

**THE DISRESPECTED STATE: CHINA'S STRUGGLE
FOR RECOGNITION THROUGH 'SOFT POWER'**

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Abstract

This study examines the Western-originated International Relations (IR) concept of Soft Power in the context of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In order to bring more nuance to the particular localised phenomena, the thesis presents three different approaches to the study of soft power: qualitative rhetorical analysis, media analysis and automated sentiment analysis. The results show that soft power is envisioned within the PRC as a political tool for international and domestic use, that the economy is where China has the most soft power potential in Western media, and that the PRC soft power policies are driven by emotions rather than rational calculation, guided by perception of disrespect.

The contribution of the study is thus divided into three parts. Firstly, a discourse analysis of relevant Chinese academic journal articles published on the Mainland in Chinese 2000-2015 (n=31) shows that soft power rhetoric aims at national identity formation using such category arguments as 'Anti-Westernisation' and 'cultural security'. In essence, the analysed soft power rhetoric formulates Chinese culture as being under threat from globalisation and Westernisation.

Secondly, the study applies media analysis to interpret popular culture produced by the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy. The results find negative dispositions vis-à-vis 'self' and 'other', as well as in-group/out-group symbolism in the analysed popular culture texts.

Thirdly, to quantify China's Western media image as part of its soft power push, the study applies an automated dictionary method to analyse two Reuters news article corpora covering the years 1996-1997 and 2008-2009 (n=1,400,000). Using automated content classification, the data is first geocoded into China-, Japan-, South Korea-, Taiwan-, and Hong Kong-related coverage and then further categorised into cultural, political, and economic topics. An automated sentiment analysis is applied to each category to quantify the tendency of the articles. The results emphasise the importance of economy in China related coverage, whereby the assumption of Chinese public diplomacy is not supported: no categorical negative Western media slant against China in comparison to other East Asian regions is found.

The study demonstrates that the phenomenon referred to as soft power within the PRC tackles the challenges of modernisation and progress by placing emphasis on cultural safety and national image construction amid the perceived threats of globalisation and Westernisation. This is seen as an answer for the Chinese state in search of national identity, legitimacy and communal acceptance, still struggling with a collective perception of disrespect stemming from historical Western hegemony.

Tiivistelmä

Tässä väitöstutkimuksessa tarkastellaan Yhdysvalloista periytyvää kansainvälisten suhteiden käsitettä pehmeä voima (soft power) Kiinan kansantasavallan kontekstissa.

Tutkimus laajentaa olemassa olevaa kirjallisuutta pääosin kolmella tavalla. Ensinnäkin tutkimuksessa esitetään, että pehmeä voima käsitetään Kiinan kansantasavallassa sekä kotimaiseen että kansainväliseen käyttöön soveltuvana työkaluna. Toiseksi tutkimus näyttää että Kiinalla on talouden saralla lännessä vahvin pehmeän voiman potentiaali. Kolmanneksi tutkimus lisää ymmärrystä Kiinan kansantasavallan julkisen diplomatian toimista, jotka tulosten valossa näyttäytyvät enemmän tunnepitoisilta kuin rationaalisilta, joita ohjaa käsitys epäkuntoituksesta Kiinaa kohtaan.

Monitieteisessä tutkimuksessa käytetään sekä määrällisiä että laadullisia menetelmiä. Siinä esitetään kolme eri empiiristä metodia pehmeän voiman analysointiin: kvalitatiivinen retoriikka-analyysi, media-analyysi ja automaattinen sentimenttianalyysi.

Retoriikka-analyysin aineistona tutkimus tarkastelee kiinankielisiä Kiinassa vuosina 2000 – 2015 julkaistuja pehmeään voimaan liittyviä tutkimusartikkeleita (N=31). Tulosten mukaan pehmeään voimaan liittyvä retoriikka perustuu kategoria-argumenteille ”länsimaisen kulttuurin vastustaminen” ja ”Kiinan kulttuurinen turvallisuus”.

Media-analyysi tarkastelee sekä kiinalaisia että länsimaissa tuotettuja yhteistuotantoelokuvia ”poliittisina teksteinä”. Tutkimuksen mukaan teksteissä tuotetaan negatiivisia dispositiota ”itsen” ja ”toisen” välille sekä symbolista ryhmäajattelua.

Automaattisessa sisältö-analyysisissä tarkastellaan kansainvälisen uutistointi Reutersin kahta arkistoa vuosilta 1996-1997 ja 2008-2009 (N=1,400,000). Tutkimus korostaa talouteen liittyvän uutisoinnin merkitystä Kiinan kokonais uutiskuvassa. Tarkasteluvälillä Kiinaan liittyvän uutisoinnin sävy todetaan lisäksi suhteellisen positiiviseksi. Huomio on merkittävä sen suhteen, että Kiinan kansantasavallan julkinen diplomatia vaikuttaa lähtevän oletuksesta, jonka mukaan läntinen lehdistö demonisoi Kiinaa.

Väitöstutkimus osoittaa, että ilmiö johon viitataan pehmeänä voimana Kiinan kansantasavallan sisällä, pyrkii minimoimaan modernisaation tuomia haasteita painottamalla kulttuurista turvallisuutta uhaksi koetun läntisen globalisaation edessä.

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DISCLAIMER: Chapter 7.1.2. “The Quantification” has been written in entirety by Juho Heimonen, Department of Information Sciences, University of Turku. The method presented in Chapter 7 has been designed together with the present author, Juho Heimonen, and Professor Tapio Pahikkala.

INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH CONTEXT AND ARGUMENT

The purpose of this study is to explore the United States (US)-originated International Relations (IR) adaptation ‘*Soft Power*’ in the context of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). As the key theoretical concept of the study, I apply the notion of ‘struggle for recognition’, most notably advanced by Axel Hoenneth (1991, 1992, 1995, 2003, 2016). Both soft power and recognition seeking are well explored subjects among China studies and political science, respectively (Fanon, 1967; Bull, 1984; Haacke, 2005; Greenhill, 2008; Wang and Lu 2008; Hunter 2009; Nel, 2010; Montgomery 2010; Barabantseva 2011; Callahan 2011; Vyas 2011; Barr 2012; Mierzejewski 2012; Scott 2012; Zhang 2012; Callahan 2015; Ringmar, 2002, 2015). To the best of my knowledge, however, no study to date has approached the political phenomenon that is referred to as ‘soft power’ in China using the struggle for recognition as the principal theoretical frame. The application, however, is appropriate as it potentially gives insight into those cultural factors that drive China’s soft power enthusiasm and the underlining assumptions that guide it. As the title of the dissertation implies, in this study I am not interested in China’s soft power *per se*, but rather aim to show how the phenomenon can help understand China’s struggle for international recognition.

While in the field of Area Studies, theoretically the study builds on the English school (ES) of international relations (IR). The reason for this is simple: ES, or as it is otherwise known, the international society approach by definition assumes the global arena as a ‘society of states’, a notion which opens up possibilities to apply social theories to the

international level (Nel, 2010: 963).¹ Therefore, in applying the key concept of ‘struggle for recognition’, I draw from social psychology in further conceptualising the PRC soft power communication into *perception* and *propensity* components. As specific research questions, I will ask 1) what underlining perceptions guide the Chinese soft power phenomenon, and 2) what type of propensities the perceptions introduce into China’s soft power communication.

The practical issue that emerges from these theoretical points concerns the Western news media image of China. While the PRC has been polishing its international image in various forms before and after 1978, a turning point in the development of its international media relations took place in 2003 (Zhang, 2012). While there is an argument to be made that PRC public diplomacy is media-centric where particular attention is given to Western news reporting (Wang, 2008; Shambaugh, 2013; Creemers, 2015), in the dissertation I therefore focus on the aggregate impact of China’s public diplomacy efforts over the last two decades as gauged through Western press coverage.

Although China’s media image is a well-explored subject, the conceptual and empirical challenges of quantifying an aggregate impact are recognised inside and outside China (Gilboa, 2001, 2002, 2008; Han 2010; Jones et al. 2011). Consequently, no large-scale

¹ This is not limited to the ES: similar approaches have also been discussed, among others, within psychology. Samuels for instance (1996) raises the question of whether what he calls depth psychology can contribute to political debates by treating those phenomena as objects of analysis, in other words, treating the “world as a client”. Samuels has a twofold objective: on the one hand to make a psychological contribution to social science and social theory and, on the other, to bridge an understanding of the political world with the theories of psychology. Samuels is particularly interested in dealing between the “fantasies of the political world and the politics of the fantasy world” (Samuels, 1996: 4). Here the political metaphors depict personality and vice versa. The government signifies the ego, citizens’ constellations of objective relations, and social problems psychopathology.

Also Clarke (2006) discusses the nature of “psychoanalytic sociology” and the implication the theory has for a “psycho-social method”. The view of Clark is that neither sociology nor psychology provides a more conclusive explanation of the world than the other, but the combination can contribute to a better understanding of the social and political world. By overviewing literature, Clarke (2006) argues that psychoanalytical sociology in its interdisciplinary form, including elements from sociology, social constructionism, interactionism and psychoanalysis, has the ability to explain “complex social processes” (Clark 2006: 1153-1155).

empirical studies have examined the changes in Western media coverage pre- and post-policy change. Therefore, in this dissertation I aim 3) to quantify, on an aggregate level, the sentiment of China's Western news coverage and 4) through topic detection, to clarify what specific news topics influence the Western media image of China.

The application of Axel Hoenneth's (1991, 1992, 1995, 2003, 2015) 'struggle for recognition' to the soft power phenomenon in China seems justified for a number of reasons. First, national mentalities and narratives have specific relevance in the context of East Asia where turbulence from the colonial era, the ending of the Second World War and the Cold War still affect domestic and international politics. The situation is different to that of the West, where the anxieties of the past have less political currency. Moreover, for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in charge of China, the ending of international communism and the collapse of the Marxist-Leninist ideology brought inevitable existential anxiety and thus problems of governance: the political legitimacy of a communist elite running state-led capitalism remains thin. As my final research question, therefore, I make an attempt to sum up the analysis by asking 5) what type of disrespect does the Chinese soft power phenomenon address?

With this in mind, my central thesis is that China's soft power and public diplomacy communication seems to be emotional rather than rational, driven by a perception of disrespect, an out-group bias, and an outright cultivation of an enemy image. Consequently, I argue that there does exist a gap between Chinese expectations and how China is actually portrayed in mainstream Western media. Making a departure from the conventional assumption, in the dissertation I aim to show that the gap rather exists between expectations of critical portrayal and an overall quite neutral reality. In attempting to make the case, I borrow the methodological pluralism of the ES in employing a historical review, a rhetorical analysis, a media analysis, and an automated sentiment analysis.

The rationale for choosing these methods is data-driven. First of all, adhering to notorious secrecy, PRC officials seldom give in-depth interviews or publish policy papers or memos for research purposes, posing challenges for journalists and academics alike. Therefore, regarding the perception component, I chose to focus on relevant Mainland pro-government academic publications, to which I apply a rhetorical textual analysis. Secondly, in the case of the propensity component, I analyse popular culture as 'political texts' for the reason that, in recent years, the PRC has acquired a vast entertainment media

empire that produces popular culture as part of its soft power push. In my analyses, I focus on the most prominent section: films that have been produced either solely by the PRC or in cooperation with Western studios. Third, to quantify the Western news media image of China, I employ an automated dictionary method to measure the sentiment of China coverage in Reuters news between 1996-1997 and 2007-2008 (N=1,400,000). Due to the large-N approach, manual methods would have been costly and time-consuming. Before the empirical analyses, however, I review briefly historical factors that may have influenced the development of China's international social identity, as well as recent developments in China's public diplomacy.

Theoretical Perspectives

Soft power by definition represents the idea that making yourself attractive in the eyes of others helps in accomplishing policy agenda (Nye, 1990a, 1990b, 1991, 2002, 2004). Nonetheless, a number of studies show how the PRC envisions soft power for foreign use to brand the nation, and for domestic use to create political legitimacy for the China's Communist Party (CCP). Barr (2012) for instance analyses PRC soft power rhetoric through nation-branding, and shows how the PRC soft power deployment is as critical to the domestic scene as it is to the external one. Edney (2012) views PRC soft power through the existing Chinese propaganda bureaucracy and, in this context, highlights the interaction between PRC domestic and international policy ambitions.

Studies focusing on an actor's status in a particular social group suggest that identity concerns are for many states as important as security and welfare goals (Gross-Stein, 2013:367). Liu (2012) argues that the calls for soft power by the PRC underline an emerging ideological crisis: the ever-present Chinese revolutionary ideology and culture are increasingly at odds with the recent economic reforms. In the view of Callahan (2015), by using soft power the Chinese state is utilising negative-positive dichotomies vis-à-vis the West by evoking negative emotions for the use of domestic legitimacy. This shows the importance the PRC places not only on soft power but identity politics in general.

The present understanding of identity politics is mainly informed by the social identity theory. Identities are constructed through two alternative perspectives. First of all, actors tend to sell themselves accounts, stories or narratives of themselves through which self-

images are built. These accounts are then tested in interaction and communication with others, who might or might not agree (Ringmar, 2015, 6-7). Consequently, if an actor's need for recognition is denied, it leads to perception of disrespect (Honneth, 1992: 202).

Within the wider field of China studies that concentrate on PRC cultural and identity politics, Johnston (1999) advanced an approach that he coined "identity realism". His argument was that the creation of in-group identities leads directly to the devaluation of out-groups. In the case of China, Johnston showed that the politics of identity constitutes a form of realpolitik where the intensities of the in-group formation affect the "degree of outwardly directed realpolitik behaviour [...]" (Johnston, 1999: 289). The approach of Johnston was commented on by Haacke (2005), who agreed with Johnston's line of inquiry, but criticised it for not giving due attention to recognition-seeking. In his words: "Other scholars might agree with the general thrust of his argument but construct an explanation with reference to China's post-1989 struggle for recognition, as it is this struggle that would appear to lie at the heart of Johnston's own argument" (Haacke, 2005: 192-193).

In this dissertation I build on research into China's soft power utilising the domestic cultural perspective, but also take the advice of Haacke (2005) and consider Chinese soft power through the key theoretical concepts of recognition-seeking. Underlining the obvious conceptual connection between the two constructs, the application of the 'struggle for recognition' makes the assumption that the minimal requirement of successful 'soft power' is an actor recognised by others.

The particular Chinese soft power phenomenon echoes a general tendency among the PRC leadership to engage in a victimisation discourse (e.g. Johnston, 1999; Callahan, 2010).

Accordingly, on the one hand, the discourse creates domestic legitimacy for the Communist Party and, on the other, gives both reason and meaning to PRC public diplomacy communication. To an extent, this view is supported by existing research that focuses on China's Western media image: most studies conclude that China is portrayed either selectively or negatively. For instance, Zhang and Cameron (2003) observe a negative bias existing despite Western media believing that their coverage of China is balanced and objective. Willnat and Luo (2011) and Peng (2004) argue for the overall negative framing of China in the US media. Xiang (2013) observes that China is more neutrally presented

by English-language social media than by traditional media but that “international social media uncritically repeats stereotyped Chinese social, political, religious and ethnic images it captures from the international mainstream media” (Xiang, 2013:252).

Therefore, it is commonly understood that PRC public diplomacy aims to improve China’s reputed negative image in the Western media from negative to positive (Wang, 2008). Research into the role of media in shaping the public opinion and policy of a foreign country has shown many cases in which this approach has been effective (Dearing and Rogers, 1996; Powlick and Katz, 1998; Kiouisis, 2004). However, prior studies suggest that nation-branding or soft power efforts seldom succeed when foreign media coverage is unfavourable (Golan, 2013). Regarding China, there is some evidence that points to a correlation between its foreign media coverage, foreign officials’ perception, and policy-making (Liu, 2006).

This study therefore also draws on literature about communication – especially the determinants of international news flow (Kim and Barnett, 1996; Wu, 2000). While these have been mainly explained using a systems perspective emphasising power relations between “centre and periphery” (Wallerstein, 1974: 1975) and “have and have-nots” (Castells, 2009), the international society approach also considers identities and images as determinants of information and news flow. Research into country characteristics has shown the identity or image of a country to determine the way in which that country is presented by the international media (Anhold, 2005).

The topic under examination can be considered to be of broader interest and importance, as many countries are stepping up their soft power and public diplomacy efforts. There is certainly a case to be made that Chinese soft power is media-centric (Sun, 2010; Creemers, 2015). In other words, while the PRC is investing in Chinese communication capabilities, among the Chinese leadership there is an overwhelming emphasis on improving Western news media coverage of China (Wang, 2008). Overall, while prior studies have focused on policies and actions China has undertaken to better China’s representation in Western media coverage (e.g Sun, 2014a, 2014b, 2015), it seems justified to further clarify what the forces driving such an approach are, and what the underlying assumptions are. The large-N empirical analysis also provides some evidence for the view that there may exist a gap between Chinese expectations and how China is actually per-

ceived by Western news media. Making a clear departure from the conventional assumption, however, the analysis indicates that a gap exists between expectations of critical portrayal and an overall rather neutral reality.

Methodological Aspects

As mentioned on page 7, this study employs three different analyses, each of which has a particular methodological approach. A more detailed methodological discussion is included in Chapter 2 and Chapters 5-7, which contain the three different empirical analyses. In this chapter I will summarise the applied methodologies.²

First of all, several studies have applied discourse analysis to the PRC soft power phenomenon (Li, 2008, 2009; Wuthnow, 2008; Hunter, 2009). These mainly focus on the strategic implication of the soft power discourse. 1) In this study I will apply a rhetorical analysis to flesh out those aspects of the language around the soft power phenomenon

² Being conceptually vague, the measurement and quantification of soft power is a grand dilemma within IR. Assessing power remains, nevertheless, a central task of IR, where the difficulties in measuring hard power alone are manifold. How changes in hard power resources, and the ways in which these are utilised, affect outcomes, is a complicated issue. Soft power that is conceptually vaguer is accordingly difficult to measure.

One option is to qualitatively assess perceptions of a given state among a certain population. Wang (2007), for instance, uses a questionnaire to survey the respective images of Japan and China among students at Osaka University. The study concludes that the major source of Japanese soft power was its economic re-emergence after the WWII and, to boost Chinese soft power, the PRC should continue with the opening up of, economic globalisation of and participation in international institutions.

A second approach is to quantify soft power resources, for instance as done by Yan and Xu (2008) in comparing Sino-US soft power. By using a system of indicators, the study makes an attempt to find a method to quantify and compare soft power objectively. As the outcome, they estimate Chinese soft power to be about one-third of that of the US. Additionally, the study indicates that "culture" would be the least effective component of Chinese soft power. A third approach combines the measurement of resources and use of opinion polls. Applying the synthesis, Huang and Ding (2006) find that there is an imbalance between Chinese soft power resources (development model) and goals (policy objectives).

that relate to in-group identity formation and out-group behaviour. To be more specific, the analysis focuses on category schemes of the language used (Reicher and Hopkins (1996: 353-357). Similarly, Chinese state-sponsored media products have been the focus of several academic studies (e.g. Zhang, 2007) where the mutually beneficial relationship between the PRC and Hollywood is a well-recognised fact (e.g. Wan and Kraus, 2002).

2) Applying media analysis, in this study I attempt to show how the messages of in-group identity formation and out-group behaviour are included in PRC-sponsored media products, paying particular attention to films. By doing this, I build on Kellner (2010) in attempting to show how social theory and critical reading of films can help understand certain aspects of contemporary society and culture - in the case of this study, that of China.

3) The aggregate level quantification of China's media image has been the topic of several academic publications.³ The main body focuses on European and US media cov-

³ Large-scale opinion surveys gathered from international public opinion polls have also been used to measure national perceptions. The BBC World Service conducts annual opinion polls regarding national impressions. The participants, randomly selected people in 25 countries, are asked to rate 16 countries and the European Union in terms of whether their influence in the world was "mainly positive" or "mainly negative". The 2006 study found that an average of 45% of people polled, excluding Chinese, had a mainly positive view and 27% a mainly negative view of China's influence. More recent polls show that in 2012 50% of participants had a positive view of China, and 31% a mainly negative one. Another annual poll is conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project measuring national perceptions of given countries. It found, for instance, that favourable views among US citizens of China have deteriorated from 43% (2005) to 39% (2008) and to 35% (2014). The same trend continues with German nationals having a favourable view of 46% (2005), 26% (2008) and 28% (2014). In general the poll shows that the least favourable view of China was held by Japanese nationals, and most favourable by Pakistanis including a few African nationalities, for instance Tanzania.

erage of China. The most popular method to quantify the image of China in the international media is manual content analysis. For instance, Zhang and Cameron (2003) analyse the content of three major US newspapers, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, ($N=579$) while Golan and Lukito (2015) focus on the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* ($N=249$). The studies most relevant to this study are those that have a longitudinal approach. Peng (2004) observes that the coverage of China in the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* during 1992 and 2001 ($N=189$) increased, but the overall tone of reporting was negative. Li (2010) finds that 1) the overall proportion of Chinese coverage increased and 2) China drew the most attention in the economic and external political sectors in European transnational media (with the focus on the *Financial Times*, the *Economist* and the *International Herald Tribune*) between 1989 and 2005 ($N=3004$). Wang and Shoemaker (2011) argue, based on content analysis of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *USA Today* between 1979 and 2007 ($N=1412$) that “political freedom” in China -- as indicated in the study -- correlates with positive US media coverage which again correlates with favourable US public opinion on China. Finally, Yang and Li (2012) observe that the “China threat” coverage in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Chicago Tribune* between 1992 and 2006 ($N=376$) fluctuated from category to category (China’s escalating military power, China’s increasing economic influence, and the political/ideological differences between China and the US).

The bulk of prior studies that specifically focus on China’s media image therefore consist of small-to-moderate-N methods. In these studies, the range of examined N varies between 63 (Zhong and Zhang, 2016) and 4,250 (Xiang, 2013). An obvious reason for

Additionally, individual surveys have been conducted. For instance, the British Council (2014) assesses and identifies the “attractiveness” (appeal) of a country. The study surveyed over 1,000 young educated people via an online questionnaire in Brazil, China, Germany, India and the US. Another 1,000 were surveyed online in Great Britain. It found that the most influential factors in the attractiveness of a country are: 1) cultural and historic attractions, 2) countryside and landscape, 3) people, and 4) arts and cities. In comparison, the least influential factors are: 1) sporting teams, events and achievements, 2) current and past actions of its government, 3) brands, products and services, and 4) science, research and the ability to innovate. The results were somewhat striking in that, among educated young people, arts and culture seem to be more important factors in national attractiveness than politics and education. Also, “economy and business environment” ranked as sixth least influential among a total of 17 factors.

this is that a large data analysis is costly and labour-intensive. This study proposes a novel approach to survey large-N text-based data by applying automated sentiment analysis, methodology, which has gained attention within Political Science (Monroe and Schrodtt, 2008). Regarding topic detection and categorisation, existing studies have applied more sophisticated methods (e.g. Quinn et al., 2010; Lucas et al., 2015). The methodological contribution of this study, however, concerns automated analysis of textual sentiment. More specifically, the area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUC), calculated from the distributions of document sentiments, is here applied as an appropriate measure and its development between corpora is statistically analysed. The model is validated using hand-coding and congruent validation (Weber, 1990).

The dissertation contributes to literature on China's Western media image by proposing an alternative method to this relatively well-explored subject. This study agrees with the study by Xiang (2013) according to which China-related economic and cultural topics are more favourably presented than political ones. However, it should be noted that a small-N study using manual analysis can discover a negative tone in some specific forum or topic while a statistical large-N study such as this can still be correct in maintaining that the overall tone is positive. The results of this study are thus not contradictory to all prior studies arguing for negative portrayal but rather only to those that point to an overall negative framing of China (He, 2004; Peng, 2004; Willnat and Luo, 2011).

Structure of the Study

This dissertation, while in the field of Area Studies, reports research that is multidisciplinary (social psychology/media studies/IR/natural sciences). This poses certain challenges to the structure of the presentation. After the introduction, the second chapter concerns theory-building. The chapter defends the state-as-person position and argues that individual-level identities and emotions are transferable to the collective level. Chapter three outlines a theoretical model by conceptualising public diplomacy communication into perception and propensity components. The fourth chapter reviews modern Chinese history from the perspective of recognition-seeking, while the fifth chapter provides an overview of recent developments in PRC public diplomacy and China's media industries.

The empirical analysis of the thesis is reported in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, respectively. Chapter 6 documents the *rhetorical* analysis, aiming to give insight into the perceptions of Chinese policy elite regarding soft power and public diplomacy through the analysed journal articles. In Chapter 7, the *media analysis* presents Chinese and Hollywood films as political texts, clarifying the propensities of Chinese public diplomacy and giving particular attention to in-group/out-group identity formations. Chapter 7 documents the *automated sentiment analysis*, the objective of which is to quantify China's Western news media image. The dissertation concludes by restating the research problem, recapping the analysis, summarising the empirical findings and discussing theoretical and methodological implications.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND 'DIS-RESPECT' IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

This chapter reviews the formation of identities and their transference into collective social identities. The purpose of bridging the various levels of analysis (individual, group, international) is to make the point that the struggle for recognition is universal in its humanistic application and thus appropriate for the international level transcending relativistic cultural claims. In terms of identity formation, the idea of an international society, as advanced by the ES, by its very definition views states as social actors.

Therefore, the theoretical position that I wish to defend here is the notion of the 'state-as-person' or, as Wendt (1999: 215-224) points out, that 'states are people too'. The related question is: can state behaviour be explained by employing methods used to analyse a human individual, without reducing the whole nation to the level of an individual. The nature of the problem is well illustrated by Craib (1997: 1): "As if the state would grow legs and arms and walk into the consulting room of a clinical psychologist". My actual aim being somewhat more modest than that, I above all attempt to show how social identities are formed as both individual beliefs (cognition) and affective states (emotions) and transferred into collective identities (in this case national ones), and what implications this has for the study of China's public diplomacy.

In order to defend the position, I will use a strategy that advances from the particular to the general. This is in line with most studies on social psychology, which start with the individual and then proceed to group behaviour (see Lebow, 2008). Since I draw from both social psychology and international relations in building the framework, it seems justified to advance from specific (individual) to broad (groups) assumptions and from there to still broader generalisations (mass).

I shall begin, nonetheless, with general assumptions related to the English School and especially to the problem of cultural hegemony, that is, whether international society can be seen as a universal or hierarchical culture. I do this in order to highlight those assumptions of the English School that are in the first place compatible with a social psychological approach. In terms of identity formation, the idea of an international society, as advanced by the ES, by its very definition views states as social actors. Thereafter, as stated,

the discussion is divided into various levels of analysis, in this case, the individual, the group and the international. At the individual level, I discuss basic assumptions regarding the study of social psychology, in other words, the concepts of cognition and emotion. At the group level, I review the social identity theory and discuss its implications for group behaviour. Thereafter, I present some formulations on why and how social identities are relevant at the international level.

In the context of each level, I shall discuss Axel Honneth's interpretation of the classical Hegelian theory of recognition as the core theoretical framework for this study. The question, therefore, concerns China's perception of its disrespected status under Western cultural hegemony – a state of affairs, which has political implications for public diplomacy decision-making, as modelled in the next chapter.

1.1. Broad English School Assumptions

International Relations (IR) as a disciplinary subject applies several theories classified in numerous ways. The classifications are mainly used as analytical tools to position a study within the wider field of IR, and to inform the reader of what claims and assumptions are accepted as analytical starting points. Any conceptual positioning regarding schools of thought within the IR aims therefore for clarity and overview (Jackson and Sørensen, 1999: 34). I will therefore start here with an overview of the assumptions that guide the present inquiry. These borrow from the English School (ES) of IR and concern, in general, the nature of international relations and foreign policy *inclinations* of an actor.

Western theoretical IR schools are typically divided into three different approaches: the realist, liberal and international society.⁴ The first instance to develop a scientific discipline to study the international political setting was influenced by the First World War (1914-1918). The conflict left both scholars and politicians asking why the war took place in the first place, why no actual gains were made despite the significant costs involved, and why the actors involved persisted with conflict despite lack of progress (Jackson and

⁴ In many instances International Political Economy is also included in the main traditions (see for instance Jackson and Sørensen, 1999).

Sörensen, 1999: 36). Not very surprisingly then, the initial theory-building within IR was mostly influenced by liberal thinkers both in the US and in the UK who aimed to develop a theory of a world system that would advance peace and the forming of alliances, enabling the avoidance of an equal catastrophe.⁵

Despite these liberal ideas gaining success in IR literature during the 1920s, the 1930s proved that the League of Nations and equivalent formulations were not working. Therefore, while liberal ideas dominated IR in its earlier phase, realist claims gained a foothold before and after the Second World War (Jackson and Sörensen, 1999: 39).

The realist argument interprets the global arena as a place where states act according to a zero-sum game fulfilling only their own needs,⁶ whereas the liberal one views the system through altruism and mutually beneficial cooperation.⁷ The dividing factor between the traditions thus concerns the nature of actor behaviour in respect to the assumed anarchic world system. The realists maintain that anarchy leads to actor self-help. This means that the primary concern of state actors is to maintain their independence through whatever means are at their disposal, meaning that the actor relationships form into a zero-sum game where the security of one state is another state's insecurity (Jervis, 1978). Within the realist tradition, it is then assumed that states are central actors who possess significant power where the strong prevail and the weak perish. Realists also assume states as unitary agents and define vital interests as related to the state body.

While the core of the realist assumption is straightforward, the liberal perspective can be considered somewhat more complex. In essence, the idea that cooperation leads to mutually beneficial outcomes is to a degree based on the assumption that a process of progress takes place within the international system. This is usually referred to as modernity or modernisation (Ruggie, 1993). The liberal position also includes the notion of

⁵ One of the main influences behind early utopian liberalism was the US president Woodrow Wilson. He promoted democracy and self-determination on the famous grounds that liberal democratic governments do not wage war against each other and that world order should be based on a firm international organisation that would regulate state relations from an institutional foundation (Brown, 1997: 24).

⁶ For realism and neo-realism, see for instance Waltz (1979).

⁷ For liberalism and neo-liberalism, see for instance Keohane (1984).

modernisation and economic interdependence. In this view, the modernisation of a nation-state requires a supply of goods (material and non-material) from outside the state that are not produced in sufficient quantity within the state (Navari, 1989: 345). This assumption includes that a sense of progress understood as modernity leads to common interests guided by rationality and reason. Modernity is therefore seen as increasing cooperation in general, economic interdependence in particular, and finally technological advancements.

While social change affects states and state systems, the relationship is arguably also reversible (Jackson and Sørensen, 1999: 28). Globalisation and the advancements made in transportation and communication have therefore been interpreted as making the world “smaller”, reducing the role of the nation-state and traditional power politics. This new global environment and subsequent rise of hermeneutics and social construction have led to new interpretations and further raised the importance of cultural factors within IR literature. For instance, Linklater (1992) raised the question of the next stage in IR after the Cold War. In fact, alongside the WWII, both the ending of the Cold War and globalisation thus created a need and an opening for new opportunities in IR theory that would move beyond the traditional classical realism and liberalism (Bellamy, 2005). The ending of the WWII and the Cold War in particular resulted in the present US hegemony.

The International Society Approach, or as it is better known, the English School in IR, seeks a middle way in classical IR scholarship. The central idea behind the approach is that international relations are regarded as a ‘society’ of states in which principal actors are states people who practise statecraft. It is precisely a society rather than a system: ‘system’ means contact between states and the impact of one state on another; ‘society’ means common interests and values, common rules and institutions (Bull, 1977)., The focus of analysis is therefore on the foreign policy inclinations of states and states people, including their interests, concerns, ambitions, intentions, desires, beliefs, hopes, fears, doubts, uncertainties and so forth (Jackson and Sørensen, 1999: 141-142). The English School thus considers international politics as a ‘realm of human experience with distinctive characteristics, problems, and language (Wight, 1994: 1). It therefore investigates the history of international politics as experienced by the people involved (Jackson and Sørensen, 1999: 140). This includes the perception of change which, according to the proponents of the ES, does not take place between unipolar and multipolar systems for

instance, but from a society of less inclusion to one that includes more members (Bull, 1977).

One of the central themes of the ES is the valuation of moral and norms within the practice of international politics. The tradition derives from philosophy, history and law, and it is characterised by reliance upon the exercise of judgement (Bull, 1969: 20). Traditional ES theory emphasises four key aspects: 1) leading operative ideas are seen as shaping the thought, policies and activities of states people, 2) in the conduct of foreign policy, dialogue between leading ideas, values and beliefs comes into play, 3) the historical dimension of international relations is relevant, and 4) normative aspect as seen through history is considered the most fundamental aspect (Jackson and Sörensen, 1999: 152).

Even though the ES is not traditionally focused on applying social-scientific models, in this study I construct a theoretical model that is presented in the next chapter. I will borrow from the ES a central approach of analysis. That is, my focus is on collective ideas, interests, emotions and history regarding the political phenomenon that is referred to as ‘soft power’ in China. Moreover, in following the ES I emphasise three key aspects in this study: 1) I treat the concept of ‘disrespect’ as the leading idea that has shaped the thought, policies and activities of the PRC ‘soft power’ phenomenon, 2) I consider the dialogue of ideas between the West and China in the context of soft power, and 3) I place the Chinese struggle for recognition in the context of history.

1.1.1. Universal or Diverse Culture?

This subchapter addresses a fundamental tension within the ES, i.e. the tension between a universal and a particular culture. As Heather Rea (2002: 6) argues, “Cultural structures and strategies play crucial roles in the construction of collective state identities

[...] It follows, therefore that these structures and strategies also play an important and often overlooked role in the constitution of the international system of states".⁸

First of all, it seems reasonable to ask how culture is defined within the ES? Here three variations can be detected: 1) culture may refer to unified modes of thoughts, patterns of behaviour, and preferred norms and values of particular society, 2) culture may refer to common cultures, cultures that are shared across particular societies or communities with a common intellectual culture (language, philosophy, moral, art), and 3) culture may refer to diplomatic culture, i.e. the procedural consensus upon which modern international society is based by official representatives of states (Bull, 1977; 1980). Bull further argues that the cohesion of international society would require the further evolution of a common, cosmopolitan culture, entailing common ideas and values both Western and non-Western alike (Bull, 1977: 317).

Within the ES, a basic question that O'Hagan (2005: 12) presents is to what extent norms, rules and institutions that form a common international system emerge from a common culture and how order is maintained in an international system that comprises a plurality of sovereign political communities? This includes questions about the extent to which international norms, values and practices are defined by or project the interests of a dominant culture or cultures. In other words, the question O'Hagan (2005) asks presents the dilemma of whether international society is horizontal or hegemonic/hierarchical. To be more specific, he asks, 1) to what extent there remains implicit or perceived hierarchies between cultures within international society based both on history and on continuing inequalities (material, institutional, ideational power/influence)? And, 2) to what extent cultural difference, expressed as different ideas of political organisation, has been truly

⁸ Since the 1950s, historians and political scientists have debated the meaning of a collective "political culture". The discussions culminated in the 1960s and 1970s in the rise of social history and, in the 1990s, in the influences of cultural history (e.g. Almond, 1956; Stevens, 1974; Putnam, 1993; Reisinger, 1995). More recently Formisano (2001) discusses the differences between historical conceptualisations (too few definitions) and political science conceptualisations (too many definitions) of "political culture". Without arriving at any definitive conclusions, Formisano (2001: 394) does refer to Pye (1972) in voicing the deep problematics of the concept: "[T]he mere term 'political culture' is capable of evoking quick intuitive understanding, so that people often feel that without further and explicit definition they can appreciate its meaning and freely use it".

respected within modern international society and to what extent the society continues to reproduce cultural hierarchies (O'Hagan, 2005: 217-220).

Within the ES, a pluralist argument claims that international society stems from an idea that accepts a plurality of nations operating within anarchy where each country constructs its own approach to good life and justice (Bellamy, 2005: 9-11). The argument thus emphasises that there cannot be any agreement on moral and political issues such as human rights or justice due to the particularity of different cultures that form international society.

The solidarity argument, in contrast, claims that diverse communities are able to reach agreement concerning morals and justice. According to the view, international society carries agency to maintain moral standards (Linklater, 1998). In an international society that is solidary by nature, international law is developed through displaying solidarity (Bull, 1966). The solidarity argument highlights those aspects of contemporary international society that are based on shared values and norms including human rights, accepted methods of governance and international law (Bull, 1977). According to Buzan (2005), these shared norms and values are also visible through economics.

In this regard, a pluralist ES scholar, Roper Jackson (2000) defines political and cultural diversity as a basic feature of international society. In his view, practices, norms and institutions, including international law and diplomacy, are tools through which cultural plurality can be managed. Moreover, he argues that moral/legal ideas and a corresponding normative vocabulary enable diplomatic practices that are directed by certain assumptions and expectations concerning justified and unjustified conduct (Jackson, 2000: 24). Concerning particular civilisations, such as the West, East Asia or the Muslim world, Jackson argues that a normative dialogue within international society is possible to the extent that it is separated from particular civilisational values (Jackson, 2001: 1). He further argues that world culture is foremost an elite culture: while having roots in the political culture of Europe, it has developed through globalisation beyond the initial Western-originated system (Jackson, 2000: 12).

These questions are not merely theoretical, but have practical usage. The question concerns socio-cultural, political and economic inclusion and exclusion. This entails binaries such as the global South contra the North, Western contra post-colonial World, and the haves and have-nots. For instance, raising income differences that escalate into terrorism

have been seen as clash of civilisations (Huntington, 1993, 1996). As discussed above, in the context of East Asia, China in particular still insists that the West dictates international norms and practices. This not only gives reason for concern regarding the cultural cohesion of international society, but also raises questions of whether and to what extent arguments of cultural hegemony are used to create in-group cohesion and out-group devaluation. I will next turn to present those concepts of social psychology that will help in the understanding of how social identities and in-group cohesion are conceptualised. I will also discuss the implications of ‘national grievances’ for the study of international politics in general and China in particular.

