

# *State Power and Nongovernmental Organizations' Policy Advocacy in China\**

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## *Abstract*

Do Chinese nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) conduct policy advocacy? If so, how are they shaped by the state power? Following the Tocquevillian perspective of the state, we use an institutional analytical framework and disaggregate China's political institutions into three levels. We then investigate how Chinese NGOs' advocacy strategies are shaped and constrained at each level. Using the survey data from three provinces, we find that Chinese NGOs prefer political advocacy to social advocacy, though both are limited. They target government branches and advocate policies through supervisory units more frequently than the legislature or judiciary. We also find that NGOs' operational organizational autonomy is negatively associated with the likelihood that NGOs would engage in all types of advocacy channels. These findings suggest that, on one hand, state power substantially shapes NGOs' policy advocacy channels. On the other hand, NGOs' policy advocacy strengthens state capacity without reducing state autonomy.

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\* The authors thank two anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback. This research project is funded by the Shanghai Pujiang Program (No. 18PJC077) and Peking University's Research Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (No. 7100602473).