

MOBILIZATION FOR DIPLOMATIC WARS:
DOMESTIC POLITICS OF CHINA'S ASSERTIVE FOREIGN POLICY

by

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(Under the Direction of Rongbin Han)

ABSTRACT

How do states achieve foreign policy goals using economic means? This project seeks to understand the question by bringing in the lens of state-led mobilization. This project argues that to achieve diplomatic goals (e.g, changing political behavior of overseas governments), China's party-state would mobilize myriad domestic actors to partake in the economic retribution for counteracting international pressure. Examining the Sino-Korea dispute over the THAAD deployment and the cross-strait tensions with Taiwan, this project focuses on the party-state's use of outbound tourism in dealing with such conflicts. Through the lens of a "hard plus soft" dual mobilization paradigm that combines mobilization by decree and mobilization by persuasion, this project argues that the Chinese government endeavors to rally a wide range of domestic forces, including commercial and social actors to counteract foreign pressure. On the one hand, the government establishes intermediary economic actors, such as travel agencies, to help execute state directives by requiring citizens to abide by "hard", coercive state rules. It orders travel agencies, which are well-supervised by the state, to help the government implement formal or informal tourism bans in which ordinary tourists would find themselves *unable* to make desired trips. On the other hand, the state carries out "soft mobilization" through media

persuasion to bring citizens into spontaneous compliance such that the prospective tourists are *unwilling* to insist on the trips. Through computer-aided content analysis and critical discourse analysis, this project finds the party not only *primes* domestic audience of the political it has been promoted but engages in strategic *framings* to accommodate national interest as well as ordinary citizens' everyday interest. Experimental and real-world investigations of the effectiveness of such dual mobilization paradigm also demonstrate that both the hard and soft mobilization tactics can largely prevent domestic actors from traveling to rival regions, an outcome the Chinese government desires to penalize diplomatic foes. However, the findings also suggest that both the hard and soft forms of mobilization should be assessed from specific temporal and spatial contexts, the variation of which tends to largely influence how the state reaches its goals.

INDEX WORDS: International relations, Foreign policy, Domestic politics, Mobilization,
Economic Sanction, China

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In July 2016, the South Korean government announced the decision to deploy the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. This news agitated China. Some Chinese citizens criticized the system, and even took to the street protesting against the Korean government and its domestic alliances.¹ Accusing those who installed such a system of threatening national security, the Chinese government “expressed firm opposition”² and reportedly removed all Korean-imported entertainment products from the screen, denied the visas of K-pop stars, suspended tours destined for Korea and halted economic activities with key Korean enterprises.³ The same year also witnessed voters elected Taiwan’s pro-independent presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen into office. Later, her inauguration speech denied the existence of the “1992 consensus”—an agreement between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and Taiwan’s Kuomintang (KMT) that there is only one China—as the basis for handling China-Taiwan relations. This denial not only disturbed the Chinese public, who fell into outcry,⁴ but provoked retaliations from the Chinese government which first reduced outbound group tours destined to Taiwan and then fully froze individual tours in response to her re-election.⁵

¹ Zhonglan Zheng, “观察：中国官办‘爱国潮’能否持久？”，BBC, March 4, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-39169899>.

² Xinhua, “外交部就美韩宣布部署‘萨德’反导系统发表声明,” July 8, 2016, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2016-07/08/c_1119186942.htm.

³ Jethro Mullen, “China’s ‘Unofficial’ Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea,” CNN.com, March 3, 2017, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/03/03/news/economy/china-south-korea-thaad-tourism-trade-sanctions/>.

⁴ Voice of America, “海峡两岸网民就台湾独立问题‘交火,’” March 7, 2016, <https://www.voachinese.com/a/voa-news-china-taiwan-internet-20160307/3222906.html>.

⁵ Bloomberg, “China Freezes Individual Tourist Permits to Taiwan,” Time, July 31, 2019, <https://time.com/5639832/china-bans-travel-taiwan-tourists/>; Elizabeth Shim, “China Limits Taiwanese Travel to Mainland,” United Press International, February 23, 2016, https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2016/02/23/China-restricting-tourism-to-Taiwan-after-elections/1471456255035/.

With China's ascent as an international economic powerhouse around the global arena, the Chinese leadership has begun to take a more assertive and confrontational approach towards regional and global affairs. More interestingly, China has increasingly used its economic clout to wield diplomatic influence by suspending regular trades and freezing tours.⁶

How does an authoritarian state like China achieve foreign policy goals using economic means? Current scholarship has already provided much insight into the question focusing on such tools as foreign aid, trade or even economic sanctions.⁷ But one understudied aspect is, exploiting China's economic leverage for foreign policy goals often means the government must *mobilize* the public to "adjust their activities to align with government objectives"⁸ as supporting state-backed initiatives could potentially impair regular operation of businesses and risk the individual's own economic interest.

This research seeks to understand the domestic politics of states using economic means in international relations by investigating how the Chinese state enlists domestic economic and societal actors for its increasingly assertive foreign policy. How does the government mobilize these actors for diplomatic purposes? What are the factors that shape the state mobilization of public participation in the diplomatic wars? How effective is such top-down mobilization?

To explore these questions, this project studies how China has weaponized tourism while handling Sino-South Korean THAAD crisis (from 2016 to 2017) and Cross-Strait relations ensuing Tsai's presidency (from 2016 till now). It shows that to rally commercial and social forces around

⁶ Notably, I use the term "diplomatic" or "international" relations to illustrate China's relations with South Korea as well as the mainland's relationship with Taiwan. In reality, both the Chinese government and the Chinese people perceive and treat Taiwan as part of China, so regarding the relationship as diplomatic/international could be complicated. The fact that Taiwan is a de facto self-governed society even makes such relations more intricate. However, despite some nuanced differences, as is shown in next few chapters, I argue that the same framework can largely be apply to both the cases of South Korea and Taiwan. In this sense, this project considers both relations at the diplomatic level only for research parsimony and not to trigger controversy.

⁷ See, among others, David A. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986).

⁸ Darren J. Lim, Victor A. Ferguson, and Rosa Bishop, "Chinese Outbound Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Statecraft," *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, no. 126 (November 1, 2020): 916–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2020.1744390>.

it when punishing the foreign relations targets, the Chinese state adopted a “hard plus soft” dual mobilization strategy: it resorted to the “hard” form of mobilization by ordering intermediary actors such as travel agencies to force citizens to abide by state goals; it carried out “soft” mobilization through media persuasion to bring citizens to compliance. Meanwhile, the findings suggest that both the hard and soft forms of mobilization should be assessed from specific temporal and spatial contexts, the variation of which tends to largely influence how the state reaches its goals.

This particular project sits at the intersection of comparative politics, international relations, area research, media studies and even tourism management. It first adds to comparative politics by offering new perspectives to understand mobilization. Diverging from studies of bottom-up collective mobilization in contentious politics,⁹ this research explores the top-down state mobilization for political participation. Besides, it extends the discussion of those *mobilized* to include not only ordinary citizens but also economic entities as intermediate actors, making it a tripartite interplay between the state, the market force and the social actors, a scheme of which is previously underestimated. In doing so, it proposes an innovative framework of dual mobilization in which the state has to mobilize the commercial and social actors using hard rules and persuade the latter softly through propaganda.

Second, the project adds to the international relations literature by offering a new understanding of how domestic politics can affect foreign policy. Previous studies have examined how domestic actors (public opinion, economic interest, etc.) exert influence over foreign policy,¹⁰ and how

⁹ John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, “Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory,” *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (May 1977): 1212–41, <https://doi.org/10.1086/226464>; Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, *Revue Française de Sociologie* (Addison-Wesley, 1978); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

¹⁰ James D. Fearon, “Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (November 28, 1998): 289–313, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.1.1.289>.

states can manipulate such factors for its foreign policy ambitions through, for instance, the “rally ‘round the flag effect.”¹¹ However, few studies have attempted to decipher the domestic politics of foreign relations within the framework of mobilization. Meanwhile, the research contributes to the scholarship of economic sanctions. It showcases how an authoritarian state imposes economic sanctions on democracies, challenging the conventional assumption of economic sanctions being means for democracies to punish non-democracies.¹² Moreover, while economic sanctions are sensitive to various variables,¹³ this project offers one more predictor, domestic mobilization, to illustrate the outcome of sanctions.¹⁴

Third, findings of this project speak to studies on Chinese nationalism and on authoritarian resilience. It will show that the state-led nationalist campaigns in China have moved beyond mere nationalist dogmatism¹⁵ to the use of innovative propaganda content, which converges state interest with personal immediate interest, in stimulating the public’s xenophobic attitudes. Furthermore, the research reveals a more dynamic and nuanced “hard plus soft” dual mobilization mechanism through which the Party-state consolidates regime legitimacy and thus remains

¹¹ John E. Mueller, “Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson,” *American Political Science Review* 64, no. 1 (March 1970): 18–34, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1955610>.

¹² Among the few studies that examine non-democracies as the sender states suggest that vulnerability of democracies to non-democracies is “almost nonexistent”. See, Tung, Chen-yuan. "Cross-strait economic relations: China's leverage and Taiwan's vulnerability." *Issues and Studies* 39, no. 3 (2003): 137-176.

¹³ For an insightful review of these variables, see A. Cooper Drury, “Revisiting Economic Sanctions Reconsidered,” *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 4 (July 1, 1998): 497–509, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343398035004006>; Dursun Peksen, “When Do Imposed Economic Sanctions Work? A Critical Review of the Sanctions Effectiveness Literature,” *Defence and Peace Economics* 30, no. 6 (September 19, 2019): 635–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10242694.2019.1625250>.

¹⁴ Early studies have found how a sanctioned state can countermeasure foreign sanctions by mobilizing its domestic public but not domestic mobilization within a sanctioning state. See Johan Galtung, “On the Effects of International Economic Sanctions, With Examples from the Case of Rhodesia,” *World Politics* 19, no. 3 (April 1967): 378–416, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009785>.

¹⁵ Suisheng Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 287–302, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x\(98\)00009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x(98)00009-9); Yinan He, “History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino–Japanese Conflict,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, no. 50 (February 2007): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560601026710>; Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012).

resilient.¹⁶ By manufacturing “voluntary” and “involuntary compliance”,¹⁷ the state garners pervasive support for diplomatic achievements, which in turn boosts regime legitimation among its citizens.

Fourth, empirical findings of this project engage the literature on media politics. By probing the propaganda machine’ strategic use of priming and framing effects, including innovative news content, the study shows that the state adroitly manipulates multiple news media and platforms, intensified by messages highlighting individuals’ immediate interest, to reinforce the persuasion effect. The empirical evidence especially contributes to several ongoing debates in media studies, particularly enriching the studies of how authoritarian propaganda can manipulate public opinion through different frames¹⁸ and adding to the ongoing debate between the “hard propaganda” and “soft propaganda”.¹⁹

Finally, it contributes to the emerging interdisciplinary scholarship on tourism and comparative politics and international relations. This project, through engaging with China’s use of outbound tourism to wield international influence, reiterates the necessity of integrating tourism with CP and IR studies and brings the tourism sector into policy makers’ mind when handling foreign relations.

¹⁶ Andrew J. Nathan, “China’s Changing of the Guard: Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 1 (2003): 6–17, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2003.0019>; Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018); Rongbin Han, “Debating China beyond the Great Firewall: Digital Disenchantment and Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, July 5, 2022, 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11366-022-09812-4>.

¹⁷ These terms are inspired by Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 60.

¹⁸ Juan Du, Rongbin Han, and Weixia Lv, “Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China,” *Environmental Policy and Governance* 32, no. 2 (April 1, 2022): 135–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/EET.1971>; Jennifer Pan, Zijie Shao, and Yiqing Xu, “How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing,” *Political Science Research and Methods* 10, no. 2 (April 21, 2022): 317–32, <https://doi.org/10.1017/PSRM.2021.35>.

¹⁹ Haifeng Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda,” *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 3 (May 11, 2018): 1034–38, <https://doi.org/10.1086/696863>; Daniel C. Mattingly and Elaine Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades,” *Comparative Political Studies* 0, no. 0 (February 1, 2022): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140211047403>.

Bringing Mobilization Back In

Mobilization has long been a major means for Chinese authorities to govern the population and implement policies. A farewell to Mao-style mass campaigns, however, leads many to underestimate the significance of mobilization in helping China's central leadership achieve desired goals, especially with its role playing in foreign relations. This section aims to assure the definition of mobilization in the context of China's governance and to identify how it could shape the contour of China's intricate development.

Mobilization: Multiple Interpretations

As Verba, Schlozman & Brady point out, mobilization “ha[s] multiple meanings and, therefore, might lead to misunderstanding concerning the process we are discussing”.²⁰ In the early days of defining mobilization, some influential scholars equalize mobilization to the process of modernization, which is marginalized later.²¹ Contemporarily, mobilization is more commonly seen by the political or sociological ontology as a bottom-up process mostly mapped within the contours of contentious politics, examining how citizens mobilize various resources to engage in collective action for political demands articulation and regime resistance.²² However, such an approach assumes the state-society confrontation, with the citizens being the *mobilizing* force while the state is the passive respondent.

Recent findings have shown that mobilization in the real world often runs counter to the above assumption. Oftentimes, state actors or political parties can mobilize through a top-down political process for a variety of state or party goals. Moreover, beyond confrontation, the state and society

²⁰ Sidney. Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Harvard University Press, 1995), 133.

²¹ Karl W. Deutsch, “Social Mobilization and Political Development,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 3 (September 1961): 493–514, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1952679>.

²² For example, McCarthy and Zald, “Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory.”

can and will align for the same causes in many circumstances. For example, in democracies and electoral authoritarian regimes, states and parties encourage constituents to go out and vote for a particular party.²³ Authoritarian regimes and their affiliated organizations often marshal mass support for the government and its policies. For example, the Russian government coopted and mobilized a youth group, Nashi, to promote pro-Kremlin messages.²⁴ In 2008, thousands of Syrians participated in a government-backed demonstration in Damascus to protest against a U.S. military raid.²⁵ The Iranian government, to counter the anti-regime protests after the controversial presidential election in 2009, gave all civil servants the day off to attend the rallies and award the protestors.²⁶

Leninism, as well, transforms “a diffuse population into a mobilizable source of power”.²⁷ Thus, Turley and Selden distinguish Leninist regimes from other authoritarian regimes by naming them “mobilizational authoritarianism” to capture “the Leninist elements of intensive, preferably voluntary citizen participation of state affairs”.²⁸ Of these regimes, the Soviet Union instrumented mass campaigns to boost public support of and participation in a wide range of state goals.²⁹ Vietnamese government also experimented mass mobilization in various campaigns from the 1953

²³ Mihye Seo, “Beyond Coethnic Boundaries: Coethnic Residential Context, Communication, and Asian Americans’ Political Participation,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 23, no. 3 (September 2011): 338–60, <https://doi.org/10.1093/IJPOR/EDR019>; Ulf Brunnbauer and Peter Haslinger, “Political Mobilization in East Central Europe,” *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 3 (May 4, 2017): 337–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2016.1270922>.

²⁴ Julie Hemment, “Soviet-Style Neoliberalism?,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 56, no. 6 (November 1, 2009): 36–50, <https://doi.org/10.2753/PPC1075-8216560604>.

²⁵ Khaled Yacoub Oweis, “Thousands of Syrians Protest in Damascus at U.S. Raid | Reuters,” Reuters, October 30, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-usa/thousands-of-syrians-protest-in-damascus-at-u-s-raid-idUSTRE49T37520081030>.

²⁶ Nazila Fathi, “In Tehran, Thousands Rally to Back Government,” *The New York Times*, December 31, 2009, https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/31/world/middleeast/31iran.html?_r=1&ref=world.

²⁷ Philip Selznick, *The Organizational Weapon: A Study of Bolshevik Strategy and Tactics* (RAND Corporation, 1952), 114.

²⁸ William S. Turley and Mark Selden, *Reinventing Vietnamese Socialism Doi Moi In Comparative Perspective* (Routledge, 1993), 269.

²⁹ Thomas P. Bernstein, “Leadership and Mass Mobilisation in the Soviet and Chinese Collectivisation Campaigns of 1929–30 and 1955–56 A Comparison1,” *The China Quarterly* 31 (1967): 1–47, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741000028691>.

land reform³⁰ to institutionalization of state corporatism system.³¹ In Cuba, mobilizational authoritarianism remains the “motor of state socialism”.³²

Using China as an example, this project engages in a discussion of mobilization through the lens of a state-led, top-down process in which the government rallies a wide range of resources for its agenda.

China as a Mobilization Regime

With its Marxist-Leninist tradition, China is known as a mobilization regime. Many believe that the key to Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s success in revolutionary war was a product of its ability to initiate effective mass mobilization.³³ The Party continued the use of mobilization campaigns in governance ensuing the founding of the PRC and developed it into a critical governing technique in the Mao era from 1949-1976, during which the state set off mass mobilization through political campaigns.³⁴ With bureaucratic politics almost suspended, mass campaigns worked as the major vehicle to implement policies and create shared perception and actions among the whole society.³⁵

Following Mao’s death, observers expected China to break from its mobilizational past as the economic reform and opening up would reduce governmental control of resources and erode the CCP’s mobilization capacity.³⁶ Recent findings reveal, however, that despite divorced from Maoist

³⁰ Alec Holcombe, *Mass Mobilization in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945–1960, Mass Mobilization in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945–1960* (University of Hawai’i Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.2307/J.CTV105BB0Z>.

³¹ Yeonsik Jeong, “The Rise of State Corporatism in Vietnam,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 19, no. 2 (1997): 152.

³² Marifeli Pérez-Stable, “Caught in A Contradiction Cuban Socialism between Mobilization and Normalization,” *Comparative Politics* 32, no. 1 (1999): 63–82, <https://doi.org/10.2307/422433>.

³³ For example, Elizabeth J Perry, “From Mass Campaigns to Managed Campaigns: Constructing a ‘New Socialist Countryside,’” in *Mao’s Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*, ed. Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J Perry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), 30–61, https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/elizabethperry/files/managed_campaigns_-_proofs.pdf.

³⁴ Govind S. Kelkar, “The Chinese Experience of Political Campaigns and Mass Mobilization,” *Social Scientist* 7, no. 5 (December 1978): 45, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3516725>.

³⁵ Charles P. Cell, *Revolution at Work: Mobilization Campaigns in China* (New York: Academic Press, 1977).

³⁶ Minxin Pei, *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Kevin J. O’Brien and Lianjiang Li, “Campaign Nostalgia in the Chinese Countryside,” *Asian Survey* 39, no. 3 (May 1, 1999): 375–93, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3021204>.

campaign-style politics, the Party has continued relying on mobilization, making it a mode of governance in its own right. Indeed, the state in the reform era has mobilized to carry out policies such as the One-Child policy,³⁷ construction of a New Socialist Countryside,³⁸ and handling crises such as nationwide blood shortages in the 1990s,³⁹ and the most recent COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁰

What characterizes China's state mobilization and how has it evolved from Mao's period to the reform era? Generally, state mobilization in China takes the forms of both "hard" and "soft." Under "hard mobilization", the party-state relies on administrative orders to ordain intermediate actors to implement central demands. Such orders are characteristic of mandatory and even coercive, with the unruly behaviors penalized whereas the compliant behaviors can be rewarded. In contrast, the soft mobilization highlights acceptance in mind, allowing the government to galvanize pro-government sentiment and manufacture volunteer participants. Insomuch, the audience could be more proactively and spontaneously standing behind the country rather than giving a perfunctory nod.

The mobilization capacity stems from state extensive control of social and political resources, with a variety of institutional arrangements and rigorous measures bonding the life of the grassroots to the state. First, the state monopolized all resources and assumed the power of redistributing them through the central planning system. The CCP's centralized, unified leadership can ensure an efficient central administration capable of mobilizing the populace and directing the system of administration.⁴¹ Second, a wide array of institutions ensured the social bond. For

³⁷ Tyrene White, "Postrevolutionary Mobilization in China: The One-Child Policy Reconsidered," *World Politics* 43, no. 1 (October 1990): 53–76, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010551>.

³⁸ Perry, "From Mass Campaigns to Managed Campaigns: Constructing a 'New Socialist Countryside.'"

³⁹ Yue Guan, "When Voluntary Donations Meet the State Monopoly: Understanding Blood Shortages in China," *The China Quarterly* 236 (December 1, 2018): 1111–30, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741018001327>.

⁴⁰ Victor Shih, "China's Leninist Response to Covid-19 from Information Repression to Total Mobilization," in *Coronavirus Politics: The Comparative Politics and Policy of COVID-19*, ed. Scott Greer et al. (University of Michigan Press, 2021), 68–86, <https://doi.org/10.3998/MPUB.11927713>.

⁴¹ Liping Sun, "运动, 运动, 运动," *China Digital Times*, February 12, 2018, <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/578403.html>.

example, the Danwei (literally, work units) and the People's Commune, in the urban areas and rural areas, respectively, leashed Chinese residents by controlling their resources, which made such institutions principal platforms and centers of implementing party policy and mobilizing mass campaigns.⁴² The "soft mobilization" was reinforced with a seamless, monolithic propaganda machine. The state's monopoly over the propaganda resources led to all media outlets funded by the government and them making the same voice on behalf of the government.⁴³ The state also owned all manufacturers of entertainment products such as movies and operas. In this regard, the Party-state cast a wide, nonporous net overwhelming its citizens' psychological world.

Post-Mao mobilization is distinct from its precedent in both hard and soft forms. On the one hand, the factors shaping the hard form of mobilization, the resource control apparatus and institutional setups, have undergone earthshaking reformation. CCP's centralized leadership under Mao has evolved into "fragmented authoritarianism" in the reform era,⁴⁴ with the central state no longer being the sole resource allocator while local authorities having more discretion in carrying out national policies.⁴⁵ Oftentimes the central leadership finds it more challenge to incentivize local authorities to conduct policies faithfully and it needs to mobilize local cadres first. For example, to mobilize local cadres to implement environmental protection policies, the state only requires them to cooperate with central demands for a short period of time, after which they could continue with departmental interest.⁴⁶ Moreover, the reform era has effectively done away the

⁴² Xiaobo Lü and Elizabeth J. Perry, *Danwei : The Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Routledge, 1997); Thomas Buoye et al., *China: Adapting the Past, Confronting the Future* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), <https://doi.org/10.3998/MPUB.22778>.

⁴³ Anne-Marie. Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship : Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

⁴⁴ Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton University Press, 1988).

⁴⁵ Kenneth Lieberthal and David M. Lampton, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*, ed. Kenneth Lieberthal and David M. Lampton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Kevin J. O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, "Selective Policy Implementation in Rural China," *Comparative Politics* 31, no. 2 (1999): 167–86.

⁴⁶ John James Kennedy and Dan Chen, "State Capacity and Cadre Mobilization in China: The Elasticity of Policy Implementation," *Journal of Contemporary China* 27, no. 111 (May 4, 2018): 393–405, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2018.1410971>.

Danwei and Commune systems, making ordinary citizens less vulnerable to government control of resources.

On the other hand, the state's mass control through "soft mobilization" has encountered challenges. The state's propaganda apparatus is severely challenged in the reform era because of the transformation of traditional media sphere and the rise of the digital media. As far as the traditional media landscape is concerned, the reform leads to media commercialization which provide some space for media norms and practices divergent from state agenda⁴⁷ and gives rise to local party media manufacturing content for departmental interest while eroding party goals.⁴⁸ Such change has rendered official propaganda less persuasive⁴⁹ and more contested.⁵⁰ In addition, inviting political deliberation, exchange of ideas and messages,⁵¹ the internet turns netizens from information recipients to content generators, challenging official discourse in various ways.⁵²

To remedy the withered propaganda system, the party has adapted to a marketized media and internet-equipped environment for mobilization purposes. In disciplining commercialized media practitioners, it demands that they follow various reporting directives⁵³ and enforces media censorship to screen out unfavorable content.⁵⁴ To counteract the influence of the Internet, the state

⁴⁷ Yuezhi Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

⁴⁸ Bei Qin, David Strömberg, and Yanhui Wu, "Media Bias in China," *American Economic Review* 108, no. 9 (September 1, 2018): 2442–76, <https://doi.org/10.1257/AER.20170947>.

⁴⁹ Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Daniela Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087742>.

⁵⁰ Ya-Wen Lei, *The Contentious Public Sphere: Law, Media, and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

⁵¹ Guobin Yang, "The Co-Evolution of the Internet and Civil Society in China," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 3 (2003): 124–41; Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online* (Columbia University press, 2009).

⁵² Hongmei Li, "Parody and Resistance on the Chinese Internet," in *Online Society in China: Creating, Celebrating, and Instrumentalising the Online Carnival*, ed. David Kurt Herold and Peter Marolt (Routledge, 2011), 71–88, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203828519>; Bingchun Meng, "From Steamed Bun to Grass Mud Horse: E Gao as Alternative Political Discourse on the Chinese Internet," *Global Media and Communication* 7, no. 1 (April 21, 2011): 33–51, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766510397938>; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*.

⁵³ Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China*; Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*.

⁵⁴ Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*.

carries out sophisticated information control, including establishing the Great Firewall, censoring online content and astroturfing.⁵⁵

Whereas current scholarship provides much insight into the roles of state mobilization in China's past and present, it has several analytical concerns. First, what are the citizens' imperatives to participate in the national causes? Specifically, since the state becomes more fragmented and weakened in controlling resources and the society less vulnerable to the state's tutelage, how does the former mobilize the latter? A few scholars have explored traditional mobilization strategies such as mobilization through local cadres, state-affiliated agencies and through advanced information control.⁵⁶ Could the state go further to include more participants? This project, through exploring the imperatives of public participation, shows how the state has adapted to mobilize a more pluralized and well-informed population. Admittedly, studies on China's nationalism have explained that many citizens are driven by nationalist demands.⁵⁷ However, this body of scholarship is limited as it primarily hinges on the investigation of ideological indoctrination the state uses to shape public cognition of international societies and fermenting nationalism. They tend to undervalue other propaganda innovation the state can conceive to enlist more accomplices. Heavy-handed indoctrination nowadays, indeed, is not that attractive. Besides, participants in campaigns toward rivalries may not merely be incentivized by nationalist fervency.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 1–18; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*; Rongbin Han, "Manufacturing Consent in Cyberspace: China's 'Fifty-Cent Army,'" *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 44, no. 2 (2015): 105–34.

⁵⁶ Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J. Perry, *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2011); Kennedy and Chen, "State Capacity and Cadre Mobilization in China: The Elasticity of Policy Implementation."

⁵⁷ For example, Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China"; Jessica Chen Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2014)..

⁵⁸ Christopher Cairns and Allen Carlson, "Real-World Islands in a Social Media Sea: Nationalism and Censorship on Weibo during the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku Crisis*," *The China Quarterly* 225 (March 1, 2016): 23–49, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741015001708>; Yinxian Zhang, Jiajun Liu, and Ji Rong Wen, "Nationalism on Weibo: Towards a Multifaceted Understanding of Chinese Nationalism," *The China Quarterly* 235 (September 1, 2018): 758–83, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741018000863>.

Current studies also tend to downplay the role of a pivotal intermediary actor: the market force. Existent literature has partially demonstrated the impact of market actors on authoritarian rule. For example, the government can mobilize state-owned enterprises in various campaigns.⁵⁹ However, such studies treat the market entities through the dichotomous state-business paradigm, not as a middle-man “sandwiched” between the state and the public.⁶⁰ In effect, media scholars have found that the state has recruited marketized media outlets and Internet service and content providers to help with propaganda, censorship and information manipulation efforts.⁶¹ However, current studies have yet to examine how the market force indulge in state-promoted causes in other realms. Indeed, as China increasingly threatens to use and practices actual economic leverages in international relations, pure mobilization of the public is noticeably deficient. They need the participation of commercial actors. In the past, activities such as boycotting foreign products were mostly carried by popular nationalism and the state intended to cool it down.⁶² Recently, however, there are speculations⁶³ and evidence⁶⁴ of the state showing ambivalent attitude toward these boycotts and even fueling them. But very few studies have endeavored to untangle the dynamics of the economy side in the state-led movements against rivalry regions.⁶⁵ This project, thus, goes

⁵⁹ Min Ye, *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018, The Belt Road and Beyond* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108855389>.

⁶⁰ Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 59.

⁶¹ Daniela Stockmann and Mary E. Gallagher, “Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China,” *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 4 (April 14, 2011): 436–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010394773>; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*; Rebecca MacKinnon, “China’s Censorship 2.0: How Companies Censor Bloggers,” *First Monday* 14, no. 2 (January 25, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v14i2.2378>.

⁶² Shih-Diing Liu, “China’s Popular Nationalism on the Internet. Report on the 2005 Anti-Japan Network Struggles,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 7, no. 1 (2006): 144–55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649370500463802>.

⁶³ Zheng, “观察：中国官办‘爱国潮’能否持久？”；Zhongshi Guo, Weng Hin Cheong, and Huailin Chen, “Nationalism as Public Imagination,” *International Communication Gazette* 69, no. 5 (October 26, 2007): 467–80, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048507080873>.

⁶⁴ An article published by Xinhua, the party mouthpiece, explicitly called for a boycott of Korea’s Lotte Group for its cooperation with the Korean government over the THAAD issue. See, Yalin Hao, “新华时评：中国不欢迎这样的‘乐天,’” Xinhua, February 27, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2017-02/27/c_1120539249.htm.

⁶⁵ For exceptions, see e.g., James Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China’s Japan Policy,” in *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Oystein Tunsjo (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 169–95, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501712777-009>.

beyond the analytical approach of “state versus public” and encompasses the role of market forces when studying political mobilization in China’s diplomatic wars.

Lastly, many studies tend to assume that the state *always* has the same will, capacity and strategy to mobilize once it decides to do so. For example, in her thorough examination of the Party-state’s intentional use of nationalist campaigns, Weiss suggests the party to be a monolithic entity that has consistent capacity in either tolerating grassroots movements or nipping them in bud, manifested in all major confrontations between China and the U.S. and Japan from 1985 to 2012.⁶⁶ While the framework offers a powerful paradigm explaining the state’s shrewdness in tackling foreign policy, it tends to overlook the fact that the state’s intention, ability and tactics may vary according to specific targets at different time frames, thus leading to different effects. This project, through process-tracing, intends to reveal how the state’s mobilization exertions often vary in longitudinal and latitudinal terms. The state alters its determination and strategies of mobilizing based on what specific diplomatic goals should be achieved, who the targeted territories are and what particular time frame it is locked in, with which the effects of mobilization will likely fluctuate accordingly. In a word, mobilization should be context specific.

In sum, focusing on the use of outbound tourism in Sino-Korea THAAD disputes and the contests across the Taiwan Strait, the project will reveal the dynamics and nuances of the party-state mobilizing public participation from almost all walks of life, including commercial and social actors. Notably, however, China’s economic coercion in pursuit of diplomatic objectives is well beyond the tourism sector and could expand to any related industries, although its concrete practice in different domains may vary, as shown in the last chapter. Also, I choose South Korea and Taiwan as focal cases only to showcase the internal scheme it may involve in, more cases subject

⁶⁶ Weiss, *Powerful Patriots : Nationalist Protest in China’s Foreign Relations*.

to be included for a brief, descriptive discussion in the Conclusion session. This project invites further thoughtful research on more industries embedded in more complicated contexts.

China's Foreign Policy:

From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievements

China's foreign policy principles have evolved in the recent forty years after the reform and opening era. More specifically, since 1989, when the CCP was placed in an ordeal environment because of the Tiananmen incident and the collapse of the communist bloc until recently, China's foreign relations practice was generally guided by the well-known strategy of *taoguang yanghui* (keeping a low profile).⁶⁷

However, with the rise of China, whether it should insist on keeping a low profile internationally was intensely debated during Jiang's and Hu's administrations. The argument centers around if it is inappropriate for China to remain a low profile as the historical context in which the strategy was proposed has changed⁶⁸ and China has emerged as the world's second largest economy.⁶⁹ Others warn against such rosy views of China's economic power and international status and advised continuation of the strategy.⁷⁰

Xi Jinping's rule marks the transition away from the "keeping a low profile" strategy officially. Different from his predecessors, Xi and the new leadership project a stronger and more assertive China, signaled by Xi's 2013 speech which officially presented the strategy of *fen fa you wei* (striving for achievement).⁷¹ The Chinese political elites' perception of China's tremendous

⁶⁷ Xiaoping Deng, "邓小平在中国共产党第十二次全国代表大会上的开幕词," People's Daily, September 2, 1982, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/64565/65448/4429495.html>.

⁶⁸ Zicheng Ye, "关于韬光养晦和有所作为——再谈中国的大国外交心态," 太平洋学报 1 (2002).

⁶⁹ Yuan Luo, "韬光养晦和有所作为结合才能体现中国的外交战略," China Network Television, March 6, 2012, <http://news.cntv.cn/china/20120306/101254.shtml>.

⁷⁰ For example, Youkun Li, "国家利益视角下的'韬光养晦'争议," 国际展望 0, no. 3 (2012): 27; Jianmin Wu, "已经天下第二, 还要韬吗?," People's Daily Online, December 11, 2012, <http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2012/1211/c49155-19857639.html>.

⁷¹ Xuetong Yan, "From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 153–84, <https://doi.org/10.1093/CJIP/POU027>.

expansion of economic power with its mismatched global influence seems to propel them to pursue broader global presence and extensive national interest.⁷² In addition, nationalist upsurge from the bottom pressures the leadership to act more assertive,⁷³ with which the party seeks to maintain legitimacy and claims its superiority in defending the nation.⁷⁴ As a result, on the one hand, the Chinese government seeks to claim regional, even global, leadership through promoting a series of international organizations since 2013. For example, China poses a challenge to the existing international order by starting programs like The Belt and Road Initiative and The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. On the other hand, the government progressively expands its definition of core national interest from only national sovereignty and territorial integrity to others like national security, political regime and social stability and people's livelihoods.⁷⁵ This not only suggests it is sensitive to more pressure points that the government would fear of threatening the regime but indicates its gradual intolerance with these challenges and possible delivery of more stringent reactions.⁷⁶

China's new assertive foreign policy bears two characteristics that current studies have yet to carefully examine. First, buttressed by its roaring economy, the party-state can resort to economic tools as a way to wage influence, which makes China's foreign relations strategy in the Xi era distinct from what precedes. As noted by Johnson, "Xi sees robust economic diplomacy as a key element in his overall diplomatic strategy".⁷⁷ Particularly since 2010, the state has attempted at

⁷² Suisheng Zhao, "Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: The Strident Turn," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 82 (July 2013): 535–53, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2013.766379>.

⁷³ Simon Shen and Shaun Breslin, *Online Chinese Nationalism and China's Bilateral Relations* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010); Zhao, "Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: The Strident Turn."

⁷⁴ Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China"; Erica Strecker Downs and Phillip C. Saunders, "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism: China and the Diaoyu Islands," *International Security* 23, no. 3 (1998): 146, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539340>; Yongnian. Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China : Modernization, Identity, and International Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁷⁵ Information Office of the State Council, "China's Peaceful Development," September 6, 2011, http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/09/09/content_281474986284646.htm.

⁷⁶ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Foreign Policy as a Rising Power to Find Its Rightful Place," *Perceptions* 18, no. 1 (March 22, 2013): 101–29.

⁷⁷ Christopher K. Johnson, "Thoughts from the Chairman: Xi Jinping Unveils His Foreign Policy Vision," Center for Strategic

flexing its economic muscle to wield diplomatic influence. Table 1.1 exemplifies Chinese government's use of economic measures during major diplomatic confrontations.

Table 1.1 China's Economic Countermeasures to International Pressure

Targeted Political Societies	Year	(Suspected/Confirmed) Countermeasures ⁷⁸	Reason
Norway	2010	Limit/ban imports of whole Salmon from Norway	2010 award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo
Japan	2010	Limit/halt export of rare-earth elements to Japan Slow the approval of Japanese imports	Dianyu Islands dispute
	2012	Cancel tours to Japan/Slow visa issuing Slow the approval of Japanese imports Limit/halt export of rare-earth elements to Japan	Dianyu Islands dispute
The Philippines	2012	Postpone tours to the Philippines	Huangyan Island dispute
South Korea	2016	Group travel visa suspended Korean stars kept from entering China	THAAD deployment
Taiwan	2016 2019	Group travel visa reduced Individual travel visa suspended	Pro-independence president and party elected
Australia	2017 2020	Australian exported goods being postponed at the customs Limit imports of Australian coalmine Ceasing importing Australian coalmine	Australia accusing China of meddling in Australia's affairs; Australia calling for an independent investigation into the initial coronavirus outbreak in China
Canada	2018	Slowing canola shipments through Chinese ports	Detention of Huawei's CFO Meng Wanzhou
Palau	2017	Stop selling package tours to Palau	Refusing to terminate diplomatic relations with Taiwan

Sources: Compiled by the author according to relevant news

Furthermore, to strive for achievements and make the aforementioned economic measures effective, the state often has to make its foreign policy more participatory for domestic actors. The public has been regarded a critical actor in facilitating foreign policy making and implementation. Domestic determinants such as public attitudes, interest groups and media can not only influence

and International Studies, December 8, 2014, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/thoughts-chairman-xi-jinping-unveils-his-foreign-policy-vision>.

⁷⁸ Many of the measures have never gained official admission from China but been confirmed as true by relevant market practitioners, especially tourism visa suspensions. Both media reports and my own interviews with travel agents confirmed that these bans are real, albeit unofficial and transmitted as oral instructions.

states' foreign policy choices and behavior⁷⁹ but more importantly, be maneuvered by the state to achieve foreign policy goals. For example, the proponents of the “rally ‘round the flag” effect find that the public can be rallied to support the incumbent leadership when an international conflict breaks out, including crises like economic sanctions.⁸⁰ Country leaders also promote ideals and national goals globally through continuing conversation with foreign publics before influencing their governments, as public diplomacy theory states.⁸¹ However, in the past, foreign relations is a realm where Chinese citizens are generally passive. The Party-state has long been aware of the public's role in foreign policy.⁸²

In the recent decade, the government appears to emphasize the grassroots. For instance, it often utilizes the Chinese citizens as an asset to provide negotiation leverage with foreign governments and complicate international cooperation.⁸³ Indeed, building a strong, ambitious China in the new age requires not only official promotion but recognition and campaigning of the public and the economic actors, especially while engaging in economic retaliation. Therefore, in addition to having state actors promoting its new foreign relations ambition,⁸⁴ the government motivates more private sectors and mass citizens in the course. The party-state has made tedious efforts to frame a healthy state-(private) business relationship and keep their loyalty by co-opting private

⁷⁹ Douglas C. Foyle, “Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Elite Beliefs as a Mediating Variable,” *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (March 1, 1997): 141–69, <https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00036>; W. Lance Bennett and Jarol B. Manheim, “Taking the Public by Storm: Information, Cuing, and the Democratic Process in the Gulf Conflict,” *Political Communication* 10, no. 4 (1993): 331–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.1993.9962998>.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Terrence L. Chapman and Dan Reiter, “The United Nations Security Council and the Rally ‘round the Flag Effect,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 1, 2004): 886–909, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002704269353/SUPPL_FILE/CHAPMAN_REITER_DATA.ZIP.

⁸¹ For example, Justin Hart, *Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of U. S. Foreign Policy*, *Empire of Ideas* (Oxford University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ACPROF:OSOBL/9780199777945.001.0001>.

⁸² See, for instance, Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China's Japan Policy.”

⁸³ Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations*.

⁸⁴ For example, state-owned enterprises are mobilized to promote China's regional leadership in the Belt and Road Initiative while many Chinese diplomats have been recognized form an ally with an aggressive style of “wolf warrior diplomacy”. See Ye, *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018*; Peter Martin, *China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy* (Oxford University Press, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197513705.001.0001>.

entrepreneurs through various mechanisms.⁸⁵ It also reinforces widespread patriotic campaigns targeted ordinary citizens through “a coordinated effort of every propaganda channel”,⁸⁶ for example, school education,⁸⁷ traditional media,⁸⁸ and digital media.⁸⁹

Central to China’s core interest lies the “Taiwan issue”, or the Cross-straits issue. In the wake of the Kuomintang (KMT) fleeing to Taiwan and starting *de facto* independent governance, keeping Taiwan unified with the mainland from secession has been enshrined in China’s original core interest interpretation. To achieve this, officials often narrate the cross-straits relations emphasizing the “common bloodline” discourse that Mainland and Taiwan “share the same destiny” within “one family”.⁹⁰ These relations warmed up during the administration of the pro-unification president, Ma Ying-jeou, and climaxed at a historical meeting between Xi and Ma in 2015.⁹¹ Thus, the central authorities gear up to attack Taiwan separatists after Tsai Ying-wen, a pro-independence president, won the 2016 and 2020 elections and denied the “1992 consensus”.⁹² The CCP also adopts far-flung punishment towards Taiwan following the 2016 election, including continually blocking Taiwan’s presence in international organizations or conferences,⁹³ increasing military intimidation,⁹⁴ and the economic sanctions which will be the focus of this project.