1.2. Individual Level

First of all, within Western philosophical understanding, the distinction between reason and emotion is usually seen as the defining characteristic of humanity (Brader and Marcus, 2013, 165). Consequently, based on neuroscientific assumptions the contemporary study of political emotions centres on a few accepted psychological categories: where cognition-oriented scholars consider emotions as a form of knowledge and evaluative thought (Nussbaum, 2001; Hutto, 2012), a tradition concentrating on affection sees emotions as non-reflective bodily functions (Massumi, 2002; Clore and Huntsinger, 2009).

Emotions, according to contemporary neuroscience, are neural processes that are faster than the aware human consciousness, therefore producing appraisals that take place prior to cognition (Rolls, 2005). This implies that, instead of the traditional view of human consciousness where thinking is situated “inside” human awareness, affective pre-conscious appraisals in fact arise before the perceived consciousness (Brader and Marcus, 2013: 171). A neuroscientific synthesis would in comparison combine not only the cognitive and bodily origins of emotions, but also conscious and unconscious perceptions (LeDoux, 1995; Jeffery, 2011; Cunningham, Dunfield and Stillman, 2013). Much of this discussion moves away from a more traditional “rational-irrational” modelling of international political behaviour. Borrowing heavily from contemporary neuroscience, the “emotional turn” of political science uses emotions as models of explanation, not to juxtapose rationality and emotion, but to overcome this “false” dichotomy (see for instance Mercer, 2005).

For the purpose of this study, I retain a distinction between cognition (beliefs) and affective processes (emotions) in discussing social identities and in-group cohesion. To all intents and purposes then, the meaning of both cognition and emotion are obscure.⁹ Nonetheless, as stated, I retain the basic division between cognition and emotion, because it accords with the social identity theory discussed below in regards to cognitive and motivational (emotion) in-group biases.

Individual level emotions, in all shapes and forms, have been studied in a number of ways within political science.¹⁰ According to the bulk of studies, emotions that contribute the most to political action are high-arousal emotions such as fear, enthusiasm and anger (Marcus et al. 2000). Of these, fear and anger seem to have the biggest influence on risk behaviour (Lerner et al, 2003). Regarding what are referred to as moral emotions, i.e. shame, embarrassment and pride, these have been observed to influence adherence to group values in particular (Suhay, 2008). On the other hand, negative emotions such as anger and guilt have been found to be central in punishing norm violations (Nelissen and Zeelenberg, 2009). Regarding individual emotions that are essential in forming group behaviour, I will next turn to the Hegelian idea of recognition at the level of an individual.

⁹ In fact, Brader and Marcus (2013, 173) suggest that this division should be abandoned in favour of temporal categorisation that conceptualises emotions as having either “upstream” (preconscious) and “downstream” (conscious) dimensions.

¹⁰ Crawford (2000: 116-118) highlights what she calls the “need for passion” in the field of political psychology by giving various reasons for the lack of the systemic study of emotion in international politics. Firstly, there exists a ubiquitous assumption in IR theory where most state action is considered to be rational or at least intelligent. Secondly, where studying emotion would seem appropriate, the concentration is on cognition. Thirdly, Crawford labels as ironic the fact that those emotions that security scholars take for granted (fear and hate) are conceptualised as self-evidently important and unproblematised. Finally, she refers to methodological dilemmas: emotions seem ephemeral, internal, subjective and difficult to quantify and distinguish between “genuine” and “instrumental” emotions. Crawford further warns of the dangers of generalising individual behaviour by giving it group attributes, including the states which, one assumes, is the reason she concentrates mainly on individual emotions, contributing less to a group level.

1.2.1. The Idea of Recognition

The classical Hegelian model for recognition assumes that every individual has a basic need to receive recognition from other human beings. However, unlike other basic needs (shelter, food) that can be obtained without changing composition of the individual, the process of attaining recognition in itself influences what type of a person the individual becomes. Therefore, the creation of the ‘self’ requires the recognition of the ‘other’ (Greenhill, 2008, 348; see also Wendt, 2003: 559). Hegel’s idea of the human need for recognition proceeds in a certain pattern of social interaction. For instance, a newly borne infant needs recognition from the mother, whereby the understanding begins that the mother and ‘self’ are separate entities. In later stages of personal life, recognition proceeds from familial love to civil rights, leading to a social sense of self-esteem (Greenhill, 2008: 349).

In Axel Honneth’s interpretation of the need for recognition, instead of gradual proceedings, different stages go forward in a series of alternating steps between perceptions of conflict and reconciliation. In the first step, the need of the individual for recognition challenges existing social systems of order, creating subsequent orders that better suit the need for recognition. An alternating step arises when the new order inevitably proves unsatisfactory, leading to further conflict and struggle for recognition (Honneth, 1995: 17). Each step of unfulfilled recognition potentially reveals to the individual novel aspects of his/her personality, thus releasing new energy to pursue the next step of struggle (Honneth, 1995: 16).

The struggle for recognition relates to affective processes, because recognition can only be achieved in the form of emotional approval and encouragement. In the view of Honneth: “The positive attitude which the individual is capable of assuming toward [...] this type of emotional recognition is that of self-confidence” (Honneth, 1992: 193). Therefore, the underlying emotional layer in the struggle for recognition is a sense of individual security when expressing personal needs and feelings that, if successful, lead to attitudes of self-respect. Needless to say, when such attempts are unsuccessful they accordingly lead to negative emotions related to insecurity and disrespect (Honneth, 1992: 202). This is especially true for group identities, which in the case of unsuccessful recognition can lead to the denigration of collective level life-styles or status such as nationality.

1.3. Group Level

The existence of collective emotions without a collective physical body is one of the central dilemmas that most contemporary theorisations tackle. Much of the contemporary research that focuses on political psychology therefore aims to theorise the processes that render individual cognition and emotions collective and thus political. This is especially true for those studies that focus on the role of emotions in international politics (e.g. Mercer, 2014).

Firstly, in conceptualising the links between the individual and the collective, viral models are used to explain the diffusion of emotion from an individual to a larger group. In these emotions are considered individual property, where the person is embedded in social interaction, then taking up signals from the environment and reacting emotionally and diffusing emotion back to the environment (Gross Stein, 2013: 384). Secondly, and relating to the appraisal theory discussed above, it is suggested that emotions spread through processes of social appraisal. Here emotions spread “based on social appraisal [that] occurs because someone else’s perceived affect carries information that alters our appraisal of the emotional meaning of what is happening” (Parkinson and Simmons, 2009: 1071). Humiliation, for instance, carries an implication of the understanding of social norms: without that shared understanding, it would be impossible to feel humiliation or plan communication that would humiliate (Gross Stein, 2013: 385).

Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014: 497) make a conceptual distinction between micro and macro approaches, in order to understand the processes through which “seemingly individual emotions either become or are at once public, social, collective, and political”. One of the revelations stemming from the divide between micro and macro is the argument that individual emotions, even when felt in individual bodies, are formed and structured within particular social and cultural environments (Hutchinson and Bleiker 2014: 497). Moreover, emotions are constituted within culturally-specific traditions such as language, habits and memories. Following Harré (1986) and Lutz (1988), Hutchinson and Bleiker (2014: 504) further argue that specific social and cultural surroundings influence how individuals gain an understanding of “what it means to feel”.

1.3.1. *Social Identity Approach and Group Behaviour*

If various viral models therefore offer solutions to the ‘emotions-without-body’ dilemma, the same approach can be generalised into identities. There are thus good grounds to make the case for the existence of collective self-identities. Social identity theory (SIT), in its basic form, maintains that identities are the product of both personal and social perceptions (Cottam, 1992: 7). The theory emphasises the motivation of group members “to differentiate their own groups positively from others to achieve a positive social identity” (Turner et al, 1987, 42). SIT thus highlights collective symbolic concerns, i.e. the meaning of the group’s social status for the development of group cohesion (Huddy, 2013: 741). SIT also emphasises social prestige, self-esteem and inter-group respect as explanations of group behaviour (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

Factors that influence the development of in-group cohesion include inclusiveness, distinctiveness and a need for certainty (Hogg, 2007; Leonardelli, Pickett and Brewer, 2010). This has political implications in the form of positive group dissociation: group identity and in-group bias appear among the members of high-status groups since their membership distinguishes group members from non-group members in a positive manner (Bettencourt, Dorr, Charlton and Hume, 2001; Huddy, 2013). Perceived threat is also a central factor in conceptualising group behaviour. It has the potential to create in-group cohesion and out-group demonisation (Huddy, Sears, and Levy, 2013: 15).

In addition to subjective interests, groups typically share common goals, or as such perceived, to form cohesion. To these Stephan and Stephan (2000) and Huddy (2013) incorporate both material (e.g. income and employment) and symbolic (group esteem and respect) threats. The SIT especially focuses on the latter as a defence of group status in creating group cohesion, where perceptions of group power, status and culture are considered symbolic interests.

A derivative of the SIT, the self-categorisation theory, emphasises cognitive aspects of the mechanism that influence social identification (Turner, 1991). Together with SIT, the self-categorisation theory forms the *social identity approach* (Turner, 1991), which allows, for instance, for differentiating between cognitive and motivational approaches. In the context of in-group biases, a cognitive approach is based on the premise that reality as a complex world is too complicated for limited human cognition to grasp, so simplifies

it through self-categorisation (Levy, 2013: 308). Thus, due to limited rationality, individuals apply a multitude of cognitive shortcuts to “simplify complexity and manage uncertainty, handle information, make inferences, and generate threat perceptions (Gross-Stein, 2013: 371). Limited individual mental capacities also make it difficult to process complex information and meet rational standards in attempts to maximise interests (Levy, 2013: 308). The cognitive approach highlights the process of categorisation as important for the development of in-group cohesion (Huddy, 2013: 739-740). Individual identity accordingly has the capacity to develop into group identity through adherence to collective norms and reinforced self-stereotyping (Terry and Hogg, 1996). Importantly, simplifications and heuristic shortcuts can be helpful in structuring the world, but are also sources of errors and bias, which are known as cognitive or unmotivated biases that occur independently of emotions (Levy, 2013: 308).

In contrast to cognitive approach and bias, motivated biases are driven by individual emotional needs. Motivational biases occur when high stakes that influence important values are at play, especially people’s need to maintain their self-esteem (Levy, 2013: 309). In decision-making both cognitive and motivational biases give rise to the same pathologies of judgement. They are therefore difficult to empirically set apart (Levy, 2013: 309).¹¹

¹¹ Theorising on psychology and foreign policy decision-making, however, not only aims to explain bias and error. To this end, Mercer (2005) proceeds to correct the “misbelief” that psychology in the study of international exists only to explain mistakes and misbeliefs. On the contrary, Mercer argues that psychological factors can also explain rational choices, strategies and behaviour through both emotion and cognition. As an explanatory framework for rational emotional behaviour, Mercer (2014) later advances the notions of social emotion and group behaviour as a unit of analysis through common identity. Moreover, the importance of recognition, drive for self-esteem, and impact of past humiliations in political psychology have been emphasised (Lebow, 2010; Lindeman, 2010), supporting Honneth’s analysis of Hegel’s recognition theory through collective social value.

1.3.2. Social Value of Groups

The idea of respect by Hegel and Axel Honneth's interpretation of it has significant implications for the group level of analysis. As stated above, according to the idea, every individual possesses a need to be recognised by social peers. The recognition takes place through an emotional affirmation, and when successful leads to positive self-assurance and self-esteem. In the case of denial of recognition, individuals who see themselves as victims, resort to different explanations, that is, categories of the different forms of recognition denial. These are divided into three different forms depending on the respective degree to which they are capable of upsetting the actor (Honneth, 1992: 188-191). The first concerns a person's physical integrity. This is the most fundamental form of maltreatment, and concerns physical injury such as rape or torture. The second degradation concerns an individual's normative understanding of the 'self'. In this case, an actor is denied fully-fledged participation in a community by being denying structural and institutional rights. The final degradation "entails negative consequences for the social value of individuals or groups" (Honneth, 1992: 190). These include the denigration of collective life-styles, honour, dignity or status, which signify a degree of acceptance towards a group's collective method of self-realisation. Consequently, the group that is the victim of the third type of degradation, may suffer from loss of self-esteem and experiences of disrespect (Honneth, 1992: 191). Therefore, should the third type of disapproval take place, it opens up negative psychological reactions in the form of negative collective emotions such as shame, anger, offence and contempt (Honneth, 1992: 197).

To be more precise then, for Honneth (1993: 269) the struggle for recognition represents a form of purposive-rational action between groups. In other words, regarding the legitimacy of social arrangements, if emotions of disrespect surface, collective struggles may follow. Accordingly, when the need for recognition is confirmed, social arrangements tend to remain stable (see also Haacke, 2005: 187). Honneth's explanation of social conflict is therefore symbolic rather than interest-based, where disrespect becomes collective if genuinely shared with group members. In the words of Honneth: "only if subjects are able to articulate them within an intersubjective framework of interpretation that they can show to be typical for an entire group" (Honneth, 1996: 163). The relevance of Honneth's interpretation of Hegel to the study of international politics is that nationalism and national identities offer ample room for intersubjective interpretations that are perceived as typical for the entire group.

1.4. International Level

In addition to social and political psychologists, IR scholars have also paid increasing attention to how cognition and emotions can be conceptualised as collective. This includes how emotions are shared and to what extent a “mood of the nation” or “national psyche” is a viable concept (e.g. Saurette, 2006).

To give an example, take realism. The realist argument holds that in a world of anarchy and self-help, states must rely on accurate representations of the world and react accordingly in a timely manner. This leads to political actors making judgments from a position of over-suspicion, where worst-case scenarios are deemed prudent because the penalties of being wrong in a zero-sum game are severe. However, according to Goldgeier and Tetlock (2001), under certain conditions the logic of the structural realism is not valid while the actors are willing to take riskier measures than the model would suggest. The conditions are 1) The decision-makers have not made psychological peace with their losses; 2) they underestimate the subjective probabilities of failure by treating small probabilities as functionally equivalent to zero; and 3) they overestimate the subjective probabilities of success by treating large probabilities as equivalent to one. The subjective bias and possibility for error do not therefore necessarily follow any logical analysis in the realist framework (Goldgeier and Tetlock, 2001: 70). To give an example of the states that have not psychologically adjusted to losses, Goldgeier and Tetlock (2001: 71) mention Serbia in 1990s, Germany in 1939 and Japan in 1940. In comparison, when states are in a winning position, they would be more likely to accept the status quo rather than

pursue resources, for instance, the initial reluctance of NATO to expand to Eastern Europe post-Cold War. What has not been mentioned is China which, it seems, would not psychologically have accepted the loss of Taiwan.¹²

It is therefore justified to consider that approaches borrowed from social psychology can be appropriate in the study of international politics. As stated at the beginning, my purpose in this chapter was to defend the assumption that, to all intents and purposes, the functioning of states is analogous to people. My specific purpose was to discuss, through Axel Honneth's interpretation of Hegel's idea of recognition, how the social concept of disrespect would be appropriate for the study of China's soft power. I will do this below by starting with an example drawn from social psychology by Carl Gustav Jung.

1.4.1. National Grievances and Disrespect

As an important element in forming group consciousness, prior studies recognise emotions of power deprivation, that is, 'grievances' (Miller and Sarat, 1981). One case where grievances as non-material and symbolic interests were used as an explanation for state behaviour relates to Nazi Germany, and was done by Carl Gustav Jung in 1946. Jung reflected the German collective psyche as an explanation for the emergence and deeds of the Nazi regime. The premise of Jung held that, if any symptom is common to a sufficient number of individuals, it can be considered a mass phenomenon, and moreover, that the

¹² Accordingly, the constructivist model emphasises the juxtaposition of how people perceive themselves in a situation (social identities) and their normative assessments of the context of the situation (how do my type of people behave?). Here the argument of Goldgeier and Tetlock (2001) is that, on a fundamental level, a psychological analysis would agree with the constructivist approach. Here two starting points are recognised for deepening the constructivist view: 1) The consideration of the nature of the information-processing task with which any observer is confronted in trying to draw causal inferences or policy lessons from world politics, and 2) the limitations of the capacity of the human mind. Just as the constructivist point of view would suggest, the cognitivist also considers all causal inferences and policy lessons the products of mental constructions. However, as Goldgeier and Tetlock (2001: 83) conclude, there would be a fundamental difference for the constructivist school: a psychological approach recognises that there exist infinite possibilities of what could, should, might happen or might have happened as a mental construction of alternative worlds. Therefore, a simplification is needed to reduce the numbers of possibilities to an amount humanly possible to manage.

psychopathology of the masses is rooted in the mentality of the individual (Jung, 1946:1). In explaining the key concepts of group mentalities in detail, the biological relationship between the unconscious processes and the activity of the conscious mind was described by Jung as compensation: in experiencing deficiencies of any sort, the unconscious side of the mind compensates. If such a compensatory move is not integrated into the conscious side of the mind as a balanced individual would do, it leads to neuroses and even psychoses. This would be true for both the individual and thus the collective (Jung 1946: 1-2). Any person, suffering from disturbances in the subconscious, for instance from long-lasting feelings of inferiority, would ultimately suffer from psychic hysteria. The hysterical disposition refers to the a-normal distance of opposites between sentiments of inferiority and self-assurance (Jung 1946: 62-63).

Jung argued that the German population had suffered from long-term feelings of inferiority leading to overcompensation and psychic hysteria. The deep polar distance between long-lasting emotions of inferiority and self-assurance and the following psychological hysteria is the central element in the unraveling of Nazi Germany by Jung. The long-lasting feelings of inferiority, beginning with the First World War, as the unconscious national element of Germany were overcompensated for by introducing conscious feelings of superiority.¹³ Jung grounded his argument in the reductionist premise that the

¹³ For Jung, this was the reason why the German population could not see the tragicomic side of the Nazi party with boastful uniforms, extravagant rallies, and small-minded leaders, all of which would have been apparent at the time to the majority of the rest of the world. This would also explain why otherwise relatively balanced people could perpetrate such a massive inhumane crime as the Holocaust.

psychopathology of the masses is rooted in individual psychology, and that this sort of psychic phenomenon can be investigated through the individual.¹⁴

In his analysis, but using his own concepts, Jung depicts Germany's struggle for recognition and those repercussions that may take place if the process of recognition results in failure. Also in this case, paraphrasing Jung, the need for recognition mattered since it represented a process within which an actor came to exist as an actor within international society and embrace a certain identity in that society. Jung and Nazi Germany are, in fact, not the only instance where national grievances and recognition in an IR or similar context have been applied. For instance, Franz Fanon (1967) points out that the developing world is struggling for recognition, which is social-psychological in nature. Hedley Bull's (1984) *Revolt Against the West* thematically deals with the same issue. More recently, Erik Ringmar (1995) applies the approach in studying Sweden's relationship with the Soviet Union. Finally, Philip Nel (2010) uses the struggle for recognition as a framework to discuss emerging regional powers.

The ES approach seems most useful as a general framework to accommodate the more specific social psychological concept of struggle for recognition, since the tradition by

¹⁴ The actual synthesis between psychology (or psycho-analysis) and sociology (or sociological thinking) has been credited to the Frankfurt School advancing critical theory by combining anti-positivist (or post-positivist) sociology, existential philosophy and psycho-analysis. Among the most notable post-Freudian members of the Frankfurt School who contributed psychoanalytically to sociology are Herbert Marcuse and his *Eros and Civilisation* (1956) and Erich Fromm and his *Escape from Freedom* (1941) and *The Sane Society* (1955). Perhaps the most famous representative of the Frankfurt School remains Jyrgen Habermas and especially his 1968 book *Knowledge and Human Interest*, investigating the relationship between modernity and self-reflection through, among other things, psychoanalysis.

What sets Fromm and other post-Freudians apart from Jung, is a Freudian interpretation of the individual as a social, not biological animal. This led Fromm (1941) in the *Fear of Freedom* to discuss how modern man, after freeing himself from medieval ties, was not yet in fact actually free to build a meaningful life, but looked for security in submission to a leader and the state. In *The Sane Society* (1955), in contrast, Fromm moved away from totalitarian arrangements to argue that the 20th century democratic system also presents a type of "escape from freedom" through the alienation of the Western man from his fellow citizen, the government, and the world in general. Significant to this analysis in both contributions by Fromm is his systematic incorporation of psychoanalysis in cultural criticism.

definition conceptualises international politics as a society where social actors interact according to their personal inclinations. The question of whether international society forms a universal or hierarchical culture fits the struggle for recognition particularly well, and opens up further possibilities to apply individual-level social psychological concepts to the international level. In other words, in a hierarchically perceived culture, it is not very far-fetched to imagine that some actors may feel social inclusion or exclusion. If the latter takes place, the struggle for recognition and perception of disrespect follows.

In fact, following Greenhill (2008: 344), here I make a distinction between formal and informal demands for recognition. The former refers to those forms of recognition where states are officially recognised by the international community, for instance, former satellites of the Soviet Union that were recognised as independent and sovereign states. In addition to the formal recognition politics, as argued, there exists a particular symbolic need by states to be recognised. Acknowledging this type of approach can be more fruitful in explaining state behaviour than material explanations, an argument that accords with Honneth's symbolic explanation of social conflicts outlined above.

In the case of perceived disrespect, using Honneth's approach we can also ask what further forms of disrespect take place. The question carries certain relevance in the sphere of public diplomacy communication, which more often than not entails country-specific strategies, tactics and aims that may or may not stem from national grievances and even traumas, using Jung's formulation.

According to the advocates of the 'struggle for recognition' within IR, the history of present international society is in fact the history of the struggle for recognition (Ringmar, 2015: 11). Already in 1984, Hedley Bull wrote about the various forms that the, what he called, *Revolt Against the West* took. According to Bull (1984: 219-220) Western dominance peaked at the turn of the century in 1900, not in technological or cultural terms, but in psychological supremacy. The consequent struggles represented equal sovereignty, post-colonial liberation, racial equality, economic justice and cultural liberation.¹⁵ Philip

¹⁵ Of these five, the first four comprised struggles for values, which were Western-originated and thus did not, in fact, represent revolts against the West. The last one, in contrast, referred to the struggle of the non-Western world to have recognition of their own right: "the struggle of non-Western peoples to throw off the intellectual or cultural ascendancy of the Western world so as to assert their own identity and autonomy in matters of the spirit" (Bull, 1984, 222).

Nel (2010) also applied the concept of recognition to the study of Global South. In his view, the regional leaders of the South struggle to be recognised as full and equal partners in the society of states who have specific development needs that the Global North is too often indifferent to. Erik Ringmar (2002) applies the struggle for recognition to an East-West structure in explaining the behaviour of Soviet Russia towards the West, through an identity-based model that he coins the ‘recognition game’. Ringmar (2002: 120) writes: “The struggle concerns not the distribution of utilities, but instead of who should have the right to impose what description on whom. This is how the master is separated from the slave, the superior being from the inferior”. The gist of Ringmar’s game setting is that recognition or the denial of it takes place between mutual intercourse where identities are not fixed but develop over time. Using the same analogy, Ringmar argues that in the long run the recognition received from a slave will not satisfy the master, since this is not recognition from a peer. The slave, in his current position, will prove himself through education, and as a result of self-transformation will one day become equal to the master, now representing a person of whose recognition the master has sought. This way mutual recognition is achieved.

Chinese soft power and public diplomacy seem to lie rather fittingly within this framework. Consider, for instance, the following. The leadership of the PRC seems to be concerned about the perception of China in European and US media. Consequently, Chinese state media and PRC government spokespersons frequently claim that Western media is biased against China. Only recently, Chinese state media accused Western news outlets of bias against the BRIC countries (Xinhua, 2015), China’s engagement in the South-China Sea (Global Times, 2016), and even China’s growth figures (China Daily, 2016). The question then of what forms this type of struggle represents is an interesting one. Does it concern colonial, racial, economic or cultural liberation? In the case of China, one could imagine that the struggle for economic liberation, at least, is no longer very relevant. In any case, the PRC leadership has come to the conclusion that the strength of Chinese culture and its international influence is not congruent with China’s status (Hu, 2012).

1.5. Putting Theory into Practice

This chapter took up the issue of connecting the theoretical discussion and empirical approaches presented in this study. In this context, nonetheless, I would like to raise a few points concerning the empirical and methodological application of the theory.

First of all, as a general framework for the study the ontology of the English School guides the methodological choices. As discussed, there are two basic characteristics within the English School. Firstly, there is the assumption that the conduct of international politics forms a type of international society, where the tradition highlights states people and their inclinations as a central focus of analysis. This means the interests, concerns, limitations, ambitions, miscalculations, desires, hopes, fears and, in a word, emotions of presidents, ministers, diplomats, generals and other actors who act on behalf of the state (Bellamy, 2005: 12). The English School typically studies the activities of states people, such as making war/peace, negotiations, giving assurances, sabre-rattling, appeasing, etc. (Jackson and Sørensen, 1999: 140-142). Secondly, through Wight's (1991) initial discussion of the three approaches within the English School (realism, rationalism and revolutionism), methodological pluralism has been raised as the second central characteristic of the tradition. Here Linklater (1990) connects the three traditions to methodological pluralism: realism with positivism, rationalism with hermeneutics, and revolutionism with critical theory (see also Little, 2009: 88-94).

The preferred choice among the ES, methodological pluralism, nonetheless, does not imply ontological or epistemological pluralism, nor that, as far as methods are concerned, 'anything goes'. Naveri (2009: 5-12), for instance, points out some 'dos' and 'don'ts' in regards to the methodological pluralism of the ES: 1) instead of an actor, the ES mainly treats the state as a setting or structure, 2) instead of a realist power calculus, the ES is mainly interested in the perception of power, 3) the ES is interested in actors in more or less rationally understood situations, that is, as homo sociologus, and 4) as a derivative of the previous point, the ES is interested in understanding social context where social action takes place.

With this in mind, I will employ a set of methods that leans towards the methodological pluralism of the ES: the rhetorical analysis studies perception (image of the 'other'), the media analysis propensity (actor choice), and the automated content analysis of China's

overall news media image that relates to both perception (status) and propensity (assessment of situation) components. In addition, the rhetorical analysis aims to examine the development of Chinese out-group/in-group intensity. It accords with the understanding of Johnston (1999) that strong in-group identities have the potential to lead to the devaluation of out-groups. Accordingly, following the logic, the stronger the in-group identity, the stronger the perceptions of competitive out-group relations. It follows therefore that the level of intensity of in-group identification has relevance. In the case of China, the level of intensity of national identification should correlate with the hostility towards an out-group, in this case the US or the West in general.

I understand therefore that the methods I have chosen comply with Naveri's (2009) "dos and don'ts" of ES, particularly in the points 2, 3, and 4. In this study I am not interested in soft power calculus, but the perception of it (Chapter 7), I try to place China in a rationally defined situation (Chapter 3), and I make a point in attempting to understand the particular social context where the phenomenon under investigation takes place (Chapter 4). Within the context of this dissertation, I do, however, consider the Chinese state a fairly homogeneous actor.

1.6. Summary

This chapter reviewed the formation of identities, their transference to collective social identities, and the consequent implications for the study of international society. The purpose of bridging the various levels of analysis (individual, group, international) was to make the point that the struggle for recognition is universal in its humanistic application and thus appropriate for the international level transcending relativistic cultural claims. In terms of identity formation, the idea of an international society, as advanced by the ES, by its very definition views states as social actors.

By implication, experiences of disrespect not only matter in the study of international politics, but also beg the question of what forms the struggle for recognition may take. In the context of China's soft power, I attempt to provide a detailed answer to this question in the next chapter by modelling Chinese public diplomacy communication into components of perception (image of the 'other/cultural and political status) and propensity (diagnostics/actor choice).

2. THEORETICAL MODEL: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DECISION-MAKING

In Chapter 1, I argued on behalf of the ‘state-as-person’ position, which maintained that individual-level cognition and emotions are generalisable to group- and therefore to international level. This chapter in contrast draws from communication studies. The guiding idea is that information, including group-level emotions (in this case grievances), which concern social identities, norms and prototypical behaviour (acquiring, validating, changing) is mediated through communication (Noels, Giles, and Le Poire, 2003). This is especially true of common category memberships that are found to reinforce inter-subjectivity and provide a framework for collective meaning-making (Hogg and Reid, 2006: 13). Against this background, my purpose in this chapter is to sketch a model of communication that links social identity (image/perception) and behaviour (actor choice), and to briefly place it in the context of the PRC public diplomacy decision-making.

This chapter thus connects social psychology to media studies in general and PRC public diplomacy communication in particular. I will first discuss different conceptualisations of soft power and public diplomacy. Particular attention is paid to the theoretical links between media and, on the one hand public opinion, and on the other, decision-makers. Thereafter, I present a theoretical model of factors that influence US public opinion of China by Wang and Shoemaker (2011: 2). Based on this, I proceed to construct a theoretical model of public diplomacy decision-making by reviewing those theoretical factors drawn from social psychology that are relevant for intergroup communication and thus influence actor perception and propensity components. I support the model with a preliminary review of Chinese public diplomacy based on secondary sources. The purpose of this discussion is to validate and calibrate, so to speak, the model. The secondary sources are chosen to give justification to the model, so contradictory literature is disregarded at this instance.

2.1. Soft Power and Public Diplomacy

As a policy and practice, public diplomacy¹⁶ became a substantial part of state agenda during the Cold War when the superpowers undertook campaigns to foster support for their respective ideology and the nuclear balance. A second phase in the development of public diplomacy practices was partly coincidental and partly a consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Gilboa, 2008). On the one hand, more developed information technology allowed widespread and cost-effective communication possibilities (Castells, 2009) and, on the other, the attacks themselves caused re-polarisation on a global scale where favourable perceptions and alluring narratives again played an increasing role (Gilboa, 1998; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2005; 2008). In the aftermath of 9/11, widespread confusion still influenced public diplomacy practices and research. Holbrooke (2001: B07), for instance, noted “Call it public diplomacy, or public affairs, or psychological warfare, or – if you really want to be blunt – propaganda.”

Various approaches are still visible in present-day conceptualisations where the uniting factor concerns the influencing of foreign audiences for political gain. To be more specific, public diplomacy was earlier defined as “direct communication with foreign peoples, with the aim of affecting their thinking and, ultimately, that of their governments” (Malone, 1985: 199), and more recently as communication with the general public of foreign nations aiming to influence people abroad to accomplish policy agenda (Waller 2007: 23). Public diplomacy is also noted as a marketing problem centring on the premise that providing audiences with more information leads to anticipated policy outcomes (Li, 2013: 1724). Moreover, the practice is seen as understanding the needs of other countries,

¹⁶ Among academics, it is usually agreed that public diplomacy and soft power have a conceptual connection. However, as to the nature of the connection, two trends can be observed. While some define soft power projection as the “major component of a country’s public diplomacy strategy” (for instance d’Hooghe, 2011: 24), others see public diplomacy as an “official policy translating soft power resources into action” (for instance Gilboa, 2008: 61). The views differ in that primacy is given either to public diplomacy or soft power, and that either ‘soft power’ is something that ‘public diplomacy’, among other things, conveys, or that ‘public diplomacy’, among other things, is one tool in a grand soft power strategy. The position I take in this study follows the latter, i.e. the view where public diplomacy is considered a vehicle for soft power projection. This not only seems to be the most logical approach in that public diplomacy is considered a concrete policy and soft power a fuzzy concept and an overall framework, but it also accords with the Chinese understanding of the two concepts.

cultures and people, communicating one's own views and correcting misperceptions (Leonard 2002: 8). Three interdependent realms are also mentioned in the context of public diplomacy: news management, strategic communication and relationship-building. News management aims to shape foreign and domestic media on a day-to-day basis, strategic communication is considered an intermediate activity communicating strategic messages of nation promotion and, finally, the purpose of relationship-building is to develop long-term contacts fostering goodwill (Sun 2010: 9-10. See also Leonard 2002; Nye 2010). Distinctions have also been made between "public diplomacy" where state and non-state actors communicate to influence public opinion in foreign societies, and "media diplomacy" where state actors use the media to promote mutual interests, negotiations, and conflict resolution, and "media broker diplomacy" where journalists are considered to temporarily assume the role of diplomats by serving as mediators in international negotiations (Gilboa, 2008: 58).

Moreover, d'Hooghe (2011: 20) following Sharp (2005: 106) has advanced a definition of public diplomacy where it is understood as "the process by which direct relations with people in a country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented". This more precise definition is referred to as "new public diplomacy", and is part of a world view where "postmodern transnational relations, the roles and responsibilities of actors in international relations are no longer clearly delineated and most actors are nearly as much in control as they would like to be" (d'Hooghe, 2011: 20). Finally, Gilboa (2000; 2001; see also 2008: 57-58) differentiates between three models of public diplomacy. These are:

- 1) The Basic Cold War model referring to the information and persuasion campaigns used by the two superpowers in an antagonistic relationship to achieve long-term results in foreign societies.
- 2) The Non-State Transnational model referring not only to the emergence of new non-state transnational actors in international affairs such as NGOs, but also to the increased and considerable interdependence of all actors, requiring a revision to the Cold War model.
- 3) Domestic PR model referring to state actors hiring PR firms and lobbyists in the target country to achieve policy aims.

The basic Cold War model is usually used in the context of authoritarian regimes, while the other two have been applied to democratic and liberal countries. PRC public diplomacy seems to be a curious mix of the first and third models. PRC bureaucracy seems to consider communication as a zero-sum-game between China and the West, the US in particular, where the PRC has used international PR firms and lobbyists. Consequently, the PRC itself mainly seems to interpret all Western activity – state and non-state alike – through the basic Cold War model. Within this framework, in this study I will mainly consider China's mid- to long-term strategic communication mediated either through traditional news media or entertainment media.

How, then, does this type of public diplomacy work? In other words, through what mechanisms do state actors shape the policy environment of a foreign country? Prior research recognises the connection between mass media and, on the one hand, public opinion, and on the other, decision-makers in a foreign country. Both connections are mainly attributed to the fact that most people, whether decision-makers or not, lack direct experiences, and hence are relying on the media to form opinions of foreign countries. The factual knowledge of public or individuals regarding foreign countries can indeed be limited, as evidenced by the documented ignorance of the US public regarding foreign affairs (Carpini and Keeter, 1997).

Regarding the public, a seminal study by Perry (1985) found that, in contrast to their personal knowledge, respondents relied on news to make inferences about foreign countries. More recent studies have also shown how mass media shapes the public opinion of other nations (Wanta, Golan, and Lee, 2004; Entman, 2004). Moreover, regarding agenda setting, prior research finds a correlation between the salience of foreign affairs in media and the salience for foreign affairs of the general public (Wanta and Hu, 1993; Soroka, 2003). Wanta, Golan and Lee (2004) also show in detail how the US media shapes public opinion on foreign countries: when the US media covers foreign countries in a negative tone, the public tends to have a negative opinion of those countries. In contrast, a positive or neutral tone does not show any effect on public opinion. In general, public diplomacy and public relation campaigns by foreign nations have been shown to potentially influence the public opinion and foreign policy of a foreign country by targeting its mainstream media coverage (Manheim and Albritton, 1984). Furthermore, in the US a foreign policy issue will only receive public attention once it has received mainstream news coverage (Powlick and Katz, 1998).

Drawing from prior research, it is therefore possible to conceptually link media coverage and public opinion. Consequently, a number of studies also show how the media influences policy decision-makers. For instance, it has been argued that the media not only sets the agenda for the public but also for policy-makers by making an issue salient (Liu, 2006). It would also seem that a major source of instability in US politics is the shifting attention of the media (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). Furthermore, media framing has the potential to influence how the public and policy-makers perceive an issue (Dearing and Rogers, 1996; Kioussis, 2004). Arguably, there exists a connection between the salience of foreign affairs in US media and an increase in US defence spending (Soroka, 2003). It has also been demonstrated that there exists a link between media coverage and foreign aid: the salience of a recipient country in the domestic press influences the amount of aid the said county receives (Van Belle, Rioux, and Potter, 2004).

Studies that have interviewed policy-makers make the point that the news media is a major source of information for them (O’Heffernan, 1991). In a seminal study, Cohen (1963) argues that policy-makers and diplomats rely on mass media to map the world (Cohen, 1963: 12-13). Diplomats are also prone to relying on mass media in their reporting, which according to Cohen (1963) is shaped by the press (Cohen, 1963: 209-212). Moreover, considering the major developments in communication technologies including the internet, studies show that both traditional and new media continue to shape the environment where foreign policy is made (Potter, 2002). Finally, nation-branding efforts do not seem to succeed if the media coverage and public perception of a country is negative (Golan, 2013). Political leaders also seem to pay attention to public attitudes when developing policies, thus public opinion has the potential to influence foreign policy, especially in democratic countries (Sobel, 2001; Holsti, 2004). Thus, China for instance may have an impact on the foreign policy of a Western democracy by trying to influence local public opinion and attitudes.

2.2. Predispositions Influencing Public Diplomacy

In their model of public diplomacy, Wang and Shoemaker (2011) depict the causal factors that influence US public opinion of China. In constructing the model, they draw from a

number of studies.¹⁷ The basic gist of their theoretical argument is that the characteristics of a country and public relations efforts of that country influence both its media image and public opinion in a foreign country. Moreover, as also argued above, media image influences public opinion. In constructing their model, nonetheless, Wang and Shoemaker (2011) review only briefly China's public relations efforts from an empirical point of view, nor do they elaborate on the various components that may influence public diplomacy decision-making. I will take up this task below.

