening factor

One incidental, yet relevant bureaucratic factor also contributing to the disparity between the two cases is that during the time when international advocacy actors were

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<sup>11</sup> Some critics interpreted this as due to the fact that the Chinese government uses the environment as a non-politically sensitive outlet to remain engaged in international affairs. However, health also presents a non-politically sensitive case.

trying to get their hands on China's conservation problems, the forestry sector—traditionally the dominant governmental body in nature conservation issues—was losing its political power at the central level. During the central administrative reform in 1998, the Ministry of Forestry was demoted to the State Forestry Bureau (deputy-ministry-level), while the National Environmental Protection Administration was promoted to SEPA (full-ministry-level). This power shift between the environmental protection and forestry sector at the central level, to some extent, secured many international NGO and advocates' status, work, and connections in China. SEPA's rising power within the Chinese state system allowed it to collaborate with more international NSAs. The 1998 reform also expanded jurisdictional boundaries of SEPA and EPBs. International NSAs, therefore, have got more access to local communities because of their formal and informal connections with EPBs at all levels. Moreover, the power-shift between SEPA and SFB also generated new incentives for the SFB to be more open to international non-state actors so that it can better compete with SEPA in overlapping areas (particularly nature conservation). Hence, we see that SFB has formed partnerships with TNC and CI since 1998.

In theory, we could have a situation of parallel administrative bodies in HIV/AIDS prevention similar to that in conservation. In China, it is not the health bureaus, but the family planning agencies that are in direct charge of reproductive and sexual health. However, due to the international health and AIDS community's mistrust of and isolation from China's family planning and population control sector, the health bureaus have become the predominant governmental actors in transnational

advocacy politics around AIDS.

China has probably the most sophisticated family planning administration in the world, which has effectively enforced the “One-child Policy” since 1978. Currently, there are 4 million professional family planning staff and over 40,000 reproductive health stations across the country.<sup>12</sup> In addition, family planning and birth control used to be at the top of the list of China’s national priorities. It was common knowledge to Chinese politicians (e.g., provincial, municipal, and county governors) that their political career was closely linked with their achievement in implementing the one-child policy.<sup>13</sup> So the family planning authorities, from central to local, used to possess a significant level of political leverage in Chinese politics. During an interview, Chen Jianzhong, a current PATH China officer and a former staff member of the China’s National Family Planning Association, gave me a personal observation to explain the politics of the family planning system in China: Provincial and local chief governmental officials used to pay more respect to staff from the State Family Planning Commission (now National Population and Family Planning Commission—NPFPC) than to the Ministry of Health.<sup>14</sup>

However, China’s “One-child Policy” is notorious internationally and has been used as one major piece of evidence for accusing the Chinese government of violating

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<sup>12</sup> The interpretation of these numbers gets blurred at county or lower levels, because it is very common that the deputy township governor is also the director of women’s affairs, ethnic relations, public health, and family planning. However, it is not an exaggeration to argue that the family planning system is well-established and far-reaching.

<sup>13</sup> It is common knowledge to Chinese bureaucrats and party-cadres that one cannot be promoted if his constituency fails in population control requirements during his term.

<sup>14</sup> Interviewed in Beijing, 17 April 2004.

human rights by many foreign governments, intergovernmental organizations and international NGOs. Therefore, for a long time, the family planning agencies in China have been off the radar of most international organizations working in AIDS-related fields, except a few U.N. and bilateral agencies. Li Dongli, a leading demographer and social scientist affiliated with the NPFPC, told me during an telephone interview that during an international population conference in America, she almost felt ostracized once her official identity was known.<sup>15</sup> Even though NPFPC has launched major initiatives in public education on AIDS and in behavioral interventions for HIV/AIDS prevention since the early 2004, it has received fewer responses from the international community compared with the MoH.<sup>16</sup> Due to ideological differences, the international AIDS community, more or less, has been refusing to engage with and advocate to China's family planning authorities, which reinforces the degree of bureaucratic centralization in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention.

Domestic bureaucratic relations, hence, are important intervening factors, among many of the others, in the emergence of transnational advocacy networks. While it does not determine the level of internationalization of the governing structures within a sector, it can augment or modify the effects of internationalization of an administrative body on the window of opportunity for external advocacy groups.

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<sup>15</sup> Interviewed in Beijing, 8 April 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Ironically, some of the most recognizable Chinese nationals involved in international NGOs' HIV/AIDS prevention work in China are formerly family planning officers. For example, Liu Liqing, Director of Marie Stopes China Office; Liu Yongfeng, UNESCO Beijing Office HIV/AIDS and School Health National Officer; and, Chen Jianzhong, PATH China Office. They all proved to be every knowledgeable and capable in advocating and implementing AIDS related work at different levels in China.



*Development of civil society sector within an issue area*

The other main contributing factor to the earlier emergence of transnational advocacy networks in conservation is the development of China's green civil society. A vibrant domestic civil society sector, according to much existing literature, provides a more conducive environment for transnational advocacy networks to emerge. The detailed case studies of civil society groups in both fields have revealed that even though pioneer activists started their outreach and direct intervention at grassroots levels around the same time, in the early and middle 1990s, the conservation community has grown substantially faster, in terms of the total numbers of local NGOs and college student groups and the geographic spread of the environmental activist community. A majority of the NGOs, student associations, and community-based PLWHA groups in the AIDS field did not exist until 2002.

Some may argue that the relation between domestic social activism and transnational advocacy networks is like "the chicken and the egg". This is true in terms of the entire development process of the two sides. Support from international NGOs and activists has been essential to the formation, survival and flourishing of many Chinese grassroots groups in both conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention. However, when examining the origins of transnational advocacy networks, I found that there are many internal factors which independently shaped the development of the green community in China. For example, despite tremendous political pressure and policy restrictions, both the Friends of Nature and Global Village of Beijing managed to form a nation-wide membership community. In contrast, none of the

AIDS activists or NGOs has achieved such wide outreach. On the aggregate level, the civil society sector has reached a higher level of development in nature conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention, which has created a more conducive environment for international advocacy actors to locate non-governmental partners, and for transnational networks to emerge.

### **The Current Form of Double-mobilization in the Two Cases**

In general, in both fields of nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention, international NGOs and advocates have pursued collaboration and partnership with both the Chinese state and social groups, and therefore, have exhibited the character of double-mobilization. By comparing international NGOs' working partnerships more carefully, I found that the conservation case presents a more balanced double-mobilization pattern. The collaborative relationship between Chinese societal groups and international NGO in HIV/AIDS prevention has not been developed as much as in the field of nature conservation. Moreover, measuring international NGOs' dual working partnership with both governmental and non-governmental entities at different levels, I found that transnational advocacy networks exhibit more clearly a deepening trend in nature conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention.

#### ***Balanced vs. tilted double-mobilization***

A crude measurement—international NGOs' working partnerships (as of the end of 2004)—is used to get a quick sense of the general pattern of international NGOs' interaction with the state and society. As Table 5.1 shows, it is very common for

international NGOs to partner with the Chinese state. Of each international NGO community studied here, an overwhelming majority (32 out of 34 in conservation, and 29 out of 32 in HIV/AIDS prevention) has established various working relationships with Chinese governmental agencies and GONGOs. It is also common for international NGOs to have working partnership with Chinese NGOs and other social groups (29 in conservation, and 18 in HIV/AIDS prevention). For both cases, it is very rare that an international NGO would work exclusively with Chinese social organizations (2 in conservation, and 3 in HIV/AIDS prevention). In the conservation field, it is rare that an international NGO would exclusively partner with state agencies (5 out of 34); while, this is much more common in HIV/AIDS prevention (14 out of 32).

**Table 5.1. International NGOs' working partnership in conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China (2004)**

	<b>Nature Conservation</b>	<b>HIV/AIDS prevention</b>
<b>Total number of international NGOs</b>	34	32 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Number of international NGOs partnering w/ the Chinese state</b>	32	29
<b>Exclusively w/ the state</b>	5	14
<b>Number of international NGOs partnering w/ Chinese social organizations</b>	29	18
<b>Exclusively w/ social organizations</b>	2	3
<b>Number of international NGOs partnering w/ both the Chinese state and social organizations</b>	27	15
Note: <sup>a</sup> One international AIDS related NGO has not established any formal partnership yet by the end of 2004.		

The above data not only illustrates that the international NGO community as a whole has both state and non-state Chinese partners, but also indicates that individual international NGOs have acquired the two types of partners *at once*. About half of the international NGOs in the two fields (27 out of 34 in conservation, and 15 out of 32 in HIV/AIDS prevention) partner with both state and non-state partners at the same time.

This data on working partnerships confirms the observations based in the case study chapters that international NSAs tend to mobilize both the state and society in China to achieve their goals.

A more careful reading of these two sets of numbers (27/34 vs. 15/32) also reveals that such dual partnership is more common in the conservation field than in HIV/AIDS prevention. In addition, there are significantly more international conservation NGOs than AIDS-related NGOs working with Chinese social organizations—29 in conservation and 18 in HIV/AIDS prevention. 14 AIDS related international NGOs exclusively work with Chinese governments at different levels; while, only five international conservation NGOs present this characteristic. All these data hints that international NGOs tend to engage more with governmental agencies in HIV/AIDS than in conservation. This observation will be further substantiated in later sections on the content of international NSAs' state and social mobilization.

### ***Development of the dual partnership***

At the early stages of transnational advocacy and double-mobilization, the process is quite “messy”, when individual NGOs or activists would apply various strategies to locate the best niche for their activities in China. As advocacy networks and coalitions mature, we find that advocacy actors emerge at multiple levels involved in a variety of activities. Moreover, more individual NGOs expand their working relationship to ensure the policy impact of their demonstration projects, or the practical outcome of their policy recommendations, or to strengthen public awareness and behavioral changes in the specific issue area. Therefore, we see the number of advocacy

organizations that engage with both governmental and societal actors increase as networks continue to develop. Table 5.2 below presents the number of international NGOs that have established working partnerships with both governmental and non-governmental entities at different levels in conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China by the end of 2004, which confirms this observation.

In both issue areas, most connections between international NGOs and Chinese governmental and non-governmental actors happen at county and lower levels; networks become thinner at the central level. While two thirds of international conservation NGOs have engaged both governmental and non-governmental actors at the grassroots level (county and lower levels), only one third have built up comprehensive partnerships ranging from local to central levels. About half of international health NGOs partner with local social and governmental entities, but merely three of them have achieved to incorporate both governmental agencies at all levels and social groups.

**Table 5.2. International NGOs' dual partnerships at different levels (2004)**

Partnering w/ both governmental agencies and social organizations at	Number of international NGOs	
	Nature conservation (34)	HIV/AIDS prevention (32)
all levels	12	3
provincial and lower levels	14	8
county and lower levels	22	15

Despite the above similarity in their political relations, table 5.2 also hints that the international conservation NGO community as a whole has achieved much more comprehensive partnerships at all levels. Thus, the HIV/AIDS prevention transnational network is not only a belated and unbalanced case in this study, but also has not reached the level of depth of the conservation case. More international NGOs

have been able to do so in the field of nature conservation rather than HIV/AIDS prevention; and, more importantly, international conservation NGOs have been able to move across different levels of administration, and build up networks that can potentially link social groups with higher authorities. To clarify, international NGOs are not all, yet main advocacy actors within transnational networks, therefore the data here are only intended to give a snapshot description of the two networks and their political relations. I will further strengthen these points by analyzing the content of international NSA's advocacy and mobilization work in later sections.

### **What Constrains the Deepening of Transnational Double-Mobilization?**

To mobilize both the Chinese public and policy-making circles, and to consolidate the effects of their advocacy work, transnational networks will have to trickle up their on-ground, pilot projects, or trickle down their input in policy formation at the top level: I call these developments a “deepening” process. For transnational HIV/AIDS activism was delayed for the many reasons as just explained, it has not been able to catch up with the pace of the conservation case. Both issue characteristics and organizational factors are intervening factors, whose effects on transnational advocacy politics are not constant but vary across cases. In contrast, bureaucratic decentralization and interconnectivity within the civil society stand out as more important explanatory variables.

The parallel existence of forestry and environmental protection governing bodies, as well as the increasing autonomy local forestry agencies enjoy since the

fiscal reforms in the 1990s, have created more entry points for external advocacy actors. In contrast, two micro-level state structural factors in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention have hindered the deepening of transnational advocacy networks.

1) MoH over CDC. The current Centers for Disease Control (CDCs) are built upon former preventive medical science schools, keeping all the personnel, yet adding more physical and financial infrastructures and turning all medical professionals into governmental officials.<sup>17</sup> The reform of the disease control governance was started around 1998, and accelerated and completed during the SARS crisis in 2003. However, the new disease control system was created not to be independent, but a part of the public health system.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, in a way, MoH and health bureaus are becoming the only governmental authorities involved in AIDS politics in China.

2) Central control over the issue of AIDS. Even though the Chinese state system in general has been undergoing fundamental decentralization since the fiscal reforms in 1992 and 1998, the public health system has actually been re-structured and centralized in recent years. With a more centralized health system headed by MoH, local health bureaus are given less autonomy in decision-making and policy-implementation.

Even though many external advocacy groups have established connections with local health bureaus and CDCs until now, it is becoming more sensitive for local health officials to collaborate with international organizations in HIV/AIDS

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<sup>17</sup> Interviews with China State CDC officials in April 2004. [Wei Nanfang, Zhu Libo]

<sup>18</sup> Li, Rui. "Zhongmei Gonggong Weisheng Tixi Bijiao Xia Lun SARS Dui Zhongguo Gonggong Weisheng Tixi De Yingxiang (Comparing Public Health Systems in China and the U.S., and The Impact of SARS Crisis)." *Shi Jiao (Perspective)*, July 31 2003.

prevention in general with the completion of the CDC reform and the centralization of the health system. Local health bureau and CDCs have to report to MoH about AIDS-related issues. For example, provincial and local officials had to take personal risks for MSF Belgium and Marie Stopes China to build independent medical clinics.<sup>19</sup> In 2005, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, an American think-tank well known to the Chinese MoH, was denied access to work at the provincial level in AIDS prevention. Provincial officials were not sure whether MoH would interfere or not, and they did not want to take the risk.<sup>20</sup> Having said this, I am, however, not arguing that there is no political sensitivity in the conservation field in China. Because nature conservation is related to land use, hydro-power, rural renewable energy and other sensitive issues, it could get as tricky as HIV/AIDS prevention. My point here is rather that political hindrance in conservation at local levels is less often caused by local governments' fear of the central authorities.

When external advocacy actors first arrive in China, some start from below by collaborating with local activists, and engaging local governments to experimenting new solutions, yet others may target the central or provincial governments and endeavor to persuade them to make significant changes in existing policies. The differences embedded in civil society structures are not reflected in the particular form of such initial transnational interactions. However, as transnational advocacy networks develop, domestic structural factors become more relevant to the overall shape of the relationship among the state, society and external political actors.

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<sup>19</sup> Interviews with MSF Belgium and Marie Stopes China in summer 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Meetings notes from the Aixin Foundation, May 2005. [for internal circulation only]



Whether domestic civil society groups are organized and connected influences the overall level of interactions between them and external advocacy actors. External advocacy actors, particularly international NGOs, are goal-oriented, and constrained by available resources. Therefore, they will have to move on and search for other partners and mechanisms to overcome political barriers when they realize that there are few Chinese non-governmental entities they can collaborate with. Even though many international NGOs emotionally and morally prefer to only work with Chinese NGOs or community-based groups, they are currently mostly working local governmental agencies. Because of a relatively more connected civil society community in the environmental field, external advocacy groups are able to strengthen their outreach in the Chinese society:

- 1) Chinese environmental NGOs and activists have improved their own capacity through networking and organizing campaigns together. Therefore, an increasing number of international conservation NGOs have been able to locate Chinese non-governmental partners in recent years.

- 2) Because of local environmentalists' mobilization capacity, external advocacy groups are able to expand their connections with both governmental and non-governmental organizations in China. For example, the partnership with Friends of Natures and Global Village of Beijing helped EETPC (an NGO affiliated with the international Environmental Television Trust) to build up further connections with SEPA. After it was "banned" by the Chinese government in the mid-1990s,

Greenpeace continued its connections with a group of Chinese environmentalists.<sup>21</sup> In 2002, Greenpeace opened an unregistered office in Beijing, and hired Chinese nationals to start preparing for public campaigns. It has so far not only survived, but also established working partnerships in various parts of China due to the alliance, solidarity and support with local Chinese NGOs and activists.

Examined by their working partnerships, the two international NGO communities present some similarities on the surface and some noticeable differences in terms of the density and quality of their state and social mobilization. International NGOs' mobilization networks are more developed and expanded in the conservation field, with more governmental and non-governmental partners involved. Moreover, such networks seem to be more balanced incorporating both the Chinese state and social forces in the conservation field, while, more tilted towards the state in the HIV/AIDS prevention field. However, we have to investigate these networks more substantively to better understand these seeming disparities. In the following three sections, international NSAs' mobilization effort will be further examined against sets of more contextual-based measurements.

#### **TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS MOBILIZING THE CHINESE STATE**

There are two main commonalities in transnational advocacy mobilization involving the Chinese state across the two issue areas. First, international NGOs and advocates have made significant effort to interact with the Chinese state at all levels. Second,

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<sup>21</sup> Greenpeace has a branch based in Hong Kong, but called Greenpeace China.

most international NSAs mobilize the state through consensus-building strategies rather than pressure-building.