⁸⁵ Gunter Schubert and Thomas Heberer, “State–Business Relations under Xi Jinping : Steering the Private Sector and Private Entrepreneurs,” in *Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping*, ed. Arthur S. Ding and Jagannath P. Panda (Routledge, 2020), 105–30, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003041481-8>.

⁸⁶ Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China,” 296.

⁸⁷ Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation*.

⁸⁸ Daniela Stockmann, “Race to the Bottom: Media Marketization and Increasing Negativity toward the United States in China,” *Political Communication* 28, no. 3 (July 4, 2011): 268–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2011.572447>.

⁸⁹ Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*.

⁹⁰ Jinping Xi, “在《告台湾同胞书》发表 40 周年纪念会上的讲话,” People’s Daily Online, January 2, 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2019/01/02/c64094-30499664.html>.

⁹¹ Richard C. Bush, “What the Historic Ma-Xi Meeting Could Mean for Cross-Strait Relations,” Brookings, November 9, 2015, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/11/09/what-the-historic-ma-xi-meeting-could-mean-for-cross-strait-relations/>.

⁹² Yongjie Ni, “回避‘九二共识’ 台湾当局新领导人何来‘善意’? ,” China News, May 22, 2016, <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/gn/2016/05-22/7879086.shtml>.

⁹³ Gerrit van der Wees, “China Continues to Block Taiwan in the International Arena ,” The Diplomat, May 18, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/china-continues-to-block-taiwan-in-the-international-arena/>.

⁹⁴ Michael Forsythe and Chris Buckley, “Taiwan Responds After China Sends Carrier to Taiwan Strait,” The New York Times,

South Korea since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1992 had dedicated itself to boosting strategic and cooperative partnership with China. Such amity showed signs of blossoming when the former president, Park Geun-hye, made a landmark four-day trip to China in 2013⁹⁵ and prospered after Park attended China's World War Two military parade despite opposition from the western world, caught standing right next to Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping.⁹⁶ The honeymoon relations, however, were upended by the deployment of THAAD in 2016 which, as denounced by Chinese officials, endangered China's national security by divulging a large swathe of its territory within THAAD's radar, containing its nuclear strategy and toppling regional balance.⁹⁷ The Chinese leadership not only decried the Korean government but protested against a Korean enterprise that approved land swap for the THAAD installation.⁹⁸ Celebrations of the 25 anniversary of China-Korean diplomatic normalization were all canceled.⁹⁹

Outbound Tourism:

Mobilizing Economic Leverage for Foreign Relations

Tourism is often defined as “the temporary, short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at each destination.”¹⁰⁰ I choose to focus on the tourism ban in both the South Korean and Taiwan cases because among all economic means, tourism has become a major tool employed by the Chinese government to exert diplomatic influence. Out of the eight territories listed in Table 1.1, five were

January 10, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/10/world/asia/china-taiwan-strait-aircraft-carrier-trump.html?_ga=2.208861778.1373538269.1616181948-975342143.1613925463.

⁹⁵ This trip was considered breaking the precedent as Park visited China before making a trip to Japan first while newly-elected Korean presidents normally visit Japan before China. See Xinhua, “‘冰公主’首访华 暖中韩惠东亚,” June 27, 2013, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/jrch/20130627.htm>. <http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/jrch/20130627.htm>

⁹⁶ Yong-in Yi, “US Government Not Thrilled with Park's Attendance at Beijing Military Parade,” Hankyoreh, September 5, 2015, http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/707572.html.

⁹⁷ BBC, “中国为何对萨德如此忧心忡忡?,” April 4, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/world-39488097>.

⁹⁸ 新华网, “中国反‘萨德’立场不会变,” February 27, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2017-02/27/c_129496577.htm.

⁹⁹ 新华网.

¹⁰⁰ Allan Beaver, *A Dictionary of Travel and Tourism Terminology* (CABI Publishing, 2005), 313.

cut off tours with China during crises, suggesting tourism has been politicized to punish “undisciplined” foes. Thus, studying the tourism bans provides a useful opportunity to understand the domestic politics of China’s foreign relations. Moreover, by incorporating tourism to study China’s domestic mobilization in settling foreign policy,¹⁰¹ this research calls for more attention from both CP and IR to government use of such “unconventional” resource and may lead to further research that can contribute to the current scholarship *theoretically* and *empirically*. Theoretically, as such, this research will show the state *can* instrumentalize tourism as a sort of resource of domestic mobilization for international use. By systematically studying the mechanisms of state weaponizing tourism, this project can provide an empirical window into the dynamics of *how* such a resource plays a critical role in the international arena. Thus, this project reiterates scholarly attention to the state capacity of (unconventional) resource control and invites further research engaging in how states (esp. authoritarian ones) may maneuver more novel resources and explore their use internationally. In addition, how the state has weaponized tourism, compared with other economic means such as trade embargoes, allows us to better unravel the tripartite state-business-public interplay. Freezing imports and exports, for instance, of Norwegian salmons or Japanese rare earths normally involve only the government and importers/manufacturers at the customs. Scrutinizing the tourism ban, however, can reveal the more nuanced interactions not just between the state and the business actors but also that with individual citizens (tourists), thus sheds light on the contours of state mobilization more thoroughly.

Why does tourism become a weapon of China’s foreign policy? How does the party-state utilize outbound tourism to wield diplomatic influence? How effective is this strategy? This section will

¹⁰¹ See, for instance, Wolfgang Georg Arlt, *China’s Outbound Tourism, China’s Outbound Tourism* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203968161>; Tony S.M. Tse, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as a Form of Diplomacy,” *Tourism Planning & Development* 10, no. 2 (2013): 149–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.783738>.

delve into how the government has mobilized outbound tourism as a means to achieve its diplomatic goals.

While for citizens in many countries, tourism can be considered as personal and free from state intervention, for the Chinese citizens, it is quite a complex process. As will be shown below, this process allows the Chinese government to shape outbound tourism in two ways: (1) administrative decrees that dictate whether citizens *can* travel and (2) media propaganda which primarily affect whether citizens *want* to travel. With dexterous adoption of these two tactics, tourism becomes a ready tool of “political needs of those who wield power” in China.¹⁰²

Mobilization by Decree

For Chinese passport holders, the international tourism environment seems not to be quite agreeable. In most cases, Chinese citizens need a visa to go abroad and this process involves in a tripartite interaction between the government, travel agencies and tourists.

Chinese citizens travel abroad primarily through two modes: grouped tours and individual tours. Those who travel in groups need to apply for an ADS (Approved Destination Status) group visa (*tuanqian*) and those choosing individual tours must hold an individual visa (*geqian*). While not a dominant travel mode recently, group tours are chosen by half of tourists traveling to foreign countries in groups, particularly popular among senior visitors.¹⁰³ However, group tourists are quite restricted in choosing a destination, selecting travel operators and practicing the trips. First, in principle, group tourists must retain an ADS group visa. The ADS scheme is a bilateral arrangement between China and a foreign government which allows only countries signed the ADS agreement to be group travel destinations for Chinese citizens. Therefore, group tourists have

¹⁰² Linda K. Richter, *The Politics of Tourism in Asia* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1989); Arlt, *China's Outbound Tourism*.

¹⁰³ China Tourism Academy and Trip.com Group Limited, “《2018年中国游客出境游大数据报告》出炉,” *Travel Weekly China*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.travelweekly-china.com/73800>.

limited destinations to choose from and if there are any, they are countries determined by the Chinese government. Second, group tourists must submit their visa applications via government-authorized travel agencies,¹⁰⁴ and only certified travel agencies by the Chinese and the destined country's governments are allowed to organize tourist groups and they "must assign special couriers to handle the visa application procedure".¹⁰⁵ Third, travelers holding the group ADS visas have to travel in groups arranged by government approved travel agencies, follow a stringent itinerary and are not allowed to leave the group during the whole trip.

Even in applying for individual visas, tourists may also experience government intervention. As shown in Chapter 3, to apply for travel documents to certain destinations, such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, all tourists need to go through government authorized agencies. To some other countries like South Korea and Japan, even though one may travel with an individual visa, one must apply for the visa through authorized travel agencies.

As such, travel agencies in China play a crucial role in assisting both grouped and independent tourists. Chapter 4 shows that when international conflicts break out and the government determines to weaponize tourism, the Tourism Bureau could prompt an immediate order of reducing or suspending tour sales and organizations. It often summons travel agencies for a conference to issue *oral* instructions or direct local tourism bureaus to transmit the oral guidance. For example, in mandating Korea-bound tourism, the Beijing Tourism Bureau summons all travel operators to stop selling tours to South Korea.¹⁰⁶ Same instructions were also directed during crises with Japan, the Philippines and Palau.¹⁰⁷ Travel agencies, to survive the Chinese competitive

¹⁰⁴ The U.S. and Canada, although joined the ADS group, is an exception to the dictation. Any Chinese tourists planning to visit the U.S. for leisure must apply for an individual visa and can make the trip either in groups or independently.

¹⁰⁵ China Contact, "Approved Destination Status (ADS) Policy," 2015, <https://chinacontact.org/information/approved-destination-status-ads-policy>.

¹⁰⁶ Mullen, "China's 'Unofficial' Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea."

¹⁰⁷ Tse, "Chinese Outbound Tourism as a Form of Diplomacy"; Lauren Beldi, "China's 'Tourist Ban' Leaves Palau Struggling to Fill Hotels and An Airline in Limbo," ABC News, August 27, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-26/china-tourist-ban->

market, normally abide by state directives. However, the market-orientation in nature suggests its necessity of smartly pivoting between the state and the tourists.

Mobilization by Persuasion

Compared with the hard mobilization, which is forceful, the Chinese government relies heavily on soft strategies to *persuade* people to stand behind the state diplomatic agenda through mass media. According to Luo Yuan, Xi Jinping's advisor, a coordinated combination and practice of official, civic and media diplomacies (*guanfang waijiao*, *minjian waijiao*, *meiti waijiao*) adds more benefits and efficiency to the construction of soft power.¹⁰⁸ His statement represents a quick reminder of official attitude to the role of media in practicing foreign relations and endorses the use of media as a way to involve citizenry into diplomacy.

To persuade individual citizens not to visit rival territories for leisure, the government may incite public sentiment among them. Extant literature has demonstrated a strong relationship between hostile emotions toward international societies and tourists travel intentions.¹⁰⁹

To affect public cognition of peculiar issues, news media not only relies on state control of information but various tactics such as priming and framing.¹¹⁰

To limit the citizens' access to alternative interpretations other than those presented by official propaganda, China's propaganda department first exercises stringent control of information. It promulgates reporting guidance all media outlets must abide by, including online news network

leaves-palau-tourism-in-peril/10160020.

¹⁰⁸ Luo, "韬光养晦和有所作为结合才能体现中国的外交战略."

¹⁰⁹ Mingming Cheng, Anthony Ip Kin Wong, and Bruce Prideaux, "Political Travel Constraint: The Role of Chinese Popular Nationalism," *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 34, no. 3 (March 24, 2017): 383–97, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2016.1182456>.

¹¹⁰ Shanto Iyengar and Adam Simon, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion," *Communication Research* 20, no. 3 (June 30, 1993): 365–83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009365093020003002>; Patricia Moy, David Tewksbury, and Eike Mark Rinke, "Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing," ed. Klaus Bruhn Jensen et al., *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016), <https://doi.org/10.31235/OSF.IO/X8F26>; Dietram A. Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," *Journal of Communication* 49, no. 1 (March 1, 1999): 103–22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.1999.TB02784.X>.

providers.¹¹¹ When reporting international news, particularly, all other media must follow those provided by particular party mouthpieces such as the Xinhua Agency.¹¹² Improperly released coverage is inclined to be censored.¹¹³

To establish a hierarchy of news prevalence by underlining government-sanctioned message, the state also relies on propaganda tactics such as priming: it activates the audience's memory through increasing the frequency of reporting the state is emphasizing¹¹⁴ and linking the targeted societies to certain cues.¹¹⁵ As shown in Chapter 5, in priming audiences' attentiveness to the Sino-Korean conflict, all media outlets emphasize a contesting discourse citing keywords "THAAD", "objection" in reporting Korea related news. Besides, covering China and Korea's contest in nonpolitical field, such as sports event, becomes another cue to reflect the conflict. In comparison, Taiwan's image is in more association with it being an "Island of Bus Accident", though the conflict subsided and political cooperation highlighted intriguingly.

Meanwhile, China's officials are shrewdly and tactically exploiting the priming effect by relying on different types of media outlets and targeting various audiences according to platforms. In accordance with previous studies that the state relies on commercialized media and digital platforms to attract more readership, the findings show that commercialized media outlets and online news portals tend to publish more social or nonpolitical issues.¹¹⁶ This is consistent with previous finding of China's strategical "remote control".¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Global Times, "Non-Public Capital to Be Barred from Media-Related Business," October 9, 2021, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202110/1235829.shtml>.

¹¹² Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*; Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*.

¹¹³ Reznikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*.

¹¹⁴ Iyengar and Simon, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion."

¹¹⁵ Nicholas A. Valentino, Vincent L. Hutchings, and Ismail K. White, "Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes During Campaigns," *American Political Science Review* 96, no. 1 (2002): 75–90, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055402004240>.

¹¹⁶ Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*.

¹¹⁷ Stockmann and Gallagher, "Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China."

Besides, state media have attended to the framing effect for better persuasion effects. As shown in Chapter 6, propaganda messages can adroitly utilize *grand rhetoric* framing that highlights national interest being affected as well as more innovative *personal-interest reporting* which suggests how ordinary readers' everyday interest is undermined. Through employing different frames of international conflicts, the state aims not only to shape public sentiment towards targeted regions but to stimulate their behavior, particularly in terms of consumer boycotts, to help the state mold diplomatic relations *economically*. Such framing strategies largely remain even when disaggregating the media according to their types and platforms.

How Effective is State-led Mobilization?

How effective is the state mobilization? While previous studies suggest complicated effects of state coercive directives and propaganda, the investigation of the “hard plus soft” mobilization mechanism shows it largely efficient.

On the one hand, even the mobilization is initiated in a hard, coercive fashion, the tripartite interplay between the state, the travel agencies and tourists deems it an intricate process. The state may largely come cross with the “principal-agent” problem when intermediary actors implement central policies as the later, as government agents, are more motivated to act to their own interest than their principal, the state.¹¹⁸ When the local cadres serve as intermediary actors, for example, they could prioritize departmental interest or personal career advancement.¹¹⁹ Even when the market force becomes an intermediary actor, the state has the same issue. For instance, the market-oriented Internet service providers could still carry out government policies half-heartedly¹²⁰ while

¹¹⁸ Brian J. Cook and B Dan Wood, “Principal-Agent Models of Political Control of Bureaucracy,” *The American Political Science Review* 83, no. 3 (1989): 965–78, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1962069>.

¹¹⁹ O’Brien and Li, “Selective Policy Implementation in Rural China”; Yuan Wang and Rongbin Han, “Cosmetic Responsiveness: Why and How Local Authorities Respond to Mundane Online Complaints in China,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 2022, August 4, 2022, 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11366-022-09798-Z>; Dan Chen, *Convenient Criticism: Local Media and Governance in Urban China* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2020).

¹²⁰ Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*.

journalists in China may exploit “guarded improvisation” to skirt government supervision.¹²¹ These all call the effectiveness of government forceful demands into question. In this sense, the travel agent could seek for their own interest—that is, to pursue market incentives—while meeting state demands.

The examination of the effectiveness of the hard mobilization also suggests its complexity. Chapter 4 indicates that the state’s hard mobilization through administrative orders indeed significantly reduces the number of tourists to South Korea and Taiwan, especially following every informal/formal tourism ban. The dramatic change of tourism statistics often causes historically low tourism numbers. Simultaneously, however, the number of tourists also suggests there were quite a lot of travelers, perhaps with the assistance of travel agents, visit the rivalry regions even amid confrontations.

On the other hand, we are not clear if different framing strategies can effectively shape public sentiment toward targeted states and change their possible economic activities (i.e., consumer boycotts), the latter of which the state expects to rely on to retaliate rivalries. First, whether does the grand rhetoric work? Some scholars contend such nationalistic indoctrination could stimulate public antagonism and create nationalist activists¹²² while others believe if propaganda is framed in a heavy-handed fashion, its persuasion effect would be limited.¹²³ Also, since the personal-interest reporting is newly identified, its effectiveness remains unclear, although previous studies may suggest that propaganda that is framed softly could persuade.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Repnikova, *Media Politics in China : Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*.

¹²² Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China”; Min Zhou and Hanning Wang, “Anti-Japanese Sentiment among Chinese University Students: The Influence of Contemporary Nationalist Propaganda,” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 46, no. 1 (April 1, 2017): 167–85, <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261704600107>; Chuyu Liu and Xiao Ma, “Popular Threats and Nationalistic Propaganda: Political Logic of China’s Patriotic Campaign,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2, 2018): 633–64, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2018.1483632>.

¹²³ Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda.”

¹²⁴ Mattingly and Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades.”

Chapter 7 focuses on the effectiveness of the soft mobilization, particularly the framing effect. It shows in most scenarios, both grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting can not only arouse public hostility towards the rivalry governments but more interestingly, help the state to achieve the ambition of economic coercion by increasing the public's intention of boycotting tourism and even other products provided by rival regions.

Data and Method

Overall, this project traces the trajectory of China's two diplomatic crises, the Sino-Korean THAAD dispute and Cross-Strait rift on Tsai Ing-wen's election, and explore how the state deals with them through the dual mobilization mechanism for more domestic supporters. To operationalize the research, I break it into three empirical sections, supported by both qualitative and quantitative evidence.

First, to study the hard side of the mobilization mechanism, mobilization by decree, I mainly focus on qualitative data from in-depth interviews with tourism bureau officials, travel agents and a few businesspeople conducting international trade, triangulated with evidence scraped in related news reports. The interviews are crystallization of several rounds of field work to China in 2017, 2019 and a follow-up virtual fieldwork in 2022. It attempts to address the following questions: whether and how do the state hold travel agencies accountable and in what ways the latter implement such policies to maneuver regular outbound tourists? How do these commercial actors reconcile their own interests and the state's goals? In particular, what is a more legitimate alternative for travel operators to meet the demands from the "top" while satiate the "bottom" besides exploiting loopholes? To examine the effectiveness of such hard mobilization, I track the official tourism statistics released monthly by South Korean and Taiwanese officials. The data allows me to conduct an impressionistic time-series analysis to identify whether and how the

number of Chinese tourists to South Korea and Taiwan increases or decreases in response to critical events, particularly affected by state mobilization in decrees.¹²⁵

A mixed method is employed to conduct content analysis of news reports in order to reveal how the state exploits soft mobilization. As the above discussion suggests, the propaganda apparatus employs two main means for effective persuasion: it increases the salience of a particular issue by priming its domestic audience and aims for engaging more audience through different frames to cater to ordinary citizens' various kinds of interest. With these goals in mind, I use quantitative, computer-assisted evidence to examine the priming effect plus in-depth manual content analysis for uncovering framing strategies. The corpus is an original dataset consisting of news coming from two sources. It first comprises more than 70 thousand news articles published by more than one hundred major print newspapers related to Korea (between 2016 and 2017) and Taiwan (in the period of 2016 and the latter of 2019), which can be accessed from a database named WiseSearch.¹²⁶ Also, to examine the news reporting pattern on the digital platform, I collect posts released on China's major microblogging platform, Weibo, by a few selected media accounts. Using R programming, I examine the how media practitioners prime the domestic readers to raise their attentiveness to particular news, manipulate their opinion through variations of cues and take advantage of different media sponsorships and platforms for better results (supplemented with topic analysis). Using critical discourse analysis, I discover how media practitioners exploit diverse frames to appeal to average citizens and identify how authorities employ innovative propaganda to maneuver the citizens' nationalist fervor as well as economic actions favoring the state.

¹²⁵ Admittedly, the THAAD deployment decision by the Korean government and Taiwan's election result could be a response to President Xi's increasingly provocative and ham-handed foreign policy. But we should see China's tourism policy directly triggered by provocations from South Korea and Taiwan.

¹²⁶ WiseSearch is widely used by previous studies. See, for instance, Qin, Strömberg, and Wu, "Media Bias in China."

The last empirical part pertains to a systematic evaluation of the framing effect. It assesses the causal relations of the propaganda tactics in manipulating popular sentiment with an original post-test survey experiment. It examines the effectiveness of the traditional propaganda strategy underlining grand rhetoric versus the innovative propagation that highlights individual citizens' everyday interest, both of which have been identified in the critical discourse analysis.

An Overview of What Follows

Readers will expect to read a project including seven chapters with four of them presenting empirical evidence. The current chapter briefly introduces China's use of economic means, the tourism sector particularly, in managing foreign policy and how this phenomenon should be investigated through a so-called "hard plus soft" mobilization paradigm. This chapter hopes to provide a theoretical framework in which this research is situated, its historical context and the significance of conducting the research. Chapter 2 includes a detailed discussion of the evolution of China's foreign policy strategies and its relations with South Korea and Taiwan separately. It also entails an overview of the role the general public has played in influencing policy making and implementation, thus providing a potential explanation of why the authoritarians hinge on a wider domestic public in the handling of diplomacy. Chapter 3 lays out the use of outbound tourism in international relations and elaborates on why outbound tourism can become a weapon that helps the party-state influence diplomacy.

The empirical parts are allocated to Chapters 4 to 7. Chapter 4 dedicates to an investigation of the dynamics of how the Chinese government decrees intermediary actors such as travel agencies to help execute state directives and thereby shape the options of tourists to South Korea and Taiwan. Moreover, it also examines to what extent the intermediary actors, a market force, can effectively pivot between the state and the tourists by complying with state instructions while meeting the

demands conveyed by potential clients, making the hard mobilization sustainable. An examination of tourism statistics also reveals the effectiveness of such hard mobilization.

By studying various media propaganda strategies, Chapters 5 and 6 examine how the state uses the soft form of mobilization to enlist more voluntary policy supporters. While the hard mobilization may prevent tourists from traveling to the rivalry targets through government orders, the government expects more voluntary compliance and commitment. Chapter 5 focuses on the priming effect to reveal that media reports across various types of outlets and platforms help broadcast government-promoted messages by priming the audience with particular keywords and cues, in the hope of stimulating public sentiment towards certain regions favoring state goals.

Chapter 6 shifts to the media effect of framing where, in shaping public opinion and actions, the state media could frame international conflicts in different ways. It not only identifies a traditionally recognized frame, the *grand rhetoric*, which highlights how the general national interest is undermined but more interestingly, an overlooked propaganda innovation, *personal interest reporting*, which speaks to ordinary people's mundane interest. It points out that, for example, in order to attack the tourism industry in Korea and Taiwan for retaliation, the propaganda messages broadcast information unveiling tourists being mistreated and ripped off by locals while traveling there. In doing both, the Chinese government aims to instigate not only the public's antagonism towards its diplomatic foes but, more importantly, discourage prospective visitors from conducting leisure travels, eventually paralyzing the tourism industry in particular and the economic performance of targeted governments as a whole.

Chapter 7 delves into an evaluation of the effectiveness of the soft mobilization with an especial focus on the framing strategies. It presents the design and findings of the survey experiment which investigates whether and how the traditional framing strategy, the grand rhetoric and the

propaganda innovation, personal-interest reporting, are effective. As the findings suggest, in most cases, both strategies and a mix of them can not only stir up respondents' hostility to the targeted regions but translate such general attitudes to potential economic activities such as boycotting traveling to these regions and purchasing manufactures.

Notably, when tracking the whole process of how these two conflicts were being dealt with by the Chinese state, I compare and contrast the state's variations in implementing the hard and soft mobilization in cases of South Korea and Taiwan.

The last chapter concludes this project with a summary of key findings and hopes to include more concerns and inquiries that may be raised by readers. For example, it adds several sections explaining how the Chinese state can practice economic coercion beyond merely the tourism industry and targeted regions' possible countermeasures to China's sanctions. Moreover, it includes a short introduction of China's variations in using the mobilization paradigm in regions including while beyond South Korea and Taiwan, added by a nonsystematic speculation of what might be the drives factoring behind the heterogeneity. It ends with a short inquiry into how such a mobilization mechanism can be applied to cases other than South Korea and Taiwan, and even beyond the territory of the tourism sector. These, together, invite further insightful research into a more fruitful discovery.

CHAPTER 2

CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND DOMESTIC ACTORS:

FROM KEEPING A LOW PROFILE TO STRIVING FOR

ACHIEVEMENTS

China's foreign relations are guided by general planning that briefly describes its major strategies and tactics for handling diplomacy. On the one hand, such directives are a vital approach expected to help Chinese authorities navigate treacherous currents of foreign relations and weather diplomatic predicaments. On the other hand, these directives could reflect China's fluctuating domestic political landscape and its political and economic presence in the international arena. This chapter examines the trajectory of China's foreign policy strategies in the post-1978 era and unravels the increasing importance of domestic determinants in implementing foreign policy through the brief retrospective of China's handling of conflicts with foreign governments. Besides, as this project focuses on China's relations with South Korea and Taiwan, this chapter also offers the historical background to understand the development of the Sino-Korean relationship and the cross-strait relations.

China's Foreign Policy After 1978

Since the reform and opening period, the major principles of China's foreign policy have evolved through a few phases. Shifts of these principles do not necessarily reflect different reigns and administrations but are consistent with the actual situations of or the authorities' perception of China's stance home and abroad. How does China's foreign policy evolve? What factors cause the

evolution? And what are the political implications of such evolution? This section is devoted to addressing the concerns.

Deng Xiaoping: From “Independent and Peaceful” to “Keeping a Low Profile”

Immediately after reopening its door to the world, the CCP established an “independent and peaceful” strategy (*duli zizhu de heping waijiao*) to direct diplomatic practitioners. In the 12th National Conference of CCP in 1982, Deng Xiaoping declared “independence” and “self-reliance” to be the “basic stand” of the CCP’s major way of managing foreign relations,¹²⁷ suggesting Deng’s denial of too close a relationship with any one state.

However, Deng Xiaoping’s aspirations to continue peaceful relations and advanced economic ties with the global society were disrupted by a series of outright domestic and international predicaments, which may urge the Chinese authorities to change the principal strategy dealing with foreign pressures.

The first challenge occurred in 1989 where the Chinese leadership repressed the Tiananmen pro-democracy movements, resulting in economic sanctions imposed by the West in the following two years. For example, the U.S. government imposed a ban on arms shipments, enacting sanctions regarding economic and trade relations and halting high-level talks with Chinese officials.¹²⁸

In the meantime, the fact that communism ended in a few Eastern European countries, including the collapse of the Soviet Union placed the Chinese government in a quite ordeal international environment where its allies in the previous Soviet bloc abandoned once upheld ideology. More importantly, the annihilation of the “bipolar” pattern between the Western bloc and the

¹²⁷ For the whole speech, see Xiaoping Deng, “邓小平在中国共产党第十二次全国代表大会上的开幕词,” *People’s Daily*, September 2, 1982, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/64565/65448/4429495.html>.

¹²⁸ Andrew Glass, “House Sanctions Post-Tiananmen China, June 29, 1989,” *Politico*, June 28, 2011, <https://www.politico.com/story/2011/06/house-sanctions-post-tiananmen-china-june-29-1989-057928>.

Communism bloc foresaw the U.S. become an only superpower of the world, meaning that global powers tended to be highly skewed around the West.

Encountered with such broken economic ties with the international community and forced dealing with political implications of the fall of communism, Deng in September in 1989 expressed his views about international situation that the Chinese leadership “should observe the situation coolly..., hold our ground [and] act calmly.”¹²⁹

Later in 1990, he then reiterated the perspective that China cannot become a leader and “should not give offense to anyone” as they are “not strong enough”.¹³⁰ However, he suggested China’s role in promoting a new international political and economic order. In April 1992, Deng for the first time proposed the words of “keeping a low profile” (*tao guang yang hui*), “We should keep a low profile and work for more years, which will result in relatively huge political power. The weights of China’s speech in the international arena will be different.”¹³¹

His opinion on China’s new-age foreign relations strategy has later emerged as a 24-character guideline, “observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership”, with the adds of four more characters “strive to make achievements” (*you suo zuo wei*) later.¹³²

The Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao Era: Debating the Low Profile

From the late 1980s until Hu Jintao’s administration, keeping a low profile became the major guidance of the Chinese government to deal with international relations. Deng Xiaoping’s successors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were both abided by this instruction and continued to “mask

¹²⁹ Xiaoping Deng, *The Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping Vol. III (1982-1992)* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1994), 208.

¹³⁰ Deng, 235.

¹³¹ Literature Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, *Deng Xiaoping Nianpu (1975-1997), Volume 2* (Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 2004), 1346.

¹³² This project briefly uses the translation of the guideline by Bradley A. Thayer and John M. Friend, “The China Threat & What the U.S. Should Do About It,” Strategy Bridge, August 1, 2017, <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/8/1/the-china-threat-what-the-us-should-do-about-it>.

the successful expansion of its power” with the rhetoric of “peaceful rise” and “harmonious world”.¹³³ Notably, however, while Jiang and Hu largely insisted on their predecessor’s laying low strategy, their tenures witnessed China as an active participant in regional and international community,¹³⁴ particularly during Hu’s presidency, suggesting a potential evolution of the principle, which will be explained briefly later.

During two decades under Jiang’s and Hu’s reigns, China rose to the world as an international economic powerhouse. Since Deng Xiaoping’s remarkable 1992 southern tour, China’s annual GDP growth rate has remained more than seven per cent and even surpassed ten per cent particularly after being admitted into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001.¹³⁵ It has also remarkably become the second largest economy by nominal GDP and the world’s largest exporter since 2010.¹³⁶

With China’s increased role in the international economy, whether it should insist on a low profile globally was intensely debated. Some scholars in China argue against the *keeping a low profile* strategy for several concerns. First, such strategy was proposed when China was trapped in a series of crisis from home and abroad in the early 1990s. As China has emerged to one of the largest economies and competitive powers of the world, the particular context in which the *low-profile* strategy was proposed has changed. Moreover, many have concerned about the U.S. government’s comment on the strategy as “strategic denial and deception”.¹³⁷ Sticking to the

¹³³ Thayer and Friend.

¹³⁴ For example, in 2001, China served as the host country for the APEC Summit Meeting in Shanghai and joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). Later, Beijing hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics.

¹³⁵ The World Bank, “GDP Growth (Annual %),” <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=CN>.

¹³⁶ Andrew Monahan, “China Overtakes Japan as World’s No. 2 Economy,” *The Wall Street Journal*, February 14, 2011, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703361904576142832741439402>; Phillip Inman, “China Becomes World’s Biggest Exporter,” *The Guardian*, January 10, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/jan/10/china-tops-germany-exports>.

¹³⁷ This comment is originally from the Annual Report on the Military Power of People’s Republic of China. See Office of the Secretary of the Defense, *Annual Report on the Military Power of People’s Republic of China*, 8, available here <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2002/d20020712china.pdf>

For articles mentioning the report, see for example, Yue Xing and Jibing Zhang, “‘Taoguang Yanghui’ Zhanlve De Zai Sikao----

strategy, as they worry, may present in front of the world a shrewd, non-transparent and even deceiving image, which could undermine China's global reputation.¹³⁸ It is, thus, unnecessary and inappropriate to remaining a low profile with diplomacy.¹³⁹ This panel of scholars start to highlight the weights of “striving for achievements” (*you suo zuo wei*) from the 24-character guideline, reduce the presence of *keeping a low profile* and advise decision-makers to underplay the “never claims leadership” (*jue bu dang tou*) guidance.¹⁴⁰

An opposing perspective, however, still encourages keeping a low profile in international relations as it believes that the China's economic power and international status are overestimated by some. This perspective points to a few economic and social disadvantages China is heading onto, such as low GDP per capita, unreasonable economic structure, heavy reliance on importing key technologies and equipment, unbalanced development between rural and urban areas and among industries, etc.¹⁴¹ They urge China to have a clear understanding of itself as an emerging power and develop a sound relationship with the West.¹⁴² Even striving for achievements, some insist, China should achieve in a modest and prudent fashion.¹⁴³

Jianlun Ruhe Shuli Zhongguo De Guoji Xingxiang,” *Guoji GuanCha*, no. 6 (2006): 13–19; Youkun Li, “国家利益视角下的‘韬光养晦’争议,” *Guoji Zhanwang*, no. 3 (2012): 27–40; Yusheng Wang, “中国‘韬光养晦’战略的再思考,” Sina, July 7, 2004, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2004-07-07/13293634536.shtml>.

¹³⁸ Xing and Zhang, “‘Taoguang Yanghui’ Zhanlve De Zai Sikao---Jianlun Ruhe Shuli Zhongguo De Guoji Xingxiang”; Zicheng Ye, “Guanyu Taoguang Yanghui He Yousuo Zuowei---Zaitan Zhongguo De Dagu Waijiao Xintai,” *Taipingyang Xuebao*, no. 1 (2002): 62–66.

¹³⁹ Ye, “Guanyu Taoguang Yanghui He Yousuo Zuowei---Zaitan Zhongguo De Dagu Waijiao Xintai”; Bing Jiao, “Zhongguo Waijiao Xin Siwei: Cong ‘Taoguang Yanghui’ Zouxiang ‘Yousuo Zuowei’,” *Hubei Shehui Kexue*, no. 10 (2005): 101–3; Yuan Luo, “Taoguang Yanghui He Yousuo Zuowei Jiehe Caineng Tixian Zhongguo De Waijiao Zhanlve,” CNTV, March 6, 2012, <http://news.cntv.cn/china/20120306/101254.shtml>.

¹⁴⁰ Ye, “Guanyu Taoguang Yanghui He Yousuo Zuowei---Zaitan Zhongguo De Dagu Waijiao Xintai,” 65; Moning Zhang, “Dui Taoguang Yanghui Yao Juti Fenxi---Zhuanfang Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Guoji Guanxi Xueyuan Meiguo Yanjiu Zhongxin Zhuren Shi Yinrong,” *Nan Feng Chuang*, no. 22 (2010): 34–36.

¹⁴¹ Youkun Li, “国家利益视角下的‘韬光养晦’争议,” *Guoji Zhanwang*, no. 3 (2012): 27–40.

¹⁴² Li, “国家利益视角下的‘韬光养晦’争议”; Wang, “谨防‘捧杀论’，切勿自我陶醉”; Jisi Wang, “中国的国际定位问题与‘韬光养晦、有所作为’的战略思想,” *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*, no. 2 (2011): 4–9; Jianmin Wu, “已经天下第二，还要韬吗? ,” People's Daily Online, December 11, 2012, <http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2012/1211/c49155-19857639.html>.

¹⁴³ Li, “国家利益视角下的‘韬光养晦’争议.”

Notably, although keeping a low profile remained the core guideline of China's foreign policy, during Hu Jintao's tenure, there were signs that the authorities started to waver with stringent adherence to the strategy. In a 2009 speech, for instance, Hu urged China's diplomats to expand political influence and economic competition through strategies including "adhering to keeping a low profile and proactively making achievements" (jianchi taoguang yanghui, jiji yousuo zuowei). He reiterated the determinations of laying low while advising an increase of proactivity in foreign relations and emboldening more attempts to making greater achievements.¹⁴⁴ Some scholars argue that Hu's deliberate emphasis on the second half of the directive suggests his "effective departure" from the first half and thus a "substantial revision" of the strategy.¹⁴⁵

Xi Jinping's Strident Turn: Forgoing the Low Profile and Striving for Achievements

The debates and speculations appeared to officially end up with President Xi Jinping's domestic and global ambitions. Since his presidency, Xi has been promoting the framework of "China Dream" (Zhong Guo Meng), aiming at realizing "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation".¹⁴⁶ Since the China Dream slogan is intimately related to the China's humiliating past inflicted by the Western powers,¹⁴⁷ the China Dream is by no means a mere dream for China's domestic achievements. As shown by how he expounds on details of the idea, the Dream is expected to intertwine with the whole world. "The China dream we want to realize will not only benefit the

¹⁴⁴ Jintao Hu, 胡锦涛文选, vol. 3 (Renmin Chubanshe, 2016), 236–37. Available here:

http://inf.hainmc.edu.cn:5000/ContentDelivery/20210609/CEE963872EAD76025E296343A2189C02_309728431996D3846610A129262A55CF.pdf

¹⁴⁵ Rush Doshi, "Hu's to Blame for China's Foreign Assertiveness?," The Brookings Institution, January 22, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/hu-to-blame-for-chinas-foreign-assertiveness/>.

¹⁴⁶ Bin Li, "Xi Jinping: Chengqian Qihou Jiwang Kailai Jixu Chaozhe Zhonghua Minzu Weida Fuxing Mubiao Fenyong Qianjin," Xinhua Net, November 29, 2012, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012-11/29/c_113852724.htm.

¹⁴⁷ This is often termed "Hundred Years of Humiliation" to describe the period of intervention and subjugation of China by Western powers and Japan from 1839 to 1949. Xi Jinping proposed the term of China Dream when he led central party members to a visit to the National Museum's "Road to Revival" exhibition and reviewed the humiliations suffered by the people in modern China in front of others.

Chinese people, but also benefit the people of all countries in the world.”¹⁴⁸ These proposals together indicate Xi’s ambitions to achieve among global competition and even surpass the powers.

In October 2013, Xi officially translated his ambitions to interact with the world by presenting the strategy of *fen fa you wei* (striving for achievement).¹⁴⁹ This time he avoided mentioning *keeping a low profile* any more. Since then, *striving for achievement*, a more aggressive and assertive agenda, has become the main theme of China’s foreign policy.¹⁵⁰

China’s diplomatic turn reflects its economic accomplishments on the international stage, the demands from top authorities and bottom grassroots, and a complicated interaction between the top and the bottom. First, the implementation of the reform and opening program over three decades has brought about exponentially increasing economic growth. China has shown its increasing importance as a worldwide workshop as well as a critical global market. In 2003, only two years after joining in the WTO, China became the largest recipient of foreign direct investment.¹⁵¹ In 2010, it overtook Germany as the world’s top exporter.¹⁵² More symbolically, in the same year, China’s GDP amounted to 6.1 trillion US dollars, making it the world’s second largest economy for the first time. In 2013, China became the world’s largest trading nation, “a landmark milestone” in the eyes of Beijing authorities.¹⁵³ Considering other western powers were

¹⁴⁸ Rong Leng, “什么是中国梦，怎样理解中国梦,” People’s Daily Online, April 26, 2013, <http://opinion.people.com.cn/n/2013/0426/c1003-21285328.html>.

¹⁴⁹ Tong Qian, “Xi Jinping Zai Zhoubian Waijiao Gongzuo Zuotanhui Shang Fabiao Zhongyao Jianghua Qiangdiao: Wei Woguo Fazhan Zhengqu Lianghao Zhoubian Huanjing,” People’s Daily Online, October 26, 2013, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/1026/c64094-23333683.html>.

¹⁵⁰ Nien-chung Chang-Liao, “China’s New Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping,” *Asian Security* 12, no. 2 (May 3, 2016): 82–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799855.2016.1183195>; Xuetong Yan, “From Keeping a Low Profile to Striving for Achievement,” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 7, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 153–84, <https://doi.org/10.1093/CJIP/POU027>.

¹⁵¹ Jiabao Li, “China Passes US as Top FDI Destination,” *China Daily*, October 29, 2012, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2012-10/29/content_15854372.htm.

¹⁵² Inman, “China Becomes World’s Biggest Exporter.”

¹⁵³ Angela Monaghan, “China Surpasses US as World’s Largest Trading Nation,” *The Guardian*, January 10, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/jan/10/china-surpasses-us-world-largest-trading-nation>.

still mired in an economic slump due to the 2008 crisis, China's economic performance had fueled Chinese more confidence to proactively shape the global environment.

Thus, China's political leaders have incrementally changed their perceptions of China's relative power and its global and regional stance. As Friedberg has noted, "[S]ince the start of the 2008–09 financial crisis many Chinese strategists have reached the conclusion that the United States is declining, and their own country is rising much faster than had previously been expected."¹⁵⁴ A careful evaluation of China's positions in the world may convince the strategists of their ability to settle international disputes by "proactively shape the external environment rather than passively react to it and forcefully safeguard China's national interests rather than compromise them".¹⁵⁵ In this way, China can morph from a rule participant to a rule maker and even an agenda setter in the global relations, as expected by some hardline officials.¹⁵⁶ Being a rule maker can thus presumably better defend national interest against foreign threats and intrusion. Besides, according to many decision makers, a sound domestic environment for China's development and defense of national interests also requires peaceful and stable international and neighboring environment and thus China is also "committed to helping other countries, developing countries and neighboring countries in particular".¹⁵⁷ In other words, the Chinese government starts to yearn for being not only a defender of domestic national interest but a "helper" (or in other words, a leader) in achieving dreams of other peoples around the world.

