
AI translation • View original & related papers at
chinaxiv.org/items/chinaxiv-201611.00032

Interview with Vice President Huang Haotao: Practice and Reflections on Building a National High-End Think Tank at the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (Post-print)

Authors: Huang Haotao

Date: 2016-11-02T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

Interview with Vice President Huang Haotao: Practices and Reflections on Building a National High-End Think Tank at the Central Party School of the CPC

Full Text

Interview with Vice President Huang Haotao: Practice and Reflections on the Construction of a National High-End Think Tank at the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC

Journal: The Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC serves as the highest institution for training and rotating senior and mid-level Party cadres and Marxist theoretical cadres, a key department directly under the Party Central Committee, an important front for studying, researching, and publicizing Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, a furnace for cadres to strengthen their Party spirit, and a research institution for the Party's philosophy and social sciences. As one of the first pilot units for national high-end think tank construction, what are the prominent advantages and distinctive features of the Party School?

Huang Haotao: The inclusion of the Party School as a pilot unit for national high-end think tank construction reflects the Party Central Committee's high regard and earnest expectations for the School's think tank development. In his December 2015 speech at the National Party School Work Conference, General

Secretary Xi Jinping devoted a special section to discussing the importance of enhancing the School's research capabilities and standards, expressing his hope that the Party School would become an important think tank for the Party and the country. General Secretary Xi specifically pointed out, "The Party Central Committee has already included the Party School in the list of pilot units for high-end think tank construction. We must seize this opportunity to achieve new accomplishments in think tank building." We must conscientiously implement the spirit of the Central Committee, deeply understand and put into practice General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions, rely on our distinctive features and advantages, and strive toward the goals of being "nationally essential, distinctively characterized, institutionally innovative, and development-leading" to elevate the Party School's high-end think tank construction to a new level.

The advantages of the Party School's national high-end think tank are mainly reflected in four aspects. First, it possesses a complete disciplinary layout in Marxist basic theory, with outstanding disciplinary construction and clear advantages in integrating theory with practice. The School currently hosts national key disciplines including Marxist philosophy, scientific socialism and international communist movement, and the history of the Communist Party of China (including Party doctrine and Party building). Second, it has access to a rich resource of students who come from the frontlines of work and possess theoretical literacy, representing an "intellectual treasure trove" for policy research. Third, it maintains a strong contingent of teaching and research personnel who are politically reliable, professionally proficient, and ethically upright. Fourth, it enjoys systemic resource advantages through its network of over 3,000 local Party schools and nearly 100,000 faculty and staff members.

Based on its actual conditions and strengths, the Party School has identified four major research areas for its national high-end think tank construction. The first is Marxist studies, which involves strengthening theoretical summarization and innovation to create a Chinese discourse system in philosophy and social sciences for developing 21st-century Marxism and contemporary Chinese Marxism, thereby transforming China's development advantages and comprehensive strength into discursive power. The second is national strategy research, which focuses on the central work of the Party and the state, major decision-making deployments of Party committees and governments, and hot and difficult social issues. This includes strengthening research on major practical problems and prominent contradictions, enhancing the reflection and study of Party, government, and social conditions, and promptly reporting important theoretical and ideological trends. It also involves targeting major national strategic needs and conducting forward-looking, targeted, and reserve policy research on medium- and long-term development strategies. The third is Party building research, which strengthens studies on the scientification of Party construction to provide theoretical support for comprehensive and strict Party governance and anti-corruption efforts. The fourth is international strategy research, which enhances studies on international strategic issues to serve the theoretical and

practical innovation of China's international strategy.

Journal: In terms of institutional mechanisms for high-end think tank construction, unlike other high-end think tanks, the Party School has not established a centralized, substantive core think tank institution. Instead, it uses the Scientific Research Department as its service and management organ, implementing a “small institution, large network” model that organizes research forces across the entire school and national Party school system through a project-based system. What considerations underlie this approach, and where do its advantages and distinctive features lie?