¹⁷ According to their discussion, first of all the effect of various characteristics such as country's geographic, economic, social and political and cultural attributes have been shown to influence news coverage (Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger, 1987; Chang, 1998). In more specific terms, 'extra media factors' (trade, population, geographic distance) have been observed to influence the volume of country-specific news coverage (Rosengren, 1977). Moreover, trade and population affected the volume of media coverage African countries gained in the New York Times (Shore and Todd, 1979). Also, the level of both GDP and population was found to predict the quantity of coverage in Japanese news (Ishii, 1996). Countries with higher socio-economic and cultural status were also more likely to receive more coverage than other countries (Chang, 1998). Additionally, the volume of trade was found to relate positively to the volume a country receives in foreign media (Wu, 2000). Finally, it was suggested that international news coverage is positively associated with national economic development, political freedom and the level of population (Kim and Barnett, 1996). Regarding the connection between country characteristics and opinion of foreign countries, prior research suggested that the more similar two countries are in terms of culture and politics, the more favourable opinions their populations have of each other (Nincic and Russet, 1979). More specifically, Wanta and colleagues (2004) argued that when US media portrays foreign countries in a negative light, US public opinion tends to have a negative perception of those countries. Positive or neutral news did not have any effect. Moreover, Wilnat and colleagues (2000) showed that the coverage of the US media can influence the criteria based on which US public opinion values foreign countries.

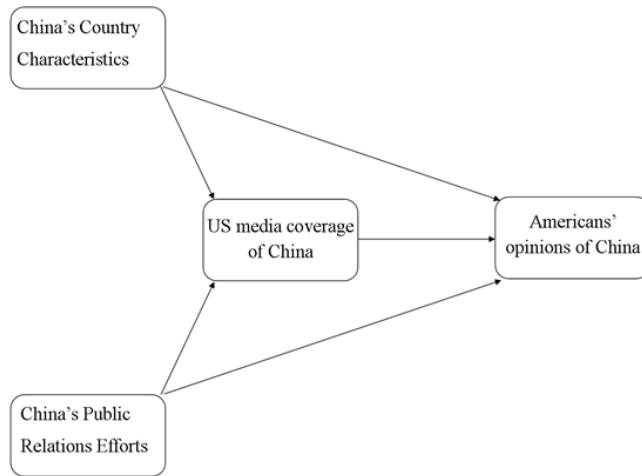


Figure 1 The theoretical model of the influences on public opinion of China in the US. Source: Wang and Shoemaker (2011: 2).

The broad outline of the various components that I propose here is based on the social identity theory discussed in Chapter 2. The theory holds that social identity as a concept of self is usually derived from an individual's group and from a perceived status of that group membership (as category arguments). In this regard, images are conceptualised as mental pictures, composed of cumulated experience-based "knowledge" of the surrounding world (Elgström, 2000: 68). National self-images that are collective "knowledge" are built on national identities that determine an actor's sense of who they are based on their group membership, in this case, nationality (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). National images serve as "road maps" and "focal points", telling policy-makers how to define a certain situation and giving them clues as to how to relate to environment (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993: 3-30). National identities are therefore cognitive organising devices that help policy-makers interpret and understand the complex "reality" (Cottam and Shih, 1992).

In this study, I primarily address two types of actor-oriented components of national identity: 1) Images of 'Others' intentions (positive or negative) and 2) cultural and political status (inferior or superior) (Chaban et al., 2016; see also Elgström, 2000). Relevant to the model, image components can introduce two types of predispositions into actor

decision-making: 1) a diagnostic propensity, which influences the diagnostic of the situation and 2) a choice propensity, which leads an actor to favour certain types of actions (Chaban et al., 2016; see also Shimko, 1991; Cottam and Shih, 1992). Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the perception component ('self' and 'other') and the following propensity component (diagnostic/actor choice) in the context of public diplomacy. In the next subchapters, I review the theoretical factors that influence each component.

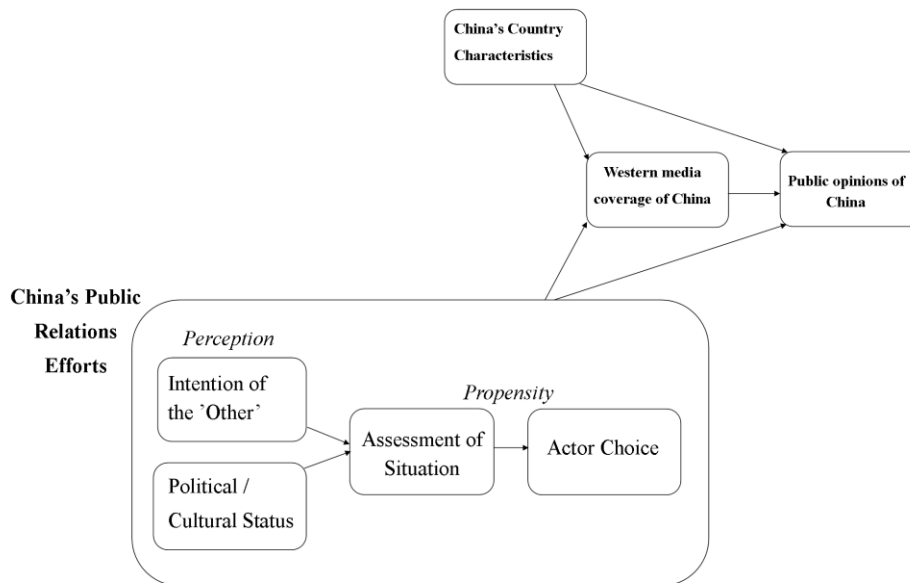


Figure 2 Theoretical model of the predispositions that influence an actor's decision making regarding public diplomacy efforts. Source: the author.

2.3. Perception Component

In this study I consider strong identities and symbolic threats/grievances as catalysts for group-based social identities, that is, perceptions of status in intergroup relations.

2.3.1. *Cultural/Political Status: 'Image of Self'*

First of all, 'Status dilemmas' are considered as an example of grievances within international political conduct. Closely related to 'security dilemmas', status dilemma occurs when "two states would be satisfied with their status if they had perfect information about each other's beliefs" (Gross-Stein, 2013, 367). Without the information, the leaders of one country may perceive its status as being challenged when in fact it is not. When that country then takes action, the other perceives that as threatening, beginning a spiral movement. The status dilemma therefore sees states valuing status equally to security (Wohlforth, 2009; Lebow, 2010). Considering China, several observers who address China's cultural and political history point to the direction where both PRC decision makers and public opinion consider China politically and culturally inferior, suffering from victimisation and national humiliation. It is a common understanding in China that the period 1840-1940 is commonly considered as the 'century of national humiliation' (for instance Callahan, 2004: 2010).

Strong identities are found to be important in explaining the political influence of identities founded on both partisanship and ideology (Huddy (2013). Strong partisans are therefore more likely than others to make biased diagnostics of economic and social facts (Bartels, 2002). There is also evidence to support the view that such tendencies are linked more to identities and less to beliefs (Malka and Lelkes, 2010). Importantly, strong identities are found to provoke defensiveness when facing criticism targeted at the group (Huddy, 2013: 745). Among strong identifiers, 'group prototype' or 'leader' is a central concept that can be used to explain political group cohesion. They establish group boundaries and limit exchange with out-groups. Group prototypes, in this case, political leaders or national figures (factual or fictional) influence group members through their personal beliefs, actions and so forth (Huddy, 2013: 749). In China, it is claimed, the PRC leadership has come to the conclusion that the strength of Chinese culture and its international influence are not compatible with China's contemporary international status (Hu, 2012).

To support the view, there is some evidence that Chinese culture tends to be admired by foreign people, whereas its politics and governance are not (Wang, 2011: 6). For instance, it would seem that in several Asian countries the perception of China along the cultural dimension is more favourable than along the political one (Xie and Page, 2013: 854-855). Moreover, Chinese public diplomacy products tend to be viewed as propaganda in the West because they originate from a Communistic regime (Chu, 2014). One study addressed the contradiction between the peace-loving harmonious image the PRC wants to project and the image the US public holds of China of an authoritarian state (Wang, 2003: 52-53).

2.3.2. *Intention of the 'Other': Intergroup Hostilities*

In the development of cohesion within political groups, intergroup hostilities play a significant role. In international politics, the concept of 'gestalt' approximates stereotypical ideas and is known as a form of general knowledge of other countries. Studies that apply the gestalt approach make the assumption that the individual actor perception of a given country is homogenous to the degree that it makes no practical sense to describe it partially (Herman, 2013: 338-341). As the intensity of the negative perception of intentions of another country increases, with it increases the intent to construct a cognitive image regarding the other country, including negative aspects (Reeder, Pryor, Wohl, and Griswell, 2005).

As a form of gestalt, perceived negative intentions of the 'Other' may result in a perception of threat and eventually to the emergence of an enemy image. One reaction to the perception of threat is demonising a country (Herman, 2013: 342-353). Those threats in particular that are perceived as existential to the in-group have been found to reinforce group cohesion and identity (Huddy, 2013: 762). Moreover, a perception of threat may be exaggerated due to emotions, incomplete information, institutional factors and cultural practices. Threat therefore can "become culturally routine, embedded in political institutions, and acquires an almost taken-for-granted quality" (Gross-Stein, 2013: 368). An enemy image produces imagery on behalf of which is easy to act on desired goals. Therefore, Herman (2013: 352) argues, enemy images may appear in many cases only as mere propaganda by the political elite in order to manipulate public opinion, but in this context they can be seen as "psychological defences that the elite come to believe in as they act

on their strategic desires”. When the concept of an enemy image is placed in the context of China, prior research highlights mutual mistrust and controversial relationship between the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy and international media. For some Chinese scholars, the Western media is negatively biased to the extent that it represents a conscious effort to demonise China (e.g. Li, 1996). The PRC has also been blamed for the mistreatment of foreign journalists, in labelling them as a “force to contend with” (Tang, 2013: 66) and, quite literally, as “demons and unruly beasts, to be avoided at all costs” (Chen, 2011: 101).

One central concept that relates to perceived out-group hostilities is ‘prejudice’. In this context, prejudice refers to “beliefs about another group’s inferiority *and* feelings of animosity directed at the group” (Kinder, 2013: 814). In this instance, the beliefs that actors possess about other social groups are typically known as ‘stereotypes’ (Brown, 1986: 188). Stereotypes are typical cognitive solutions to simplify reality into a form manageable for humans. They also have the tendency to sharpen the boundaries between the in-group and the out-group (Kinder, 2013: 822). Stereotypes also typically focus on the negative aspects of an out-group such as defects and deficiencies (Bobo and Massagli, 2001). To illustrate the empirical relevance of these concepts, I refer here to Zhang and Cameron (2003: 17-18) who report on questionnaires conducted at bilateral communication conferences. In these instances, American journalists and policy-makers viewed US coverage of China as balanced and objective, while their Chinese colleagues strongly disagreed. To give further anecdotal evidence of prejudice and stereotypes of Western media that are typically used in China, Chu (2014: 163) quotes one Chinese blogger: “Whenever there is a conflict, western reporters will prefer to choose some selected views – you guessed it right – the views that are opposed to China [...] They would rather prefer the Asians remain poor and under-developed, so that superiority of Western civilisation can be maintained in the region”.

In Chapter 6, I will analyse Chinese journal articles published in Mainland China connected to soft power and public diplomacy. As discussed in Chapter 1, I will apply a rhetorical analysis in order to flesh out the category arguments of the texts to further clarify the underlining assumptions of the PRC soft power approach. These centre on the above-discussed concepts of gestalt, stereotype and an enemy image as catalysts for national identity and perception of China’s international status.

2.4. Propensity Component

The final subchapter discusses the theory of action and the poliheuristic theory that address the actor choice component in the model.¹⁸

2.4.1. *Assessment of Situation: Emotional Appraisal*

First of all, in the conduct of international politics it is typical that decision-makers exaggerate their own capabilities and the hostilities of adversaries (Levy, 2013: 312). This includes not only power relations but also symbolic issues such as reputation, complicating any decision-making process and is prone to lead to cognitive and motivational biases, as discussed above. This could help to explain why Chinese policy-makers not only insist that Western media governs the international setting, but that it also deliberately aims to demonise China (Ma and Hong, 2011). The globalisation of state-run Chinese media corporations are also seen in China as facing barriers from a global communications system that serves Western-based transnational monopolies. China is thus not seen to be “fully” or neutrally represented by global media due to a Western-dominated structure of information flow (Hu and Ji 2012: 32). Chinese scholars and policy-makers also estimate that 80% of the world news is produced by four Western news agencies; AP, UPI, AF and Reuters (Wen, 2010). These estimates would seem to represent a typical exaggeration of enemy hostilities that in this case concern symbolic issues.

The theory of appraisal is aptly positioned to further clarify Chinese position. The theory is drawn from social psychology, and in essence focuses on the relationship between appraisals and emotions. Within the approach, appraisals are understood as “cognitive interpretations of the significance of a situation for one’s goals that trigger emotions” (Smith and Ellsworth, 1985). While the claims of structural bias within the international media might have some claim to them, Chinese assessments of the situation seem to some extent to be based on emotional appraisals. The Chinese elite indeed seem to believe that

¹⁸ As Levy (2013, 316) shows, however, it should be noted that all key variables in international relations are difficult to operationalise on an interval scale – including those that influence decision-making.

global media stereotypes China as an “oriental” nation-state, offering a biased and negative perspective. The distorted and demonised Western media bias is seen to stem from differences in news practice, ideology and national interest (Xiang, 2013: 255). More specifically, the historical, cultural and political “complexity” of China has been seen as posing challenges, especially to US journalists, at whose mercy the national image of China is perceived to be (Peng, 2004: 54-64).

In those studies, conducted and published in Mainland China, the appraisal of Western media slant is even more persistent. For instance, Zhong and Zhang (2016) argue that, due to inherent tensions in Chinese rhetoric, the top-down approach of Chinese propaganda, and anti-communist ideology of the Western media, China is stereotyped in international media. In contrast to those studies conducted and published in international journals, however, Chinese Mainland studies have also approached the issue through the periodisation of history. For instance, Li Xiguang (1996) divides the reporting of international media after 1971 into the “Romanticised Period” (1970s), the “Angelised Period” (1980s), the “Demonised Period” (1990s), and the “Demonised Period” (21st century). Following Li (1996), He Ying (2004) also recognises historical periods: the “Horrible Stage” (1950-1972), the “Respect Stage” (1972-1979), the “Glorifying Stage” (1979-1989), and finally the “Demonising Stage” (1989-2000) when China was depicted as dictatorial, brutal, and authoritarian. Lu (2009) in turn, divides the history into three periods: the “Antagonistic Period” (1950s and 1960s), the “Cooling-off Period” (1970s and 1980s), and the “Negative Period” (since the 1990s). Following the theory of appraisal, these Chinese assessments seem to exaggerate the significance of China and the intentions of Western journalist, thus evoking an emotional appraisal from these Chinese analysts.

2.4.2. *Choice of Action*

In addition to the emotional appraisal of a situation, there is evidence that emotional issues may further influence the decision-making process. For instance, the theory of action holds that a decision-making process can be divided into two modes: whereas *pre-decision phase* actors tend to be thoughtful and deliberative in weighing up possible scenarios and options, in the *post-decision phase* actors move on from making decisions to implementing them. Importantly, prior studies show that during the latter phase actors are most vulnerable to various biases, including selective attention, tunnel vision, cognitive

dissonance, and self-serving illusions (Levy, 2013: 313). Emotions, essentially, are found to influence which of these takes place in decision-making. In other words, emotional appraisals shape judgment in the sense that they may trigger one or the other type of decision-making mode (Brader and Marcus, 2013: 184).¹⁹

As evidenced by the above-discussed Chinese appraisals, it could be argued that the PRC's soft power push seems to be intrinsically linked to a post-decision-making mode whereby, after an emotional appraisal, the decision-making mode has moved on to implementation. As Susan Shirk (2007: 6-9) shows, the decision-making of the PRC leadership is connected to China's domestic insecurity. In her view, the domestic fragility of Chinese society has made the PRC leadership be above all concerned with its own position. While lacking a democratic system, the ruling Communist party is at the mercy of social instability, where popular movements could not only overthrow the party elite, but also threaten their lives and the lives of their families.

This existential threat underlines the importance of the domestic scene where the Communist party attempts to convince the Chinese population that the party represents legitimate rulers. At the core of its soft power, the PRC thus seems to utilise traditional culture as a symbolic source for national spirit, knowledge and strength, reinforcing a perception of China as the representative of the oldest and most valued cultural civilisation. Through this rehabilitation of its traditional culture, "cultural soft power" has become popular in China's official articulations of itself, characterising its public diplomacy communication (Wang, 2011). The PRC has also become a formidable cultural gatekeeper and producer that manages a vast publishing and broadcasting empire, also influencing artists in Hong Kong and Taiwan (Curtis, 2012: 6). In essence, the PRC leadership tends to believe that through boosting China's international cultural influence it can achieve a "competitive" advantage, and overcome its still largely negative image – both at home and abroad (Chu,

¹⁹ Brader and Marcus (2013, 185) also show how emotions impact political decision-making in particular ways through learning: "[...] one triggered by anger, focusing on defense of extant convictions and hence disinterested in disconfirming evidence or new information triggered, and a second, more deliberative and mode that is triggered by anxiety". In other words, for instance, anxious voters have been found to be responsive to available information and less tied to predispositions, whereas either those who are angry or enthusiastic have been found to be the opposite (Brader 2006; Parker and Isbell, 2010).

2014: 164).²⁰ In this instance, they seem to rely on ‘symbolic patriotism’ using positive emotions and pride in national symbols that represent the nation (Huddy, 2013: 747-748). More importantly, the perception and possibility of a symbolic loss create for the PRC opposition to the out-group (the West) and support for policies that aim to counter the perceived threat (Huddy, 2013: 752).

As argued above, a perceived external threat has the ability to reinforce in-group cohesion. This was especially true in the case of the threat being perceived as existential. In this situation, normative restraints on behaviour are relaxed, creating a context that allows engaging in morally questionable behaviour such as lying, torture and killing (Herman, 2013). This would also seem to be correct in the case of the PRC: as part of the recent media ‘going out’ campaign, the PRC intentionally blurs media demarcations between “Western” and “Chinese” media and journalists. The intention is to give the domestic audience a false impression of non-Chinese media that praises China and the PRC (Sun, 2014).

In Chapter 7, I will show how out-group hostilities and in-group cohesion building are implemented in Chinese public diplomacy through ‘political reading’, i.e. the interpretation of several films that have been produced either entirely by the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy or in co-operation with Hollywood studios. The analysis also further clarifies the question of how the PRC blurs media demarcations in order to assure the Chinese domestic audience of its international respect. While there is a general argument to be made that popular culture and international politics are in fact on a continuum instead of separate entities (Grayson, Davies, and Philpott, 2009), in the case of the PRC films are a pivotal part of its media-centric public diplomacy and hence relevant empirical data that cannot be overlooked. In effect, the narratives of the films show how identity formations

²⁰ Studies that concentrate on decision-making in international politics have developed several models to approach the difference between “genuine” processes of learning and motivational biases. Take for instance the poliheuristic theory. Similar to the theory of action, it holds that the decision-making process has two stages. During the first, people eliminate those strategies that are perceived to lead to unacceptable outcomes, and during the second stage people choose the strategy that they perceive has the most potential for success. Importantly, in the context of international politics, it has been shown that in many cases it is the domestic position that is considered primary while the international is considered secondary and can thus be jeopardised if these two positions are in conflict (Levy, 2013: 317).

are implemented in practice, as decision-making propensities, in China's soft power efforts.

2.5. Summary

This chapter constructed a theoretical model to depict dispositions that may influence actor decision-making. In doing that, I drew from social psychology in dividing the decision-making process into perception and propensity components, linking social identity with actor behaviour.

The various components of the model were also briefly placed in the context of China's soft power and public diplomacy. According to the discussion, the complexities of China's social identity seemed to link to perceptions of what China is and what it should be. These were associated with an enemy image of Western media and the concept of Western media bias. The subsequent public diplomacy communication centres on promoting China's culture. One may argue that it is likely that the basic concept of claimed out-group hostilities is generally accepted among the PRC policy community and general public to the extent that gives justification for costly and dramatic public diplomacy communication strategies. The basic concept of media slant in China consists largely of a stereotypical enemy image where "Western" media is seen as a hostile actor that does not recognise China's national image as legitimate.

The next chapters report the empirical analysis of the thesis. These follow the model outlined in this chapter (see Figure 3). Chapter 7 thus addresses the perception component, Chapter 8 the propensity component and Chapter 9 the aggregate general of China's Western media image. While Chapters 7 and 8 provide verification, further clarification and more nuanced empirical evidence to the arguments presented in this chapter, Chapter 9 challenges the concept of Western media slant against China. Before these, however, Chapter 4 reviews those historical factors that have influenced the formation of China's international social identity, and Chapter 5 discusses latest developments in China's public diplomacy and media industry.

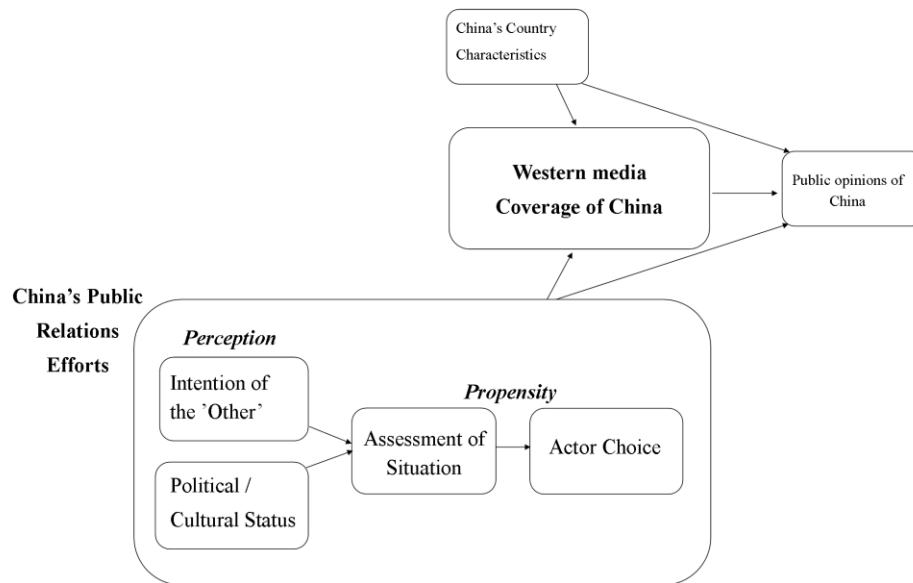


Figure 3 The components of the model marked in bold that are empirically analysed in this dissertation. Chapter 5 addresses the Perception, Chapter 6 the Propensity, and Chapter 7 the Western Media Coverage component. Source: the author.

3. THE PARTY-LINE HISTORIOGRAPHY: BACKGROUND TO CONTEMPORARY PRC SOFT POWER ENTHUSIASM

This chapter highlights certain perspectives regarding how Chinese national social identity has developed through a changing relationship with the West and Westphalian society, as perceived by the Communist Party. I aim to show that the struggle of the PRC for recognition through soft power has a historical dimension ever present in the understanding of history by the Communist Party echoing in its public diplomacy policies. Drawing mostly from Chinese secondary sources, in my reasoning I follow in broad terms the official Communist Party-line historiography, proceeding in the following manner. In the first part of the chapter, I underline how the replacement of the tributary system with Westphalian society has been perceived in such a manner that it has in essence triggered the struggle for recognition. I then show how numerous historical events have been interpreted to rejuvenate China's international social identity, all failing. The recent economic reforms and the adoption of the soft power concept seem then logical continuums of this Party narrative, whereby the economic reforms would restore China to a central position within the international society in an economic and political sense and soft power in a cultural one. The second part of the chapter provides an overview on how the soft power concept was localised and how it developed through internal discussions.

It should be pointed out that the party-line historiography regarding social identity rejuvenation is related to the concept "Century of Humiliation" (1839-1949), which often acts as a starting point for Chinese leadership for their perceptions on how China should interact within other nations within international society (see for instance Callahan, 2006; Kaufman, 2010). Neither is the narrative presented here by any means a comprehensive discussion, as it is limited to issues relevant to later soft power policies. For a detailed discussion on how the Confucian idea of the state was replaced by an imported nationalism, see Whitney (1969). On the other hand, for an elaborate investigation of the linkages between Chinese nationalism and the perceived international aggression, see Zhao (2000).

3.1. A Bitter History: Social Identity Lost

I wish to start the historical background review by pointing out what is meant by “internal” and “external” causes in Chinese history writing. The issue has received wide attention in China, and has particular relevance in discussing the perceived struggle for recognition. Wang Xi (1997) most notably raised the issue of the two competing perspectives in interpreting macro-level changes in Chinese society. While the latter implies that Chinese society remained stagnant before the Western interaction that brought about a positive influence on the modernisation of China, the former suggests that domestic factors of China were mostly responsible for the drastic change and progress that took place during at the turn of the 20th century. In making the point, Wang clarified the differences between Japan and China in responding to Western colonial ambitions. His view was that, while Japan was more eager to assimilate foreign culture, methods and influences, China mainly maintained a resilient negative disposition towards outside influence and all things foreign. Moreover, Wang argued that the foreign-oriented national mental state of Japan was not a singular isolated case, but has been repeated multiple times in history, in contrast to China. In making the argument, Wang (1997) echoed earlier commentators. Chih-yu Shih (1992), for instance, had pointed out that Japan’s transition from colonial humiliation to Western-style modernisation was easier than China’s, in part because Japanese, unlike Chinese, did not harbour any “pretensions of innate superiority” (Shih, 1992: 186-187). This made it easier for the Japanese to welcome and accept both officially and in popular terms Western values after the WWII.

The question of inner and outer influences reflects the broader issue of Western Eastward expansion that is perceived to begin the abolishment of China’s centrality, a position different to that of several thousand years of imperial past. During this time, the world around China in East Asia consisted of the so-called tributary system where China is interpreted to have enjoyed a central status. The tributary system in essence welcomed neighbouring states to pay tributary visits to China’s imperial court, where strict protocol based on Chinese ritual practice was followed. The centrality of China in this arrangement influenced Chinese conception of world order to the extent what Esheric (2010: 19) calls “strategic centrality and cultural superiority”. This particular conception of world order was supported by numerous philosophical constructs. Of those Tian Xia (literally under heaven), for instance, meant that the Chinese emperor was a Son of Heaven, ruling all

people under heaven. The idea of Tian Xia carries weight in contemporary PRC propaganda to the extent that it has been reformed by some Chinese IR theorists as one possible solution for durable world peace (e.g. Zhao, 2006, 2009, 2011). These formulations, on the other hand, have been criticised by Western scholars as reinventions and nostalgia towards a Chinese-led hierarchical world order, having use mainly in Chinese domestic propaganda (Callahan, 2008).

The issue seems to have, nonetheless, relevance in how the PRC perceives China's self-image developed between 1840 and 1949. It appears that during this time it can be interpreted that China's collective mentality underwent a period of uncertainty influenced by the transition from the tributary system to Westphalian international society. Therefore, where some Chinese historians have depicted the era using such a concept as "century of great transformation" (Luo, 1997), others borrow from social psychology in referring to it as China's "struggle for identity reconstructing" Qin (2010, 263). Moreover, the period has been referred to in China as "self-examination" (Luo, 1997), "self-consciousness" (Chen, 1995) and "self-reflection" (Qin, 2009).

A pattern can thus be observed to emerge in this interpretation whereby during this time China is seen to come into contact not only with the technologically superior Western powers, but also with itself. What unites these depictions by Chinese historians is a sense that during 1840-1949 China struggled with external relations, mainly due to internal backwardness leading to re-evaluations of China's international status. To illustrate the point further, Qin (2009: 37-38; 2010: 253-258) divides the period into three separate phases of self-reflection and social identity reconstruction: after the Opium War defeats, the struggle dealt merely with technological issues. Between 1898 and 1911, a political dimension was added in accordance with the turbulence of the political revolution, and, finally, the struggle also spread to the cultural sphere with the New Culture Movement in 1919.

These periods of self-reflection do not seem to represent for Chinese historians attempts to construct a Chinese social identity, but rather to restore it. As stated above, before the status dilemma became a concrete issue for the Chinese, the Tributary system placed China at the centre of that particular international society. The first period of self-awareness then deals with the direct aftermath of the Opium Wars. In 1860s, therefore,

what is either known as the *Westernisation Movement* or the *Self-Strengthening Movement* reflected on China's multiple defeats in the Opium Wars and attempted to rejuvenate China to a great power by developing its military to Western standards. According to Elliott (2002), it was an elite-led top-down movement, which had minimal popular backing since the Chinese population at the time consisted mainly of agrarian workers for whom national pride was of no primary concern. The progressives of the movement put forward the idea of maintaining the best of Chinese culture while adopting the best of Western technological and military knowhow. This approach was depicted with the slogan "Chinese learning for essential principles, western learning for practical applications" (*zhong ti xi yong*).²¹

The Chinese elite, it has been argued, were left without any other practical options on how to psychologically cope with the national humiliation of the Opium Wars. Fairbank (1942), for instance, shows that this realisation broke the continued genealogy of Chinese intellectual atmosphere. In other words, to an extent it opened up the Chinese elite to the possibility that China's status might not remain the same going forward, in other words, the idea of the centrality of Chinese society and culture might not be sustainable in the future. The technological superiority of the Western powers was profound to the extent that, in the end, the Western-oriented reformism in the Chinese military adapted Western technology by especially developing the Chinese Navy. In 1868, the first steamboat was finished, in 1888 the Beiyang fleet was completed, and Nanyang and Fujian fleets set sail soon after (Qin, 2010: 254).

However, by the late ninetieth century this particular road to rejuvenating Chinese international status is seen to face serious obstacles, which eventually turned into a failure. First of all, instead of China, the Japanese became the first East Asian country to develop

²¹ In Mandarin 体 consists of two elements, from a feudal, totalitarian political system and that part of Confucian philosophy that serves such a system. 用 on the other hand, here refers to Western science and technology. 体 was the goal and 用 the method to serve 体. At the time, amid Western influence, this slogan served a compromise purpose. The advocates of traditional China could live with it because it maintained 体 and those for modernisation could accept it because it acknowledged Western techniques (Wang 1997: 13).

a modern military.²² In the subsequent First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) China was defeated, ending for the time being the Westernisation Movement. According to Shih (1992) for those cultural conservatives who opposed Westernisation to begin with, the defeat to the Japanese proved ultimately that an Oriental, in this case Japanese, solution was better than Western learning. The advocates of Westernisation, in contrast, were left in despair and purged from the military. The rest of the elite while in shock, but found new energy to rejuvenate China's status (Qin, 2010: 255). The pinnacle of this Oriental conservatism that accompanied the First Sino-Japanese War occurred with the Boxer rebellion of 1899-1901. Supported by the Qing court, the rebels, convinced of Eastern learning, figuratively tried to use Chinese "traditional boxing" to defeat Western military technology. The result was a devastating defeat by the Western coalition. According to Shih (1992, 187) the inevitable catastrophe led to the further diminishing of national pride.

Following the logic set by Chinese historians, the second attempt to restore China's social status would have taken place during the reform period of 1898 and the subsequent revolution of 1911. As stated above, the defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War seems to have been devastating to the extent that it shocked the contemporary Chinese elite. It would have been shocking precisely for the reason that none other than Japan, which was considered a national little brother, beat the Chinese to modernisation and then delivered them a military and technological blow. In part for this reason, the following *Reform Movement* of 1898 sought to bring reforms to Chinese political institutions and governance by replacing the divine imperial system with constitutional monarchy (Qin, 2010, 255). This ultimately failed due to strong opposition from the conservative Qing court members.

Along with the 1911 revolution, another social movement of the time in China was granted status as an effort to restore China's social identity. This was the *New Culture Movement* in 1919, crystallising in the *May Fourth Movement*. As argued above, at the

²² As suggested by the US popular historian James Bradley (2009) the Japanese considered themselves the representatives of Western progress and development in Asia, a mental state partly due to Teddy Roosevelt's encouragement of the Japanese as veritable Americans and honorary Aryans.

beginning of the 20th century cultural conservatives in China made the case for more traditional pan-Asianism inspired by Japan.²³ At the same time Western-oriented progressives felt that the restoring of China's social identity would demand Western-style modernisation. This desire then crystallized essentially in the May Fourth Movement (Schwarcz, 1986). Mostly educated in the West, the advocates of the movement took the idea of reforming China to the extent of denouncing the country's traditional civilisational core in rejecting Confucianism all together. They not only wanted China to adopt Western governance, but also envisioned for China a Western-style historical trajectory when moving from traditional to modern. Hu Shi (1891-1962), for instance, who was a leading figure in the movement and educated at the Cornell and Columbia Universities, identified a teleological development in the West from enlightenment to industrialisation and from democracy to socialism, where the renaissance symbolised the beginning of modernity. For Chinese modernity, Hu envisioned an analogous trajectory for China from Tang-dynasty poetry and Song-dynasty neo-Confucian philosophy through the dramas of the 13th century to 300 years of classical scholarship. According to Hu's argument, this trajectory ended with the May Fourth Movement as the "Chinese renaissance" (Dolezeva-Velingerova and Wang, 2001).²⁴

From the perspective of restoring national identity, all these attempts to restore China's status have been more or less perceived to fail. This is also the case with the revolution of 1911. Although it was successful in overthrowing the Qing, the movement did not succeed in rejuvenating China's national identity, and China's struggle for international recognition fell short when the country fell into a period of internal turmoil. The Party

²³ After the First Sino-Japanese War, support from Japan sought, among others, monarchists (e.g. Liang Qichao), warlords (e.g. Zhang Zuolin) and revolutionaries (e.g. Sun Yat-sen)

²⁴ Outside China, Schwarcz (1986), for instance, describes the period of the May Fourth Movement as Chinese "enlightenment". Where in the West critical thinking was advanced against Christianity, the Chinese, Schwarcz argues, sought emancipation from the ethic of self-submission and the familiar authority of Confucian values. Even though Western religious dogma and Chinese feudal ethics share a social self-inflicted immaturity, Schwarcz points out that in the West the quest for social truth was more abstract. The battle for "Chinese enlightenment" was not against a transcendent god but obedience to compatriot patriarchal authority and social tradition.

argument here is that the fall of the tributary system led China not only to lose its territorial integrity but also deprived it of any possibility to join the Western-originated new world society as a full-fledged member.

This new self-image did not correspond well with the image China harboured collectively through its imperial past. As was the case with the May Fourth Reformers, all subsequent failed attempts to rejuvenate China's international status seemed to have caused an enormous emotional toll on elite Chinese that still echoes in contemporary depictions. Take for instance Qin (2010, 258) who depicts the anxieties of the May Fourth reformers as rather unique in world history: "Seldom in human history has a nation begun to doubt its roots. The pain and torture must have been tremendous".²⁵ It seems, therefore, obvious that the separate efforts to restore China's social identity between 1840 and 1949 constituted a project that faced unprecedented difficulties. The Second Sino-Japanese War and the Civil War did not help the cause. The victory of the early Communists and the subsequent adoption of Communism in China can be said to represent another attempt at social identity restoration that echoed the past in that it also failed to restore China's status in international society.

Chinese historians are less enthusiastic about depicting the era of Communism or the adoption of a market economy as another self-reflection. As one of the few, Qin (2010: 258-259) does make the argument. According to him the "thirty years of peace" – his choice of words – between 1949 and 1979, should have been enough for China to rebuild a coherent social identity and a relevant international status. However, due to separate internal and external reasons, China had to play in between the superpowers and was therefore unable to reconstruct an appropriate identity in the world society. At the same time domestically, as Qin (2010: 258-259) calls it, consecutive political movements led

²⁵ According to (Tang, 1996), the brutality of WW1 and the disappointing Versailles resolution made Chinese intelligentsia disillusioned with Western learning. For instance, Liang Qichao (1873-1929), an unofficial member of the Chinese delegation to the Versailles Peace Conference, reported the war atrocities back to China: In the following climate, faith was restored in the Chinese traditional culture. The following Sinicisation movement then aimed to highlight Chineseness in history, culture and politics, to which also the Communists contributed. Mao celebrated the "soul of China" in culture and arts, which were to have a "Chinese flavour". Fung (2009, 806) shows how during this time the early Communists also came to localise Marxism, giving the ideas of Marx a dose of Chineseness.

to domestic turbulence causing, in addition to natural, also so-called “man-made catastrophes”.

In summary, while the notion of national social identity in general, and the losing and rejuvenation of it in particular, can be seen as contemporary projections of modern notions to the pre-modern era, the narrative presented above has its relevance in explaining background factors influencing PRC soft power efforts today. The recent success in economic reforms and the resultant gain in political status in international society are seen within the Communist Party as signifying a return to global prominence and an ending to the “Century of Humiliation” that began with the defeats in the Opium Wars. As it stands, however, this struggle for recognition, as I depict it here, was not settled merely with the economic reforms.

3.2. Localized Soft Power to Help in the Struggle

When China was struggling with loss of its central position and subsequently social identity, from the transatlantic perspective the world was also changing. The ending of the Cold War cemented US position as the sole super power. Then global economic development and the spreading of market economy marked a transition to a more multipolar world and relative decline of US hegemony. The balance of power therefore seemed to move from Europe to “West” and then further from “West” to “East”. This led to the fear and admiration of the Japanese economy in the 1980s (e.g. Chan, 2013) and then to various discussions on “Asian values” in the 1990s (e.g. Thompson, 2001).