### **Mobilizing the State at All Levels**

In the case study chapters, we have seen patterns of transnational advocacy networks engaging state actors from central to local levels. The data presented below further confirms this observation. Table 5.3 shows international NGOs' partnership with Chinese governmental agencies at different levels. 19, 19 and 23 conservation NGOs have established working relationship with central, provincial and county and lower governmental agencies, respectively. The numbers are 14, 14 and 22 in the AIDS field. This table briefly indicates that international NGOs interact with governmental agencies at all levels.

**Table 5.3. International NGOs' partnerships with the Chinese state at different levels**

Partnership w/ the state at	Number of international NGOs	
	Nature conservation	HIV/AIDS prevention
Central level	23	14
Provincial level	19	14
County and lower levels	23	22

This observation is in line with the data from other research teams. There is no other source specifically focusing on international conservation NGOs in China, but on international environmental NGOs (environmental INGOs) in general: *China Environment Series Inventory of Environmental Works in China*, and *China Development Brief data on international NGOs in China*. According to the information from these two sources, environmental INGOs generally have a variety of partners in China, but local government or governmental agencies are most popular

ones to cooperate with. (Table 5.4) There is only one other source of data on INGOs in the AIDS field generated by the UNAIDS China Office. Even though this data is very limited to only 11 INGOs, it presents the similar pattern of INGOs' governmental partnerships as mine. Of the 73 projects implemented by these 11 AIDS-related INGOs, 41 are jointly implemented by international NGOs with local governments, and 32 are with central-level governmental agencies and GONGOs. (Table 5.5)

**Table 5.4. CDB/CES estimates of environmental INGOs' partnerships with the Chinese state**

Sources	Number of INGOs	Number of INGOs that partner w/ central governmental agencies		Number of INGOs that partner w/ provincial and local governments
		State agencies	Central GONGOs	
CDB 2000 <sup>a</sup>	15	4	6	8
CES 2001 <sup>b</sup>	28	13	17	15
CES 2002 <sup>b</sup>	36	12	20	21

Notes: <sup>a</sup> China Development Brief. (2000). *Directory of International NGOs Supporting Work in China*. Hong Kong: China Development Research Services and author interviews with Chinese government, NGO, and GONGO representatives.  
<sup>b</sup> "The Inventory for Environmental Work in China." *China Environment Series*: Issue 4 (2001), and Issue 5 (2002). Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center.

**Table 5.5. UNAIDS data on INGOs' governmental partners in HIV/AIDS prevention in China (2004)**

Number of INGOs	Number of governmental partners (total: 73)		
	At central level		At provincial and local levels
	State agencies	Central GONGOs	
11	14	18	41

Source: UNAIDS China Programme, December 2004.

### **Mobilizing the State by Consensus Building**

The idea of double-mobilization underlines stresses that advocates consider the targeted government as a negotiable counterpart, and one that is capable of learning and being persuaded. Therefore, they form networks not only to perform leverage politics to make governments *comply*, but also to build up consensus to make governments *agree* to change. By examining and categorizing the content of international NGOs' work, I compiled a set of data to illustrate what external

advocates do to convey information, ideas, or principles to the Chinese government so to gradually reach agreeable terms, and whether contentious or non-contentious means are both applied. (Table 5.6) To assess international NGOs' work in consensus building, I used four indicators: information dissemination, involvement in policy implementation, direct input in policy-making, and partaking in institution building to maintain policy outcomes. I show what are the mechanisms external advocacy actors use to wield their influence and make changes to existing policies. For information dissemination, I further clarified by three categories: information sharing, research collaboration, and training for governmental personnel. To include international NSAs' work in pressure building, I add the information on the number of international NGOs that are engaged with public and media campaign to expose policy problems and challenge governmental authorities.

**Table 5.6. Comparing international NGOs' mobilization of the Chinese state (2004)**

Content of international NGO activities	Number of international NGOs	
	Nature Conservation	HIV/AIDS Prevention
<b>CONSENSUS BUILDING:</b>		
Information dissemination		
<i>Information sharing</i>	28	22
<i>Research collaboration</i>	18	3
<i>Training</i>	17	19
Policy implementation	15	20
Direct policy-making input	15	5
Institution building	6	3
<b>PRESURE BUILDING:</b>		
Public campaign	5	0

The data in Table 5.6 first shows that non-contentious means are frequently applied by international NGOs to interact with the Chinese state. Only a handful of international environmental NGOs have organized public campaigns to openly criticize governmental policies, and mobilize pressure onto the governments. While

much effort has been spent to disseminating information, and demonstrating norms and solutions by participating in policy implementation, international NGOs still have limited access to *directly* exert influence in policy-making. In terms of institution building which would sustain policy changes in the long-run, very few international NGOs have been able get involved in the processes in both cases.

Table 5.6 also gives a good sense of the difference in international NGOs' mobilization of the Chinese state across the two cases studied. There are two most striking dissimilarities between the two: 1) international conservation NGOs have been able to exert their influence by direct policy input much more in nature conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention; 2) international health NGOs have not employed any openly confrontational means to change state behavior in the AIDS field. This more substantive analysis of international NGOs' deeds confirms the observation that transnational advocacy mobilization has reached a deeper degree in nature conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention in China.

### ***Information dissemination***

As explained in the theoretical chapter, international NGOs and advocacy actors can influence state behavior by feeding the state with advanced information, or by engaging the state in research projects, so that new knowledge will be generated and disseminated. Through these trainings, international NGOs and advocates have helped Chinese governmental officials and professionals to digest new information, learn the implications of research findings, and more importantly, go through the practical methods of AIDS education, care, and treatment, and conservation implementation. In

both fields, I have found evidence of international NGOs and advocacy groups sharing information with, and providing training opportunities for the Chinese government. However, there is a significant gap between the two networks in terms of their involvement in sponsoring or engaging the Chinese government in fundamental research. In both nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention, how to carry out research and interpret research findings matters substantially to the final decision-making on policy making. International advocacy actors can better defend and promote their normative principles if they are involved in research projects, which usually take place before actual policy-crafting or law-making. Therefore, the above gap suggests that international NSAs have been mobilizing to change the perceptions and understandings of the Chinese state to a higher degree by engaging the government in fundamental research.

The majority of the international NGOs studied (28 out of 34 international environmental NGOs, and 22 of 32 international health NGOs) voluntarily shared information and research findings with the Chinese government. This is a strong evidence for double-mobilization, and a challenge to the Boomerang arguments, which only emphasizes the information-sharing between domestic and international advocates, and the point the advocates use shared information to leverage pressure onto the targeted government. Many examples of information sharing were given in the previous two chapters, and here I will give another brief reference. After China became a member of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in 1996, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serving as the formal channel for information exchanges,

IUCN pursued multiple technical contact channels with a range of Ministries and Departments, notably the SEPA, SFB, the Academy of Sciences and the State Oceanic Administration.

Providing training and learning opportunities to governmental agencies and personnel is the field where many international NGOs and advocacy groups find they can immediately lend their help so to get into the broader political picture. Moreover, this is the area where international health NGOs appear to be more involved than in the case of conservation. For example, Helping AIDS in Resource Poor Areas (HARPA), an American NGO, has sponsored the Chinese Academy of Medical Science to provide AIDS Clinical Training Courses to health officials and state-affiliated professionals in 11 provinces across the country.

Some external advocacy groups, either due to limited resources, or their more restricted views on engaging the Chinese government, only sponsor key governmental officials or state-affiliated professionals to participate in advanced trainings. For example, in 2002, the Aixin Foundation sponsored Jin Wei, lecturer of the Central Party School, to attend an intensive workshop in women's leadership and public health education in Washington, D.C. Jin acknowledged that she greatly benefited from this learning experience, which strengthened her lectures on AIDS-related policies back in Beijing, and prepared her to edit the *Handbook on AIDS Prevention for Party Leaders* published in 2003. Members of the Aixin Foundation saw this as an effective way to indirectly change the mind-set of thousands of Chinese Party cadres



at a low financial expenditure.<sup>22</sup>

Even though most international NGOs and advocates are committed to basing their work on reliable sources, many are either unwilling or unable to fund governmental research projects. In the case of China, because of the close relationship between the state and academy, international advocates sometimes sponsor fundamental research as a way to establish connections with the state. In fact, it is fairly common in the field of conservation, where 18 of the 34 international NGOs have conducted research together with Chinese governmental and quasi-governmental agencies. However, the HIV/AIDS transnational advocacy case differs dramatically in this respect, with only three international NGOs sponsoring the Chinese state in fundamental research. At the central level, the only exception here is the China AIDS Initiative (CAI), coordinated by the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center (ADARC).

The New York based ADARC is widely recognized as one of the world's leading institutions in basic science of AIDS and its related research. Since 2003, the ADARC has been coordinating the China AIDS Initiative, a transnational effort to “produce dramatic and sustained interventions that will greatly reduce the size of what could otherwise become a devastating AIDS epidemic, far exceeding the impact of SARS”.<sup>23</sup> Beside ADARC, CAI coordinates the capacity, resources, and expertise of a broad network of NGOs and other implementing organizations, including the AIDS

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<sup>22</sup> Multiple interviews with Aixin members in Beijing and Maryland, U.S. in 2004.

<sup>23</sup> The China AIDS Initiative reports. [Available online: <http://www.adarc.org>, last accessed 15 Dec 2004]

Research Center (Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/Peking Union Medical College), William J. Clinton Presidential Foundation, Yale-China Association, Project HOPE, Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, Tsinghua University (China), Wuhan University (China) and Bureaus of Health in Yunnan, Henan, and Hubei provinces. Under this working framework, a series of clinical research and treatment testing have been conducted in two cities in Yunnan by the end of 2004.<sup>24</sup>

Occasionally, international health NGOs sponsor small-scale clinical or laboratory research initiated by or in collaboration with the Chinese health authorities. For example, HARPA has supported the Chinese Academy of Medical Science (led by Dr. Cao Yunzhen) in clinical trials in Beijing, Guangzhou, Henan, Fujian and Yunnan. At the local level, some audacious public health officials have accepted research support from foreign NGOs. For example, the Burnet Institute has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the AIDS situation in Lhasa City and San Nan and Shigatse prefectures in Tibet Autonomous Region. The analysis was meant to inform the development of a strategic plan to respond to HIV/AIDS in the Tibetan geographic, cultural, and economic context.

Among many factors, one intervening variable that may explain why international NGOs are not the main collaborators with the Chinese government in basic research on AIDS is that a large number of medical schools and university research teams are currently filling this role from overseas. From the U.S. alone, most leading medical, public health and public policy schools, including those from

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<sup>24</sup> Cao, Yunzhen. 2004 End of Year Report of the AIDS Research Center at Chinese Academy of Medical Science and Peking Union Medical College.

Harvard, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Southern California, have all contacted and been invited to join research projects with the MoH and CDCs at various levels. However, this is not necessarily an adequate explanation. As documented by the *China Environment Series*, while a number of American university environmental science departments have been implementing research in China for years, still many international environmental NGOs collaborate with the government and state-affiliated academies in research projects in China.<sup>25</sup> My interpretation of the lack of research collaboration in the AIDS field is that the central health authority has the decisive power over what is to be researched, how, and by whom in the field of AIDS, and it has not been familiar with international NGOs or any agencies outside of the bilateral and multilateral frameworks to conduct clinical trials and medical research together.

### ***Involvement in policy implementation***

Adapting to the Chinese political context, many international advocacy actors began to realize that in order to change state behavior and introduce new practices at local levels, one must not only argue what is not working, but also demonstrate to the policy makers and implementers what would work. Many have realized that the Chinese government often hangs on to ineffective policies and resist to changes not because they don't want to change, or what are the options, but because they do not

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<sup>25</sup> Inventory of Environmental Works in China: U.S. Universities and Research Institutions. In *China Environmental Series*, Issue 5 & 6. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press. In fact, when the Inventory was first created in 1997, there were not many universities implementing environment related research and projects in China. As the number of universities grow, the editor of the journal added a new category into the Inventory to especially document their research activities in China.

know how to operationalize the options. State capacity is extremely lacking at county or lower levels. In addition, without local governments, external actors also find difficulty in mobilizing local communities. Therefore, in addition to provide training and learning opportunities to governmental staff, international NGOs and advocates become involved in policy implementation processes, during which they can explain, operationalize and demonstrate better solutions to the targeted problems. Because international NGOs and advocates are committed and norm-driven, they see their participation in policy implementation as a strategy to socialize the principles that they endeavor to promote. This feature is present in both of the cases here, but particularly common in HIV/AIDS prevention.

As we read in the sections on TNC, WWF, and CI, these three major conservation groups have successfully integrated their missions in China into the three main national policies related to reforestation —the *Natural Forest Protection*, the *Conversion of Sloping Cultivated Land to Forest and Grassland*, and the *Endangered Plant and Wildlife Protection and Nature Reserves Program*—introduced between 1999 and 2001. These programs have multi-billion dollar budgets, and as CI China stated in its program brochure, they offered international advocacy groups “unprecedented opportunity to influence the course of conservation in China”.

Against the general trend in this comparative study, the international health NGO community as a whole has exhibited more vitality than the conservation community in assisting the Chinese government in policy implementation. On the one hand, because it is still in the early stage of the development of the AIDS networks,

participating in policy implementation can get external advocates access to the center of the politics. In contrast, the conservation advocacy groups have moved on and established other channels to reach their goals. On the other hand, this is also partially a result of the recent institutional changes in China's health system. As the health authorities are paying more attention to the AIDS issue, they also have strengthened political control over the issue. Therefore, some external advocacy actors have framed their work in the way that they can be of assistance to governmental initiatives, so that they can win the opportunity to demonstrate their core principle through project implementations. For example, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance has opened a China Programme focusing on increasing PLWHAs' access to and involvement in effective community-based care and prevention services, and building up community-base groups' capacity to deliver health services. The Programme considers effective working relationships with the provincial health bureau and AIDS office essential. They, thus, have translated their goals as to fill in the gaps in existing policy implementation in Yunnan and Sichuan provinces and persuaded local governments to support the implementation of their projects.

### ***Direct policy input and institution building***

The difference between the two networks becomes more evident when comparing their activities directly related to policy-making and institutional innovation. As explained before, these are two much shorter causal mechanisms for international advocates to leave imprints in China's domestic changes in the specific issue areas. Even though it is not common for international non-state actors to be part of the

policy-making process, more international environmental NGOs have tunneled through into the policy-making circles and made their point heard, as the data show in Table 5.6. Six international NGOs in conservation and three in HIV/AIDS prevention have also initiated, and essentially assisted in creating new institutions for the Chinese government to better deal with governance problems.

Many have argued that the Chinese state is a deeply fragmented system, and policy-making and institutional change within the Chinese state prove to be rather a tedious process, filled with inter-bureaucratic bargaining and administrative redress. Moreover, the Chinese state is not particularly friendly to external advice, let alone advice from NSAs, about whom the state knows very little. When interviewed, Lu De, division chief of the International Cooperation Office of SFB, commented that: “It (first) takes a long time for us to have trust in international NGOs. Then, they (international NGOs) have to also convince all related governmental agencies, and make sure that they are not messing up the current (political) balance among these agencies.”<sup>26</sup> Facing the obstacles described by Lu, some international advocacy actors have been able to use informal connections and formal policy recommendations, or serve as expert consultants for policy-making committees to exert their influence on policy-making. For example, members of the International Fund for China’s Environment, a Washington, D.C. based NGO, are mostly environmental specialists, so they have the expertise to provide recommendations for many recent national-level policy revisions. In 2003, they provided a report to the Chinese People’s Political

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<sup>26</sup> Telephone interview in Beijing, 16 July 2004.

Consultative Committee (CPPCC)—*Recommendation of Four on One System for Vegetation Restoration and Improving Farmers' Living in Western China and Implementation of Land Laws in China*. As requested by CPPCC, this report was submitted to the standing committee meeting of the CPPCC and forwarded to the concerned central governmental agencies in China.

By institution building, I refer to the establishment of new governing rules, mechanisms and agencies, or re-arrangements of existing governing institutions. International NGOs and advocates can sustain the policy and project-based changes they have introduced by pushing for corresponding institutional changes. In my research, international environmental NGOs initiated such changes mostly by establishing new nature reserves, or providing substantial support to reform and strengthen existing reserves in China. In the AIDS case, international advocates try to introduce changes in local health governing structures by assisting in creating infectious disease hospitals and disease control centers. But, such efforts still remain at a low level in the current stage.

Since 1995, the Wild Camel Protection Foundation (WCPF) has successfully initiated and assisted in the establishment of a 75,000 km<sup>2</sup> nature reserve in Xinjiang autonomous region, now the last home of the critically endangered wild bactrian camel. Appointed by both the Chinese and Mongolian governments as the sole international consultant to the new nature reserve, WCPF advises reserve management on biodiversity conservation, develops and participates in the implementation of scientific studies of the protected area, and leads a multilingual

environmental public awareness educational program for schools and communities in Xinjiang. The WCPF is currently working with Chinese SEPA and the Mongolian Ministry of Nature and the Environment to protect the last wild bactrian camels in the wild.