Moreover, there have been swelling outrages for a more assertive government from the bottom. From around the mid 1990s, popular nationalism started to rebuke the government's feebleness in

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Suisheng Zhao, "Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: The Strident Turn," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 82 (July 2013): 545, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2013.766379>.

¹⁵⁵ Suisheng Zhao, "Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: The Strident Turn," *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 82 (2013): 545, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2013.766379>.

¹⁵⁶ Luo, "Taoguang Yanghui He Yousuo Zuowei Jiehe Caineng Tixian Zhongguo De Waijiao Zhanlv."

¹⁵⁷ Jiechi Yang, "新形势下中国外交理论和实践创新," *Xinhua*, August 16, 2013, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2013-08/16/c_125179915.htm.

confronting international powers and request its commitment to defend the national interest. For example, a series of books, such as *China Can Say So*¹⁵⁸ and *China Is Unhappy*,¹⁵⁹ scolding China's weak stance in international relations and demanding the government to act assertively, were sold in millions in the 90s and the 2000s. Besides, grassroots nationalists often remind the public of China's past as a victim of western invasions and call for the government to redeem the humiliations.¹⁶⁰ Activists participated in nationalist demonstrations in early 2000s to protest against the U.S. and Japan for them sabotaging China's interests.¹⁶¹ Meanwhile, as China's international influence inflates, many start to urge China to become a world leader. One scholar authoring *China is Unhappy* explicitly contends that "China is entirely capable of maintaining the global order [and] managing [global] resources".¹⁶² Moreover, the launching of the digital technology has lent the nationalists a virtual platform to vent the anger and make nationalism a prevailing meme.¹⁶³ Similar to much offline nationalistic ire, these netizens demand the government to stand assertively in international matters, respond aggressively to foreign threats

¹⁵⁸ Qiang Song, Zangzang Zhang, and Bian. Qiao, *Zhongguo Keyi Shuobu* (Zhonghua Gongshang Lianhe Chubanshe, 1996).

¹⁵⁹ Xiaojun Song et al., *Zhongguo Bu Gaoxing* (Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 2009).

¹⁶⁰ Peter Hays Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy* (University of California Press, 2005); Yanan He, "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, no. 50 (February 2007): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560601026710>; Rongbin Han, "Defending the Authoritarian Regime Online: China's 'Voluntary Fifty-Cent Army,'" *China Quarterly*, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741015001216>.

¹⁶¹ Jessica Chen Weiss, "Authoritarian Signaling, Mass Audiences, and Nationalist Protest in China," *International Organization* 67, no. 01 (January 16, 2013): 1–35, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818312000380>; Jessica Chen. Weiss, *Powerful Patriots : Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2014); James Reilly, *Strong Society, Smart State : The Rise of Public Opinion in China's Japan Policy* (Columbia University Press, 2012); Dingxin Zhao, "Nationalism and Authoritarianism: Student-Government Conflicts during the 1999 Beijing Student Protests," *Asian Perspective* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), <https://doi.org/10.2307/42704396>.

¹⁶² Song et al., *Zhongguo Bu Gaoxing*, 11.

¹⁶³ Christopher Rene Hughes, "Nationalism in Chinese Cyberspace," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 13, no. 2 (2000): 195–209, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557570008400309>; Xu Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism : Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications* (Lexington Books, 2007); Simon Shen and Shaun Breslin, eds. *Online Chinese Nationalism and China's Bilateral Relations* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010); Yinxian Zhang, Jiajun Liu, and Ji Rong Wen, "Nationalism on Weibo: Towards a Multifaceted Understanding of Chinese Nationalism," *The China Quarterly* 235 (September 1, 2018): 758–83, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741018000863>; Christopher Cairns and Allen Carlson, "Real-World Islands in a Social Media Sea: Nationalism and Censorship on Weibo during the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku Crisis*," *The China Quarterly* 225 (March 1, 2016): 23–49, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741015001708>; Florian Schneider, *China's Digital Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1093/OSO/9780190876791.001.0001>.

and take the lead when necessary.¹⁶⁴ Many even blame China's inferiority in international relations to the weakness of the central government and challenge its claims to nationalist legitimacy.¹⁶⁵

Therefore, the strident turn to a more confrontational foreign policy guideline could be the outcome of several concerns: authorities' calibration of China's economic facts, perceptions of its global political influence and desires to follow nationalist yearnings from the bottom. The *striving for achievements* determinations result in a bifurcated pursuit for achievements, domestically and internationally. Domestically, the party-state is expecting to demonstrate its ability to redeem the past humiliations as the only qualified, legitimate party within China. To do so, it has to behave affirmatively and aggressively in defending core national interests before domestic audiences. Moreover, to further justify the regime's role of safeguarding national pride, the authorities even go forward to expanding the definition of core national interest from only national sovereignty and territorial integrity to others including national security, political regime and social stability and people's livelihoods.¹⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the striving to achieve includes gaining international attainments, particularly, to claim regional leadership. The party-state has to expand the achievements globally: to create a suitable global environment and safeguard regional interests. It is also consistent with grassroots' outcries for redeeming the humiliations. Since the humiliations pertain to intervention and subjugation by Western powers (including Japan) before PRC, an agenda to redeem them calls out China to take world leadership. This echoes a contention that China's assertive foreign policy and

¹⁶⁴ Yongming Zhou, "Informed Nationalism: Military Websites in Chinese Cyberspace," *Journal of Contemporary China* 14, no. 44 (2005): 543–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560500115481>; Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*; Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism: Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications*.

¹⁶⁵ Gries, *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*.

¹⁶⁶ Information Office of the State Council, "China's Peaceful Development," September 6, 2011, http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/09/09/content_281474986284646.htm.

an ambition to replace the US as a world superpower is driven by the nationalist sentiments yearning for humiliation redemption.¹⁶⁷

In sum, the shift to “*striving for achievements*” appears to be a decision converging state calculation of the national power from the top and the popular nationalism from the bottom. Such assertive foreign policy, thus, becomes an effective instrument to enhance legitimacy of the regime.¹⁶⁸

New Means for New Ambitions:

Mobilizing More Resources and Actors in Foreign Relations

The ambitions to defend national interests and to claim leadership, in effect, require the coordination of numerous resources and actors that were ignored or even suppressed by previous leaderships and underestimated by intellectual attention. First, as China’s emerging rise has been bolstered by its explosive economic power, not surprisingly the government expects to exploit *economic* means to achieve diplomatic goals. Second, the state has to attract and mobilize more actors, particularly non-state actors, including commercial actors and social actors, into the new policy framework. It is not only because the “*striving for achievements*” agenda is partly responding to grassroots’ demands, but because an assertive image and effective economic leverages may necessitate a wider range of aggressive supporters and participants. Such non-state actors, in addition to cheerleading for state policies, oftentimes have to turn the supportive hoorays into real actions reflected in individual economic activities, without which the state would find it unlikely to exercise anticipated diplomatic influence. This section tracks how the government shifts attitudes to the roles of economic means as well as nonstate actors, and showcases to what extent it has instrumentalized China’s economic weight in defending national interests.

¹⁶⁷ Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (Vintage, 1998).

¹⁶⁸ Zhao, “Foreign Policy Implications of Chinese Nationalism Revisited: The Strident Turn,” 2013.

Flexing Economic Muscles

Since Deng Xiaoping, China has endeavored to develop its economy. Even trapped into domestic crises (such as the Tiananmen incident) and international conflicts, the party-state has prioritized the economic expansion and defended economic interests, partly as it gains legitimacy mainly from satisfactory economic performance.¹⁶⁹ For example, amid the 1999 anti-American unrest, then-President Jiang Zemin, while approving the patriotism of Chinese protesters, emphasized that “the whole country is now determined to study and work harder, so as to develop the national economy continuously, enhance national strength, and fought back ... against ... U.S.-led NATO”.¹⁷⁰ Also, during the 2005 demonstrations against Japan, China’s policy analysts suggested top authorities to adopt “a strategic point of view” for both countries to promote sound economic and trade exchanges.¹⁷¹ Then Commerce Minister Bo Xilai expressed concerns with political tensions which would finally sabotage economic relationship with Japan.¹⁷²

However, China’s expanding economic reach later lends confidence to the Chinese leaders that the economic card is not only a source of domestic legitimation but can be a useful tool in leveraging global diplomacy. Roughly around 2010,¹⁷³ the year it became the second largest economy, China has wielded economic influence over diplomacy. The first attempt of such economic leverage was triggered by a diplomatic standoff due to Japan’s arrest of a Chinese

¹⁶⁹ Dingxin Zhao, “The Mandate of Heaven and Performance Legitimation in Historical and Contemporary China,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 53, no. 3 (November 12, 2009): 416–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764209338800>; Elizabeth J. Perry, “Chinese Conceptions of ‘Rights’: From Mencius to Mao—and Now,” *Perspectives on Politics* 6, no. 1 (March 2008): 37–50, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592708080055>.

¹⁷⁰ Quote from Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China’s Foreign Relations*, 48.

¹⁷¹ James Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China’s Japan Policy,” in *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Oystein Tunsjo (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 177, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501712777-009>.

¹⁷² Reilly, 177.

¹⁷³ China’s first use of economic tools in affecting international relations is much earlier than that. For example, in the 2000 Taiwan presidential election, the Chinese government has pressured the Taiwanese investor in the mainland (taishang) against candidates not upholding the One China principle and punished those undisciplined. See William J. Norris, *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*, 2016. But such attempts were mostly sporadic and not broadly targeted.

trawler captain in disputed waters around the Diaoyu Islands. The Chinese government reportedly halted all exports of rare earth to Japan, a mineral vitally used in many technology products for about two months.¹⁷⁴ In the same year, it restricted imports of salmon from Norway as a retaliation of the latter awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo, a Chinese dissident imprisoned for “subverting the state”.¹⁷⁵ Recall Table 1.1 in Chapter 1 that in the following years, the Chinese government has continued instrumentalizing economic revenge for international bargaining. The actions range from limiting or suspending imports of goods from rivalry territories to an even more interesting measure, restricting or canceling leisure tours to certain destinations.

The Roles of Nonstate Actors

Since the Chinese government owns prodigious capacity to exert economic influence to pressure foreign foes, the question is how it can translate the influence through maneuvering non-state actors, such as the market force (i.e. corporations) and citizens. After all, the latter needs to adjust their own interests in consistence with those of the government during the process. However, the state’s attitudes to these actors do not remain static and sometimes ambivalent. How does the state gradually shift its attitudes to the nonstate actors and what roles do they play now?

The Roles of the Public: Citizens, Netizens and Consumers

Official attitudes toward the role of the general public have been quite equivocal since the reform, especially after 1989, given the repercussions of what a mobilized public could generate to threaten the regime itself. The state tends to utilize the massive public smartly and strategically.¹⁷⁶ On the one hand, it may employ a wide range of resources to activate the public’s nationalist sentiment via multiple channels such as school education, “patriotic education bases”

¹⁷⁴ BBC, “China Resumes Rare Earth Exports to Japan,” September 24, 2010, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-11826870>.

¹⁷⁵ Mark Lewis, “Norway’s Salmon Rot as China Takes Revenge for Dissident’s Nobel Prize,” *The Independent*, October 23, 2011, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/norway-s-salmon-rot-as-china-takes-revenge-for-dissident-s-nobel-prize-2366167.html>.

¹⁷⁶ Reilly 2011; Weiss 2013.

and traditional media.¹⁷⁷ In the education, China is narrated a victim inflicted at the hands of imperialist powers in a century of humiliation and only the Chinese communist government is able to redeem the past humiliations. Briefly, such patriotic education aims to convince the public, as exemplified by a People's Daily editorial to defend China's responses to a conflict with Japan, of "the party and the government's capability in dealing with the complex situation and resolving the complex international problem adequately" and thus demand the Chinese public to "uncompromisingly support the stance of our country's government and policy".¹⁷⁸

On the other hand, it relies on the masses with surveillance and careful calibration. For instance, in waves of dispute regarding the Diaoyu Islands with Japan in the 1990s, the party authorities minimized the use of the masses—it tried to downsize the significance of the dispute, imposed a media blackout on covering protests occurring overseas and quelled expressed anti-Japanese sentiments.¹⁷⁹ In comparison, in the aftermath of the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in May 1999, the Chinese government "not only decided to let students protest against the embassy bombing; it also asked the school authorities to organize the protests" against the US-led governments.¹⁸⁰ However, when the demonstrations escalated into violence, then Vice-President Hu Jintao firmly condemned the attack and urged the protesters to "prevent overreaction and ensure social stability by guarding against some people making use of the opportunities to

¹⁷⁷ Suisheng Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 287–302, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x\(98\)00009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x(98)00009-9); Zheng Wang, "National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (2008); Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012); Jeremy L. Wallace and Jessica Chen Weiss, "The Political Geography of Nationalist Protest in China: Cities and the 2012 Anti-Japanese Protests," *The China Quarterly* 222 (June 10, 2015): 403–29, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741015000417>; Daniela Stockmann, "Race to the Bottom: Media Marketization and Increasing Negativity toward the United States in China," *Political Communication* 28, no. 3 (July 4, 2011): 268–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2011.572447>.

¹⁷⁸ Quoted in Liu, "China's Popular Nationalism on the Internet. Report on the 2005 Anti-Japan Network Struggles," 146.

¹⁷⁹ Erica Strecker Downs and Phillip C. Saunders, "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism: China and the Diaoyu Islands," *International Security* 23, no. 3 (1998): 146, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539340>.

¹⁸⁰ Zhao, "Nationalism and Authoritarianism: Student-Government Conflicts during the 1999 Beijing Student Protests," 13.

disrupt the normal public order”.¹⁸¹ Anti-Japan protests in the 2000s also showcase China’s ambivalence in the role of the public: it largely restrained large-scale protests between 2006 and 2010 while fanning the flame through state media 2012.¹⁸² But soon Chinese officials smashed down street demonstrations and riots through local law enforcement, and officials called upon people to express appeals “calmly, rationally, legally and orderly”.¹⁸³ Even the state-affiliated nationalist tabloid, *Global Times*, advised people to “open their mind and focus their attention on more important issues”.¹⁸⁴

After Xi Jinping’s administration, there has emerged awareness for more organic coordination of domestic participants in foreign relations. For example, some Chinese scholars points out that as ordinary citizens increase attention to and participation in China’s foreign policy and their augmented roles, it is important to consider how the government can effectively organize them in accordance with national interests.¹⁸⁵

The central authorities and strategists also seemed to recognize and endorse the power of the ordinary people in diplomacy. Jinjun Li, the vice minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (ID-CPC, or Zhonglianbu), an agency in charge of maintaining contact with and influencing foreign elites and promoting China’s foreign policy interests,¹⁸⁶ stresses the importance of non-governmental diplomacy, “... In response to some hotspots and sensitive issues where there is limited official diplomatic space, [we should] give full play to the non-governmental diplomacy ... [which will] coordinate with ... the party diplomacy. ... Say whatever it needs to

¹⁸¹ For the transcript, see People’s Daily, “1999年5月9日胡锦涛就我驻南使馆遭袭击发表讲话,” Sina, May 25, 2003, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2003-05-25/14421097103.shtml>.

¹⁸² Weiss, *Powerful Patriots : Nationalist Protest in China’s Foreign Relations*.

¹⁸³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “2012年9月17日外交部发言人洪磊主持例行记者会,” September 17, 2012, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/fyrbt_673021/jzhs1_673025/t970243.shtml.

¹⁸⁴ Quoted in Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China’s Japan Policy,” 186.

¹⁸⁵ Cungang Wang, “论中国外交调整——基于经济发展方式转变的视角,” *世界经济与政治*, no. 11 (2012): 120–35.

¹⁸⁶ Christine Hackenesch and Julia Bader, “The Struggle for Minds and Influence: The Chinese Communist Party’s Global Outreach,” *International Studies Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (September 1, 2020): 723–33, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ISQ/SQAA028>.

say, deed whatever it needs to struggle, [and] cooperate whenever it needs to cooperate. [It] should do some things that cannot be achieved by official diplomacy, but also build bridges for official diplomacy in order to cleverly resolve the crisis and overcome the predicament....”¹⁸⁷

This seems to suggest a potential change of official attitude toward the role of the public to adapt to China’s new ambitions in foreign relations: using the *public* to affect the international situation, especially in where the government has limitations doing so. This may lead to two other prominent roles the government expects the public to play, other than them being merely *citizens*, in countering foreign pressure.

The first eminent role the Chinese citizens has taken and officially endorsed in recent years is nationalist *consumers*.¹⁸⁸ The Chinese, since the early 1900s, has been recognized employing their identity of consumers to influencing international relations. For example, in 1905, to protest against American hostility towards Chinese, a large-scale boycott of American goods went rampant. But the party’s stance on utilizing the public consumers’ resentment used to be wavering. Between 2003 and 2005 a few anti-Japanese demonstrations broke out due to a variety of conflicts over, for example, Japan’s approval of a right-leaning historical textbook, escorted by waves of movements boycotting Japanese products. However, when asked opinions on citizens’ boycotts of Japanese products, then spokesman of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Qin Gang, gave an irrelevant answer by stating that it would benefit both sides when China and Japan cooperate improve the Sino-Japanese relations,¹⁸⁹ indicating official discontent with, and their intention to restrain, consumer boycotts.

¹⁸⁷ Jinjun Li, “中国特色民间外交:认识与建议,” 公共外交季刊, no. 3 (2013): 7–8.

¹⁸⁸ This is regarded as consumer nationalism, see for example, Jian Wang, “The Politics of Goods: A Case Study of Consumer Nationalism and Media Discourse in Contemporary China,” *Asian Journal of Communication* 16, no. 2 (2006): 187–206, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292980600638710>; Zhihong Gao, “Chinese Grassroots Nationalism and Its Impact on Foreign Brands,” *Journal of Macromarketing* 32, no. 2 (January 23, 2012): 181–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146711428808>; Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China’s Japan Policy.”

¹⁸⁹ People’s Daily Online, “Waijiaobu Tan Beijing Dengdi Kangyi Shiwei Huodong: Riben Yinggai Fanxing,” Sina, April 12,

Later in the 2012 conflicts with Japan due to the Diaoyu Islands dispute, Chinese nationalists again called out for boycotting Japanese goods to retaliate the Japanese government. In two articles published by the *Global Times*, the authors tactically emphasized the downsides of boycotts. One of them explicitly stated that, “If 30,000 Japanese companies go bankrupt because of the ‘boycott of Japanese goods’, it will cause millions of Chinese people to lose their jobs. Therefore, ‘boycotting Japanese goods’ is not good for both Japan and China.”¹⁹⁰ It also cited a foreign policy expert that “[T]he fundamental way to counter Japanese goods is not to boycott Japanese goods, but to ‘excel Japanese goods’.” The other one, an opinion piece by a researcher in the Institute of the Ministry of Commerce, warned that boycotting Japanese products should “take proper measures, and cannot expand indefinitely and hurt our country’s industry itself”.¹⁹¹ In comparison, some other strategists more explicitly endorsed these nationalist consumers. The vice minister of the Ministry of Commerce contended it is the “Chinese consumers’ right to express their stance and attitudes rationally in response to Japan’s infringement upon China’s territorial sovereignty”.¹⁹² Considering the political stance and stylish narratives normally transmitted by the *Global Times*, the opinion pieces and the speech delivered by the vice minister indicate authorities’ ambivalent, or indeterminant thoughts of the role of the masses being nationalist consumers.

Latest changes, nevertheless, have witnessed a solid conversion of official approval in manipulating the public as consumers. In the 2016 South China Sea argument with the Philippines, an opinion piece on *Guanchazhe Wang*, a state-affiliated online portal with nationalistic leaning, offered a few suggestions to encourage readers to boycott Filipino products effectively, including

2005, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2005-04-12/23186366346.shtml>.

¹⁹⁰ Xiuping Sun et al., “抵制日货搅动东亚数十年,” *Global Times*, September 19, 2012, <https://world.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJx7FY>.

¹⁹¹ Xinyu Mei, “抵制日货一旦盲目, 容易自伤,” *Global Times*, August 22, 2012, <https://opinion.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJwP5T>.

¹⁹² People’s Daily Online, “商务部: 中国消费者有权对日‘购岛’表达立场--财经--人民网,” September 14, 2012, <http://finance.people.com.cn/n/2012/0914/c1004-19005817.html>.

halting tourism to the Philippines.¹⁹³ In contesting the deployment of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) with Korea in 2016 and punishing Lotte, a Korean conglomerate involved in the dispute, *Xinhua*'s report overtly commented, "China will not be welcoming Lotte like this" and encouraged consumers to "say no" to Lotte.¹⁹⁴ Such stance is endorsed by other party mouthpieces, and some even exalted consumer boycotts "rational" patriotic activities.¹⁹⁵ Earlier in 2021, hundreds of world-known clothes retailers declared suspension of using "Xinjiang Cotton" in manufactures due to concerns over alleged use of Uyghur forced labor in cotton production in Xinjiang, including Swedish fast-fashion chain H&M.¹⁹⁶ *People's Daily*, again, warned H&M that involvement in the "Xinjiang cotton" controversy would alienate (zi jue yu) itself from the Chinese consumers and the market,¹⁹⁷ and stated "[s]uch behavior will only result in Chinese consumers' "self-defense". [They will] vote with their feet, and boycott unruly companies!"¹⁹⁸ Chinese officials appears ratifying such stance. In response to boycotting Lotte, officials of Ministers of Foreign Affairs warned all foreign investors of respecting China's market.¹⁹⁹ Following the Australian government's appeals for investigations into the origins of COVID-19, Chinese ambassador to Australia even threatened that Chinese consumers may boycott Australian products or tourism.²⁰⁰

¹⁹³ Yun Hua, "如果要经济制裁菲律宾 该怎么出招?," *Guanchazhe*, July 14, 2016, https://www.guancha.cn/huayun02/2016_07_14_367408_2.shtml.

¹⁹⁴ Yalin Hao, "新华社评: 中国不欢迎这样的'乐天,'" *Xinhua*, February 27, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2017-02/27/c_1120539249.htm.

¹⁹⁵ China Youth Daily Online, "抵制乐天, 这一届的爱国很理性!," March 6, 2017, http://m.cyol.com/content/2017-03/06/content_15706863.htm.

¹⁹⁶ Robin Brant, "Nike, H&M Face China Fury over Xinjiang Cotton 'Concerns,'" *BBC News*, March 25, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-56519411>.

¹⁹⁷ Chuan Qin, "一边赚我们的钱一边使坏, H&M 你该掂量掂量了," *People's Daily Online*, March 25, 2021, <https://wap.peopleapp.com/article/6162524/6066872>.

¹⁹⁸ https://weibo.com/2656274875/K7HnCdWnU?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment#_rnd1660674328343

¹⁹⁹ Chenqian Sun, "中国民众抵制乐天?外交部回应," *Xinhua*, March 1, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2017-03/01/c_136093825.htm.

²⁰⁰ Ying Si, "疫情之下大行其道的中国'战狼'外交会不会成为新常态," *BBC*, May 13, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-52632979>.

Above evidence together suggests with China's economy and trade prospering in recent years, the government likely realizes the economic power from the bottom and deliberately churns out nationalist consumers to leverage foreign policy. As a result, instead of an ambiguous attitude toward consumer boycotts, Chinese authorities not only explicitly claim the righteousness of consumers to vent sentiments toward certain regions but even use the propaganda apparatus to encourage boycotts.

The other role the public has been playing, and often consciously shaped by the government, is nationalist *netizens*. Like the nationalistic movements offline, online nationalist activities can also be state-sponsored or spontaneous. As documented, the spontaneous digital nationalist activism can be traced back to the 1990s but the early nationalist on the digital platforms are mostly college students who had more access to computers.²⁰¹

But government awareness of the power of these netizens is much later. Perhaps facing the rising challenge of digital technology to state monopoly of the official narratives,²⁰² China's propaganda apparatus develops the online patriotic education. It not only hires millions of trolls dubbed "fifty-cent army" (*wu mao dang*) to manipulate online expression²⁰³ but encourages and ferments *non-paid*, voluntary jingoistic nationalists to defend China's national interest.²⁰⁴ State-run media outlets are believed playing critical parts in backing and stirring up nationalist wrath on multiple platforms, especially during crises. For example, a group of active nationalists, Little Pink

²⁰¹ Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism: Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications*.

²⁰² Guobin Yang, "The Co-Evolution of the Internet and Civil Society in China," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 3 (2003): 124–41; Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online* (Columbia University press, 2009); Ashley Esarey and Qiang Xiao, "Political Expression in the Chinese Blogosphere," *Asian Survey* 48, no. 5 (2008): 752–72.

²⁰³ Rongbin Han, "Manufacturing Consent in Cyberspace: China's 'Fifty-Cent Army,'" *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 44, no. 2 (2015): 105–34; Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 1–18; Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument," *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 3 (2017): 484–501, <https://doi.org/DOI:https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055417000144>.

²⁰⁴ Han, "Defending the Authoritarian Regime Online: China's 'Voluntary Fifty-Cent Army.'"

(xiao fen hong), are often rampantly sweeping the social media to confront discourses critical of the regime or government policy.²⁰⁵ Even in the recent COVID-19 crisis, while being questioned and criticized by foreign observers, the Chinese leadership mobilizes digital nationalism which turns the crisis into a national success.²⁰⁶

Such government orchestration has not only shaped China's domestic political media sphere but demonstrated global influence. The above mentioned fifty-cent army often expands their territory to international battlefield such as Twitter or Facebook to propagandize pro-Chinese-government and nationalist messages. In early 2016, under close surveillance of China's propaganda apparatus, a group of nationalist netizens flooded the Facebook pages of a few pro-independence figures in Taiwan to defend the "One China" principle, an event called "Diba expedition".²⁰⁷ This event was not only closely monitored by the propaganda apparatus but overtly praised by state media for its essential "patriotism" and endeavors to "step down Taiwan-separatist forces".²⁰⁸ Similarly, in attacking Hong Kong's antigovernment protesters in 2019, Fanquan Girls (roughly fan club girls), a group of young, female idol followers, were also encouraged and acclaimed by state media to hop the Great Firewall (GFW) in support of the Hong Kong police.²⁰⁹ The mouthpiece media, *Xinhua*, ostensibly applauded the expedition for defending China and Hong Kong.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ Kecheng Fang and Maria Repnikova, "Demystifying 'Little Pink': The Creation and Evolution of a Gendered Label for Nationalistic Activists in China," *New Media and Society* 20, no. 6 (October 9, 2017): 2162–85, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817731923>.

²⁰⁶ Florian Schneider, "China's Viral Villages: Digital Nationalism and the COVID-19 Crisis on Online Video-Sharing Platform Bilibili," *Communication and the Public* 6, no. 1–4 (September 22, 2021): 48–66, <https://doi.org/10.1177/20570473211048029>.

²⁰⁷ Hailong Liu, ed. *From Cyber-Nationalism to Fandom Nationalism: The Case of Diba Expedition in China*, (Routledge, 2019); Rongbin Han, "Patriotism without State Blessing: Chinese Cyber Nationalists in a Predicament," in *Handbook of Protest and Resistance in China*, ed. Teresa Wright (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019), 346–60, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781786433787.00036>.

²⁰⁸ Han, "Patriotism without State Blessing: Chinese Cyber Nationalists in a Predicament," 350–51.

²⁰⁹ Xinmei Shen, "Nationalists Hopping the Great Firewall to Attack Hong Kong Protesters Praised by Chinese State Media," *South China Morning Post*, August 19, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/abacus/culture/article/3029555/nationalists-hopping-great-firewall-attack-hong-kong-protesters>.

²¹⁰ Xinhua, "帝吧、饭圈女孩再出征! 妄图毁掉香港的人, 对不起, 让你们失望了," September 1, 2019, xinhuanet.com/gangao/2019-09/01/c_1210263520.htm.

Admittedly, although the government expects to unleash such online trolls to campaign the government-backed narratives and seize the international discourse, the official attitudes to remain quite vigilant. After all, the authorities have to ensure the online protests not spin out of control as street protests,²¹¹ because China's online nationalist sentiment includes a great deal of antigovernment censures.²¹²

To summarize, the public has become a useful and powerful force that the government hopes to recruit in influencing international relations. In employing the ordinary citizens in the course, the government has also deliberately amplified their role into different kinds to accommodate the constantly evolved global environment. But is the public, or social actors, the only force that autocrats find helpful?

The Roles of the Market Force in the Era of Striving for Achievements

The roles of the market force in aiding in China's domestic and international courses have received increasing scholarly attention. In reaching its aspired achievements, the state recruits numerous enterprises to carry out its ambitious policies. For example, as a way of economic statecraft to advance foreign policy interests, many state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and financial institutions are mobilized to assist or directly carry through investment across Asia, Europe, Africa and America.²¹³ Notably, however, most of the economic entities this body of literature centered on characterize state-owned, non-local and large in size. And, more importantly, these enterprises,

²¹¹ Han, "Patriotism without State Blessing: Chinese Cyber Nationalists in a Predicament."

²¹² Zhang, Liu, and Wen, "Nationalism on Weibo: Towards a Multifaceted Understanding of Chinese Nationalism"; Cairns and Carlson, "Real-World Islands in a Social Media Sea: Nationalism and Censorship on Weibo during the 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku Crisis*."

²¹³ James Reilly, *Orchestration: China's Economic Statecraft Across Asia and Europe*, *Orchestration: China's Economic Statecraft Across Asia and Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197526347.001.0001>; Norris, *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*; Pippa Morgan, "Can China's Economic Statecraft Win Soft Power in Africa? Unpacking Trade, Investment and Aid," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 24, no. 3 (September 15, 2019): 387–409, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11366-018-09592-W/FIGURES/8>; Wei Liang, "Pulling the Region into Its Orbit? China's Economic Statecraft in Latin America," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 24, no. 3 (September 15, 2019): 433–49, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11366-018-09603-W/TABLES/2>.

by and large, do not have to interact with the domestic public or consumers. The features together may constrain a profound probe into how they pivot between the state and the social actors.

One of the most salient examples to illustrate how the market force, particularly in the private sector, can interact with both the state and the citizenry is revealed in the media industry. Briefly, the media practitioners help the state mold public opinion and construct a favorable discursive space skewed towards the regime. Although China's media industry has experienced marketization reforms, which generates both state-run media and commercialized media,²¹⁴ the latter remains a workable tool manipulating public opinion. Commercialized media, similar to their state-run counterparts to a large extent, carries propaganda messages according to state instructions, especially when reporting international affairs, including Taiwan affairs.²¹⁵ During diplomatic confrontations, both state-run and commercialized media play a major role disparaging the target states and shape public sentiment.²¹⁶ Similar roles reflect on the territory of digital media. A sophisticated state surveillance mechanism has effectively operated through Internet service providers (ISPs) in China.²¹⁷ The propaganda apparatus not only relies on Internet companies such as Weibo²¹⁸ and Wechat²¹⁹ to censor user-generated content undesired by the officials, but

²¹⁴ Yuezhi Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Daniel C. Lynch, *After the Propaganda State Media, Politics, and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China* (Stanford University Press, 1999); Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); Daniela Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087742>.

²¹⁵ Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China*; Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Daniela Stockmann and Mary E. Gallagher, "Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China," *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 4 (April 14, 2011): 436–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010394773>; Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*; Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²¹⁶ Daniela Stockmann, "Who Believes Propaganda? Media Effects during the Anti-Japanese Protests in Beijing*," *The China Quarterly* 202, no. 202 (June 2010): 269–89, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741010000238>.

²¹⁷ Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); Rebecca MacKinnon, "China's Censorship 2.0: How Companies Censor Bloggers," *First Monday* 14, no. 2 (January 25, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v14i2.2378>; Schneider, *China's Digital Nationalism*.

²¹⁸ Jonathan Sullivan, "China's Weibo: Is Faster Different?," *New Media & Society* 16, no. 1 (February 7, 2014): 24–37, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812472966>.

²¹⁹ Lotus Ruan et al., "The Intermingling of State and Private Companies: Analysing Censorship of the 19th National Communist Party Congress on WeChat," *The China Quarterly* 246 (June 1, 2021): 497–526, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741020000491>.

instrumentalizes them as a conduct via which it can mobilize public sentiment on hot-button issues.²²⁰

The market force in other industries than the media is also “sandwiched” between the state and the public.²²¹ In many boycotting waves to counteract foreign threats, in effect, it is *not* the ordinary consumers who unvote the involved merchandise first. Rather, oftentimes vendors that rely on making profits from retailing those products *proactively* discontinue them and some even “advertise” the boycotts. For instance, during the South China Sea disputes with the Philippines, many vendors on Taobao, China’s largest e-commerce site, declared fruits imported from the Philippines would not be available.²²² Besides, as a countermeasure to criticisms over human rights abuses in the “Xinjiang cotton” controversy, all major Chinese e-commerce platforms discontinued H&M products.²²³ Although no evidence is accessible with respect to how the state mobilizes the private vendors into supporting government goals, these showcase to what extent private commercial actors can adjust their interest to meet state ends. In some other cases, by comparison, the state issued official or unofficial instructions to demand corporate coordination. As mentioned in Chapter 1, for instance, amid the Sino-Korean THAAD conflict, the Chinese government was reportedly requesting enterprises to take Korean shows, movies off screens and decreeing travel agencies to freeze organized tours destined there through unofficial bans and instructions.²²⁴

²²⁰ Shaohua Guo, “‘Occupying’ the Internet: State Media and the Reinvention of Official Culture Online,” *Communication and the Public* 3, no. 1 (February 7, 2018): 19–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057047318755166>; Schneider, *China’s Digital Nationalism*.

²²¹ Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018), 59.

²²² Tencent, “国家面前无芒果干？吃货与某宝店主都沦陷了,” July 14, 2016, <https://fashion.qq.com/a/20160714/039838.htm>.

²²³ Eva Xiao, “H&M Is Erased From Chinese E-Commerce Over Xinjiang Stance,” *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25, 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/h-m-is-erased-from-chinese-e-commerce-over-xinjiang-stance-11616695377>.

²²⁴ Jethro Mullen, “China’s ‘Unofficial’ Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea,” *CNN.com*, March 3, 2017, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/03/03/news/economy/china-south-korea-thaad-tourism-trade-sanctions/>.

China's Relations with Taiwan and South Korea

In recent years while continuing the economic prosperity, departing from the low-profile tenet and reclaiming the country's past glory, China appears to be more assertive in international relations. In the past decade, China has been known for engaging in spats and confrontations with many neighboring territories such as South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam,²²⁵ and several other states like the U.S., Australia, Norway, Canada and even Palau. This should not be surprising since an expanded cluster of core national interests and the assertion to defend them could suggest possible delivery of more stringent reaction to foreign pressures.²²⁶

As explained, this project mainly focuses on China's relations with South Korea and Taiwan showcase how the party-state under Xi Jinping achieves diplomatic goals using economic means, particularly through the tourism industry. In doing so, it expects to reveal China's increasing reliance on and mobilization of non-state actors (i.e., commercial actors and social actors) in tackling foreign relations and further unravel the dynamics of state-society interactions.

China's Relations with South Korea

It is said that, since the seventh century B.C., the Korean peninsula had started economic exchanges with ancient China, and the relations were even tightened through expanding China's political and cultural systems, including the Confucianism, to Korea.

The Korean War, resulting in the separation of the Korean peninsula into communist North Korea and westernized South Korea, rendered Sino-(South)Korean relations unstable, antagonistic and suspended until 1975 China resumed economic conversation with South Korea and normalized diplomatic relations as late as 1992. Since then, however, China and South Korea had dedicated

²²⁵ China and Vietnam confronted a few times over the disputed territory in the South China Sea. See, for example, Suisheng Zhao, "China and the South China Sea Arbitration: Geopolitics Versus International Law," *Journal of Contemporary China* 27, no. 109 (January 2, 2017): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2017.1363012>

²²⁶ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Foreign Policy as a Rising Power to Find Its Rightful Place," *Perceptions* 18, no. 1 (March 22, 2013): 101–29.

to boosting strategic and cooperative partnership. The publication of an array of protocols and treaties made the way for future rapid development of trade, culture and personnel. The relationship was also upgraded from “cooperative partnership facing 21st century” to “comprehensive cooperative partnership facing 21st century” and eventually to “strategic cooperative partnership”. Park Geun-hye’s election in the presidential campaign marked the most prosperous relations between China and Korea. During her first visit to China in 2013 as the elected president, she delivered her speech partly in Chinese to show hospitality and approved Xi’s China Dream framework by stating the China Dream was shared by Koreans with their own “Korean Dream”.²²⁷ In response to the amity, Xi Jinping became the first Chinese leader that chose to stop by South Korea before meeting with his North Korean ally in 2014.²²⁸ One year later in 2015, Park attended China’s military parade commemorating World War II, an event shirked by the U.S. and western allies. In the event, she was caught standing right next to Russian President Vladimir Putin and China’s President Xi Jinping,²²⁹ suggesting the unprecedentedly close friendship between China and South Korea.

The thriving bilateral relations also facilitated economic and trade communications. In 2005, South Korea admitted China’s market economy and expanded investment in China. Ten years later in 2015 both sides signed the China-South-Korea Free Trade Agreement which significantly intensifies economic exchanges between two countries. Despite a U.S. ally, Korea joined the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in the same year.²³⁰ From 2014 to 2016,

²²⁷ Xinhua, “S Korean President Park’s Cultural Bond with China,” China Daily, July 2, 2014, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2014xivisitskorea/2014-07/02/content_17638667_2.htm.

²²⁸ Emily Rauhala, “Chinese President Xi Jinping’s Seoul Visit Reveals Shifting Alliances,” Time, July 3, 2014, <https://time.com/2952513/xi-jinping-visit-south-korea/>.

²²⁹ Yong-in Yi, “US Government Not Thrilled with Park’s Attendance at Beijing Military Parade,” Hankyoreh, September 5, 2015, http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/707572.html.

²³⁰ Ankit Panda, “South Korea Joins the AIIB,” The Diplomat, March 28, 2015, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/03/south-korea-joins-the-aiib/>.

both parties established direct transactions between China's RMB and Korean won in succession.²³¹ By now, China has become South Korea's largest trading partner, largest importer and the largest sources of exports.²³² South Korea also ranks the third in trading with China. In 2020, China and South Korea trade volumes reached 285 billion dollars.²³³

The social and cultural exchanges in the non-governmental level also boosts, especially in terms of Korea's cultural export, or the export of "Hallyu" (Korean Wave). The Korean wave, including Korean pop music (K-pop) and Korean dramas/movies (K-drama/K-movie), has become enormously popular among Chinese youth since earlier this century. For example, a Korean drama named "My Love from Another Star" has been streamed more than 2.5 billion times in the first three months after its premiere on one streaming service in 2014 such that even Wang Qishan, the current Vice President of China, mentioned the drama at a session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).²³⁴ Quite a lot of Chinese youth are obsessed with these Korean stars, organizing fan clubs to support their own idols²³⁵ and even flocking to Korea for cosmetic surgery to look like a certain Korean Wave star.²³⁶

But China's smiley official relations with South Korea camouflaged the complexity of Sino-Korean relations. First, as a thorn in South Korea's flesh, North Korea has been continually threatening the security of the territory to the south of the Military Demarcation Line. Before 2016,

²³¹ Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, "中国同韩国的关系," May 2022, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/yz_676205/1206_676524/sbgx_676528/.

²³² Minister of Foreign Affairs of China.

²³³ Minister of Foreign Affairs of China.

²³⁴ Amy Qin, "China's Love Affair With Irresistible Korean TV," The New York Times, July 21, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/21/arts/television/chinas-love-affair-with-irresistible-korean-tv.html?_ga=2.257524363.148762076.1661618874-358184167.1661618874.

²³⁵ Jaeyeon Woo, "Chinese Fans of Korean Soap Operas: Don't Call Us Dumb," The Wall Street Journal, March 20, 2014, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-KRTB-5302>.

²³⁶ Anna Fifield, "Chinese Tourists, with Korean Drama Stars in Mind, Flock to Seoul for Cosmetic Surgery," The Washington Post, August 26, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/chinese-tourists-with-korean-drama-stars-in-mind-flock-to-seoul-for-cosmetic-surgery/2014/08/26/6f91c23b-cdae-4d27-aff3-d10fd634e2f4_story.html.

North Korea has reportedly conducted three underground nuclear tests.²³⁷ In 2015 alone, it is reported that Kim Jung Un demanded a sequence of missile tests, including a submarine-launched ballistic missile test²³⁸ and upgraded a rocket launch site for future use.²³⁹ In December 2015, North Korea even claimed it has hydrogen bomb.²⁴⁰ Despite South Korea's deep concern with Pyongyang's missile and nuclear threats, China's ambiguity frustrated Park's administration who was expecting China's more pressure on North Korea. Consistent with its typical narratives, however, China stood antagonistic to North Korea's nuclear tests without any specific, substantive steps and seemed to blame both Koreas for peninsula tensions regardless of the well-maintained Sino-Korean honeymoon.²⁴¹ Thus, the threats from Pyongyang may still push South Korea closer towards its U.S. alliance for U.S. military protection.