Reacting to these global developments, the initiator of the *soft power* idea, Joseph Nye (1990a, 1990b, 1991, 2002, 2004) developed the approach as a tactic for the US to regain position by utilizing its immaterial attractive resources through the possibilities offered by the advanced communication technology. To be more precise, the original intent of Nye, that he outlined with his 1990 book “Bound to Lead”, was to remind the American policy makers that the US was still a leading country, partly due to its cultural recourses, and dispute any assumptions of the relative decline. The theoretical contribution of Nye was to combine prior research using Carr’s (1940) argument of “power over opinion”,

Lukes' (1974) "three faces of power",²⁶ and Etzioni's (1975) segregation of "coercive, remunerative, and normative power".²⁷ In a subsequent book, Nye (2004) reacted to the drop of global US attractiveness caused by the unpopular Bush administration and the unsanctioned war on Iraq in 2003. By condemning the failure of the administration to incorporate soft power into hard power, Nye further extended his analysis to include the Hollywood entertainment industry, and ideals of freedom and democracy as part of American cultural attraction.²⁸

As the power and economic weight was perceived to shift more towards the East along with economically reforming China, attention in the international discourse was given to the "rise of China" (e.g. Cumings, 2011) and subsequent "China threat" metaphors (e.g.

²⁶ The idea of Nye was indeed not a very novel one. The main argument of Lukes (1974) was that power manifests in three ways: decision-making power, non-decision-making power, and ideological power. While focusing on the connection between, on the one hand, how to think of power theoretically, and on the other, how to study it empirically, Lukes (1974) advanced the notion that power is most effective when least observable or noticeable.

²⁷ Likewise, already in 1975 Etzioni argued:

"Power differs according to the means employed to make the subjects comply. These means may be physical, material, or symbolic.

Coercive power rests on the application, or the threat of application, of physical sanctions such as infliction of pain, deformity, or death; generation of frustration through restriction of movement; or controlling through force the satisfaction of needs such as those for food, sex comfort and the like.

Remunerative power is based on control over material resources and rewards through allocation of salaries and wages, commissions and contributions, 'fringe benefits', services and commodities.

Normative power rests on the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards and deprivations through employment of leaders, manipulation of mass media, allocation of esteem and prestige symbols, administration of ritual, and influence over the distribution of 'acceptance' and 'positive response'." (Etzioni, 1975: 5ff).

²⁸ In a more recent take, Nye (2011) acknowledged the importance of "stories" and "images" also in contemporary conflicts that otherwise remain geopolitical in nature. Therefore, while mainly focusing on the outward image projection in his formulations of soft power, Nye (2004) argues that an actor (the US) should also pay attention to how it develops its soft power on the domestic front, and moreover, that successfully implementing it domestically is even more important than abroad because other states pay attention to how it acts there.

Broomfield, 2010). The participants in the discourse advocate that an increasingly influential China forms a concrete threat both regionally and globally. The nature of the threat was perceived as comprehensive with a wide variety of issues ranging from military to economic and social security. The subsequent academic discussions around the China threat ranged from neoliberal (Roy, 1996) to post-structuralist (Song, 2015) explanations and policy recommendations.

To counter the Western “China threat theory”, China under Hu Jintao devised the official policy doctrine of “Peaceful Rise” (Zhongguo heping jueqi) in 2003. This was continued in 2005 when the concept of “Harmonious Society” (hexie shehui) was introduced as a proposal for a post-Western world order that would better accommodate different civilizations, including the non-liberal China, echoing similar formulations of the Tian Xia. Subsequently, the idea of soft power was introduced in China during the early 1990s where the first academic efforts concentrated on translating the works of Joseph Nye. A related macro policy development took place in 2004 when Chinese policy elites started developing the concept “soft power” as a policy tool to advance the understanding of China’s story. Soft power was raised to the fore of China’s foreign policy in 2007, explicitly announced by Hu Jintao at the 17th CCP National Congress.

However, the adoption of soft power like attitudes in communist China has its roots in the early reform era. In 1979 the then Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping made a trip to the US as the first Chinese leader to visit the country since 1949. This turned out to be a success. According to the official CCP biography of Deng, the visit marked a turning point in Chinese foreign policy: “From then on, China said "good-bye" to isolation and stepped onto the path of "opening to the world" and "opening to the future."²⁹ Then hardly by coincidence, when a few years later in 1984 Deng encouraged Chinese academia to analyze the future national security environment, Chinese scholars became to speculate on the softer side of China’s power repertoire. As a result the concept “comprehensive national power” (zonghe guoli) was coined, referring to the combined overall conditions and strengths of the nation (Zhang, 2010: 386-387).

This in fact meant that culture as a security issue was already part of the discourse in China before Nye coined the actual soft power idea in the US a few years later. This way both practice and theoretical discussion can be said to have laid the foundation for the

²⁹ FIXME

later localization process. Incidentally, when the soft power concept caught Chinese interest, it coincided with the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989. Due to the closeness of the subsequent international controversy and the Western origin of the soft power concept, the possibilities to discuss the issue and thus official interest in soft power remained marginal within Chinese policy circles. Only in 2003 after the emergence of the “peaceful rise” doctrine, which aimed to counter the suspicions of a growing Chinese influence, did an actual construction of the PRC soft power understanding begin.³⁰

After soft power gained more top-down policy attention, alongside it re-emerged the concept of “cultural security” (*wenhua anquan*) in Chinese academic literature. Having roots in the 1980s, the contemporary concept of cultural security stems from two seminal articles by Lin Hongyu (1999) and Rong Zhuchuan (1999). Following that, in a 2004 volume entitled *National Security Studies*, Liu Yuejin devoted a chapter to cultural security. Combining soft power and cultural security, the contemporary concept of “cultural soft power” (*wenhua ruanshili*) has been singled out as one of the central theoretical approaches of the PRC to national security.

The growing emphasis on cultural aspect in the official soft power rhetoric can be traced by looking at the Party Secretary General’s Reports at the First Plenum of the 16th (2002), 17th (2007) and 18th (2012) CCP National Congresses. Initially, during the 16th Congress, Jiang Zemin did not refer to soft power, but recognized the importance of culture in global competition:

“[...] culture is interactive with economic and political activities, and its status and functions are becoming more and more outstanding in the competition in overall national strength. [...] create an even more splendid advanced culture in the great struggle of the Chinese people in the contemporary era.”³¹

With Hu Jintao in power, the rhetoric changed. The 17th Congress report brings together the idea of soft power and cultural creativity as a national issue:

“We must [...] stimulate the cultural creativity of the whole nation, and enhance culture as part of the soft power of our country [...]”³²

30 See Zhao, Li and Cai (2011) for a full discussion on the early history of soft power research in China.

31 Source: <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/49007.htm#6> (Accessed 19.11.2015)

32 Source: <http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm#7> (Accessed 19.11.2015)

The following 18th Congress formulation left no doubt about whether soft power mixed with culture was central to national development, now called cultural soft power. It also places economic responsibility for the cultural industry:

“The country's cultural soft power should be improved significantly. [...] More cultural works should be created; a system of public cultural services should be basically in place, and the cultural sector should become a pillar of the economy.”³³

Finally, the 18th Congress report continues with more details regarding the contents of cultural soft power. It recognizes traditional culture as the basis of cultural soft power:

“We should develop a system for carrying forward fine traditional culture and promote outstanding traditional Chinese culture. [...] The strength and international competitiveness of Chinese culture are an important indicator of China's power and prosperity and the renewal of the Chinese nation.”³⁴

If the party discourse between 2002 and 2007 was still sending relatively weak signals of the official recognition of cultural soft power, at the same time the academic rhetoric became detailed, echoing official themes. In it, the promoting of domestic cultural soft power was seen as inseparable from mass media and the development of mass media pivotal to the construction of cultural soft power. The promotion of culture, identity, and social progress were interpreted as needing channels for realization and expression. For instance, Guo (2005: 218) saw the basic task of mass communication as the “guiding of public opinion”, including “social cognition, values, attitudes and action”. The values of traditional China, on the other hand, were not interpreted as transforming automatically to cultural soft power. Liu and Zheng (2008: 22) envisioned cultural resources needing a “modern conversion” of mass communication before transforming into soft power resources. According to Yang, Xu and Leng (2011: 260), the first step was “agenda setting”, forming a guide for public opinion and a link to cultural soft power, which needed a

33 Source: http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/16/content_27137540_3.htm (Accessed 19.11.2015)

34 http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/16/content_27137540_6.htm

“mature system” consisting of “equipment updates, technology promotion, government support for media, and personnel training”. As the contemporary PRC mainstream view, the “cultural school” still holds that the core of Chinese soft power is its unique culture.³⁵

3.3. Summary

The point that I wished to make in this chapter was that China’s relation with the international society has always in the modern era been the focal point that has influenced China’s domestic development, Communist Party understanding of history, and the PRC perception of China’s social identity within the international society.

The next chapter continues the same theme but focuses on reform era public diplomacy in general and the development of China’s film industry in particular. There is a good argument to be made that the latter takes place to defend Chinese culture from Western values, and that China has every right to do so. However, the point I try to articulate is that a struggle for recognition appears to justify – not morally questionable – but, lacking a better word, ‘clumsy’ communication tactics. While the next Chapter sets the table for this argument, Chapter 6 discusses it in more detail.

³⁵ Comparing the two soft power approaches (US – PRC), they are superficially similar. However, concerning the role of domestic and international politics, some differences emerge. Nye would seem to think that soft power stems from both the domestic political values and foreign policies. In contrast, according to the Chinese, there is a difference in mere propaganda and actually fulfilling of ideals. The Chinese view of *tianxia* sees the world as a whole, rather than splitting it in to single actor states. This unified world again has three levels: *tianxia*, state and family. The measures to realize harmony in all of these would accordingly be the same, implying consistency between domestic and international politics. Despite some similarities, Li, Li and Jiang (2011) conclude, the two approaches differ in one central issue – the perspective. They claim that the articulation of Nye does not have any higher ideals than the American security strategy, although in many analyses it is taken for granted that it can be applied to everywhere everywhere. In contrast the all-under-heaven world view would be more applicable in the era of globalization since it is – at least in the rhetoric – all encompassing.

4. STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION: REFORM ERA PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The previous chapter provided a review of factors that contributed to the development of Chinese national identity after it came into contact with the expanding European international society that ultimately replaced the regional tributary system and decentred China. In this chapter, I consider more recent historical attempts to rejuvenate China's lost national identity. Since the reform era beginning in 1979, the struggle for recognition has taken many forms. These range from communist anti-imperialism to recent neo-liberal corporative strategies, and are discussed below.

4.1. China's Public Diplomacy 1979-2014

In line with the general role of China during the early years of the PRC, Chinese public diplomacy among the socialist bloc was mainly focused on countering "American imperialism" by seeking friends from the developing nations.³⁶ Since the opening up in 1979, Chinese public diplomacy has, in relative terms, matured to build an international image of China as a cooperative, friendly and responsible country, signifying its status as a major

³⁶ Being led by the Communist party, the past of the PRC-endorsing culture is, however, anything but unambiguous. While Mao Zedong agreed with Marx that the basic contradictions in a socialist society were between forces of production and the productive forces (and between the superstructure and the economic basis), his vision of a three-in-one (sanweiyiti) model combined new political, economic and cultural forces. Thus, under Mao Chinese artists were supported by the state, whereas during the materialism of Deng Xiaoping, differentiation between spiritual (jingshen wenming) and material civilisation (wuzhi wenming) was again relevant, and cultural institutions and artists were given fewer subsidies and had to support themselves (Zhang 2010: 393-394). After the pragmatism of Deng, culture re-emerged on the party agenda, first in 2002 during Jiang Zemin with the three-in-one development of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" (economic, political and cultural), and then in 2005, under Hu Jintao, with the adoption of four-in-one (siweiyiti) development, adding a social dimension. Both ideas (first soft power and then four-in-one) led to growing interest in arts and culture among the PRC elite, and thus increased funding. For instance, during the 10th Five-Year Plan from 2001 to 2005, national investment in non-commercial public cultural institutions reached approximately 50 billion yuan (Zhang 2010: 397).

stakeholder in international society. Consequently, to an extent PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy has been able to depend on the formal “good” international conduct of China. Since its 1972 UN membership, the government has demonstrated increasing willingness to participate in international organisations and multilateral arrangements: the Chinese initiatives of the Shanghai Five Grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation established in 1996 and 2001 respectively,³⁷ WTO access that took place in 2001, a China-ASEAN free trade agreement was signed in 2002, and in 2003 China joined the regional non-aggression pact Southeast Asia Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Since 2005, China has also been an active participant in peacekeeping operations. During the years leading up to 2006, China sent more peacekeeping troops under the UN flag than any other permanent member of the Security Council, and more than any NATO member (Gill and Huang, 2006: 22). Between 2006 and 2015, China ranked no lower than the sixteenth largest contributor of peacekeeping personnel (police, military advisor and troops) to the UN.³⁸

Established in 1991, the government body currently responsible for the coordination of public diplomacy bureaucracy is the State Council Information Office (SCIO). The main mission of the SCIO is articulated as follows: 1) to tell the story of China and the government to the world and promote Chinese culture, 2) to counter what is perceived as hostile foreign propaganda; 3) to counter Taiwan independence ambitions and promote a one-China policy; and 4) to propagate PRC foreign policy (e.g. Shambaugh, 2007). The establishment of the SCIO placed the responsibility of public diplomacy within the propaganda system, directly in charge of all forms of publishing, radio, film, television, culture and education (Creemers, 2015: 3). This has meant that the Foreign Ministry with its diplomatic missions abroad is separated and has less influence in public diplomacy than the propaganda bureaucracy. In the Chinese discourse, “external communication” (*duiwai xuanchuan*) is often used instead of “public diplomacy” (*gonggong waijiao*), when referring to the international soft power projection of China.

³⁷ Both regional arrangements have also been seen as “anti-Western”, “anti-democratic” and advancing authoritarian values (e.g. Ambrosio, 2008).

³⁸ See United Nations Peacekeeping statistics: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors_archive.shtml

The importance of public diplomacy in PRC security strategy was officially announced in 2003 by President Hu Jintao who declared at a national external propaganda conference that “creating a favourable international public opinion environment” and “establishing a good image of China” internationally were of “importance for China’s national security (See Ohlberg 2013: 9). The declaration can be seen as a legacy of the “making news media big and strong” policy (*ba xinwen chuanmei zuo qiang zuo da*) of 2002 that promoted the creation of powerful Chinese media conglomerates under party control for the use of international competition. The idea behind it was that, without strong state-led commercial media, China would be unable to influence global public opinion.³⁹ For instance Wang (2008: 269) summarises a detailed PRC public diplomacy strategy:

The target: An image of a self-confident, trustworthy, peace-loving China. China’s public diplomacy should gradually change China’s image in international society from negative to neutral to positive.

The means: Chinese government organs overseas should initiate image-promotion activities through cultural exchange and broadcasting, making use of local media to broadcast Chinese news and other programmes with the help of local overseas Chinese, students studying abroad, and transnational companies with investments in China.

The Focal point: Since China’s international image is demonised by the American media, Chinese public diplomacy should focus on the media in

³⁹ See China Media Project 07 April 2007. <http://cmp.hku.hk/2007/04/10/225/>

the United States and Europe, who mainly shape the public opinion of the world, to erase the bad effect of the “hate media”.⁴⁰

International broadcasting is therefore a central feature in PRC public diplomacy, and since the 1990s the central government has increased its competitive capabilities in the field. The public diplomacy bureaucracy has hired foreign lobbyists, brand consultants and policy strategists to advance their ideas and interests internationally, especially leading to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. State-owned media (Xinhua News Agency, China Radio International, China Central Television, and the newspaper China Daily) made significant investments to improve their status and capabilities (Ding 2014: 9; see also Zhang 2010).

Traditional culture also remains a central element in international broadcasting. This is seen as enhancing Chinese cultural identity and helping the world understand the Chinese “story”, which is done by disseminating mass media and international communication, for instance, news reports, cultural performances, cultural exhibitions, multimedia,

⁴⁰ At the centre of this national cultural soft power effort lies what Yang, Xu and Leng (2011) call the “construction of mass communication”. Accordingly, they argue that China should not only depend on economic and military power, but that national cultural soft power should provide more fundamental, profound and longer-lasting competitive strength. Traditional culture in particular should possess charm to attract tourists, enhance Chinese cultural identity in the world, and help the world to understand Chinese culture and heritage. This should be done through dissemination of mass media and international communication, for instance through news reports, cultural performances, cultural exhibitions, multimedia and literary works, overseas communication of Chinese material and non-material cultural products displayed in the international arena. In the context of globalisation, this international communication and construction of national cultural soft power should aim for the world to know more about positive, healthy, open and democratic China. Chinese cultural industry should use international mass media especially in the fields of 1) overseas Chinese literature, 2) Chinese movies and television series and, 3) modern information networks.

In a similar vein, Ma and Hong (2011) view Chinese cultural soft power from the perspective of mass media development. While recognising the central role of mass media in soft power competition, they argue that Western media still governs the international setting. To overcome this bottleneck of mass media, Ma and Hong propose 1) to increase financial support, 2) to develop Chinese mass media industry and, 3) to strengthen the influence of Chinese media industry.

films, literary works, overseas communication of Chinese material and non-material cultural products (Yang, Xu and Leng, 2011). To give an overview of the development of the industry, according to PRC data, the business volume of Chinese telecommunication services, under government control, grew from 1.2 billion to 22.2 billion yuan between 1996 and 2008.⁴¹

Yet another, but central, example of the practical measures the party-state has taken during the early phase of its push to rejuvenate its status as a major cultural civilisation, is the Confucian Institute Project (CIP). Initially the CIP started as part of a five-year plan in 2004 for Chinese language education abroad, known as the Chinese Bridge Project (*Hanyu qiao gongcheng*). The launching and controlling organisation of the CIP is the Office of Chinese Language Council International (*Hanban*), which was first set up as a language education agency under the Ministry of Education, but was later expanded to include representatives from 12 different state organisations⁴² responsible for education, culture, foreign affairs and strategic planning for long-term national development (Pan 2013: 26). In the very basic form, the institutes are Chinese government establishments that operate in collaboration with foreign universities and educational institutions in order to promote Chinese language and culture. The first CI was opened in 2004 in Seoul, Korea and by 2011 353 CIs and Confucius classrooms had been established in 104 countries and regions, mainly in Asia, Europe and North America.⁴³ The origins of the concept are in Germany's Goethe Institutes, Spain's Instituto Cervantes, the British Council and the Alliance Francaise. While the main functions of all the national institutes are language teaching, cultural promotion and facilitation of business activities, none has received nearly as much criticism and scepticism from the receiving countries as the CIP. Concerns have been raised about whether the CIP represents ideologically-laden cultural invasion

⁴¹ Source: National Bureau of Statistics China. <http://www.stats.gov.cn/>

⁴² These are General Office of the State Council, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Culture, State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, State Press and Publications Administration, State Council Information Office and State Language Committee (See Zhe 2012: 3).

⁴³ Between 2004 and 2008, 292 new institutes were opened in 78 countries (See Zhe 2012: 2-10).

and a Chinese “Trojan horse”. Recently scepticism has intensified in the US amid concerns that the CIP might threaten academic freedom, conduct surveillance of Chinese students abroad, and promote the political agenda of the Chinese party-state. In 2013, the Canadian Association of University Teachers urged all Canadian universities hosting Confucius Institutes to cease doing so, and in 2014 the American Association of University Professors made a similar plea to US universities.⁴⁴

The discussion around CIP has also gained scholarly attention regarding its purpose, nature, features, structure, operation, controversies and challenges. This has mainly been done in the framework of soft power or cultural diplomacy (for instance Guo, 2008; Hartig, 2012; Lo and Pan, 2014). Where the general consensus agrees that to a large extent the CIP, being part of the soft power strategy, aims to create a favourable international environment for the modernisation of China, more moderate voices are also heard. Zhe (2012) for instance argues that the CIP is a mere language education tool. Paradise (2009) argues that the best way to think of the project is to see it as a type of impression management and an effort by China to construct a positive image of itself.⁴⁵

Pan (2013) understands the CIP as a state-sponsored and university-piloted form of cultural diplomacy that involves soft power techniques, but not full soft power capability, and that is intended to facilitate economic connection, cultural dialogue and political trust between China and the rest of the world. Pan (2013: 29) also segregates the cultural diplomacy activities into three: 1) the CIP lays the foundation for the PRC to promote China’s cultural traditions, way of life and foreign policies through intensive cultural events, 2) the CIP targets elite classes, including politicians, university presidents and foreign CIP partners, and 3) the CIP is used to showcase China’s diplomacy, foreign policy and harmonious image. Thus, while the CIP is on the surface all about language learning and cultural promotion, it is at the same time part of the grand Chinese strategy and greater soft power projection, where the PRC attempts to dis-alarm the world regarding its political agenda.

⁴⁴ See BBC 22 December 2014: Confucius institute: The hard side of China's soft power <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-30567743>

⁴⁵ See Paradise 2009, 662.

Other Hanban language and cultural promotion projects include the US-focused Chinese Language and Culture Initiative with the College Board. With several components, the programme aims to teach Chinese language and culture to elementary-level students in the US.⁴⁶ The educational exchange has not only been limited to institutions. Gill and Huang (2006) show that of those international students who studied in China during the decade prior to 2006, at the time of the study some 30 held minister-level positions in their home countries, more than 10 have served as ambassadors, and over 30 as attachés posted in China. Gill and Huang (2006) speculate that these professionals are likely to have a better understanding of Chinese interests, and therefore increase Chinese soft power. While this might be a correct assessment, it is just as likely that individual-level exchanges lead to negative evaluations, as has happened with the CIP.

It can be concluded that the PRC soft power agenda includes the changing of the Western perception of China from strong, threatening and negative to strong, peaceful and positive. While in general the soft power push of the PRC has been received with scepticism, and foreign media coverage of China and the Confucius Institutes Project has generated mutual mistrust in particular, the challenges of Chinese public diplomacy are assessed as more versatile. There is certainly irony in the PRC enthusiasm for soft power: on the one hand China promotes diversity, peace and harmony and, on the other, it controls freedom of speech and access to social networks (Barr, 2012). Internationally Chinese media projects an image whose values, ethics and sensibilities are compatible with, if not superior to, international morals. However, Chinese media faces a crisis of credibility; the wielding of political and economic power might take attention away from soft power (Sun, 2010). Also, the technocratic nature of the public diplomacy programmes by the propaganda bureaucracy have been seen as homogenised commodities that are produced based on efficiency rather than, for instance, attractive narratives or identifiable characters (Creemers, 2015). The specific problems of Chinese media communication are finally argued to be threefold: 1) Political and institutional constraints (lack of openness); 2) Differences in media and cultural traditions (desire to present the best but not truthful image); and 3) Deficiencies in knowledge and skills (lack of Western-style communication experts) (Lu, 2012).

⁴⁶ See Paradise 2009: 654-655.

4.2. Foreign Journalists and China

Quite interestingly, all the above reflects on the relationship between Chinese officials and foreign journalists working in China. First of all, it is not far-fetched to argue that Chinese officials seem to believe that global media narratives stereotype China as oriental, displaying a biased and negative perspective overlooking positive accomplishments and aspects of Chinese society (e.g. Hu and Ji, 2012: 32). Also, as discussed in Chapter 3, while recognising the central role of mass media in international soft power competition, Chinese mainstream academia insist that the Western media governs the international setting (e.g. Ma and Hong, 2011).

Thus, not surprisingly, it has been argued that the most instrumental party determining the effectiveness of China's public diplomacy remains not only the domestic but also the foreign media. While the former remains under the control of the Communist Party (CCP), the foreign media covering China has also witnessed more transparent and open Chinese government public disclosure. In the past, this has been all but self-evident. During the Mao era, foreign correspondents were not allowed to enter China unattended, but were invited for propaganda purposes under strict control. Reporting on China was therefore done by "China watchers" usually based in Hong Kong. During the economic reforms in the 1980s, foreign correspondents were seen as a necessary evil, who had to be allowed to enter China, "inviting the wolf into house" being the typical pattern of thinking (Sun, 2014).

Consequently, PRC external propaganda bureaucracy seems to harbour negative sentiments towards the foreign press corps in China. In the earlier days, and in those rare cases when Chinese officials have accepted requests for interviews from foreign journalists (Kristof, 1990), the usual procedures have gone along the lines of "inviting them to have a chat, issuing with a warning, and cancelling their visas and sending them home if they break the rules" (Zhang, 1998: 190).

Indeed, depictions in Chinese domestic studies of foreign journalists working in China remain damning. For instance, the coverage of foreign journalists is assessed as "inaccurate", "selective", "biased", "partial" and "one-dimensional" (Hu and Ji, 2012: 32). Foreign journalists are also accused of "distortion", "demonisation", and "malicious attack"

(Li et al, 1996). The relationship is also depicted as “continuous conflict” between “co-operative antagonists” where mutual distrust is omnipresent (Zhang, 2008).

Thus, after 2003 when President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao declared the new foreign policy doctrine of ‘peaceful rise’ by stressing soft power and peaceful means such as the spreading of culture instead of military force (e.g. Zhang, 2008: 310) as part of the shift in foreign policy conduct, China’s public diplomacy changed, and with it the foreign press corps has witnessed more transparent and open Chinese government public disclosure (Zhang, 2012: 687). As late as 2006, the PRC government lifted its old restrictions on foreign correspondents working in China, including the suspension of the earlier strict travel restriction placed upon foreign journalists, allowing them to report on China’s social, political and economic issues. The concession was made permanent after the Beijing 2008 Olympics on October 17, 2008 (Zhang, 2012: 687). This policy eliminated some rules. For instance, foreign journalists were no longer required to be accompanied by Chinese organisations or individuals when conducting journalism, and were allowed to hire Chinese assistants through their agencies (Sun, 2014: 3). Before and after the Beijing Olympics, the rhetoric of the Chinese officials also changed towards the foreign press core using such language as “similar mutual benefits”, “cooperation” and “joint effort” (Zhang, 2008).

Among the policy relaxations by the PRC on foreign correspondents working in China, perhaps the most central is the new government spokesperson system. The idea has been on the PRC agenda since 1989, but only after the SARS epidemic in 2003 did the government start to fully implement it (Zhang, 2008: 311). Starting in 2003, the system has been developed across the country in the State Council, government ministries and provincial governments. The purpose of the system is to create good relations with other countries through “presentation”, “explanation” and “dissemination” instead of “publicising” or “propaganda”. The communication should also be based on the “research of foreigners’ interested issues and reading habits”, as was declared by the official government media voice (People’s Daily, 28th March 2005).

4.3. Marketisation as Neoliberal Policy

In the overall picture, the main goal of PRC state public diplomacy bureaucracy seems to include the achieving of full Chinese representation within global news media in order

to correct the assumed false media narratives and thus achieve a more balanced structure of international information flows. What makes this effort especially modern is the way in which the PRC has transformed its propaganda system from the old socialist style to one following contemporary market economy principles, letting the consumer markets in the end decide which cultural products are accepted as Chinese soft power. To this end, the already existing propaganda system has offered a practical platform (Edney, 2012).

Following the period 2008-2009, the PRC launched a new media “going out” campaign.⁴⁷ The main strategies can roughly be divided into three:

1) The government and government affiliated actors are targeting Chinese ethnic diaspora. Utilising diasporic connections and communities, media outlets are set up to spread the PRC public diplomacy message.

2) The main players of PRC state media (CCTV, Xinhua, CRI) set up offices and sign formal content contracts with non-Western, non-liberal democratic states, for instance in sub-Saharan, South-East Asia and Latin America. Common to these target countries is a strong state media presence, usually under authoritarian, sometimes former communist regimes that still adhere to anti-American and anti-imperialistic rhetoric, and which are considered China’s “friends” (Sun, 2014: 1900). Xinhua in particular has in recent years increased its activity in Africa including setting up regional bureaus, developing news content targeting African audiences, providing news content for local media, and providing journalistic training and technical support to media organisations. Additionally, Xinhua has signed formal content deals with Cuba, Mongolia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Turkey, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. CCTV and CRI have also started to produce content in English targeting non-Western countries.

3) The main players enter into third-party partnerships in those Western countries that do not permit Chinese state media to operate within their borders directly. The third-party broker can be an overseas entrepreneur, and have close connections to the PRC government utilising an individual Chinese actor, media tycoon or simply a private Western media corporation. For instance, in 2011 CCTV and Sky News Australia, a cable news corporation, entered into a ten-year agreement on content swap. As a consequence, for

⁴⁷ For a detailed discussion of the details in the campaign, see for instance Kurlantzick, 2011; Ding, 2011; Curtin, 2012; Hu and Ji, 2012; Chu, 2014; French, 2014; Sun, 2014, Sun 2015.

the first time, Australian news events will be seen live in China and major Chinese news events seen live on Australia's news channel. According to reports, the agreement will allow CCTV to "provide its viewers with live pictures of events happening in Australia, including state visits by Chinese leaders and other material with a China angle". Importantly, of course, the agreement will not affect "Chinese state control of news broadcasts".⁴⁸

As another example, in 2012 the Chinese media giant Wanda bought the then second biggest American movie theatre franchise, AMC, for \$2.6 billion, creating the largest cinema chain in the world.⁴⁹ The Chairman and main owner of Wanda, Wang Jianlin, is considered a Beijing insider and one of the richest men in China. In 2014, it was reported that Wanda was looking to expand to Hollywood by purchasing a majority stake in a local major production company, either in the Lions Gate Entertainment Corporation (which produced the Twilight Saga and Hunger Games films, among others) or in MGM (which produced for the Hobbit trilogy and James Bond films). According to other reports, Wang expressed ambitions to control 20% of the world cinema market by 2020.⁵⁰ In March 2015, it was rumoured that the US movie studio Lionsgate had agreed to a Chinese company co-financing its films in hopes of gaining better access to the Asian market. Apparently, a subsidiary of Hunan TV and Broadcast Intermediary Company (HTBI) would help fund "qualified" films for the next three years. PRC state news agency Xinhua reported that the agreement was worth USD 1.5 billion, and described it as "the biggest overseas deal in China's film-making history".⁵¹ According to Xinhua, Long Qiuyun, the HTBI chairman stated that "The deal will bring Hollywood's production model to China and start an era full of imagination."⁵²

⁴⁸ See Hollywood Reporter August 2011: www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/sky-news-australia-chinas-cctv-224884

⁴⁹ See Bloomberg May 2012: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-05-21/china-s-wanda-group-to-buy-amc-cinema-chain-for-2-6-billion>

⁵⁰ See China Business Review December 2014: <http://www.chinabusinessreview.com/dalian-wanda-eyes-lionsgate-purchase/>

⁵¹ See South China Morning Post: <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1742302/chinese-firm-hunan-tv-us15-billion-deal-lionsgate-films>

⁵² See Xinhua March 2015: http://www.china.org.cn/arts/2015-03/18/content_35095392.htm

4.4. China's Film Industry Develops

As is the case all over the world, cinema in China has always had political, ideological and cultural connotations. For instance, foreign film productions and imports have been seen as the product of “the political, economic, military and cultural invasion of the West” carrying with them a “deep colonial branding” (Wang, 2003: 61). This is also the reason why the Chinese film industry has been on the radar of the party-state with a view to nationalising it to serve as a propaganda tool. This is especially true regarding the early years of Communist rule from the 1950s to the 1970s, when the film industries mainly responded to the official agenda (Wang, 2003). The relevance has re-emerged with the contemporary enthusiasm for soft power.

Following Mao's initial artistic enthusiasm and Deng's pragmatic funding cuts from the creative industries, the contemporary status of the film sector in Mainland China has been described as “vague” and “doubtful” (Su, 2010: 317-318). Beginning with the reform era, the artistic function of films is maintained by the so-called Fifth Generation directors (e.g. Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige). As the industry began to face economic pressure, state cinema policies also moved from a planned economy to a more market-oriented one and, consequently, entrepreneurs began to invest new resources in this sector which had become profitable. Nonetheless, the film industry's high profit margins and the remaining ideological importance meant that the sector was subject both to commercial investment and state control. State control also intensified after the Tiananmen events: the function of the mainland film industry returned once again to convey official ideology (Wan and Kraus, 2002).

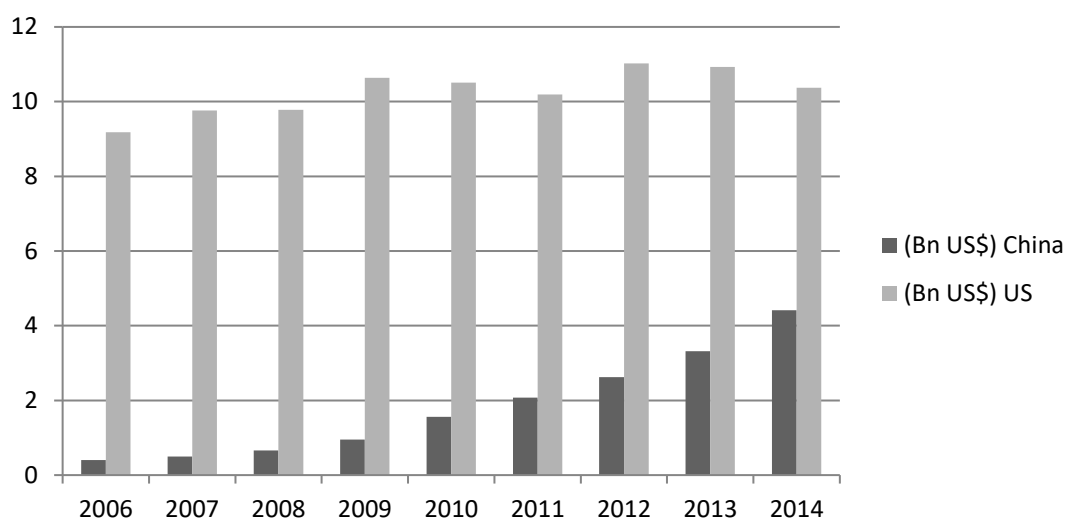
Only after the official embracing of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” did the film industry undergo the reforms required to operate under the banners of the market economy (Su, 2010: 318). The change in policy was defined at the 15th CCP National Congress in 1997 that declared the need for advancing marketisation as “socialism with Chinese characteristics”. At a subsequent national film conference, the then Propaganda Minister, Ding Guan'gen declared: “The film sector must win the market in order to prosper. Under the condition of the socialist market economy, film as a cultural product cannot be independent of the market economy” (quoted in Zhao, 2000: 13; See also Su, 2010).

One year after China joined the WTO in 2001, the PRC began in earnest to reform its film industry. Firstly, the state ended the monopoly of the state-owned China Film Group, which was transformed into the China Film Group Corporation. Secondly, the government allowed private film production and distribution companies to operate, also in cooperation with foreign actors, as joint ventures and partnerships in China, but not independently, as partnerships were only permitted with state-owned film production companies. Moreover, foreign partners were only allowed a 49% ownership of a joint film production venture, and furthermore the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) granted distribution licences to only six private companies, breaking the state monopoly of the China Film Group in film distribution (Wan and Kraus, 2002; Su, 2010; 2011).

Keane (2005: 130) argues that the reforms of the culture, media and creative industries, including the film sector, have become a central issue in the soft power enthusiasm of the Chinese state. The central reason for this is, as d’Hooge (2010: 4) points out, that the PRC is highly sensitive to international perception of China in general and the state and its policies in particular. Zhang et al (2007: 37) detail how the state is increasingly allowing private investors to enter the Mainland film industries and thus compete with Hollywood productions, leading to a “euphoric age of blockbusters (*dapian shidai*).⁵³ Despite the nature of coproduction between the state and private investors, efforts have been made to keep the content of films political. In a later take, Keane (2010: 7) shows how the main trend in Mainland cinema production is the politicisation of content, censorship and the necessity to modify scripts according to official liturgy.

In recent decades the PRC state has therefore both loosened control over the financing of film production, and tightened control over the content in the direction of the official party-state line. As Gerth (2010) argues, this has led to a situation where the market, rather than the state, plays a major role in deciding the taste of consumers regarding cultural products. However, while the markets decide what cultural products consumers consume, the state maintains control over the industry as a whole, promoting those images that are favourable for its legitimacy in the eyes of the domestic audience.

⁵³ For a detailed discussion on various coproduction strategies see Keane (2005, 6).

Figure 4 Annual Cinema Box Office Revenues (China/US).

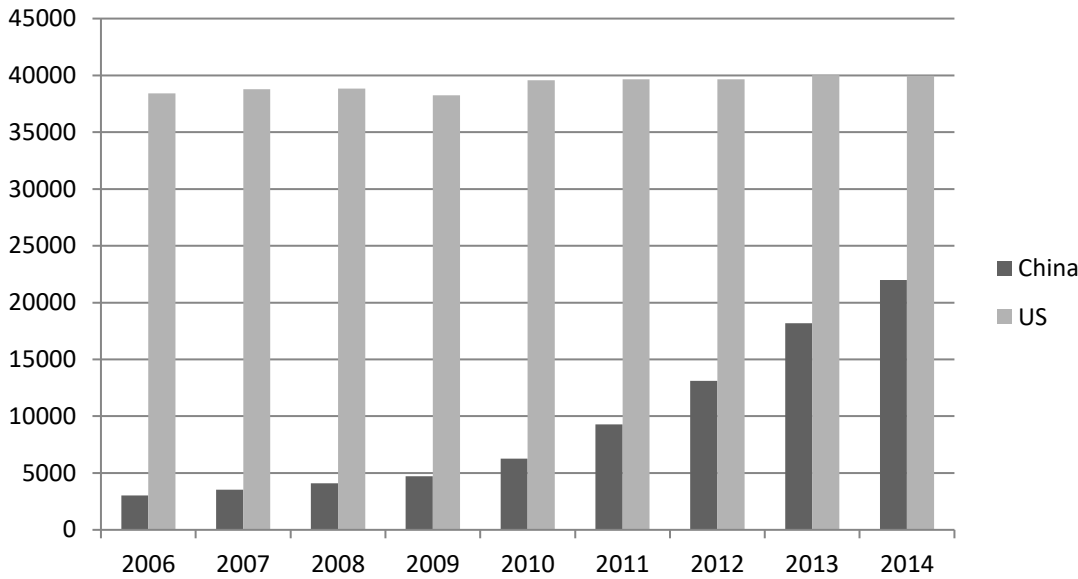
Source: China Film Industry Report, Motion Picture Association of America⁵⁴

To this end, that is, the soft power push, the Chinese domestic film industry has witnessed an unprecedented growth in both revenues and number of cinema screens. Figure 11 depicts the development of annual Chinese box office revenue, converted into US dollars. Between 2006 and 2014, the amount of revenue the cinemas received increased more than tenfold (2006: 0,4 Bn US\$/2014: 4,4 Bn US\$). In comparison, Figure 11 also depicts the box office revenues of US domestic cinemas. While maintaining higher revenues, the overall volume was stable between 2006 and 2014, as is also depicted in Figure 11.