Similarly, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has been working with a large number of Chinese environmentalists and NGOs, as well as governmental agencies, on transboundary conservation projects (e.g., Amur Tiger and Far Eastern Leopard) in Northeast China. WCS assisted Jilin provincial government in establishing the Hunchun Nature Reserve in December 2001. Since its establishment, a total of 56 reserve staff obtained two training courses from WCS in 2002, focusing on the issues of tiger monitoring, anti-poaching, and reserve management. With financial and technical support from WCS, the reserve undertakes regular anti-poaching activities. Within a year, a total of about 3,200 wire snares and 110 traps were removed, five rifles with over 200 bullets were confiscated, and seven illegal hunters were arrested. At the end of 2002, WCS China Program established its own office in the Hunchun Nature Reserve to lead local conservation work.<sup>27</sup>

In the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, Save the Children UK (SC)'s continuous work in Ruili County (Yunnan) has proved to be the most distinctive example in terms of institution building. SC was able to convince the local authority and mobilize a large amount of material and human resources to support local governmental agencies to adopt a fundamentally new approach in dealing with AIDS. SC signed an

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<sup>27</sup> Interviews in Shanghai in August 2002 and email exchanges in October 2004.



MoU with the Ruili government to implement a comprehensive interference project in AIDS from 2001-2006 (two phases), which requires fundamental reform of the local public health governance. The Ruili government on accepting the assistance from SC established a special Committee of HIV/AIDS Prevention, consisting in 33 chief directors from different administrative sectors besides the health bureau, e.g., education, public security and ethnic affairs.<sup>28</sup> Even though the SC project is reaching to its final stage, the governing frameworks they helped to build up in Ruili will stay. International health organizations, particularly UNAIDS China, have praised this Ruili model, and recommended to the Chinese central health authorities, as well as to other international concerned parties who intend to introduce changes to China's rural health system.

There are two major findings from comparing the four categories of international NGOs' work in mobilizing the Chinese state through persuasion, demonstration, and collaboration in policy-making and implementation: First, consensus-building is common and important to transnational advocacy actors to influence the Chinese state; Second, there is a higher level of such consensus-building in the conservation case than in HIV/AIDS prevention, reflected in international NGOs' more frequent involvement in policy-making process and institution building. While international AIDS-related NGOs' presence in policy implement is relatively high, they have not been able to build up access to directly influence the policy makers and modify new institutional arrangement. This is not simply to argue that

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<sup>28</sup> The Committee first consisted of around 20 officials from different sectors, and was gradually expanded to 33 to include more administrative branches.

external advocacy actors are not making as much impact in the AIDS field as in nature conservation, but highlight that interactions and connections between the Chinese state and international advocates are deepening in the latter case.

### **Mobilizing the State by Building Pressure**

Much existing literature has suggested that external advocacy actors can change a state's behavior by "mobilization of shame" and use leverage politics to make targeted governments comply with international norms. While emphasizing the more gradual and consent-based dimensions, the double-mobilization argument does not overlook this aspect of transnational advocacy politics. In fact, in the field of conservation, I have found evidence that international NGOs and activists have successfully organized public campaigns to put pressure on the Chinese government to modify existing policies, through the help of domestic activist groups, journalists and sympathetic governmental officials.

It is not surprising that the Chinese government is sensitive to open encouragement of public protest and campaigns pointing at policy failures. Such activities can become more controversial if it is externally initiated and sponsored. The Chinese government certainly does not have a good record of accepting international criticism. International human rights organizations are not welcomed by the government. Foreign news agencies are still under excessive surveillance in the

country.<sup>29</sup> In the environmental field, Sanjeev Khagram documented the silencing of transnational activism against the Three Gorges Dam in the 1980s.<sup>30</sup> Because of its protest in Tian'an Men square in 1996, Greenpeace was banished from China for half a decade.<sup>31</sup>

However, not much is known of the successful campaigns to protect wildlife and protest against animal cruelty and large hydro-power plants organized or sponsored by various international advocacy groups. In the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, a few incidents might have provided triggers for transnationally mobilized campaigns against existing policies, yet none has been brought to maturity. In fact, international NGOs appear to be very careful not to agitate the Chinese authorities. During the World AIDS Conference in 2004, a Chinese AIDS activist, joined by Amnesty International, distributed fliers at the main convention venue, which caricatured the Henan provincial government.<sup>32</sup> Because this activist was sponsored by a British NGO, the NGO immediately sensed the potential trouble, and announced that they were disappointed by what happened, and they were not part of the action.

The lack of confrontational actions taken by international health NGOs or advocates does not necessarily mean that they care less about changes than their peers in the environmental field. Nor can this be attributed solely to the political

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<sup>29</sup> Interviews with Susan Lawrence and David Murphey, Beijing correspondents of the Far Eastern Economics Review, in January 2003; and with Yuen Chen, Pacific Time correspondent and free-lancer for BBC World in Shanghai, in May 2004.

<sup>30</sup> Khagram, Sanjeev. 2004. *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp170-176.

<sup>31</sup> Greenpeace came back to China in 2002, and has been expanding its work since then.

<sup>32</sup> The activist compared the way the Henan government dealt with HIV patients to the Nazi government.

sensitivity factor. For external advocates, it is a learning process to conduct work in China, to get to know domestic activists, and to figure out how to push the right button at the right time. There is not too much difference in the repressive context across the two cases. Yet, the difference is that international environmental advocates have made many more failed or semi-successful trials, and as a result, they have learned where the “cutting-edge” is. Also, in the environmental field, many Chinese activists and NGOs have also tested the political boundaries by organizing petitions, open meetings with governmental officials and public rallies, which helped tremendously for external advocacy groups to figure out exactly how confrontational they can be under different circumstances at different times.

In this section, I analyzed the content of international NSAs’ advocacy and mobilization work engaging the Chinese state. The main findings are: 1) More international NSAs apply consensus-building than pressure-building strategies across the two cases; 2) International NSAs interact and mobilize governmental agencies at all levels; 3) More external advocacy groups are able to engage the state by information sharing and assisting policy implement rather than providing direct input in policy-making and institutional changes; 4) The conservation network presents stronger evidence of international NSAs mobilizing the state by being part of the policy-making processes, as well as applying confrontational means to build pressure onto the government. State mobilization has reached a higher level in the nature conservation case.

### TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS MOBILIZING THE CHINESE SOCIETY

From international NGOs' formal working partnership, we find some evidence of international NGO's social mobilization through collaborating with registered Chinese non-governmental organizations. However, this observation is slightly skewed because of the lack of formal laws and regulations regarding NGO registration in China. Many Chinese NGOs are invisible in "formal" terms. International NGOs sometimes do not list their non-governmental partners to protect their status in China. Moreover, international NGOs' social mobilization can take various forms besides formal partnership with local NGOs. In fact, many international NGOs mobilize local populations through more general public education and training programs, instead of focusing on particular local organizations. Localization of international NGOs is a significant way of social mobilization. WWF China has so far established over 15 regional offices, most of which have become local hubs of Chinese environmentally concerned citizens. Even its online chat-rooms have inspired many grassroots actions for the environment. For example, WWF friends in Shanghai initiated and participated in a campaign against the municipal government's plan for turning the last piece of wetland into a golf course in 2003-2004.

In this section, I use three indicators (i.e., public education, local societal capacity building, and promotion of social activism) to examine the content of international NGOs' social mobilization work. Table 5.7 below presents the findings. The first observation is that there is sufficient evidence of international NGOs' social

mobilization work. Recall the findings in Table 5.6 on the content of international NGOs' state mobilization work. In terms of conducting advocacy education for information dissemination and norm socialization, almost the same number of international NGOs provide public education and training at grassroots levels (county and below) to non-governmental participants as the ones providing learning opportunities and training to governmental agencies and officials. 25 (of total 34) international conservation NGOs conduct public education work, while 28 are engaged in some kind of information sharing with the Chinese government; 23 (of total 32) international health NGOs conduct public AIDS prevention education work, while 22 share information with governmental agencies. Similarly, many international NGOs in both cases see providing learning opportunities as a key capacity building step for local society as well as to the state. Quite a few international NGOs, especially in the field of nature conservation, have overcome political barriers to support local activism. 19 international NGOs provide training to non-governmental participants in each field, while 17 and 19 provide training to governmental participants in conservation and AIDS fields, respectively. Hence, findings from the content of international NGOs' work substantiate the argument of the Double-mobilization pattern of transnational advocacy networks.

**Table 5.7. Measuring international NGOs' mobilization of Chinese society**

Content of international NGO activities	Number of international NGOs	
	Nature conservation	HIV/AIDS prevention
<b>Public education</b>	25	23
<b>Training and local capacity building</b>	19	19
<b>Promoting social activism</b>		
Technical and financial support	21	12
Creating new local NGOs and networks	10	3

The second interpretation of Table 5.7 is related to the difference between the two international NGO communities examined. The two cases showed much in common in societal mobilization except in promoting social activism. The AIDS international NGO community is catching up, but still not as proactive in supporting domestic social activism as the conservation community. There are significantly more international NGOs involved in the development of Chinese NGOs and regional networks to promote social activism in conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention. Close to two thirds of all the international NGOs within the conservation networks managed to provide various technical and financial assistance to their Chinese counterparts.

### **Public education and Societal Capacity Building**

One aspect of the Communist legacy in China is that its society's capacity of self-governance has been continually crushed. Societal self-governance based on family or clan based collectivities have largely broken apart since the 1950s. Under Mao's regime, centralized political command was established through a party-administration dual system, and secured at the grassroots level through hundreds of thousands of production brigades in rural areas and workings units in urban cities. Through these collective units, the state has managed to penetrate into all aspects of citizens' social and private lives. Entering the reformist era, new institutions were introduced to strengthen grassroots level governance: district governments in cities and self-elected

village committees in rural areas.<sup>33</sup> However, in both environmental and public health fields, international advocacy groups find levels of public awareness and self-capacity of Chinese communities are very low. Therefore, they consider it necessary to promote public education and assist in capacity building for local populations to maintain the effects of short-term projects and solve the problems in a more sustainable way.

The Chinese public is in great need of AIDS-related information, yet still lacks access to such information. This is because of the state's denial at the beginning and lack of capacity to fully implement AIDS public awareness policies at the current stage. Because China is such a big, diverse and unevenly developed country, it is not surprising that international NGOs find a large void in public education about AIDS even after the central government changed its policies in 2003. Most of them have found a niche to start their social mobilization work in this regard. With the help of internet and communication technology, international NGOs and advocates can reach a large audience in China. For example, Odilon Couzin, a former foreign news correspondent in Beijing, founded the China AIDS Info. in 2003.<sup>34</sup> He maintains a website to provide the general public latest information related to AIDS in China. What is unique about this organization is that it has formed a network of Chinese journalists, translators, NGO-workers, and PLWHA across the country, which enables

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<sup>33</sup> For example, in Shanghai city, district (*je dao*) governments and residential committees (*ju wei hui*) were set up to be in charge of daily public affairs (e.g., public sanitary), and a large number of military veterans and college graduates were recruited as local officials.

<sup>34</sup> China AIDS Info. is registered as an NGO in Hong Kong. Interviews with Odilon Couzin in Shanghai and Beijing, July 2004.



it to gather, translate, and disseminate the latest information about the China's AIDS policies, international agencies in AIDS in China, domestic AIDS related NGOs, updates of treatment, and China's drug industry.

The problem of little awareness of AIDS appears worse in the rural areas, where majority of the population have lost basic health-care access since the barefoot doctor system collapsed at the end of the 1970s. The goal set by the State Committee of AIDS Control and Prevention in April 2004 was to raise the rate of AIDS awareness to 85% in cities and 65% in rural areas, which indicates the urban-rural gap in public health.<sup>35</sup> When I visited two villages in southern Henan province in May 2004, months after the central government has announced the "Four Frees One Care" policy for rural HIV+ patients, only a handful of local villagers had heard about these policies, where the HIV infection rate is higher than the national average. In these villages, handing out a one-page leaflet of where to pick up treatment medicine and compensation money can mean significant changes in life. Many international NGOs, e.g., Health Unlimited, Marie Stopes China, Chi Heng Foundation, MSF Belgium and France, therefore, have realized the importance of maintaining their physical presence in rural China to directly provide AIDS related information to the most affected or potentially high-risk populations.

Public education of AIDS is in need in China also because of the social stigma related to it. According to many practitioners I interviewed and UNAIDS 2004 Assessment Report, such stigma is mostly from medical professionals. Professor Jing

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<sup>35</sup> State Committee of AIDS Control and Prevention information sharing meeting, organized by UNAIDS China, 29 April, 2004.

Jun, who has written extensively on AIDS in China and personally conducted Henan blood scandal, pointed out:

Chinese AIDS patients, in most instances, are silent sufferers. They are even reluctant to reveal their health status to medical professionals, as doctors and nurses often suspect that these patients have acquired HIV through commercial sex, injection drug use, or homosexuality. Even when patients do tell doctors and nurses that they have been infected with HIV via other means (e.g., transmission through spouses or unsafe blood supplies), the cloud of suspicion may never be cleared.

International NGOs (e.g., MSF Belgium) has conducted peer education work among nurses and medical professional to particularly address the stigma issue before the government took actions. On top of the stigma against AIDS, CSWs, MSM, and IDUs also face a double discrimination. International NGOs are also taking the lead in breaking social stigma and promoting AIDS awareness in gay bars and brothels and among hidden drug users. In these areas, international NSAs and experts appear to have much more experience than Chinese health officials.

With the collapse of the free health care and barefoot doctor system in the middle 1980s, rural China is in great need of health services, facilities and medical professionals.<sup>36</sup> As public education campaigns are crucial for promoting AIDS awareness at grassroots level, training for local doctors and nurses are essential to

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<sup>36</sup> Health system in rural China before the end of 1980s was featured by equal access to free health care, bare-foot doctors and village-level medical clinics. Since the 1990s, most village clinics have been privatized and higher level health authorities could not afford training and sending bare-foot doctors to villages. Recent reforms of rural medi-care system emphasize on provincial government, county government and individuals share the cost of health insurance. Li, Xiaorou. "Too Poor To Get Sick: Medicare System on Trial." *Beijing Review*, July 24 2003, 14-18. Saich, Tony. 2001. "Health Care in Rural China", in *Governance and Politics of China*. New York: Palgrave. pp257-61. Wang, Shaoguang. 2003. "Zhongguo Gonggong Weisheng de Weiji yu Zhuanji (Crisis and Opportunity for China's Public Health)." *Bi Jiao (Comparison)*. No. 7.

fundamentally improve local capacity in providing basic medical needs for AIDS patients.<sup>37</sup> The level of health knowledge is low in rural communities. It is extremely common for village doctors to use large amounts of antibiotics and intravenous fluids to treat common colds. Many international health NGOs (e.g., Health Unlimited, Yale China Association, Volunteers Overseas Services) have been able to convince local health authorities and provide training opportunity to rural medical professionals and village doctors, who usually do not have chance to participate in government sponsored health training for doctors and nurses at county and above level hospitals. Having attended trainings provided by Health Unlimited, Li Zheming, a doctor at the Heping village clinic (Yunnan province), said that “the project increased his knowledge about health and he was impressed by the increased number of local villagers who were now more willing to come to his clinic for medical help.”<sup>38</sup>

International advocacy groups’ work in public education and local capacity building in the field of nature conservation, in many ways, resembles the patterns that have emerged in the AIDS case. A low level of environmental awareness has led to much resentment from local people against the idea of wildlife and biodiversity conservation. Therefore, to promote ideas related to nature conservation and to actually implement conservation projects, most external advocacy groups first spent time communicating with local farmers and listening to their concerns. The differences between the two cases in this respect lie in that there is not as much social

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<sup>37</sup> China’s hospital system does not go lower than county-level in rural areas. This means that village clinics are the only places for farmers to get medi-care.

<sup>38</sup> Health Unlimited 2004 project report.

stigma in the conservation field as in the AIDS field, and Chinese environmental NGOs now are becoming more effective and important in playing the role of public educator. Public awareness in the environmental field has been improved rapidly. A 2002 National Environmental Protection Foundation survey showed that environment ranked among the top five major concerns among the Chinese public.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, international advocates' involvement in public education in the nature conservation field is becoming stabilized in the recent years. The data listed in Table 5.7 shows that almost the same number of international NGOs in both cases are working in public education, and this should be interpreted as international conservation NGOs have moved on to other areas regarding social mobilization.

Like the case of health, local capacity in nature conservation is also underdeveloped, and many international conservation advocacy groups have provided training and technical assistance to local farmers to help them in sustainable development without over exploiting the forests, wetlands and lakes around their communities.

The lakes and wetlands in the Central Yangtze region, including the biggest freshwater lake in China—*Dongting* Lake, are of vast importance for international biodiversity and local economies.<sup>40</sup> Since the Great Leap Forward Movement in 1950s, lakes and wetlands have been retrieved for economic and agricultural

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<sup>39</sup> However, changes in public awareness of environmental protection only took place in the recent few years. SEPA (1998-1999) National Survey of Public Awareness of Environment Protection still revealed the lack of environmental awareness.

<sup>40</sup> They provide habitat for vast flocks of migratory birds, including 95% of the wintering Siberian Crane population, and four highly-endangered endemic aquatic animals.

purposes. In the government's Ninth Five Plan (1990-1995), national development plan, *Dongting Lake* area is listed as one of the national agricultural production bases. This tension between the nature and economic development was intensified by the 1998 flood, which destroyed local people's homes and farms over night. Having surveyed hundreds of local farmers, WWF China started a program to introduce fishery technologies to the local people and help them build up fishery facilities. With the preliminary success, WWF China further convinced local people and governmental agencies to establish a new reserve on the flooded lands. Hence, the lands within the reserve will not be retrieved to farm lands any more, and local people can generate sufficient income from fishery. Such an approach which provides necessary technical support to build up local capacity for conservation was applied in WWF China's other species and habitat conservation programs in Shaanxi and Sichuan.