Meanwhile, despite flourishing, interdependent economic ties between two countries, this is not a balanced relationship, suggesting the volatility of Korea's economy when something disarrays on China's side. For instance, as the largest importer of South Korea, China takes in 24.5 percent of its exports in 2019, 10 per cent more than its second largest importer, the US.²⁴² Considering that exports accounted for more than half of the country's GDP, China's position is particularly significant. China is also the largest source of exports to Korea, accounting for 22.2 per cent of the latter's imports.²⁴³ By comparison, while South Korea ranked the third in trading with China, it takes up only 4.19 per cent of China's exports and provides 8.61 per cent of China's total

²³⁷ The three tests occurred in 2006, 2009 and 2013, respectively.

²³⁸ Ankit Panda, "North Korea's Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile Test Fails – The Diplomat," *The Diplomat*, November 30, 2015, <https://thediplomat.com/2015/11/north-koreas-submarine-launched-ballistic-missile-test-fails/>.

²³⁹ *The Guardian*, "North Korea Completes Rocket Launch Site Revamp, Says US Thinktank," July 29, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/29/north-korea-completes-rocket-launch-site-says-us-thinktank>.

²⁴⁰ Jason Hanna, Tim Hume, and James Griffiths, "North Korea Claims It Has H-Bomb as U.N. Discusses Human Rights Abuses," *CNN*, December 12, 2015, <https://www.cnn.com/2015/12/10/asia/north-korea-thermonuclear-claim/index.html>.

²⁴¹ Shannon Tiezzi, "North Korea Nuclear Test Reveals the Limits of China-South Korea Cooperation – The Diplomat," *The Diplomat*, January 14, 2016, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/01/north-korea-nuclear-test-reveals-the-limits-of-china-south-korea-cooperation/>.

²⁴² <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/kor>

²⁴³ <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/kor>

imports.²⁴⁴ Korea also heavily relies on the Chinese market at some industries. For example, in 2015 before the THAAD conflict, Chinese outbound tourists contribute 45.2 per cent visits to Korea among travelers of all countries, ranking the largest source of tourists.²⁴⁵ In other words, South Korea is economically vulnerable to external shocks, particularly those from China. What happens drastically in China's market will exert striking influence on Korean economy.

Moreover, public attitude to Korea is also somewhat complicated. While many Chinese are enthusiastic with the Korean wave, some others embrace negative attitude to it. In response to the Korean wave fans in China and their behavior, some opposites believe such fans to be dumb and less educated.²⁴⁶ Quite a lot even turn this hatred into anti-Hallyu outcries, regarded part of the anti-Korean nationalist movement.²⁴⁷ Moreover, the anti-Korea hatred also targets at Korea with an image of stealing China's civilization and make it their own. For example, it was once widely reported that South Korea registered Gangneung Dano, a Chinese traditional festival pronounced Duanwu, as its own to the UNESCO cultural heritage list in 2004. Media also covered stories of Korean officials and scholars claiming other Chinese traditional culture their own, such as the Chinese characters, Chinese traditional medicine and even Confucius.²⁴⁸ South Korea thus has "won" a notorious reputation of "robbing" culture from China.²⁴⁹

No wonder that a crisis upended the fragile honeymoon period shortly. In February 2016, in the short aftermath of North Korea's long-range missile launch, South Korea started a formal talk with the U.S. on the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system to

²⁴⁴ <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/chn>

²⁴⁵ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1053544/south-korea-visitor-arrivals-from-mainland-china-share/>

²⁴⁶ Woo, "Chinese Fans of Korean Soap Operas: Don't Call Us Dumb."

²⁴⁷ Lu Chen, "The Emergence of the Anti-Hallyu Movement in China," *Media, Culture & Society* 39, no. 3 (April 27, 2016): 374–90, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716646176>.

²⁴⁸ For examples of such report, see Yuze Yang, "韩国"抢文化"与中国的文化洁癖," *China News*, August 7, 2008, <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/gn/news/2008/08-07/1338458.shtml>.

²⁴⁹ See, for example, Peter Gries, "Disillusionment and Dismay: How Chinese Netizens Think and Feel About the Two Koreas," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (2012): 31–56, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S159824080000761X>.

better defend against the North's nuclear and missile threats, which, however, triggered strong opposition from China.²⁵⁰ Later in July, US and Korean officials announce the decision to deploy THAAD and declared they would quickly install the system, a resolution again infuriated the Chinese government for impinging on its national interest and destabilizing the denuclearization issue.²⁵¹ With China's fury inflaming, Lotte, a Korean-located conglomerate successfully operating in China, approved land swap with Korean government for THAAD deployment in February 2017.²⁵² This exacerbated the already soured Sino-Korean relations by evoking not only harsher criticisms on the Korean government but protests against the involved Lotte group. Coupled with a travel warning to Korea issued by the Tourism Bureau, tours destined Korea organized by travel agencies were then suspended in March.²⁵³ Later, celebrations of the 25th anniversary of China-Korean diplomatic normalization were all canceled. While Park Geun-hye stepped down due to political scandals shortly and the newly-elected president Moon Jae-in endeavored to mollify China and amend the broken ties, both sides found it impossible return to the past degree of intimacy.

The Cross-Strait Relations

Mainland China's relations with Taiwan, or the Cross-Strait relations, has been long considered its core national interests. To the east of the mainland, the Island of Taiwan was inhabited by the aboriginals until the 17th century when the Qing Dynasty annexed it. Qing autocrats, however, lost the control of Taiwan to Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The Republic of China (ROC) led

²⁵⁰ Ankit Panda, "What Is THAAD, What Does It Do, and Why Is China Mad About It?," *The Diplomat*, February 25, 2016, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/02/what-is-thaad-what-does-it-do-and-why-is-china-mad-about-it/>.

²⁵¹ Laura Zhou, "China and Russia Criticise THAAD Missile Defence System as Destabilising Region," *South China Morning Post*, July 8, 2016, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/1987103/china-and-russia-criticise-thaad-missile-defence-system>.

²⁵² Reuters, "South Korea's Lotte Approves Land Swap for Missile Defence: Ministry," February 27, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-usa-thaad-lotte/south-koreas-lotte-approves-land-swap-for-missile-defence-ministry-idUSKBN1660P6>.

²⁵³ Mullen, "China's 'Unofficial' Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea."

by the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, or KMT) overthrowing and succeeding the Qing Dynasty, took back Taiwan in 1945 as one of the victories of the World War II. In the Chinese Civil War, KMT lost the control of the mainland to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and fled to Taiwan, starting *de facto* independent governance over the island since 1949.²⁵⁴

However, from then on, mainland China consistently claims sovereignty over Taiwan. For the party-state, recovering Taiwan not only represents its legitimacy over governing all territories ensuing the KMT's failure and but also demonstrates its ability to protect the Chinese people from the humiliated past imposed by the Japanese, a way to redeem its nationalist legitimacy.²⁵⁵ The CCP has maintained a lasting pursuit of reunifying Taiwan ever since the establishment of PRC. In the official narratives, Taiwanese people share the "common bloodline" with the mainland compatriots (*dalù tongbao*) within "one family".²⁵⁶ To deal with the Taiwan issue, Deng Xiaoping's leadership offered the "One China, Two Systems" initiative as the main principle.²⁵⁷ To ease the tensions across the strait and intensify exchanges, the mainland and Taiwan held several semiofficial contacts in the early 1990s, crystalizing into what is later termed "1992 consensus". According to the consensus, the ROC and PRC agree that there is one China while diverging in what "China" means (i.e., whether it is ROC or PRC). In spite of many suspicions of whether it being a real consensus,²⁵⁸ the 1992 consensus sets a precondition for the CCP to engage in any cross-strait dialogues and negotiations.

²⁵⁴ Territory controlled by the Republic of China includes Taiwan Island and a bunch of small nearby islands, Penghu, Kinmen, Matsu Islands, Dongsha Islands and Taiping Island.

²⁵⁵ Note that since the civil war is technically not over, one still can argue that taking Taiwan back is a way of the CCP to continue with this unfinished war.

²⁵⁶ See, for instance, Jinping Xi, "在《告台湾同胞书》发表40周年纪念会上的讲话," People's Daily Online, January 2, 2019, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2019/0102/c64094-30499664.html>.

²⁵⁷ Under the same principle did the Chinese government already take back control of Hong Kong (1997) and Macau (1999).

²⁵⁸ For example, a KMT legislator Su Chi admitted that the term 1992 consensus was made up by him in 2000, eight years after the meetings. Then president Lee Teng-hui also posited the so-called "1992 consensus" was a fiction. See, Hsiu-chuan Shih, "Su Chi Admits the '1992 Consensus' Was Made Up," Taipei Times, February 22, 2006, <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2006/02/22/2003294106>.

Cross-strait relations prospered under the administration of pro-unification president Ma Ying-jeou. During Ma's tenure in 2008, mainland and Taiwan officially established "Three Links", allowing direct postal, transportation and trade links across the strait. The remarkable agreement allows flights between the two sides and up to 3000 visitors from China every day,²⁵⁹ an exchange that has been terminated since the end of the Chinese Civil War. In the wake of the first official, government-to-government contact between ministers from two sides in 2014,²⁶⁰ Ma Ying-jeou and Xi Jinping met in Singapore in late 2015, marking the first meeting between leaders of both parties since 1949.²⁶¹

Some kind of crisis nonetheless hid behind the warm relations. Although Ma and his Kuomintang party advocate the pro-unification stance, the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and a great deal of its supporters have endeavored to promote a pro-independence message and been discontent with Ma's intimate relationship with the mainland authorities. In 2014, such internal conflict within Taiwan eventually transformed into a mass protest, the Sunflower Student Movement. The activists, worrying that the passing of a trade pact with the mainland government by Kuomintang at the legislature may hurt Taiwan's economy and leave it vulnerable to political pressure from Beijing, occupied the Legislative Yuan of Taiwan.²⁶²

The Sunflower Movement not only represents the climax of antagonism to the mainland China in Taiwan but generates far-reaching political reverberations: the KMT was criticized for its inability to solve various crises within the Taiwanese society and then suffered electoral defeats in

²⁵⁹ Xinhua, "海峡两岸关于大陆居民赴台湾旅协议," June 13, 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20090213204603/http://news.xinhuanet.com/tw/2008-06/13/content_8360914.htm.

²⁶⁰ Chris Wang, "MAC Minister Wang in Historic Meeting," Taipei Times, February 12, 2014, <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2014/02/12/2003583307>.

²⁶¹ Richard C. Bush, "What the Historic Ma-Xi Meeting Could Mean for Cross-Strait Relations," Brookings, November 9, 2015, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/11/09/what-the-historic-ma-xi-meeting-could-mean-for-cross-strait-relations/>.

²⁶² J. Michael Cole, "Sunflowers End Occupation of Taiwan's Legislature," The Diplomat, April 11, 2014, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/04/sunflowers-end-occupation-of-taiwans-legislature/>.

the following years.²⁶³ Eventually, a pro-independence presidential candidate, Tsai Ing-wen and her Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections and legislations. Refusing to recognize the 1992 consensus, Tsai was lashed out by mainland authorities. What further enraged Beijing is Tsai's continuous attempts at increasing Taiwan's presence in international organizations²⁶⁴ and her stance on many sensitive issues, such as human rights in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.²⁶⁵

In addition to the complexities of political ebbs and flows, economic relations across the strait perform similar degree of intricacy. Since the resumption of trade between the two sides in 1979, economic exchanges have become one of the dominant issue domains. With trading relations magnify, China has developed as Taiwan's largest trade partner, accounting for 25.2 percent of total trade and 21.6 percent of Taiwan's imports in 2021.²⁶⁶ Similar to the economic interdependence between South Korea and China, however, Taiwan's economy remains reliable on the mainland market. China absorbed nearly 30 per cent of Taiwan's exports by value while, notably, exports accounting for over half of Taiwan's GDP in 2019.²⁶⁷ Practitioners of many industries unproportionally depend on the Chinese market for profits. 80 per cent of Taiwan's exported fruits, for instance, are shipped to China.²⁶⁸ Taiwan's international tourism also has its most visits from the mainland. Since 2008 when Taiwan opened tourism market up to the

²⁶³ Ming-sho Ho, "The Road to Mainstream Politics: How Taiwan's Sunflower Movement Activists Became Politicians - After Protest: Pathways Beyond Mass Mobilization," Carnegie Europe, October 24, 2019, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/2019/10/24/road-to-mainstream-politics-how-taiwan-s-sunflower-movement-activists-became-politicians-pub-80150>.

²⁶⁴ For example, she has been vigorously promoting Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO).

²⁶⁵ The Standard, "Taiwan President Tsai Ing-Wen Says China Must Respect Uyghur Rights," March 28, 2021, <https://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news/section/6/168400/Taiwan-President-Tsai-Ing-wen-says-China-must-respect-Uyghur-rights>; Lily Kuo, "Taiwan Promises 'Support' for Hong Kong's People as China Tightens Grip," The Guardian, May 24, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/25/taiwan-promises-support-for-hong-kongs-people-china-national-security-law>.

²⁶⁶ [https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/taiwan-market-overview#:~:text=China%20is%20Taiwan's%20largest%20trading,Hong%20Kong%20\(7.9%20percent\)](https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/taiwan-market-overview#:~:text=China%20is%20Taiwan's%20largest%20trading,Hong%20Kong%20(7.9%20percent)).

²⁶⁷ <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/twn>

²⁶⁸ Zhouyi Lin, "台灣水果多外銷大陸 農委會鎖定新、日、美分散市場," China Times, March 1, 2021, <https://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20210301002872-260405?chdtv>.

mainlanders, the number of Chinese visitors has increased exponentially---- as of 2015, a year before Tsai Ing-wen won the presidency, Taiwan attracted above four million mainland travelers, almost half of its all tourists. Meantime, tourists from mainland spend 227.58 dollars per day per capita on average, boasting the tourists with second strongest purchasing power, only one penny short of Japanese counterparts.²⁶⁹ Given the volume of Chinese visitors, however, mainland remains the most critical source of tourists. That being said, such degree of dependency leaves this territory vulnerable to China's economic pressure and gives Beijing more leverage on the bargaining table.

As a retaliation for Tsai's denial of the 1992 consensus, the CCP adopts widespread punishment towards Taiwan immediately after the election in 2016, ranging from diplomatic to military, economic and even criminological. For example, Taiwan's presence has been continually prevented by the Chinese government in international organizations or conferences. The Chinese government also sent aircraft carrier into the waterway of Taiwan Strait for military intimidation.²⁷⁰ Further, despite Taiwan's strong objection, hundreds of Taiwanese suspected telecommunication scammers were deported to China for trials several times.²⁷¹ Moreover, segments of economic sanctions are sporadically imposed. China suspended the imports of a variety of Taiwan-grown fruits.²⁷² It was also reported that China reduced group tours to Taiwan²⁷³

²⁶⁹ Huaxia Jingwei Wang, "调查: 大陆游客在台湾消费力 去年首追平日本游客," Global Times Online, July 11, 2016, <https://taiwan.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJWpwU>.

²⁷⁰ Michael Forsythe and Chris Buckley, "Taiwan Responds After China Sends Carrier to Taiwan Strait," The New York Times, January 10, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/10/world/asia/china-taiwan-strait-aircraft-carrier-trump.html?_ga=2.208861778.1373538269.1616181948-975342143.1613925463.

²⁷¹ Reuters, "Taiwan Objects to Vietnam Deporting Telecom Fraud Suspects to China," Reuters, January 3, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-china-vietnam/taiwan-objects-to-vietnam-deporting-telecom-fraud-suspects-to-china-idUSKBN14N1AX>.

²⁷² Amanda Lee, "Mainland China Bans Taiwan Wax and Sugar Apple Imports as Cross-Strait Relations Continue to Worsen," South China Morning Post, September 19, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3149339/mainland-china-bans-taiwan-wax-and-sugar-apple-imports-cross>.

²⁷³ Elizabeth Shim, "China Limits Taiwanese Travel to Mainland," United Press International, February 23, 2016, https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2016/02/23/China-restricting-tourism-to-Taiwan-after-elections/1471456255035/.

in response to Tsai's first tenure in 2016 and issued a total ban on all individual tours in 2019 to retribute her continuous provocation.²⁷⁴

Conclusion

This chapter briefly reviews China's foreign policy and relations: the different stages of it handling foreign policy under various leaderships and its relations with South Korea and Taiwan, the pertinent cases in this project. As this chapter has shown, China's foreign relations indeed becomes more assertive and aggressive after President Xi's leadership. Besides, the state has increasingly relied on domestic actors, the market force, and the public to help realize such assertiveness.

How does tourism become a weapon for China's foreign policy and how do the domestic actors' roles reflect China's real-world conflicts? The next chapter aims to further examine the role of tourism playing in China's international relations, followed by three chapters addressing a more systematic empirical analysis of how the party-state engages more commercial and social actors in its foreign relations agenda, as reflected in the Sino-Korean THAAD dispute and the wrangling in cross-strait relations. Relying on different mobilization strategies tactically to rally more domestic supporters, as we will demonstrate, the state aims to strangle the tourism lifeline of its foreign enmities and pressure them to align with China's national interests eventually.

²⁷⁴ Bloomberg, "China Freezes Individual Tourist Permits to Taiwan," Time, July 31, 2019, <https://time.com/5639832/china-bans-travel-taiwan-tourists/>.

CHAPTER 3
WEAPONIZED TOURISM:
MOBILIZING DOMESTIC ACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In the last chapter, we provide a brief review of China's evolving principles of handling diplomacy and its increasing reliance on non-state actors, including the market force and the public, in shaping international relations. The chapter also shows that as China emerges as a significant economic powerhouse in the global arena, the government often returns to economic leverage to punish adversaries and to reward allies. In particular, outbound tourism has become a convenient tool in the economic arsenal and been repetitively employed in countering diplomatic crises with, for example, South Korea and Taiwan. But why can outbound tourism become a weapon for the Chinese government to influence international relations? And in theory, how non-state actors could be utilized in this process? This chapter aims to answer these questions.

Tourism in the Arsenal of Economic Leverage

In response to strained foreign relations, governments can employ economic sanctions, such as embargo, tariffs, asset freeze, financial prohibitions, cutting aid, etc. to economically manipulate the political behavior of target states.²⁷⁵ By contrast, warm relations could lead to increased international trades and investment, lifted tariff and so forth.

²⁷⁵ David A. Baldwin, *Economic Statecraft* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986); T. Clifton Morgan, Navin Bapat, and Valentin Krustev, "The Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions, 1971—2000*," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 26, no. 1 (February 1, 2009): 92–110, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894208097668>; Robert A. Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (1997): 90–110, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539368>; A. Cooper Drury, "Revisiting Economic Sanctions Reconsidered," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 4 (July 1, 1998): 497–509, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343398035004006>; Dursun Peksen, "Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights," *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 1 (January 1, 2009): 59–77, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343308098404>.

As globalization intensifies and multinational cooperation strengthens, innovations in economic coercion flex muscles. For example, during the 2022 Russian-Ukraine war, the West decided to impose economic sanctions on Russia in penalizing the latter's invasion, including a ban on few Russian banks²⁷⁶ from using the SWIFT, a component of the global payments system.²⁷⁷ Since it also occurs in juxtaposition with the war, many suggest the innovative economic ban may increase our understanding of international relations.²⁷⁸ Public health may even become another tool in economic punishment. As a punitive measure for Bengali abstention on condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Lithuania has cancelled its decision to donate Covid-19 vaccines there.²⁷⁹

In many of such sorts of economic leverage, state-society interactions exist, and quite a lot of individual citizens have, either spontaneously or gradually, participated in the sanctions. For example, during the 1930s while the U.S. government placed embargos on Japan as a penalty for the latter's invasion and atrocities in China, the American public initiated a grassroots campaign to stop buying products assumably manufactured in Japan.²⁸⁰ Among waves of economic sanctions imposed on Russ during the Russian-Ukraine war, on the one hand, the Ukrainian president Vlad Zelenskyy mobilized French companies to stop backing Russian invasion,²⁸¹ and on the other hand, ordinary citizens around the world worked together to boycott Russia products and even brands potentially funding Russian attacks.²⁸² Also, amid diplomatic conflicts between South Korea and

²⁷⁶ BNS, "Lithuania Cancels Decision to Donate Covid-19 Vaccines to Bangladesh after UN Vote on Russia," LRT, March 3, 2022, <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1634221/lithuania-cancels-decision-to-donate-covid-19-vaccines-to-bangladesh-after-un-vote-on-russia>.

²⁷⁷ Philip Blenkinsop, "EU Bars 7 Russian Banks from SWIFT, But Sparing Those in Energy," Reuters, March 2, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/eu-excludes-seven-russian-banks-swift-official-journal-2022-03-02/>.

²⁷⁸ Thomas Friedman, "The Cancellation of Mother Russia Is Underway," The New York Times, March 6, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/06/opinion/putin-ukraine-china.html>.

²⁷⁹ BNS, "Lithuania Cancels Decision to Donate Covid-19 Vaccines to Bangladesh after UN Vote on Russia."

²⁸⁰ Lawrence B. Glickman, *A History of Consumer Activism in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

²⁸¹ Euronews and AFP, "Ukraine War: Zelenskyy Calls on French Companies to Stop Backing 'Russia's War Machine'," March 23, 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/03/23/zelenskyy-to-address-french-mps-in-latest-bid-to-get-tougher-sanctions-against-russia>.

²⁸² Madeline Montgomery, "American People and Businesses Boycott Russian Exports," CBS12 News, March 3, 2022, <https://cbs12.com/news/local/american-people-and-businesses-boycott-russian-exports>; Euromaidan Press, "Consumers Urge Boycott of Companies Still Doing Business with Russia," April 29, 2022, <https://euromaidanpress.com/2022/04/29/consumers->

Japan, or China and Japan, several movements boycotting Japanese products actively or passively initiated by ordinary consumers in Korea and China broke out.²⁸³ Many of the consumer boycotts in China are believed to be fueled or supported by the Chinese government.²⁸⁴

Similar to other types of economic measures, tourism is used both for punishing and rewarding international relations. Prosperous international cooperation can prophesy “freer” international travels between countries with almost no boundaries such as travel visas, like the degree of freedom of travel between Canada and other Commonwealth states.

Tensions between governments may lead to the imposition of travel bans, which has been recognized one of the critical measures of economic sanctions.²⁸⁵ For example, the European Union imposed travel bans on particular individuals from Congo and Nicaragua for their violation of human rights,²⁸⁶ and Russia has decided to ban the EU leadership from entering its territory to counteract western sanctions over Moscow’s military actions in Ukraine.²⁸⁷ In addition to prohibiting certain individuals from traveling to the sanctioning state, states oftentimes proscribe their own citizens’ trips towards the sanctioned states: just consider how the U.S. government prohibited international trips to Cuba and the western boycott of the Moscow Olympic games in 1980.

urge-boycott-of-companies-doing-business-with-russia/.

²⁸³ Yeunjae Lee and Myoung-Gi Chon, “‘Don’t Go, Don’t Buy’: Understanding the Motivations of the Anti-Japan Boycott Movement in South Korea During an International Conflict | Negotiation and Conflict Management Research,” *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research* 15, no. 1 (2021): 1–25; Jessica Chen. Weiss, *Powerful Patriots : Nationalist Protest in China’s Foreign Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2014); James Reilly, “Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China’s Japan Policy,” in *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Oystein Tunsjo (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 169–95, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501712777-009>.

²⁸⁴ James Reilly, “A Wave to Worry About? Public Opinion, Foreign Policy and China’s Anti-Japan Protests,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 86 (2014): 197–215, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2013.832519>.

²⁸⁵ Morgan, Bapat, and Krustev, “The Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions, 1971—2000*.”; Jonathan Masters, “What Are Economic Sanctions?,” Council on Foreign Relations, August 12, 2019, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-are-economic-sanctions/>; Gary Clyde Hufbauer and Euijin Jung, “What’s New in Economic Sanctions?,” *European Economic Review* 130 (November 1, 2020): 103572, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.EUROCOREV.2020.103572>.

²⁸⁶ Hufbauer and Jung, “What’s New in Economic Sanctions?”

²⁸⁷ Channels Television, “Russia Bans EU Leadership after Sanctions,” March 31, 2022, <https://www.channelstv.com/2022/03/31/russia-bans-eu-leadership-after-sanctions/>.

However, the use of tourism in the previous discussions remain quite limited regarding motivating individual ordinary citizens, especially domestic citizens. Many countries simply forbid inbound tourism made by foreign political figures, such as those between the EU and Russia or the EU and Congo, or ban foreign nationals from visiting their territories.²⁸⁸ Few pay attention to how a government could prohibit its own citizens from visiting an international society. An interesting attempt was to mobilize a boycott of the Moscow Olympic games as an international rebuke to the Soviets for invading Afghanistan in the 1980s.²⁸⁹ Not presented as a total ban on trips to Moscow, such (U.S.) government-mobilized boycott has reportedly experienced rebels: although the government warned athletes that travel to Moscow for the games would result in being stripped of their passports, a group of 25 American athletes sued the U.S. Government over the boycott seeking permission to compete.²⁹⁰ As one can tell, however, such interactions remain not at mobilizing domestic individuals at a *citizenry* level.

In the case of a U.S. travel ban on Cuba, questions on how the government interacts with ordinary citizens remain understudied. Although personal leisure tourism to Cuba is simply considered outlawed as the travel ban is black and white and resolute, different administrations have taken turns loosening and tightening the leash. For example, before the Obama administration, American leisure visits to Cuba practiced mostly in small numbers in an illegal fashion.²⁹¹ But Obama's approval of "purposeful" travel to Cuba encouraged American visits to Cuba to above

²⁸⁸ Human Rights Watch, "DR Congo: EU, US Sanction Top Officials," June 1, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/01/dr-congo-eu-us-sanction-top-officials>; The Guardian, "89 European Politicians and Military Leaders Banned from Russia," May 30, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/30/russia-entry-ban-european-politicians-eu-moscow>; Handan Kazanci, "EU Denounces Russian Travel Ban in Retaliation for Bloc's Sanctions over War in Ukraine," Anadolu Agency, April 1, 2022, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/eu-denounces-russian-travel-ban-in-retaliation-for-blocs-sanctions-over-war-in-ukraine/2552518>.

²⁸⁹ Linda K. Richter, *The Politics of Tourism in Asia* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 5.

²⁹⁰ U.S. Department of State, "The Olympic Boycott, 1980," accessed April 15, 2022, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/qfp/104481.htm>.

²⁹¹ Art Padilla and Jerome L. McElroy, "Cuba and Caribbean Tourism after Castro," *Annals of Tourism Research* 34, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 650, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.ANNALS.2007.02.004>.

600 thousand in 2018.²⁹² This trend changed again when the Trump administration imposed more restrictions on Cuba travel, reasoning that, “Visiting Cuba, even purchasing Cuban rum and cigars, funds a regime that represses its people and exports human rights abuses”,²⁹³ resulting in a drop by 21 percent.²⁹⁴ However, in the fluctuated attitudes toward Cuba tourism, how the government has mobilized the public in this case to support government policies is barely observed.

How does China become a salient case for us to examine to what extent the government can mobilize domestic actors in international relations? Outbound tourism in China as an economic means to tackle international pressure has received increasing attention recently. Many scholars contend that the state relies on outbound tourism as a manifestation of soft power in dealing with diplomatic issues and thus a tool of diplomacy.²⁹⁵ Such argument is echoed and confirmed by Chinese authorities of tourism. For example, then director of China National Tourism Administration (now Ministry of Culture and Tourism, hereafter Tourism Bureau), Jinzao Li, stated in 2015 that “tourism needs to take an active role and action in new situations, to be integrated with China’s international policy”.²⁹⁶ Researchers from China’s Tourism Academy, an institution affiliated with the Tourism Bureau, articulate a positive relationship between the development of outbound tourism and China's overall diplomacy.²⁹⁷ As pointed out by some, these all suggest China’s official, explicit statement that tourism would play a role in international diplomacy.²⁹⁸

²⁹² Kristan Schiller, “US Travel to Cuba: How Americans Can Travel to the Island Nation ,” CNN, February 11, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/cuba-travel-for-americans/index.html>.

²⁹³ See the article published by ShareAmerica in August 2020. ShareAmerica is a U.S. Department of State’s platform for communicating American foreign policy worldwide. ShareAmerica, “Visiting Cuba Fuels Regime’s Repression,” August 24, 2020, <https://share.america.gov/visiting-cuba-fuels-regimes-repression/>.

²⁹⁴ Schiller, “US Travel to Cuba: How Americans Can Travel to the Island Nation .”

²⁹⁵ Tony S.M. Tse, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as a Form of Diplomacy,” *Tourism Planning & Development* 10, no. 2 (2013): 149–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.783738>.

²⁹⁶ Quoted from Honggang Xu, Ke Wang, and Young Mi Song, “Chinese Outbound Tourism and Soft Power,” *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 12, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 34–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2018.1505105..>

²⁹⁷ Bin Dai et al., “China’s Outbound Tourism – Stages, Policies and Choices,” *Tourism Management* 58 (February 1, 2017): 253–58, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TOURMAN.2016.03.009>.

²⁹⁸ Xu, Wang, and Song, “Chinese Outbound Tourism and Soft Power.”

However, what makes China a salient case is not it being an authoritarian regime that has explicitly expressed its ambitions to instrumentalize international tourism in navigating diplomatic affairs, but its capacity in adroitly coordinating state control and mobilizing popular participation. Fan even considers the Chinese state “the only country” that “can leverage on its outbound tourism”.²⁹⁹ First, the state can resort to its unique institutional arrangements to counteract foreign pressure at the *state* level. For instance, the government has conceived a formal institution, namely, Approved Destination Status (ADS), a bilateral agreement between China and foreign countries for legal leisure travels, for diplomatic goals.³⁰⁰ It is used to reward international allies with the status in exchange for diplomatic support³⁰¹ or helped them recover from disasters and crises.³⁰² By comparison, the refusal or delay in approving the status could be imposed on rivalries. For example, China’s delay in approving Canada the ADS is seen as a reprisal for then Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s criticism of China’s human rights record, and meeting with the Dalai Lama, a Tibetan separatist for Beijing.³⁰³

More interestingly, in recent practice, the state employs a more dynamic coordination of the ADS scheme and mobilization of the market force and social actors at the *individual* level. For a brief example, in encountering territorial disputes with Japan and the Philippines in 2012, based on tightened grips on the ADS, the Chinese government reportedly placed (unofficial and unwritten) tourism sanctions on Japanese and Filipino and ordered travel agencies to stop

²⁹⁹ Shih-Ping Fan, “The Effects of China’s Tourism Diplomacy and a ‘United Front,’” *China: An International Journal* 8, no. 2 (September 2010): 281.

³⁰⁰ Wolfgang Georg Arlt, *China’s Outbound Tourism, China’s Outbound Tourism* (Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203968161>; Wolfgang Georg Arlt, “The Second Wave of Chinese Outbound Tourism,” *Tourism Planning & Development* 10, no. 2 (May 2013): 126–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.800350>; Tse, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as a Form of Diplomacy”; Darren J. Lim, Victor A. Ferguson, and Rosa Bishop, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Statecraft,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, no. 126 (November 1, 2020): 916–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2020.1744390>; Fan, “The Effects of China’s Tourism Diplomacy and a ‘United Front.’”

³⁰¹ Fan, “The Effects of China’s Tourism Diplomacy and a ‘United Front.’”

³⁰² Tse, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as a Form of Diplomacy.”

³⁰³ Tse.

promotion of and send tours there.³⁰⁴ Later in response to tensed relations with Palau, South Korean and Taiwan, it almost duplicated such “tourism retaliation” through decreeing travel agencies and prospective travelers from insisting on their travel schedule.³⁰⁵

Moreover, the Chinese government can wield tremendous influence over the information domestic tourists to receive and then shape their opinion toward future travels. Owing one of the most sophisticated propaganda machines in the world, China’s Communist Party (CCP) is regarded overseeing of “virtually every conceivable medium which transmits and conveys information to the people of China”.³⁰⁶ Through instructing organic coordination between state-run media, commercialized media and even the digital platform,³⁰⁷ the government ensures that the published content is consistent with its major policy and regime goals.

Why and how can global tourism become an economic weapon to assist the government reach diplomatic goals? In comparison with many previous studies exploring the politics of tourism at the state level, this chapter focuses on an organic interaction between the state, the commercial actors and the individual social actors. I argue that the uniqueness of it being under both vibrant market economy on par with close government surveillance, both in terms of controlling travel agencies and tourists, enables the party-state’s adroit manipulation of outbound tourism and mobilization of domestic public, which serves a robust countermeasure in shaping international relations.

³⁰⁴ Tse.

³⁰⁵ Lauren Beldi, “China’s ‘Tourist Ban’ Leaves Palau Struggling to Fill Hotels and An Airline in Limbo,” ABC News, August 27, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-26/china-tourist-ban-leaves-palau-tourism-in-peril/10160020>; Lim, Ferguson, and Bishop, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Statecraft.”

³⁰⁶ David Shambaugh, “China’s Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy,” *The China Journal*, no. 57 (September 30, 2007): 28, <https://doi.org/10.1086/TCJ.57.20066240>.

³⁰⁷ Daniela Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087742>; Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018).

Note that in examining China's weaponizing outbound tourism as a diplomatic pressure point, this project focuses on its conflicts with South Korea and Taiwan. It chooses these territories for methodological and empirical reasons. First, a study of China's relations with Korea and Taiwan and an ensuing comparison of them can be useful because these regions are similar in many aspects. For example, they are not traditional major powers in the world, comparable in terms of demographics.³⁰⁸ Adjacent to China mainland, besides, both have intimate cultural, economic and social relations with China. Also, as is shown later, both have close trade relations with China. Compared to other territories, one of the obvious differences between Taiwan and South Korea is that Taiwan represents a society regarded by the Chinese government as its own territory and thus an internal political issue while Korea remains a foreign country. Insomuch, in examining China's mobilization of domestic actors, such difference allows us to investigate how the state mobilizes the commercial actors and citizens in strategically different means and how these means are responded by the audience. As will be shown in the next few chapters, the Chinese government changes its mobilization tactics according to the targets it aims to direct at, partly considering the nature of regions it is dealing with. Although this project will *not* argue the method necessarily to be a Most Similar System Design, their potential similarities, compared with other states or regions, and the possible difference may provide a window into how the state-led mobilization should be contextualized.

Additionally, a study of South Korea and Taiwan can offer more nuanced and comprehensive empirical evidence. Central to this research is how the party-state rallies its domestic audience into diplomatic conflicts using economic leverages, with a focus on the tourism industry. While in the

³⁰⁸ Taiwan has a total population of 23 million residing on an area mounting to 36,197 km² whereas 51 million South Koreans live in a country totaled 100,363 km². South Korea's nominal GDP per capita is estimated at 34,866 dollars, ranking the 28th around the world, in comparison to Taiwan's 32,123 dollars, the 29th largest.

past few years China has weaponized the tourism sector in disputes with roughly five regions, namely, South Korea and Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines and Palau, only conflicts with South Korea and Taiwan lasted for at least one year. In light of the intensity of these two conflicts, a systematic enquiry into them tends to reveal a more dynamic and vibrant paradigm of state mobilization. Moreover, data availability renders the Japan and the Philippines cases difficult to follow as they occurred almost ten years ago. Meanwhile, they may limit our understanding of the role of online media in helping the state mobilize its audience, given that social media were not widely used as they are nowadays.

China's Outbound Tourism:

A Prosperous Market Meeting Restricted Freedom

China's Booming International Tourism Market

The first factor that may convince the party-state of its strength in utilizing tourism could be the vibrant outbound tourism flows. It has been noticed that China's outbound tourism has become "the most influential new social and economic phenomenon".³⁰⁹ In 2019, the year before the tourism market devastated by the COVID pandemic, 154 million tourists departing from China for global travels, ranking the 2nd among all countries, only 16 million shortage of the U.S., the country with highest number of departures (see Figure 3.1). While not the largest international tourism market in terms of departures, China might boast one of the most rapidly emerging market, considering its outbound tourists rising by 12.8% a year on average from 2009 to 2019, compared to the global average of 5.1%.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ Patricia C. Johnson, Honggang Xu, and Wolfgang G. Arlt, "Outbound Chinese Tourism: Looking Back and Looking Forward," *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 12, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2018.1505098>.

³¹⁰ <https://www.eiu.com/n/the-road-to-recovery-for-chinese-outbound-tourism/>

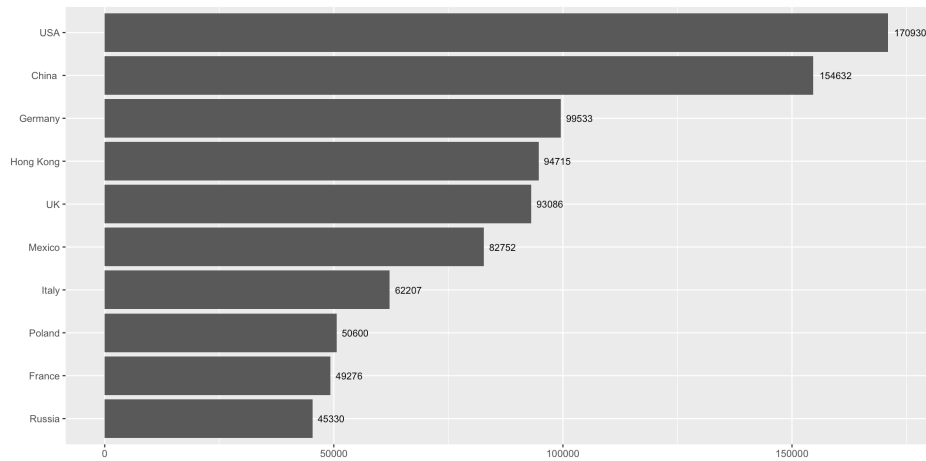


Figure 3.1 Country Rankings of Outbound Tourists Departing in 2019, Top Ten (In Thousand)

[https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/tourist_departures/;](https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/tourist_departures/)

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.DPRT?locations=CN>

The arrival of Chinese tourists contributes not merely tremendous number of visits but billions of dollars to global tourism. From 2014 onward, Chinese tourists spend more than 200 billion US dollars each year in international travels (see Figure 3.2), according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). In 2019 alone, they expend US\$254.6 billion overseas, accounting for almost one-fifth of global tourism spending,³¹¹ higher than the U.S. at \$133.3 billion of outbound tourism expenditure, and Germany at \$ 93.2 billion, boasting the world’s largest spender on global tourism.³¹²

³¹¹ <https://www.eiu.com/n/the-road-to-recovery-for-chinese-outbound-tourism/>

³¹² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1093809/outbound-travel-and-tourism-expenditure-worldwide/#:~:text=Outbound%20travel%20and%20tourism%20expenditure%20in%20leading%20countries,%20%2090.2%20%206%20more%20rows%20>

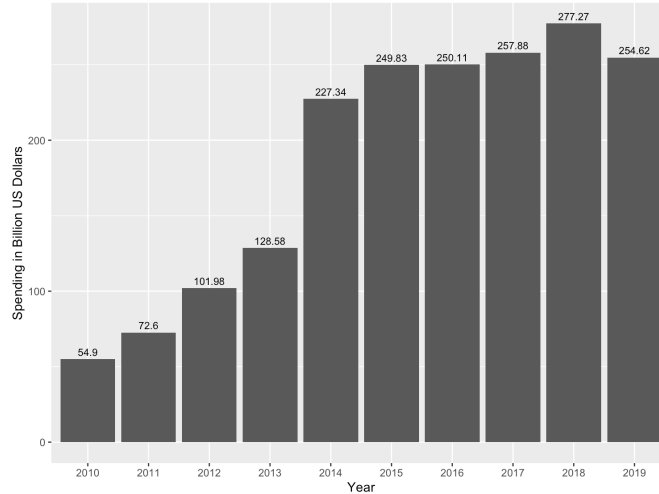


Figure 3.2 International tourism expenditure of Chinese tourists from 2010 to 2019, in Billion US Dollars <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-data/country-profile-outbound-tourism>

This suggests international dependence on China’s tourists for revenue. In fact, China has developed the largest source of tourists for many territories, such as Thailand, Singapore, Japan, and more importantly, South Korea and Taiwan, the selected country/region cases by this study.³¹³

Take South Korea for instance. Since 2013, visitors from China have begun to serve as a dominant force for the Korean tourism market.³¹⁴ In 2015, one year before the THAAD dispute, 5.9 million Chinese visitors arrived in South Korea, constituting 45 percent of total visits, followed by Japan travelers who took up only 19 percent.³¹⁵ Even in 2019 affected by the soured Sino-Korea relations due to the dispute, 34.4 percent of total visitor arrivals to South Korea came from China. Besides, Chinese tourists play a critical role in invigorating consumption in Korea. According to

³¹³ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/6e8b663c-en.pdf?expires=1648141658&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=8755A885BA602C232F802ED36C38C648#:~:text=International%20visit%20arrivals%20increased%20by,total%20international%20arrivals%20to%20Korea.>

³¹⁴ Wei Xu, “South Korea Plays up Pop Culture to Attract Chinese Tourists,” China Daily, June 25, 2014, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/travel/2014-06/25/content_17613476.htm.