During the same time, the number of movie screens in China grew from 3,034 (2006) to 22,000 (2014), as depicted in Figure 12. In comparison, US figures remained virtually stable, although continued to be higher than in China. The developments depict the potential of growth in China, making it the most lucrative market for the future, especially for Hollywood production companies.

⁵⁴ <http://english.entgroup.cn/index.aspx>

<http://www.mpa.org/research-and-reports/>

Figure 5 Annual Number of Cinema Screens (China/US)

Source: China Film Industry Report (2006-2014), National Association of Theater Owners⁵⁵

Regarding future prospects, according to US Department of Commerce data, the film sector in China is expected to grow by 13% by 2018 to reach \$7 billion, almost doubling from \$3.8 billion in 2013.⁵⁶ This is mainly due to the PRC continuing policies to stimulate the sector, building up its domestic movie production, expanding the role of co-productions, addressing the quota system and increasing revenue-sharing imports. In 2015, foreign films had a 45.5% market share, mainly due to the success of the US film *Transformers: Age of Extinction*. In 2014, 67 foreign films were released in China. Thirty-three of those were released on a flat-fee basis and 34 on a revenue-sharing basis, meeting the full quota of films, as defined by PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy.⁵⁷

An important hallmark in movie imports to Chinese markets is the US-China film deal of 2012. This contract allows 14 additional movie imports on a revenue-sharing basis.

⁵⁵ <http://english.entgroup.cn/index.aspx>

<http://natoonline.org/data/us-movie-screens/>

⁵⁶ See US department of commerce data: http://trade.gov/topmarkets/pdf/Media_and_Entertainment_China.pdf

⁵⁷ See US department of commerce data: http://trade.gov/topmarkets/pdf/Media_and_Entertainment_China.pdf

China's overall import quota on a revenue-sharing basis now stands at 34 films annually for all countries. Co-production is gaining in popularity, and several major Hollywood studios as well as independent filmmakers are engaging in these deals with China.⁵⁸

Although the US at the present is home to the largest movie market in the world, this is not predicted to be the case in the future. Box office sales in China totalled 29.6 billion yuan from 618 films on the screen in 2014, up 36% from previous year. In February 2015, Chinese box office income reached 4 billion yuan, overtaking the US market for a short time.⁵⁹ This also explains the interest of Hollywood production companies in entering into cooperation with Chinese state media: it grants them access to the rapidly growing and lucrative Chinese market. At the same time, nonetheless, it gives the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy a channel of communication and, to a large degree, credibility for its message. This is a win-win situation for both the Hollywood studios and the PRC, connecting corporate and policy goals.

4.5. Summarized Findings

In this chapter, I gave an overview of PRC public diplomacy during the reform era. In seeking recognition and restoration of status, more recent strategies have been rather sophisticated, where joint ventures, corporate acquisition and co-productions of media and cultural products play a significant role. The argument can therefore be made that PRC public diplomacy is media-centric. This has relevance for the next chapters that move on to the actual empirical analysis, focusing on Chinese films and China's Western news media image in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively. Before this, however, Chapter 6 attempts to show what the underlining assumptions and guiding principles of this approach are.

⁵⁸ See Financial Times February 19, 2012.

⁵⁹ See Xinhua March 2015: http://www.china.org.cn/arts/2015-03/18/content_35095392.htm

5. ANALYSIS: PERCEPTION COMPONENT

This chapter addresses the perception component of the model outlined in Chapter 2. The focus is on both China's perception of its 'cultural status' and on its perception of the 'intention of the Other'. In doing that, I employ a rhetorical analysis to highlight how soft power language is used to mobilise identity categories in the Chinese government-sanctioned soft power language. From the discussion presented in above chapters, I draw two main and one additional research question for the empirical analysis. These are:

RQ#1: What specific type of disrespect does the Chinese soft power phenomenon address?

RQ#1.2: Which 'category arguments' and classifications define PRC soft power rhetoric?

RQ#1.3: To what extent, if at all, can the intensity of this type of disrespect be evaluated?

5.1. Rhetorical Analysis: Methodology

Existing studies have concentrated on the strategic elements in the PRC soft power discourse, highlighting the need to transmit traditional culture, the desired leadership role of the third world, and willingness to assure the world of China's peaceful rise (e.g. Wuthnow, 2008; Li, 2008, 2009). In contrast to these earlier studies, my focus here is on national identity formation. I therefore employ an approach that enables a focus on identities that emerge in qualitative research data (Törrönen, 2013: 80).⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Reicher and Hopkins (1996, 353-357) discuss a method that combines self-categorisation theory with rhetorical and discursive psychology. According to their argument, language is one, but not the sole, domain where categories are constructed and contested. Moreover, in their discussion of cause and effect, Reicher and Hopkins (1996, 356) further argue that, without establishing the present of category arguments in language, investigations as to their effect are irrelevant.

First of all, political rhetoric as a concept refers to those strategies used to construct persuasive arguments either in day-to-day discussions or formal talks and debates (Billig, 2013: 263). Consequently, the study of political rhetoric entails a multitude of approaches, where the demarcations are obscure, for instance, political narrative (Hammack and Pilecki, 2012), framing (Chong, 2013) and discourse (Fairclough and Fairclough 2012).⁶¹ In contrast to many forms of discourse analysis, nonetheless, empirical studies on political rhetoric tend to focus on micro-features such as clichés, idioms and other figures of speech as strategic argumentative tools (e.g. Ferrari, 2007; Orwenjo 2009; Kephart and Rafferty, 2009).⁶² Argument here refers to a variety of phenomena of which the most relevant to this study are disputes between groups and coherent sets of statements used to rationalise unitary premises (Billig, 2013: 267).

The empirical analysis of political rhetoric I wish to conduct in this study draws from the social identity approach discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. This especially concerns the self-categorisation theory, which suggests that, when individuals act in the context of social identity, they tend to stereotype the ‘self’ based on in-group definitions and the ‘other’ based on out-group definitions. Classifications are thus considered an important vehicle

⁶¹ In contrast to rhetoric, “discourse” as defined by Foucault (1972), is considered a body of knowledge composed of particular ways of talking and seeing, forms of subjectivity, and power relations. A “discourse analysis” also refers to a multitude of methods. For instance, ethno-methodologists and structuralists approach language as constituting social reality, where the study of discourse is a way of studying society (see Hammersley, 1997: 237).

⁶² The interpretation of texts is arguably the most common method of studying political behaviour. Monroe and Schrodt (2009) for instance date clearly political texts as far back as 2500 BC in the case of Mesopotamia and 1300 BC in the case of China. Later contributors usually include Lorenzo Valla’s philological analysis of the Donation of Constantine revealing the volume as a medieval forgery post-dating Emperor Constantine. The method of automated sentiment analysis is derived from the field of Information Science. Despite representing a novel approach within the field of Political Science, the method has long traditions: the Catholic Church has been attributed as systematically categorising text documents as early as in the 17th century and similar techniques were still used by social scientists in the 1940s analysing, for instance, the “effect of reading to people” (Waples et al., 1940) and “collaboration in propaganda” (Berelson and de Grazia, 1947). The first modern and theoretically driven textual analysis is usually considered Harold Lasswell’s Wartime Communications Project performed just before the Second World War (see also Janowitz, 1968), leading subsequently to an analysis of enemy communications by the Western allies.

in constructing ‘self’ and ‘others’ as membership categorisations (Sacks, 1974) and “specific argumentative devices, tropes, or commonplaces” (Billig, 2013: 267). Moreover, in addition to classifications, the boundary lines between ‘us’ and ‘them’ can also be considered as subject positions (Törrönen, 2001). These can be produced as “open or implicit categorisations, and they can be based on slim differences of degree or sharp, almost antithetical distinctions” (Törrönen, 2013: 85).

Social self-categorisation in communication is quite commonplace. Regarding political leaders in general, they typically frame an in-group agenda as representative of the entire nation. Reicher and Hopkins (2001) consider political leaders, in a rhetorical sense, as entrepreneurs of identity. Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins (2004) also show how such categories as “West” and “Islam” have been used in political rhetoric to legitimise group interests, social contexts and particular choices of action.

Regarding China’s soft power, the discourse is not a closed system. On the contrary, political rhetoric within the Chinese government is influenced by numerous external factors, varying from Western conceptualisations to Chinese state ideology, and from developments in Chinese foreign policy to day-to-day world events (Wuthnow, 2008). Although soft power rhetoric discussed here has various sources involving a fairly large number of practitioners, I consider it homogeneous enough to be treated as an entity. The data for the rhetorical analysis consists of *practical political writings* and *scientific scholarship*. While the former withholds CCP declarations, policy papers and newspaper articles, the latter consists of academic publications. The latter data (n=30) comprises Chinese journal articles published on the mainland either in Chinese or in English, drawn mainly from the CNKI database. The selected journal articles are published between 1993 and 2015, and are connected either implicitly⁶³ or explicitly to PRC soft power or public diplomacy.

⁶³ A number of journal articles address such themes as moral decline in China, Chinese public diplomacy and political philosophy.

The selected data set is a representative sample of the very homogeneous Chinese academic rhetoric.⁶⁴ Namely, in China the category of scientific scholarship is, to an extent, controversial. For instance, Wu (2013) shows that lack of academic autonomy makes the study of domestic politics in China an underdeveloped and sensitive field. He (2013) also criticises Chinese academics for a pro-government approach where official endorsement is preferred over peer review in judging the quality of research. Accordingly, Zhu and Pearson (2013) argue that the state in Chinese academic literature is rarely critically considered. While thus often lacking academic rigor, domestic political research conducted in Chinese and published in Mainland China nevertheless has the potential to provide insight into the general attitudes of the party-state and official party line. More importantly, it reflects the official views, concepts and accepted approaches.⁶⁵

A disclaimer I wish to point out concerns the language used itself. As Link (2013) argues, political rhetoric in China diverges from the regular one. She coins the term “officialness” to depict the official language of China, and argues that this has a long pedigree dating back to imperial times as *guanhua* (literally “official talk”) (Link, 2013: 234-235). As attributes of the official language, Link includes “colorless” and “boring”, in a sense that it is mostly ritual. Another central characteristic of the official language is what Link calls “fruit language” (*shuiguo yuyan*). This entails an amount of vagueness: “*When we hear the word ‘banana’ or ‘apple’ [...] we can picture an image in our minds. When*

⁶⁴ The writer of the analysed texts represent among others the Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing Research Center of the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the National Defense University, Tsinghua University, Beijing Normal University, and Beijing International Studies University.

⁶⁵ The study distinguishes between those studies published in international fora in English for an international audience, and those studies published in Mainland China in Chinese. Naturally both groups include Chinese nationals or ethnic Chinese with other nationalities. Prior studies drawn from the mainland for Chinese audiences are regarded categorically as empirical material.

we hear ‘fruit’ we don’t know what to picture” (Link, 2013: 246).⁶⁶ The fruit language enables Chinese politicians to preserve options and thus even, if needed, save their career. While this might be something that most politicians practise universally regardless of the country or nature of the political model, in authoritarian systems the level of abstract language grows.

Finally, the term ‘soft power’ has been translated in various ways in Chinese.⁶⁷ The term ‘*ruan shili*’ is usually used to describe “soft power”, whereas ‘*ruan quanli*’ translates into ‘soft authority’, ‘*ruan lilian*’ into ‘soft strength’, and ‘*ruan guoli*’ into ‘national soft power’. These different translations are variedly used in Chinese literature. However, ‘*ruan shili*’ is more used in the context of cultural construction or strategy and has a more domestic angle. ‘*Ruan quanli*’, on the other hand, would seem to be used in an international power perspective, more in the spirit of the original theory of Nye. Different from this, and relevant here, are the extended concepts ‘*wenhua ruanshili*’ which translates into “cultural soft power” and ‘*guojia wenhua ruan shili*’ translated into “national cultural soft

⁶⁶ In the Chinese official language, Link also observes characteristic metaphors, where some are “dead metaphors”, that is, metaphors that are so well established that people no longer recognise them as such. Again “military” metaphors arise from communist tradition, including references to guerrilla warfare. These also include those parts of official Chinese language that Link describes as “violent”, where the politicians establish an “atmosphere of fear” bringing “psychological pressure” to people eventually becoming accepted as part of the official language (Link, 2013: 251-254).

⁶⁷ As is evident through the linguistic complexities, it is challenging to find analytical consensus in the rhetoric; the use of language is scattered and multiple variations of ‘soft power’ are used. Soft power has been extended to areas of “regional society” (Wang and Qin, 2011), “business management” (Sui, Guo and Sun, 2011), “urban planning” (Li and Zheng, 2011), “education” (Jiang and Song, 2011), “human resources” (Tian, 2011), and many other things. The scope of research has moved from translating the ideas of Nye towards analysing, theorising and constructing a Chinese soft power vision. This vision nonetheless has the potential to showcase in-group and out-group dynamics involved in the PRC soft power enthusiasm.

power”.⁶⁸ In conducting the CNKI database search, I employed the key words ‘ruan shili’, ‘ruan guoli’, ‘wenhua ruanshili’, and ‘guojia wenhua ruan shili’.

5.2. Intention of the ‘Other’: An Enemy Image

First of all, typical of the Chinese soft power rhetoric, Guo (2012) deviates from Nye in making a difference between national and international soft power in her article “From national to international soft power” (Cong guojia ruan shili dao guoji ruan quanli). For Guo (2012) soft power has a dual purpose, where “ruan shili” indicates the domestic and “ruan quanli” the international dimension. Zhao, Li and Cai (2011)⁶⁹ also underline the necessity in differentiating the soft power theory originating from the “American discourse”, and in enhancing the soft power of China by developing a theory with local traditions. They refer to Liu (2006):⁷⁰

There might be a serious ambiguity and misunderstanding, if we continue to use Nye’s soft power definition and connotation as a value base on analysis of China’s power construction. Presently the theoretical point of China’s soft power construction is neither the traditional view of comprehensive national power, nor the western-style soft power theory but the soft power theory with Chinese characteristics (Quoted in Zhao, Li and Cai 2011, 41. See also Liu 2006.)

In the pro-government discourse therefore, two broad but interconnected dimensions can be observed: firstly, a need to move towards Chinese formulations from the original idea of Nye and secondly, indications of ambitions to juxtapose the soft power of the US and China. Regarding the latter, the views of Chinese scholars differ significantly. Liu (2001),⁷¹ for instance, claims that soft power provides a new angle in researching the

⁶⁸ Additionally, in Chinese literature there are also such extensions as “political soft power” (*zhengzhi ruan shili*), “military soft power” (*junshi ruan shili*), “soft power of thinking” (*siwei ruan shili*) and “meal soft power” (*zhongcan ye shi ruan shili*).

⁶⁹ Zhao Xiufang, Lecturer at School of Political and Public Administration, University of Jinan.

⁷⁰ Liu Xienshang, Research Scientist at the Institute for Science, Technology, and Public Policy, Texas US.

⁷¹ Liu Debin, Director at the Centre of Contemporary International Relations Studies, Jilin University.

nature of American hegemony. According to the argument, the rapid expansion of US soft power after the Cold War promotes “Americanisation” within the processes of globalisation, changes the dynamics of power competition, and raises historical challenges not only for developing countries, but also for major Western nations. Wang (2007),⁷² on the other hand, argues that the major source of US soft power is its hard power, which is the strongest in the world. By combining these two, Wang claims, the US can fully exploit its resources to have the maximum effect on other countries. According to the discussion by Wang, American popular culture has had an enormous impact on the development of other cultures since the 20th century, and would thus be a major source of US soft power.

Continuing the argument, another scholar, Wang (2013)⁷³ calls for more protective and proliferating measures regarding the national Chinese film and television industries, as they are “under attack by foreign cultures” (*Zhongguo chuantong wenhua zai wailai wenhua chongji xia*). Using the notion of “cultural imperialism” (*wenhua diguozhuyi*), he fears that through Hollywood, the Chinese may start to turn towards “American values” (*Meiguo de jiazhi guannian*). Wang notes that the Chinese television and film industry has a long way to go to protect national Chinese culture. Likewise, Li (2013)⁷⁴ recognises US popular culture as dominant, which would enable it to “control the global cultural discourse” (*kongzhizhe quanqiu de wenhua huayu*).

This kind of identity classification between ‘them’ as abnormal, dominant and intrusive and ‘us’ as normal and vulnerable is a recurring argumentative tool in Chinese soft power rhetoric. This is evident through references to cultural imperialism and attacking foreign cultures. Another recurring way to construct the same position is by reference not only to the US but the West in general. Wu (2011),⁷⁵ for instance, interprets “cultural homogenisation” (*wenhua shang de tongzhihua*) followed by globalisation causing “blurring of national cultural identity” (*minzu de wenhua shenfen ye bian de mohu*). This would lead to “anxiety and crises” (*jiaolu yu weiji*) for non-Western cultures, especially China. He sees globalisation as proliferating “foreign cultural hegemony” (*wailai wenhua*

⁷² Wang Xiaode, Professor at the Fujian Normal University.

⁷³ Wang, SuYa, Zhengzhou University School of Journalism and Communication.

⁷⁴ Editorial Department of Journal of Shangluo University.

⁷⁵ Wu Xueli, Provincial Party School. Shandong.

baquan), “cultural colonialism” (*wenhua zhimin*) and “general public westernisation” (*shehui dazhong xifang hua*).

By taking distance to China’s main rival the US, users of the rhetoric therefore express demarcations between the West and non-West, that is, China. Globalisation, proliferation of market economy and modernisation are subsequently classified as belonging to the former and not to the latter. Moreover, these subject positions are further constructed by implying that in the West “modern” is considered as “good” and “traditional” that refers to the non-West, is regarded as “bad”.

Considering various types of categorisations as social identity construction represented in the rhetoric, it is rather easy to notice that these are placed in the context of global cultural competition where China is seen as the underdog. Take for instance Li (2013), who makes a normative argument to the effect that modern globalisation consists of Western institutions and ideas. Leading to a lack of Chinese cultural confidence, these institutions and ideas take shape in “global expansion” (*quanqiu de kuozhang*) and have thus grown to “represent the advanced culture” (*daibiao xianjin wenhua*). It is ironic that in the Chinese soft power rhetoric the subject position of “lack of cultural confidence” in China is connected to globalisation, of which the PRC is in economic terms among the most prominent beneficiaries.

Producing this position further, Su (2013) argues that China is threatened by “Western cultural hegemony” (*xifang wenhua baquan*), “export of Western democracies” (*xifang minzhu shuchu*) and “religious penetration” (*zongjiao shentou*). Wang (2014)⁷⁶ also argues that Western impact is the reason why Chinese academia is interested in cultural confidence, hinting at why it is studied from both “historical and realist perspectives” (*lishi he xianshi de weidu*). This “realist” perspective seems to position China in cultural competition with the West as a *realpolitik* fact. A distinctive feature of the soft power rhetoric is therefore the mapping of contemporary menaces to Chinese cultural, political and social existence. As shown above, Chinese scholars find them in the categorisation schemes of globalisation and decadent Western culture.

⁷⁶ Teresa Wang, School of Marxism, Wuhan University.

To this problem, interesting solutions are offered. To illustrate, Liu (2014)⁷⁷ connects ideology to Chinese cultural soft power, arguing that the enhancing of national soft power is a “cultural path to ideological security” (*yishi xingtai anquan de wenhua lujing*). For this reason, Liu suggests establishing a national cultural security strategy to build a “great cultural security wall” (*wenhua anquan changcheng*) against “Western cultural invasion” (*xifang wenhua de qinxi*). In expressing, if it is so doing, symbolic withdrawal from the world, the choice of words is extraordinary. At best, this could be interpreted as nostalgia towards traditional society amid the economic reforms and, at worst, it comes across as misguided alarmism in the face of imminent lack of legitimacy of the establishment. Zhao, Li and Cai (2011) continue the criticism of US soft power and American cultural hegemony by proposing measures to respond in defence of “Chinese cultural security” (*wenhua anquan*). Therefore, to encounter American values, the discourse recognises a strategic need to strengthen the soft power of China. This reflects the overall classification system between ‘self’ and ‘other’ as a membership argument.

5.3. Image of the ‘Self’: Cultural Status

The context for the undertaking to build an enemy image of the West in general and the US in particular seems to be connected to the Chinese image of the ‘self’. This is evident through those rhetorical moves that reflect on wider processes within Chinese society. In this, not only the perceived threat of globalisation but also the recent ideological turnaround in economic thinking are perceived as developing social anomie or, as Wu (2011)⁷⁸ coins it, a “national sense of apathy” (*minzu yishi danmo*). Producing hierarchical positioning, Lee (2011) also questions the mental state of the Chinese population. According to the argument, the transitions in Chinese society are resulting in the mentality

⁷⁷ Liu Cuiyu, School of Humanities and Law, Henan Agricultural University.

⁷⁸ Shandong Provincial Party School.

of some people⁷⁹ “getting gradually out of balance” (*jian shiheng*), “the moral sense getting confused” (*daode yishi chuxian-mimang*) and their “values being distorted” (*jiazhi quxiang fasheng niuqu*).

Relating to this sense of “national apathy”, a further tendency can be observed in the rhetoric to apply in-group definitions and self-categorisation stereotypes. Xiao (2013),⁸⁰ for instance, depicts the post-Marxist or, in other words, the reform era as “drastic change” (*sudong jubian*) and adds that “people’s thoughts were shocked” (*ren de sixiang chansheng dongyao*) and “feelings for the future confused” (*dui weilai de fazhan gandao mimang*). Xiao seems convinced that an understanding of Marxism has practical significance and that the “strengthening of faith in communism is of crucial importance” (*jianding gongchan zhuyi de xinnian youzhe zhi guan zhongyao de yiyi*). The references to popularised Marxism in the discourse can be seen as the historical legacy of the socialist era. At the same time, they may represent a counter-discourse to the perceived Western originated neoliberalism and, again, the perceived lessening of national morality by consumerism. The subject position resonates with the PRC notion of the so-called “socialist core values”, attempting to mix nationalist sentiments with Marxism in a contemporary context. According to the People’s Daily, these values “have taken roots in the public’s mind and are translated into actions”.⁸¹

In this framework of traditional culture and popularised Marxism mixed with general alarmism, Pan (2005)⁸² discusses the broad relationship between present-day national security and culture in China. According to the view, cultural security mainly refers to “political cultural security” (*zhengzhi wenhua anquan*) including “political values” (*zhengzhi*

⁷⁹ To refer to “some people” is a typical rhetorical choice for the PRC policy elites when discussing political opposition. See Chapter 7.

⁸⁰ Xiao Weiwei, College of Marxism, Central China Normal University.

⁸¹ According to the People’s Daily: “Core socialist values, which summarize the nation, society and individuals, comprise a set of moral principles defined by central authorities as prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendship.” See People’s Daily March 2016. “24-word core socialist values engraved on people’s mind”: <http://en.people.cn/n3/2016/0302/c98649-9023926.html>.

⁸² Pan Yihe, Department of International Cultural Studies, Zhejiang University.

jiazhi) and “social management system” (*shehui guanli zhi*). The argument of Pan is that culture is not only a subdomain (*ziyu*) of security, but an essential part of it. A threat may come in the form of an “open challenge to government legitimacy” (*zhengfu hefa xing quanwei de gongkai tiaozhan*), other “social conflict” (*shehui chongtu*) or “civil war” (*neizhan*).

Regarding a more specific perspective, Shen, Liu and Ni (2011)⁸³ link cultural security with soft power. In this view, culture produces security through national cohesion while maintaining an intact ideology: the prosperity and decline of a nation would be dependent upon the rise and fall of the respective culture.⁸⁴ National culture, the argument goes, is the historic accumulation of national ethos as a specific “survival guide” of the nation. Should national culture be weak, a country loses soft power in competition with other countries. In this sense, they argue, cultural safety is factually tantamount to national sovereignty. Following this logic, the scholars argue that China must carry forward the “outstanding achievements of national culture”, and construct a “shared spiritual home” for the Chinese. Accordingly, of highest importance for China would be to develop the structure of its cultural industry and form cultural industry groups (Shen, Liu and Ni 2011: 32-36). Echoing the argument, Li and Shi (2011)⁸⁵ bring to the discussion an application of soft power. The method, as a rhetorical move, looks at domestic social management, calling it soft power of the ruling class – “ruling soft power”. This means that after gaining a ruling position, a class exposes members of society by mandatory means to dominant ideology, public opinion or cultural education to maintain the ruling status and the stable development of society.⁸⁶

⁸³ Shen Haigang and Ni Yong, Department of Sociology, Shandong University of Technology / Liu Qingshun, School of Business Administration, Jiangsu University.

⁸⁴ As an analogy, they mention the Jewish ideology of returning home to Israel after times of hardship and exile. The Zionist power would stem from the Jewish national spirit and culture, the Bible functioning as a cultural carrier (Shen, Liu and Ni 2011: 35).

⁸⁵ Li Liaoning and Shi Jun, Marxism College, Hainan University.

⁸⁶ Li and Shi give three principles of the “ruling soft power”:

1) Only the ruling body can possess ruling soft power, no other individual, social organisation, etc.

This need for a “ruling soft power system” stems from the need to create legitimacy for the CCP. In addition to the academic publications, the rhetoric has also been applied to state-run media, albeit in a somewhat more moderate form. Among other things, the argument for a need for a “ruling class soft power” is noticeably absent in the rhetoric of daily newspapers. To illustrate, in a People’s Daily article,⁸⁷ Director Chen Shaofeng,⁸⁸ formulates for China a need to construct a “new understanding and enthusiasm of culture” (*wenhua de xin renshi he xin reqing*). The impact of culture should bring hope as a “positive socialist image construction” (*shehui zhuyi jianshe lai de jiji ying*). He states that culture, economy, entertainment and lifestyle are separate and should be managed with “ideological policy” (*yishi xingtai de zhengce*). Again, it would be important to understand the role of culture in national development. Chen notes that culture should be “elevated to a strategic level” (*tisheng dao yige zhanlüe gaodu*) where cultural self-confidence can be achieved through structural reform and “major cultural development” (*wenhua de da fazhan*). He thus makes clear that cultural industries are closely related to “national cultural safety” (*guojia de wenhua anquan*) by making cultural existence a “security issue” (*anquan wenti*).

Consequently, in a take on Guangming Daily,⁸⁹ Professor Zhang Yiwu⁹⁰ sees Chinese culture at a new starting point, but stresses the importance of the continuation of Chinese civilisation. For Zhang, the founding of the PRC itself and its support for the Third World created “precious spiritual wealth” (*zui baogui de jingshen caifu*), and 30 years of reforms

2) Ruling soft power is a humane social management repertoire, which is realised through such flexible methods as dominant ideology, cultural education or public opinion, while maintaining people orientation, in other words, people dependency.

3) The goal of ruling soft power is to advance the position of the ruling body by attracting members of society and obtaining widespread support (Li and Shi 2011, 201).

⁸⁷ September 2, 2010, People's Daily - the theoretical channel. See <http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/166866/12627026.html>

⁸⁸ Deputy Director of the Department of the National Cultural Industry Innovation and Development, Ministry of Culture.

⁸⁹ November 27, 2009, Guangming Daily. See <http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/166866/10464588.html>

⁹⁰ Professor at Beijing University.

and rapid development a “large platform for soft power tactics” (*dapingtai shi Zhongguo fahui ruan shili de jichu*). According to Zhang, China wants to achieve “cultural awareness” (*wenhua zijue*), “utilize the power of culture” (*fahui wenhua de liliang*), and charm domestically to create a “harmonious China” (*hexie de Zhongguo*). In the same article,⁹¹ Professor Wu Jiamin⁹², raises the issue of the long social tradition. Wu asks why the feudal society of China has survived the longest in the world. His argument seems to be that the “mainstream culture” (*zhuliu wenhua*) of China has been consistent even throughout multiple regime changes, even surpassing the feudal nature of the imperial China. According to Wu there are two important dimensions of this cultural continuation; domestic “long-term stability” (*changzhijiu'an*) and external “contribution to the world” (*dui shijie de gongxian*). In this, he also echoes both in-group cohesion and out-group competition.

Soft power rhetoric thus positions China’s cultural civilisation as domestically durable and externally potential. In addition to stereotyping traditional culture and Marxism, the rhetorical argument is to connect soft power to domestic ethnic harmony in searching for stability and security. Wu (2014),⁹³ for instance, attempts to show that shared cultural communication is inevitably connected to cultural confidence. Here classification between ‘us’ and ‘them’ is produced by proposing dialogue and cultural communication between different ethnic groups of China to “achieve psychological and cultural appeal under political equality” (*shixian zhengzhi pingdeng xia de xinli he wenhua suqiu*). According to this logic, as I read it, the diversity of 55 domestic ethnic minorities should unite towards a common identity of Han culture under the PRC. Producing this demarcation, Sun and Wang (2014) place at the centre of the soft power construction a cultural security concept that is “pragmatic, self-confident, open and pluralistic” (*wushi, zixin, kaifang, duoyuan*). According to this subject position, ‘pragmatic’, ‘pluralistic’ and ‘open’ refer to ethnic tolerance between ‘us’.

⁹¹ November 27, 2009 Guangming Daily. See <http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/166866/10464541.html>.

⁹² Professor at Foreign Affairs University.

⁹³ Wu Xianjun, School of Marxism, Fujian Normal University.

5.4. Intensity

Based on the above rhetorical analysis, it would seem that the level of intensity of identity formation and underlining recognition-seeking seems rather tense. Earlier studies do not, however, provide any method or indicator to assess its level. This is recognised by Johnston (1999: 292), who highlights the difficulties in evaluating the intensity of the in-group formation: “the literature is remarkably free of any effort to think about indicators of the scope and intensity of in-group identification”. To the best of my knowledge, no studies after the initial remark of Johnston (1999) have addressed the issue, which is no doubt challenging to operationalise. However, regarding the scope, and perhaps intensity, of the in-group formation that concerns Chinese soft power rhetoric, I consider here a statistical indicator.

As I have attempted to show using the rhetorical analysis, the soft power-related language of the PRC is rather homogeneous. In it, the practitioners apply fairly similar argumentative devices and subject positions in forming identity categories. It would seem to me, then, that the scope and, with certain reservations, the intensity of the in-group formation could be assessed by looking at the amount of publications on an annual basis. Figure 13 shows the number of soft power-related academic journal articles published in China between 2001 and 2013. The search was conducted using *the Journal and Newspaper Database of Renmin University of China* and the *Wanfang Database*. A few observations can be made. First, the results indicate an increase in numbers of soft power-related journal articles and conference proceedings published in China since 2001, with a dramatic rise first in 2004 and then from 2006 to 2008. The first observed change in volume coincides with the launch of the ‘Peaceful Rise’ doctrine in 2003. The second development in 2006 occurs in tandem with the launch of the national soft power strategy by Hu Jintao in 2007. With this coincidental rising trajectory of academic interest, it can be assumed that contemporary soft power enthusiasm mainly represents top-down movement within Chinese policy circles.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ This is evident in those journal articles included in the discourse analysis. For instance, Su (2013), Liu and Zhou (2013), and Liu (2014) begin their articles with the declarations of third Plenary Session and Li (2013) with the eight Plenary Session of 18th CCP Central Committee, whereas Wu (2014) refers to the sixth Plenary Session of the 17th CCP Central Committee report.

I would therefore argue that the volume of publications would reflect not only policy guidelines given top-down, but also the general attitudes of the practitioners of the rhetoric. It could thus be considered an indication, if not evidence, of the *scope* of this particular form of in-group formation. It is not clear, however, whether this can be considered an indication of the *intensity* of the phenomenon. As I understand it, this problem could be approached by quantifying the sentiment or tone of the language used and by observing its development over time. This could be achieved with multiple automated methods. One in particular, for English language sources, is proposed in this dissertation in Chapter 8. Multilingual and non-English approaches have been developed by Lucas et al (2015), among others.

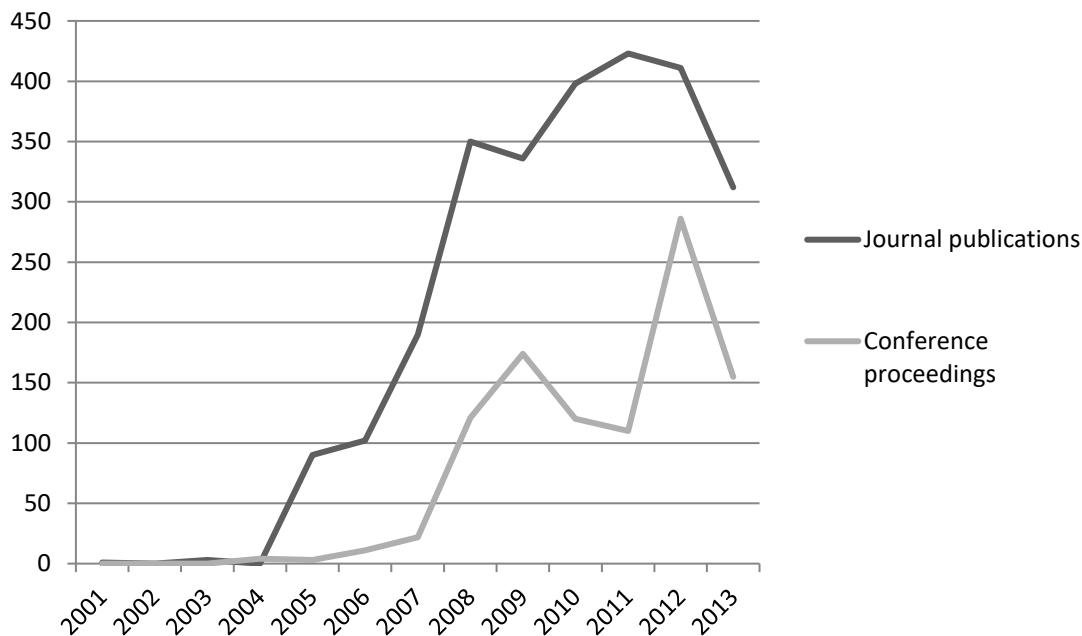


Figure 6 Soft Power-Related Journal Publications and conference proceedings in Mainland China

Source: the Journal and Newspaper Database of Renmin University of China, Full-text Database of Academic Conferences in China

Note: Searches were conducted using the key word *ruan shili*.

Indeed, as He, 2013 shows: “Today, it is common for top universities like Qinghua, Beijing and Fudan to offer the most prestigious awards to those short executive summary papers or documents that have drawn the attention of Chinese central leaders who then read, comment on, or endorse the scholar’s policy-oriented work. As a result, the leaders’ preferences determine the direction of political studies” (He 2013: 198).

5.5. Summarised Findings

At the beginning of the chapter I outlined two main questions and one additional research one. Below I will consider each.

RQ#1: What specific type of disrespect does the Chinese soft power phenomenon address?

In observing how the subject positions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ are constructed through soft power rhetoric, it can be found that these are produced by contrasting China and the West, assumptions of advanced and backward cultures, Chinese culture and American culture, developing countries and Western countries. This, in my view, can be seen as recognition-seeking that is post-colonial and self-orientalist.

Accordingly, to strengthen Chinese position, the rhetorical move is to envision China as ethnically harmonious and socio-economically stable. Therefore, future China is seen by the participants as self-confidently open (in an introverted sense) and ethnically diverse. As the rhetoric literally suggests, the Chinese soft power idea can be seen as a cultural wall constructed to defend the uniqueness of Chinese civilisation, which is protected from the forces of globalisation by a confident Chinese culture.

RQ#1.2: Which ‘category arguments’ and classifications define PRC soft power rhetoric?

The analysed rhetoric focuses on those developments of Chinese society that are favourable to subject-positioning and that stereotype the ‘self’ as weak and under attack, discussing the mental state of the Chinese people and national apathy, curable by common culture, ethnic unity and political stability.

The observed soft power rhetoric thus aims to close the socio-economic and ethnic ranks as a counter-strategy to the perceived threats of globalisation and Westernisation. Therefore, the category argument offered in the rhetoric speaks for a social order and

patriarchal authority devoid of inner conflicts and capable of defending the civilisation against foreign threats with a mental wall of vitality, uniqueness, and higher status.

In the PRC soft power language, there can thus be observed a trend where culture is politicised and nationalised. This creates a framework for social discussion that takes place outside “politics” and within “culture”. This is convenient for the one-party-state in maintaining its ruling status.

RQ#1.3: To what extent, if at all, can the intensity of this type of disrespect be evaluated?

The intensity of this type of in-group formation remains a difficult task to evaluate. There is a statistical argument to be made, but it is question of interpretation whether this is an acceptable approach.