In both cases, international advocacy groups have made substantial effort to promote new ideas among local people and provide training and technical support for them to digest and practice with new concepts and methods. The data in Table 5.6 also indicates that slightly different from previous findings, international NGOs do not present much more strength in these two aspects in nature conservation than HIV/AIDS prevention. This is partially because in the nature conservation field, international advocacy groups have moved on to other agenda since the rise of grassroots environmentalism in the recent years; in addition, social stigma in the

AIDS field is still salient and still requires a lot more effort from both domestic and international advocacy communities.

### **Supporting and Promoting Social Activism**

The threshold step for international advocates' to expand their social mobilization is to establish contacts and coalitions with Chinese activist groups. In this aspect, I have found sufficient evidence to argue that most international advocacy groups are keen to build up such connections in both fields. What differentiates the two cases in this aspect is that more external advocacy groups have helped to create new local NGOs and new networking mechanisms to nurture social activism in the conservation field.

#### ***Supporting Chinese NGOs***

While according to the data in Table 5.7., the number of international NGOs in the AIDS field that has engaged in building new Chinese NGOs is substantially lower than that in public education and training, this finding does not contradict with the argument that support from international NGOs is crucial to Chinese NGOs. On the contrary, from a survey of ten main Chinese NGOs working in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, I found that almost all of them received financial and technical support from international NGOs.<sup>41</sup> (Table 5.8) In both fields, not only many international NGOs, but also a number of private foundations and funding organizations have applied a variety of innovative ways to support Chinese NGOs. However, Table 5.7 reveals that more international NGOs have been engaged in supporting local NGOs in

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<sup>41</sup> For a comprehensive explanation of the methods related to this survey see Appendix 5.1.

nature conservation than in HIV/AIDS prevention.

**Table 5.8. Support to Chinese NGOs from international NSAs**

	Number of Chinese NGOs interviewed	Number of Chinese NGOs that have received support from international NSAs in:		
		Formation	Funding	Information/technical issues
<b>conservation</b>	12	4	12	12
<b>AIDS related</b>	10	3	10	8

Note: Data presented are based on interviews of Chinese NGOs conducted during the time period 2002-2004.

In both cases, I have given examples of external groups providing financial and technical support to Chinese social groups, such as CI, WWF, IFAW, and PERC in nature conservation, and MSC, SC, and ARFC in HIV/AIDS prevention. Moreover, a number of international NSAs began to design and organize special programs to help Chinese NGOs to build up self-capacity. Invited by the Ford Foundation in the late 1990s, Winrock International has provided training for local forestry and nature reserve officials in Yunnan since then. More recently, it has shifted its efforts to civil society capacity building, particularly focusing on women's groups and other NGOs. Its *China NGO Capacity-Building Program (2002 – 2005)* is tailored to the specific needs of each NGO participants and addresses issues such as accountability, governance and management of volunteers. During the pilot phase, the Program worked with a small number of NGOs in Beijing and provided training and coaching to these local NGOs in strategic planning, leadership, financial management, fundraising and local resource mobilization. Starting in the autumn of 2003, Winrock worked with a larger number of NGOs across the country to help them address some of the most urgent problems they had identified by a participatory organizational assessment.

International NSAs' effort in supporting local activist groups is not limited in financial and technical terms. Many times, they tactically help Chinese NGOs to voice their opinion and fight for their interests. For example, China AIDS Info. was funded by UNAIDS China and the Ford Foundation to compile a directory of all AIDS-related works and organizations in China. By including Chinese NGOs and PLWHA groups in the directory, China AIDS Info. has helped to increase the visibility of them. Odilon, founder of the China AIDS Info., is also a consultant for the Global Fund in China, and has been consistently pushing for more direct funding and opportunities for PLWHA and Chinese NGOs. Similarly, by incorporating local groups into its own projects in Sichuan, CI have been able to give local NGOs and activists more opportunities to expand their networks, meet with outside funding organizations and even governmental officials in Beijing.

### ***Incubating local NGOs and creating linkages***

Besides telling the commonalities in international NSAs' social mobilization, data in table 5.7 also suggests that what fundamentally sets the two cases apart is their differential involvement in the development of Chinese NGOs and the networks among themselves. In the nature conservation case, 10 of the 34 international NGOs focused on have created or helped to establish new local NGOs. Support from a number of funding organizations, such as Global Greengrants Fund and Blue Moon Foundation, has also been crucial to many newly established Chinese environmental NGOs. However, in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention, while small private foundations have made effort to support emerging grassroots groups, only three



international NGOs (Save the Children UK, Marie Stopes and Oxfam HK) are engaging with the similar type of support.

During the implementation of its comprehensive community health project in Ruili, Save the Children UK established a Women and Children Development Center in the county. This Center has obtained official registered as a social organization from local Department of Civil Affairs, and in April, 2004, it received a grant of 10,000 RMB from the American Chamber of Commerce in China. Currently, World Vision HK is planning to collaborate with the Center and expand its work in AIDS orphan care.

MSF Belgium Xiangfan team was also trying to support a local PLWHA activist and create a patient support-group in the city. However, Xiangfan CDC has already established an official AIDS Care Center, and they decided to invite the activist to join the Center instead of having his own organization.

Across issue areas, it is still difficult to register independent social organizations or NGOs in China. However, through trial and error and expanding networks, international NSAs have been able to help local activists to establish their own organizations. Moreover, in the nature conservation field, international advocacy groups have also been able to create more opportunities for Chinese NGOs to network with each other and support the development of regional focal groups which would further strengthen local social activism and mobilization. For example, every year since 1999, the International Fund for China's Environment organizes the China-U.S. Environmental NGO Conference. ECOLOGIA and GGF have created a web of their

NGO grantees in China, which greatly increased information exchanges among these on the group conservation groups.

The three regional hubs of young environmentalists have all received important support from international advocacy groups. The Global Greengrants Fund (GGF) supported the China Green Student Forum in Beijing, and ECLOGIA helped the Environmental Volunteers Association in Sichuan University to grow into a central group in the Southwest. Since 2003, the Siemenpuu Foundation (Finnish) has given the Green Stone of Nanjing University a grant to support other college student environmental groups which further strengthened the networks among student groups in the eastern provinces. While the three student groups initiated by Chinese young environmentalists were emerging as regional focal groups, support from international provided them with additional momentum.

Not surprisingly, both cases present evidence of international NSAs' social mobilization in China. In addition to public education and local capacity building, international advocacy actors have been particularly important in supporting and promoting social activism in China. Many external advocates see the rise of domestic activism and community-based NGOs as a necessary way to sustain their own advocacy work at the local level. International NSAs support Chinese NGOs not only in financial and technical terms, but also in helping generate more political space and opportunities for bottom-up initiatives. In the nature conservation field, a number of international NGOs and private foundations are making more effort to incubate new

local NGOs and create new channels for Chinese activists and NGOs to network domestically and internationally. Therefore, the level of social mobilization of transnational networks is relatively higher in nature conservation than HIV/AIDS prevention.

A word of caution here: I do not intend to evaluate international NSAs' social mobilization, but to present the patterns involved in their interactions with social groups in China. Promoting social activism is the type of work that should not be too hastened. Unless enough public awareness is raised, bottom-up initiatives cannot naturally emerge; and, unless such initiatives can grow on their own to some extent, too much international influence might lead to organizational dependency, which is not necessarily beneficial for local communities.<sup>42</sup>

### **TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN THE STATE AND SOCIETY**

In addition to state and social mobilization, transnational advocacy networks also introduce new political dynamics by modify the existing state-society relations. The

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<sup>42</sup> The concern of domestic NGOs depending on international NSAs is common in the field. I do agree with this point, but my argument here is rather on the relations between domestic and international advocacy groups than the consequences of such relations. On international NGOs' influences on domestic NGOs: Heyzer, Noeleen, James V. Riker, and Antonio B. Quizon, eds. 1995. *Government-NGO Relations in Asia: Prospects and Challenges for People-centered Development*. Kuala Lumpur, New York: Asian and Pacific Development Centre and St. Martin's Press. Lewis, David J. 1997. "NGOs, Donors, and the State in Bangladesh." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (The Role of NGOs: Charity and Empowerment)*. 554: 33-45. McMahon, Patrice C. 2000. "Building Civil Societies in East Central Europe: The Effect of American NGOs on Women's Groups". Paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., August 31-September 3. (manuscript).

Double-mobilization model highlights that domestic state-society relations are not constant, and co-evolve with the development of transnational networks. As evidenced in Chapters 3 and 4, international NSAs, together with their local governmental and non-governmental partners, can experiment with new mechanisms to facilitate the communication between local state and society. In some case, advocates introduced the participatory approach into local political context. I have compiled the data on international NGOs' work in building bridges between local governments and communities to further illustrate these observations. (Table 5.9)

Among the international NGO surveyed (34 in nature conservation, 32 in HIV/AIDS prevention), many of them have created new communication channels between local governments and social groups (18 in nature conservation, 14 in HIV/AIDS prevention). Even though still limited, a few international NGOs have established public participation mechanisms through their projects, and some even further persuaded local government to form new rules, policy frameworks or agencies that would further consolidate the idea of public participation in a long run.

**Table 5.9. Measuring international NGOs' promotion of state-society communication**

Content of international NGO activities	Number of international NGOs	
	Nature conservation	HIV/AIDS prevention
Creating communication channels	18	14
Project-based public participation	12	7
Institutionalizing public participation	5	2

### **Creating “Dialogues”**

The term “dialogue” was quite a popular political expression in China in the second half of the 1980s, when the country had an interlude of political liberalization under

the leadership of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang. It was used to encourage Chinese citizens to voice their different opinions, and governmental authorities to listen to these opinions. Governments and citizens should be able to solve controversies through friendly, open and fair exchanges of ideas. I borrow this expression here to refer to the occasions when governmental and non-governmental actors meet and communicate as equal parties outside the formal political arena, yet in organized, legal, and open settings. This type of communication is beyond informal, personal connections. Even though it still lacks formality, and probably will not lead to any official records that the state is accountable for, it offers important opportunity for the two parties to form some impression of each others' principles and bottom lines. Such communication often takes places in an internationalized setting, e.g., conference, forum, roundtable, and ceremony, where both governmental and non-governmental organizations are invited as equal participants. Though the "equal status" may be nominal, it provides a favorable atmosphere for exchanges of opinions between governmental officials and activists, who normally won't meet fact-to-face at all. In both conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention fields, international NSAs have been very active in creating such channels of "dialogue".

For example, every year since the late 1990s, together with the China Environmental Protection Foundation—a GONGO affiliated with SEPA, Friend of the Earth Hong Kong gives out the Earth Award to the best practices in environmental protection in China. Because nominations for the Award are collected not only through both governmental and activist circles, and it is reviewed and recognized by a

committee of both governmental and non-governmental representatives, it has generated a great deal of exchanges between SEPA affiliated officials and environmental activists. On the one hand, SEPA was able to know better about bottom-up environmental activism; and, on the other hand, environmental activists and NGOs were able to build up networks and alliance with more open-minded officials. The Berry and Martin's Trust annual award to distinctive individuals in HIV/AIDS prevention has similar effects, though its nomination and ceremonies have not involved as many parties as the Earth Award.

Since 2001, the International Fund for China's Environment holds a multi-day conference "Sino-U.S. Environmental NGO Forum" either in the United State or China. Such a forum is designed to invite both influential NGO representatives and governmental officials from both countries to particularly discuss how to perceive and maintain a healthy relationship between the state and non-governmental actors in environmental protection.<sup>43</sup> During the 2004 World AIDS Conference, the U.S.-China AIDS Alliance initiated the idea of a celebration party for all Chinese governmental and NGO participants. According to Xu Hua, Secretary General of China STD & AIDS Foundation, this is the first "family party" of all Chinese NGOs together with governmental officials.<sup>44</sup>

Besides the examples above, which are more visible and require more effort, international NGOs and advocates also convey many more small-scale, project specific meetings for various governmental and non-governmental actors to

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<sup>43</sup> Chinese book quote.

<sup>44</sup> Interview in Beijing, August 2004.

communicate at local levels.

### **Promoting Public Participation**

A distinctive feature of state-society relations in China is that formalized channels for public participation is lacking. By introducing and experimenting with the concept of public participation, international NSAs can bring in new dynamics to local politics. The difference between facilitating public participation and establishing institutionalized participation channels lies in that the latter emphasizes the formal and sustainable aspect of public participation, while the former is oftenly one-time, project specific practice.

In both HIV/AIDS prevention and nature conservation cases, international advocacy groups have tried various measures to directly involve social actors in project implementation, and particularly those projects that also engage local governmental agencies or the ones that implement governmental policies. For example, Oxfam America created a program in Yunnan province as a part of their conservation work of the Mekong River basin with an overarching emphasis on securing residents' right to water, their access to sustainable livelihoods, and participatory decision-making processes around development projects. The program has helped local governments and communities to develop participatory watershed management committees and create micro-financing initiatives to promote economic development alternatives to destroying forests and water resources.

With repeated experiences of having non-governmental actor in policy

implementation, international NSAs, together with their local partners, can further persuade the government to develop new policy implementation frameworks or institutions which incorporate the norm of public participation. In Suojia Tibetan township, western Qinghai province, local governmental bodies used to adopt a top-down approach in agenda setting of nature conservation which overlooked local people's interests. Local environmentalists, including herders, teachers and retired local officials, established an NGO—the Upper Yangtze Organization (UYO), and hoped to communicate in between the nomads and governmental officials. Since 1999, an international NGO, Floral and Fauna International (FFI), have worked with UYO to develop effective local management for the grassland ecosystems and for key species. In response to the tension between local governmental authorities and nomadic communities, FFI planned a *Collaborative Management Plan for Conservation of Biodiversity and Community Livelihoods* to engage both governmental and non-governmental parties in conservation projects. Thereby, UYO became to be recognized as an effective force for the communication between governmental agencies and local people, as well as for conservation implementation. When the new Three Great Rivers Source National Nature Reserve was established by the central government in the region in 2003, initial plans included moving the nomads out of Suojia and resettling them in other towns. UYO successfully lobbied local governmental agencies on behalf of local herdsman. The master plan for the nature reserve was later revised. Moreover, the new plan added provisions to enlist local herders as deputized monitors. With the previous experience of FFI's project,



local governmental agencies became familiar and convinced of the goodness of local participation.

Both of the cases show that promoting public participation is desirable for international NSAs, yet requires more trial and error and stronger ties between international and local advocacy groups than usual social mobilization. Even though international NSAs have been able to create many new communication opportunities in between governmental agencies and local NGOs, still only few have been engaging in formalizing channels for local NGOs and community representatives to participate in policy implementation.

While the focus of this chapter is to examine the effects of domestic structures on transnational advocacy networks, this section is intended to demonstrate that neither domestic context is constant, nor external NSAs merely react to domestic state-society contention, and to stress that an interactive, dynamic perspective is needed in studying the topic. Domestic state-society contention, which often triggers transnational networks, can evolve independently. More importantly, it is also capable of being modified by external NSAs. Under particular circumstances, external advocates can alleviate domestic contention by creating new opportunities for governmental and non-governmental actors to communicate and negotiate. Some even see this as a necessary component of advocacy work in a country like China, where the level of societal resentment can be extremely high; while legal state-society communication channel is nearly in existence. They see that both the state and civil

society groups are not familiar with non-contentious means to reach agreement, and one way to change the state's negative attitude and suppression of domestic societal and activist groups is to increase face-to-face interactions between them. Yet, this section only provides a glimpse of how international NSAs and NGOs influence domestic state-society relations, by no means a comprehensive and systematic study of the general patterns in this aspect.

Evidence from my research shows that both of the networks studied have made noticeable contribution in linking the state and social forces, by creating communication channels and introducing the concept of participatory approach. Some even experimented with participatory approach in specific projects, and further facilitated the institutionalization of public participation mechanisms at local levels. Comparing the two networks in this respect, the international conservation NGO community has achieved more in institution build in public participation, which can lead to long-term impact on state-society relations in specific regions and issue areas in China.

## CHAPTER CONCLUSION

International advocates and NGOs are capable of educating governments and influencing local practices. While both cases of transnational networks present evidence of double-mobilization, conservation advocacy networks as a whole exhibit more balanced and deeper relations among the state, local society, and external

advocacy actors. (Table 5.10) Transnational networks in HIV/AIDS prevention are not as mature as those in nature conservation for three main reasons: First, China's health system, before SARS, was relatively closed to international community and influences, which delayed the emergence of transnational advocacy networks. Therefore, the AIDS case is still in its early stage of double-mobilization, and external advocacy groups are making more effort to tunnel through political barriers and building networks that can provide them entry point into the governing system. This partially explains why the AIDS-related networks are still more centered around Chinese governmental agencies than civil society groups.