³¹⁵ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/6e8b663c-en.pdf?expires=1649788948&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=5052E795F9DF3CF6C384913AE63F06CE>

a report in 2014, each of them spent 2272 US dollars on average in Korea, 1.3 times more than visitors from other countries.³¹⁶

Taiwan's tourism also counts on mainland travelers. Since 2010, mainland visitors have overtaken Japanese travelers as the biggest tourist group to Taiwan until the tensions between two societies in 2016.³¹⁷ Even impacted by the paralyzed cross-straits conflicts since 2016, China mainland remains the region that exported most visitors to Taiwan.³¹⁸ Before the onset of the COVID, total expenditure of mainland visitors in Taiwan was almost 4 billion US dollars, ranking the highest among all countries.³¹⁹

This above discussion suggests that a vibrant outbound tourism market, particularly that destined to South Korea and Taiwan, seems to convince the Chinese government of its ability to affect the targeted regions by reining in traveling. Their heavy independence on visitors from China mainland allows the party-state to leverage relations with them and to express a political stance. But why should domestic travelers stand behind government goals? What makes them a possibly mobilized force in favor of the government?

Restricted Travel Freedom: The Limitation of Visas and Tours

China's confidence of weaponizing tourism not only originates from a dynamic and heavily dependent market but perhaps more from its ability to restrict ordinary people's freedom of travel. It is not uncommon that nondemocratic regimes restrict international travel for reasons such as effective population control and stability maintenance.³²⁰ Free flows of population in China were

³¹⁶ The Chosun Ilbo, "Chinese Tourists Boost Consumption in Korea," October 7, 2014, http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/10/07/2014100702059.html.

³¹⁷ According to the Tourism Statistics Database of the Taiwan Tourism Bureau. <https://stat.taiwan.net.tw/>

³¹⁸ Please note that Chinese visitors dominate Taiwan's tourism market as an individual *country*, but Taiwan's authorities often combine statistics regarding other countries as "others". Also see the Tourism Statistics Database of the Taiwan Tourism Bureau. <https://stat.taiwan.net.tw/>

³¹⁹ Tourism Bureau M.O.T.C Republic of China, "中華民國 108 年來臺旅客消費及動向調查," 2020, <https://admin.taiwan.net.tw/Handlers/FileHandler.ashx?fid=82fc55cf-fded-4ccb-9427-ccd79b38794a&type=4&no=1>.

³²⁰ José Alemán and Dwayne Woods, "No Way out: Travel Restrictions and Authoritarian Regimes," *Migration and Development* 3, no. 2 (July 3, 2014): 285–305, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2014.935089>.

forbidden since the Qin Dynasty, almost two thousand years ago, mostly given the purposes of taxation, conscription, as well as migration regulation.³²¹ This situation did not relax even after the foundation of the People's Republic in modern China. Before Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening policy, every Chinese citizen is leashed by the Hukou system, Danwei system (for urbanites) and People's Commune (for rural residents). The Hukou, a registry system that identifies the holder's permanent residence status, determines one's benefits he/she could earn through life and constrains him/her to the residency. An urban resident was bounded by the Danwei and the rural counterparts by the Commune, with both institutions the providers of basic resources and benefits to Chinese citizens (see Chapters 1 and 4 for details). Flows of population was closely monitored by the Hukou record and once an outlawed flow was found, one's urban/rural benefits might be confiscated by his/her Danwei or Commune. Travels can only take place upon approval, mostly on official affiliated trips, under the proof of the letter of introduction (jie shao xin). Tourism was barely a possible option for leisure, let alone international tourism.

International tourism did not start until the early 1980s and experienced three stages, namely travel to Hong Kong and Macao, travel to the border regions and intra-Asia countries, and travel beyond Asia, until a ripened market emerged in the 2000s.³²²

Emancipated from previous austere population control, Chinese citizens are now able to enjoy flights between countries. However, for Chinese passport holders, the international tourism environment seems not to be quite agreeable. According to the Henley Passport Index (HPI), a ranking of passports according to the "power" of passports by assessing how many territories can be reached "visa free" or visa on arrival, China ranked 66th with being granted access to 79

³²¹ Jason Young, *China's Hukou System: Markets, Migrants and Institutional Change*, *China's Hukou System: Markets, Migrants and Institutional Change* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137277312>.

³²² See, for example, Christine Lim and Ying Wang, "China's Post-1978 Experience in Outbound Tourism," *Mathematics and Computers in Simulation* 78, no. 2–3 (July 1, 2008): 450–58, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.MATCOM.2008.01.033>.

countries and territories without visa. Most of the visa-free territories nevertheless are underdeveloped countries situated in Africa, South America and South Asia with only a few of them being major popular tour destinations among Chinese tourists.³²³ In other words, in order to make a successful overseas trip to their favorite destinations a Chinese passport holder still struggles to be approved for a visa.

One may argue that visa application features a private matter between the applicant herself and the embassy of the destination. In China, however, a series of institutions warrant it an issue in need of organic tripart interaction between the government, travel agencies and tourists. Such interaction turns international travel into a tool the government can rely on and force the “hard mobilization” into counteracting international pressure.

Chinese tourists aiming for non-visa-free international destinations must register a visa. Different from visa application process implemented by many other states, China’s tourism (leisure) visa is divided for bifurcate purposes: grouped tours and individual tours. Participants in group tours must apply visas through the group ADS visa (tuanqian) application venue while their individual counterparts turning to individual visa (geqian) registration. Before packaging personal baggage for a trip, one must decide on which kind of visa he/she will be holding.

Group ADS Visas and Tours

Generally speaking, China’s outbound tourism industry for grouped tours is largely founded on the Approved Destination Status (ADS) protocol. Although China’s prohibition on outbound tourism started to lift progressively since the 1980s, travelers at that time were largely packaged

³²³ For example, among ten most popular outbound destinations for Chinese citizens in 2018 only Thailand needs no visa approval or requires visa on arrival. For popular outbound destinations among Chinese, see China Tourism Academy, “中国出境旅游发展年度报告 2019 ,” 2019, <https://www.pinchain.com/article/198626>. The visa information is accessed through <https://www.henleyglobal.com/passport-index>

through tightly controlled groups. Civilians were only allowed to visit Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia for family/friend related matters by early 1990s.

Later in 1995, the agreement became the formalized Approved Destination Status framework with more territories staking in. So far, the Chinese government has granted a total of 140 states and regions the status, including South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, the U.S., Australia and Canada.³²⁴ Any Chinese citizens deciding on grouped tours is required to apply for a group visa determined under the ADS scheme. Dictating the practice of international trips in three aspects, the scheme restricts the “travel freedom”.

First, the Chinese government allows only countries and regions signed upon the agreement to be listed as legitimate travel destinations for leisure tourists in groups and promote their tourism market in China. In other words, those not on the list, in principle, should be unable to receive Chinese tourists in grouped tours and Chinese tourists not permitted to organize a tour in group package there.³²⁵ Since group tours remain an essential tour mode for Chinese travelers, especially among senior people, the ADS system limits their options of tour destinations, especially considering travel habits of Chinese visitors, which will be elaborated more later.

Second, the ADS rules that grouped visa holders must travel in groups organized by travel enterprises.³²⁶ In principle, grouped tours are organized and practiced under a stringent schedule arranged by travel agents, including what transportation should be used, which tourist points will be visited and what hotels the tourists are supposed to stay during the trip.

³²⁴ Chao Zhao and Jing Cui, “China Grants 140 Countries Approved Destination Status,” People’s Daily Online, December 30, 2011, <http://en.people.cn/90782/7693106.html>.

³²⁵ In real practice, it is still possible for Chinese citizens to travel to non-ADS countries, for example, Palau, and the state may keep its eyes closed. However, at any time when the state deems proper, it may cite this (the country is not on the ADS list) to stop the tourist flow. See, for example, Beldi, “China’s ‘Tourist Ban’ Leaves Palau Struggling to Fill Hotels and An Airline in Limbo.”

³²⁶ The policy does not apply to the U.S. and Canada who joined the ADS. Instead, all Chinese tourists destined the U.S. and Canada for leisure trips must apply for an individual visa individually but can proceed with the upcoming trip either in groups or independently.

Third, only certified tour operators, by both the Chinese government and the destined country's government, are allowed to administer the business and "each of the certified travel agencies must assign special couriers to handle the visa application procedure".³²⁷ The guides of each tour group are also demanded continuous vigilance over their travelers for a contingency that tourists sneak out of the group and become overstayed illegal immigrants. Penalty ranging from fine to forced business closure would fall upon travel firms which have any group travelers overstay.

Individual Visas and Tours

The other type of visa, vis-à-vis the group visa, is individual visa. As the name indicates, it is a type of visa applied by the tourist individually and conduct trips independently aftermath. Such visa holders, like a normal tourist, book air tickets, hotel accommodations on their own and choose things to do and places to go for the trip and the length of the trip all by themselves. Theoretically, the individual visa applicant could choose to register for a grouped tour but not for the vice versa. In a word, traveling independently allows a more flexible and in-depth travel experience.

Does that mean an individual visa holder can implement the tours without any intervention from a third party? The answer is a disappointedly no. There are a few situations where visa applicants have to interact with government or travel agencies, regardless. For example, some territories (e.g. South Korea, Japan) rule that, even Chinese citizens are allowed to apply for individual visa, the applications must be registered through officially-approved agencies who would turn in the applications directly to the embassies of these countries on behalf of the would-be tourists. Moreover, travelers to particular regions, such as Hong Kong and Macau, regardless of the applicant's type of the visa, need to apply for all documents (a pass along with an endorsement)

³²⁷ China Contact, "Approved Destination Status (ADS) Policy," 2015, <https://chinacontact.org/information/approved-destination-status-ads-policy>.

through a government agency, the Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration (thereafter Administration).

Trips to Taiwan are even more complicated. In addition to applying for the pass and the endorsement directly through the Administration, applicants must go through an authorized travel agency for a permit to enter and exit Taiwan (details will be narrated in the next section). This suggests that, in many scenarios, mainland tourists must interact with the government itself or through the intermediary actor (i.e., travel operators) at some point for a leisure trip.

One may argue that travel agencies play not a big deal in individual visa application for most of the international destinations, and thus their roles should not be overestimated in individual visas. Many countries, for example, Canada, Australia, the U.S., and European countries, allow individual submission of visa. As such, it is believed that tourists can continue the trips by applying an individual visa and stick to personal itinerary independently with zero government intervention. Admittedly, there are cases in which citizens can travel with minimal state intervention, but many tend *not* to do so, considering travel habits and preference many Chinese hold, as is explained next.

Travel Preferences of Chinese Tourists

Although China has become the world's largest outbound tourism market,³²⁸ many Chinese remain unexperienced travelers. Language, cultural and diet barriers obstruct travelers' interest from visiting a different region independently of travel agencies. Chinese command of foreign languages is quite basic, for some even none, leading to their understanding of exotic culture less effectively. With most popular international destinations being non-Chinese-speaking states, tours escorted by a Mandarin-speaking guide tend to be more secured and thus preferred. Also, travel operators usually arrange Asian cuisine for Chinese tourists whose diet includes more rice and

³²⁸ People' Daily Online, "China Becomes World's Largest Outbound Tourism Market ," China Daily, December 28, 2016, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/business/2016-12/28/content_27798009.htm.

wok recipes, which an individual traveler normally couldn't find. In other words, many require veteran travel guides to help them adapt to a completely new exotic environment.

Besides, traveling in groups reduces costs. Purchasing all-inclusive group tours usually offer travelers with hotel accommodation, food and transportation at a lower price compared to those packaged in an individual tour. This is compatible with the basic requirements of Chinese travelers whose shopping budget is more than that on accommodation, meals and tourist attractions, according to a survey on consumption by Alipay, the largest mobile payment app in China.³²⁹

And for visa applicants, irrespective of group visas and individual visas, gaining help from certified travel agencies can also relieve them from excessive time investment in preparing documents and filling out tedious forms. In some scenarios, moreover, foreign embassies, and even Taiwanese authorities, require fewer materials or lower the requirements if visa applicants work the process through authorized travel firms, resulting in tremendously simplified procedure but increased success rate. Even the visa application fee might be discounted. An experienced travel agent shared her knowledge of how different travel agencies can vary in visa application success rate and simplified procedures through personal connections. “[Bringing in documents of] ten people and a thousand people [to apply for visas] must be different in price [in terms of visa application fee], and success rate is variant, too.”³³⁰

Such travel preferences together result in Chinese more reliance on guided, supervised group tours regardless of other inconvenience and even on the travel firms to arrange everything for individual visa application. According to the 2019 China Outbound Tourism Report, there are still more than half of the tourists (55.24 percent) traveling in groups.³³¹ Even veteran tour operators

³²⁹ Marisa Garcia, “What You Need to Know about Where and How Chinese Tourists Spend Their Money,” PhocusWire, March 1, 2018, <https://www.phocuswire.com/What-you-need-to-know-about-where-and-how-Chinese-tourists-spend-their-money>.

³³⁰ Interview #4, in April 2019.

³³¹ China Tourism Academy, “中国出境旅游发展年度报告 2019.”

themselves stated their experience of turning in visa application through licensed travel agencies rather than on their own.³³² One interviewee who manages a medium travel agency illuminated on motivations of these travelers,

“If I were an ordinary traveler, I would let travel agencies apply the visa on behalf of me. What a convenience! You can do it on your own, like applying for US visa. But you have to search online for information regarding all required materials. I might as well throw everything out to the travel agency and don’t have to worry about them.”³³³

Notably, with the development of tourism industry and increasingly competitive market, travel agencies have promoted a variety of mixed types of tours to attract more customers. Such adaption blurs the difference between group tours and individual tours. For example, travelers planning on individual tours may still hire an agent to book hotels and flights, or require the agent to design a plausible route. A report released by Tuniu, a major online travel agency in China, reveals above half of the users have booked transportation, hotels and sightseeing passes through its mobile app.³³⁴ Such adjustment consolidates tourists’ reliance on travel firms for organizing tours.

In a word, travel operators have played a central role in guiding almost whole process of outbound tourism from assisting visa application to helping organize and complete tours, especially for group tours. On the one hand, as all group tours are organized by authorized travel business crew, “[b]y directly restricting these certified ADS travel agents, the government retains—in theory—oversight of all ADS group travel out of China”.³³⁵ On the other hand,

³³² Interview #5 in April 2022.

³³³ Interview #6 in April 2019.

³³⁴ Tuniu Travel Portal, “途牛发布《移动旅游消费报告 2017》：机酒预订人次占比超 50%,” January 16, 2018, <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1589730012762195650>.

³³⁵ Lim, Ferguson, and Bishop, “Chinese Outbound Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Statecraft,” 923.

government surveillance over some of the individual tours is overt and palpable, given the reliance individual tourists have placed on travel operators for visa application and other travel arrangement.

Since the authorization is conferred by the government and could be deprived of at the state's disposal, travel agents are quite vulnerable economic actors subject to state maneuvers. In principle, if "discouraged" or decreed by government officials to stop sell tours or visa assistance, travel agencies have to conform to state hard rules, or risking their certification of running business. A large portion of tourists, thus, would have to forfeit their travel plans or switch tourism destinations as a result of the forceful compliance of travel agents, and to some extent indirectly help the government achieve its diplomatic agenda of leveraging international pressure.

Besides, it must be noted that the government can also manipulate outbound tourism through completely administrative process such as restricting *passport* application. For example, in the early years after the reform policy, one may find it hard to obtain a passport for international flows due to rigorous procedures for government approvals, including a draconian "political investigation" (zhengzhi shencha).³³⁶ Even today, the Chinese government can exercise outright oversight of global tourism by controlling passport application. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has largely frozen passport application for leisure purposes in order to rein in virus contractions that would possibly generated by returning tourists from abroad, reasoned as "No Emergency, No Going abroad" (fei biyao bu chuguo).³³⁷ There is also news regarding local governments ordering residents to hand over passports until after the pandemic.³³⁸

³³⁶ For an article vividly documenting the difficulties of applying for passport for average citizens, see Jinghua Shibao, "改革开放 30 年:护照从层层审批走向按需申领," China News, November 4, 2008, <http://www.chinanews.com.cn/gn/news/2008/11-04/1436222.shtml>.

³³⁷ Ping Hao, "国家移民管理局: 对非必要非紧急出境事由, 暂不签发普通护照等出入境证件--社会·法治--人民网," People's Daily Online, July 30, 2021, <http://society.people.com.cn/n1/2021/0730/c1008-32176416.html>.

³³⁸ Hsiao-hwa Hsia, "Chinese Police Rrder Residents to Hand over Passports 'until after the Pandemic,'" Radio Free Asia, April 20, 2022, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/passports-04202022123626.html>.

Since this project focuses more on its interaction with the market force and social actors, its regulation on passport alone will not be further scrutinized.

Discussion in this section suggests a close tripartite relationship between the state, travel agencies (an intermediary actor) and ordinary tourists. Since travel agencies are mostly under careful inspection by the Chinese government, and to some extent, their participation in the market is endorsed by the government through government-designated institutions (i.e., the ADS scheme) and can be deprived of if undisciplined, China's authorities is able to mobilize them with decrees into the state-promoted campaigns against international travels. Ordinary tourists, who also highly depend on the organization of travel operators due to the ADS scheme and their own preferences, would be recruited into the campaigns at the same time. Therefore, once the government determines to start its economic retaliation on targeted regions, almost all travel agencies and many tourists would be mobilized although not necessarily spontaneously and voluntarily but compulsory ways.

Restricted Information Freedom: The Impact of Propaganda

How can the state mobilize more voluntary citizens into such "tourism retaliation"? This project argues that, to mobilize them into spontaneous compliance psychologically, the state can also rely on its capacity in controlling information conveyed to ordinary citizens. Through limiting the tourists to particular information, the government can expect to influence the choice of average travelers, and they in return cooperate with state goals of punishing the targeted regions' tourism market.

I first present an inspiring talk with one of the interviewees. The interviewee is the CEO of a small, private travel agency and a veteran tourism practitioner with more than 20 years of

experience. When asked how he understood the state's restriction of travels to target regions, he expressed,

“[Restricting travels to targeted regions] is quite simple. [The government] only need to take advantage of propaganda. It is enough to just say that place is unsafe. [The government] doesn't have to prohibit you.... Public opinion shaping (yulun daoxiang) is so powerful. Take Canada for example. Did the news report this? [The news went] ‘tourists with valid Canadian visas may be barred from entry by the Canadian government’.... [This is because of] information asymmetry. Guidance of media (meiti daoxiang) is quite powerful. ... Where is your information, experience from? From media and internet. When 98 out of 100 people saying an issue not safe while only two others saying it safe. Do you think it is safe? ... For a tourist has never been to [a place], where does the information originate from?³³⁹

The interviewee's answer reveals quite a lot of information to explain how the government can potentially recruit more tourists voluntarily into its campaigns retaliating tourism of rivalry regions. A word he kept reiterating is public opinion shaping or opinion shaping by media. It is true that controlling the travel information tourists can access to helps the state manipulate their opinion and decision of traveling. How does the state achieve this? First, the interviewee suggests that information source for Chinese citizen is rather limited, with most information providers offering similar messages. This is not surprising. In China, political agenda is mostly decided by the propaganda apparatus. Propaganda authorities have demonstrated enormous capacity of controlling information by manipulating media practitioners employed not only by state-run media

³³⁹ Interview #6, April 2019.

outlets but by commercialized media, and both in traditional platforms and in the digital platform.³⁴⁰ As suggested by previous studies, Chinese citizens are quite limited in accessing to alternative information other than those presented by official sources, especially when information involves in international affairs or include sensitive topics.³⁴¹ This is because the state propaganda department is quite with stringent with what can and what cannot be reported in international affairs.³⁴² Such directive targets all media practitioners in China, including online news network providers.

The government also possesses a wide array of strategies to filter the unexpected messages. For media practitioners who publish messages violating the state-promoted goals, the messages are vulnerable to censorship, both in a pre- and post- fashion.³⁴³ Besides, it even employs subtler censorship tactics through, for instance, inconveniencing information recipients.³⁴⁴ In addition to blatant and subtle censorship, the government can also mobilize its agents to astroturf the online ecology to suppress and remove noisy expressions.³⁴⁵ These strategies together ensure that Chinese citizens receive the information the government attempts to promote and erase its unwanted messages to the largest extent.

Moreover, the interview also suggests one propaganda strategy information providers could rely on to influence travelers: to frame the conflicts as affecting the travelers' personal interest.

³⁴⁰ Reuters, "China Tightens Rules on Online News, Network Providers," CNBC, May 2, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/02/china-tightens-rules-on-online-news-network-providers.html>; Anne-Marie. Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship : Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

³⁴¹ Daniela Stockmann and Mary E. Gallagher, "Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China," *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 4 (April 14, 2011): 436–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010394773>; Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*; Margaret E. Roberts et al., "The Increasing Constraint of Newspaper Propaganda in China and Its Implications," presented in 2022 *American Political Science Association's Annual Meeting*, 2022.

³⁴² Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship : Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*.

³⁴³ Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108164474>.

³⁴⁴ Margaret E. Roberts, *Censored : Distraction and Diversion inside China's Great Firewall* (Princeton, MA: Princeton University Press, 2018), <https://press.princeton.edu/titles/11341.html>.

³⁴⁵ Rongbin Han, "Manufacturing Consent in Cyberspace: China's 'Fifty-Cent Army,'" *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 44, no. 2 (2015): 105–34; Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 1–18.

For example, as he mentioned, to discourage potential visitors, media practitioners can only report how unsafe or inconvenient traveling to a particular destination is. When security and convenience become an issue that undermines the very traveler's immediate interest, he/she may not choose to stick with the itinerary anymore. This perspective is quite intriguing. But considering China's propaganda has employed different frames to achieve a variety of goals, such as to implement domestic policies, to demobilize protests and to shore up regime support while shaping international relations,³⁴⁶ such frame is important and worth noting. What also makes the frame worth attended to is that, to a certain extent, it is consistent with previous findings that the state has started to cater to the taste of average citizens and often integrate propaganda with forms they care about, such as entertainment.³⁴⁷ Using such frame, the state may engage in more audiences. In other words, the Chinese government is more confident not only in controlling *what* information could be presented in front of the citizens (or tourists in particular) but *how* it is presented.

Besides, the interview reminds of another propaganda strategy through the priming effect. Priming basically increases the accessibility of particular information to the audience. One can increase the salience of the antagonist or negative messages regarding international travels by disseminating the information repetitively. For example, as the interviewee suggests, through disseminating 98 similar messages that convey how unsafe and convenience a particular

³⁴⁶ Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*; King, Pan, and Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression"; Peter Lorentzen, "China's Strategic Censorship," *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 402–14, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12065>; Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*; Juan Du, Rongbin Han, and Weixia Lv, "Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China," *Environmental Policy and Governance* 32, no. 2 (April 1, 2022): 135–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/EET.1971>.

³⁴⁷ Daniel C. Mattingly and Elaine Yao, "How Soft Propaganda Persuades," *Comparative Political Studies* 0, no. 0 (February 1, 2022): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140211047403>; Matthew Ming-Tak Chew and Yi Wang, "How Propagames Work as a Part of Digital Authoritarianism: An Analysis of a Popular Chinese Propagame," *Media, Culture & Society* 43, no. 8 (July 25, 2021): 1431–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437211029846>; Sheng Zou, "When Nationalism Meets Hip-Hop: Aestheticized Politics of Ideotainment in China*," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 178–95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420.2019.1637008>; Johan Lagerkvist, "Internet Ideotainment in the PRC: National Responses to Cultural Globalization," *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 54 (2008): 121–40.

destination is, ordinary citizens could be convinced of the information and their mind might be changed regarding whether they want to travel.

Thus, it is possible that when international confrontation starts, domestic readers are all exposed to similar information regarding the targeted regions. Such information may not only include the conflicts themselves but is strategically framed to affect tourists' intention to travel. Also, such message could come in large amounts and thus change the way the tourists think about visiting targeted regions. In this way, a wider range of citizens could be mobilized by the state as "voluntary" policy supporters and withdraw the opportunity to travel spontaneously.

Conclusion

Can tourism become a weapon in international relations? The party-state's unprecedented control of the average tourist's freedom of travel and the access to information, underscored by the extent to which international societies are dependent on China's market, makes outbound tourism a potentially compelling economic tool to achieve diplomatic goals. On the one hand, the Chinese government can influence whether the tourists *can* travel to certain regions through decreeing travel agencies. On the other hand, it can manipulate the opinion of these tourists by affecting whether they *want* to travel. Besides, China is among the largest market of outbound tourists on which many regions heavily rely for revenue.

The next question is, how does the Chinese government mobilize its domestic actors in real conflicts? And how is the tripartite interaction between the state, travel agencies and the travelers manifested in reality? In the following chapters, through the government's mobilization of domestic actors both in hard and soft forms, I expound on the idea of China's use of tourism as an economic tool to leverage political behavior of South Korean and Taiwanese governments.

CHAPTER 4

MOBILIZATION BY DECREE:

RALLYING CIVIC PARTICIPATION THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS

In the previous chapter, I argue that due to the uniqueness of its outbound tourism, namely a vibrant tourism market and a controlled society in terms of freedom of travel and information flows, China's party-state possesses the capability to mobilize domestic actors to shape international relations using tourism both in hard and soft forms. How does the state, then, implement the mobilization in real conflicts for diplomatic goals? This chapter and the next two dedicate to China's dual mobilization mechanism in diplomatic wars.

This chapter primarily focuses on the state's "hard mobilization" in which it recruits domestic supports for foreign policy goals via compulsory *administrative decrees*. Centering around China's tourism contests with South Korea and Taiwan, this chapter illustrates how the hard mobilization affects tourism as an economic leverage to achieve China's diplomatic goals.

Hard Mobilization: How History Shines into Reality

The use of administrative decrees, or the "hard mobilization", to force domestic citizens into state-promoted campaigns, indeed, is not an innovation but a historical legacy. Leninist regimes have been named "mobilizational authoritarianism" by some scholars, who have relied on the tool of mobilization to govern their societies in history or even currently.³⁴⁸ In preparing the mass mobilization, these authoritarians have to resort to the hard form of mobilization to recruit policy supporters. For example, in Vietnam's 1953 land reform, the political leader Trường Chinh

³⁴⁸ William S. Turley and Mark Selden, *Reinventing Vietnamese Socialism Doi Moi In Comparative Perspective* (Routledge, 1993).

stressed a few preparatory tasks before starting the mass mobilization, one of the most critical tasks being the *policy preparation*.³⁴⁹ Such policy preparation, involving in government promulgation of a land law as well as circulation of an internal directive, worked as the disciplinary regulations for states' delegates (mostly local cadres) and the public to abide by and implement government policies.³⁵⁰

In Mao Zedong's China, the hard mobilization during each state-led campaign appeared even more dynamic and nuanced through not only the complicated local implementation but the buttress of social institutions. Mao's campaigns were identified being carried out through a series of common stages: They involved in policy proposals from the top and a few others such as a draft of points distributed to all concerned agencies, and the establishment of keypoints (*zhongdian*) and representative models (*dianxing*).³⁵¹

In this process, all social actors were required to comply with state goals. For instance, in mobilizing people to support new policies, state and local cadres requested ordinary citizens to participate in mandatory political study sessions to learn official policies, sometimes two or three times a day, the political pressure of which even threatened many people's health.³⁵²

It is considered "hard mobilization" not only because the masses were enlisted by mandatorily but due to the rewards and punishment one can receive. For those "activists" (*jiji fenzi*) among the mass, the party organization would select them as "backbones" (*gugan*) in the course of the

³⁴⁹ Alec Holcombe, *Mass Mobilization in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945–1960* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2020), 142–43, <https://doi.org/10.2307/J.CTV105BB0Z>.

³⁵⁰ Holcombe, *Mass Mobilization Democr. Repub. Vietnam, 1945–1960*.

³⁵¹ Elizabeth J Perry, "From Mass Campaigns to Managed Campaigns: Constructing a 'New Socialist Countryside,'" in *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*, ed. Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J Perry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2012), 33, https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/elizabethperry/files/managed_campaigns_-_proofs.pdf.

³⁵² Thomas Buoye et al., *China: Adapting the Past, Confronting the Future* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 389, <https://doi.org/10.3998/MPUB.22778>.

campaign to facilitate “breakthroughs” (tupuokou) in grassroots implementation.³⁵³ Anyone disapproved participation, in contrast, could be deprived of all social and economic benefits.

This is because, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, in Mao’s China, the society was highly organized by a few institutions such as the Danwei system (*work unit*, for urban citizens) and the People’s Commune (for rural citizens). All urban citizens were bonded to a particular Danwei and all of the social and economic resources were distributed through their own Danwei. Before the reform and opening era, China was a society with all resources monopolized at the hand of the CCP, and the leadership claimed the authorization to redistribute the resources at the central level. At the local level, such state-owned Danwei and Commune, thus, became the working organizations that took full control of all resources delegated from the central leadership and provided opportunities for individual life and development, including housing, healthcare, schooling, childcare, even shopping and entertaining.³⁵⁴ Some scholars contend Danwei’s role of “nothing but the state's controlling place, in which individuals do what leaders want them to do in order to exchange living resources...”.³⁵⁵ Likewise, rural residents were similarly associated with their own Commune and allocated with resources by the Commune. In the rural areas, the Commune owns the majority of the resources including means of production, such as lands, livestock and farming tools.

In this sense, Danwei and People’s Commune became the major venues for the state to realize hard mobilization. Not partaking in state mobilization will incur punishment. For example, when enforcing the One-Child policy campaign, the state would penalize violators with “administrative

³⁵³ Perry, “From Mass Campaigns to Managed Campaigns: Constructing a ‘New Socialist Countryside,’” 33.

³⁵⁴ Barry Naughton, “The Danwei: Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective,” in *The Danwei: Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective*, ed. Xiaobo Lu and Elizabeth J. Perry (Routledge, 1997), 169–94, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315700014>.

³⁵⁵ Kaifeng Yang, “From ‘Danwei’ Society to New Community Building: Opportunities and Challenges for Citizen Participation in Chinese Cities,” *Chinese Public Administration Review* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 71, <https://doi.org/10.22140/CPAR.V1I1.12>.

punishments” (xingzheng chufa) or disciplinary actions (jilv chufen).³⁵⁶ Such administrative punishments usually mean termination of employment.

One may argue that as China deepens its reform and economic development, such institutional basis of the hard mobilization has ceased—citizens are no longer leashed to their Danwei and the Commune system has vanished—so the state has difficulties mobilizing the public forcefully. To a large extent, the state nowadays remains relying on hard mobilization to force the public into compliance. First, although the Danwei and Commune systems have collapsed, many citizens are still heavily binding to their work units, particularly those employed by government agencies and state-affiliated enterprises. In blood donation campaigns, for example, Guan finds those working in the government agencies and public service institutions more frequently donated blood, whereas others contributed more money.³⁵⁷ It is grounded to believe that government employees, who are more refrained by their Danwei, have to meet state mobilization demands due to career concerns.

Would the massive public be exempt from the hard mobilization? In many senses, they would not. For instance, digitalization allows the government more tools to control necessary resources the general public relies on for living. In the recent anti-COVID mass mobilization, for example, the Chinese government forces the grassroots into the statewide campaign using the “health code” system.³⁵⁸ Through the color change of the code, the government determines what the citizens can (and cannot) do and where they can (and cannot) go.³⁵⁹ As such, citizens must comply with the state’s anti-COVID demands, otherwise they would find themselves nowhere to go.

³⁵⁶ Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, “Law of the People’s Republic of China on Population and Family Planning,” Law of China, December 29, 2001, <http://www.lawinfochina.com/Display.aspx?lib=law&Cgid=38086>.

³⁵⁷ Yue Guan, “When Voluntary Donations Meet the State Monopoly: Understanding Blood Shortages in China,” *The China Quarterly* 236 (December 1, 2018): 1111–30, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741018001327>.

³⁵⁸ Wanshu Cong, “From Pandemic Control to Data-Driven Governance: The Case of China’s Health Code,” *Frontiers in Political Science* 3 (April 14, 2021): 627959, <https://doi.org/10.3389/FPOS.2021.627959/BIBTEX>.

³⁵⁹ Chris Buckley, Vivian Wang, and Keith Bradsher, “China’s Covid-Era Controls May Outlast the Coronavirus,” *The New York Times*, January 30, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/30/world/asia/covid-restrictions-china-lockdown.html>.

Besides, in the reform era, the government can conduct hard mobilization through non-state intermediary actors, such as the market force. For example, in implementing the government's information control directives, China's Internet companies are requested to help propaganda authorities censor the user-generated content.³⁶⁰ Major Internet service providers even have a track record of complying or collaborating with the party-state's censorship actions.³⁶¹ Thus, the public's online expression could be intensively controlled.

To sum up, Chinese government is capable of mobilizing the domestic actors to join state campaigns through a hard, coercive manner. In the pre-reform era, such hard mobilization could be achieved by attaching the public to particular social institutions. But even as the institutions diminish in the reform era, China's party-state remains its grips on the hard mobilization as quite a number of social resources are still controlled and allocated by the state. Furthermore, as the reform intensifies, the market force has become a crucial intermediary actor the government can take advantage of for mobilization.

Thus, it is not surprising, and as elaborated in Chapter 3, that in retaliating diplomatic rivalries, the party-state appears able to weaponize tourism through hard mobilization. By one hand, to a large extent, the Chinese government wields considerable influence over ordinary citizens' resources for outbound tourism through the ADS (Approved Destination Status) scheme. Chinese citizens, thus, are not so free in terms of visiting a region outside China. By other hand, the intermediary actors, the travel agencies in this sense, can help the government implement the directives issued from the top and thus prevent numerous prospective tourists from traveling to targeted regions.

³⁶⁰ Rebecca MacKinnon, "China's Censorship 2.0: How Companies Censor Bloggers," *First Monday* 14, no. 2 (January 25, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v14i2.2378>.

³⁶¹ Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 56.

Hard Mobilization During Diplomatic Conflicts

How does the state mobilize travel agents through decrees, which can in turn influence tourists, in real-world conflicts? And is it effective? Besides, how do these agents respond to state demands and spin between the state and their customers? Next, I track the process of actual practice of “hard mobilization” during China’s diplomatic frictions with South Korea and Taiwan.

Hard Mobilization in South Korean Travels

It is undocumented when South Korea joined the ADS agreement. But since June 1998 the government has officially permitted outbound tourism to this neighboring country.³⁶² Like majority countries that sign on the ADS, there are two types of visas available: group tour visa and individual tour visa. While Korea-bound trips had been only limited to residents of a few provinces at the outset, tour organization and visa application later became quite simple and straightforward. But as discussed in Chapter 3, the application of either type of visa is required through government authorized agents.³⁶³ Now more than 600 agencies across China have gained authorization in processing visa issues.³⁶⁴ Several Q&A posts in Mafengwo.cn, one of the most popular leisure travel sites with 120 million users in China, claim that “visa application of South Korea is quite easy”; some even assert “almost none get unapproved”.³⁶⁵ This answer is also confirmed on another well-known social platform for independent travelers, Qyer.com.³⁶⁶

Since Korean announcement of THAAD deployment released on July 8, 2016, there has been information or rumors regarding economic revenge, including travel ban, circulated on China’s

³⁶² National Tourism Bureau, “国家旅游局关于试办中国公民自费赴韩国旅游业务具体实施办法的通知,” Beida Fabao, June 24, 1998, http://www.pkulaw.cn/fulltext_form.aspx?Gid=33962&EncodingName=.

³⁶³ Such requirement was relinquished by the South Korean Embassy for a short while during the THAAD crisis when individual persons were allowed to submit visa application, the details of which will be explained in the conclusion section.

³⁶⁴ Such agencies include travel agencies and institution specializing in foreign affairs (waishi jigou). For the lists of all authorized agencies, see <http://www.hanguo-qianzheng.com/zhidinglvxingshe/>.

³⁶⁵ <https://www.mafengwo.cn/wenda/detail-15973537.html>; <https://www.mafengwo.cn/wenda/detail-15973537-16049153.html>; <https://www.mafengwo.cn/wenda/detail-9714032.html>; www.mafengwo.cn/wenda/detail-15973537-16068301.html

³⁶⁶ <https://ask.qyer.com/question/3518619.html>

and Korean media platforms. For example, in August 2016 in a *Global Times*-organized discussion, several international relations pundits suggested official and civic boycotts of Korea-bound tourism have Korean government and citizens suffer from serve economic retribution.³⁶⁷ Two months later in October, Korean media reported that the Chinese government told travel agencies in several provinces to cut the number of tourists to Korea by over 20 percent.³⁶⁸ Nevertheless, this reduction demand is unconfirmed at this stage and was denied by China's officials.³⁶⁹

The friction climaxed on February 28, 2017 at the decision of the Lotte Group, a Korean conglomerate, to swap lands with the government in order to place THAAD-related military equipment. Three days later, on March 3, China's Tourism Bureau released a notice warning travelers destined to Korea of security concerns.³⁷⁰ While this travel advisory may serve as merely a suggestion to would-be Korea-bound tourists of travel safety, it represents more as an administrative decree mobilizing travel agencies for further cooperation against Korean diplomacy as well as a turning point of outbound tourism to Korea. Mullen shows that at least Beijing's local tourism bureau authorities summoned all travel operators to convene and issued oral instructions to stop selling and organizing tourism products to South Korea.³⁷¹ Similar closed-door talks between tourism administrations and travel agencies in other cities also occurred. Most of the travel agents I interviewed in a coastal city in east China recalled that the local tourism bureau "invited" their company representatives over to the government office and informed them to stop

³⁶⁷ Global Times Online, "因为'萨德', 中国应如何'报复'韩国," August 1, 2016, <https://opinion.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJWNlp>.

³⁶⁸ Young-june Yeh and Hwa-sun Sung, "Beijing Tells Travel Agencies to Cut Travel to Korea by 20%," Korea JoongAng Daily, October 25, 2016, <https://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3025354&ref=mobile>.

³⁶⁹ China News, "韩媒称中方要求旅行社将赴韩旅游人数减少 20% 中方: 不知情," Global Times, October 26, 2016, <https://china.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJYiNP>.

³⁷⁰ Ministry of Culture and Tourism of People's Republic of China, "赴韩国旅游提示," March 3, 2017, https://www.mct.gov.cn/zxbs/cxts/201703/t20170303_832101.htm.

³⁷¹ Jethro Mullen, "China's 'Unofficial' Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea," CNN.com, March 3, 2017, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/03/03/news/economy/china-south-korea-thaad-tourism-trade-sanctions/>.

or reduce organizing trips bounding Korea in *verbal* instructions.³⁷² Such interview evidence is also confirmed by Lim and Ferguson who conversed with Korean government officials.³⁷³ Such instructions often take in a quite implicit and suggestive fashion rather than in a written, trackable document. For example, the CEO of a small tour firm told that, “at the time of THAAD, [the authorities and travel agencies have conducted] verbal communication. The officials just convened with us and chatted, saying ‘should we take [canceling trips to South Korea] into consideration?’ They won’t say that you are not allowed to cooperate with [Korea] explicitly. And we know that we need to cancel Korean trips.”³⁷⁴ Officials of local tourism administrations also acknowledged that they had “touched base” (tongqi) with local travel agents, although no documented formal notice was ever issued down.³⁷⁵

It must be noticed that in real practice of governance in China, not all administrative demands are issued through formal, written documents. Many of them, instead, circulate in the form of oral instructions. For instance, some of the instructions directing media censorship have been issued verbally.³⁷⁶ Besides, in response to tensed Sino-Australian relations in 2020, a notice that demanded China’s domestic power plants and iron and steel mills to cease the purchase of Australian coalmine was also reportedly disseminated through verbal communication.³⁷⁷ Although the motives of using oral instructions could be mixed and uncertain—many believe avoiding the use of a formal statement in black and white could prevent someone from bring it to light that may cause further potential disputes—such oral instructions are regarded equally authentic and valid.³⁷⁸

³⁷² Interview #1 in May 2017 and April 2019, and interview #3 in March 2019, #5 and #6 in April 2019.

³⁷³ Darren J. Lim and Victor A. Ferguson, “Informal Economic Sanctions: The Political Economy of Chinese Coercion during the THAAD Dispute,” *Review of International Political Economy*, 2021, 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2021.1918746>.