6. ANALYSIS: PROPENSITY COMPONENT

This chapter focuses on the propensity component of the model outlined in Chapter 3. The analysis draws on media studies in studying Chinese public diplomacy products, paying special attention to entertainment media and popular culture. As specific research questions I will ask:

RQ#2: What type of propensities does the PRC perception of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ introduce into China’s soft power communication?

RQ#2.1: How are in-group/out-group dichotomies used in PRC public diplomacy productions?

6.1. Media Analysis: Methodology

Prior cultural studies show how entertainment industries can be used to form political agenda. The political relevance and importance of interpreting films has a long tradition. Siegfried Kracauer’s analysis of pre-WWII German cinema, published in a volume entitled “From Caligari to Hitler – A Psychological History of The German Film” (1947), can be considered seminal. In the study Kracauer was less interested in the films for their

own sake, and more because they could reveal national psychological dispositions predominant in Germany before the Second World War.⁹⁵

A more recent take on the issue comes from Crane (2014) who studies global culturalisation through international film markets. While the main argument of Crane is that global culturalisation has led to changes in film content towards more deculturalised transnational films, her argument shows that governments spend vast sums of money on maintaining a presence in the film industry. This would indicate that media in general and films are perceived as having considerable symbolic and cultural value (Crane, 2014: 365-366), and that the production and consumption of films performs an important role in negotiating or constructing cultural identities and social consciousness (Gao, 2009: 432). “Cultural policies that support national film industries in the form of tariffs, quotas subsidies and tax credits may therefore be interpreted as a form of cultural resistance to the homogenised effects of globalisation” (Gao, 2009: 432; quoted in Crane, 2014: 366).

⁹⁵ Kracauer (1947: 5-7) gives two specific reasons why national films have the potential to reflect collective mentalities in a more direct way than other artistic media. The first argument addresses precisely the collective nature of the medium: films are never the product of an individual so the teamwork nature of any production would tend to suppress individual peculiarities favouring common traits. The second rationale of Kracauer is based on the appeal of the audience, or the “anonymous multitude”: “Popular films –or, to be more precise, popular screen motifs – can therefore be supposed to satisfy existing mass desires” (Kracauer, 1947: 5). What Kracauer states would seem to imply that both the production team of a film and the subsequent audience are together bound in a collective mentality that may or may not be confined within national borders. In Kracauer’s time, the late 1940s, this dependency was no doubt clearer than it is today. However, what makes the contemporary situation more interesting and thus having relevance for this study is the hegemony of the Hollywood film productions that the international audience is accustomed to. It is this hegemony that any public diplomacy effort must take into account, if the goal is to speak to a large international audience. On the contrary, the ambition of Kracauer was no less than to discuss the rise of the Third Reich: “Thus, behind the overt history of economic shifts, social exigencies and political machinations runs a secret history involving the inner dispositions of the German people. The disclosure of these dispositions through the medium of the German screen may help in the understanding of Hitler’s ascent and ascendancy” (Kracauer, 1947: 11).

Prior studies show that contemporary governments seem not only to be aware of the value of entertainment media, but also actively use it as a policy tool to promote national values and a good national image (De Zoysa and Newman, 2002; Crane, 2014). To this end, Scott (2004) and Keane, (2005) discuss how the “pen is mightier than the sword, and how the picture is worth a thousand words”.

A popular approach is to focus especially on Hollywood and the US film industry in general. In this area, most studies show how popular culture is used and have been used to promote US politics, the American way of life and thus US soft power and foreign policy in the world. For instance, Kellner (2010) analyses allegorical representations in Hollywood films that commented on, interpreted or indirectly portrayed aspects of the Bush era. According to Kellner (2010: 14-15), films, properly interpreted and contextualised, can provide key insights into the specifics of political history.⁹⁶

In addition to Kellner (2010), Thompson (1985) and Jarvie (1992) consider the early phases of US film exports. Stokes and Maltpy (2004) also analyse Hollywood contemporary exports. Finally, the focus of Crane (2014) is on cultural globalisation and the dominance of the US film industry.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Moreover, “cinematic mappings” for Kellner represent historical events, individuals, character types, cultural norms and other defining features of specific societies, and the fact that films are a crucial part of contemporary cultures embedded in fundamental economic, political and social elements of the present age (Kellner, 2010: 14-17).

⁹⁷ It is especially the early years of the Hollywood film industry that have been seen as inward-looking, promoting American middle-class values and discounting, devaluing and stereotyping the outside world: “[...] the mythical golden years of Hollywood spanning 1938-60 projected a uniformed vision: faith in the democratic order, the classless society, heroic individualism and the golden opportunities offered by the capitalist work ethic and enterprise” (De Zoysa and Newman, 2002: 188). These views have also been contested as unrepresentative and one-sided, but it has equally been argued that even those films that appear as counter-cultural and liberal such as *Taxi Driver* (directed by Martin Scorsese, starring Robert De Niro) and *Blue Velvet* (directed David Lynch) have in fact been representative of a right-wing agenda and cinematic tradition, applying heroic individualism, myth-making, and incapable of structural reform (see for instance Cousins, 2001, Kellner, 2010, De Zoysa and Newman, 2002).

Using a similar approach, De Zoysa and Newman (2002) show how the American film became an essential part of the socialisation process from early childhood in many parts of the world. They argue that this way American values, basic assumptions, idioms and subtexts became part of what they call global consciousness. According to their argument, film and television became an integral part of US soft power, promoting the virtues of a particular American life: “American self-definition as the first ‘universal nation’ made up of immigrants familiar with cultural exchange meant it could negotiate other traditions with ease” (De Zoysa and Newman, 2002: 189).

Within the field of IR, popular culture and world politics have mostly been understood as interconnected but separate entities (Grayson, Davies, and Philpott, 2009: 155). However, popular media is also increasingly recognised as important for world politics (Weber, 2006; Dodds, 2008; Ruback, 2010; Drezner, 2011). Popular media is relevant for security issues in identifying threats and characterising enemies (Dixit, 2012; Valeriano and Habel, 2016). The premise here assumes that there exists an ‘intertext’ between what are known as the ‘first order’ and the ‘second order’, that is, between the real world and the fictional world (Fey, Poppe, and Rauch, 2016: 349; see also Weldes, 2003; Kiersey and Neumann, 2013).

From the viewpoint of methodology, Grayson, Davies and Philpott (2009: 158-160) outline a popular culture-world politics research agenda, which places popular culture and world politics on a continuum instead of cause and effect. Of their agenda, I utilise here three points. First, according to the outline, the interconnectedness of these two spheres enables the study of popular culture as political ‘texts’ and sites where politics takes place. Secondly, cultural studies have the potential to give insight into relations between popular culture as an identity producer and the nation-state as an IR actor (see also Greyson, 2008). Finally, as argued above, also according to Grayson, Davies and Philpott (2009), the focus of popular culture studies within the IR has been on the Anglo-

Coming to the Bush era, as both Kellner (2010) and De Zoysa and Newman (2002) show, Hollywood reinforced and reflected on “American values”, and more specifically, it seems that the Bush administration not only encouraged but in fact enlisted Hollywood studios for a propaganda project to sell the Iraq war to the outside world.

American world. Thus, taking popular culture ‘seriously’ would require expanding inquiry to the rest of the world.

The reading of popular culture as texts and interpreting them presents some methodological difficulties. Within the domain of security, interpretations of popular culture texts tend to either be critical or affirmative, that is, texts are seen to either support or challenge an assumption of a threat. Moving beyond positive-negative interpretations, reading texts in multiple different ways may better capture the political significance of entertainment media. This is known as ‘polysemy’ (Schulzke, 2017). Polysemy should enable a focus on how identities are produced and deemed commonsensical (Dixit, 2012, 289). To be more specific, instead of causal links between popular culture and world politics, the former potentially explains how images, narratives and ideas are made commonsensical (Nexon, 2010). In this fashion, popular culture creates and sustains the conditions of world politics (Weldes, 2003, 6). This approach is reflexive. Instead of audience reception, therefore, the focus is on the meaning of the actual text and the author’s motives behind it (Fey, Poppe, and Rauch, 2016: 349).

Of the popular culture and film genres, the most attention among IR scholars seems to have been paid to science fiction and fantasy. Here particular themes and products have focused on zombies (Drezner, 2011), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Davies, 2010), *Harry Potter* (Nexon and Neuman, 2006), many aspects of the *Battlestar Galactica* (Carpenter, Civijanovic, and Mason, 2006; Jackson, 2011; Fey, Poppe, and Rauch, 2016), and *Doctor Who* (Dixit, 2012). Based on a rather short review, a genre that may be overlooked is action, and in the case of China, the Kung Fu movies that play a significant role in PRC public diplomacy communication. Su (2010) argues how, through Kung Fu movies, Chinese films have a long history of penetrating Western film markets, mainly with Hong Kong actors such as Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Chow Yun Fat and Jet Li. The central strategy of Chinese Kung Fu films, according to Su (2010), is to draw from traditional Chinese culture and combine this with Hollywood production techniques. The films highlight traditional Chinese cultural values such as brotherhood, family ties, personal perseverance and loyalty. They also employ skillful shooting techniques, sensational kung fu arts, gorgeous costumes, magnificent settings, and colourful, impressionist-painting-like scenes. Moreover, according to Su (2010), Kung Fu movies have obtained official public diplo-

macy bureaucracy blessing, because the domestic filmmakers in China believe that ancient themes are politically safe, financially less risky and commercially successful (Su, 2010: 319-321).

As a case in point, He (2013) shows how Singaporean audiences react positively to Chinese martial arts films. The argument is that, in making traditional Chinese culture attractive, the potential of Chinese action films in enhancing China's soft power is seen as significant. Moreover, He (2013) shows that Chinese martial arts films are a valuable cultural resource, and a promising way through which China can project soft power.

The primary data for the empirical analysis consists of action films that have been fully or partly financed by the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy or Chinese media companies that are closely tied to the Communist Party.

6.2. Situational Assessment

To give an overview of tensions that underline the PRC public diplomacy strategies, the first text concerns the so-called Document no. 9 entitled “Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere”. The communiqué was leaked and translated into English in September 2013 by a US-based Chinese news outlet Mirror Media Group. The memo attracted wide attention both in and outside China.⁹⁸ The reasons for the attention are obvious, as the memo was issued by the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party responsible for drafting and circulating CCP memos and directives. The document urged party members to stay alert and guard against ideological threats emanating from the outside world, including the promotion of “western constitutional democracy”, “universal values”, “civil society”, “neoliberalism”, “Western idea of journalism” and “historical nihilism”.

⁹⁸ See for instance

The New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/20/world/asia/chinas-new-leadership-takes-hard-line-in-secret-memo.html?_r=1

The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/analects/2013/06/political-rebalancing>

China File: <http://www.chinafile.com/document-9-chinafile-translation>

There remained a few doubts as to the authenticity of the document among Western analytics, especially since a wide and harsh government crackdown on Chinese dissidents was later reported. Among others, in April 2015 the 71-year-old journalist Gao Yu was sentenced to seven years in prison for "leaking state secrets."⁹⁹

In general, the document was considered offensive, against all liberal political ideas and values and a way for Xi Jinping to silence dissent and consolidate power. The message of the communiqué was also interpreted as instilling faith in the conservatism of Xi's regime. In contrast, during the early years of his reign it was widely believed in the West that not only the economic reforms, but also social and political opening up would continue, Xi having from the outset outlined somewhat liberal directions. For instance, in 2012 in a congress speech Xi stressed the importance of the PRC constitution and the rights of individual citizens that it guaranteed. He stated:

"We should endeavour to let the people experience fairness and justice in every judicial case, and should never allow unjust judgment infringing people's rights and interests."¹⁰⁰

The contrast between the early statements of Xi and the later "Document 9" can be considered especially stark since there was no uncommon pressure to underline the constitutional rights of Chinese citizens in the first place during 2012, and no unusual social or political turmoil or civil threats towards the legitimacy of the CCP in 2013.

Based on Document 9 alone, it could be argued that the PRC leadership would seem to feel that its position of power and legitimacy is somehow threatened by Western ideas. According to the memorandum, the goal of "some people" is to use "Western constitutional democracy" to undermine the leadership of the PRC. The memo further states that,

⁹⁹ See for instance

CBS: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/china-journalist-gao-yu-prison-sentence-leaking-state-secrets/>

The New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/17/world/asia/china-journalist-gao-yu-gets-7-year-sentence.html>

¹⁰⁰ See http://www.china.org.cn/china/2012-12/05/content_27312541.htm

for instance, the separation of power, a multi-party system and general elections are concepts of the “capitalist class” regarding nation, political model and system design. Considering the turbo-capitalism the PRC itself benefits from, utilises and promotes, the claim borders on latent denial. Moreover, the document argues that the West, headed by the US, is attempting to weaken the control of the PRC over the Chinese economy, by carrying out “their Neoliberal agendas under the guise of globalisation”. This tactic, the document claims, would have had “catastrophic consequences for Latin America, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe”, not forgetting to stress that the financial crisis is still ongoing, only apparently everywhere else but in China.

Perhaps more understandably, the memo also tackles social and cultural issues. Here again, “some people” in co-operation with “Western anti-China forces” are seen as promoting the “Western theory” of civil society, claiming that it would be the precondition for protecting the rights of the individual, and setting the CCP “against the masses”. The memorandum warns against any declarations that advance “universal values”. This is seen as a biased claim that Western values transcend time, space, nation and class, applicable to all humanity. In this context, the document stresses that, due to the long-term Western dominance in economics, military and science, the argument of the universality of Western values might be “confusing and deceptive”. Equally confusing, at least to a Western reader, is the claim that the known “some people”, through promoting “historical nihilism”, would be distorting the history of the CCP and characterising it as a “continuing series of mistakes” by rejecting the “accepted conclusions”.

Considering the pro-PRC government academic arguments presented in the discourse analysis, the claims of the Document 9 cannot be considered surprising. They can be given the benefit of the doubt, nonetheless, in “social matters”, and one can acknowledge that there exists organised social forces on whose agenda rests the advancement of civil society, human rights and democracy, not only in China but in the world in general. The idea, however, that through neoliberal market-oriented globalisation, the West would aim to undermine the legitimacy of the PRC is an extraordinary claim, which would require extraordinary evidence. In fact, it seems that viable explanations regarding the content of the document would have to include some emotional aspects.

6.3. Actor Choice: In-group/Out-group Narratives

6.3.1. *Blurring of Media Demarcations*

As argued in Chapter 3, recent times have witnessed the Chinese Communist Party acting as a global neo-liberal media player, utilising the full imagination of transnational capitalistic communication tactics. I therefore wish first to underline a central feature of PRC public diplomacy. Even though the PRC does not generally operate in a latent fashion when it comes to third-party corporate acquisition, it does purposefully aim to *blur media demarcations*. This tactic relies on both the international and domestic audiences confusing PRC media, independent Chinese media, and international media, making it difficult to tell whether the media representatives (such as journalists) and the media products (such as films) are “Chinese” or “foreign”. The above-mentioned third-party corporate media acquisitions play a central role in this tactic, with the invisible hand of the PRC external propaganda bureaucracy guiding the process.

The first film that I analyse as political ‘text’ is a seemingly separate Hollywood-produced film *Transformers – Age of Extinction* that premiered globally in the summer of 2014. At the time, the film was the latest entry in a series of Transformers films, which feature one group of alien robots fighting on Earth alongside humans (mainly US military) against another group of robots. The producer and director of the films, Michael Bay, is known for his earlier works that exploit American values, patriotism, and military might in high-budget productions (for instance, *The Rock*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Armageddon*). Also, the three previous Transformers films made no exception to this formula, clearly produced in co-operation with the Pentagon.

The events of the film taking place in Mainland China and Hong Kong notwithstanding, it was surprising that, in the *Age of Extinction*, the typical US patriotism of Michael Bay productions was changed to a Chinese one. In short, the opponent of the protagonists is the CIA, the White House government is represented as incompetent, and the main villain, a US agent, uses the government’s secret operations for personal gain. In contrast, the Beijing government is portrayed as benevolent, and a body to whom the Chinese population can turn in time of crisis. In the final battle scene, in which Hong Kong is being destroyed, two seemingly insignificant small scenes turn out to be revealing. First, when

the evil robots destroy the harbour, a Hong Kong official declares that “we must call central government for help”. After a short while, the film moves to Beijing where the PRC Defence Minister gets a call informing him that Hong Kong is in trouble. His reaction is: “Of course China will help Hong Kong. We’ll send fighter jets.”

There would not have been anything out of the ordinary with the two scenes, except for the fact that the events are completely unrelated to the plot of the film. No central government help or fighter jets are seen during the rest of the narrative. Not surprisingly, the film turned out to be partly financed by the Chinese state media, in this case CCTV’s movie channel, the Jiaflix Enterprises. It does not require a huge leap of analytical faith to speculate that, within PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy, this type of co-operation requires the consent of the high ranks. Surprisingly China watchers, academics and journalists took little public notice of the film, especially since it aired both in China and internationally during the Hong Kong student pro-democracy demonstrations of 2014. In fact, only the Senior Editor of *Variety* magazine, David Cohen, in an opinion article, raised the issue calling it “sickening” to see Bay and Steven Spielberg (the second executive producer) “*show less courage in the face of the CCP than Hong Kong grocers and waitresses*”.¹⁰¹

The film was a huge financial success both inside and outside China, generating in China alone more revenue than any other film before it. Despite the coincidental timing with the Hong Kong pro-democracy protests, which could make the film appear as a rather blunt reaction of the PRC to the protests, the general principle follows the Hollywood pattern of cashing in on patriotism and nationalistic emotion. The utilisation of American cultural “imperialism” and the *Americana* values of popular entertainment: individualism, autonomy and the right to be different are not a particularly new tactic. Moreover, it has also been found to be an effective one for domestic purposes. In a social psychological experiment, US female nationals who were shown a clip from an altered *Rocky IV* where the protagonist (an American boxer played by Sylvester Stallone) lost to his Russian adversary (instead of the original plot where he wins), were found to have lost national self-esteem (Branscombe and Wann, 1994, see also Gries, 2005: 241).

¹⁰¹ See *Variety* July 2014: <http://variety.com/2014/film/columns/transformers-age-of-extinction-patriotic-for-china-1201257030/>

The second, also relatively little-known, case of PRC public diplomacy blurring the media demarcations is what Sun (2014) calls the “curious case of Andrea Yu”. The incident occurred during the 18th Party Congress in Beijing in November 2012. It is usually not normal at official press conferences of the Party Congress for foreign media to be allowed to address PRC officials. They prefer Chinese state media to pose easy questions (known as ‘soft balls’) with no risks of confrontational editorialising. It was considered surprising then that in the press conferences of the 18th congress, a seemingly Caucasian-looking young female reporter identifying herself as an Australian journalist by the name of Andrea Yu was given multiple opportunities to ask questions. Moreover, she asked the questions in both excellent Mandarin and English, ‘pitching’ the typical ‘soft balls’ beloved by Chinese state media.

This, of course, aroused the interest of other members of the foreign press corps, and soon it was revealed that the company Andrea Yu was representing, Global CAMG Media, was not only Melbourne-based and Beijing-funded but also a subsidiary of the CRI. A final confirmation of the issue was provided by Stephen McDonnell, a long-time Australian correspondent in Beijing, who in an eight-minute interview with Andrea Yu, got her to confess that through her the PRC government was basically “asking questions of themselves”.¹⁰² Of course, those questions presented in Mandarin by Andrea Yu were widely circulated in Chinese domestic news coverage. This particular tactic of blurring media demarcations is not only an ongoing, but also a growing phenomenon.¹⁰³

The tactic of blurring media demarcations speaks to the apparent Chinese need for outer recognition. The fashion in which this is conducted, that is, praising oneself, is related to the psychological concept of *complex*. This means that in social psychology, the psyche is understood as a complete *self-regulatory* system. Accordingly, the process of self-regulation is capable of bringing about its own self-realisation. This is, in the most technical sense, called psychic compensation. According to Aziz (2007: 24-25), the more awareness there is of a psychic compensation, the less problematic the process is. Accordingly, when the process is accompanied by little or no awareness, it becomes psychi-

¹⁰² The interview can be heard from the Australian Broadcasting Corporations (ABC) website accessed in August 2015: <http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2012/s3632894.htm>

¹⁰³ Interviews 2 and 3 with foreign journalists working in China.

cally autonomous and thus more problematic. An example of an application of the concept in present-day China is given by Gries (2005: 243-250) as the *Kissinger complex* and the *Nobel complex*.

According to the first, Chinese nationalists exercised an exaggerated desire for external confirmation through the positive evaluations of China by Henry Kissinger. Kissinger praising Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai was an overly emphasised theme among Chinese nationalists in historical discussions concerning the warming of diplomatic relations during the early 1970s.¹⁰⁴

The external positive evaluation validates group identities, as is the case with the Kissinger complex, but when the collective desires for positive self-confirmation are not met, negative individual and group emotions prevail. The *Nobel complex* thus deals with the flipside of the Kissinger complex. It is based on the anger of the Chinese nationalists at having being denied international affirmation in that no Chinese economist has been awarded the Nobel Prize, in spite of the Chinese “economic miracle”.¹⁰⁵ The insult has been exacerbated by first awarding a Nobel to Guo Xingjian in 2000, considered a dissident writer, and more recently to the human rights activist Liu Xiaobo in 2010. This way personal and collective emotion has become intertwined through, on the one hand, awareness and, on the other, autonomous processes.¹⁰⁶

To apply the concept of complex to the study of PRC public diplomacy, certain conditions that transform individual emotions into collective and thus political must be met. Brewer (2000) recognises four stages in both in-group and intergroup identity formation and competition. These are:

- In-group identification
- In-group positivity
- Intergroup competition
- Intergroup conflict

¹⁰⁴ See also Li, 1998.

¹⁰⁵ See also Zhao, 1997.

¹⁰⁶ See also Crocker and Luhtanen, 1990.

Building on the argument of Brewer (2000), Gries (2005: 239-240) further argues that in-group identification invariably leads to a positive evaluation of the group, but does not inevitably lead to intergroup competition or intergroup conflict. However, Gries (2005: 240) actually shows that the *de facto* social comparison takes place between stages two and three: “*When the goodness or honour of our nations is challenged, we will compare our nations with other nations.*” Moreover, Gries (2005, 240) identifies three conditions for comparison to turn into competition: that being compared must be *salient*, the comparison must be *consequential* and the act of comparison must be a *zero-sum* game. In other words, the competitor, the competition and the outcome must be significant in order to transform group behaviour.

Regarding the Kissinger and Nobel complexes, a salient comparison would be against the West (especially the US).¹⁰⁷ To be consequential, the comparison would have to have special meaning, in this case, recognition from a prestigious party (Kissinger/Nobel Prize Committee). In addition, Gries (2005: 249) argues that the cultural detail of *Face*, that is, gaining respect in the eyes of the other, would in China constitute of a zero-sum game. Within the framework of national comparison, there would only be winners and losers. Therefore status (e.g. gaining face) could be considered a zero-sum resource.¹⁰⁸

6.3.2. *Group Identification Through Martial Arts*

The four phases of group identification appear in popular cultural products that the PRC-led Chinese cultural industry produces, for instance in martial arts films. A case in point are the *Ip Man* (叶问) and the sequel *Ip Man 2* (叶问2) films produced by Mandarin Films, and released in 2008 and 2010, respectively. The films were successful at the box office, especially in Mainland China. Despite not being released in Europe and the US, the first film grossed \$22 million and the second \$15 million worldwide during their theatrical runs. The sequel was more popular in Hong Kong in its opening weekend than the popular Hollywood action film *Iron Man 2*, released at the same time, and went on to

¹⁰⁷ Or Japan, not so much Philippines or Vietnam.

¹⁰⁸ see also Milner, 1994.

break box office records in Singapore, making the films fitting examples of PRC public diplomacy products.

The films are loosely based on the biography of the famous Chinese martial artist Ye Wen (叶问) (1893-1972) who popularised the style of Wing Chun in Wushu.¹⁰⁹ In the first film, Ye is pictured as a wealthy and well-respected martial arts teacher with a beautiful middle-class family and lifestyle. He is superior in martial arts and gives spontaneous lessons, not only in fighting, but also in high morals, to his fellow Foshan. The idyllic harmony is first disrupted by a group of reckless northern Chinese who arrive to challenge the local master (Ye) in martial arts. After much unwillingness to fight, contemplation, and hesitation, Ye is left no other choice but to face the northern challengers, whom he overcomes in both fighting skill and moral conduct. The dispute between the northern and southern Chinese is soon settled and moved to the background of the narrative, through the arrival of the Japanese occupation force. First Ye is deprived of his home and forced into dirty factory labour. He is then forced to pit his wits against the Japanese officers who practise karate. In the final fight, he beats the Japanese colonel in a public duel, at the end of which he is shot by the colonel's right-hand man in most unsportsman-like fashion. The film concludes with the badly wounded Ye barely escaping Foshan for Hong Kong with his family.

The second film follows the same pattern of narrative, but is situated in Hong Kong. There, the family man Ye struggles to succeed with his new martial arts school, the directors of the local competing schools being unhappy and unconvinced about the newcomer. After much physical and moral back-and-forth among the Chinese, mutual respect is accomplished. After this is achieved, a common enemy again appears in the form of a rude barbarian, a racist British boxing champion who arrives in Hong Kong. Again, after

¹⁰⁹ What made Ye famous was his role as the original teacher, master and mentor of Bruce Lee, the famous Hong Kong and Hollywood Kung Fu actor. According to an actual biography as told by his son, Ip Ching, Ye grew up in Foshan, Southern China where he started the practice of martial arts, and later proceeded to work as a police officer. Acting as an officer of the Kuomintang, Ye left Foshan for Hong Kong in 1949 after the Communist accession. During his stay in Hong Kong, he eventually set up a Wing Chun school where he got acquainted with Bruce Lee. According to one biographer of Lee, Ye financed his opium habit and addiction through teaching. He died in 1972 of throat cancer in Hong Kong (Clouse, 1989).

initial refusal to fight, Ye is forced to take over the much larger and stronger opponent in a public dual to revenge the death of his former Chinese opponent, with whom the inner dispute was earlier settled in a civilised manner. In the end, Ye is of course victorious, and the film ends with him delivering a lecture on noble morals to the international audience of the fight.

The narratives of both films follow the general phases of group identity formation outlined by Brewer (2000) and Gries (2005). Firstly, the *in-group* identification takes place during the seemingly civilised and harmless bickering between first the northern and southern Chinese, and then in Hong Kong between the newcomer Ye and the already established martial art schools of Kowloon. These disputes are settled in a cultured fashion, where harmony and high morals are in the end applied by all parties, leading to in-group positivity. Afterwards when the goodness and honour of the in-group (Chinese) is challenged by first the Japanese, and then the British, the conflict leads to *intergroup* competition. In both cases the contest takes place against a *salient* opponent (Japan, the West), has *consequences* (the honour of the Chinese nation), and the act of comparison is a *zero-sum game* (a dual to the death).

In the comparative narratives of both films, there exists an exaggerated desire for external confirmation validating the group identity, and when the positive self-confirmation is denied, negative individual emotions prevail (anger, hate and desire for revenge). Needless to say, in this analysis Ye Wen could be seen as an analogy of the contemporary Chinese nation.

It should also be stated that this type of exploitation of nationalistic sentiment, the fabrication of history, and the elevation of national historical figures, i.e. taking “artistic license”, is common for entertainment industries in general, not only for Chinese television dramas, but also for Hollywood. Indeed, it would be hard to deny that cultural stereotyping is common for those industrial entertainment products that capitalise on national sentiments. However, the application of social psychological concepts could give further insight. In this light, it could be argued that the two Ip Man films represent a longing for balance within Chinese society between the polar opposites of archetypal modernity, namely the seeking of stability between the quest for “harmony” and the constant desire to juxtapose China with the external world. Here an Apollonian archetypal disposition is revealed through the character of Ye Wei as a mature *father* who disciplines his passions

and serves as an upholder of the status quo. At the other end of the spectrum, as a polar opposite of the Apollonian archetype, Ye Wei is also forced to act as a Faustian *hero* demonstrating the vitality of the Chinese culture in battling the more physical (salient) enemies of China.

In any case, the story of the Ip Man movies did not end here. In May 2015, it was widely reported that a third installment in the franchise would be filmed, produced by Hong Kong-based Pegasus Films. The founder of Pegasus films is Raymond Wong, the Hong Kong film producer, whose company Mandarin films also produced the two previous Ip Man films. In this regard, it is interesting to note that in 2001 Mandarin Films listed on the Hang Seng (Hong Kong Stock Exchange),¹¹⁰ while the relationship between Hong Kong and the Mainland also remains convoluted in cinematic productions, making the concept of “Chinese cinema” anything but clear-cut. With a history of operating autonomously from the Mainland, Hong Kong is usually associated with a cinematic tradition that “defies easy categorisation as to whether it is “Chinese or not” (Rojas, 2013, 2). In fact, it has been argued that, from the middle of the 20th century, the Hong Kong film industry has had to negotiate its relationship with the Mainland and the PRC government with regard to the Mainland’s cultural, political and economic influence (Fu, 2013). In this light, it is interesting to note that, although the two previous Ip Man instalments were on paper produced in Hong Kong, the actual filming took place in Shanghai.

Despite its public listing in Hong Kong, the cooperation between Mandarin Films and the PRC government has not been fully verified. The connection appeared clearer, nonetheless, in May 2015 when Mike Tyson, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, and Shi Jianxiang, a Chinese producer and entrepreneur, held a joint press conference in Shanghai to declare the filming of *Ip Man 3*. The executive producer Shi is the founder and the CEO of the Shanghai Kuailu Investment Group. In July 21, 2015 Shi received an award from the Xinhua News Agency Hong Kong Branch, for his “special contribution to the celebrations of Hong Kong’s 18th anniversary of returning to China”.¹¹¹ According

¹¹⁰ See: <http://www.mandarinfilms.com/index.php?apps=content&cid=2&layout=display&menuid=3&lang=zh-HK>

¹¹¹ See Shanghai Daily July 21, 2015: <http://www.shanghaidaily.com/metro/Film-producer-Shi-Jianxiang-receives-award-from-Xinhua-News-Agency/shdaily.shtml>

to reports, Shi convinced Tyson to play a role in the new Ip Man installation while meeting him in Los Angeles early 2015, where Shi was invited to “participate in the Oscars” and “explore investment opportunities” as a guest of Paramount Pictures, the Hollywood production company behind the Transformers franchise.¹¹² A Reuters article cited Shi:

“I liked reading martial arts novels when I was a little child, and have been fascinated with Kong Fu since then [...] I think of myself as macho, generous and bold, just like those novel characters. After talking with Tyson, I also found him warm and loyal to friends. That’s why we swore to be brothers.”¹¹³

In the third film, Tyson plays a property developer/street fighter and antagonist to Ye Wen played again by Donnie Yen. The archetypal disposition of the films is revealed again in this interview: Shi as the executive producer would also like to see himself as both a father-figure and a hero who apparently sees the need to stand in a social hierarchy on an equal level with a Western “tough guy” Mike Tyson. In the article, Shi further sheds light on his personal motives to produce the film:

“The movie also conveys the spirit of emotion and justice [...] This year marks the 70th anniversary of World War II, and the 110th of the founding of the Chinese film industry. I feel like I’m not only publishing a movie, but carrying forward the Chinese spirit as well.”¹¹⁴

It would thus seem that the earlier instalments and the upcoming Ip Man production are made with the consent of the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy. Moreover, there was little doubt that the plot would follow the general guidelines of the previous films, where the character of Mike Tyson has the role of the salient Western opponent against

¹¹² <http://variety.com/2014/film/columns/transformers-age-of-extinction-patriotic-for-china-1201257030/>

¹¹³ See Yahoo Finance May 8, 2015: <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/mike-tyson-joins-ip-man-121200307.html>

¹¹⁴ See Yahoo Finance May 8, 2015: <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/mike-tyson-joins-ip-man-121200307.html>

the hero and father-figure to Donnie Yen's Ye Wei. Mike Tyson was also praised by Yen in Xinhua coverage as a "smart actor".¹¹⁵

Against expectations, the third Ip Man film, however, followed a slightly different narrative. Despite the slight variation in the plot, the film nonetheless continued the same themes of in-group/out-group formation of the previous instalments. This time too, the protagonist Yi Wei must endure opposition from both Westerners and Chinese citizens of Hong Kong alike. The role of the main antagonist, however, is assigned to the latter. After first, through fighting, gaining the respect of the Western real estate developer Frank, played by Tyson, the main problematics of the text turn to the question of whose Wing Chun is more authentic, that of Yi Wei's or that of a local Hong Kong master. The question is solved in a fight that Yi Wei again is reluctant to take part in. In fact, his dying wife sings Yi Wei up for the fight: as we already know, he is a pacifist by nature after all. After the duel is done, the again victorious Yi Wei remarks: "What's most important are the ones closest to us".

The allegorical symbolism in the latest Ip Man film is quite explicit. The reading that I make here follows that of the earlier films. In it the character of Yi Wei symbolises the CCP, that of Mike Tyson the West in general and the US in particular, and the local Hong

¹¹⁵It seems, however, that Mike Tyson is not the only "actor" marginalised by Hollywood whom the PRC public diplomacy is willing to recruit for the cause. In July 2015, it was widely reported that, this time, the outcast Hollywood star Mel Gibson would be in cooperation with the producer Shi Jianxiang, serving as an art director for an upcoming Chinese WWII movie, entitled *the Bombing*. The film tackles the air raid of Chongqing by the Japanese air force during the WWII as part of the Sino-Japanese War. According to reports, the film will "portray the suffering of the Chinese people at that time and their determination to fight against fascism." This time the executive producer Shi Jianxiang commented: "I hope audiences around the world can appreciate the cruelty of war and our courage, determination and capability to fight against it. China needs such movies that deliver hope and spirit." The film will also feature the Hollywood A-list star Bruce Willis, but the significance of his role remains a mystery as Willis is scheduled to film his scenes in only eight days. The presence of the star, nevertheless, will undoubtedly bring to the film much-needed prestige and credibility, at least for the domestic audiences in Mainland China.

Source: HNGN July 14, 2015: <http://www.hngn.com/articles/109235/20150714/mel-gibson-art-director-chinese-wwii-movie-bombing-china.htm>.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-05/12/c_134231748.htm.

Kong masters, Chinese opposition to the CCP, particularly the Hong Kong democracy movement. The problematics again revolve around in-group formation by gaining recognition from a salient out-group. In the last film, the main question seems to be who has the right to lead the in-group and what type of in-group it should be. This is evident through the, this time, rather serious conflict between the ethnic Chinese over whose martial arts are the most genuine. The fact that “the ones closest to us” matter most, seems to imply that Hong Kong should unite with the Mainland as the PRC is both benevolent and powerful – and importantly, recognised and respected by the West. The aim to depict Yi Wei as a restraint and calm character becomes evident through the use of a particular Wing Chung technic “eye gouge”. In his fight against Frank, Yi Wei deliberately misses the strike, whereas in the final fight the Hong Kong master executes the blow against Yi Wei. Giving an interview, Donnie Yen recognised that this was done on purpose to highlight the character of Yi Wei.¹¹⁶

The symbolism exhibited in the Ip Man films underlines the importance of political reading of the text. In this interpretation, the films highlight the type of recognition seeking where outer recognition is used to create inner legitimacy. In “technical terms”, this could be called a *Victimisation Complex*. In other words, the long-standing narrative of victimisation by the PRC may be an indication of an autonomous compensatory process. A psychological conclusion would be that the distance between the opposites of inadequacy and superiority in the case of the PRC would not be “healthy”, and that if the compensatory movements were not brought from unconscious to collective awareness, the complex would cause (increase) distance from reality.

6.3.3. *Defending the Wall*

The final popular culture text that I wish to examine here concerns the biggest and most expensive mainland Chinese film production to date. This is the action/historical/fantasy movie entitled *The Great Wall*. The film was released in 2016 in China by China Film Group and in the US by Universal Studios. It is a co-production between

¹¹⁶ See: Feng Huang (Phoenix) Entertainment. 9 March 2016.

Chinese and US companies. While the filming took place in China, it is an English language film starring Western Hollywood stars such as Matt Damon, Pedro Pascal and Willem Dafoe.

The plot is relatively straightforward, the events taking place during the Song Dynasty at the Great Wall and its surroundings. In the narrative two Westerners, played by Damon and Pascal arrive in China and go to the Wall in search of gunpowder. At the Wall, they are sustained by a Chinese company occupying the Wall against a threat of monsters, which are in habit of attacking the kingdom every sixty years.

From the outset, the narrative underlines social differences between the two Westerners and the Chinese military occupying the Wall. Whilst the former are depicted as dirty and deceitful (they do not disclose their attempt to steal gunpowder), the Chinese are portrayed as clean, beautiful, efficient and ethical. The Chinese company is divided into five units that each portray different special skills: the Bear Troop (close combat), the Crane Troop (acrobatics), the Eagle Troop (archers), the Tiger Troop (engineers), and the Deer Troop (horse-riding). After initial mistrust and, of course, a bath, the Westerners prove themselves in battle against the monsters attacking the Wall. After that, the narrative revolves around the Westerners facing an inner conflict of whether go through with their sinister plan to steal the Chinese secrets or whether to help the imperial company to fight of the monsters that have now moved beyond the Wall, and are closing in on the emperor in Beijing. The character of the most famous celebrity, that of Matt Damon, does the moral act, and decides to help the Chinese in their fight against the hoard of monsters.

The text is interesting from various points of view. The obvious symbolism again concerns the in-group/out-group identity formation. The imperial military company represents the PRC and the Westerners the Western powers, which are depicted as filthy, morally questionable, but able to exercise considerable military might. The role of the monsters is more open for polysomic reading. On the one hand, these attack the Middle Kingdom from the outside and thus could be seen as symbolising an external threat. On the other, a different reading would place them symbolising an inner power struggle between the CCP and Chinese opposition. In this interpretation, the Western powers have a choice to make: either support the CCP or face an influx of uncontrollable masses.