**Table 5.10. Comparing domestic structures and transnational advocacy networks**

	<b>Nature Conservation</b>	<b>HIV/AIDS prevention</b>
<b>Governing structures</b>	Bureaucratic decentralization, higher level of local autonomy	Increasing level of internationalization and central control
<b>Social forces</b>	A civil society community primed with a sense of solidarity	Emerging NGOs, and activist groups, yet lack of interconnectivity
<b>Transnational advocacy networks</b>	<b><i>Emergence:</i></b>	
	early	late
	<b><i>Development:</i></b>	
	Full-fledged and deepening double-mobilization	Double-mobilization tipped towards the state, and less deepening
	<b><i>Mobilizing the state:</i></b>	
	More influence through policy input and institution building	Still less access to provincial and central governments
<b><i>Social mobilization:</i></b>		
Significant effort in building new local NGOs and social activism networks	More in public education and local capacity building	

Second, after the Chinese government openly acknowledged the AIDS crisis, it greatly strengthened MoH's central control over the issue. Local governments and health bureaus do not enjoy autonomy in AIDS-related issues at the similar level as in

forestry, wetlands, or watersheds. This prevents external advocacy groups to expand and consolidate their societal and governmental connections.

Third, civil society groups in HIV/AIDS prevention field are not as tightly tied together as those in the environment and nature conservation field. While a “green” social identity is emerging among Chinese environmentalists, activists and newly established NGOs in the AIDS field are still waiting for the right moment to organize coordinated campaigns or symbolic events.

No strong evidence from comparing the two cases indicates that either individual leadership or international political opportunity structures played a major role in the emergence and initial growth of transnational advocacy networks. In fact, the AIDS case presents even more favorable international structural factors, particularly after main international health organizations identified China is among the “Second Wave” countries of worldwide AIDS epidemic.<sup>45</sup> While multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies have always been keen in supporting energy efficiency, environmental management, and pollution control works in China, international NGOs are taking the lead in improving China’s nature reserve management, community-based habitat protection, and critical eco-system conservation.

Issue characteristics do not directly affect transnational networks. Or, at least the causal chain is not as clear-cut as existing theory has argued. Public awareness was low in both biodiversity conservation and HIV/AIDS fields. HIV patients

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<sup>45</sup> The other two major countries among this Second Wave are India and Russia. One of the earliest expert opinions of the newly developed AIDS epidemic in Asia and Russia is from Nicholas Eberstadt, American Institute of Enterprise. (Eberstadt, Nicholas. 2002. "The Future of AIDS." *Foreign Affairs*. 81, 6.)

infected through blood transfusion confronted local authorities and caused contention, so did farmers living inside local nature reserves due to either human-animal conflict or poorly designed conservation measures. Social stigma against AIDS patients (particularly against the CWS and IDU population) is mostly from medical professionals and urbanites. In rural communities, where AIDS infection rate is relatively higher, stigma problem is not as salient as people usually think. My observation is that the lack of public awareness and presence of stigma can be a double-edged sword. It certainly creates difficulty for advocacy groups to promote new norms, but it also offers a niche for both Chinese and external NGOs and activists, because this is exactly where the government proves to be not effective. Advocacy groups are more capable of designing and implementing suitable education programs at grassroots levels, and committed to change existing beliefs and behaviors in a sustainable way. A few international NGOs in fact have successfully implemented demonstration projects of free needle exchange among IDUs and peer education among CSWs in Yunnan, partnering with multiple governmental agencies including public security, health, and education. After seeing the results, state health authorities consented to widely promote these practices in the province.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

The last 20 years undoubtedly have witnessed the grand transformation of Maoist China. In the context of globalization and the information technology revolution, the trajectory of this transformation is increasingly affected by transnational factors and actors. My research started with this observation, and introduced to readers of Chinese politics and international relations a particular group of non-state political actors in the form of transnational advocacy networks who have played a unique role in the changing Chinese polity. I explored such networks in the fields of nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention. I explicated the historical development and the political context of each case, and the political processes involved in individual international advocacy actors' interaction with the Chinese state and society. By comparing the two cases, I pointed out the key factors that have constrained the emergence and affected the development of transnational advocacy networks across issue areas in China.

Findings in my research offer two pertinent suggestions for theory-building about non-state actors (NSAs) in international affairs. First, new theories need to address the direct and extensive interactions between advocates and the targeted sovereign state, and that of contentious and non-contentious politics involved in transnational advocacy networks. In addition to organizing local communities and educating the general public, engaging and mobilizing the government is an important feature of transnational advocacy politics. The two cases studied here strongly suggest that international advocacy actors form broad networks into the state apparatus in order to communicate,

negotiate and persuade the Chinese government to change its attitudes and policies—presenting a Double-mobilization pattern. They fund or collaborate with the Chinese government in basic research to influence the formation of knowledge-building among officials and policy makers. Through demonstration projects and participation in policy implementation, international NGOs carry out the measures and principles they attempt to promote, and therefore, they can show the government not only the necessity of policy changes, but also how to implement such changes. Furthermore, international advocacy actors are able to directly influence policy-making at different levels by partnering with key governmental agencies and providing policy consultations. In short, transnational advocacy networks not only target and pressure state agencies, but also interact and engage the state in the service of their cause.

Second, my research suggests looking into the effects of domestic micro-level structures on transnational advocacy politics. Case studies have shown that the character of transnational advocacy networks varies across countries and even within a single county. As transnational networks develop, on the one hand, international advocacy actors deepen their connections and consolidate their influences in domestic politics at different levels. On the other, political dynamics of transnational networks are becoming more affected by existing domestic state and societal structures. Focusing only on macro-level political factors cannot provide an adequate explanation of why networks emerge, which forms of politics they are engaged in, and why the triangular relationship among the state, local society and external advocacy actors vary across cases. In China, transnational networks emerged earlier in nature conservation than in preventing AIDS due to a relatively high level of internationalization of environmental governance and the

rise of domestic environmentalism and green civil society by the end of the 1990s. Bureaucratic decentralization and the interconnectivity among Chinese environmental groups further provided favorable conditions for transnational networks to mature and achieve their goals. Theory-building related to transnational activism should further tackle the question of the impact of domestic micro-level structures on transnational networks, considering the long-term effects of such networks in national and local politics. My study here provides one example of this type of research. Both case studies within a country and cross-country are needed to identify more relevant variables, and test the conclusions in this research.

### **From Boomerang to Double-mobilization**

Central to this dissertation is an understanding of domestic and international politics not as separate but as interconnected and mutually constituting domains. I share the view of scholars such as Keck, Sikkink, and Tarrow that we live in a transnational civil society, where sovereign states are still primary political actors, yet NSAs are rapidly emerging and increasingly modifying the state-system and state behavior. State and NSAs should be reviewed together to understand new dynamics in national and international politics. This is not only evidenced by economic interdependence, but also by growing transnational activism, advocacy networks and social movements.

However, I disagree with these authors' emphasis on contentious relations among political actors (state or non-state) in this transnational civil society, and more importantly, the underlining assumption that contentious *means* are the principle tool of solving political problems and establishing new norms. In the conclusion chapter of *Activists beyond Borders*, Keck and Sikkink specifically contested the world polity theory: "In



essence, world polity theorists eliminate the struggle over power and meaning that for us are central to normative change.”<sup>1</sup> To emphasize this point, they quoted Martha Finnemore’s argument that “political process, coercion and violence, value conflict and normative contestation are our business.”<sup>2</sup> Their theory of transnational activism and advocacy networks, hence, highlighted that the process of norm emergence is characterized by intense domestic and international struggles over discourses, policies and practices. The main site of such struggles is the contentious interaction between repressive governments and transnational networks composed of both local and international advocacy actors.<sup>3</sup>

I argue that while political changes are the essential goal for advocacy networks and contention is prevalent in a transnational civil society, the processes of making such changes are embodied not only in struggles but also in long-term advocacy education, norm socialization and consensus building. I challenge the existing literature on

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<sup>1</sup> p210. Major scholarly works on world polity theory include: Brown, Seyom. 1992. *International Relations in A Changing Global System: Toward A Theory of the World Polity*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Boli, John, and George M. Thomas, eds. 1999. *Constructing World Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. This perspective highlights diffusion of world culture as the fundamental characteristics of international society, and non-state actors (NGOs and IGOs) are enactors of basic principles of the world culture.

<sup>2</sup> Finnemore, Martha. 1996. "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism." *International Organization*. 50, 2: 325-47. Quoted in Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p211.

<sup>3</sup> Even though Keck and Sikkink clarified that “transnational change ... is not just one of ‘diffusion’ of liberal institutions and practices, but one through which the preferences and identities of actors engaged in transnational society are sometimes mutually transformed through their interactions with each other” (p212), they pointed out earlier that “the logic of transnational advocacy networks, which are often in conflict with states over basic principles, is quite different from the logic of other transnational actors” (p210). Therefore, they seemed to be saying that the real “struggle” is between states and advocacy actors, and the advocates involved (who are not necessarily neo-liberals) can form better understanding of their own principles through complex interactions with other transnational actors (e.g., neo-liberal IGOs).

transnational activism and advocacy networks for its tendency to overlook the more sustainable, yet less contentious, means applied by advocacy groups. To better understand the meaning of transnational advocacy politics, one must look into the preparatory work and lasting effects of particular symbolic actions and events. The Boomerang theory is useful to capture the more suspenseful stage/aspect of transnational mobilization against domestic political obstacles. However, it simplifies the whole process of changes, and ignores the complexity of transnational advocacy politics. By highlighting the power of contentious means (e.g., leverage politics), it risks a full interpretation of advocacy activities and their impacts on the state. As evidenced by my case studies, state behavioral change is usually a result of numerous interconnected factors and events which are not all related and meant to build up pressures on the targeted state. To better understand what kind of political power advocacy actors possess and how they are able to make governments change policies, one must investigate what happens before, after, and beyond the “Boomerang”.<sup>4</sup>

The Double-mobilization model developed in this dissertation provides a conceptual framework that is complementary to the Boomerang model to fully capture the characteristics of transnational advocacy politics and the mechanisms that are employed by advocacy actors to promote policy and local changes:

1) Besides the alliances of domestic and international advocacy groups, the extensive connections and interactions between advocacy actors and governmental agencies/officials are also important to the effectiveness of transnational advocacy networks. Advocacy actors can modify state perceptions and behavior through

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<sup>4</sup> Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2002. "After the Boomerang: Environmental Movements and Politics in the La Plata River Basin." *Global Environmental Politics*. 2, 4.

negotiation, persuasion, project demonstration, and long-term mutual-learning processes in addition to building up international pressures and mobilizing punishing measures through a third party. State agencies can consent to make changes as well as comply with what is promoted by advocacy actors.<sup>5</sup>

2) Transnational networks are complex and dynamic amalgamations of agents, rules, and structures. Various advocacy actors apply different strategies at the same time under a similar set of core principles. While some may focus on transnational campaigns to expose domestic policy failures and scandal to hold governmental agencies accountable, others conduct grassroots advocacy education to promote public awareness. Moreover, some advocacy actors seek out key officials or state-affiliated researchers and provide learning opportunities to them in order to persuade them and bring in new ways of thinking from inside the state apparatus. In other words, while some advocacy actors of the networks perform Boomerang politics, others prepare both the public and the state agencies to grasp the new principles and consolidate the effects of transnational advocacy through Double-mobilization.

3) The Boomerang model emphasizes that advocacy networks can be effective, in a way, by amplifying and elevating domestic state-society contention. The Double-mobilization model, in contrast, points out that external advocates are also able to modify domestic politics by building bridges between the state and local communities and repressed group, and introducing innovative institutional arrangements. In fact, the Boomerang model may seem to be more relevant when speaking of policy changes in the

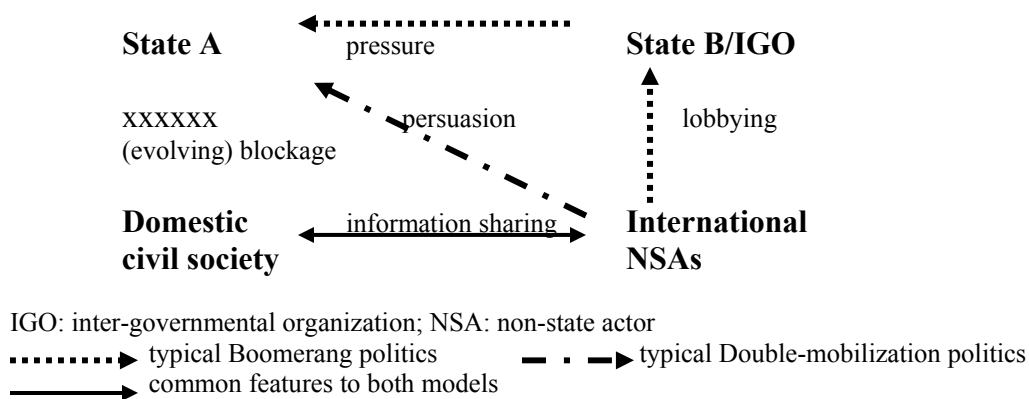
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<sup>5</sup> State actors may change their positions on a policy issue because they find that such change is in their interest. However, the emphasis here is that the targeted state is capable of conceiving and digesting the value of the principles that advocacy actors promote, and agree to make changes.

short-term, but the Double-mobilization model explains how such changes can be implemented and normative and practical changes can be established at different levels in the long-term.

Recalling Figure 2.4 (reproduced below) in Chapter 2, the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models are complementary in that each depicts some essential aspects of the most ideal and effective transnational advocacy networks that can both pressure the targeted state to quickly change domestic policies through the leverage of a third party, and mobilize domestic social groups, public, governmental officials and policy implementation agencies to digest new principles and operationalize new solutions. In most cases of sustainable and effective transnational advocacy networks, Boomerang and Double-mobilization politics are likely co-exist and together make domestic changes happen, in spite of the possibility that transnational campaigns and symbolic political actions may catch more attention. Double-mobilization becomes even more crucial when speaking of the consolidation of policy effects rather than the mere policy outcomes of transnational advocacy.

**Figure 2.4. A synthesis of the Boomerang and Double-mobilization models**



Despite their complementary nature, each conceptual model may appear to be more primary to a specific case, depending on the characteristics of the targeted state and local civil society groups. For example, for the Amazon anti-deforestation campaigns in Brazil in the 1980s and the early 1990s, the leverage politics played by the networks of local rubber tapper activists, international NGOs and World Bank experts was a key turning point.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, the findings from my research in China showed that transnational advocacy networks can effectively influence governmental agencies in policy implementation and policy-making by opening communication channels within the Chinese government: Double-mobilization becomes necessary when the Boomerang mechanism is not useful because many regimes are still not familiar with international NSAs and are not susceptible to international pressures and censures. However, such variations should not suggest that the two models are exclusive to each other in explaining transnational advocacy politics. In fact, even when conceptualizing the Boomerang politics of human rights networks in Mexico, Keck and Sikkink included the important transition of domestic state-society contention brought force by the collaboration of the Mexican government and local and international NGOs during the 1985 Mexico City earthquake.<sup>7</sup> The nature conservation case studied in this dissertation indicated that coalitions of international and Chinese NGOs and activists started to employ Boomerang-type strategies (e.g., campaigns and leverage politics through IGOs) as the Chinese government became more involved in international environmental agreements and programs. The value of the Double-mobilization model lies not only in

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<sup>6</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998, pp135-150.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p112.

its own explanatory power of transnational advocacy activities and actors, but also that it completes what is missing from the Boomerang model.

I highlighted and illustrated the Double-mobilization model and consensus-building politics in this study by the examples of transnational advocacy networks in nature conservation and HIV/AIDS prevention in China. I have shown that the contentious perspective on transnational NSAs and advocacy networks is not sufficient. Future studies should pay attention to both types of political dynamics involved in transnational advocacy networks. Important questions then arise: Why is one pattern more primary than the other in some cases? Is there any chorological relationship between the two models? By comparing my empirical studies with others, I have tentative answers to these questions:<sup>8</sup> Though Double-mobilization is necessary to consolidate the Boomerang effects, it becomes more visible and crucial when the targeted regime is not susceptible to international pressures and relatively isolated from global discourses. In terms of a chorological relationship, because not every network can mature to the same extent, it is not clear whether Double-mobilization occurs consistently before or after Boomerang across cases. Some networks diverge after a series of protests and campaigns, yet others may be waiting for the right time to negotiate with the state after

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<sup>8</sup> Examples of case studies of transnational advocacy networks include: Sperling, Valerie, Myra M. Ferree, and Barbara Risman. 2001. "Constructing Global Feminism: Transnational Advocacy Networks and Russian Women's Activism." *Journal of Women in Culture & Society*. 26, 4: 1155-86. Ricker, Tom. "Boomerang, Battering-Rams, and Sustainable Solidarity: Transnational Advocacy and the Struggle for Workers Rights in Nicaragua's Maquila Industry." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2001. Khagram, Sanjeev, James V. Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. 2002. *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*. Vol. 14. Social Movements, Protest and Contention, Bert Klandermans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Khagram, Sanjeev. 2004. *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

years of advocacy education and social mobilization. In ideal cases, transnational advocacy networks should exhibit both patterns throughout the processes to effectively promote new principles, influence both governmental and societal actors, and consolidate the diffusion and establishment of new ideas and practices.

