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A CHINESE BUREAUCRACY FOR INNOVATION-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT?

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A Chinese Bureaucracy for Innovation-Driven Development?

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Abstract: This Element scrutinizes the attempts by the Chinese party-state bureaucracy since the 2000s to advance innovation and technological upgrading. It examines insights from the developmental state debate – the need for a bureaucracy to achieve internal coherence and the capacity of that bureaucracy both to forge coalitions between bureaucrats, businessmen, and scientists and to discipline domestic companies.

Moreover, it assesses efforts to foster technological upgrading in the semiconductor and electric vehicle industries. While there are significant differences between China and earlier successful developmental states, with the former facing problems such as the legacies of short-termism, limited monitoring capabilities, and flawed discipline over business, the authors find that, compared with other emerging capitalist economies, the

Chinese bureaucracy has developed strong capabilities to advance “innovation-driven development.” This Element seeks to provide avenues for comparing China with other late developers.

Keywords: China, innovation, bureaucracy, economic development, state–business relations

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