Instead of this type of symbolism, however, Western audiences and the media were concerned about other aspects of the narrative. It was widely suspected that the film represented what is known as “white-washing” or “white saviour narrative”.¹¹⁷ These refer to a text where a white protagonist is placed in a non-white setting to make a popular cultural product more appealing to Western audiences, and thus insulting to the non-Western world. While in some instances this might occur, concerns were unwarranted in the case of the Great Wall, for the above-mentioned reasons. It should also be pointed out that the film was produced by the China Film Group, the Chinese state-owned media corporation, and was financed by the Wanda Group, closely connected to the central government. In an interview with *Indiewire*, the director, Zhang Yimou, confessed that white-washing was not the intention of the film, but that: “In many ways *The Great Wall* is the opposite of what is being suggested”.¹¹⁸ To underline the point, after the film received critical reviews in mainland China (for poor special effects), the *People’s Daily*, the official newspaper of the state, ran an article criticising the reviews, after which these were taken down.¹¹⁹

6.4. Summarised Findings

This chapter set out with the intention of clarifying what type of propensities the perception of ‘self’ and ‘other’ introduce to PRC public diplomacy. Again, I will first restate the research questions outlined at the beginning of the chapter, and then address each.

RQ#2: What type of propensities does the PRC perception of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ introduce to China’s soft power communication?

Regarding in-group formation, peculiar blurring of media demarcations as one important propensity is used to achieve a perception of out-group validation. In doing this,

¹¹⁷ See: *The Guardian*. (29 July 2016). "Asian Americans decry 'whitewashed' Great Wall film starring Matt Damon".

BBC. (29 July 2016). "The Great Wall: Is Matt Damon 'whitewashing' or good business?".

The Diplomat. "Matt Damon Film Sparks New Round of 'Whitewashing' Controversy".

¹¹⁸ *IndieWire*. "The Great Wall Director Addresses Matt Damon Whitewashing Controversy".

¹¹⁹ See: 遭人民日报批评后 猫眼专业影评人评分下线". 网易.

one aim of the communication is to question borderline in-group identities. This is evident for instance through the references to “some people” as well as the assuring of Hong Kong of the benevolent but powerful character of the PRC.

RQ#2.1: How are in-group/out-group dichotomies used in PRC public diplomacy productions?

Giving attention to in-group/out-group identity formation further clarifies the narratives of PRC public diplomacy products, as analysed here through the reading of the Ip Man texts. The question concerns in-group formation and intergroup competition: the disposition is revealed in the negative narrative dichotomies between China and those external opponents that are considered salient enough, with dire consequences.

Based on the above analyses, the diagnostic of the PRC seems to be based on an identity that lacks outer recognition and inner legitimacy. This disposition introduces recurring themes to popular culture, which aim to reinforce the inner social coherence of the Chinese population and the perception of recognition of the PRC by the outside world.

7. ANALYSIS: CHINA'S AGGREGATE WESTERN MEDIA IMAGE

As argued throughout the dissertation, Chinese public diplomacy is media-centric, whereby it aims to better the image of China in Western news media. Moreover, China's international status seems to be a question of heightened national identity and pride in the PRC. Chinese leadership consequently appears to be concerned about the alleged negative perception of China in European and US news media. Therefore, Chinese state media and PRC government spokespersons frequently claim that Western media is biased against China.¹²⁰ This victimisation discourse has broadly speaking two overlapping but separate purposes. On the one hand, it creates domestic legitimacy for the Communist Party (Johnston, 1999: 292), on the other, it gives both reason and meaning to PRC public diplomacy communication. This includes the improvement of China's image in the Western media from negative to positive (Wang, 2008).

In reviewing the literature (Chapter 1), very little was found in terms of automated statistical tools to analyse the development of country- and topic-specific sentiment over time in news coverage. The bulk of prior studies that specifically focus on China's media image consists of small-to-moderate-N methods. In these studies, the range of examined N varies between 63 (Zhong and Zhang, 2016) and 4,250 (Xiang, 2013). To examine China's media image, this chapter proposes an automated content method, previously applied to other large-n textual analysis within political science (Monroe and Schrod, 2008). The specific research questions for the analysis are:

RQ#3: To what extent, if at all, does a negative bias against China appear within Western news media?

RQ3.1#: How has the sentiment of China-related Western news coverage developed since 2003?

¹²⁰ Chinese state media has recently accused Western news outlets of bias against the BRIC countries (Xinhua, 2015), China's engagement in the South China Sea (Global Times, 2016), and even China's growth figures (China Daily, 2016). See:
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/indepth/2015-02/04/c_133969308.htm
<http://world.huanqiu.com/exclusive/2016-02/8591779.html> http://www.china-daily.com.cn/business/2016-04/27/content_24897411.htm

RQ#4: Which news category - culture, politics or economy - within China-related coverage has the most positive/least positive tone within Western news coverage?

I expect that comparing the coverage of China with other East Asian countries and regions will clarify the extent of the assumed news media slant. The selection of the comparison group (Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong) reflects the difference in systems of governance, which are democratic as opposed to the authoritarian China, adhering mostly to human rights such as freedom of speech, valued among Western democracies and international journalists. Consequently, if the sentiment of the China-related content is similar to or more positive than that of the comparison group, this should dismiss the existence of a slant against China.

I also assume that the mostly liberal Western media does not support authoritarian governance, so coverage addressing Chinese culture is expected to be more positive in tone than politics. While it is difficult to outline clear assumptions relating to coverage addressing economics, any related expectations are at this point left ambiguous.

7.1. Automated Content Analysis: Methodology

Today, there is a growing interest among social sciences in the tone (or sentiment) of political writing. This has coincided with the development of information technological methods and a rapidly expanding volume of information in electronic form. The availability of electronic texts presents opportunities and challenges for political science: large-scale data has the potential for novel approaches but its manual inspection is impractical. For this reason, computer scientists have developed methods for automated content analysis, which has become a commonly used form of empirical research in the study of political content (for instance, Hillard et al., 2008; Spirling, 2012).

A recent methodological contribution to the use of automated content analysis for interpretation of political texts is Grimmer and Steward (2013), who overview methods for *scaling* and *classification*. The study emphasises that the complexity of language implies that all automated content analysis necessarily fails in providing an accurate account of the data-generating process used to produce texts. However, Grimmer and Steward (2013: 3-4) suggest that, in developing models that are helpful in making inferences from the

data, content analysis can be useful. They also suggest that these models should be evaluated based on their ability to perform basic social scientific tasks, such as assigning documents to predetermined categories, discovering new category schemes or measuring theoretically relevant quantities from large data sets.

While automated content analysis makes inferences about communication in general, scaling situates an actor in a political space, and classification categorises textual content for predetermined or non-predetermined sets. Applying classification, the *dictionary method* uses relative frequency of key words to measure the presence of given categories in textual data. The mapping function is the “word list”, found in “lexicons” or “dictionaries”. A dictionary for a specific category can assign a textual unit to that category if the text contains a word on that list (Atteveld, van Noije and Vliegenthart 2005: 3), or a dictionary can use the rate at which key words appear in a text to measure the extent to which a document belongs to a given category (Grimmer and Steward 2013: 8). The function is more complex if the text is analysed as a whole entity instead of individual words, for instance using a formula entailing the frequency of both negative and positive words in a document. In any case, instead of fully manual coding or supervised machine learning with annotated data, a word list of *a priori* categories is used in the dictionary method for automated classification.

In counting the frequency of definitive keywords in a text, the crucial element is the composition of the machine-readable dictionary. The oldest and most expansive dictionary for political science remains the General Inquirer (GI), developed by Philip Stone and colleagues at Harvard during the 1960s (Stone et al 1966). Since then various lexicons for different purposes have been developed.¹²¹ Young and Soroka (2012: 218) merge three previous dictionaries (Roget’s Thesaurus, GI, and RID) into the *Lexicoder Sentiment Dictionary* (LSD) and evaluate the effectiveness of all four relative to hand-coding.

¹²¹ For instance, from communication the *DICTION* (Hart 2000), from psychology the *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count* (LIWC) (Pennebaker, Francis and Booth 2001), the *Regressive Imagery Dictionary* (RID) (Martindale 1975; 1990), from behavioural science the *Affective Norms for English Words* (ANEW) (Bradley and Lang 1999), from literature the *Whissell’s Dictionary of Affect in Language* (DAL) (Whissell 1989), and from computational linguistics the *Pointwise Mutual Information Workdlist* (PMI) (Turney and Littman 2003), the *Roget’s Thesaurus* (Roget 1911).

The validated results show that the LSD has capacity to establish the overall tone of newspaper articles. In this, the correlations were relatively high with all four dictionaries, and especially with the GI (0,67). As does the LSD, the GI provides categories also aimed at capturing the positive-negative sentiment of a text. In addition, however, the GI has word list categories for, among others, “culture”,¹²² “economy” and “politics”.

As Paisley (1968) notes, most content analysis research is more descriptive than inferential. Following Grimmer and Steward (2013), automated content analyses methods model political texts to help researchers make inferences. Therefore, the goal of building text models is different to the usual political science model implying causality. Unlike in this traditional causal model, including all possible realistic details might not make the text model more useful. Rather, “*subtleties of applying the methods to any one data set mean that models that are less sophisticated in the use of language may provide more useful analysis of texts.*” (Grimmer and Steward 2013: 4).

Existing studies also recognise further challenges of the dictionary method. Among the most notable is the fact that the automation processes words regardless of order or context as a “bag of words”. It assumes “semantic independence” not considering psychological information above the literal meaning (Young and Soroka, 2012: 205-210). On the other hand, there is evidence that the tone is far more dependent on the relation between words than topic.¹²³ A second major concern is the assumption of additivity, meaning that every instance of every word contributes isomorphically to the output. For instance, “evil” has more weight than “bad”. This, however, would seem to be less of an issue with content analyses than psychology, while it must be recognised that different weighing of words can present a potential problem for automated word frequency analyses (Young and Soroka 2012: 210).

As the necessary component of the dictionary method, prior research recognises the *validation process* (especially Grimmer and Steward, 2013). Due to the automated nature of the method, it is not given that a particular dictionary would give correct results, even

¹²² The category ‘Exprsv’ containing 205 words associated with the arts, sports, and self-expression is interpreted as “culture” in this study. See Appendix 1.

¹²³ For instance Thomas, Pang and Lee (2006); Wilson, Wiebe and Hoffman (2005). See Young and Soroka 2012, 209.

if developed for that particular purpose (for instance the GI for political content). This is especially important using dictionaries with a priori defined categories where wordlists produce results both with annotation (machine learning) and without annotation (non-machine learning). The aim of the validation in both cases is therefore to ensure that the values correspond with the assumed categories. This can be done using predictive validity (for instance statistical correlation) and/or by hand-coding (using human coders).

The analysis documented below applies the GI dictionary for its benefits in analysing political texts. For validation of the method, the study applies both predictive validation and hand-coding. The former seeks correlations with the results of the analysis and 1) the World Bank GDP/capita rankings and, 2) the Corruption Perception Index for respective years. It is predicted that the country list of ranked sentiment as the result of the analysis correlates with both indicators. Prior studies suggest that there exists a negative correlation between corruption and GDP/capita (e.g. Aidt, 2009; Mustapha, 2014). By selecting these indicators for statistical validation, it is predicted that ranked results will correlate with both indicators.

The AUC values, in the context of this dissertation, analyse whether the tendency of the documents concerning the target region have more positive (or negative) sentiment than the other documents. The AUC values are thus used to determine whether the observed changes in Chinese coverage can be explained solely by the overall changes of tone in the two corpora. In other words, the AUC analysis aims to rule out possible macro-level explanations for changes in sentiment regarding China-related coverage, including developments in areas such as “world politics” or “journalistic habits”.

The research questions concern regional, thematic and temporal aspects of China’s image in Western media. To analyse the regional and thematic aspects, the documents in the data set were geocoded into China, Japan, South-Korea and Taiwan regions¹²⁴ and

¹²⁴ In the preliminary experiments, Hong Kong was also considered a region but was dropped from the analysis after observing that it could not be reliably categorised by the automated method. This is not very surprising since Hong Kong has been the regional base for Western outlets to cover Asia Pacific, East and South-East Asia.

further categorised under culture, economics and politics topics. To address the temporal aspect, the data set was selected to be composed of documents from two time periods.

I consider 2003 and 2004 as the key years in relaxing the restrictions on foreign journalists in China (see Chapter 6.2.). Therefore, The Reuters Corpus, Volume 1 (RCV1) and Thomson Reuters Text Research Collection (TRC2) were selected for analysis. They consist of news articles ranging from 20 August 1996 to 19 August 1997 and 1 January 2008 to 28 February 2009, respectively.¹²⁵ These time periods are located before and after the beginning of the policy changes with a sufficient margin, and should therefore reflect the development of the image of China due to PRC public diplomacy efforts.

Instead of causality, a relational correlation is assumed. The reason for selecting Reuters data for the analysis is twofold: 1) Reuters is one of the three major Western news agencies that not only produces and gathers reporting but also sells it to subscribing news organisations¹²⁶ and, 2) Reuters News (headquarters in London, England) is a subsidiary of the Thomson Reuters Corporation (headquarters in New York, US and Toronto, Canada) making the agency transnational, transcending individual countries and individual newspapers.

The analysis is validated by domain experts and uses a predictive validity by correlating the results with the Transparency International Corruption Index and the World Bank GDP/Capita rankings. The limiting factor is that Thomson Reuters has made available for research purposes only these two data sets. More recent data would have the possibility to examine the tendencies over a longer time span. The years between 1996 and 2009 are nevertheless considered adequate since the initial PRC public diplomacy push took place during the key years of 2003 and 2004, giving enough interval pre-and post-event.

¹²⁵ The origins and characteristics of RCV1 made available by Reuters are discussed by Rose et al. (2002) and Lewis et al. (2004) while TRC2 was originally released by Thomson Reuters for the TREC-2010 Blog Track (Ounis et al. 2011).

¹²⁶ Others being Associated Press (US) and Agence France-Presse (France).

7.2. The Quantification

In the actual analysis, classification was applied to obtain meaningful document subsets for comparison: documents concerning a particular topic had to be separated from those that did not and documents had to be grouped by the nation they discussed. The overall sentiments of these groups were quantified, following the approach taken by Young and Soroka (2012), discussed by Grimmer and Steward (2013), and statistically analysed. While state-of-the-art machine learning techniques may be adapted in future studies, this study applied dictionary methods because the availability of sentiment dictionaries minimises the need for manual effort and the large-scale, comparative nature of the analysis is expected to mitigate the general weaknesses of dictionary methods. Given the similarity of the GI and the LSD along with the expectation of diminished differences between dictionaries in a comparative study, the GI was selected over the LSD because it provides both topic and sentiment categories. The usage of the LSD dictionary would also be suboptimal without the accompanying pre-processing steps of Lexicoder.

The development of sentiment from 1997 to 2008 was evaluated by comparing two large-scale corpora: Reuters Corpus, Volume 1 (RCV1) and Thomson Reuters Text Research Collection (TRC2). They consist of news articles from 20 August 1996 to 19 August 1997 and 1 January 2008 to 28 February 2009, respectively. The analysis was first performed on the full (pre-processed) data set and then repeated on three subsets that only consist of documents concerning one of the three selected topics: economy, politics or culture. Four East Asian countries and regions – China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan were examined. The analysis was performed in the following steps: text pre-processing, document classification, document filtering, variable selection and sentiment analysis. The first two steps were executed at document level and the data was aggregated in the last two steps in order to analyse the development at a nation level. In addition, the validity of the analysis was evaluated.

In the text pre-processing step, the documents were cleaned of inline metadata and tokenised. The words were then lemmatised and converted to lower case. Lemmatisation is more accurate than stemming and particularly important in this study because the GI consists of lemmas. Punctuation tokens (i.e. tokens without a letter or a digit) were filtered out along with common stop words. The documents were then represented as vectors in

which the elements denote the frequencies of the words belonging to the selected categories of the GI as well as the total number of words.

In the document classification step, each document was assigned to exactly one nation and zero or more topics, which describe the content. While RCV1 includes the topic and nation classifications in its metadata (Rose et al., 2002), TRC2 does not have such information. To produce comparable results, the nation information was extracted from TRC2 documents by automatically detecting the city–date pattern in the dateline – such as “TOKYO, Jan 1 (Reuters)” – and determining the nation from the city. The corresponding information in RCV1 is readily available as the location of the document creator as a piece of metadata. The nation names were normalised by manually matching the variants encountered in the two corpora and in the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) data used in the validation (see below). For both corpora, a document was assigned to a particular topic if its headline contained at least one word belonging to the corresponding GI category. The Econ*, Polit*, and Exprs categories were chosen to represent the topics of economy, politics and culture, respectively. This procedure is likely to produce a classification that is less accurate than the metadata of RCV1 but it is obtainable for both corpora.

After the classification step, the data sets were filtered to improve the reliability of the analysis. First, the documents that could not be assigned to a nation were excluded because the analysis depends on the ability to aggregate documents by nation. Such documents in the news stream of TRC2 are, for example, service alerts and commodity price updates. Documents without any full sentences were excluded from RCV1 for a similar reason. Second, the nations that contributed less than 0.1% to the number of documents were removed because the sentiment value for those nations would have been determined by a small number of documents producing only noise for the analysis.

Two variables were selected for analysis, both of which reflect the polarity of the documents and the strength of the polarity. They are derived from the frequencies of the words with positive and negative connotation, represented by the GI categories Pos and Neg, respectively, and the total number of words.

The variable q measures the tone of a textual unit and, following Young and Soroka (2012), is defined as the difference between positive and negative words normalised by the length of the text:

$$q(d) = \frac{w_d^+ - w_d^-}{w_d}$$

where the frequencies of the positive, negative and all words of the document are denoted by w_d^+ , w_d^- , and w_d , respectively. For example, the value -0.02 indicates that, on average, there are two negative words more than positive words in a passage 100 words long. In the analysis, a value was produced for a nation by treating the concatenation of its documents as a single document. The selected nations were also evaluated using the rankings of the nations within the corpora, which alleviates the issues arising from the two corpora having unequal distributions of q .

The variable r reflects how well the documents concerning one nation are separated from the others when ranked by q . In an extreme case, each document concerning the target nation has a higher (or lower) q value than any document not concerning the nation which yields $r = 1$ (or $r = 0$). If the two groups of documents are not separated, $r = 0.5$. The variable is defined as

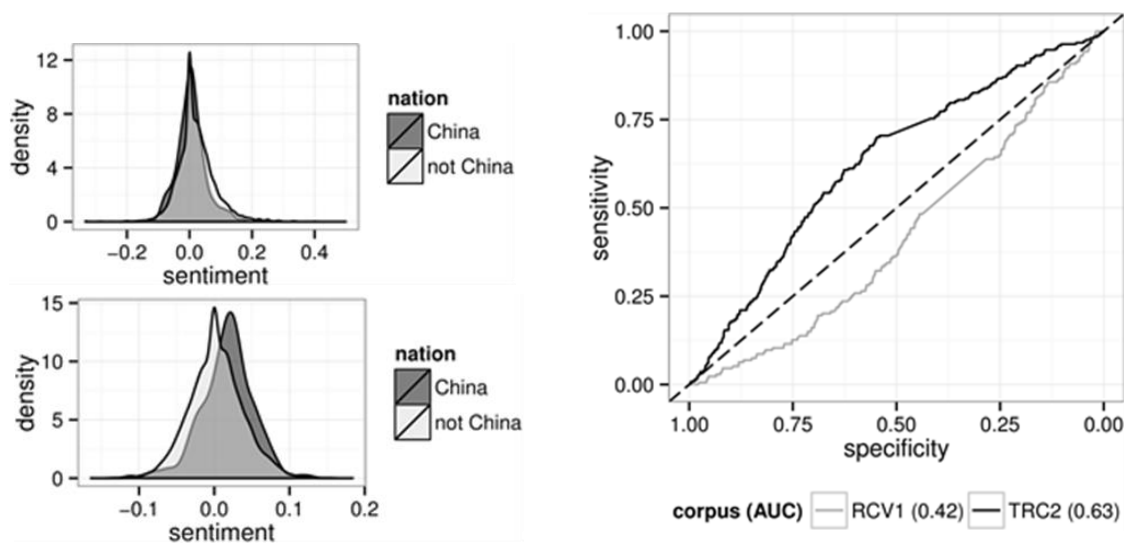
$$r = A(D, c, q)$$

where D is a set of documents and the function A calculates AUC, the area under the receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve, given the documents and the functions c and q . The function c is defined as

$$c(d) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } d \text{ concerns the target nation} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Sentiment distributions and ROC curves are illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7 An exaggerated example of sentiment distributions and ROC curves for illustrative purposes. Upper left: the sentiment distributions are close to each other in RCV1. Lower left: the sentiment distribution of China-related content has shifted to the right (i.e. become more positive) relative to non-China content in TRC2. Right: the higher the ROC curve is located, the more China-related content has been separated in a positive direction from the non-China content. The dotted diagonal line indicates the case of no separation. The ROC curve of TRC2 is located higher than that of RCV1 because China-related content (relative to non-China content) is more positive in TRC2 than in RCV1.



AUC is equivalent to the well-known Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney U statistics, first proposed by Wilcoxon (1945), which are used in testing whether observations from one distribution tend to be greater (or less) than those from another. Its value can be interpreted as the probability that a random observation from the first distribution will have a higher value than a random observation from the second (Hanley and McNeil, 1982).

The advantage of r over q is the fact that the unequal distributions of q are implicitly addressed by r because one nation is always compared to the others within a corpus. The statistical test developed by DeLong et al. (1988) examines two ROC curves to determine whether their AUC values can be considered unequal. In the context of this study, it analyses whether the tendency of the documents concerning the target nation to have more positive (or negative) sentiment than the other documents has changed between the corpora. Hence, it assesses the development of sentiment over time. The test was originally

developed for paired observations but later extended to unpaired observations in the pROC package for the R programming language that was utilised in the analysis.

The document selection step was validated with hand-coding by domain experts. A stratified random sample of documents was selected from the computer-classified data set such that there were 15 documents for each of the 30 possible corpus-topic-nation combinations. Three coders¹²⁷ examined each document and assessed whether the given topic and nation were correct. The proportion of correctly assigned documents was estimated from the consensus, determined by a simple majority vote. The quality of the hand-coding was evaluated with Cohen's κ (Cohen, 1960), which measures an inter-coder agreement and takes into account the agreement by chance. That is, Cohen's κ is zero if there is no agreement beyond what is expected to occur by chance. The variable selection was validated by calculating the Spearman's rank correlations (Spearman, 1904) between the sentiment variables and the CPI (years 1997 and 2008 for RCV1 and TRC2, respectively).¹²⁸

7.3. Validation

The numeral output of the analysis is divided into validation values (Table 1) and actual tone measurement statistics (Table 2 and Table 3). Table 1 provides validation values as the percentages of correctly classified documents whereas Table 2 and 3 display the absolute and relative numbers of articles (column 1), the absolute sentiment ranks (column 2), the relative sentiment ranks (column 3, defined as the percentage of countries with equal or better rank), and the AUC-values (column 4).

Reviewing the validation values in Table 1, it can be found that the human coding corresponds well to the automated analysis regarding countries. The most likely reason for the high country agreement is that the country information is included in the metadata of RCV1, and the place of writing is provided in a standardised form in TRC2. Therefore, it is surprising that the values are not higher, for which a number of factors can be suggested: 1) even though the place of writing is correct, the article itself addresses another

¹²⁷ These were three Finnish political science majors.

¹²⁸ The Python programming language with the modules NLTK, Numpy, Scipy, Scikit-learn, Pandas, and rpy2 were utilised in the analysis.

country (for instance Japan), or 2) the upper limit of human capability to attribute articles to given countries could be approximately 80% (automated analysis making the correct assignment).

The results of the hand coding (Table 1) show that all regions were categorised with high precision (80%-93%). This validates the assumption of the analysis that the region from which the report originates reflects the perspective of the article and hence the sentiment should associate to that region instead of all regions mentioned in the article. In contrast to regions, there was variation in the precision of the topic categorisation. The economy topic was well categorised (89%) but notably small proportions of documents in the politics-specific and culture-specific subsets of documents were in fact about those two topics (47% and 21%, respectively). It is worth noting, however, that the culture topic of China has 37% precision, which is notably higher than those of other regions. Low precision values do not necessarily lead to unreliable AUC analysis (see Discussion), but they do decrease the sensitivity of the analysis to detect differences. Therefore, the subsets with low precision values should be analysed with a heightened level of scepticism.

	Economy	Politics	Culture	Country
China	76.7% (0.90)	53.3% (0.73)	36.7% (0.93)	91.1% (0.94)
Japan	80.0% (1.00)	40.0% (0.79)	3.3% (0.37)	80.0% (0.76)
South Korea	90.0% (1.00)	60.0% (0.86)	23.3% (1.00)	93.3% (0.82)
Taiwan	90.0% (1.00)	46.7% (0.81)	13.3% (0.71)	90.0% (0.78)
Topic	89.3% (0.93)	51.3% (0.73)	21.3% (0.78)	

Table 1 The precision of automated classification as evaluated by the majority of human annotators. The values in parenthesis are the highest of the three pairwise Cohen's κ values and reflect the reliability of the manual annotation. The values for regions are China: 91.1%, Japan: 80.0%, South-Korea: 93.3%, Taiwan: 90.0%, and for topics Economy: 89.3%, Politics: 51.3% and Culture: 21.3%, respectively.

Surveying the values further in Table 1, in comparison to the country agreement there is less confidence in the automated analysis assigning correct thematic categories. On the other hand, large variation is observed: economy is well validated while politics is limitedly and culture only poorly validated. For this reason, some scepticism is warranted: if a large proportion of the included articles within the cultural topic address other themes, the values do not reflect the development of the sentiment within cultural content.

The Cohen's κ values in Table 1 indicate that, with the exception of the culture of Japan, manual annotation can be considered reliable.

It is also interesting to note that there is country-related variation within culture. For instance, China is well above the average while Japan is near the zero level, even though Japan as a country was well validated. Similar variation is also seen in other categories. For example, Chinese economy is well classified by the automated analysis (76.7%) but Chinese politics is more problematic (53.3%).

The correlation of the Corruption Index with the q-variable (0.59 for RCV1, 0.37 for TRC2) and with the AUC-variable (0.55 for RCV1, 0.41 for TRC2) implies that both variables are appropriate. A similar observation can be made with the World Bank GDP per capita rankings: AUC-variable (0.54 for RCV1 and 0.54 for TRC2) and q-variable (0.5 for RCV1 and 0.53 for TRC2). The correlations are also statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) regarding both corpora and both variables.¹²⁹

7.4. The Volume of China-Related Content

Regarding the volume of China-related content, reviewing Table 4 the document counts in TRC2 are approximately two-fold in economy, one-and-half-fold in politics, and three-fold in culture as compared to RCV1. The relative increase in the Chinese culture category being notably higher than those of the other categories (excluding the economy of South-Korea) is consistent with the PRC cultural soft power push.

The numbers indicate a growth of interest in China in general and Chinese culture in particular. The observed trends, however, could be mostly attributed to the increase in

¹²⁹ The observation also has general socio-economic interest since the level of corruption would seem to correlate negatively with the development of either the actual GDP per capita (Mustapha 2014) or genuine wealth per capita (Aidt 2009). Both the Corruption Index and the country ranking of this research are based on subjective human perceptions measured from different data using completely different methods, where any statistical correlation would be estimated to have a low probability.

sentiment of economy because the weight of culture is small: reviewing table 5, the number of economy documents is ten times greater than that of culture documents in both corpora. Therefore, considering the high proportion of economy and the low validation values of culture (even though above average for China), the values of the culture topic may be more indicative of the tone shift in economy than in culture.

7.5. China's Country Image

The overall sentiment of the data seems to indicate a neutral tone of articles (the value of q-variable is at most 0.027. In the large data, however, minor differences also emerge. Due to a number of different factors of global scale (e.g. in "world events" and "journalistic approaches") spanning a decade, the examination of absolute sentiments would not be relevant. Instead, the relative sentiment ranks are significant: due to a different total number of countries included in the analysis between the two corpora, a change in absolute rank may be fully attributed to this variation. In addition, the relatively dense East Asian context offers a reasonable comparison of the country development.

	Document Count		Absolute Rank		Relative Rank		AUC		
	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	p-value
China	11439 (1.54%)	20659 (3.21%)	34	18	41.5%	31.0%	0.48	0.51	4.20-10 ⁻¹⁷
Japan	41259 (5.56%)	24124 (3.75%)	49	38	59.8%	65.5%	0.48	0.46	2.83-10 ⁻³⁰
South Korea	6155 (0.83%)	11498 (1.79%)	75	45	91.5%	77.6%	0.42	0.43	2.40-10 ⁻⁰¹
Taiwan	4468 (0.60%)	5661 (0.88%)	65	27	79.3%	46.6%	0.41	0.50	1.36-10 ⁻⁷³
Total	742323	643715	82	58					

Table 2 The overall document counts, absolute ranks, relative ranks (the percentage of countries with equal or better rank) and AUC values for each analysed country and corpus. The p-values refer to the DeLong test.

In the overall results of Table 2, the sentiment rank of China was quite high in both corpora. Most importantly, the tone shifted positively between the data sets (the relative rank improved from 41.5% to 31.0%), which verifies the second hypothesis. Only Taiwan had a larger increase in sentiment, but since its RCV1 value was lower than that of China, their TRC2 values settled close to each other. More specifically, of the thematic categories displayed in Table 3, China-related economic and cultural content shows a clear positive trend while the political category displays a negative trend. In comparison, the sentiment of Taiwan increased in all categories whereas the sentiment of Japan decreased.

The analysis of the AUC values leads to the same conclusions as above, because the q-variable and the AUC-variable follow each other closely: the higher the AUC, the higher the rank. This is not surprising because they rely on the same underlying sentiment analysis. The p-values indicate that most of the observed trends are statistically significant, even if the Bonferroni correction ($n=16$) is applied. The data provides strong evidence for a change in AUC in all cases except South Korea in general, the economy and politics of Japan and the culture of Taiwan. Table 2 shows that, regarding the numbers of news articles, there is an increase for China and South Korea, a decrease for Japan and no notable change for Taiwan when moving from RCV1 to TRC2. This is consistent with the reports concerning the popularity of the respective national industrial and cultural products (see Hong 2012).¹³⁰

Table 3 The document counts, absolute ranks, relative ranks (the percentage of countries with equal or better rank), and AUC values for each analysed country and corpus in each thematic category. The p-values refer to the DeLong test

¹³⁰ This is especially true concerning South Korea and Japan, who compete in the market and audience shares of not only popular culture but also consumer electronics products. Following its national strategy, since early 2000 the South Korean government in particular has invested aggressively in consumer industries and popular culture (Chua 2012; Hong 2012). There is reason to assume that this trend will also continue in more recent data.

Economy	Document Count		Absolute Rank		Relative Rank		AUC		
	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	p-value
China	6027 (1.72%)	11089 (3.21%)	55	25	67.1%	46.3%	0.45	0.51	1.27-10 ⁻³⁶
Japan	12436 (3.56%)	12587 (3.65%)	59	39	72.0%	72.2%	0.46	0.46	2.88-10 ⁻⁰²
South Korea	3248 (0.93%)	6367 (1.85%)	72	43	87.8%	79.6%	0.43	0.43	4.55-10 ⁻⁰⁵
Taiwan	2472 (0.71%)	2922 (0.85%)	75	26	91.5%	48.2%	0.40	0.50	1.29-10 ⁻⁴⁶
Total	349761	344993	82	54					

Politics	Document Count		Absolute Rank		Relative Rank		AUC		
	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	p-value
China	1564 (1.41%)	2362 (2.80%)	35	45	38.9%	62.5%	0.49	0.46	2.25-10 ⁻⁰⁴
Japan	2220 (2.01%)	1939 (2.30%)	42	47	46.7%	65.3%	0.48	0.46	1.52-10 ⁻⁰²
South Korea	965 (0.87%)	1086 (1.29%)	79	57	87.8%	79.2%	0.36	0.41	2.13-10 ⁻⁰⁵
Taiwan	558 (0.50%)	413 (0.49%)	68	22	75.6%	30.6%	0.42	0.53	1.35-10 ⁻¹⁰
Total	110554	84221	90	72					

Culture	Document Count		Absolute Rank		Relative Rank		AUC		
	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	RCV1	TRC2	p-value
China	506 (1.62%)	1378 (4.38%)	48	19	59.3%	34.6%	0.46	0.52	4.25-10 ⁻⁰⁵
Japan	1115 (3.56%)	1115 (3.54%)	22	38	27.2%	69.1%	0.56	0.44	7.06-10 ⁻²¹
South Korea	336 (1.07%)	448 (1.42%)	63	51	77.8%	92.7%	0.59	0.39	7.84-10 ⁻¹⁸
Taiwan	159 (0.51%)	257 (0.82%)	61	35	75.3%	63.6%	0.41	0.46	8.23-10 ⁻⁰²
Total	31292	31459	81	55					

7.6. Summarised Findings

The aim of this chapter was to quantify China's media image in Reuters news. Two main questions and one additional research question are presented in the introduction to the chapter. Below I will address RQ#3 and RQ3.1. together, and after that RQ#4.

RQ#3: To what extent, if at all, does a negative bias against China appear in Western news media?

RQ3.1#: How has the sentiment of China-related Western news coverage developed since 2003?

The results show that in total the sentiment of China-related content was relatively positive. The results of the automated content analysis reveal a positive development of tone in China-related overall coverage between 1996 (AUC: 0.48) and 2008 (AUC: 0.51). To get a sense of the magnitudes, as an illustrative example, it can be considered that Belgium (a first-world country with high GDP and low corruption) has AUC 0.57 (1996) and AUC 0.66 (2008) while the corresponding values for Kenya (a third-world country with low GDP and high corruption) are 0.33 and 0.4.

In comparison to East Asia, only Taiwan-related content increased more in positivity, but despite the increase remained at similar level to China in 2009. The data does not therefore confirm negative bias towards China within the examined Reuters data in comparison with other East Asian nations and regions.

RQ#4: Which news category - culture, politics or economy - within China-related coverage has the most positive/least positive tone in Western news coverage?

According to the results, Chinese culture is perceived more positively in the West than politics or economy, and both the interest (document count) and positive sentiment would have increased within the cultural coverage. However, due to the disagreement between manual and automated annotation, doubt remains.

CONCLUSION

Social identities as explanations for state behaviour offer alternative explanations to rational models. It is what Martha Cottam (1992) referred to as “The Metaphor of Drama”. In this study, I wished to make the case that China’s public diplomacy is driven by emotional factors rather than rational calculation. To be more precise, this dissertation attempts to offer insights into PRC public diplomacy from the viewpoint of recognition-seeking. The ‘struggle for recognition’ as a particular identity, I argued, has relevance in explaining China’s attempts to create ‘soft power’, that is, self-confidence and attraction among her peers.

In this final chapter, I shall proceed in the following manner. I will first provide a short recap of the proceedings of the analysis. I will then summarise the empirical result and discuss methodological and theoretical issues before finally offering concluding remarks.

Recap of the Analysis

As its theoretical framework, the study applied the English School of IR. The reason for this was that, within the approach, the international arena is conceptualised consisting of a ‘society of states’, so the application of social psychological concepts was well suited. In this framework, I showed how individual emotions can be transferred to group- and international levels, including the need for recognition. According to Hegel and following him Axel Hoenneth, if this need was denied, emotions of disrespect would arise. Actor perception and propensity components borrowed from the social identity theory then provided the particular theoretical model to study the struggle for recognition in the context of China’s public diplomacy.

To be more precise, the analysis proceeded in the following manner: in Chapter 1, I built the concepts up from social psychology giving particular focus to the transference of the concepts from the individual level to group and mass levels. Next, in Chapter 2, I constructed a theoretical model of communication by introducing the components ‘Others

intentions', 'Cultural Status', 'Situational Assessment', and 'Actor Choice'. In this context, I also briefly provided examples from the Chinese case.

Before the empirical analysis, in Chapter 3 I first discussed the ways in which PRC understandings of China's social identity have evolved. Borrowing from Chinese historians, a collective PRC 'self-reflection' was then conceptualised to have begun during the defeats in the Opium Wars. The technological hegemony of the Western powers, it was argued, gave the Chinese imperial elite a sense of inadequacy, having influenced recent Chinese history and nation-building. According to Chinese historical interpretations, this self-reflection would have had different natures during different periods. Firstly, as stated, the defeats in the Opium Wars led to technological re-evaluations; during the revolution and overthrow of the Qing court, the nature would have been political; and finally, the May Fourth Movement as part of New Cultural Movement would have evoked cultural considerations -- again in the form of localised Western ideas.

Moving from theory to empirical analysis, in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 I borrowed the methodological pluralism of the English School in applying different methods to study the perception and propensity components of the model outlined in Chapter 3. In Chapter 5, the rhetorical analysis found that the localised soft power approach by the PRC cultivated an enemy image of Western culture and considered Chinese international status as relatively low. Based on the PRC language, soft power rhetoric aims to create communal acceptance internationally and legitimacy domestically. In Chapter 6, I showed through a media analysis how the out-group/in-group identity formations found in the rhetorical analysis were in practice implemented in relevant PRC-sponsored popular cultural products.