### **Domestic Structures and Transnational Advocacy Networks: Findings and Generalizability**

Existing literature would not predict the rise of transnational networks in China and similar regimes. This is due not only to its focus on the contentious aspect of transnational advocacy politics, but also to its reliance on macro-level factors for prediction. China's non-democratic regime is thought to block any interference from the international community (e.g., IGOs and NSAs). In this dissertation, I instead found sufficient evidence for transnational advocacy networks in China, and changes happening at the micro-level are most critical to the emergence and development of such networks. First, the level of internationalization of governing structures and that of domestic social activism determine whether external advocacy actors can obtain the minimum level of access to domestic politics required for the initial formation of transnational networks. Second, the levels of bureaucratic decentralization and interconnectivity among domestic civil society groups affect whether transnational networks will further expand their scope and deepen their influence in domestic politics. Here, I give brief accounts of three other issue areas in China (besides environment and public health) to illustrate how domestic state and society structures may affect transnational advocacy networks:

*1) Transnational advocacy for women's rights.* China's post-Mao transition has undermined the foundations of women's political participation embodied in

state-sponsored mass organizations. Women have to re-organize themselves and engage in competition for their political participation without the support of the state.<sup>9</sup> Since the 1995 U.N. Women's Conference in Beijing, not only has the concept of NGO become well received among women's affairs officials and activists. The officials of the Women's Federation branches across the country are becoming frequent participants in international women's rights conferences and events. Supported by international foundations and NGOs, some former Women's Federation officials actually gave up their bureaucratic titles and started a new career in women's NGOs, such as the founders of the Xi Shuang Ban Na Women and Children's Rights Center in Yunnan. A number of women's hotlines and support groups have been established by university professors, journalists and activists in various cities.<sup>10</sup> These independent initiatives have caught attention from international NSAs, such as the Ford Foundation, and are conceived as the seeds of civil society and democratic culture in China. The women's rights case presents very similar patterns to the transnational advocacy networks in nature conservation: A relatively high level of internationalization of governing structures and domestic NGOs has led to the relatively early emergence of transnational networks in the women's right field; and, decentralized bureaucratic relations and inter-connections among domestic NGOs have facilitated the development of such networks.

2) *Transnational advocacy for global climate change-related policies.* The Chinese government has been involved in international negotiations in the field of global climate

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<sup>9</sup> Wang, Qi. 1999. "State-Society Relations and Women's Political Participation." In *Women of China: Economic and Social Transformation*, edited by Jackie West, et al. New York: St. Martin's. p20.

<sup>10</sup> Cornue, Virginia. 1999. "Practicing NGOness and Relating Women's Space Publicly: The Women's Hotline and the State." In *Spaces of Their Own*, edited by Mayfair M. Yang, 68-94. Minneapolis, USA: Minesota University.



change since the late 1980s. It is among the first signatory countries of the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1987. With the consent from the central government, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) has collaborated with multiple ministries and established a few inter-departmental working mechanisms to further promote new policies related to global climate change.<sup>11</sup> International foundations (e.g., the Energy Foundation and the Blue Moon Foundation) have mobilized significant resources to implement pilot projects in energy efficiency which would bring about global climate benefits. Advocacy groups emerged in the global climate change issue area due to a relatively high level of internationalization in the governing structures, although the domestic non-governmental sector in this field is underdeveloped. Moreover, despite the fact that IGOs and NSAs are among the most active in modifying China's policy-making related to global climate change issues, transnational advocacy networks in this field are radically tilted towards the government because of the lack of domestic civil society groups. Recently, international NGOs and foundations have pulled resources together to create new GONGOS in this field (e.g., China Renewable Energy Industry Association) with the hope that this might be the first step to strengthen the non-governmental sector in the field.<sup>12</sup>

3) *Transnational advocacy for human rights.* This case differs most from the others in that little evidence of transnational advocacy networks is present in China. Currently, there are a small number of international organizations (e.g., International Labor

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<sup>11</sup> Yu, Hongyuan. 2004. "Global Environment Regime and Climate Policy Coordination in China." *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 9, 2: 63-77.

<sup>12</sup> Wu, Fengshi. 2002. "New Partners or Old Brothers? GONGOS in Transnational Environmental Advocacy in China." *China Environment Series*, 5: 45-58.

Organization) implementing projects to promote human rights in China. The Chinese government has also established a few official channels to discuss human rights issues with intergovernmental agencies (e.g., the China-Australia Human Right Annual Meeting). In addition, several foreign governmental embassies and the EU office in Beijing have directly supported human rights civil society groups in China with small grants (e.g., the Canadian Civil Society Program). Chinese human rights groups have emerged, yet are extremely constrained in what they can achieve. This is a least developed example of transnational advocacy politics due to the low level of internationalization within the governing bodies, the high level of central control, and the lack of domestic human rights NGO building.

While Khagram's cross-country comparative study of anti-dam movement has showed the relevance of domestic politics to transnational advocacy, I argue that with the deepening integration of transnational and domestic politics, domestic micro-level state and society structures are increasingly important to the development of transnational advocacy networks. Evidence in this study suggests that transnational networks vary in their emergence and political relations even within a single country, where macro-level political and societal factors remain constant. I here provide two frameworks to create a conceptual space/spectrum to map various transnational networks and to probe the disparities and similarities among them. (Figures 6.1 and 6.2) My studies confirm part of Khagram's thesis that with a stronger domestic civil society, transnational advocacy networks are more likely to emerge. I further argue that the level of internationalization of the governing structures in an issue area also conditions the origins of the networks. Defined by a specific issue area, domestic governing structures, local state autonomy, and

the maturity and interconnectivity of civil society all affect the political patterns of transnational advocacy networks (i.e. the triangular relationship).

Figure 6.1. Domestic micro-level structures and the emergence of transnational advocacy networks

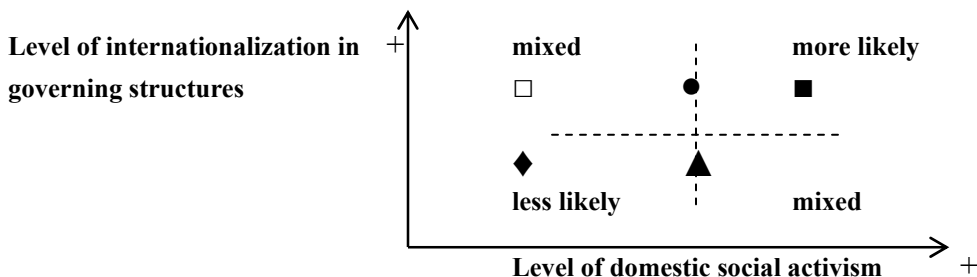
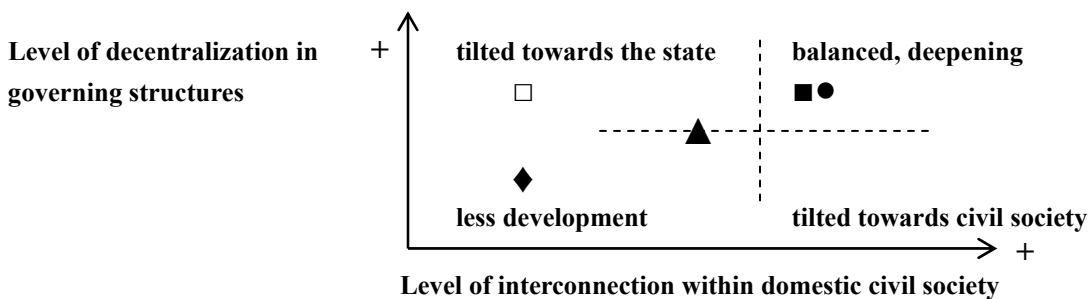


Figure 6.2. Domestic micro-level structures and the political patterns of transnational advocacy networks



- nature conservation    ▲—HIV/AIDS prevention
- women's rights    ◆—human rights    □—climate change

### Issue Characteristics and International Structures

Two relevant and popular alternative explanations for the variance in the triangular relationship among the state, local civil society groups, and external advocacy actors are issue characteristics and international structures. I dismissed them as sufficient explanations for the cases explored in this dissertation for different reasons.

The argument that issue characteristics cause variance in transnational advocacy networks, despite of its apparent simplicity, is almost *ad hoc*. Keck and Sikkink concluded that issues related to human bodily harm and the most vulnerable parts of the

population resonate with most existing belief systems, and such issues appear most prominently in transnational campaigns.<sup>13</sup> In a sense, these issues reflect fundamental human rights, and therefore, are more “frame-able” and can generate more activist momentum than others. However, this cannot explain why many transnational environmental protection movements and nature conservation campaigns succeeded, which, to a large degree, were driven by the ideas that are critical of ethno-centric values. Nor can the argument of issue characteristics justify why many transnational campaigns directly related to bodily welfare (e.g., against women’s genital circumcision in Kenya in the 1930s, promoting AIDS prevention in South Africa in the 1990s) were not effective. Moreover, some of the most remarkable examples of transnational activism and movement in history, such as the civil rights movement in America,<sup>14</sup> in fact, went against the “existing belief systems” at the time.<sup>15</sup> The true meaning of “advocacy” rather indicates that the difficulty of framing an issue should not prevent activists and advocacy networks from mobilizing for change. The causal linkage between the nature of an issue

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<sup>13</sup> Keck and Sikkink, 1998, pp203-205.

<sup>14</sup> Chabot, Sean. 2001. "Building Transnational Advocacy Networks before 1965: Diffusion from the Indian Nationalist Movement to the American Civil Rights Movement." In *Non-State Actors in International Relations*, edited by Arts, Bas, Math Noortmann and Bob Reinalda. Burlington, USA: Ashgate.

<sup>15</sup> When Keck and Sikkink discussed the problem of issue characteristics, they particularly pointed out the trend of the diffusion of Western liberal values and ideas in the world. Therefore, it is more likely for transnational activism to emerge in the issue areas that are closely associated with liberal values (e.g., human rights). They even argued that: “Network campaigns have been most successful in countries that have internalized the discourse of liberalism to such a degree that there exists a disjuncture to plumb and expose.” (Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 206) However, historical evidence (e.g., abolition of slavery in America, international movement for women’s suffrage in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century) indicates that liberal values evolved over time even within Western democracies, and transnational activism actually played an important role in modifying and re-shaping such values during the process. It is probable that current liberal norms will continue to change, and it is not necessarily true that those transnational networks who only promote core Western liberal principles will be the most effective.

and the emergence, development and effectiveness of a transnational advocacy network is not as straightforward as what the existing literature has argued (e.g., the more acceptable to existing beliefs of human rights, the more likely to be successful).<sup>16</sup>

I do not completely dismiss the effects of issue characteristics, but propose a different approach to better interpret the linkage between the nature of an issue and the politics of transnational advocacy networks. Because it is not realistic to argue that certain norms and principles will inevitably prevail across countries, we should not only focus on the content of the issue to assess the potential of a transnational network committed to promote it. Instead, we need to translate issue characteristics into cross-system terms. In other words, rather than dwelling on whether the issue is close to or related to a specific ethical view (e.g., individual liberty), we need to ask another set of questions: How is the state authority controlling the issue? What are the governing structures in the issue area? Is political power over the issue centralized or fragmented? Who are the related political actors, and what is the nature of the political relations among them? Will social activism in the issue area directly challenge the authority of existing governmental agency and the power of political leaders?

In Chapter 5, I pointed out that no significant evidence was found in the two cases studied that could lead to a general proposition on how issue characteristics affect the emergence and development of transnational advocacy networks. Despite the vital effect

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<sup>16</sup> Since the publication of *Dynamics of Contention* (Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, 2001, Cambridge University), the field of contentious politics has moved from focusing only on repertoire, resources and political opportunity structures to explicating interactive processes and causal mechanisms involved in social movements and conflicts. Drawn upon this academic shift, I suggest that instead of trying to generalize how the content of a principle and an issue affect transnational advocacy, more attention should be paid to the actual processes and political relations involved in transnational activism and mobilization.

of HIV/AIDS on individual well-being, transnational activism and networks appeared almost seven years later than the case of nature conservation. Some may argue that the delay is because of the political sensitivity of the AIDS topic. However, this is exactly the type of ad hoc explanation we want to avoid. The causes of political sensitivity and official denial of AIDS in China varied over time.<sup>17</sup> It is more useful to investigate the particular actors and political dynamics involved in the development of the two originally separate AIDS epidemics in China in order to understand why transnational advocacy in this field did not emerge as rapidly as in the nature conservation case. Some may also argue that the success of nature conservation networks is due to the lack of state repression of activists in the issue area. As I repeatedly pointed out, this is a common misperception. At both central and local levels, economic development is much more prioritized than nature conservation by the Chinese government. Therefore, activism and social movements for species protection, watershed conservation, or against dam-building usually trigger intensive political struggles in China. While the central government may view social activism as a political threat, local politicians and tycoons repress bottom-up environmentalism because of the fear of exposure of corruption and loss of private interests.

Neither of the two cases in this research indicates that there is direct linkage between issue characteristics and the rise and effectiveness of transnational advocacy. Instead, issue characteristics can have effects only if advocacy actors use mobilization

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<sup>17</sup> As I explicated previously at different parts of the dissertation, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Chinese government's indifference to AIDS was caused more by ignorance than policy scandal. However, in the late 1990s, particularly on the issue of blood contamination and HIV transfusion in Henan province, individual politicians have made open investigation impossible.

techniques and elaborate/politicize them for the public, or the governing agencies have formulated certain institutions surrounding the issue based on misperceptions. Issue characteristics are elusive variables, and we need to de-codify them to clarify how they are reflected in governing structures and mobilization strategies rather than merely focusing on their content.

I dismissed the argument of international structures not because the causal mechanism here is unclear, but because not much variation is found in my case studies. Existing literature suggests two main kinds of international structures that are relevant to transnational advocacy networks. First, the political opportunity structures embedded in international institutions, such as the leverage of international institutions over the targeted government, and resources available for NSAs.<sup>18</sup> As explained in Chapter 3 and 4, the international political context surrounding the nature conservation and AIDS prevention issues in China is similar: In each case, a number of bilateral and multilateral aid agencies are involved yet with a relatively low level of political leverage over the Chinese government.

The second type of international structures refers to the political relations within the advocacy network, either among international NSAs or between international and domestic advocacy actors. Factors such as conflicting interests among international NGOs, and unbalanced power hierarchy between international and local NGOs may affect the trajectory of transnational networks.<sup>19</sup> Even though I have found various

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<sup>18</sup> Tarrow, Sidney. 2002. "The New Transnational Contention: Organizations, Coalitions, Mechanisms." Paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, August 29-September 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ricker, Tom. "Boomerang, Battering-Rams, and Sustainable Solidarity: Transnational Advocacy and the

coalitions and competitions among international NGOs in the two cases of transnational networks in China, the differences are not so major as to reshape the entire pattern of the networks. In terms of the asymmetric power relationship between international and local NGOs, there is some evidence emerging in the nature conservation field, in spite of the fact that Chinese NGOs are much more developed in environmental protection than in public health.<sup>20</sup> However, such discord has not reached the degree that would cause distrust among the activists and NGOs within the networks in nature conservation. Many new transnational coalitions are in formation in nature conservation, which has a positive influence in fostering solidarity among international and local environmentalist groups.

Neither is my empirical research sufficient nor intended to reject the theoretical relevance of international structures to transnational advocacy politics. My point based on the two cases is simply that even when international structures are constant across cases, transnational advocacy networks can diverge given variations in domestic structures.

### **State Responses to the Deepening Process of Transnational Advocacy**

The Double-mobilization model stresses the dynamic nature of transnational advocacy politics and considers the state as an active political actor that is capable of learning and changing perceptions rather than passively reacting to international pressures. Hence, it is natural and worthwhile to discuss how and through which means the Chinese state has

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Struggle for Workers Rights in Nicaragua's Maquila Industry." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, 2001. Dumoulin, David. 2003. "Local Knowledge in the Hands of Transnational NGO Networks: A Mexican Viewpoint." *International Social Science Journal*. 55, 178: 593-616.

<sup>20</sup> This can be partially explained by the fact there are not as many international NGOs that have established working relations and connections with local activists groups in public health as in nature conservation. Therefore, in a way, the lack of conflict of interests within the transnational networks against AIDS in China is currently due to the lower density of interactions among



responded to transnational advocacy and activism, even though a full investigation of this question would require another dissertation. In different parts of Chapters 3 and 4, I pointed out how particular governmental agencies reacted to international NGOs and foundation on individual occasions. While more general observation of the Chinese government's responses to international NSAs and transnational activism requires more systematic studies, I raise two main points. First, at the central level, there is still a lack of recognition and coordinated policies towards international NSAs, and therefore, the state's response highly depends on personal connections and ad hoc opportunities for international NSAs to form working relationships with governmental agencies in China. The government's reactions to international NSAs are not consistent across issue areas and regions.

Second, local governments are even less informed about international NGOs and foundations. Even though in some cases local governments found the support from international NGOs and foundations to be crucial to solve local problems, in general local governments are not self-motivated to attract or block international NSAs. As much as international advocacy groups would like to mobilize local governments to promote certain principles and practices, local governments' responses to them do not yet appear to be uniformly friendly or hostile.

As David Zweig accurately observed, although the Chinese government is very careful about whether to accept and how to channel foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA), it was not very keen on international non-governmental assistance throughout the 1990s.<sup>21</sup> The supposed only corresponding

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<sup>21</sup> Zweig, David. 2002. *Internationalization China: Domestic Interests and Global Linkages*. Edited by

governmental agency for international NGOs—China Association for Non-Governmental Organizations (CANGO)—was created under the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) in 1992.<sup>22</sup> The state rationale behind CANGO is to establish a warehouse of all possible projects for international NGOs to fund and support. Facing the mounting poverty and social welfare problems in China, CANGO was intended to “sell the projects to international NGOs.”<sup>23</sup> In addition, through CANGO, the state can channel the funds from international NGOs rather than let them go inside China, travel around and design their own projects.<sup>24</sup> However, in reality, most international NGOs bypass CANGO and find a niche for their work in China through their own connections, working directly with grassroots groups.