³⁷⁴ Interview #6 in April 2019.

³⁷⁵ Interview #7 in March 2019 and #8 in May 2017.

³⁷⁶ Zicao Ye, “正在收紧的中国新闻审查制度,” *The New York Times (Chinese)*, January 23, 2013, <https://cn.nytimes.com/china/20130123/cc23media/>.

³⁷⁷ BBC News (Chinese), “中国据称暂停进口澳洲煤炭 关系再添紧张因素,” *BBC*, October 16, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/business-54552560>.

³⁷⁸ See Minnie Chan, “Mainland Media Told to Toe Government Line on Dispute ,” *South China Morning Post*, March 24, 2010,

Meanwhile, the informal nature, especially compared to official travel bans by other countries, such as the US ban on Cuba, bears more implications. First, being informal may indicate a certain degree of flexibility and volatility, thus more likely subject to change than official instructions. This allows more variation and discretion in actual implementation. For example, as is shown later, the travel ban on South Korea was quickly relaxed in a few provinces (without public notice from authorities), and the relaxation generated some sort of loopholes travel agencies can take advantage to pivot between government decrees and market demands from tourists.

Second, the Chinese government may also utilize informal or formal ban to signal different resolutions. In a few conflicts including those with South Korea and Taiwan (during Tsai Ing-wen's first tenure in 2016), the party-state only employed informal travel bans to pressure rivalry governments. In comparison, in 2019 when it found further agitated by the Taiwanese authorities, an official ban on all individual tours was issued (more details are provided later). This may suggest the government's extreme discontent and increased intention to retaliate Taiwan.

As soon as travel adversary was issued, all travel agencies, online or offline, discontinued Korean tours and agencies promised to refund the people who have booked such tours.³⁷⁹ What if a travel agency skirts government rules and insist on sending tours to South Korea for profits? As all businesses conducting Korea tourism are authorized by the government, failing to comply would unsurprisingly face fines and/or have their licenses revoked.³⁸⁰ It is not possible to “revel against the government”, commented by an interview running sales department of a large travel agency.³⁸¹ As Coca suggests, travel agencies are “heavily dependent on their ties to the

<https://www.scmp.com/article/709440/mainland-media-told-toe-government-line-dispute>. It is also suggested by interview #5, #15 in April 2019.

³⁷⁹ Wenqi Ding, Fung Goh, and Luisetta Mudie, “Chinese Travel Agents Quietly Stop Sending Tour Groups to South Korea — Radio Free Asia,” Radio Free Asia, March 3, 2017, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/china-tourism-03032017162204.html>.

³⁸⁰ Lim and Ferguson, “Informal Economic Sanctions: The Political Economy of Chinese Coercion during the THAAD Dispute.”

³⁸¹ Interview #2 in March 2019.

government and have no choice but to fall in line” if they prefer to stay on the playfield for a share of cake.

Besides, an interviewee reminded the “bianfang mingdan” (border defense name list, hereafter “name list”) system where the boarder officials can disapprove exit of group tours.³⁸² The name list, with its full name “List of Chinese Citizens Traveling Abroad in Groups”, is a document all travel agencies are required to fill out when executing group tours. It entails the names of all tourists in this very tour, and the list is subject to various authorities, including exit customs and tourism bureaus, for immigration inspection and final approval.³⁸³ That is, the name list system entitles government officials with superb authorities to reject some border exits or reduce the number of outbound visits if necessary. As long as the government agencies in charge refuse to sign in the form, group tourists won’t be able to exit the border even they hold the visa in hand.

At the height of the conflict, it seems that travel agencies of all regions in China were not allowed to do Korea-bound tours publicly. However, the tensed Sino-Korean relations appear to soothe in the wake of a more liberal candidate, Moon Jae-in, who won the presidential election in May 2017. He has criticized the system during the campaign and soon revealed his plans to resolve the dispute after taking office.³⁸⁴ The turning point then occurred almost eight months after the travel ban. At the end of October, Korean acceded with Beijing on “Three Nots” in handling the THAAD crisis: not to deploy additional anti-ballistic missile systems, not to form a closer military alliance with the U.S. and Japan, and not to join the U.S. regional defense system. While considered not an ultimate resolve ending the THAAD dispute,³⁸⁵ China’s officials appeared to

³⁸² Interview #1 in May 2017.

³⁸³ For details of the name list system, see National Immigration Administration, “中国公民出国旅游管理办法,” June 21, 2019, <https://www.nia.gov.cn/n741440/n741547/c1014562/content.html>.

³⁸⁴ Sang-Hun Choe, “Moon Jae-in of South Korea and China Move to Soothe Tensions - The New York Times,” The New York Times, May 11, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/11/world/asia/china-south-korea-moon-jae-in.html>.

³⁸⁵ Mingda Zheng, “妥善处理‘萨德’问题，中韩关系才能向前看,” Xinhua, October 31, 2017, http://m.xinhuanet.com/2017-10/31/c_1121885798.htm.

ease tensions. A month later on November 28, the Tourism Bureau reopened the tours to South Korea in such regions as Beijing and Shandong, albeit with no public notice.³⁸⁶ Several days later, a Beijing tour group, holding a banner of “[A Tour] Breaking the Ice to South Korea” (pobing hanguo), boasted the first ever group trip to South Korea since the travel ban.³⁸⁷ Interestingly, however, the trip received wide criticisms among citizens,³⁸⁸ likely reflecting lingering *popular* anti-Korean attitudes despite the alleviated fervor from the top.

This trip also foresaw wider resumption of Korean tours. Marked by Moon’s visit to China on December 13, the strained ties were on the “official” mend as he called for “new era...based on trust and friendship between us...”.³⁸⁹ Following the visit, four more provinces and cities (i.e., Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Chongqing and Shanghai) were allowed to resend tours to Korea as of August 2018.³⁹⁰

Considering the locations of these regions, it is likely a compromise between the government and the market force. Among all six regions, Beijing, Shanghai, and Chongqing are all pivotal municipalities directly administered by the central government and travel hubs for northern, eastern and middle China, as well as Hubei, a critical province in the center of China. Two other provincial units, Shandong and Jiangsu, both stand in close proximity to South Korea and export large amounts of tourists each year. Sohu, echoing this speculation, reports that tourism practitioners believe the reopening decision could be made in accordance with high market

³⁸⁶ Sohu, “【独家】刚刚，北京、山东赴韩国旅游团正式开放,” November 28, 2017, https://www.sohu.com/a/207090868_374686.

³⁸⁷ Yi Zhang and Xinying Zhao, “Chinese Tourists Go to South Korea,” China Daily, December 5, 2017, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-12/05/content_35208990.htm.

³⁸⁸ Tianlu Wang, “32人‘破冰韩国’旅游韩国海涛旅行团，不要忘记你们是中国人?,” NetEase, December 14, 2017, <https://www.163.com/dy/article/D5KL32760524E4RB.html>.

³⁸⁹ Lucy Hornby, “South Korea’s Moon Jae-in Calls for ‘New Era’ in China Relations,” Financial Times, December 14, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/d7ea5874-e0ba-11e7-a8a4-0a1e63a52f9c>.

³⁹⁰ Sohu, “这省将开放赴韩国跟团游，继北京、山东、湖北、重庆、上海之后!,” September 6, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/252316119_710103.

demands for outbound travels, assuming progressive reopens will be executed contingent on the proximity of these areas to South Korea escorted by their own economic development status.³⁹¹

Notably, however, official resolution of the travel ban remained ambivalent and wavering. On the one hand, no information regarding more regions reopened for Korean-bound travels was released after 2018. On the other hand, some online travel portals reportedly resumed advertising Korean tours in early 2019³⁹² but discontinued the products soon.³⁹³ This perhaps comes from official awareness of popular sentiment towards South Korea and uncertainty about possible repercussions by totally lifting the ban. It is not surprising, thus, that a close-door conference in Ctrip, the largest online travel portal in China, revealed that the government consented the re-promotion of Korean tours on the condition of “not making it public” (bie shengzhang).³⁹⁴

With the unexpected arrival of COVID pandemic in early 2020, China’s outbound tourism has all been suspended. Although the event that Ctrip coordinated with Korea Tourism Organization in promoting Korean travels in July 2020 is understood as a signal of subdued anti-Korean ardor, if not a complete lift of tourism ban,³⁹⁵ government discouragement of international flows due to COVID actually continues the hard mobilization triggered by THAAD.

Hard Mobilization in Taiwan-Bound Travels

Links between mainland China and Taiwan were proscribed due to political abrasions for a long while. While communications across the strait had already started in the 1980s and residents of a couple of cities in adjacency were allowed to visit Taiwan administrated islands like Kimmen and

³⁹¹ Sohu.

³⁹² Choi Moon-hee, “China’s Largest Online Travel Company Resumes Selling S. Korean Tour Packages,” Business Korea, April 10, 2019, <http://www.businesskorea.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=30742>.

³⁹³ Pak Soo-chan, Kim Jin-myung, and Song Hye-jin, “Chinese Boycott of Korea Continues,” The Chosun Ilbo, November 1, 2019, https://web.archive.org/web/20200924190140/http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2019/11/01/2019110101410.html.

³⁹⁴ Shui Liu, “韩国想不透：赴韩团体游上架又下架,” Radio Free Asia, November 15, 2018, <https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/jingmao/ko-11152018105911.html>.

³⁹⁵ Hae-na Wang, “‘限韩令’解除实锤？携程网时隔3年重新上线韩国旅游产品,” Aju Business Daily, June 30, 2020, <https://www.yazhouribao.com/view/20200630131537840>.

Matsu (consented by the so-called Little Three Links, xiao santong), majority mainlanders were forbidden from visiting the island of Taiwan directly until July 2008 when the Three Links (santong) officially opened to the general public.³⁹⁶ The lifted travel ban suggests a full restoration of links across the strait. However, at the outset only grouped tours arranged by travel agents can be sent to Taiwan until June 2011 when individual tours from three cities, Beijing, Shanghai and Xiamen, were accepted.³⁹⁷ The number of cities permitting individual tour incrementally expanded to 47.

In spite of open relations between mainland and Taiwan, trips destined to Taiwan are strictly regulated by government authorities, because “Taiwan is a special case”.³⁹⁸ Since Taiwan is regarded as part of China, Chinese citizens do not need a passport or Taiwan-issued visa. As mentioned in Chapter 3, while departing China, one must hold two official documents: 1) Travel Permit to and from Taiwan (wanglai Taiwan tongxingzheng, or colloquially known as Mainland Resident Travel Permit), with 2) valid exit endorsement (qianzhu, equivalent to exit visa) on it. To enter and exit Taiwan the traveler is required to hold the 3) Exit & Entry Permit (rutaizheng). The Travel Permit and exit endorsement should be obtained from the mainland side while the Exit & Entry Permit is delivered by Taiwan. A prospective traveler can obtain the Travel Permit and exit endorsement by going to the local Administration on their own while applying for the Exit & Entry Permit one must go through government-certified travel agencies. Notably, regardless of the mode of traveling, in group tours or individual tours, tourists must apply for the Exit & Entry Permit through travel agencies. Moreover, tours to Taiwan are administered by a tourism quota system to

³⁹⁶ Pin-kung Chiang and Yunlin Chen, “海峽兩岸關於大陸居民赴台灣旅遊協議,” Mainland Affairs Council Republic of China, June 13, 2008,

<https://ws.mac.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9VcGxvYWQvMjk1L2NrZmlsZS8wMDY3MzVjMS0xZmE3LTQ2YzYtYmIxMy0xZGY4NWlZOGIwZDkucGRm&n=Miox5peF6YGK5Y2U6K2wKOWQq%2BaPm%2BWHvSkucGRm>.

³⁹⁷ Jing Sun, “大陆居民赴台个人游正式启动首批 290 名游客今日抵台,” China National Tourism Administration, June 29, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20160509192002/http://www.cnta.gov.cn/xxfb/jdxwnew2/201506/t20150625_460655.shtml.

³⁹⁸ Interviewees #5,#6 in April 2019.

control daily entries to Taiwan. In principle, the quota is preset by the Taiwan side and subject to change under various circumstances (through controlling the issuance of the Exit & Entry Permit). But as is shown later, the Chinese government may also have the capability to rely on the quota system to manipulate tourism to Taiwan.

The selection of travel operators for handling the Exit & Entry Permit for Taiwan tours is also unique in Taiwan tourism. Unlike South Korea, only a very small number of agencies are authorized to process the Exit and Entry permit application on behalf of travelers. From 2008 till now, compared with more than 600 travel agencies dealing with Korea tours, the government has ratified merely 271 agencies for Taiwan travel business, and, in most provinces, there are no more than ten such agencies.³⁹⁹ Many of the travel agents I interviewed mentioned that it is difficult for a travel agency to get a license to deal with Taiwan businesses. When asked the major traits of licensed agencies, some of these tourism practitioners provided ambiguous and even contradicting answers.⁴⁰⁰ “I’m not sure. It is hard to say.”⁴⁰¹ Those who may have a clue offered varying explanations. The CEO of a private agency stated that it depends on the agency’s annual turnover, its ratings (pingji) and recommendations from local government. “You won’t get the certificate unless local tourism bureau recommends, even though your agency meets all criterion. A city has limited number of certified tour enterprises doing Taiwan business; the local government won’t recommend all qualified agencies.”⁴⁰² An employee working for another private agency, however, shared a different opinion, “they must be state-owned, large travel agencies.”⁴⁰³ However, the list that provides all certified agencies seems to contradict such assertion: many of them are personally

³⁹⁹ For a complete list of authorized travel agencies, see the published document by Taiwan Tourism Bureau <https://admin.taiwan.net.tw/Handlers/FileHandler.ashx?fid=b7b31dd0-0697-48f8-847e-4d62d02cbbc&type=4&no=2>.

⁴⁰⁰ Interview #2,3,4 in April 2019.

⁴⁰¹ Interview #3 in March 2019.

⁴⁰² Interview #6 in April 2019.

⁴⁰³ Interview #1 in March 2019.

owned. In response, a veteran agent working in one of China's largest travel agencies, which is also one of the first group of agencies approved by the Tourism Bureau for Taiwan business, explained,

Because of the particularity of Taiwan, [the qualified agency] should be able to be surveilled and administered by the government. State-run agencies are advantageous at being administered by officials, so at the first few years only a few centrally-administered enterprises (yangqi) and state-owned businesses (guoqi) are allowed to handle Taiwan travels. Why are there privately-run agencies in later times? The government wanted to show the public that government-run enterprises did not monopolize on trips to Taiwan and then the market is "semi-opened" up for private firms to compete. [However,] Taiwan tourism is mainly [run] by state-owned agencies as government officials have difficulties managing private agents.

These together reflect an opaque selection process when the government decides on certifying agencies. Meanwhile, such "tourism landscape" also suggests that the agencies luckily chosen by the government maintain a close relationship with the authorities, or directly owned by the state, thus more vulnerable to state surveillance and demands.

So to obtain all three required documents, in other words, one would *not* make it through without government intervention. Thus, if the government decides to mobilize more policy supporters, it can easily decree the local Administrations, which are government agencies, to suspend the issuance of Travel Permit and exit endorsement and order travel agencies to abstain from assisting the application of the Exit & Entry Permit.

The cross-strait relations have stressed since early 2016 when the pro-independence president, Tsai Ing-wen, won the election and even deteriorated upon her re-election in 2020. Only a month

after she won the election during her first tenure, it was reported that the Chinese government would set out several waves of tourism reduction in response to the weakened cross-strait relations.⁴⁰⁴ While the spokesperson of Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council (TAO) denied it a rumor and emphasized the fluctuating trips to Taiwan reflect the market demands,⁴⁰⁵ evidence seems to invalidate the statement. A report in January 2016 by a Xinjiang local metro newspaper substantiated the tourism reduction, “some provinces in China have verbally passed down [the directive regarding] the number of quota reductions” with the state planning to “reduce the quota down to a third of the same time last year” from March to June 2016; in this regard, some travel agencies, in, for example, Henan province, were even distributed with only 100 visits each month.⁴⁰⁶ A few interviewees also confirmed the receipt of similar directives to reduce Taiwan-bound travelers.⁴⁰⁷

How does the mainland side manipulate the travel quota? Like the case in South Korea, the “bianfang mingdan” name list system can easily help the government instantly discern how many package groups will be sending to Taiwan, the number of tourists and even the name of each traveler. A couple of travel agents informed that the mainland government in the past years controlled the number of daily visits to Taiwan through such system.⁴⁰⁸ One stated, “The name list is under downright control. The quota, for example, for [a province] to send Taiwan-bound visitors is set at 5000 a day [by the Taiwan authorities]. Now [the Chinese government] controls it at 2000 visits, with the excessive [3]000 visitors not approved.”⁴⁰⁹ An interviewee shared her friend’s story

⁴⁰⁴ Er Ni, “陆客来台限缩是真的?,” Deutsche Welle, February 27, 2016, <https://www.dw.com/zh/陆客来台限缩是真的/a-19078914>.

⁴⁰⁵ Zhe Yang, “国台办谈两岸青年交流：愿用真诚、善意和亲情拉近心理距离,” China News, February 24, 2016, <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/tw/2016/02-24/7771217.shtml>.

⁴⁰⁶ Author’s dataset. #22349.

⁴⁰⁷ Interview #3,#5 in March and April 2019.

⁴⁰⁸ Interview #5, #6 in April 2019.

⁴⁰⁹ Interview #6 in April 2019.

of how the delayed “quota” from the Chinese side impacted the friend’s schedule and the whole trip.⁴¹⁰ When further asked if it was the Taiwan side who intended to diminish the issuance of “Exit & Entry Permit” on purpose to reduce entries from the mainland, as reported widely in China,⁴¹¹ all informants shook head and disapproved such contention because, as reasoned, Taiwan tourism is going to facilitate its own economy and there is no reason for Taiwan to do so.⁴¹²

Besides, the government was also found relying on “technical delay” (jishuxing yanhuan) of the issuance of the Travel Permit, from seven days normally to a prolonged time of fifteen days for tourists.⁴¹³ That said, those prepared to visit Taiwan, in theory, would have to postpone their trips without the Travel Permit. As for travel agencies, even they have set up all arrangements and obtained Taiwan delivered Exit & Entry Permit for travelers, the delayed arrival of the Travel Permit may confound their original itinerary.

Another wave of more severe ban occurred in July 2019 from when tensions across the strait even aggravated. Presumably exasperated by Taiwan’s arms deal agreement with the U.S., President Tsai Ing-wen’s visit to New York and her public support of Hong Kong pro-democracy movement,⁴¹⁴ the Chinese government suspended all individual leisure trips to Taiwan from August 1, 2019 at short notice. The one-sentence notice attributed individual tour termination to the “current state of cross-strait relations”.⁴¹⁵ Although the state only forbade individual tours officially, it is also reported that local tourism bureaus informally cut group tours to step up

⁴¹⁰ Interview #4 in April 2019.

⁴¹¹ For instance, Guanchazhe Wang, “大陆旅行社抱怨：办入台证像小学生犯错写保证书，侮辱人格,” Sohu, November 14, 2017, https://www.sohu.com/a/204195747_115479.

⁴¹² Interview #4, #6 in April 2019.

⁴¹³ SET News Channel, “陸客限縮來真的？通行證下不來 大陸官方：空白證件不足 |,” March 8, 2016, <https://www.setn.com/News.aspx?NewsID=128574>.

⁴¹⁴ Nikki Sun and Lauly LI, “China Freezes Permits for Individual Travel to Taiwan,” Nikkei Asia, July 31, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/China-freezes-permits-for-individual-travel-to-Taiwan>.

⁴¹⁵ Association For Tourism Exchange Across The Taiwan Straits, “海峡两岸旅游交流协会关于暂停大陆居民赴台个人游试点的公告,” Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People’s Republic of China, July 31, 2019, https://www.mct.gov.cn/whzx/ggtz/201907/t20190731_845439.htm.

pressure on Taiwan by reducing the total number of visitors by 300,000 by the end of 2019.⁴¹⁶ My follow-up interview with the travel agent specializing in Taiwan trips also confirmed that the mainland government sent informal directives in reducing group tours along with the formal ban on individual tours.⁴¹⁷

Tourism Performance After Decrees:

The Effectiveness of Hard Mobilization

Following the discussion of the state's hard mobilization, it is natural to examine how effective the mobilization is. By examining the tourism statistics provided by Korean and Taiwanese officials, this section reveals whether government decrees can truly affect the number of tourists to targeted regions.

South Korea

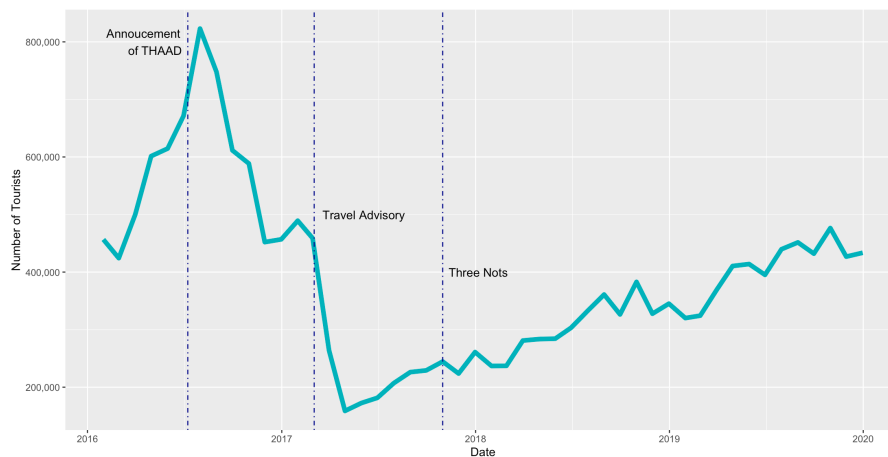
What is the real-world tourism performance regarding South Korea and how are they affected by China's mobilization attempts? Figure 4.1 displays the monthly changes of China's Korea-bound travelers for leisure purposes between 2016 and 2019, with three major events marked in between to show how the number of tourists could be interrupted by state directives.

As Figure 4.1 indicates, there are two general plunges, which took place largely between the second half of 2016 and 2017. Before the Korean government's announcement of THAAD in July 2016, Chinese tourists were desperately to make a trip to Korea. From January to June 2016, the number of tourists to Korea increased by around 100 thousand monthly. This statistic even reached an astonishing 800 thousand a month in July 2016. However, a huge dive should be identified a couple of months after the THAAD announcement. If we recall the rumors that in late 2016 the

⁴¹⁶ Formosa TV English News, "China Reportedly Planning to Cut Tour Group Numbers to Taiwan Starting September" (Formosa TV, August 4, 2019), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqdxMJt6s_8; Lawrence Chung, "First Solo Travellers, Now Beijing Cuts Group Tours to Step up Pressure on Taiwan," South China Morning Post, August 27, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3024580/first-solo-travellers-now-beijing-cuts-group-tours-step>.

⁴¹⁷ Interview #5, in April 2022.

Chinese government had told travel agencies in several provinces to reduce tourists to Korea, albeit denied by Chinese officials, it may not be surprising to detect a wave of tourism reduction before 2017.⁴¹⁸ For example, in November and December 2016, there were merely 450 thousand visits from China each month. Considering even when a viral respiratory illness, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), plagued in Korean around 400 thousand Chinese still chose to tour Korea between November and December 2015, the effects of such directives were quite significant.



**Figure 4.1 Times-series changes of Chinese travelers to South Korea (Jan 2016 – Dec 2019).
Data obtained from Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)**

Indeed, an even greater drop broke out immediately following the travel advisory in March 2017. Starting from April, the number of tourists to Korea hovered around 200 thousand a month, only half of that before the conflict. And the influence is far-reaching. Until the end of 2017, the monthly number of tourists to Korea remained under 300 thousand. While an agreement of “Three-

⁴¹⁸ Admittedly, as there are a great deal of spontaneous nationalists in China, the plummet of tourism could be partly an outcome of some nationalist public refusing future trips to South Korea voluntarily rather than being mobilized by state decree. This can also explain the change of tourism flows in Taiwan later.

nots” between two governments was promoted, the tourism remains doomed as the ban was still not entirely lifted. Until the latter 2019, more than two years following the tourism ban, the number of Chinese visitors to Korea returned to 400 thousand a month, likely a result of eased Sino-Korean tensions.

The loss of Chinese tourists also means reduced revenue from the tourism industry. Generally, China’s decision to mobilize the use of outbound tourism on retaliating South Korea cost the economy at a loss of 6.8 billion US dollars, according to one estimate in 2017.⁴¹⁹

Taiwan

How do tourism statistics change in the case of Taiwan? Figure 4.2 includes the time series change from January 2015 to December 2019. 2015 represents the condition one year before the tensed cross-strait relations and the end of 2019 reflects how Taiwan’s tourism is affected by the latest travel ban on individual travelers.

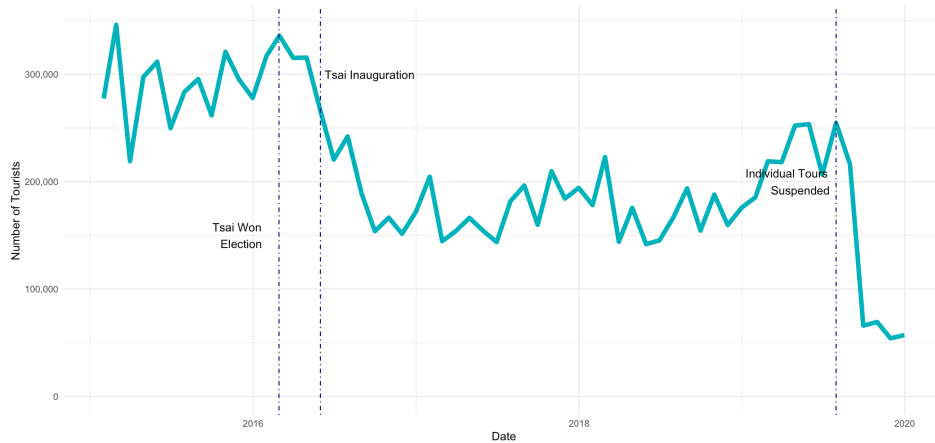


Figure 4.2 Times-series Changes of Mainland Travelers to Taiwan (Jan 2015 – Dec 2019), data gained from Taiwan Tourism Bureau

⁴¹⁹ Echo Huang, “China Inflicted A World of Pain on South Korea in 2017,” Quartz, December 21, 2017, <https://qz.com/1149663/china-south-korea-relations-in-2017-thaad-backlash-and-the-effect-on-tourism/>.

One thing worth mentioning is that the official released mainland visits for leisure purposes include all three panels of visitors: grouped visa holders, individual visa holders and visitors from overseas China. But as the last panel of visitors constitutes only a quite small portion (approximately 5 per cent) among all visitors, including it should not disrupt the effect of mobilization over China's domestic audience. In later discussion, I remove this type of visitors for further comparison.

If and how does the tourism change in accordance with state mobilization? In Figure 4.3 two major drops could be perceived. The first one started from around early 2016 when Tsai Ing-wen won her first presidential election and rumors of the mainland government's instructions of reducing tourists to Taiwan went viral. The drop went deeper after Tsai Ing-wen completed the inauguration in May 2016. Compared with before the cross-strait friction when visitors could achieve approximately 300 thousand a month, Tsai's presidency appears the cause of that number dropping to no more than 200 thousand until pre-mid-2019, suggesting the mainland's informal tourism ban playing a significant role.

After years of vacillated visits, monthly visitors seemed to return at around 250 thousand in mid-2019. However, the rosy picture of the back of mainland travelers again was ruined by a formal individual tourism ban. After the announcement of the ban in July 2019, we witness a plummet of tourism to a historical low at merely 50 thousand a month.

Also, Taiwan's tourism statistics allows us to further examine the vacillation of group tours and individual tours, respectively (see Figure 4.3). The statistics show changes of group and individual tours between January 2015 to September 2019 because the data categorizing tours by visa types is no longer provided by the Taiwan Bureau Tourism beginning October 2019.

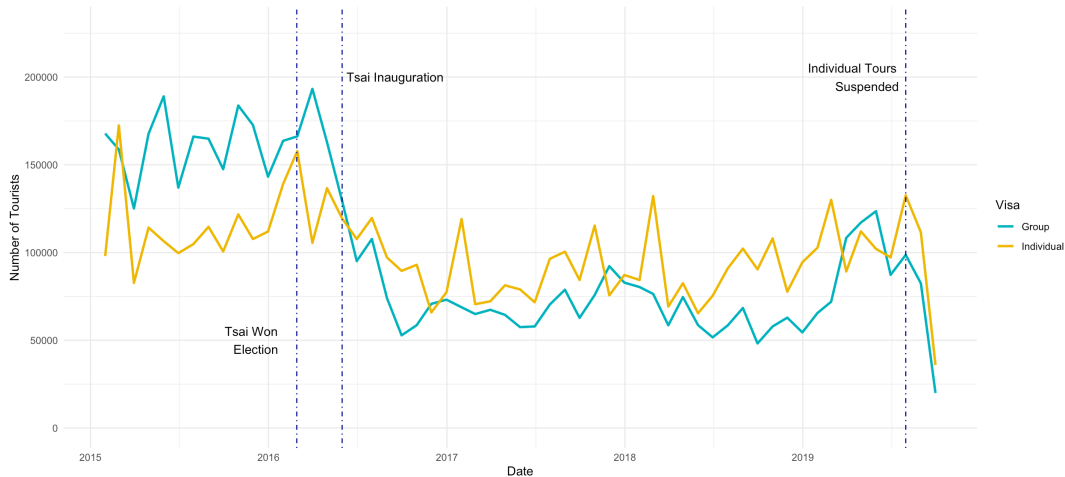


Figure 4.3 Times-series Changes of Taiwan-bound Travelers by Visa Type (Jan 2015 – Sep 2019), data gained from Taiwan Tourism Bureau

I report the group tours first. Likely, it is easy to identify two waves of plummet in statistics of grouped tourists. Again, the first one occurred around after the Tsai Ing-wen won the election in January 2016 and there were rumors of state demands to reduce mainland visitors. It went strengthened after Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration ceremony in May 2016. Compared with before Tsai when monthly grouped tourists could achieve almost 200 thousand, the number of grouped tours was reduced to under 100 thousand a month succeeding the start of Tsai's official presidency. The number even decreased to a surprisingly low at 50 thousand in the latter of 2016. Lastly, following several years of recovery, grouped travelers started to rise to 150 thousand, only to find themselves shrunk considerably due to the formal ban on individual tours. As talked before, although the mainland government announced an official ban merely on individual tourists, it also mobilized travel agencies to cut grouped tours. In other words, group tours are largely shaped by the tourism bans. One month after the declaration was announced, group visits to Taiwan plummeted from August's 82,452 to only 19,929 in September. It is not uncommon that Taiwan-bound travelers shrink after the summer break, but a monthly 76 per cent reduction gigantically

outnumbers average 25 to 30 per cent decrease in the past few years. Meanwhile, compared with same period in 2018, September 2019 witnessed 59 per cent lower mainland visitors.

Comparatively, individual tours are not *so much* affected by the hard mobilization during 2016 as group tourists. At least, from the beginning of 2016 until around July 2016, we are discerning a fluctuation but not noticeable decrease. This is reasonable as individual tourists, compared with grouped counterparts, are less dependent on the travel agencies and thus perhaps less affected by state hard mobilization. Indeed, however, we must notice that Tsai's inauguration led to a reduction of individual tourists till the end of 2016. The monthly visits to Taiwan decreased from over 125 thousand before Tsai's inauguration to less than 75 thousand. But in comparison with the wanes of grouped tours in the following years, the number of individual tours experienced both ebbs and flows. In early 2018, the monthly number of individual tourists even surpassed 125 thousand, higher than most time in 2015 when the cross-strait relations were still warm. Also, after the tourism ban due to Tsai's presidency, individual tours in majority times outnumbered group tours. This is reasonable even in the case of Taiwan. By one hand, Taiwanese government intentionally increased quota to individual tourists after the ban.⁴²⁰ By other hand, group tourists are more vulnerable to the hard mobilization because they not only rely on travel agencies to obtain all travel documents but need them to organize tours. Individual tourists, after accessing to all necessary documents through government agencies and travel agencies, could arrange tours by themselves. Therefore, the latter is less dependent on government-supervised intermediary actors. Even the ban starts, they have more freedom of travel. The 2019 official ban on all individual tourists, however, significantly constrain travelers holding individual visas, having the number reduced to only 35 thousand a month in September 2019.

⁴²⁰ Cankao Xiaoxi, "台当局增大陆赴台自由行配额 旅游业者：本来也用不完," ifeng, December 21, 2016, <http://inews.ifeng.com/50447990/news.shtml?&back>.

Generally, the tourism mobilization in 2016 caused a loss of 1.9 billion US dollars for Taiwan according to one estimate.⁴²¹ The 2019 formal ban, whose effects are not able to evaluate due to the interruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, was believed likely cost 900 million US dollars for Taiwan.⁴²²

“Sandwiched”⁴²³ Travel Agencies:

Market Responses to Hard Mobilization

Though hard mobilization seems to be quite effective, as the previous section indicates, it is worth noting that the strategy sometimes recedes. For example, even at the climax of the THAAD dispute, thousands of tourists still opted to visit Korea. Also, group and individual tours to Taiwan remained above 50,000 and even more, irrespective of the influence of state’s administrative decrees. Factors such as individual tourists’ persistence may play a role. However, as suggested in this section, travel agencies could contribute considerably to the receded mobilization due to them being an intermediary actor that “sandwiched” between the state and the citizens. To a certain extent, because they abide by official directives while at the same time respond to (or even encourage) market demands, the compulsory hard mobilization may not stop tourism to rivalry regions completely.

No wondering that travel agencies must respond to the market demands, even decreed by state directives. After all, “depicting intermediary actors as loyal accomplices of the state is misleading” considering their “market incentives”.⁴²⁴ Moreover, the travel industry may use more strategies to

⁴²¹ Global Times Online, “大陆游客持续下降致台损失 500 亿 蔡英文求全民拉客,” Sina, April 5, 2017, <http://mil.news.sina.com.cn/dgby/2017-04-05/doc-ifycwvyns4861691.shtml>.

⁴²² Lawrence Chung, Mandy Zuo, and Kinling Lo, “Beijing’s Ban on Solo Travellers to Taiwan Could Cost Self-Ruled Island US\$900 Million by January | South China Morning Post,” South China Morning Post, July 31, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3020787/beijing-halt-individual-travel-permits-taiwan-over-rising>.

⁴²³ The word “sandwich” is firstly crafted by Han when describing the role of Internet service providers between the state and the netizens. See Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*.

⁴²⁴ Han, 57.

answer the market without annoying the authorities. After all, there must be a few tourists inquiring about plausible ways to apply for visas and visiting South Korea and Taiwan regardless of the diplomatic disputes. As an informant commented, “As long as the state doesn’t prohibit tours ... in black and white, there will be [tourists] going there. Number will reduce, but some will go.”⁴²⁵ Even amid the dispute, a small percent (1.8 percent) of Chinese tourists have reportedly shown interest in making tours to South Korea.⁴²⁶ For example, one enquiry was posted on a travel website renown for individual tourists asking how a Shanghai resident should apply for individual visa to Korea ensuing the tourism advisory.⁴²⁷ Intention to visit Taiwan also was also kept ensuing the 2019 termination of individual visa. A lot of citizens reportedly rushed to their local Administrations and waited in lines for individual visa application immediately received the notice before it took effective a day later.⁴²⁸ According to a report, “the waiting lines were even none before noon [when the notice was released].”⁴²⁹

But how are the travel agencies sandwiched between the state and tourists? In effect, during the hard mobilization, travel agencies conceived a few alternatives to pivot between the state and the tourists. Whereas the authorization of submitting visas and organizing group tours to Korea was temporarily terminated for tour operators, some vigilantly but smartly continued visa business under the table. For a quite short period of time (from March to December 2017), the Korean embassy allowed individual submission of visa application, seen as Korean countermeasures to China’s tourism ban (see Chapter 8 for detail). Following the permission, a few travel agents sensed an opportunity coming forward. In one of the threads published on Zhihu, a website

⁴²⁵ Interview #3 in March 2019.

⁴²⁶ Yu Pengfei, “民调：萨德使中国民众对韩好感度下降 仅 1.8%受访者有赴韩旅行意愿,” Global Times Online, April 4, 2017, <https://world.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnK1Jub>.

⁴²⁷ <https://ask.qyer.com/question/3363166.html>

⁴²⁸ Liya Chen, “陸客赴台自由行突於明日起停簽，各大城市湧現排隊人潮,” Initium Media, July 31, 2019, <https://theinitium.com/article/20190731-whatsnew-mainland-taiwan-tourist/>.

⁴²⁹ Chen.

equivalent to Quora which gains and shares knowledge, about 20 days after the tourism ban, a user profiling Korean visa application agent, simply repeated the updates regarding individual submission of visa application, and added at the end that, “[i]f the applicant is not familiar with the Korean visa application process, he can also ask an agency to apply for a Korean visa,” although “he needs to go to the embassy to send the visa in person.”⁴³⁰ Given Chinese tourists’ travel habits—in need of travel operators in visa application—such “indirect” visa application service may become a possible lucrative market that commercial actors can take advantage of during the peak of the THAAD.

Some agents even took advantage of the policy loophole and deceived the government. For example, in response to the relaxed directives in organizing Korea-bound tours in different regions, tour firms strategically counteracted by exploiting the regional variations. An experienced travel agent shared how some enterprises play edge ball (*da cabianqiu*) to save plunging profits impacted by the travel ban. He told that travel agencies of some inland cities, after learning that group tours were allowed in particular cities and provinces, attempted to organize tours in collaboration with travel enterprises there. For instance, a travel agency from Shaanxi Province in Northwestern China may help a local client who intends to visit Korea to obtain an employment certification from a Shandong travel firm. Doing so turns the Shaanxi tourist who cannot visit Korea into a Shandong one who can. “While he is not actually employed by any businesses in Shandong, the certificate still shows it. Fraud is quite normal.”⁴³¹

Travel agencies can also adjust the travel packages to make the trip possible. In 2016 when Taiwan tours were reduced but not fully frozen, travel operators transformed the pattern of tourism by providing premium group tours such as golf tours in which tourists can travel in groups for the

⁴³⁰ <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/25928488>.

⁴³¹ Interview #5 in April 2019.

purpose of playing golf in Taiwan.⁴³² In many of the tours, “five people, even three people, can form a group. [Travel firms are] flexible [with this]”.⁴³³ Following the more overt 2019 individual tour ban, travel agencies launched group tour routes with quality trips that can be similarly enjoyed in individual tours for those who fail to obtain individual visa. Some businesses managed to customize individual travel itinerary for group visa holders so that they can arrange a certain part of time visiting attractions independent of travel agencies. Figure 4.4 illustrates part of an advertisement published by a major online travel portal that claims to receive visa type L (group visa) owners to visit Taipei with one day free of prearranged activities.



Figure 4.4 Screenshot of a travel advertisement showing more flexible itinerary for group visa holders

Helping tourists applying for other types of visa other than the tourism visa is another means to meet market demands when the latter was forbidden.⁴³⁴ For example, they can help apply for the medical tourism visa. Since such type of visa allows tourism as well, many can take advantage of

⁴³² Zhonglan Zheng, “分析：台湾为何不再是大陆客长假出游首选,” BBC News (Chinese), October 8, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/china/2016/10/161008_ana_golden_week_holiday_taiwan_tourism.

⁴³³ Interview #5, in April 2022.

⁴³⁴ Interview #5 in April 2022.

it to make a tour of the region during the trip without confronting the state bans over leisure travels. Due to the advanced healthcare provided by Korean medical institutions, especially in plastic surgery, a great number of Chinese patients visit South Korea for medical treatment. In 2015, for example, the year before the THAAD dispute, 34 percent of all foreign patients visiting Korea are Chinese. Also, 11 percent of the patients seek for plastic surgery service. A report on China's outbound tourists conceals that South Korea ranked 2nd most popular international destination for medical travels in 2016.⁴³⁵ Medical tours are even much easier for Taiwan-bound trips. Following the individual tourism ban, many enquiries on Zhihu, China's Quora, regarding how to visit Taiwan without having to staying in group tours, were replied with recommendations of medical visa, and some of them were even attached with brief guidelines of how to obtain it.⁴³⁶ When consulting a customer representative of an online travel portal about individual tour to Taiwan after it was prohibited, I was also reminded of medical visa. "By applying for medical visa you can enjoy the same kind of tour with the only difference that you need to appear in the assigned hospital for a 10-minute wellness visit..."