Huang Haotao: The Party School's high-end think tank construction is under the unified leadership of the School Committee, with the Scientific Research Department responsible for specific management and service work. Additionally, the Party School has established a National High-End Think Tank Construction Council and a National High-End Think Tank Construction Academic Committee. The Council is responsible for organizational leadership, macro-management, and supervision and inspection of the high-end think tank, while the Academic Committee handles business matters such as research plan formulation and research project issuance.

High-end think tank construction requires a significant enhancement of the Party School's research capacity and standards, as well as a major transformation in research concepts, methods, means, and management mechanisms. Since December 2015, the Party School has comprehensively launched its teaching and think tank construction innovation project, placing equal emphasis on teaching innovation and think tank construction innovation, and conducting overall coordination, scientific planning, and coordinated advancement of teaching, research, and decision-making consultation. Furthermore, the Party School recently restructured its former Marxist Theory Teaching and Research Department and Institute of International Strategic Studies, establishing the Marxist Academy and the Institute of International Strategic Studies to strengthen substantive construction of think tank-related entities.

Project teams represent the primary organizational form for professional think tanks to conduct policy research, adapted to meet the needs of specialized think tank construction. This organizational form helps overcome problems such as the mismatch between disciplinary layout and teaching-research department structure, the mismatch between teachers' professional expertise and department structure, and insufficient development of human resources. It also helps break down departmental and identity-based segmentation in talent utilization. In accordance with the requirements for establishing pilot units for national high-end think tank construction, the Party School has established project teams with distinct professional and thematic characteristics, absorbing relevant talent from across the school, including students and external experts, to leverage collective research advantages and integrate teaching, research, and consultation functions. Project teams implement a chief expert responsibility system, with chief experts being politically strong, highly responsible, and organizationally

capable academic leaders. Upon completion of tasks, project teams are either promptly dissolved or, based on need, maintained long-term with dynamic adjustments. The Party School has also formulated and issued the “Management Measures for Project Teams of the Party School’s National High-End Think Tank Construction” to enhance the flexibility and competitiveness of project teams, strengthen their awareness of social responsibility, highlight their public service orientation, and reflect their non-profit nature. Through this process, the School continuously improves and develops itself, forming a sustainable think tank mechanism capable of producing both achievements and talent.

Journal: What specific measures does the Party School employ for think tank product selection and quality control? How does management balance the two major orientations of academic research and think tank research?

Huang Haotao: The Party School approaches product selection, quality control, and the balance between academic and think tank research from three dimensions. First, it guides the development of high-quality, high-level, and widely influential products. Through extensive research and deliberation, the Party School is formulating and will soon issue the “Evaluation Measures for High-End Think Tank Products of the Party School” to establish a scientific, fair, and quantifiable evaluation system for high-end think tank products. The Measures will develop specific quantitative evaluation indicators based on the decision-making influence, academic influence, media influence, public influence, and international influence of think tank products, thereby guiding them toward higher quality, greater levels, and broader impact.

Second, the Party School explores the establishment of a compensation and performance system adapted to high-end think tank development. In accordance with the overall requirements for high-end think tank construction, it breaks the original position and title system by implementing a performance system that links think tank personnel compensation to performance. Remuneration is allocated based on workload, performance, position importance, and work achievements in participating in the think tank innovation project. In implementation, based on performance evaluation results, treatment gaps are widened with appropriate preference given to frontline key teaching and research personnel. The School establishes competitive mechanisms and exit mechanisms where think tank staff can be promoted or demoted, and formulates an annual assessment indicator system for think tank personnel. Strictly following assessment grades, the School determines matters such as demotion, renewal, or dismissal of think tank staff.

Third, the Party School establishes and improves incentive mechanisms characteristic of its high-end think tank. It incorporates decision-making consultation achievements as an important factor in all aspects including teaching and research, professional technical position evaluation, and position appointment, and establishes supporting measures such as a research evaluation mechanism and achievement incentive mechanism conducive to decision-making consultation. The School has revised the “Trial Measures for the Distribution of Key

Allowances of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC” to establish a compensation mechanism for think tank construction, providing rewards for think tank achievements that shape decision-making or generate positive impact.