As international NGOs are making more progress in solving local problems and providing learning opportunities to governmental officials, state ministries are becoming more aware of them in recent years. A few ministries have created separate offices and GONGOs to interact with international NGOs, e.g., SEPA, SFB, MoH, and Ministry of Education.<sup>25</sup> As illustrated by the nature conservation case, sometimes ministry-level agencies even initiate collaborations with international NGOs and foundations. Becky Shelly studied three American NGOs and foundations involvement in China’s village election reform, and found that the Ministry of Civil Affairs approached these

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Peter J. Katzenstein, *Cornell Studies in Political Economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp249-258.

<sup>22</sup> MOFTEC’s Chinese International Center for Economic and Technical Exchange (CICETE) was the key agency that is in charge of any foreign development assistance. Ministry of Commerce (MOC) replaced MOFTEC after the 1998 central administrative reform. CANGO was created basically by transforming the NGO Division of the CICETE into a semi-autonomous entity.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p253. Interview of CANGO staff by Zweig in 1999.

<sup>24</sup> Interview of CICETE staff in Beijing in 2004.

<sup>25</sup> Usually such GONGOs are names as Center for International Cooperation under each ministries.

international NSAs to elevate its own status within the state.<sup>26</sup> Despite these new changes, there is no national-level policy or regulation responding to international NSAs across issue areas. All international NGOs and foundations are currently registered as multinational corporations (MNCs) in China. On the one hand, governmental agencies' international NGO partnerships vary dramatically across cases. For example, SEPA interacts and collaborates with many more international NSAs than any other ministries. On the other hand, very few international NGOs have signed formal Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with state ministries, even though many have already participated in policy implementation and demonstration projects to different degrees. State control and regulation over the issues related to international NSAs are still at a very spontaneous stage.

Compared with state ministries and national-level GONGOs, provincial and local governments are even less informed about and acquainted with international NGOs and funding organizations. In contrast with the issue of FDI, local governments are not handed guidelines to deal with international non-profit organizations from the center. They are mostly left alone when deciding upon whether or not to collaborate with international NSAs. However, in cases where the central government is directly in charge of (e.g., reforestation, dam construction, AIDS prevention), local governments can be extremely constrained in working with international NSAs even if they find the partnership is in their interest.

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<sup>26</sup> Shelley, Becky. 2000. "Political Globalization and the Politics of International Non-governmental Organizations: The Case of Village Democracy in China." *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 35, 2: 225-238.

From the local government's point of view, they are not particularly motivated to attract international NSAs, because international NGOs and funding organizations do not appear to be able to bring about new jobs or economic benefits. Therefore, the relationship between local governments and international NSAs are at a very nascent and highly sporadic stage. In addition, international NGOs are usually problem driven, and more concerned with marginalized populations than with local economic development. I have not found particular patterns of international NGOs' regional preference in China, except for Yunnan province. Due to its ethnic, cultural and ecological diversity, Yunnan has attracted dozens of international NGOs specialized in various fields. In turn, the provincial and local governments in Yunnan became familiar with the concept and working style of international NGOs over time, and therefore, new international NGOs have found it relatively easy to implement projects in Yunnan compared to other regions. The Ford Foundation has supported a generation of Yunnan local officials since the early 1990s, some of whom became local NGO leaders after they returned from overseas studies. Yunnan is also a popular recipient of multilateral and bilateral development grants and loans, which also helped the provincial and local governments to be familiar with international norms and working with various partners. However, my research also shows that international NGOs are emerging in every province in China, and international foundations are also expanding their grantee networks across the country, even though local governments may respond very differently.

As a first step to explore transnational activism in China and introduce the concept of Double-mobilization, this dissertation mainly focused on elaborating how individual and groups of advocacy actors engage and mobilize governmental agencies

and local communities, and how existing domestic structures have affected the political relations generated by transnational networks. The next step would be to trace how state agencies (as well as domestic civil society actors) interact with transnational advocacy networks and whether networks evolve over time due to state responses. We also need more comprehensive research to find out whether there are regional patterns of transnational activism, and if so, whether there are the factors contingent to provincial and local polities that can explain such patterns.

### **A Transnational Tocquevillian Transformation? Implications for China's Transitional Polity**

This dissertation offers two main suggestions for the study of contemporary Chinese politics. First, civil society structures are becoming more relevant to the transformation of the political regime in China. Parallel with the changes from within the state, Chinese society is evolving from within led by social entrepreneurs, activists and organized citizen associations. Evidence from this research has shown that civil society groups are not merely responding to the state, but are exerting their influence on governmental agencies and policy-making processes by various means. In addition, they are becoming important players in particular issue areas where, together with international NSAs, they can mobilize citizens, media, experts and even governmental agencies to reshape policies and change local practices.

Second, this emerging transformation within Chinese society, characterized by the rise of civil society organizations and voluntary associations, to a large degree, is a part of the wave of transnationalization at the global level. A transnational civil society is evidenced by increasing and deepening networks, coalitions and movements formed

among NSAs and committed citizens across borders. The development of civil society in China is influenced by, and in turn, influencing international NSAs and transnational civil society dynamics.

Besides providing the latter the necessary resources to survive, the most politically important aspect of international NSAs' impact on Chinese civil society is that they bring in ideas and lessons related to voluntary associations, one most common form of which is an NGO. International NSAs, mostly from western democratic countries, carry with them a particular set of norms and methods to run NGOs and social organizations, regardless of their professional expertise. This is not to say that Chinese people do not know how to organize their own social lives within the community. The point is rather that Chinese activists and local NGOs are now inevitably *exposed* to liberal democratic ways of associational life.

Much of the political science literature on the international dimension of China's transformation has focused on economic factors, even though many scholars are not satisfied with the economic explanations of political changes. Transnational civil society interactions have so far been largely overlooked. The most common mass-based political actions in a democratic regime are public campaigns, interest group lobbying, grassroots mobilization and social movements. With the transnationalization of voluntary and bottom-up advocacy and social mobilization organizations, the Chinese public and civil society are becoming more aware of these methods and ideas.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government is not able to cope with many new social welfare problems caused by the rapid economic development and increasing rural-urban divide. Policy victim groups are emerging (e.g., migrant workers, landless farmers).

Local governments are becoming more open to independent social organizations and NGOs for their help in alleviating social resentment and delivering better social welfare services. Chinese NGOs develop their own capacity with support from their international counterparts. During this process, Chinese activists and NGO leaders are experiencing and learning the ways and principles that NGOs adopt in democratic regimes. With the growth of transnational advocacy networks, as this dissertation has shown, Chinese civil society groups are better equipped not merely with abstract notions related to democracy, but practical ways of democratic action, association and political negotiation.

When Alexis de Tocqueville visited America in the early 1830s, he heard of an incident in which one hundred thousand men publicly demonstrated against alcoholism. He first found it “more amusing than serious”, because “if those hundred thousand men had lived in France, each of them would have addressed himself individually to the government, begging it to oversee the cabarets all over the realm.”<sup>27</sup> But, after his journey completed, he reflected upon such actions and groups of common citizens and understood why people had to act *together* to make changes in American society. He further pointed out that:<sup>28</sup>

There is nothing, according to me, that deserves more to attract our regard than the intellectual and moral associations of America. We easily perceive the political and industrial associations of the Americans, but the others escape us; and if we discover them, we understand them badly because we have almost never seen anything analogous. One ought however to recognize that they are as necessary as the first to the American people, and perhaps more so... In democratic countries the science of association is the mother science; the progress of all the others depends on the progress of that one.

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<sup>27</sup> de Tocqueville, Alexis. (trans. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop). 2000. *Democracy in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago. p492.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Tocqueville saw that the ability of the people to voluntarily combine their forces and engage in social and political affairs together is essential for the whole democratic polity. Associational life is what distinguishes a democratic people from those who live under other types of political regimes. Therefore, for a people or country to whom democracy is appealing, they ought to first grasp the spirit and *science* of associational life.

170 year later, Tocqueville's theory is still inspiring political scientists to explore the great value of democracy. Whether the East-West encountering through transnational advocacy networks will significantly change the course of civil society development in China remains to be seen, yet it is worth pointing out that there is an organic relationship between civil society and democracy. Democracy is not only about the rise of civil society, but the sustainable engagement of civil society with the formal governing apparatus. There are fundamental differences between a massive mobilization led by an avant-garde political party or social movement organization and via accumulative processes through town hall meetings and citizen associations. The latter offers opportunities for each citizen to digest and internalize political ideas voluntary. In the post-Tian'an Men Square Movement era, international NGOs and advocacy group may have a role in a second trial of democratization by spreading the spirit and science of democratic associational life in China.



## APPENDICES

**Appendix 2.1. Civil Society and NGOs in China**

The concept of civil society has rich meanings and is conceptualized in distinctive ways in political science.<sup>1</sup> I adopted the Tocquevillian perspective in this dissertation, in contrast with the Hegel-Marx-Gramsci tradition. From Hegel to Marx, the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy. Civil society is viewed as an intermediary sphere, the sum of all institutions that exist between the family and the state. They both recognized the tension between the self-interested economic activity and the macro-level political structure. Yet, Hegel saw a state authority acknowledged by citizens' will, but Marx predicted a state as subordinate instrument for particular social class; Hegel pointed out the educational function of civil society where political legitimacy is originated, but Marx argued that civil society is the locale of political tensions among different social classes.<sup>2</sup> Gramsci added a cultural element to this approach, and argued that civil society is the "political and cultural hegemony, which a social group exercises over the whole society, as the ethical content of the State."<sup>3</sup> It comprises not only material relationships, but also ideological, cultural and intellectual relationships. In this sense, civil society generates ideational power and eventually "reinvents" the political structure.<sup>4</sup>

The Tocquevillian perspective on civil society was developed upon the American experience in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. For Tocqueville, civil society is the combination of a variety of "intellectual and moral associations". Like the previous authors, he also saw civil society very important to political life. Unlike them, he pointed out that civil society is particularly essential for democratic regimes. "In democratic countries the science of association is the mother science; the progress of all the others depends on the progress of that one."<sup>5</sup> This approach has been widely adopted to study the relationship between citizen associations/civil society and democracy/democratic tradition since Almond and Verba's "civil culture" project in

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen, Jean L., and Andrew Arato. 1992. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel. 1967. *The Philosophy of Right*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Marx. 1975. *Collected Works*. New York: International Publishers. Ehrenberg. 1999. *Civil Society: The Critical History of and Idea*. New York and London: New York University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Gramsci. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. ed. and trans. by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith. New York: International Publishers.

<sup>4</sup> Tismaneanu, Vladimir. 1993. *Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel*. 2 ed. New York: The Free Press.

<sup>5</sup> Tocqueville, A. 2000. *Democracy in America*. trans. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago. p492.

the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> Putnam's recent works on social organizations in Italy and "social capital" in America re-popularized this tradition.<sup>7</sup> Recent scholarship of transitional regimes also emphasized the importance of voluntary associations and civic engagement.<sup>8</sup>

I applied this view of civil society and emphasized voluntary citizen organizations for three main reasons: 1) the literature of transnational advocacy networks pays great attention to grassroots social organizations and voluntary associations; 2) such organizations are emerging in the Chinese context, particularly in the form of NGO; and 3) I am interested in the potential linkage between civil society and democracy, even though this is not the central point of this dissertation.<sup>9</sup>

I particularly highlighted the emerging NGO sector in China's civil society. Though the total number of NGOs is limited, they are becoming more important in a few issue areas, particularly in environmental protection. NGOs often represent local communities, advocate of particular principles and ideas, mobilize for changes of existing policies and organize campaigns to confront the governmental authorities. Under the Chinese political context, all these activities led by NGOs have introduced new and crucial dynamics in local and national politics.

The Chinese state, on the one hand, still intends to slow down the pace of NGO development by implementing restricted rules. On the other hand, it cannot avoid encountering NGOs, as more Chinese NGOs are, in a way, helping local authorities in delivering social services and helping marginalized groups. The state is uncertain of how to deal with such social organizations rather than blind oppression.<sup>10</sup>

Since 1989, the government has gradually adopted a policy of "fostering and promoting non-profit organizations, while strengthening supervision and regulation

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<sup>6</sup> Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

<sup>7</sup> Putnam, Robert. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University. Putnam, Robert. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Communities*. New York: Simon&Schuster.

<sup>8</sup> Howard, Marc Morjé. 2003. *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press. Demes, Pavol. 1999. "Civil Society Development in Post-War Kosovo and In Post-War Serbia". Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center. Carothers, Thomas. 1999. "Civil Society." *Foreign Policy*. Winter 1999-2000, Issue 117. Grugel, Jean, ed. 1999. *Democracy without Borders: Transnationalization and Conditionality in New Democracies*. London: Routledge. Lewis, Peter. 1992. "Political Transition and the Dilemma of Civil Society in Africa." *Journal of International Affairs*. 46, 1.

<sup>9</sup> O'Brien, Marie. 1998. "Dissent and The Emergence of Civil Society in Post-Totalitarian China." *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 7, No. 17, page 153. Kluver, Randy, and John H. Powers, eds. 1999. *Civic Discourse, Civil Society, and Chinese Communities*. Stamford, Connecticut: Ablex Publishing. White, Gordon, Jude Howell, and Shang Xiaoyuan. 1996. *In Search of Civil Society : Market Reform and Social Change in Contemporary China*. New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>10</sup> China scholars have noted that the Chinese government is not consistent in its policies over the growth of social organizations and NGOs. However, on certain issues (e.g., the Falung Gong religious movement), the state still leaves no room for any kind of negotiation.

on them".<sup>11</sup> By summer 1996, some 200,000 social organizations were registered with the Department of Civil Affairs at different levels. The regulations regarding social organization and NGO status in China are currently under revision. Before the 1998, the government used the two-step registration process to register NGOs. Application for NGO status should be supported by both a state or Party organization sponsor (*Gua Kao Dan Wei*) and a professional supervisory governing body.<sup>12</sup> Registration of NGO has been slowed down since 1998.<sup>13</sup>

However, Chinese NGOs have found a variety of ways to survive without being constrained by this two-step registration. For example, they register as a secondary governmental agency or private business. In some cases, activists formed volunteer groups to avoid registration redress.<sup>14</sup> Applying different strategies, Chinese NGOs find ways to build up coalition with governmental officials or agencies, and work closely with the state, meanwhile maintaining organizational autonomy.

Despite the lack of academic consensus on the definition of NGOs in general or in China, four specific standards are applied in this research regarding a Chinese NGO:

- 1) It is individual citizens, not government, that take the initiative of the NGO. Founder(s) of the NGOs can still work for state-affiliated agencies (e.g., universities, hospitals, research institutions, media), but his (their) work for the NGO is not paid by the state, or influenced by his (their) official affiliations.
- 2) The NGO is not administratively nor financially constrained by any government agencies, even though they may be legally registered under certain agencies according to the current regulation.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Mas, Stephanie. 2000. "The Legal Environment for Non-Profit Organizations in China and Its Impact". Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge, Kunming, China. p11.

<sup>12</sup> Two-step registration: register both at civil affairs department and related sectoral administration department. For example, an environment NGO has to register with both civil affairs and environment protection departments of the government.

<sup>13</sup> This is partially due the Falung Gong Movement.

<sup>14</sup> NGOs registered as secondary organizations: these are the groups that are administratively affiliated with a governmental departmental office or a GONGOs. They only need to get the approval from the affiliated governmental agency and deposit a file at the civil affairs department. Therefore, such secondary groups enjoy relative autonomy. For examples, the Friends of Nature is a secondary organization under the Beijing Green Culture Association, a GONGO under Beijing municipal government. NGOs registered as private corporations: these are the groups that are registered as business corporations, but remain non-profit in operation. The Global Village of Beijing is an example in this category. Informal groups: a number of "volunteer associations", "clubs", "salons" and "on-line communities" have chosen to remain unregistered, which in fact has not prevented them from networking. Green Earth Volunteers is an example. They have not registered since 2000, but have organized tens of tree-planting, bird-watching and media campaigns.

<sup>15</sup> According to the Contemporary Regulations on Social Organizations, every NGO should meet the two-step registration requirement.

- 3) The NGO enjoys the autonomy of naming its own staff and organizing activities.<sup>16</sup>
- 4) There should be some form of organization of the NGO, regardless whether it is officially registered or not. If it is not registered, its organizational structures can be reflected in full-time or part-time volunteer networks, regular meetings and a core group of regular participants and members.

This paper purposely excluded government organized NGOs (GONGOs) from the category of NGOs.<sup>17</sup> Among other things, NGOs are different from GONGOs in their private, self-governing and voluntary characteristics. For example, the China Wildlife Conservation Association was created by the Ministry of Forestry around the early 1980s for the purpose of receiving international non-governmental donations for wildlife protection in China. Not only all its staff are state bureaucrats and have official rankings, but also during the distribution of donations and implementation of protection projects, it operates through the existing forestry administrative system.<sup>18</sup> Despite the word “association” in its name, it cannot be treated as an environmental NGO. This is, however, not to overlook the role of GONGO in China’s society, but to concentrate on non-government and more grassroots organizations.<sup>19</sup>

Another kind of confusion of NGOs in China is professional associations, industry associations and research institutions. For example, in the field of environmental protection, Associations of Environmental Protection Industry and Societies of Environmental Science at all levels. They are defined as a special type of entity in current China—public enterprises (*she hui shi ye dan wei*). Most of them are undergoing fundamental reforms and becoming more independent from the government after the national public enterprise reform in 2003. However, they do not exhibit the similar characteristics as voluntary citizen associations, and therefore, they are not included in this research.