Would the above apparent deviations trigger state punishment? After all, any kind of assistance, such as helping fill out tourism visa application or organizing medical tours, appears defying the will of the state and may undermine the state's diplomatic ambitions through manipulating tourism. An interviewee did not believe the state would be much concerned with such issue, "The state has many other critical matters to handle with... [The state would not punish us] as long as we do not cross the red line".⁴³⁷ This makes sense especially considering the informal nature of the ban: the

⁴³⁵ China News, "携程发布《2016年中国出境旅游者大数据》," January 20, 2017, <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/business/2017/01-20/8130983.shtml>.

⁴³⁶ For example, see <https://www.zhihu.com/question/340924663>. Similar questions also show on other tourism platforms, such as Mafengwo. See <https://www.mafengwo.cn/wenda/detail-19600207.html>

⁴³⁷ Interview #5 in April 2022.

government allows a certain degree of elasticity in implementing its directives. Also, even under the rigorous instructions from the top, many intermediary actors could navigate to walk a fine line between the state and the market.⁴³⁸

Would it be possible that tour firms proactively stop selling trips to a particular state with voluntary antagonist emotions rather than being forced by top-down command? None of the interviewees agreed. Their answers suggest strong market incentives. “Travel businesses would proceed to operate a certain route as long as clients opt to go there. We look to the market demand and won’t reduce the number of groups [spontaneously].”⁴³⁹ Certainly, there must be many citizens refuse or cancel future trips to rivalry states or regions out of strong spontaneous fervency or impacted by peers,⁴⁴⁰ leading to shrunk revenues or even losses in the business. In such scenario, travel agencies may have to bring certain products to an end on their own to avoid more deficits.⁴⁴¹

Therefore, with the help of travel agencies, many tourists, who may otherwise unable to visit South Korea or Taiwan, conducted trips even while the government’s administrative decrees in progress. Travel agencies’ pursuit of market incentives, thus, sometimes erodes the hard mobilization. Such erosion, certainly, won’t significantly affect the overall effectiveness.

Conclusion

In achieving diplomatic goals, hard mobilization has become a critical tool of the party-state. By issuing coercive and compulsory decrees, the state holds economic actors, as intermediary actors, accountable in enforcing government wills and help change other governments’ behavior through economic measures. This chapter, focusing on the state-led hard mobilization in the

⁴³⁸ For example, Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*; Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108164474>.

⁴³⁹ Interview #3 in March 2019.

⁴⁴⁰ Mingming Cheng and Anthony Ipkin Wong, “Tourism and Chinese Popular Nationalism,” *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 12, no. 4 (October 2, 2014): 307–19, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14766825.2014.914948>.

⁴⁴¹ Interview #4 in April 2019.

THAAD dispute and cross-strait tensions through decreeing travel agencies, maps the contour of how the government mobilizes economic actors with administrative orders, which in turn prevents international travels *in action* forcefully. The hard mobilization, as above discussions have shown, wields significant influence over the number of tourists sent to both South Korea and Taiwan and such influence is far-reaching even until years later.

Meanwhile, in many scenarios, although the hard mobilization characterizes coercive and forceful, and the travel agencies and tourists need to comply with state goals, such compliance is at most “discontented compliance”.⁴⁴² Such discontented compliance thus facilitates travel agencies to enforce the government’s “tourism ban” by limiting themselves within the red line while meeting market demands by assisting international visits by strategically playing edge ball.

This may become a disturbing concern to the Chinese government: how to diminish discontented compliance to the largest extent while persuading more travelers from making trips to rivalry territories? In other words, the party-state needs to fabricate more voluntary policy supporters. The next chapters, thus, cope with the other side of the mobilization mechanism, “soft mobilization”, with which the party-state expects to manipulate the *minds* of the public mobilize more voluntary followers.

⁴⁴² Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 55.

CHAPTER 5

MOBILIZATION BY PERSUASION:

HOW THE STATE MANIPULATES MEDIA FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION WITH

PRIMING

The past chapter focuses on the party-state's mobilization in a more forceful and coercive manner. However, authoritarian states do not always resort to hard mobilization, but rather often encourage voluntary participation of citizens, thus achieving desired goals in greater magnitude and with less cost. This and the following two chapters focus on such "soft mobilization". In comparison to hard mobilization, soft mobilization aims to "mentally" prepare the public with state-promoted courses and thus rationalize the courses and persuade citizens into believing. Notably, as the state-led soft mobilization included mixed tactics, the present chapter delves into how the state *prime* its audience to shape public opinion and thus recruit more voluntary supporters to join the state's tourism ban.

Mass media serves the role as a principal conduct bridging events in the world and the images in the minds of the public. Through various means, it increases the public's knowledge about and affecting their perceptions of other nations.⁴⁴³ In particular, receiving message from mass media, the audience can engender supportive as well as antagonistic sentiments.⁴⁴⁴ This makes mass

⁴⁴³ For example, Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, Harcourt, Brace and Company (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922); Bruce Lannes Smith, Harold D. Lasswell, and Ralph D. Casey, *Propaganda, Communication and Public Opinion: A Comprehensive Reference Guide* (Princeton University Press, 1946); Jarol B. Manheim and Robert B. Albritton, "Changing National Images: International Public Relations and Media Agenda Setting," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (December 1983): 641–57, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1961834>; David K. Perry, "The Image Gap: How International News Affects Perceptions of Nations," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 64, no. 2–3 (August 29, 1987): 416–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769908706400218>.

⁴⁴⁴ Bakht Rawan, Shabir Hussain, and Amna Khurshid, "Media Framing and Foreign Policy: A Case Study of the Coverage of Sino-Pak Relations in Global Media," *The Dialogue* 13, no. 3 (September 30, 2018): 285–285; Simon Serfaty, *The Media and Foreign Policy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1990); Jennifer Pan, Zijie Shao, and Yiqing Xu, "How Government-Controlled Media

media a critical communication tool for the governments such that the management of it would wield considerable influence in “shaping public perceptions of political leaders and political systems, and in mobilizing or demobilizing popular pressure on governments as they render specific policy decisions”.⁴⁴⁵

Governments rely on a good deal of coordinated mass media tools to convey messages, including posters, and even through entertainment programs like films, dramas, music and video games.⁴⁴⁶ Existing studies have highlighted how authoritarian states have used news media to shape public opinion and social discourse in favor of the government.⁴⁴⁷ In Russia, for example, media manipulation is closely related with political control.⁴⁴⁸ The Syrian government also dedicates to news production in creating knowledge and shaping public perception amid conflicts.⁴⁴⁹

Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing,” *Political Science Research and Methods* 10, no. 2 (April 21, 2022): 317–32, <https://doi.org/10.1017/PSRM.2021.35>.

⁴⁴⁵ Jarol B Manheim, “Strategische Kommunikation Und Eine Strategie Für Die Kommunikationsforschung,” *Publizistik* 42, no. 1 (1997): 63, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11616-016-0307-3>. Quoted from Barbara Pfetsch, “Government News Management-Strategic Communication in Comparative Perspective,” 1999. Available here, <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/49821/1/30895761X.pdf>

⁴⁴⁶ Suisheng Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 287–302, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x\(98\)00009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x(98)00009-9); Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012); Daniel C. Mattingly and Elaine Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades,” *Comparative Political Studies* 0, no. 0 (February 1, 2022): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140211047403>; Sheng Zou, “When Nationalism Meets Hip-Hop: Aestheticized Politics of Ideotainment in China*,” *Communication and Critical/ Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 178–95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420.2019.1637008>; Matthew Ming-Tak Chew and Yi Wang, “How Propagames Work as a Part of Digital Authoritarianism: An Analysis of a Popular Chinese Propagame,” *Media, Culture & Society* 43, no. 8 (July 25, 2021): 1431–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437211029846>; Johan Lagerkvist, “Internet Ideotainment in the PRC: National Responses to Cultural Globalization,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 54 (2008): 121–40; Shenshen Cai, *State Propaganda in China’s Entertainment Industry* (Routledge, 2016).

⁴⁴⁷ Maja Adena et al., “Radio and the Rise of The Nazis in Prewar Germany,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130, no. 4 (November 1, 2015): 1885–1939, <https://doi.org/10.1093/QJE/QJV030>; Arturas Rozenas and Denis Stukal, “How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia’s State-Controlled Television,” *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 3 (June 18, 2019): 982–96, <https://doi.org/10.1086/703208>; Pan, Shao, and Xu, “How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing”; Maxwell E. McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The News Media and Public Opinion* (Wiley, 2004); Robert M. Entman, “Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (December 1, 1993): 51–58, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.1993.TB01304.X>; Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion* (University of Chicago Press, 1987); Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

⁴⁴⁸ Anjalie Field et al., “Framing and Agenda-Setting in Russian News: A Computational Analysis of Intricate Political Strategies,” *Proceedings of the 2018 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing, EMNLP 2018*, 2018, 3570–80, <https://doi.org/10.18653/V1/D18-1393>.

⁴⁴⁹ Greg Simons, “News and Syria: Creating Key Media Moments in the Conflict,” *Cogent Social Sciences* 2 (2016): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2016.1170583>.

In China, generations of leaders attach significant importance to manipulating news media for political goals. For example, Mao Zedong repeatedly emphasized the role of newspapers in “amplifying political influence and winning over mass support” during the revolutionary era⁴⁵⁰ and stressing the significance of newspapers by proposing “newspapers must be run by politicians” (zhengzhijia banbao), the latter of which was reiterated by presidents Jiang Zemin and Xi Jinping, respectively.⁴⁵¹

Given that authoritarians undergird news media in affecting political landscape, how could news media help mobilize popular participation into the party-state’s diplomatic goals?

State Control Over Media in China

To effectively implement the soft mobilization, authoritarian regimes like China have long realized the importance of controlling media. From the establishment of PRC until the open-door era, the Chinese government had seized on media outlets: all newspapers were funded by the state and reflect the official rhetoric.⁴⁵²

However, media commercialization beginning in early 1980s weakened the state’s agenda-setting ability. Many media outlets were required to seek fund themselves and stop receiving stipends from the state. To survive the market competition and achieve wider subscriptions, commercialized media started to arrange coverage following the cravings of average readers and diverge from state-backed agenda.⁴⁵³

In response to the challenges posed by the reform in the media industry and the undermined

⁴⁵⁰ Qingwei Song, “学习毛泽东的‘办报思想,’” *Dangjian Wang*, July 17, 2020, http://www.dangjian.com/shouye/sixianglilun/dangjianpinglun/202007/t20200717_5715385.shtml.

⁴⁵¹ Zemin Jiang, “江泽民在接见《解放军报》社师以上干部时的讲话,” *People’s Daily*, January 2, 1996, <http://rdbk1.ylib.cn:6251/qk/Paper/42171>; Bin Li and Xiaoguang Huo, “习近平:坚持正确方向创新方法手段 提高新闻舆论传播力引导力,” *Xinhua*, February 19, 2016, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016-02/19/c_1118102868.htm.

⁴⁵² Yuezhi Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009).

⁴⁵³ Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China*.

capability of state control of information, the propaganda apparatus has to tighten grips on all media outlets, whether they are state-owned or commercialized. For the state-run media, for instance, President Xi Jinping demands “(a)ll ... must work to speak for the party’s will and its propositions, and protect the party’s authority and unity.”⁴⁵⁴ It promulgates stringent reporting guidance to which all media outlets, including commercialized media, must conform. These directives stipulate what can be reported, what cannot be reported and how they should be reported.⁴⁵⁵ Leaked propaganda directives also demonstrate the state’s tightened grips on how news should be reported by all media outlets.⁴⁵⁶ Over particular issues, especially those in relation to international affairs, reporting directives are even stricter. Since 1996, party mouthpieces such as the Xinhua Agency have monopolized provision of foreign news to other Chinese media outlets and the latter have to republish Xinhua reports.⁴⁵⁷ For matters of national importance, media are ordered to use Xinhua reports verbatim.⁴⁵⁸ On Taiwan issues, the state even rules specific terminology.⁴⁵⁹ In recent years, particularly, even experiencing the market reform, non-state capitals are not allowed into media-related business any more⁴⁶⁰ so that the commercialized media should be regarded “like a business while remaining state-owned enterprises”.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁴ Linette Lopez, “President Xi Just Laid out Some Creepy Rules for China’s News Media,” Business Insider, February 22, 2016, <https://www.businessinsider.com/xi-speech-on-media-and-party-2016-2>.

⁴⁵⁵ This includes a few reporting policies. For example, reporters are required to talk up economy and think positive while refrained from mentioning problems that can’t be easily solved and from publishing bad news during holidays/sensitive dates. See Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*.

⁴⁵⁶ Margaret E. Roberts et al., “The Increasing Constraint of Newspaper Propaganda in China and Its Implications,” in *Presented in 2022 American Political Science Association’s Annual Meeting*, 2022.

⁴⁵⁷ Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Daniela Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087742>; David Shambaugh, “China’s Propaganda System: Institutions, Processes and Efficacy,” *The China Journal*, no. 57 (September 30, 2007): 25–58, <https://doi.org/10.1086/TCJ.57.20066240>.

⁴⁵⁸ Anne-Marie. Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

⁴⁵⁹ Anne Marie Brady, “Unifying the Ancestral Land: The CCP’s ‘Taiwan’ Frames,” *The China Quarterly* 223 (September 7, 2015): 787–806, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S030574101500082X>.

⁴⁶⁰ Global Times, “Non-Public Capital to Be Barred from Media-Related Business,” October 9, 2021, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202110/1235829.shtml>.

⁴⁶¹ Ashley Esarey, “Cornering the Market: State Strategies for Controlling China’s Commercial Media,” *Asian Perspective* 29, no. 4 (December 2005): 54, <https://doi.org/10.1353/APR.2005.0002>.

Besides media commercialization, digital media poses another threat to the state's control of information, which may allow free information flows and loosened media content.⁴⁶² To regulate online news network providers, the Chinese government also bans private capital into the digital news platform,⁴⁶³ and instruct “what news can be produced and distributed by online platforms” under the supervision by government-authorized editors.⁴⁶⁴

Improperly released coverage is inclined to be censored, no matter before or after publication. As documented, for unwanted articles, online content is subject to delete while those printed out will be removed.⁴⁶⁵ Punitive measures to indocile journalists include official warnings and personnel replacements.⁴⁶⁶ Party mouthpieces thus serve as gatekeepers that shape the boundary of reporting foreign news.⁴⁶⁷ In so doing, the authoritarian leadership limits the citizens' access to alternative interpretations other than those presented by official propaganda.

Shaping Public Attitudes and Activities by Priming

State control of media can play a critical role in shaping public perception and even influencing their behavior. For example, the officially promoted, endorsed and unchallengeable “century of humiliation” narratives, especially the segment related to Japan,⁴⁶⁸ have become a major tool fomenting public antagonism to international societies, particularly to Japan and other western

⁴⁶² Guobin Yang, “The Co-Evolution of the Internet and Civil Society in China,” *Asian Survey* 43, no. 3 (2003): 124–41; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*; Ashley Esarey and Qiang Xiao, “Digital Communication and Political Change in China,” *International Journal of Communication* 5, no. 0 (February 17, 2011): 298–319.

⁴⁶³ Coco Feng, “Beijing Reiterates Ban on Private Capital in News Media, Updating It to Prohibit Hosting Events | South China Morning Post,” *South China Morning Post*, October 9, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/tech/policy/article/3151778/beijing-reiterates-ban-private-capital-news-media-updating-it-prohibit>.

⁴⁶⁴ Reuters, “China Tightens Rules on Online News, Network Providers,” *CNBC*, May 2, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/05/02/china-tightens-rules-on-online-news-network-providers.html>.

⁴⁶⁵ Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 100.

⁴⁶⁶ Repnikova, 100.

⁴⁶⁷ Pamela J. Shoemaker and Tim P. Vos, *Gatekeeping Theory, Gatekeeping Theory* (Routledge, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203931653/GATEKEEPING-THEORY-PAMELA-SHOEMAKER-TIMOTHY-VOS>.

⁴⁶⁸ For example, a college professor who questioned official claims about the death toll of Nanjing Massacre during Japan's invasion in WWII, was removed from her position and many others even got detained. See Meishan Luo, “Teacher Fired for Contesting Nanjing Massacre Death Toll in Class,” *Sixth Tone*, December 17, 2021, <https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1009238/teacher-fired-for-contesting-nanjing-massacre-death-toll-in-class->.

powers.⁴⁶⁹ However, the control over media through offering information from a single channel, could help the government set official agenda before the public and influence the way “what to think”, as the agenda-setting effect does,⁴⁷⁰ media control alone may have difficulties influencing how people think about the issue. For example, among gigantic amounts of information, how can media increase the salience of the particular agenda that the government deems most important to disseminate?

More propaganda strategies, thus, are employed to help the state mold public sentiment and behavior. *Priming* is one of the tactics to increase the accessibility of information to recipients. As “[t]he process by which the salience of an idea becomes the basis for judgment”, priming partly determines how media attend to some problems and ignoring others and thus alters the standards of public evaluation of certain issues.⁴⁷¹ Priming could form attitudes on the strength of considerations that are *most* salient, and thus *most* accessible, when making decisions.⁴⁷² Iyengar and Kinder argue for a strong relation between the prominence of an issue and its weight in political judgement, as ordinary people adopt a shortcut strategy when exposed to complex political events: they make evaluations based on information most ready and accessible from memory.⁴⁷³ In general, media can activate the audience’s memory by increasing the frequency of reporting⁴⁷⁴ and linking the covered targets to certain cues.⁴⁷⁵ Appropriate media prime can shape the

⁴⁶⁹ Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China.”

⁴⁷⁰ Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, “The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1972; McCombs, *Setting the Agenda: The News Media and Public Opinion*.

⁴⁷¹ Shanto Iyengar, Mark D. Peters, and Donald R. Kinder, “Experimental Demonstrations of the ‘Not-So-Minimal’ Consequences of Television News Programs,” *American Political Science Review* 76, no. 4 (December 1, 1982): 848–58, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1962976>.

⁴⁷² Patricia Moy, David Tewksbury, and Eike Mark Rinke, “Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*, ed. Klaus Bruhn Jensen et al. (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016), 5, <https://doi.org/10.31235/OSF.IO/X8F26>.

⁴⁷³ Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion*.

⁴⁷⁴ See, among others, Shanto Iyengar and Adam Simon, “News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion,” *Communication Research* 20, no. 3 (June 30, 1993): 365–83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009365093020003002>; Iyengar and Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion*.

⁴⁷⁵ Nicholas A. Valentino, Vincent L. Hutchings, and Ismail K. White, “Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes During Campaigns,” *American Political Science Review* 96, no. 1 (2002): 75–90,

audience's opinion towards domestic and foreign issues.⁴⁷⁶

In response to domestic or international challenges, China's state media often ratchets up relevant news coverage to prime the domestic audience to mobilize them into state-backed campaigns.⁴⁷⁷ In this regard, it is hypothesized that, amid the THAAD and Cross-Strait disputes, the Chinese government likely raise the public awareness of the conflicts using increased number of relative reports citing the very conflict while underestimate the conflict when it aspires to signal resolves ($H_{frequency}$) in order to mobilize or demobilize more civic participation.

The Chinese media is also adept at labeling foreign countries with certain political or nonpolitical cues in order to arouse antagonism. South Korea is known as a "culture thief" to Chinese citizens who often reportedly claims China's traditional culture their own, including announcing Chinese inventions, such as the Chinese traditional festivals, Chinese characters, traditional medicine and even Confucius, to be originated from Korea.⁴⁷⁸

Besides, due to state propaganda, Taiwan gains a reputation as an island overwhelmed by tour bus accident ("the Island of Bus Accident", chehuo dao). For example, an op-ed in *Global Times*, the state-affiliated nationalist tabloid, estimated that, since 2008 when Taiwan reopened to Chinese mainland tourists till 2017, at least 12 tour bus accidents occurred pertaining to mainland travelers which cause 83 deaths.⁴⁷⁹ Another article originally published by the party mouthpiece, *Xinhua*, portrays Taiwan's tour buses as "Death Bus" (duoming che).⁴⁸⁰ Frequent reporting on similar

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055402004240>.

⁴⁷⁶ Zhihong Gao and Na Li, "The Priming Effect of News Context on Chinese Attitudes toward Foreign Brands," *Journal of Asia-Pacific Business* 14, no. 4 (October 2013): 268–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10599231.2013.793554>; James N. Druckman, "Priming the Vote: Campaign Effects in a U.S. Senate Election," *Political Psychology* 25, no. 4 (August 1, 2004): 577–94, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1467-9221.2004.00388.X>.

⁴⁷⁷ Daniela Stockmann, "Race to the Bottom: Media Marketization and Increasing Negativity toward the United States in China," *Political Communication* 28, no. 3 (July 4, 2011): 268–90, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2011.572447>.

⁴⁷⁸ Peter Gries, "Disillusionment and Dismay: How Chinese Netizens Think and Feel About the Two Koreas," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (2012): 31–56, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S159824080000761X>.

⁴⁷⁹ Man Xiao, "愿台湾一切安好," *Global Times Online*, February 14, 2017, <https://taiwan.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnK0vJN>.

⁴⁸⁰ Nan Sun, "台湾游览车为何成为连环'夺命车'?", *People's Daily Online*, February 21, 2017, <http://tw.people.com.cn/n1/2017/0221/c14657-29097719.html>.

issues leads netizens to label Taiwan as “Death Island” (duoming dao) and a trip to Taiwan is often ridiculed as “braving the Death Island” (yongchuang duoming dao).⁴⁸¹ State media also often forms Taiwan with an image of the “island of telecom fraudsters” (zhapian dao). A *People’s Daily* reporting reveals that more than 100,000 Taiwanese profess in scam calls for a living.⁴⁸² A *Global Times* report explicitly labels Taiwan as an “island of telecom fraudsters”.⁴⁸³ Wide media reporting of phone frauds in the mainland aggravated the attitude of Chinese people towards Taiwan as birthplace to and paradise of phone swindlers. A popular internet slang illustrates, “Of one hundred thousand dumbwanese (daiwan, a mocking name for Taiwanese) ninety thousand are scammers, while the rest in training.” Such images, due to the cited cues, deteriorate public perception of some certain states and regions. In this regard, I hypothesize that the propaganda authorities would focus on certain keywords (or cues) not directly relate to the conflicts (H_{cue}) to mold public perception beyond the conflicts themselves, leading to a more comprehensive (but negative) construction of the image of the rivalries.

Variations: Media Effects Achieved via Types of Outlets and Platforms

To achieve better media effects through priming, the state adopts various tactics in response to media commercialization and digitalization. On the one hand, propaganda authorities can rely more on commercial newspapers to sell more appealing stories as commercial newspapers gain more credibility than state-owned media after the market form⁴⁸⁴ and help the state accommodate various audience demands to achieve “remote control”.⁴⁸⁵ In this logic, although the political

⁴⁸¹ Qiang Liu, “网友：别让台湾变成夺命岛,” Taihai Net, March 7, 2017, <http://www.taihainet.com/news/twnews/latq/2017-03-07/1979970.html>.

⁴⁸² Ping Wang and Yaming Wu, “台北传真：电话诈骗成‘台湾之耻,’” *People’s Daily Online*, March 25, 2015, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2015/0325/c83083-26746400.html>.

⁴⁸³ China News, “国际观察：台湾是怎样沦为‘诈骗之岛’的,” *Global Times Online*, April 18, 2016, <https://oversea.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJUYKd>.

⁴⁸⁴ Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*;

⁴⁸⁵ Daniela Stockmann and Mary E. Gallagher, “Remote Control: How the Media Sustain Authoritarian Rule in China,” *Comparative Political Studies* 44, no. 4 (April 14, 2011): 436–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010394773>.

agenda (in this case, the conflicts) is set by the state, official media and commercialized media should differ in their reporting behavior. In particular, to attract more readership, commercialized media may tend to focus on more nonpolitical issues that cater to average citizens ($H_{variation_outlet}$).⁴⁸⁶

On the other hand, media *platform* should serve as another channel reflecting reporting variations. As the number of internet users grows to nearly 1 billion in China,⁴⁸⁷ digital media become an important source of news information. To engage in more online users, Internet use may be geared toward nonpolitical news uses.⁴⁸⁸ Accordingly, in the similar vein with $H_{variation_outlet}$, I lastly hypothesize that digital media, compared with printed media, citing more *cues* related to nonpolitical issues ($H_{variation_platform}$).

Notably, *framing* is also known as an important media effect. It, through presenting the story by selecting a particular perspective or aspect, can similarly mold public opinion and shape their behavior.⁴⁸⁹ We regard it another critical propaganda strategy in soft mobilization but leave it until next few chapters for further discussion.⁴⁹⁰

Data

To investigate how the Chinese state rallies wider participation into China's conflicts with Korea and Taiwan through priming, I examine news coverage of daily general-interest newspapers both in online and print formats. The timeline for Korea is locked between July 2016 since the

⁴⁸⁶ Esarey and Xiao, "Digital Communication and Political Change in China"; Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*; Zhao, *Media, Market, and Democracy in China*.

⁴⁸⁷ Evelyn Cheng, "China Says It Now Has Nearly 1 Billion Internet Users," CNBC, February 4, 2021, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/04/china-says-it-now-has-nearly-1-billion-internet-users.html>.

⁴⁸⁸ Dietram A. Scheufele and Matthew C. Nisbet, "Being a Citizen Online: New Opportunities and Dead Ends," *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 7, no. 3 (September 14, 2016): 55–75, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1081180X0200700304>.

⁴⁸⁹ Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm"; Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, "Framing Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (May 4, 2007): 103–26, <https://doi.org/10.1146/ANNUREV.POLISCI.10.072805.103054>; Iyengar and Simon, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion"; Dietram A. Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," *Journal of Communication* 49, no. 1 (March 1, 1999): 103–22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.1999.TB02784.X>.

⁴⁹⁰ Admittedly, not an article employs either priming or framing alone; an article must be primed and framed in a certain way at the same time. However, this project looks at the priming effect primarily through keywords and cues analysis while examines the framing effect by studying what the whole sentences convey.

Korean official announcement of THAAD installation until December 2017 when then-president Moon Jae-in paid a visit to China, signaling subsiding of the conflict. As for Taiwan, I used two periods for research: the year of 2016 when the pro-Taiwan-independence president Tsai Ing-wen won her first tenure and the second half of 2019 (from July to December). The latter half of 2019 is selected here for a few concerns. First, it is the time during which Tsai was further disapproved by the Chinese government for her political stance in pushing for independence and stirring up division, marked by a *formal* tourism ban on all individual tours to Taiwan issued from the mainland government in July 2019.⁴⁹¹ Meanwhile, the latter half of 2019 was a half year ahead of Taiwan's 2020 presidential election in which Tsai won her second tenure. It is, thus, helpful to examine how the propaganda authorities primed their audiences when the relations deteriorated in 2019 and particularly when the tourism industry again became a tool of retaliation.

For printed news, I resort to the WiseSearch portal, a Hong Kong based news archive widely used by previous studies.⁴⁹² For articles regarding Korea, I used key words such as “韩” (Korea), “韩国” (Korea) and “萨德” (THAAD) but eliminated those irrelevant, such as articles over Syrian president Bashar al-Assad (阿萨德), and duplicated entries. In the examination of Taiwan related news, I search for such keywords as “台湾” (Taiwan), “台” (Tai) and removed those irrelevant. The selection generates a corpus of 42880 articles published by 456 individual newspapers regarding South Korea and another corpus of 23723 articles by 472 newspapers pertaining to

⁴⁹¹ Lawrence Chung, “Beijing’s Ban on Individual Taiwan Visits ‘A Big Mistake’, Says President Tsai Ing-Wen,” South China Morning Post, August 1, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3021019/beijings-ban-individual-taiwan-visits-big-mistake-says>.

⁴⁹² WiseSearch maintains a large corpus of news coverage published by 1,300 media outlets across from pan-China regions, including the mainland, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. For studies using WiseSearch, see for example, Sung Eun Kim, “Media Bias against Foreign Firms as a Veiled Trade Barrier: Evidence from Chinese Newspapers,” *American Political Science Review* 112, no. 4 (November 1, 2018): 918–38, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055418000242>; Bei Qin, David Strömberg, and Yanhui Wu, “Media Bias in China,” *American Economic Review* 108, no. 9 (September 1, 2018): 2442–76, <https://doi.org/10.1257/AER.20170947>.

Taiwan. I also categorized these newspapers according to their sponsorship (official or commercial)⁴⁹³ and location. In summary, there are 251 official and 205 commercial media outlets from all 31 provincial units within mainland China in the Korea corpus while 261 official newspapers and 211 commercial newspapers in the Taiwan corpus.

To examine the media strategies on the internet, I resort to posts on selected newspapers' Weibo accounts. Weibo is China's largest microblogging website, similar to Twitter. In its 2020 report, Weibo boasts to have half a billion users, among which almost 40 thousand are accounts affiliated with media groups.⁴⁹⁴ Notably, however, not all media groups belong to officially registered newspapers and not all print newspapers have Weibo portals. Also, for those who have an account, posts locked in the designated time span are not all available.⁴⁹⁵ Given both, I selected only four media accounts for Korea case and five accounts for Taiwan case. For Taiwan related posts, I used the keyword "Taiwan" and "South Korea" for Korean news.

It must be noted that Weibo is also vulnerable to heavy-handed censorship imposed by the government, resulting in articles on these platforms frequently deleted and inaccessible, even for state-run media. In other words, there could be a good deal of articles publicly available in the past but deleted later. Among the media accounts that possess available data, I include both state media and commercialized media. Also, the media's location and level (central/provincial/municipal) are considered. For example, a media group located in a city adjacent to Korea may focus more on Korea-related issues. Thus, the selection of newspapers' online accounts is, thus, a balance of data availability and the media outlets' individual attributes, such as the level, affiliation, type and their

⁴⁹³ For the media sponsorship, I followed Qin, Strömberg, and Wu, "Media Bias in China."

⁴⁹⁴ Sina Weibo Data Center, "微博 2020 用户发展报告" (3, 2021), <https://data.weibo.com/report/reportDetail?id=456&sudaref=www.google.com&reason=&retcode=>.

⁴⁹⁵ For instance, *Global Times* has deleted all posts before 2020.

location, with which I hope to largely reflect the reporting pattern. I do *not*, however, argue that the selected news media fully epitomizes China's whole media landscape.

In both region cases, I select Weibo accounts of *People's Daily* (Renmin Ribao), *Xinhua Daily* (Xinhua Ribao) and *The Beijing Times* (Xinjingbao). As the party mouthpiece, *People's Daily* represents the China's official attitude and tone at the central level. I select *Xinhua Daily* to reflect the reporting behavior of local party media. *Xinhua Daily* is administered by the Jiangsu Committee of the CCP. With an average of 400 thousand daily circulation and more than 10 million followers on Weibo, it remains an influential paper among dailies. Besides, the location of its headquarter, Jiangsu, an eastern-central coastal province that sits between South Korea and Taiwan and maintains close trade and cultural exchanges with both regions.

The Beijing Times is headquartered in Beijing. Although administered by the Beijing Municipal Department of Propaganda, it is a commercial newspaper gaining nationwide reputation for publishing news divorced from state promoted agenda at times. The *Beijing Times* is also considered a commercial beyond the influence of Beijing local.

The difference lies in the selection of the Weibo account of *Peninsular Metropolitan News* (Bandao Dushi Bao) to reflect the pattern of a local commercial media in reporting Korean news and *Guangming Daily* (Guangming Ribao) and *The Straits Tribune* (Haixia Daobao) to access to Taiwan news.

Peninsular Metropolitan News is the first metropolitan newspaper located in the Shandong province. It has reportedly ranked top 50 dailies around the globe. As Shandong is in proximity to South Korea, the selection of *Peninsular Metropolitan News* represents the local reporting pattern in a region close to Korea.

To reflect the reporting pattern of a local commercial regarding Taiwan news, I rely on *The Straits Tribune*. Boasting the most widely circulated metropolitan in southern Fujian, it is one of the few mainland media outlets residing in Taiwan. As a critical media covering Taiwan related news, among the data corpus that covers all Taiwan-related printed news, *The Straits Tribune* contributed 1178 news entries, almost five per cent of all news articles.

The selection of *Guangming Daily* is a result of missing data in the *People's Daily's* Weibo account as the latter does not include Taiwan-related entries before July 2016., Under the direct supervision of CCP, *Guangming Daily* plays an important role in reflecting official attitudes.

Notably, when comparing news reporting across different platforms, I only compare the selected news media (that is, four media outlets on South Korean news and five outlets for Taiwan news) from their printed newspapers and the Weibo platform. A brief description of the selected news media and a comparison of the selected newspaper articles and Weibo entries for Korea and Taiwan is shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Description of Selected Newspaper Articles and Weibo Entries

Regions	Media Outlet	Type	Level	Location	Weibo		Newspaper	
					# of entries	Total Entries	# of entries	Total Entries
South Korea	People's Daily	Official	National	Beijing	124	614	224	729
	Xinhua Daily	Official	Provincial	Nanjing, Jiangsu	164		164	
	The Beijing News	Commercial	Prefectural	Beijing	174		170	
	Peninsular Metropolitan News	Commercial	Prefectural	Qingdao, Shandong	152		171	
Taiwan	People's Daily	Official	National	Beijing	86	546	141	1498
	Guangming Daily	Official	National	Beijing	51		53	
	Xinhua Daily	Official	Provincial	Nanjing, Jiangsu	108		73	
	The Beijing News	Commercial	Prefectural	Beijing	150		53	
	Straits Tribune	Commercial	Prefectural	Xiamen, Fujian	151		1178	

Method, Results and Analysis

To analyze the state's propaganda strategy of priming, I employ computer-aided content analysis to examine word frequency and cues. I first look into the corpuses that cover all news stories published in *printed* newspapers. To discern the time fluctuation of word frequency, I break them into subsets according to the month of publication. This generates 18 subsets in the panel of Korea-related and Taiwan-related news, separately. Following previous studies, I use the “Jieba” package in R⁴⁹⁶ for word segmentation and rely on multiple dictionaries located in the Sogou dictionary,⁴⁹⁷ one of the most enriching Chinese pinyin dictionaries for word segmentation to the largest extent. Notably, for parsimony, I remove all stop words and report frequency of the words with more than two Chinese characters. Using the same method, I then compare if different types of media outlets (state-run and commercialized) and their platforms (printed versus Weibo) can vary in citing keywords and certain cues. To compensate the keyword/cue analysis, I also manually categorize selected news entries into different topics for further comparison. The results are shown below.

South Korea

I present the results of South Korea first. Table 5.2 presents top 10 key words mentioned in *printed* newspapers monthly. Note that I selected eight months among May 2016 to Dec 2017 to show the representative keywords and their change at each critical juncture. The selection can save space. For results of rest months, see Appendix 5.A. Two months of May to June 2016, which is outside the timeframe designed before are included, for later use. Also, I erase the word “South Korea” (*hanguo*) from the list for it always being the most frequently mentioned word as a searching keyword.

⁴⁹⁶ <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/jiebaR/jiebaR.pdf>

⁴⁹⁷ For Sogou pinyin dictionaries, see <https://pinyin.sogou.com/dict/>

Table 5.2 Top 10 Keywords Monthly of South Korea (Selected Months)

Jun 2016		Jul 2016		Sep 2016		Oct 2016	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
China	2328	THAAD	11542	China	2710	Park Geun-hye	4082
North Korea	1644	Deployment	7205	N. Korea	2333	China	3688
Sino-Korea	1466	System	7108	Game	2009	Choi Soon-sil	2776
Conduct	1232	China	4203	THAAD	1757	THAAD	2292
Cooperation	1065	U.S.	3720	South Korean Team	1688	U.S.	1796
Seoul	986	North Korea	3570	China national football team	1666	President	1739
Japan	824	Region	2948	Conduct	1593	Report	1722
Tourism	814	Strategy	2605	Chinese Team	1523	Deployment	1709
Development	809	Anti-Ballistic	2586	We	1501	Conduct	1687
Activities	798	Missile	2418	U.S.	1422	Event	1665
Feb 2017		Sep 2017		Nov 2017		Dec 2017	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
THAAD	4918	THAAD	7012	Cooperation	1749	Sino-Korea	2625
President	4045	Deployment	4412	Both parties	1454	Problem	2551
China	3978	U.S.	2807	U.S.	1443	Moon Jae-in	2533
U.S.	3094	Moon Jae-in	2549	Problem	1442	China	2443
Deployment	3045	System	2501	The Chinese side	1431	The Korean side	2235
Seoul	2799	North Korea	2159	Development	1397	Agreement	1939
State	2705	China	1825	Sino-Korea	1372	Comfort - woman	1939
Investigation	2688	Government	1716	China	1327	Both countries	1892
Park Geun-hye	2685	Masses	1331	The Korean side	1305	Development	1868
Special prosecutor	2682	State	1325	Relation	1225	Relation	1842

As Table 5.2 and Appendix 5.A show, beginning July 2016, the word of “THAAD” had dominated a space on the top ten list until September 2017. In July 2016 alone when the Korean government announced installment of THAAD officially, THAAD was mentioned 11542 times among all printed newspapers in the corpus, following by “deployment” (bushu), mentioned 7205 times (see Table 5.2, Jul 2016). In Feb 2017 when Korea’s Lotte group agreed to swap land with the government to install THAAD equipment, THAAD remains the top keyword cited. Mostly, such reports expressed how different actors, including the Chinese government, Korean citizens and even citizens and officials from other countries such as North Korea, Russia and the U.S., oppose and protest the deployment.⁴⁹⁸ It indicates that, amid the crisis, THAAD related news has

⁴⁹⁸ Such news is quite dominant in the dataset. I select only a few examples here. See author’s dataset #305, #306, #307, #308, #5892.

served a way to manipulate domestic audiences' cognition of South Korea; that is, the political contest between China and South Korea dominates.

Whether and how does the information fluctuate across time? Does the government always highlight the conflict throughout the dispute? The word frequency shows that there are periods that the state propaganda apparatus is willing to underestimate the ongoing conflict when it aspires to signal resolve. Instead of citing the words perhaps playing up the conflict and instigating public sentiment toward Korea, as soon as the “three nots” principle was announced by the Korean government to reassure China of its resolution in late October 2017, China’s domestic media started to downplay the previous contesting discourse and emphasize such words as “Sino-Korea” (zhonghan), “cooperation” (hezuo), “both parties” (shuangfang) and “development” (fazhan), “relations” (guanxi), which are *not* seen in any top 10 lists in previous periods (see Table 5.2, Nov 2017 and Dec 2017). Among them, cooperation ranks the most frequently mentioned word in November 2017 and “both parties” the second. A month later, “Sino-Korea” became the first mentioned word. In comparison to all such words indicating resolutions and cooperation, words like “THAAD” and “deployment” are removed off the lists. For instance, *People’s Daily*, from which we could “smell” changes of official attitudes, started to focus on how various China’s authorities conducted communications with Korean officials and articulated cooperation and agreement beginning at the end of October 2017. Much of the communication mentioned that China and Korea are close neighbors (jinlin), and the mainstream of Sino-Korean relations characterizes friendly exchanges and win-win cooperation.⁴⁹⁹ This makes a sharp contrast to only a couple of months ago when headlines were filled with THAAD reports (see Table 5.2, Sep 2017), much being framed as “The Voices Protesting THAAD only to be Stronger”⁵⁰⁰ or “A Korean Anti-

⁴⁹⁹ For example, author’s dataset #6088.

⁵⁰⁰ Author’s dataset #6077.

THAAD Activist Dies after Self-Immolation ”.⁵⁰¹ These findings confirm the $H_{frequency}$ that the party-state would increase the number of reports of the very conflict during international tensions while underestimate it when the state aspires to signal resolves. For visualization of frequencies of such words and their changes across time, see Appendix 5.B.

One may be interested in what words were most frequently mentioned prior to the conflict. To make a comparison of word frequency before and after the THAAD conflict and show how THAAD became a critical juncture of propaganda, I also include all *printed* news articles published in May and June 2016 (see both Table 5.2 and Appendix 5.A), two months before the start of the THAAD. Not surprisingly, two months before the arrival of the THAAD, mostly cited words regarding Korea are “Sino-Korea” (2996 times totally within two months), “carrying out” (2299 times totally within two months) and “cooperation” (2263 times totally within two months), among others.⁵⁰² This suggests a picture consistent with the point made above: outside the conflict period, China’s propaganda of South Korea centers around largely the themes of cooperation while when it is involved in international pressure, the words highlighting the very conflict emerge and endure until a turning point for resolve. The party mouthpiece, *People’s Daily*, for instance, in its May and June reporting mostly covered how China cooperated with Korea in a wide array of industries, such as tourism, e-commerce, film, etc.⁵⁰³

Is THAAD the only reminder of an international conflict with Korea among readers? Table 5.2 also implies that THAAD is not continuously the most frequently mentioned keyword for priming purposes. For instance, in September 2016, “game” (bisai) is even more mentioned which refers to a qualification game for the 2018 FIFA World Cup between China and South Korea. Although

⁵⁰¹ Author’s dataset #6079.