Journal: Building upon traditional academic journals, newspapers, academic forums, and internal references, what are the Party School’s future plans for building exchange platform brands, think tank communication, telling China’s story well, expanding discourse power, and increasing influence? *Thought and Theory Internal Reference* is an internal journal issued by the Party School exclusively for central decision-making leaders’ reading, serving as a channel for policy recommendations and being one of the internal references most favored by central leaders. It has even been described by *The Economist* as a Chinese-characteristic “direct express.” How do you view the relationship between “internal references” and public communication?

Huang Haotao: The Party School possesses large-scale, standardized, institutionalized, and informatized platforms for exchanging and releasing achievements. It organizes annual theoretical seminars and achievement exchange meetings for the national Party school system, and hosts over a hundred professional academic exchange activities such as the “China Marxism Forum,” “Qiushi Lecture Hall,” and various specialized academic exchanges.

The Party School operates a unique central-level publishing house that releases hundreds of new titles annually. It also maintains traditional media resources with broad social influence and academic reputation, including *Study Times*, *Theoretical Trends*, *Chinese Party and Government Cadres Forum*, *Scientific Socialism*, and *Journal of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC*. Additionally, it possesses new media platforms such as the Study Times website and the Chinese Party and Government Cadres Learning website.

The Party School is one of the 15 national research centers for the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics designated for key construction by the Central Committee. Since 2009, the quality and quantity of its publications in central mainstream media under the center’s name have ranked first among the 15 major national bases (research centers) for six consecutive years. The two internal journals *Thought and Theory Internal Reference* and *Research Report* have become decision-making consultation brands.

Guided by the principle of telling China’s story well, the Party School continuously expands its discourse power and influence through the combination of platform construction, communication development, brand building, and internal reference provision.

Journal: What are the Party School’s visions and plans for future exchange and cooperation with other domestic and international high-end think tanks? What are the possible areas of cooperation with scientific think tanks such as the Chinese Academy of Sciences?

Huang Haotao: The Party School emphasizes developing exchange and cooperation among high-end think tanks to jointly build academic exchange platforms and enhance their influence and academic status. The School has four visions for future cooperation with other high-end think tanks. First, organize a batch of international academic seminars annually around major theoretical and practical issues concerning the Party and country's development, inviting renowned domestic and foreign experts, foreign political figures, and core members of internationally renowned think tanks to gradually form well-known academic brands. Second, organize a batch of academic seminars and closed-door meetings annually to conduct in-depth research on key, hot, and difficult issues, producing high-quality internal references and research reports for submission to the Central Committee. Third, fully leverage the important role of the Party School's Research Center for the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, organizing research forces from the Party school system and various social sectors to strengthen research and publicity on major strategic thoughts such as the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and major practical issues, giving voice to the Party School and playing a leading role in ideological public opinion. Fourth, strengthen the role of the "China-U.S. Academic Forum" to expand exchanges and cooperation between the Party School and renowned foreign think tanks, further enhancing the international influence and visibility of the Party School's think tank.

Scientific think tanks are an important component of new-type think tanks with Chinese characteristics. As a domestic high-level scientific think tank, the Chinese Academy of Sciences has played an active role in national science and technology strategies, planning, layout, and policies. The Party School's high-end think tank looks forward to strengthening exchange and cooperation with the CAS high-end think tank to jointly play a greater role in promoting scientific, democratic, and law-based decision-making and implementing innovation-driven development strategies.

About the Interviewee

Huang Haotao is Vice President and Research Fellow of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC. Born in Pizhou, Jiangsu Province in December 1957, he is a delegate to the 18th National Party Congress. He graduated from the Philosophy Department of Nanjing University in 1982 and joined the Communist Party of China in February 1985. He formerly served as Deputy Director and Director of the Bureau of Scientific Research Management of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Member of the CASS Party Group, Deputy Secretary-General, and Secretary-General, and as a temporary member of the Party Group and Assistant General Manager of the China Yangtze Three Gorges Project Development Corporation. In June 2013, he became Vice President of the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC.

The English biography of Huang Haotao was provided by the interviewee.

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.