

Fudan-IAS: Emphasis on Cross-Disciplinary Approaches

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Our Mission

THE FUDAN Institute of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (Fudan-IAS) is an academic research unit created by Fudan University. Fudan-IAS seeks to become a leading social science institute in China and to promote the awareness of cutting edge global social science developments in China to achieve a better understanding of social science theories, intellectual inquiries, traditions and approaches, and methods.

It aims to advance comparative and interdisciplinary research and knowledge, which will shape the way we understand and study social changes, issues, and challenges in transitional China as well as the changing world.

It also endeavors to provide an advanced platform for high quality academic exchange and best scholars who undertake research that produces creative thinking, theory-building, and socially relevant knowledge.

Our Vision, Goals and Emphases

In the age of globalization, China's social sciences must make a transition from the phase of "introduction," "duplication," and "integration into the world" to a new phase of "knowledge transition towards the world" (or knowledge producer for the world) to introduce China's social sciences to the world by promoting the development of its own ideal picture of the world order, its own schools of thought and intellectual tradition based on China's local knowledge, and thereby contribute to the development of the global social sciences and the reconstruction of a new world order.

However, we also realize Chinese social sciences, after the 30-year development, are still inadequate to the tasks of our times, because the "westernization" of the social sciences has resulted in some serious consequences:

- 1) Chinese scholars have accepted Western concepts and theoretical frameworks without critical scrutiny and creative thinking, and adopted them as academic standards in the assessment of Chinese social sciences and/or China development practice;
- 2) they have largely "modeled" and "tailored" their study of Chinese is-

sues upon Western concepts and theoretical frameworks while neglecting in-depth research and theoretical innovation;

- 3) thus, their studies have neglected the inherent rationality of China's social systems and its potential world implications.

To achieve the "knowledge transition," we must accomplish three main tasks:

- 1) jump over the hurdles of "westernization" and establish the autonomy of China's social sciences;
- 2) break through the barriers of disciplines and adopt cross-disciplinary approaches which demand a higher level of intellectual engagement and production from scholars of all disciplines of social sciences and humanities;
- 3) break the trap of the self-absorbed and narrow localism, embrace perspectives of cosmopolitanism and globalization for studying local problems and challenges, integrate theoretical innovations with the in-depth study of China's practice and experience, and thereby actively engage in the substantive discourse with the world's social scientists. This will not only lead to an enrichment of Chinese social sciences, but also impact on the intellectual development of the world's social sciences with our knowledge and experience

Methods and Mechanisms

We bring together a distinguished team of scholars from across all disciplines of social science and humanities on Fudan campuses, and from both within and outside China, with academic appointments as academic committee members, distinguished professors, joint-appointed professors, adjunct professors, and visiting professors and scholars in residence.

We work with almost all colleges of the humanities and social sciences throughout Fudan University campuses, as well as academic institutions of social sciences and humanities throughout the world to promote its mission. It draws upon their strength and knowledge in a broad range of fields in social sciences and humanities to build a focal point in China for scholarly exchange, information sharing, scholar training, and collaboration.

We actively organize various cross-disciplinary forums, seminars, distinguished lecture series, workshops, bi-monthly academic luncheon, roundtables, conferences, academic programs, publications, collaborative projects, and international collaboration to facilitate the above processes.



Photo courtesy IEA Fundan

Meeting held at Fudan Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences

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