Chapter 7 set out with the aim of assessing the image of China in Western media. The analysis was designed to determine the tone of overall China-related coverage, to detect specific topics and determine their tone in China coverage in a large-N setting. Regarding pre- and post-policy change and the related increase in in PRC public diplomacy activities discussed above, this paper did not assume causality but focused on positive correlation. The large-scale analysis, covering nearly 1.5 million news articles published by Thomson Reuters during the years 1996-1997 and 2007-2008 also measured the sentiment for Japan-, South-Korea-, and Taiwan-related content. The comparative perspective revealed that China-related content was neutral or positive. Moreover, by dividing the large-scale

data into further categories of “politics”, “economics”, and “culture”, the analysis found that precisely the “culture”-related China content was particularly positive in tone but, due to poor disagreement between the validation by domain experts and automated classification, this part of the empirical results could not be considered fully verified. Instead, the findings indicated that the category “economy” carried the most weight in Chinese overall tone, which, as stated, was relatively positive in comparison to other East Asian regions and was found to increase between the data sets.

Summary of Empirical Findings

I will restate here the main research questions and sub-questions, and answer them in the order they were presented in the introduction.

RQ#1: What underlining perceptions guide the Chinese soft power phenomenon?

RQ#1.2: Which ‘category arguments’ and classifications define PRC soft power rhetoric?

RQ#1.3: To what extent, if at all, can the intensity of this type of disrespect be evaluated?

I find that China’s soft power and public diplomacy communication are driven by an out-group bias and an outright cultivation of an enemy image. In the analysis, these were observed to fall under the category arguments of ‘anti-Westernisation’ and ‘cultural security’. These accord with China studies literature by providing an indication of the PRC still attempting to restore a coherent international social identity for China (e.g. Johnston, 1990; Shih, 1992, 2011; Breslin, 2013; Callahan, 2015; Ford, 2015; Ferdinand, 2016).

The analysis also showed that the soft power advocates among the Chinese policy elite are eager to juxtapose China with the US, and link the “West” with the policy ambitions of the US. This implies that the PRC would seem to be targeting superpower status by seeking parallels between China and the US – ironically, by accusing the US of seeking hegemony through individualism, globalisation and the spreading of market economy. I do not wish to say that the PRC would not have a right to safeguard Chinese culture from consumerism, Western values or liberal democracy. Instead, I would merely like to underline a certain inconsistency on the part of the PRC which has greatly benefitted from

the spreading of global market economy, which, in fact, most of the Chinese population appear eager to embrace.

Based on statistical evidence, the present results suggest that the intensity of the recognition-seeking through soft power seemed to intensify during the turn of the millennium, so far peaking in 2014-2015. This observation is in accordance with the inauguration of Xi Jinping first as CCP General Secretary in October 2012 and as President in March 2013.

RQ#2: What type of propensities do the perceptions introduce into China's public diplomacy communication?

RQ#2.1: How in-group/out-group dichotomies are used in PRC public diplomacy productions?

I find that, through reinforcing the category arguments of 'anti-Westernisation' and 'cultural security' through public diplomacy, the PRC aims to maintain party control over articulations of Chineseness, China's external enemies and inner orthodoxies. The Ip Man and the Great Wall films are good examples of this type of propensities appearing in PRC public diplomacy. I also interpreted the symbolism found in the analysed texts as signalling to those on the periphery of central government to embrace the identity of Chineseness crafted by the CCP. This was evident for instance through the assurances given to population of Hong Kong through the Transformers film.

Typically in the analysed texts, particularly in the Ip Man films, in-group cohesion is achieved through inner dialogue, whereas the out-group competition is depicted to take place against a salient opponent with dire consequences. An exception to this was made in the third Ip Man film, which focused on Hong Kong, and rather turned the setting upside down, making the Westerner the respected in-group member and the ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong the salient opponent. I interpret this to be reference to the democracy movement of Hong Kong.

RQ#3: To what extent, if at all, does a negative bias against China appear within Western news media?

As Chapters 4, 5 and 6 show, the PRC policy elite would seem to consider Western mainstream media as “hate media” towards China (see also Wang, 2008). This position is not entirely without a factual base. A mostly “cosmopolitan” and liberal Western media no doubt is highly critical of the many aspects of Chinese society that do not resonate with their normative base. These include the non-democratic, authoritarian system of government, and lack and violation of individual human rights and freedom of speech. Since the Chinese domestic media under state control does not criticise the establishment, the coverage of non-Chinese media might give Chinese officials an impression of overly aggressive, offensive and critical Western journalism.

Regarding Western demonisation of China, the findings did not support the premise of PRC public diplomacy or the multitude of prior research supporting this view (for instance Chang, 1988; Dorogi, 2001; Peng, 2004; Stone and Xiao, 2007; Willnat and Luo, 2011; Golan and Lukito, 2015). However, findings from samples that greatly differ in size and in the type of source material they concern are not directly comparable. A small-N study using a manual analysis can discover negative tone in some specific forum or topic, while a statistical large-N study, such as the one presented here, can still be correct in maintaining that the overall tone is positive. The results of the automated content analysis of this dissertation are thus not necessarily contradictory to all existing studies arguing for negative portrayal, but rather only to those that point to an overall negative framing of China (e.g. Peng, 2004; Willnat and Luo, 2011), including Chinese studies conceptualising time periods of Western negative media slant (e.g. Li, 1996; He, 2004). In any case, this study agrees with the study by Xiang (2013) that China-related economic and cultural topics are more favourably presented than political ones.

RQ#4: Which news category: culture, politics, or economy within China-related coverage has the most positive/least positive tone within Western news coverage?

Contrary to expectations, China’s culture and economy were equally favourably received in Western media and had similar positive development from 1996 to 2008. The positive development likely relates to the increase of China’s economic weight between

1996 and 2008. Taking into consideration high validation values of the economy content, the present findings are consistent with those of Ahern (1984) and Kim and Barnett (1995), who found that the amount of economic clout is positively related to the amount of coverage a country receives in foreign media.

RQ#5: What type of disrespect does the Chinese soft power phenomenon address?

The various forms of disrespect conceptualised in the literature were discussed in Chapter 1. Following Greenhill (2008), I first made the distinction between formal and informal recognition-seeking. Clearly, in the Chinese case the question concerns the latter. There is, however, a case to be made that while China and the PRC are officially recognised by the international community, some formal territorial disputes remain, most notably in the case of Taiwan and Tibet.

Therefore, Chinese recognition-seeking seems mostly to fall into the informal category. In this, the struggle appears to be emotional rather than rational. I make this distinction to point out that China by numerous indicators is in fact informally recognised and respected, one could say feared, within international society. This is in contrast to, for instance, sub-Saharan Africa, where emerging regional powers have a rational case for their national grievances (see Nel, 2010).

As I have argued in this dissertation, the struggle for recognition is about perception. Bull (1984) argued that Western dominance peaked at the turn of the century in 1900, not in technological nor cultural but psychological supremacy. Bull (1984: 219-220) went on to define further forms that the struggle for recognition represented. These were 1) equal sovereignty, 2) post-colonial liberation, 3) racial equality, 4) economic justice, and 5) cultural liberation. In the case of China, by looking at the data analysed in this dissertation, we can easily dismiss numbers 1 and 4, as discussed above, neither did I find anything in the soft power data that would imply or point in the direction of number 3. What remain are numbers 2 and 5.

References that could imply a need for post-colonial and cultural liberation do appear in Chinese soft power discussions. These are of course relatively straightforward counter-arguments to Western demands for civil rights and political freedom. Again, the irony

here is that the PRC might be deploying its own version of ‘soft power’ in order to repress that particular part of society that would have the capacity to create genuine attraction, that is, civil society.

Overall, then, on the question of public diplomacy perception and propensities, the results support the view that China applies an enemy image to Western media and considers China’s international status as inferior to other states. This, however, is not very surprising as the concept may stem from emotional rather than rational factors and has its use mainly in the domestic propaganda of China. The practical issue emerging from the findings, however, is that while China’s Western media image was found to be relatively neutral and the tone of China-related news more positively developed between the observed pre- and post-policy change, the results indicate that the economy rather than culture is where China is received most favourably in Western media.

Finally, it appears that the crumbling and declining general morality of the Chinese population, including ‘domestic anaemia’, was defined in the PRC soft power language as a central problem of Chinese society. This, according to the analysed rhetoric, was seen as the result of proliferation of Westernisation, rapid economic reforms, market economy and the declining cultural weight of traditional Chinese values, that is, not only the Confucian politico-moral framework, but also the dispersion of a socialist value base. As a policy measure to counter this perceived social decay, the rhetoric envisioned the reintroduction to Chinese society of popularised Marxism alongside traditional values. This could be seen as representing a policy move of “creative conservatism” (Elvin, 1990), holding that a modern society would be best achieved not by disregarding traditions but by combining older values with more recent ones instead of antagonising them. Any discussion of whether this would in the future include a freer Chinese civil society including free non-state media and a popular culture sector producing soft power, was not present in any data analysed here. Furthermore, I did not detect any considerations as to what future Chinese public diplomacy would look like once China’s Western media image was corrected to equate China’s international cultural, political and economic significance. It may be of importance, since the present analysis indicates that this might already be the case.

Discussion

I will here discuss a few methodological and theoretical limits of the study and point to some future directions that emerged during the analysis. I begin with methodological issues.

Methodological Issues

First, regarding the rhetorical analysis, it remains to an extent unclear whether the formal political language can be interpreted linearly. In other words, the nature of the official language could considerably limit the amount of information that can be distilled without a more detailed analysis of the different contexts. Secondly, the reading of popular culture texts is challenging. Prior studies show (e.g. Kellner, 2010) that the symbolic nature of the interpretation makes it difficult to repeat, especially with cross-cultural data (e.g. Chu, 2014). However there seems to be some consensus in that ‘better’ and ‘worse’ readings of texts exist (Fiske, 1987; Schulzke, 2017). In the dissertation, I attempted to accomplish the former rather than the latter.

Although the results of the automated content analysis proposed in this study show promise in quantifying China’s media image, it is challenging to assess the general applicability of the method, and there is certainly room for improvement. Firstly, since the results are directly affected by the assignment of topics and nations to documents, an improvement in the classification accuracy will increase the reliability of the analysis. This could be achieved by machine-learning methods. For example, Naive Bayes classifiers (McCallum and Nigam, 1998) have been successfully applied to similar tasks, such as filtering spam e-mails (Sahami et al., 1998) and assigning terms from Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) to scientific articles in the field of biomedicine (Sohn et al., 2008). Second, a method that utilises sophisticated linguistic analyses is likely to outperform its simple counterparts in accuracy. For example, Lexicoder (Young and Soroka, 2012) considers short sequences of words to address negation and multi-toned phrases. One step further is to utilise syntactic analysis to capture relationships between words, regardless of the word order of a sentence, in order to analyse not only negations but also other linguistic structures that affect the overall sentiment (e.g. Di Caro and Grella, 2013).

Regarding the differences between an aggregate and an individual campaign level of analysis, there is a difference in the method: a small-*n* study can discover negative tone in some specific forums or topics, while at the same time a numeric large-*n* study is correct in maintaining that overall coverage is relatively positive. While studies with small data sets will likely benefit from advanced methods, large-scale data analysis may be primarily influenced by the quality and scope of the applied dictionary or hand-coded examples. The dictionary refinement efforts (e.g. Young and Soroka, 2012) are therefore important.

Finally, the validation process could be improved upon as it is crucial for the reliability of the conclusions. The challenges arise from the complexity of the phenomena studied in Political Science. On the one hand, it is difficult to assess the exact implications of the results of a statistical validation method. On the other, manual annotation is likely affected by the sociological background of the coders (and coding instructions) when studying phenomena that are difficult to reduce into simple coding guidelines. I consider the validation through the correlation with Corruption Perceptions Index and World Bank GDP/capita proposed here nonetheless intriguing: the observed correlations indicate an interesting prospect. The observation that the AUC ranking clearly correlates both with the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index and with the World Bank GDP per capita ranking strongly suggests that AUC quantifies the tone of document sets. The correlation may have a connection to the observation that the weight of economic topics was high in determining the overall tone of Reuters coverage.

The conclusions regarding China's culture coverage should be treated with caution. The failure to find statistically significant differences between the tones of China's culture coverage and economy coverage may be due to the small number of culture-related documents retrieved for analysis and due to the low precision of the automated categorisation of culture documents. For this reason, scepticism is warranted: if a notable proportion of the retrieved articles within the culture topic actually concern economy, the AUC values only partially reflect the tone of culture coverage.

The negative trend in Chinese political content could be attributable to several factors. A mostly "cosmopolitan" Western media would have a negative view of the "rigid" Chinese authoritarianism, which would also feed the "rise of China threat" discourse. The

question remains whether the discourse increased in volume or the negative tone strengthened between 1996 and 2009. It is accordingly difficult to assess the impact of individual events, for instance, the nuclear explosion test by China in late July 1996, the handover of Hong Kong in July 1997, the Tibetan unrest in March 2008, the Sichuan earthquake in May 2008, and the Beijing Olympics in the summer of 2008. In any case, the comparative large-scale research setting shows that, within the East Asian context, in the political sentiment, too, China ranks above Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in the RCV1 corpus, and above South Korea (and on par with Japan) in the TRC2 corpus. This does not indicate any strong Western negativity towards China.

While the relation between China and Western media remains a particular case in which the employment of a large-scale approach can be justified, it is challenging to assess the general applicability of the proposed method. In any case, there are several viable research directions to further develop the method. In addition to the above discussion, the AUC analysis could be applied to a variety of research designs in political settings that use text as primary data. It could be particularly beneficial in testing hypotheses that address the longitudinal development of categorised content that requires adjustments for dissimilar baselines. To give an example, the AUC analysis could be used to test whether senatorial speeches by republican representatives grew more hostile between the Bush and the Obama administrations in comparison to the speeches held by their democratic colleagues. In this setting, it would be problematic to conceive an appropriate measurement baseline for the development of tone. The application of an AUC analysis, on the other hand, would enable this.

Theoretical Issues

The results of the study would seem to indicate a paradoxical position of the PRC. On the one hand, the discourse analysis revealed a certain neoliberal angst in the soft power language of the Chinese soft power advocates. On the other, the above-discussed strategies and case studies show how the PRC takes major advantage of the contemporary transnational neoliberal media organisation. Most importantly, the automated content analysis found that the major source of Chinese soft power would not in fact be traditional culture, despite its heavy promotion by the state bureaucracy, but the growing economic

attention China has enjoyed in the West. In other words, the relative weight of “economy” in the overall perception of China would seem to outperform the “cultural” aspect.

The changes in the volume of China coverage indicate a growth of interest in China in general and in Chinese culture in particular. The observed abundance of economy coverage over culture coverage in the Reuters data, however, suggests that culture is a marginal topic in global news coverage. This supports Wu’s (2000: 503) meta-study, which showed both economic issues and political affairs dominating international news agenda. As a result, it may be that it is the economy that has driven the development of China’s Western media image. Some of the consequences that emerge from this finding relate particularly to PRC decision-making. In terms of choice propensity, it may be that cultural topics play a smaller role than expected as determinants of China’s country perception in Western media. In particular, the employment of culture may not have a significant effect on the overall outcome. The same conclusion can be reached for political topics: regarding national image, issues of governance may not represent a major factor in China’s overall perception. It could conceivably be hypothesised that highlighting, for instance, economic success stories has a greater net positive effect on China’s national perception than the promotion of culture. It is therefore interesting to note Brady’s (2006) observation, according to which the guidelines of the Central Propaganda Department overseeing PRC public diplomacy also include the talking up of economy. The broader argument of Ferdinand (2016) should also be noted, according to which economic reformers within the PRC have sought to use economic reforms as a source of China’s international attractiveness.

This observation begs a question: how surprising, in the context of Western modernity that is built on principles of market economy, transnational capitalism and consumerism, is the fact that the perception of China is based on economic performance? As argued, the positive tone in news reporting correlated with the International Corruption Perception Index and with the GDP per capita ranking (the World Bank), a central indicator of economic success. While there is less evidence of the PRC successfully exporting or promoting its political values to be the norm in international society, through its economic weight international society is already facing a Chinese soft power push. This is evident for example through the latest financial institutional developments, and the subsequent soft power agenda of the PRC towards the developing countries. This includes the growing

role and influence of China through the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the One Belt One Road Initiative and the BRIC grouping (see e.g. Ferdinand, 2016, Wang, 2016).

Finally, the present results lead to the question of why the basic assumption of Western media bias has gone largely unchallenged. Studies on political psychology should provide insight into the reasons why the concept remains common. First, images are change-resistant (Elgström, 2000). Contradicting information may also be ignored in light of existing knowledge structures (Jönssön, 1990), where culture is found to influence cognition and emotion (Heinrich, 2000). Finally, psychological mechanisms that resist change include rejecting the validity of new information, discrediting the source, bolstering and undermining (Jervis, 1976: 291-296). Moreover, some China experts have provided more pragmatic explanations for the tension between Western journalists and the PRC public diplomacy bureaucracy that may partly explain the existence of the concept: 1) reinforcing the concept of Western media bias is important for the PRC domestic propaganda: the premise allows the government to categorise under “hate” messages all unwanted Western ideas, including democracy (Callahan 2015: 220), 2) Western journalists are trained not to trust any government, including their own, which is not widely understood in China (Sun, 2014: 1904), and 3) inherent Confucian hierarchical obedience as a “cultural meta-rule” views Western critique with strong scepticism (Chu, 2012).

The question of whether China is demonised in the Western media, nonetheless, has relevance outside Chinese domestic propaganda. While it could be argued that the assumption mainly works as a rhetorical tool for the PRC to fight for domestic control over national narrative, following Chu (2014: 161), there is a difference between the need of the PRC to domestically create a “collective imagination” and internationally to “brand the nation”.

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Appendixes

Appendix A lists below 200 entries in the Harvard General Inquirer Dictionary as examples of the words associated with “positive” sentiment.

- 1 ABIDE
- 2 H4 Positiv Affil Active Doctrin IAV SUPV
- 3 ABILITY
- 4 H4Lvd Positiv Strong Virtue EVAL Abs@ ABS MeansLw Noun
- 5 ABLE
- 6 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue EVAL MeansLw Modif adjective: Having necessary power, skill, resources, etc.
- 7 ABOUND
- 8 H4 Positiv Passive Increas IAV SUPV
- 9 ABSOLVE
- 10 H4 Positiv Active SocRel ComForm IAV SUPV
- 11 ABSORBENT
- 12 H4 Positiv Increas IndAdj Modif
- 13 ABSORPTION
- 14 H4 Positiv Affil Increas Noun
- 15 ABUNDANCE
- 16 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Ovrst ECON Quan WltOth WltTot Noun
- 17 ABUNDANT
- 18 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Ovrst Quan WltOth WltTot Modif
- 19 ACCEDE
- 20 H4Lvd Positiv Affil Active ComForm IAV PowGain PowTot SUPV
- 21 ACCENTUATE
- 22 H4 Positiv Active Ovrst IAV SUPV
- 23 ACCEPT
- 24 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Submit Passive SocRel IAV PosAff SUPV verb: To take, receive or accede to something
- 25 ACCEPTABLE
- 26 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue EVAL PosAff Modif
- 27 ACCEPTANCE
- 28 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Passive SocRel PosAff Noun
- 29 ACCESSIBLE
- 30 H4 Positiv Virtue IPadj Modif
- 31 ACCESSION
- 32 H4 Positiv Strong Increas Noun
- 33 ACCLAIM
- 34 H4 Positiv Virtue ComForm Noun
- 35 ACCLAMATION
- 36 H4 Positiv Virtue ComForm Noun
- 37 ACCOLADE
- 38 H4 Positiv Virtue ComForm Noun
- 39 ACCOMMODATE
- 40 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Active Vary IAV PowCoop PowTot SUPV
- 41 ACCOMMODATION
- 42 H4Lvd Positiv Virtue PLACE PowCoop PowTot Noun
- 43 ACCOMPANIMENT

- 44 H4 Positiv SocRel Noun
 45 ACCOMPLISH
 46 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Power Active Complet IAV EndsLw SUPV verb: To bring to its goal or conclusion
 47 ACCOMPLISHMENT
 48 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Power Active Goal EndsLw Noun
 49 ACCORD#2
 50 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv SocRel IAV PosAff SUPV 3% verb: "Accord with" to be consistent with
 51 ACCORD#3
 52 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Power SocRel IAV TrnGain SUPV 8% verb: To grant, bestow
 53 ACCORD#5
 54 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Means PowOth PowTot LY 3% adv: "Of one's own accord"--voluntarily
 55 ACCORDANCE
 56 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Know PowCoop PowTot Noun
 57 ACCOUNTABLE
 58 H4 Positiv Causal IndAdj Modif
 59 ACCRUE
 60 H4 Positiv Active Econ@ ECON Increas DAV SUPV
 61 ACCURACY
 62 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Ovrst Abs@ ABS EnlOth EnlTot Noun
 63 ACCURATE
 64 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Ovrst EnlOth EnlTot Modif
 65 ACCURATENESS
 66 H4 Positiv Virtue Ovrst Noun
 67 ACHIEVE
 68 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Active Complet IAV EndsLw SUPV verb: To accomplish or carry through
 69 ACHIEVEMENT
 70 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Power Active Goal EndsLw Noun
 71 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
 72 H4 Positiv Ovrst ComForm Noun
 73 ACQUAINT
 74 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Solve IAV EnlGain EnlTot SUPV
 75 ACQUAINTANCE
 76 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Role HU AffOth AffTot Noun
 77 ACQUIT
 78 H4 Positiv Legal Solve DAV SUPV
 79 ACQUITTAL
 80 H4 Positiv Legal Solve Noun
 81 ACTUAL#1
 82 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Ovrst SureLw Modif 27% adjective: Existing in act or fact, real.
 83 ACTUAL#2
 84 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Ovrst SureLw LY 73% adverb: "Actually"--really
 85 ACTUALITY
 86 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Doctrin SureLw Noun
 87 ADAMANT
 88 H4 Positiv Strong Arousal Know IndAdj Modif
 89 ADAPTABILITY

- 90 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Vary Noun
 91 ADAPTABLE
 92 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Vary IndAdj Modif
 93 ADAPTATION
 94 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Vary Noun
 95 ADAPTIVE
 96 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Vary IndAdj Modif
 97 ADEPT
 98 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue EVAL SklOth SklTOT Modif
 99 ADEPTNESS
 100 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Noun
 101 ADEQUATE
 102 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Undrst EVAL EndsLw Modif PFREQ adjective: Sufficient.
 103 ADHERENCE
 104 H4Lvd Positiv Affil RcEthic RcTot Noun
 105 ADHERENT
 106 H4 Positiv Affil IndAdj Modif
 107 ADHESION
 108 H4 Positiv Rel Noun
 109 ADHESIVE
 110 H4 Positiv Rel IndAdj Modif
 111 ADJUNCT
 112 H4 Positiv Increas Rel Noun
 113 ADJUST#2
 114 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Submit Virtue WlbPsys WlbTot Modif 23% adj: "Adjusted"--adapted
 115 ADJUSTABLE
 116 H4 Positiv Vary IndAdj Modif
 117 ADJUSTMENT
 118 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Virtue Noun
 119 ADMIRABLE
 120 H4Lvd Positiv Virtue Eval@ IPadj RcTot RspOth Modif
 121 ADMIRATION
 122 H4Lvd Positiv Strong Pleasur EMOT Virtue RspOth RspTot Noun
 123 ADMIRE
 124 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Submit Passive Pleasur SV RspGain RspTot SUPV
 125 ADMIRER
 126 H4 Positiv Strong EMOT HU Noun
 127 ADMIT#1
 128 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Weak Submit Passive ComForm IAV RspLoss RspTot SUPV 63% verb: To acknowledge, confess, agree
 129 ADMIT#2
 130 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Power Passive SocRel DAV PowOth PowTot SUPV 33% verb: To grant entry, membership or access to something
 131 ADMIT#3
 132 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Weak Submit Passive Ovrst ComForm RspLoss RspTot FormLw LY 3% adv: "Admittedly"--adverbial form of sense 1
 133 ADMITTANCE
 134 H4 Positiv Active Travel Noun
 135 ADORABLE

- 136 H4 Positiv Virtue Eval@ IndAdj Modif
 137 ADORE
 138 H4 Positiv Active Pleasur EMOT SV SUPV
 139 ADORN
 140 H4 Positiv Strong Active Eval@ IAV SUPV
 141 ADORNMENT
 142 H4 Positiv Virtue Eval@ Noun
 143 ADROIT
 144 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue IndAdj Modif
 145 ADROITLY
 146 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Modif
 147 ADULATION
 148 H4 Positiv Strong Pleasur EMOT ComForm Eval@ Noun
 149 ADULT#2
 150 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue Modif 30% adj: Mature, of or pertaining to adults
 151 ADVANCE#1
 152 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Active Travel IAV EndsLw SUPV 47% verb: To move or bring forward, improve, promote
 153 ADVANCE#2
 154 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Active Means EndsLw Noun 20% noun-adj: A moving forward, improvement, approach, in front, prior
 155 ADVANCE#3
 156 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Virtue EndsLw Modif 20% adj: "Advanced"--forward, in front, progressive
 157 ADVANCEMENT
 158 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Increas EndsLw Noun
 159 ADVANTAGE
 160 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue ECON Abs@ ABS MeansLw Noun noun: Any state or opportunity favourable to success, benefit, gain, position of superiority.
 161 ADVANTAGEOUS
 162 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue MeansLw Modif
 163 ADVENT
 164 H4 Positiv Begin Noun
 165 ADVENTURESOME
 166 H4 Positiv Strong Active IndAdj Modif
 167 ADVENTUROUS
 168 H4Lvd Positiv Strong Active IndAdj PosAff Modif
 169 ADVISABLE
 170 H4Lvd Positiv Know Eval@ Quality IAdj PosAff Modif
 171 ADVOCACY
 172 H4Lvd Positiv Affil ComForm Noun
 173 AFFABILITY
 174 H4 Positiv Virtue Noun
 175 AFFABLE
 176 H4 Positiv Virtue IAdj Modif
 177 AFFECTION
 178 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Arousal EMOT AffOth AffTot Noun
 179 AFFECTIONATE
 180 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Arousal EMOT AffOth AffTot Modif
 181 AFFILIATE

182 H4Lvd Positiv Affil Active IAV PowCoop PowTot SUPV
 183 AFFILIATION
 184 H4 Positiv Affil Noun
 185 AFFINITY
 186 H4 Positiv Strong Virtue Noun
 187 AFFIRM
 188 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Power ComForm IAV TrnGain SUPV
 189 AFFIRMATION
 190 H4 Positiv ComForm Eval@ Noun
 191 AFFIRMATIVE
 192 H4 Positiv Noun
 193 AFFIX
 194 H4 Positiv Affil Active Exert DAV SUPV
 195 AFFLUENCE
 196 H4Lvd Positiv Econ@ Quality WltOth WltTot Noun
 197 AFFLUENT
 198 H4 Positiv Econ@ Quality IndAdj Modif
 199 AFLOAT
 200 H4 Positiv Strong Econ@ IndAdj Modif

Appendix B lists below 200 entries in the Harvard General Inquirer Dictionary as examples of the words associated with “Exprs” category used in the dissertation to content analyse “cultural” content.

205 ACTOR
 201 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Role MALE HU PowPt PowTot Noun
 202 AESTHETIC
 203 H4Lvd Doctrin Exprsv SklAsth SklTOT Modif
 204 ANECDOTE
 205 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM FormLw Noun
 206 ARCHITECT
 207 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 208 ARCHITECTURE
 209 H4Lvd Doctrin Exprsv SklAsth SklTOT Noun
 210 ART#1
 211 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv Object ComnObj COM SklAsth SklTOT Noun 63%
 noun-adj: Painting, and more generally all the 'fine arts,' having to do with beauty
 212 ART#4
 213 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Doctrin Exprsv SklOth SklTOT Noun 13% noun: The particular skill of--'the difficult art of rowing'
 214 ARTIST
 215 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun noun: One who creates works of art, especially a painter
 216 ARTISTIC
 217 H4Lvd Doctrin Exprsv SklAsth SklTOT Modif
 218 ASSIGNMENT
 219 H4Lvd Active Exprsv ComForm PowOth PowTot Noun
 220 ATHLETIC
 221 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Virtue Exprsv Modif

- 222 AUTHOR
 223 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU EnlPt EnlTot Noun
 224 BALL#2
 225 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual Noun 25% noun-adj: A game which is played with a ball
 226 BALL#3
 227 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual RspOth RspTot Noun 4% noun: A formal social dance
 228 BANDSTAND
 229 H4Lvd Exprsv PLACE Social SklAsth SklTOT Noun
 230 BAR#3
 231 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Object Tool Noun 0% noun: Athletic equipment
 232 BARD
 233 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 234 BASEBALL
 235 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual Noun noun-adj: Popular team sport or the ball used in same, having to do with that sport
 236 BAT#2
 237 H4Lvd Exprsv Exert DAV SUPV
 238 BEAT#1
 239 H4Lvd Exprsv Time@ Noun 3% noun-adj: Rhythm, a blow, stroke or throb, as of the heart (1); hip (1); exhausted (0)
 240 BIOGRAPHY
 241 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM FormLw Noun
 242 BLUE#3
 243 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM WlbPsyc WlbTot FormLw Noun 0% noun: "Blues"--type of music, depression
 244 BOWL#2
 245 H4Lvd Exprsv Exert IAV SUPV
 246 BOX#4
 247 H4Lvd Strong Active ECON Exprsv Ritual SklOth SklTOT Noun 4% noun-adj: "Boxing"--the sport
 248 BOXER
 249 H4Lvd Strong Active Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 250 BRIDGE#2
 251 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual COM SklOth SklTOT Noun 13% noun: A card game
 252 CAMERA
 253 H4Lvd Exprsv Object Tool Noun
 254 CAMP#3
 255 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual WlbPhys WlbTot Noun 3% noun-adj: "Camping"--descriptive of establishing temporary shelter, the activity of going into the woods
 256 CATCHER
 257 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 258 CHARACTER#3
 259 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU PtLw Noun 51% noun: A person, often as in a play or other piece of writing
 260 COMEDY
 261 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv Ritual Noun
 262 COMPOSER
 263 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 264 CONCERT
 265 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual PowCoop PowTot Noun
 266 CONDUCTOR

- 267 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 268 CONJURE
 269 H4 Positiv Strong Active Exprsv Begin IAV SUPV
 270 CREATE
 271 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Strong Active Exprsv Begin IAV EndsLw SUPV verb: To
 cause to come into being, to happen, to bring about.
 272 CREATIVE
 273 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Active EMOT Virtue Exprsv EndsLw Modif adj-adv: Innova-
 tive, artistic; "creatively"--in a creative manner
 274 CREATOR
 275 H4Lvd Strong Active Exprsv Role HU RcEnds RcTot Noun
 276 CRITIC
 277 H4Lvd Negativ Ngvtv Hostile Exprsv Role HU EnlPt EnlTot Noun
 278 CUBISM
 279 H4Lvd Doctrin Exprsv SklAsth SklTOT Noun
 280 DANCE#1
 281 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv Ritual AffOth AffTot Noun 38% noun-adj: A social
 event at which people move rhythmically to music; the rhythmic movement itself
 or a specific form of it (0)
 282 DANCE#2
 283 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Active Exprsv Travel DAV AffGain AffTot SUPV 49% verb:
 To move rhythmically
 284 DANCE#3
 285 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Active Exprsv Travel AffOth AffTot Modif 13% noun-adj:
 "Dancing"--moving rhythmically
 286 DANCER
 287 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun
 288 DERBY
 289 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual Noun
 290 DONATE
 291 H4 Positiv Active Econ@ Exch Exprsv Fetch DAV SUPV
 292 DONATION
 293 H4 Positiv Econ@ Exch Exprsv Fetch Noun
 294 DRAMA
 295 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual Noun
 296 DRAMATIC
 297 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual EVAL FormLw Modif
 298 DRAW#2
 299 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm DAV SUPV 16% verb: To sketch, depict, compose; to
 form or make (abstract)--"to draw a conclusion or analogy
 300 DRUM
 301 H4Lvd Exprsv Object Tool Noun
 302 ELOQUENT
 303 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Exprsv EVAL IndAdj FormLw Modif
 304 ENTERTAIN#1
 305 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Active Exprsv SocRel EVAL Modif
 306 ENTERTAINMENT
 307 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv Ritual WlbPsv WlbTot Noun
 308 ESSAY
 309 H4Lvd Academ Exprsv ComForm COM Noun
 310 EXPRESS

- 311 H4Lvd Active Exprsv ComForm IAV EnlGain EnlTot SUPV verb: To render in communicable form ideas, opinions, or feelings-- to manifest, show or reveal
- 312 EXPRESSION#1
- 313 H4Lvd Active Exprsv ComForm COM Abs@ ABS EnlGain EnlTot FormLw Noun 67% noun: The act or process of expressing
- 314 EXPRESSION#2
- 315 H4Lvd Passive Exprsv ComForm COM EnlGain EnlTot FormLw Noun 30% noun: A look, expressing personal reaction or feeling
- 316 EXPRESSIVE
- 317 H4Lvd Passive Exprsv ComForm EnlGain EnlTot Modif
- 318 FAIR#5
- 319 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv Ritual Noun 0% noun: Carnival
- 320 FASHION
- 321 H4Lvd Doctrin Exprsv SklOth SklTOT Noun
- 322 FENCE#3
- 323 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Ritual Noun 0% noun-adj: The art of self-defense with a foil
- 324 FICTION
- 325 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM EnlOth EnlTot FormLw Noun
- 326 FIELD#2
- 327 H4Lvd Exprsv Work IAV SUPV 1% verb: To handle or answer, to catch in baseball, to put on a field
- 328 FIGURE#4
- 329 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM WlbPsyc WlbTot FormLw Noun 1% idiom-noun: "Figure of speech"
- 330 FOOTBALL
- 331 H4Lvd ECON Exprsv Ritual Noun
- 332 FUN#1
- 333 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Pleasur Exprsv WlbPsyc WlbTot Noun PFREQ 97% noun-adj: Enjoyment, enjoyable
- 334 GALLERY
- 335 H4Lvd Exprsv PLACE Social Noun
- 336 GAME#1
- 337 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual SklOth SklTOT Noun 75% noun: An amusement or competitive activity played by various persons according to a set of rules
- 338 GIANT#3
- 339 H4Lvd Exprsv COLL HU Noun 0% noun: (the baseball team)
- 340 GUITAR
- 341 H4Lvd Exprsv Object Tool Noun
- 342 GYMNAST
- 343 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Role HU Noun
- 344 GYMNASTIC
- 345 H4Lvd Active Doctrin Exprsv Modif
- 346 HIDE#5
- 347 H4Lvd Exprsv Ritual Noun 0% noun-idiom: "Hide and seek"
- 348 HOP#1
- 349 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Travel Noun
- 350 HORN#1
- 351 H4Lvd Exprsv Object Tool Noun PFREQ 88% noun: The animal bodypart of analogous structures; a wind instrument (1)
- 352 HUNTER

- 353 H4Lvd Negativ Ngvtv Hostile Active Exprsv Role HU SklPt SklTOT Noun noun:
One who chases and kills animals
- 354 IMAGE#2
- 355 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM Noun 42% noun: A visual or mental representation, a picture
- 356 IMAGERY
- 357 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM FormLw Noun
- 358 IMAGINABLE
- 359 H4Lvd Exprsv Know SklOth SklTOT Modif
- 360 IMAGINARY
- 361 H4Lvd Passive Exprsv Know Modif
- 362 IMAGINATION
- 363 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv Know SklOth SklTOT Noun
- 364 IMAGINATIVE
- 365 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Virtue Exprsv EVAL SklOth SklTOT Modif
- 366 IMAGINE
- 367 H4Lvd Passive Exprsv Solve IAV SUPV verb: To form a mental image, to speculate, conjecture, suppose, or fantasize
- 368 INVENT
- 369 H4Lvd Active Exprsv Work IAV SklOth SklTOT SUPV
- 370 JAZZ
- 371 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM FormLw Noun
- 372 JOKE#1
- 373 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv ComForm FormLw Noun PFREQ 85% noun-adj: A jest, funny story
- 374 JOKE#2
- 375 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Exprsv ComForm IAV SUPV 10% verb: To jest, be funny
- 376 JOKER
- 377 H4Lvd Exprsv Role HU Noun
- 378 KEYBOARD
- 379 H4Lvd Exprsv Object Tool Noun
- 380 KID#2
- 381 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Affil Exprsv ComForm IAV SUPV 3% verb: To jest
- 382 LAUGH#1
- 383 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv ComForm COM WlbPsysc WlbTot FormLw
Noun 3% noun: Expression of mirth or amusement
- 384 LAUGH#2
- 385 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv ComForm DAV WlbPsysc WlbTot SUPV 40%
verb: To express mirth or amusement by laughter
- 386 LAUGH#5
- 387 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv ComForm WlbPsysc WlbTot Modif 2% noun-
adj: "Laughing" - laughter, expressive of amusement
- 388 LAUGH#6
- 389 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv ComForm COM WlbPsysc WlbTot FormLw
Noun 45% noun: Same as sense 1, but inserted into text as editorial comment, parenthesised.
- 390 LAUGHTER
- 391 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Exprsv ComForm COM WlbPsysc WlbTot FormLw
Noun noun: The act or sound of laughing, an expression of amusement.
- 392 LEGEND
- 393 H4Lvd Exprsv ComForm COM FormLw Noun

394 LEISURE

395 H4Lvd Positiv Pstv Passive Virtue Exprsv Noun

396 LITERARY

397 H4Lvd Academ Exprsv ComForm SklAsth SklTOT Modif

398 LITERATURE

399 H4Lvd Academ Exprsv ComForm COM SklAsth SklTOT FormLw Noun