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<sup>16</sup> The term “autonomy” particularly refers to the freedom of agenda-setting, organizational decision-making and project implementation. Those local NGOs with a relatively higher level of autonomy do not obligated to report their budget, annual plan, or activities to any government agencies.

<sup>17</sup> Some scholars define non-governmental associations in China as both GONGOs and NGOs, while other conclude three types: GONGOs (quasi-NGOs), public enterprise (*shi ye dan wei*), and NGOs. GONGOs and public enterprises both are administratively and financially related with the government, and are initiated and supervised by the government. All media, education, and research entities fall in this group, e.g., China Forestry Association, All China Women’s Federation, and national charity organizations, newspapers and presses.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Zhang Shanning, 21 July, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> For a detailed studies of Chinese environmental GONGOs, see: Wu, Fengshi. 2003. "Environmental GONGO Autonomy: Unintended Consequences of State Strategies in China." *Journal of the Good Society*, 12,1.

### **Appendix 3.1. Main Chinese Environmental NGOs with An Focus on Nature Conservation**

Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge (Kunming)  
 Center for Community Development Studies (Kunming)  
 China Wild Bird Liberation Front (Liaoning)  
 Chongqing Green Volunteers Association  
 Friends of Nature (Beijing)  
 Global Environmental Institute (Beijing)  
 Global Village of Beijing  
 Grassroots Community (Shanghai)  
 Green Earth Volunteers (Beijing)  
 Green Plateau Institute (Yunnan)  
 Green Rivers (Sichuan)  
 Green Watershed (Kunming)  
 Green Yanbian (Jilin)  
 Greener Beijing  
 Institute for Human Ecology (Beijing)  
 South-North Institute for Sustainable Development (Beijing)  
 Saunders' Gull Protection Association of Panjin (Liaoning)  
 Friends of the Earth Guizhou  
 Volunteers' Association of Environmental Protection of Yueyang City (Hunan)  
 Friends of Green Tianjing  
 Friends of Green Hebei  
 Guizhou PRA Network  
 Yunnan PRA Network  
 Han-hai-san (anti-desertification) (Beijing)  
 Green Island (journalist salon) (Beijing)  
 Green Web (Beijing)  
 Snowland Great River Environmental Protection Association (Qinghai)  
 Xinjiang Conservation Fund  
 Yunnan ECO Network  
 Zhaotong Black-necked Crane Volunteers Association  
 Chongqing Forest Conservation Volunteers

#### **Main University Environmental Student Groups:**

Green Association of Tsinghua University  
 The Scientific Exploration and Outdoor Life Society of Beijing Forestry University  
 China Green Student Forum (Beijing)  
 Environmental Volunteers Association of Sichuan University  
 Green Stone of Nanjing University  
 Green Association of Beijing Industrial University  
 Green Association of Yunnan University

### **Appendix 3.2. A Chronicle of the Nu River Anti-Dam Movement (July 2003-August 2004)**

- 3 July, 2003. UNESCO included the Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas in the World's Heritage List. The three rivers are the Nu, Lanchang, and Jinsha.
- 12-14 August, 2003. China State Development and Reform Committee reviewed and passed the proposal of building a 13-level dam on the Nu River (21MW).
- 16 August, 2003. Environmentalist Wang Yongchen heard about the Nu River dam proposal.
- 3 September, 2003. SEPA organized a roundtable to collect feedback on the proposed Nu River dam. Yunnan environmental scientist, He Dayi, presented his disagreement on the issue. He became the first scientist who openly opposed the Nu dam proposal, and his arguments were the foundation of Beijing anti-dam activists' reference for public campaigns. Wang Yongchen called many journalist friends and sat in the meeting.
- 1 October 2003. A Yunnan NGO Green Watershed started investigation of the Nu River dam site, and tried to persuade local governments the negative effects of large dams.
- 15 November, 2003. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sino-U.S. Environmental NGO Forum was hold in Beijing, sponsored by the International Fund for China's Environment. Over 200 Chinese activists and environmental NGO representatives participated the meeting. Wang raised the issue of the Nu River dam and caught much attention.
- 17-22 November, 2003. World Dam Commission meeting in Thailand. Supported by international funding, Wang and other environmental activists from the Friends of Nature, Green Island, and Green Watershed attended the meeting, during which they organized a petition against the Nu River dam. Around 80 Thai NGOs also signed a letter against the dam, and submitted to the Chinese embassy in Bangkok.
- 16-24 February, 2004. Conservation International and International Rivers Network sponsored Wang and other 20 activists, scientists and journalists to conduct a comprehensive field investigation of the Nu River dam site. Meanwhile, Wang's activist and media friends in Beijing have managed to submit a policy recommendation letter to the Office of Primer Wen Jiabao.
- 18 February, 2004. Primer Wen brought to a temporary halt of the dam proposal and called for further environmental assessment.
- 14 March, 2004. The website for the Nu River anti-dam movement was up.
- 21 March, 2004. Photograph exhibition of the Nu River was launched by the Green Earth Volunteers, with the support from CI.
- 26-29 March, 2004. Wang and other three anti-dam activists attended the Fifth UN Civil Society Forum in Korea, and received moral support from UNEP senior official on the issue.

- 3 May 2004. Activists, journalists, and activist-minded governmental officials gathered a brainstorm meeting in Beijing. Dai Qing, Liang Xiaoyan, and many other leading activists in the Three Gorges Dam movement were present. Before the meeting, a SEPA official was criticized for his sympathy and involvement in the anti-dam movement. However, he continued his invisible involvement in the movement. Another group of environmentalists from Beijing and Yunnan organized farmers from the Nu River Dam site to visit Manwai Dam area. About 50,000 farmers and ethnic minorities were forced to relocate during the construction of the Manwai Dam completed in 1998. After talking to the farmer at Manwai, who lost their lands and have not received promised compensations from local governmental authorities, the farmers from Nu River were better informed about the consequences of dam project on their livelihoods. Environmentalists made a documentary film out of this trip and distributed within the activist community.
- 16 May 2004. Another gathering of anti-dam activists, during which Wang proposed to establish a “China’s River Network”.
- July 2004. Condi Nest awarded Wang Yongchen for her worldwide recognizable achievement in environmental protection.
- July 2004. UNESCO issued warning documents on the status of the Three Parallel Rivers World Heritage site. Beijing environmentalists invited a UNESCO official to give a talk about the details, and discussed with him where and how to submit policy advocacy letters.
- August 2004. China’s River Network was formed in Beijing.

To date, the Nu River dam proposal is still undergoing cycles of re-assessment, rejection and re-submission. The total scale has been reduced to 11-level. More Chinese and international NGOs and environmentalists are combining their resources to continue protesting against the proposal.

### **Appendix 3.3. International NGOs and Foundations Related to Nature Conservation in China**

#### **International NGOs**

Animals Asia Foundation (Hong Kong)  
 Bridge Fund (U.S.)  
 Center for International Forestry  
 Research  
 China Exploration and Research  
 Society (Hong Kong)  
 Conservancy Association Hong Kong  
 Conservation International  
 Ecology and Culture Organization  
 (France)  
 Fauna & Flora International (U.S.)  
 Forest Trends (U.S.)  
 Friends of the Earth Hong Kong  
 Global Communications for  
 Conservation  
 Greenpeace (U.S.)  
 World Agroforestry Center  
 International Crane Foundation (U.S.)  
 International Fund for Animal Welfare  
 (U.S.)  
 International Fund for China's  
 Environment (U.S.)  
 International Institute for Environment  
 and Development  
 International Rivers Network (U.S.)  
 International Snow Leopard Trust (U.S.)

IUCN (World Conservation Union)  
 Mountain Institute (U.S.)  
 Oxfam U.S.  
 Pacific Environment and Resource  
 Center (U.S.)  
 Roots & Shoots  
 Rural Development Institute (U.S.)  
 Saving the South China Tiger (U.K.)  
 The Nature Conservancy (U.S.)  
 Trickle Up Program (U.S.)  
 TVE (EETPC)  
 U.S. China Environmental Fund  
 Wetlands International (U.S.)  
 Wild Camel Protection Foundation  
 Wildlife Conservation Society (U.S.)  
 Winrock International  
 World Resource Institute (U.S.)  
 Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)

#### **International Foundations**

Blue Moon Foundation  
 ECOLOGIA Virtual Foundation  
 Ford Foundation  
 Global Greengrants Fund  
 MacArthur Foundation  
 Rockefeller Brothers Foundation



**Appendix 4.1.****World Bank (WB) HIV/AIDS Related Projects in China**

Project Title	Starting Year	Ending Year	Total WB Loan (million USD)	HIV/AIDS Component	
				million USD	% total WB loan
TB Control Project	2002	2010	104	n/a	n/a
Health Nine Project	1999	2006	60	33.3	55.5
Disease Prevention Project	1995	2004	100	18.76	18.76
Infectious and Endemic Disease Control Project	1991	2002	129.6	< 2.7	< 1
total			193.6	> 55	

Source: World Bank online project database.

**Appendix 4.2.****AIDS Programs Coordinated by UNAIDS China Office (excluding the WB)**

U.N. agencies	Main AIDS-related activities
UNICEF	Yunnan component of the regional Mekong project, collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and training of mass media.
UNESCO	Supports the Chinese Government to mainstream HIV/AIDS issues into its education systems (both formal and non-formal).
UNDP	Multisectoral AIDS project in Fujian, Shanxi and other provinces.
UNFPA	Reproductive Health/Family Planning Project, including base-line surveys of STD and HIV/AIDS in over 30 selected counties.
WHO	Promotes surveillance of STD and HIV, the use of STD syndromic management, health education for school children, and training for HIV/STD counseling.

Source: UNAIDS China Office annual reports (1998-2004).

### Appendix 4.3. Main Chinese AIDS Related Civil Society Groups

#### **Institutionalized NGOs/NGO-to-be**

##### PLWHA organizations:

Shanghai AIDS Sunshine  
 China AIDS Care (Guangzhou)  
 Hemophilia Home of China (Shanghai)  
 Home of Love (Xi'an, Shaanxi)  
 Mangrove Support Group (Beijing)  
 Yunnan PLWHA Support Group

##### General AIDS advocacy:

Aizhixing Institute of Health  
 Education (Beijing)  
 Loving Source Institute for Education  
 and Research (Beijing)  
 Dongzhen Project for Helping AIDS  
 Orphans (Beijing)  
 NOHIV (a web-based virtual support  
 group in Beijing)  
 Community Development Research  
 Center (Henan)  
 AIDS Working Group (Beijing)

##### Gay community:

Gender Health Education Institute  
 (Beijing)  
 Friends Project (Qingdao, Shandong)

##### Women's groups:

Women and Child Development  
 Centre of Ruili  
 Legal Assistance Center for Women  
 and Children of Xishuangbanna  
 Qianxi Women's Health Association

##### Non-AIDS specific organizations:

Grassroots Community (Shanghai)  
 Beijing Civil Society Development  
 Research Center (Beijing)  
 Green Volunteers Association  
 (Chongqing)

#### **Rural community based groups**

Dongguan Village AIDS Care  
 Association (Sui County, Henan)

Shuangmiao Village Home of Care and  
 Love (Shangqiu County, Henan)  
 Wenlou Village AIDS Patients  
 Association (Shangcai County,  
 Henan)

#### **University student associations**

Beijing University  
 Beijing University Medical School  
 Renmin University  
 Peking Union Medical College  
 Tsinghua University (Beijing)  
 National Ethnic Minority University  
 Beijing Foreign Language University  
 Beijing Broadcasting College  
 Capital Medical College  
 Beijing Chemical Industry University  
 Shanghai Jiaotong University  
 Fudan University (Shanghai)  
 Shanghai Oceanic Transportation  
 College  
 Tianjing University  
 Nankai University (Tianjing)  
 Huazhong University of Science and  
 Technology (Jiangxi)  
 Anhui Medical College  
 Xingjiang Normal University  
 Sun Yat-sen University (Guangdong)  
 Xiamen University (Fujian)  
 Jimei University (Fujian)  
 Nanjing Climatology College (Jiangsu)  
 Nanjing University (Jiangsu)  
 Jiangxi Agriculture University

#### **Religion-based groups**

Northern Jinde Light of Hope  
 (Shijiazhuang, Hebei)  
 Home of Red Maple (Xi'an, Shaanxi)

#### **Appendix 4.4. Examples of Local CDC and hospital sponsored AIDS Care Centers**

Beijing You'an Hospital, Home of Love and Care  
 Beijing Ditan Hospital, Home of Red Ribbon  
 Liangshan Community Association for Drug Rehabilitation and Disease Prevention  
 (Sichuan)  
 Guiyang Garden of Health, Care, and Love (Guizhou)  
 Welcoming Spring Flowers Organization (Wenxi county, Shanxi)  
 Urumqi Red Ribbon Center (Xinjiang)

#### **Appendix 4.5. International NGOs and Foundations Working in AIDS Prevention in China**

##### **International NGOs**

Chi Heng Foundation (Hong Kong)  
 China AIDS Info. (Hong Kong)  
 Hong Kong AIDS Foundation  
 Harmony Home Association (Taiwan)  
 Oxfam Hong Kong  
 Salvation Army Hong Kong  
 World Vision Hong Kong  
 Aaron Diamond AIDS Research  
 Center (U.S.)  
 Aixin Foundation (U.S.)  
 Australian Red Cross Society  
 (Australia)  
 Daytop (U.S.)  
 DKT International (U.S.)  
 Family Health International (U.S.)  
 Futures Group Europe  
 Helping AIDS in Resource Poor Areas  
 (HARPA) (U.S.)  
 Health Unlimited (U.S.)  
 International Federation of Red Cross  
 and Red Crescent Societies  
 (Switzerland)  
 International HIV/AIDS Alliance  
 (U.K.)  
 International Planned Parenthood  
 Federation  
 Macfarlane Burnet Centre (Australia)  
 Marie Stopes (U.K.)  
 Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors

without Borders) – Belgium  
 Médecins Sans Frontières – France  
 Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the  
 World) (France)  
 Voluntary Service Overseas (U.K.)  
 PATH (U.S.)  
 Population Services International (U.S.)  
 Project Hope (U.S.)  
 Rotary Club (U.S.)  
 Save the Children (U.K.)  
 U.S.-China AIDS Foundation (U.S.)  
 Yale-China Association (U.S.)

##### **International charities and foundations**

AIDS Relief Fund for China (San  
 Francisco, U.S.)  
 Asia Foundation (U.S.)  
 Barry and Martin's Trust (U.K.)  
 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
 (U.S.)  
 China AIDS Orphan Foundation  
 (Minnesota, U.S.)  
 Clinton Foundation (U.S.)  
 Ford Foundation (U.S.)  
 Misereor (German Catholic Charity)  
 Operation Blessing (Taiwan Christian  
 Church)  
 Taiwan Catholic Church

### Appendix 5.1. Studying International NSAs' Support to Chinese NGOs

To trace the support from international NGOs to Chinese NGOs, I used the method of standardized interview to collect information from 12 conservation-related and 10 AIDS-related Chinese NGOs. Three sets of questions were asked to survey international NSAs' assistance to a Chinese NGO:

1) Formation. Two questions were designed to examine whether international NSAs were involved and had given significant support at the beginning of each local NGO. Any "yes" answer to one of the following two questions was coded as "Y" in the column of "Form".

A. Was the foundation of the local NGOs an outcome of an international NSA's project or initiative in China?

B. Did any international NSAs provide the first funding for the LNGO to start basic operation, rent an office, and recruit staff?

2) Funding. If the local NGO gets financial support from international NSAs, the answer will be coded as "Y" in the column of "Fund".

3) Information sharing and technical support. If international NSAs provide any of the following types of assistance to the local NGO, it was coded "Y" in the column of "Info":

A. regular meetings for information sharing

B. international NSAs sent experts to help with the local NGO

C. technical support for the local NGO to implement its own projects

#### Detailed information on international NSA's support to selected Chinese NGOs

Chinese conservation related NGOs	Form	Fund	Info	Chinese AIDS related NGOs	Form	Fund	Info
Friends of Nature	N	Y	Y	Guangzhou China AIDS Care	N	Y	Y
Global Village of Beijing	N	Y	Y	Beijing Mangrove Support Group	N	Y	Y
Green Earth Volunteers	Y	Y	Y	Beijing Positive Art Workshop	Y	Y	Y
Green Plateau	N	Y	Y	Shanghai AIDS Shunshine	N	Y	Y
Green Watershed	Y	Y	Y	Yunnan PLWHA Support Group	Y	Y	Y
Guizhou Friends of the Earth	Y	Y	Y	Home of Love, Xi'an	N	Y	N
Greener Beijing	N	Y	Y	Beijing Aizhixing Institute	N	Y	Y
Green Rivers	N	Y	Y	Beijing Loving Source Institute	N	Y	N
Snowland Great Rivers	N	Y	Y	Beijing Gender Institute	N	Y	Y
Saunders Gull protection Association of Panjin	N	Y	Y	Dongzheng Project	N	Y	N
South North Institute for Sustainable Development	N	Y	Y	Henan Community Development Research Center	Y	Y	Y
Xinjiang Conservation Fund	Y	Y	Y				
<b>Total: 12 NGOs</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Total: 10 NGOs</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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