⁵⁰² The most frequently cited words are “China” (zhongguo) and North Korea (chaoxian), which indicate that North Korea was once a key issue concerning China’s reporting of South Korea before the THAAD.

⁵⁰³ Author’s additional dataset #269, #277, 279.

the game appears not related to the THAAD conflict, such cues, amid the fighting atmosphere, still imply a theme of contest: the “contest” between China and South Korea, no matter in military or sporty terms. For example, some articles show Korean disrespect to Chinese players by citing the Korean coach’s comments on Chinese players, “[To us,] preparing for 3 days is not different from preparing for 3 months... The level of Chinese players is far from improving yet...”⁵⁰⁴ Such evaluation likely provoked ire from the Chinese people. *People’s Daily* also implicitly related the soccer game to international competition by citing a Korean op-ed that, “there is no ‘great power’ (daguo) on the green field.”⁵⁰⁵ In covering another qualification game for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in February 2017, the state-affiliated *Guanchazhe Wang* even explicitly called the game “Sino-Korea War” (zhonghan dazhan) that the journalists not only expected the game to be one that “redeems the past humiliation” (yixue qianchi)—a narrative typically employed by China’s state-led nationalism campaigns⁵⁰⁶—but directly related the game to the soured relations due to THAAD, “at a time when the relations between the two countries are at a stalemate due to the entry of “THAAD” into South Korea, China is even more determined to win this game”.⁵⁰⁷ The rivalry atmosphere indeed stirred up antagonism. In July 2016, a Weibo post by the *Peninsula Metropolitan News* vividly portrayed how a Korean Taekwondo world champion mocked at Chinese Kong Fu but was easily defeated by a Kong Fu fighter from China.⁵⁰⁸ In the comment, one cheered with a deprecatory ethnic slur for Koreans, “Bangzi”, going, “Good Beat[!] Beat Bangzi to cry.” Indeed, current scholarship has suggested a close relation between nationalist sentiment on sport events, especially soccer the most popular game in the world, and political

⁵⁰⁴ Author’s dataset #20385

⁵⁰⁵ Author’s dataset #5915

⁵⁰⁶ Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China”; Xu Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism: Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications* (Lexington Books, 2007); Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation*.

⁵⁰⁷ Guanchazhe Wang, ““中韩大战”将至：韩国政府请求中方保护韩球迷安全,” March 22, 2017, https://www.guancha.cn/Neighbors/2017_03_22_399878.shtml.

⁵⁰⁸ https://weibo.com/1668589317/E0wDreXJu?type=comment#_rnd1663540152032

conflict.⁵⁰⁹ In particular, sport is seen an arena of international rivalry between political/diplomatic competitors.⁵¹⁰ Citing an international game by China's media, particularly between its rivalry countries (in diplomatic or sporty terms), is one of the means to display China's global dominance and power to further nationalism.⁵¹¹ Not surprisingly, thus, Duerden contends that the fierce rivalry between China and South Korea on the soccer field could be due partly to the THAAD dispute.⁵¹² Therefore, in citing such cues, media practitioners aim to shape the audience's opinion of this opponent in a relatively derogatory sense and highlight Sino-Korean competition, in addition to the reminisce of THAAD dispute per se.

It is also noteworthy that among many news entries, the former president Park Geun-hye is most frequently mentioned. This is because starting from October 2016 a political scandal related to her has attracted global attention, making her name a cue dominating the headlines for months. In November 2016 when the scandal burst, the word "Park Geun-hye" was even mentioned more than 20 thousand times, almost ten times of the second most frequently mentioned word, THAAD. Is the cue mentioned purposefully? Actually, since THAAD was deployed at the decision of the Park administration, her scandal often reminds the audience of THAAD conflict itself, directly or indirectly. For example, a *Beijing Times* Weibo post questioned if next Korean president would halt the installation of THAAD after Park was impeached.⁵¹³ Even reports on Park's scandal without direct reference to THAAD can bring THAAD to readers' mind. Under a news entry by

⁵⁰⁹ Andrew D. Bertoli, "Nationalism and Conflict: Lessons from International Sports," *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (December 1, 2017): 835–49, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ISQ/SQX029>.

⁵¹⁰ Richard Arnold, "Sport and Official Nationalism in Modern Russia," *Problems of Post-Communism* 65, no. 2 (March 4, 2018): 129–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2018.1425093>.

⁵¹¹ Bo Li et al., "How Mediated Sporting Events Constitute Nationalism: Chinese Newspapers Covering the 2014 Incheon Asian Games," *International Journal of Sport Communication* 9, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 79–96, <https://doi.org/10.1123/IJSC.2015-0104>.

⁵¹² John Duerden, "Political Tension Between China and South Korea Intrudes on a Fierce Rivalry - The New York Times," *The New York Times*, September 1, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/01/sports/soccer/political-tension-between-china-and-south-korea-intrudes-on-a-fierce-rivalry.html?_ga=2.227883230.215641471.1663536334-358184167.1661618874.

⁵¹³ https://weibo.com/1644114654/Ez7pTvYHI?filter=hot&root_comment_id=0&type=comment

Xinhua reporting that Park Geun-hye would reorganize her cabinet in response to the scandal, quite a few readers related this issue to THAAD. The comments went, “South Korea has not stopped [chaos] since Park started the THAAD anti-missile system. Is this karma?”, or “Ever since Park Geun-hye became the dog of the American imperialist ([in helping] deploying THAAD), it has indicated that she is not far from stepping down.”⁵¹⁴

Thus, even not citing the conflict itself, political or nonpolitical cues of other events can also help the state prime its audience with Sino-Korean contest, in the hope of shaping China’s public attitude towards Korea. In this regard, these findings confirm the *H_{cue}*.

How do news media vary in reporting keywords and cues according to media types and platforms? The following offers a comparison. Notably, when conducting the comparison, I look at the news entries *printed* by and published on *Weibo* accounts by the selected four media outlets. In this project, since I am particularly interested in the use of *tourism* in state mobilization, I pay special attention to news related to tourism or may affect tourism, too. Here I report the comparison of word frequency between platforms by their relative ranks in the list because Weibo posts are comparatively shorter than that of printed articles, thus unfair to present the times of each word being mentioned.

First, Table 5.2 and Appendix 5.B may suggest that printed media generally focus more on political news with political figures and events, and words related to tourism and tourist are not much emphasized. In the corpus that includes news entries published by the four selected *printed* newspapers, words such “tourist” and “tourism” are barely mentioned and, if any, ranked around 300th among all words. Comparatively, such news is used to raise public awareness *online*. Weibo content, although emphasizing politically associated cues as well, interestingly attaches special

⁵¹⁴https://weibo.com/1699432410/Efl639wH1?from=page_1002061699432410_profile&wvr=6&mod=weibotime&type=comment#_rnd1663616366930

importance to news regarding tourists. In the *Weibo* corpus, “tourist” ranks at the 13th most frequently mentioned words while “tourism” ranked 65th. The tourism/tourist related news largely focus on Chinese tourists’ conflicts with Korean government or merchants or problems encountered when touring Korea. A detailed analysis of how such news is framed and the purpose of citing such news will be discussed in Chapter 6.

I use a pair of word cloud to visualize the comparison. As Appendix 5.C indicates, the printed newspapers (left panel) focus more on political news with political figures and events being highlighted while the right panel (*Weibo*) attaches special importance to news regarding tourists (*youke*), making it one of the most significant cues on the online information. Since tourist and tourism are nonpolitical cues, compared to THAAD and Park Geun-hye, it seems that online news differs from printed news in citing cues and tends to focus more on nonpolitical issues (*H_{variation_platform}*).

But if we disaggregate state-run media and commercialized media on different platforms, there emerge interesting results. In the *printed* platform, words “tourist” and “tourism” are more frequently cited by commercial media outlets than official counterparts.⁵¹⁵ In the dataset including four selected printed newspapers, commercial newspapers cited tourism (tourist) 78 (69) times on average while official newspapers only 21(33) times. However, on the *Weibo* platform, state-run media accounts appear more aggressively reporting news related to tourists. They cited tourist 61 times, doubling that of commercial media (32 times), leading tourist among top 10 frequently used words. This, although somewhat is inconsistent with the *H_{variation_outlet}* that hypothesizes state-run media is expected to attend to political cues, indicates an intriguing phenomenon: on the digital platform, state and commercial behaviors do *not* distinguish as much as they are demonstrating

⁵¹⁵ In the printed version, commercial newspapers cited tourism (tourist)78 (69) times on average while official newspapers 21(33) times.

offline. This may shed light on the political implication that on the digital venue, even official media dedicates to engage in more audience and gain more subscription, which echoes Guo's argument that the state media has endeavored to adapt to the new Internet ecology by "experiment[ing] with online media logic that focuses on attracting and sustaining user attention" and "foster[s] an alliance between the nation and its citizens".⁵¹⁶

This pattern largely remains when changing the nonpolitical cue to a different one, e.g., the soccer game between China and Korea. When comparing the Weibo corpus and the newspaper corpus, it shows that Weibo posts are more likely to mention the word "guozu" (ranked 20th), an abbreviation of China's national soccer team, versus printed newspapers (ranked 136th) as well as soccer (Weibo, ranked 182nd versus printed newspaper, ranked 1234th), although in mentioning the word "game" (bisai), Weibo is a little (ranked 105th) behind the newspaper (85th).

On the *printed* platform alone, findings show that commercialized newspapers are more likely to report soccer games. The keywords of "soccer", "game" and "guozu" are all mentioned much more times by commercialized media than state-run media with higher ranks.⁵¹⁷ But on the *online* platform, state-run media again exhibits more ambition to attract more subscriptions.⁵¹⁸ This is consistent with findings before, that state-run media, on the printed platform, presents less nonpolitical cues but on the digital form, it is even more nonpolitically leaning than commercialized media.

Indeed, it is impossible to exhaust all keywords for comparison. To supplement the keyword and cue analysis and further uncover the reporting variation, I then examine the topics different

⁵¹⁶ Shaohua Guo, "'Occupying' the Internet: State Media and the Reinvention of Official Culture Online," *Communication and the Public* 3, no. 1 (February 7, 2018): 19–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057047318755166>.

⁵¹⁷ For example, commercialized newspapers report "game" 174 times (ranked 46th), "guozu" 129 times (ranked 129th) and "soccer" 21 times (ranked 1095th), versus official newspapers 72 times (ranked 162nd), 55 times (241st) and 10 times (1556th).

⁵¹⁸ On Weibo, official media report "game" 20 times (ranked 53rd), "guozu" 44 times (ranked 12th) and "soccer" 16 times (ranked 86th), versus commercialized media 7 times (ranked 352nd), 18 times (69th) and 3 times (1226th).

types of media and disparate platforms focus on. To conduct the topic analysis, I randomly chose 365 news articles from the selected printed newspaper corpus for manual reading. I also read all Weibo posts (N=614). After reading, such news entries are categorized into several themes, including politics, military, economy, social, culture, entertainment, sports. Since this project focuses on the state's use of tourism industry in mobilizing the public, I also separated tourism news as an individual category. The news generally includes eight topics (see Appendix 5.D. South Korea panel for details).⁵¹⁹ Echoing findings before, the political news (e.g., news related to THAAD and Park's political scandal) is the dominant topic (53 percent) to prime the audience with a sense of conflict, and news regarding international sports (or contest) between China and Korea is also very common (14 percent).

How do types of media and platforms differentiate? Consistent with the findings in keyword and cue analysis (see Appendix 5.E), topic analysis also shows that media outlets tend to report less politically related news (50 percent) on their digital form than printed version (almost 70 percent), but the former more likely focuses on nonpolitical news, particularly those pertaining to sports (almost 20 percent) and tourism (over five percent) than the latter, which reports only around seven percent sports news and two percent tourism news.

Types of media outlets show somewhat similar variations according to which platform the news is published. Appendix 5.F suggests that, in the printed newspapers, commercialized media tend to print less political news while more sports and tourism news. However, once the battlefield is moved to the digital form, even state-owned media tends to report more sports and tourism news. It even increases the reporting of entertainment news and decreases political news, supposedly in the hoping of attracting more readership.

⁵¹⁹ Advertisement is also identified in the dataset. But as it comprises of only a quite small portion of the total entries in either South Korea corpus or Taiwan corpus and will be only seen in printed media, I removed this theme for parsimony.

Taiwan

How does the government prime Taiwan-related news? Similar to the case of Korea, I present the list of top 10 keywords (published by all printed newspapers) selected from only eight months in Table 5.3. The results of the rest months are shown in Appendix 5.G. The table suggests that while the Taiwan-independence (taidu) attitude, as well as a refusal of the 1992 consensus, of Taiwan president Tsai Ing-wen are the major reasons upsetting the Chinese authorities and are where the conflict has been situated at, words indicating the conflict such as “Taiwan-independence” is intentionally underemphasized. Although the words of “Tsai Ing-wen” and her-led “DPP” (Democratic Progressive Party) and the term “1992 consensus” (jiuer gongshi) have nudged into Taiwan’s top 10 lists of word frequency once or twice (see e.g., Table 5.3 Jan 2016 and May 2016), it is discernable that among all 18 top 10 lists, the main theme concentrates around phrases that suggest cooperation and the common-blood narrative. For example, “across the strait” (liang’an), “cross-strait relations” (liang’an guanxi), “development” (fazhan), “cooperation” (fazhan), “exchange” (jiaoliu) appear in almost all top 10 lists. Even in January 2016 succeeding Tsai’s election as the new president, an interview published by *People’s Daily* still reiterated the state rhetoric that “the general trend... of cross-strait relations have not... changed. People on both sides of the strait...hope for the peaceful development...”⁵²⁰

In February 2016 when the news of a severe earthquake attacking Taiwan dominates headlines, media takes it an opportunity to articulate the atmosphere of cooperation and the common-bloodline narrative. “Rescue” (jiuyuan) and “compatriot” (tongbao) are the words being accentuated (see Table 5.3, Feb 2016). Almost all related articles reported “People from all walks

⁵²⁰ Author’s dataset_Taiwan, #5961.

of life in the mainland extend a helping hand to the earthquake-stricken area in Taiwan”, or China’s officials expressed condolences to Taiwanese compatriots.⁵²¹

Table 5.3 Top 10 Keywords Monthly of Taiwan (Selected Months)

Jan 2016		Feb 2016		Apr 2016		May 2016	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Mainland	2319	Earthquake	2677	Mainland	6398	Both sides of the strait	4771
Both sides of the strait	2240	Mainland	2227	Swindle	3445	Mainland	4252
Cross-strait relations	1410	Building	1858	Suspects (xianyiren)	2922	Cross-strait relations	3233
Development	1093	Both sides of the strait	1765	Both sides of the strait	2598	1992- Consensus	2688
DPP	963	Rescue	1457	Criminal	2413	We	2164
Election	864	Occur	1272	Telecom	2361	Basis	1888
Economy	835	Compatriot	1270	Side (fangmian)	1684	Political	1693
Tsai Ing-wen	812	People (renyuan)	1176	Suspects (xianfan)	1470	Common	1565
Tourism	762	Tainan City	1003	Cooperation	1455	Peaceful Development	1450
Citizen	682	Tainan	993	We	1408	Leader	1365
Jul 2016		Jul 2019		Oct 2019		Dec 2019	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Mainland	4123	Both sides of the strait	1781	Both sides of the strait	1235	Mainland	1715
Tour bus	3342	Mainland	1757	Mainland	829	Both sides of the strait	1387
Tourist	2740	China	1742	Development	817	Development	1026
Family (jia shu)	2522	U.S.	1406	Exchange	519	Measure	873
Both sides of the strait	2102	Development	1239	Activity	511	Enterprise	789
Driver	2099	Enterprise	1233	Enterprise	440	Taiwanese Compatriot (taibao)	707
Taoyuan	1995	Youth	1228	Cooperation	418	Youth	572
Victims	1653	Weapon	1107	Culture	418	Exchange	540
Xinhua Agency	1582	Chinese side	1042	We	371	Taiwanese Compatriot (Taiwan tongbao)	510
Side (fangmian)	1516	Activity	1013	Youth	370	Job	484

The common bloodline narrative goes even more popular recently (see e.g., Table 5.3, Jul 2019, Oct 2019 and Dec 2019). Words such as “youth” (qingnian), “Taiwanese compatriot” (Taiwan tongbao), “measures” (cuoshi), “enterprises” (qiye) all reveal the central government’s strategies of winning over Taiwanese minds through not only using the common-blood rhetoric but granting

⁵²¹ For example, Author’s dataset_Taiwan, #5966, #5968

economic privileges. For instance, a good number of articles emphasized the mainland is the best choice for Taiwanese compatriots to invest and the mainland government had taken measures to offer attractive and competitive environment for them.⁵²² They even are allowed to invest in many sensitive, national-security-related high-tech industries, such as 5G and civil aviation.⁵²³ This is consistent with the fact that to win more Taiwanese citizens, the Chinese government has long offered Taiwanese with various benefits and privileges.⁵²⁴ In other words, to shape the mind of newspaper audience, the propaganda authorities appear to exploit priming strategies in an opposite way; that is, to emphasize cooperation rather than contestation. To visualize the comparison of words that indicate the theme of confrontation and the theme of cooperation, I offer Appendix 5.H. It, again, shows that the mainland side largely attempts at promoting cooperation, the strategy of which differentiates from that of the Korean case.

While underestimating the political confrontation, propaganda authorities likely take advantage of cues of Taiwan's being "the Island of Swindlers" and "Island of Bus Accident". In the top 10 list of April 2016 (see Table 5.3), for example, news reports regarding Taiwan's phone fraudsters being arrested in Kenya and sent to China went viral, leading to "scam" (zhapian), "suspect" (xianyiren), "crime" (fanzui) and "telecom" (dianxin) become buzzwords. More interestingly, in July 2016 when the Taoyuan Bus fire, an incident causing deaths of 24 mainland tourists (details will be detailed later) took place, words such as "tour bus" (youlanche), "tourist" (youke), "driver" (siji) and "victim" (yunanzhe) reiterate Taiwan's image of "Island of Bus Accident". In particular, the word of "tour bus" (youlanche) was mentioned 3342 times totally in July 2016, even surpassing many of the political cues.

⁵²² Author's dataset_Taiwan, #6094, #13273.

⁵²³ Author's dataset_Taiwan, #12529.

⁵²⁴ Lawrence Chung, "Is Beijing's Offer of Residence Permits to Taiwanese A Trick or Treat?," South China Morning Post, September 17, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/2164430/beijings-offer-residence-permits-taiwanese-trick-or-treat>.

Beyond the Taoyuan incidence, amid the soured cross-strait relations, propaganda authorities showed particular interest in exploiting cues related to tourism. In five of the top-10 lists in 2016 (see Appendix 5.G), terms such as tourism, tourist, and tour guide have appeared and even outshined “cross-strait relations” and “exchange”. What purpose does the tourism cue serve? As most of the news either generally broadcasts the impact of reduced mainland visitors on Taiwan’s economy or specifically covers Taiwan’s ordeal travel environment, such priming strategy may achieve the purpose that alter the standards of public evaluation of the very issue.⁵²⁵ The logic is, if one or two tourism related accidents are reported, prospective tourists may not change travel itinerary accordingly. But if negative news regarding tours in a certain area dominates the headlines constantly, the readers’ assessment of the tour destination could be altered and they value the destination as unfriendly and insure. Similarly, if readers are frequently exposed to reports reflecting reduced mainland visitors to Taiwan, they should feel the peer pressure and may quit traveling as others. More details are provided in Chapter 6.

In this regard, the state’s purpose seems multi-faceted. It reminds the audience of the conflict (through, for instance, mentioning Tsai Ing-wen, DPP and the 1992-Consensus), but tends not to emphasize it. Instead, it attempts equivalently or even more at creating a positive environment of cooperation and collaboration on the mainland side. Meanwhile, it resorted to nonpolitical cues such as tourism to engender an unfavorable image of Taiwan. With such priming strategy, the state may expect to build up an image of itself as benevolent and thirsty for cooperation but meanwhile discourage domestic public support for the Taiwan side particularly in terms of tourism industry.

How do media outlets vary in covering Taiwan-related news? Similar to what has been reflected in Korea entries, printed media puts more emphasis on politically related news while their online

⁵²⁵ Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, “Experimental Demonstrations of the ‘Not-So-Minimal’ Consequences of Television News Programs.”

platform is more inclined to cover nonpolitical messages. In the corpus including five printed newspapers, the time “tourism” being mentioned merely ranks 72nd among all words, with those ranked first 20 being all politically related words. “Tourist” ranks the 79th mentioned words. The word that reflects the detrimental bus accident in Taoyuan “tour bus” (youlanche) even ranks lower (187th). In the Weibo reporting, by comparison, the editors appear to attach more importance to nonpolitical cues of “tour bus” and “tourist” so many times that they rank the 9th and 11th most frequently cited words. This difference could be indicated by Appendix 5.I where two word clouds are created for comparison. As shown, the word cloud of Weibo entries (right panel) exhibits the importance of tourist (youke), tour bus (youlanche) and even driver (siji) among all news regarding Taiwan, as opposed to the word cloud of printed news (the left panel).

To compare reporting variation of state-run media and commercialized media, I look within each platform. In the printed platform, although commercialized media also highlights political cues, it does less so than official newspapers. Words like tourist and tour bus gain more significance for commercial media outlets. The average ranks of frequency of these words are higher. For example, in the reporting by commercialized media, “tourist”, “tourism” and “tour bus” ranked 77th, 81st and 158th, respectively, with the word “mainland tourist” (luke) even higher, at 49th. In comparison, official media mention such words at a lower rank, with “tourism” the highest at the 71st but “tourist” at the 131st. The word “tour bus” is even lower (ranked 371st).

However, on the Weibo platform, official accounts are more aggressively reporting news related to nonpolitical cues, particularly those related to tourism. They cited “tourist” 42 times (ranked 11th) and “tour bus” 47 times (ranked 8th), exceeding that of commercial media (e.g., “tourist” mentioned 36 times ranked at 14th and “tour bus” mentioned 32 times ranked at 22nd). All the findings are consistent with those reflected in South Korea case.

The topic analysis also echoes such findings (printed media, N=355; Weibo posts, N=546). As Appendix 5.D (the Taiwan panel) shows, political news remains the most dominant topic to prime its audience (29 percent), but tourism becomes important in mold public perception (12 percent), too. Besides, digital platform is generally more likely to report nonpolitical news, such as tourism, entertainment, and social news than printed media (see Appendix 5.J).⁵²⁶ And when investigating the reporting patterns of state-run and commercialized media, Appendix 5.K suggests that on the printed platform, state-run media is less prone to cover nonpolitically related news (e.g., entertainment, social, sports and tourism news) while all entertainment and sports news are reported by commercialized newspapers. By comparison, on the digital platform, official media is more aggressive in covering such news. This again suggests that even official media needs to struggle for subscriptions online.

Discussion and Conclusion

How does the state mobilize public support into the campaigns against international rivalries softly through the priming effect? And does the priming strategy differ according to the rivalries the state is encountered with, and to the audiences it targets at? Using computer-aided analysis of keywords/cues, this chapter suggests that in setting political agendas in the THAAD dispute with South Korea and the cross-strait issues, media plays an indispensable part in priming the audiences by raising the readers' awareness to the political issues or themes the government desires to emphasize. Through increasingly and consistently repeating the very issue it aims to promote, the government hopes to remind the audience of the most significant messages over others. For example, during the THAAD dispute, the keyword of THAAD has remained mostly cited among all other words for almost ten months. Of course, when critical juncture occurs and the government

⁵²⁶ When comparing media variations, I removed the topics of "advertisement" and "mixed" for research parsimony.

would like to signal resolve, it may stop promoting the words and cues suggesting confrontation but instead emphasize cooperation to the audience. Furthermore, cues that are *not* directly related to the conflict itself could also be a helpful tool for the party to form some sort of stereotype of the targeted regions and to arouse public antagonism. Thus, the contest between China and South Korea is not limited to the THAAD but to sport events such as international games. Also, through frequently citing particular issues, even news related to tourism could become a salient issue readers attend to. Moreover, for better mobilization effect, the propaganda machine relies on different types of outlets and platforms to target at various audiences.

However, the propaganda strategies regarding Taiwan and Korea differ. As suggested from the keyword and (political) cue analysis, the Chinese government purposefully promotes different agendas in propagating Korea-related news and Taiwan-related news. For instance, in elaborating on the Korean reports, the words suggesting conflicts such as THAAD, deployment and objection are highlighted. Only when the Chinese government aspires to signal resolve, positive words like “cooperation” and “development” regain attention. By comparison, news related to Taiwan remains insistent on a discourse of unification, cooperation and “common bloodline”. Words with a tendency to undermine such atmosphere tend to be downplayed. This explains why keywords “cross-strait” (liangan) and “cross-strait relations” (liangan guanxi) dominates the top spots of the frequency ranks. In comparison, words such as “Sino-Korea” (zhonghan) or “Sino-Korea relations” (zhonghan guanxi) only emerged important when THAAD conflict deescalated in late 2017.

Such propaganda strategies suggest that in mobilizing domestic supporters into diplomatic crises, the government keeps cautious about who the targeted territories are. Since South Korea is a foreign nation, keywords and cues implying conflicts could be relatively frequent. Propagating Taiwan-related issues, in comparison, is more complicated and nuanced, as Taiwan is perceived

as part of China. By one hand, cooperation should be the prioritized theme in reporting Taiwan, which can help the state's unification course. By other hand, the Chinese government remains its desire to retaliate and penalize the Taiwanese government so that it resorts to prime the audience with nonpolitical cues, such as tourism.

Indeed, it is also possible that such propaganda may not only target domestic audience. Although it is quite difficult to acquire the number of users outside China mainland reading domestic news, some news media should target overseas readers as well. At least, the Weibo platform is open to the public, regardless of the location of the audience. Thus, much of the message is not only conveyed particularly to China's domestic audiences but international audiences. For example, the common-blood narrative regarding Taiwan and the state's intention to highlight cooperation is not merely a strategy to prime readers within the mainland but to shore up more international supports, especially those from Taiwan, to partake in the state-backed unification course.

Using particular words and cues to prime the audiences, propaganda authorities expect to mobilize the public into state-backed campaigns. Admittedly, however, the keyword analysis has limitations. It could be affected by an event abruptly occurring, which may thus skew media's previous agenda. For example, Taiwan's Taoyuan bus accident could be regarded as such sort of event. But considering China's media sphere and government oversight of international news, even such "breaking news" should also largely suggest the government's purposes, that is, to manipulate public (negative) opinion on Taiwan's tourism. After all, many other events that similarly occurred abruptly and also quite eye-catching have received barely reporting. For example, in almost the same time with Taoyuan bus accident, a school bus carrying dozens of Korean pupils in China's Shandong province, burned out in an accident, the nature of which resembles to the Taoyuan bus

accident. This accident, in contrast, was reported in a low-profile. After all, a recent study suggests that many events of high public interest within China are intentionally downplayed or delayed in reporting on purpose, as directed by propaganda authorities.⁵²⁷

Of course, in addition to reiterating certain keywords and impressing the audience with some cues, the government also could rely on more strategies, such as framing, to highlight the importance of certain perspective or aspect of an issue. The next chapter moves onto another strategy of the state's soft mobilization, *framing*, to uncover how it can shape public opinion with different frames and to persuade the citizens to comply with the state's policy particularly in economic means.

⁵²⁷ Roberts et al., "The Increasing Constraint of Newspaper Propaganda in China and Its Implications."

CHAPTER 6
MOBILIZATION BY PERSUASION:
HOW THE STATE MANIPULATES MEDIA FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION
THROUGH FRAMING

Taking advantage of priming effect, the party-state expects to get readers familiar with the emphasis of current affairs using particular keywords and cues. As shown in the last chapter, in dealing with the THAAD dispute with South Korea, for example, the state media constructed a contesting image between China and Korea as the dispute heightened while dampening it to signal resolve and cooperation when the conflict deescalated. Amid tensions with Taiwan, comparatively, the mainland Chinese government continues its emphasis on the One-China principle and common-blood narrative, highlighting an image of cooperation while downplaying the frictions.

Besides priming, previous studies also suggest that authoritarian states resort to framing tactics to more directly shape public opinion and behavior. Simply speaking, framing tells how the news is presented. Compared to priming, framing is selecting “some aspects of a perceived reality” so that they can “promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation”.⁵²⁸ Since the premise of framing suggests that “an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives”,⁵²⁹ selecting a particular perspective may also affect their opinion.

⁵²⁸ Robert M. Entman, “Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (December 1, 1993): 53, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.1993.TB01304.X>.

⁵²⁹ Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, “Framing Theory,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (May 4, 2007): 104, <https://doi.org/10.1146/ANNUREV.POLISCI.10.072805.103054>.

Deliberate ways of framing a given issue could generate considerable impacts in public opinion and their subsequent choice of action.⁵³⁰ Thus, authoritarian regimes such as China rely on manipulating the framing of propaganda messages to achieve domestic policy goals, demobilize protests and maintain resilience.⁵³¹ Framing the same issue differently, government-controlled media moves respondents to adopt policy positions closer to the ones espoused by the regime.⁵³²

In dealing with international affairs, framing can also help. Should governments intervene in media selection of framing a country and thus form certain stereotypes, it would likely create and reinforce a nation's image, and even exert ultimate influence on the relations between nations in changing domestic and international scenarios.⁵³³

The Chinese government has been known employing various frames to mold public sentiment toward international society. For example, once confronted to foreign pressure, Chinese authorities often resort to a frame lashing out at foreign forces for undermining China's national interest.⁵³⁴ In many of the censures, the Minister of Foreign Affairs blames foreign governments "forces with

⁵³⁰ Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm"; Dietram A. Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," *Journal of Communication* 49, no. 1 (March 1, 1999): 103–22, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.1999.TB02784.X>; Thomas E. Nelson, Zoe M. Oxley, and Rosalee A. Clawson, "Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects," *Political Behavior* 19, no. 3 (1997): 236, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024834831093>.

⁵³¹ Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009); Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018); Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 1–18; Peter Lorentzen, "China's Strategic Censorship," *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 402–14, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12065>; Maria Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108164474>; Juan Du, Rongbin Han, and Weixia Lv, "Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China," *Environmental Policy and Governance* 32, no. 2 (April 1, 2022): 135–48, <https://doi.org/10.1002/EET.1971>.

⁵³² Jennifer Pan, Zijie Shao, and Yiqing Xu, "How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing," *Political Science Research and Methods* 10, no. 2 (April 21, 2022): 317–32, <https://doi.org/10.1017/PSRM.2021.35>.

⁵³³ See, for example, Kevin W. J. McCracken, "Australia and Australians: View from New York Times," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (August 29, 1987): 183–87, <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769908706400126>; Cui Zhang and Charles William III Meadows, "International Coverage, Foreign Policy, and National Image: Exploring the Complexities of Media Coverage, Public Opinion, and Presidential Agenda," *International Journal of Communication* 6, no. 0 (February 3, 2012): 76–95; John T. Mcnelly and Fausto Izcaray, "International News Exposure and Images of Nations," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (August 29, 1986): 546–53, <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769908606300315>.

⁵³⁴ For example, see Xin Zhou and Sarah Zheng, "Xi Jinping Rallies China for Decades-Long 'Struggle' to Rise in Global Order, amid Escalating US Trade War," *South China Morning Post*, September 5, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3025725/xi-jinping-rallies-china-decades-long-struggle-rise-global>.

ulterior motives” and accuses them of triggering disputes.⁵³⁵ The framing also promotes a positive identity of China by portraying it an innocent and benevolent victim, justifying its countermeasures to foreign pressure.⁵³⁶ These are in consistency with the “century of humiliation” rhetoric.⁵³⁷ However, such nationalist narratives are often crude and formulated such that a couple of programs were developed by unknown netizens to emulate China’s official hard rhetoric on foreign affairs, ridiculing the clichéd content.⁵³⁸

Perhaps recognizing the limited opinion manipulation effect such dry pedagogy has generated, the party-state often use it sophisticatedly to appeal to wider readership and for better persuasion effects by reframing or repackaging it. In some examples, propaganda authorities can frame the same stories differently to affect the audience,⁵³⁹ for example, exploiting diverse media outlets to reframe a dry story with vivid language.⁵⁴⁰ Or, they embed the nationalist narratives into entertainment forms such as comics, folk songs and dances, spoken drama, and even video games making such propaganda “soft”⁵⁴¹ and “ideotainment”.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁵ Kinling Lo, “China’s Foreign Minister Blames ‘Forces with Ulterior Motives’ for Solomon Islands Riots,” South China Morning Post, December 7, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3160084/chinas-foreign-minister-wang-yi-blames-forces-ulterior-motives>.

⁵³⁶ Enrico V. Gloria, “Justifying Economic Coercion: The Discourse of Victimhood in China’s Unilateral Sanctions Policy,” *The Pacific Review*, 2021, 1–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2021.1980605>.

⁵³⁷ Suisheng Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 287–302, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X\(98\)00009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X(98)00009-9); Xu Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism: Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications* (Lexington Books, 2007); Wang Zheng, *Never Forget National Humiliation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012).

⁵³⁸ Masha Borak, “Want to Be a Chinese Diplomat? Developers Have a Program That Emulates China’s ‘Wolf Warrior’ Rhetoric,” South China Morning Post, December 1, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/abacus/culture/article/3112103/want-be-chinese-diplomat-developers-have-program-emulates-chinas>.

⁵³⁹ Pan, Shao, and Xu, “How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing.”

⁵⁴⁰ See for example, Stockmann’s comparison of two framings published by a commercialized newspaper and an official newspaper, respectively. Daniela Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 175, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087742>.

⁵⁴¹ Daniel C. Mattingly and Elaine Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades,” *Comparative Political Studies* 0, no. 0 (February 1, 2022): 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140211047403>; Sheng Zou, “When Nationalism Meets Hip-Hop: Aestheticized Politics of Ideotainment in China*,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 178–95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420.2019.1637008>; Matthew Ming-Tak Chew and Yi Wang, “How Propagames Work as a Part of Digital Authoritarianism: An Analysis of a Popular Chinese Propagame,” *Media, Culture & Society* 43, no. 8 (July 25, 2021): 1431–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437211029846>.

⁵⁴² Johan Lagerkvist, “Internet Ideotainment in the PRC: National Responses to Cultural Globalization,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 54 (2008): 121–40.

Such framing strategies, which accused international societies of infringing on China's national interest at the aggregate level, may be able to manipulate public attitudes toward the targeted regions.⁵⁴³ However, the soft mobilization is not only to shape abstract and general hostility towards its rivalries but, perhaps more importantly, to entice compliance and cooperation with state policy in terms of *behavior* of individual citizens. Indeed, individual citizens' behavior toward targeted regions seems an increasingly desired action by the government in that the state media is explicitly encouraging citizens to take actions. For example, when Lotte Group agreed to offer land to the Korean government for THAAD deployment, party mouthpieces all overtly encouraged Chinese consumers to boycott Lotte and applauded it "rational" patriotic activities.⁵⁴⁴

More interestingly, tourism has become a target for such behavior. In handling territorial dispute with the Philippines, China's party-affiliated nationalist tabloid, *Global Times*, overly called out, "Chinese should collectively boycott outbound travels to the Philippines".⁵⁴⁵ In doing so, the government expects to use such economic means to punish the undisciplined foreign governments or brands. After all, the average citizens have adopted the role of citizen-consumers in the nationalist course, and the role has been used by Chinese officials priorly.⁵⁴⁶

With the above concern in mind, this chapter aims to examine how the propaganda machine engages in framing tactics not only manipulating public attitudes toward South Korea and Taiwan

⁵⁴³ Mattingly and Yao, "How Soft Propaganda Persuades."

⁵⁴⁴ Yalin Hao, "新华时评：中国不欢迎这样的‘乐天’," Xinhua, February 27, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2017-02/27/c_1120539249.htm; China Youth Daily Online, "抵制乐天，这一届的爱国很理性！," March 6, 2017, http://m.cyol.com/content/2017-03/06/content_15706863.htm.

⁵⁴⁵ Global Times Online, "中国应冷淡菲律宾 抵制赴菲旅游," Sohu, November 17, 2011, <http://news.sohu.com/20111117/n325917658.shtml>.

⁵⁴⁶ Jian Wang, "The Politics of Goods: A Case Study of Consumer Nationalism and Media Discourse in Contemporary China," *Asian Journal of Communication* 16, no. 2 (2006): 187–206, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292980600638710>; James Reilly, "Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China's Japan Policy," in *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China*, ed. Robert S. Ross and Oystein Tunsjo (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 169–95, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501712777-009>.

but strategically motivating the audience to take real anti-Korea or anti-Taiwan actions, especially through economic means.

Data and Method

To unearth how the propaganda machine operates on different framings for the state's diplomatic agenda, particularly to mobilize the public to target the adversaries, I resorted to the corpuses that include selected newspaper articles and all Weibo posts and relied on qualitative content analysis. In the Korea case, I selected entries including the keywords “THAAD” (萨德) *or* “tourism” (旅游), “tourists” (游客)⁵⁴⁷ while in the Taiwan sample, I mainly focused on keywords of cross-strait relations (两岸关系), One-China (一个中国) and 1992 Consensus (九二共识), considering their importance in the cross-strait agenda,⁵⁴⁸ *or* articles with the keywords of “tourism” (旅游), “tourists” (游客). The selection eventually generates 273 entries in the Korea panel and 171 entries in the Taiwan panel.

“Tourism” and “tourist” gain particular attention because the weaponization of tourism to realize diplomatic ends is what the current project focuses on. This chapter, thus, is especially interested in how media can help the state recruit more supporters through framing tourism-related news reports. It, however, does *not* indicate that news excluding the words tourism or tourist is not able to connote similar messages. In effect, as is shown later, the state media is dexterous in exploiting news related to other industries to mobilize its audience.

I coded all reports in an inductive and data-driven way, following the logic of previous studies.⁵⁴⁹ Finally I identify four different frames in each corpus. I report each with examples of

⁵⁴⁷ Note that the news articles do not have to contain THAAD and tourism/tourists at the same time, so is the news in the corpus of Taiwan.

⁵⁴⁸ For newspaper articles, I looked at titles including these keywords.

⁵⁴⁹ For example, Margrit Schreier, “Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice,” *SAGE Publications*, 2012; Du, Han, and Lv, “Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China.”

specific reporting texts translated into English.⁵⁵⁰ As an article can resort to multiple frames, the sum of the frequency of the four categories is greater than 100%.

Framing Analysis

South Korea

How do media outlets use different framing tactics to mobilize citizens to target South Korea during the THAAD crisis? Before diving into details, I report the overall results. As Table 6.1 shows, the most typical framing tactic is what I call the *grand rhetoric* (84%), which mostly explains how the installation of THAAD would be generically detrimental to 1) China's national interest, 2) harming bilateral relations between two countries, and 3) even how that may affect Korean domestic actors, often 4) escorted with threats/resolutions of countermeasures, in line with previous findings.⁵⁵¹ These together briefly concentrates on how national interest at the aggregate level can be impacted, so regarded grand, generic rhetoric.

In addition, and perhaps more interestingly, I detect a quite intriguing frame that portrays how events occurred in, or initiated by, rivalry regions disrupt individuals' immediate interest in their daily life, or the *personal-interest reporting* (10%).⁵⁵² As Table 6.1 indicates, during the THAAD disputes, coverage of how ordinary tourists were mistreated by the Korean government or Korean

⁵⁵⁰ Du, Han, and Lv, "Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China."

⁵⁵¹ For example, Gloria, "Justifying Economic Coercion: The Discourse of Victimhood in China's Unilateral Sanctions Policy."

⁵⁵² This category is inspired by previous identification of human interest frame in media reporting, but one should distinguish the personal-interest reporting from the human-interest frame. Human-interest frame often "personalizes", "dramatizes" and "emotionalizes" the news and puts a "human face and emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem", (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000, 95-96). However, in the human-interest frame, many of the news stories, in effect, may not truly relate to ordinary citizens' everyday interest: they are only framed with a human face to makes people regard the crisis as related. The content of personal-interest reporting itself, in comparison, covers how people's everyday interest is affected, and unnecessarily escorted with dramatized emotions. This is especially important in messages promoting antagonism toward international society because some of them are only framed with human face to appear credible but should not be considered truly affecting average citizens' immediate interest. As will be explained later, in many of Taiwan-related stories, the government is usually using heart-broken personal stories to promote the narrative of "common blood-line" between the mainland and Taiwan. Although it is likely a human-interest frame in previous studies, this story is regarded as "grand rhetoric" framing as it has little bearings with people's mundane life. See Holli A. Semetko and Patti M. Valkenburg, "Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News," *Journal of Communication* 50, no. 2 (June 1, 2000): 93-109, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1460-2466.2000.TB02843.X>.

locals is quite common. That is, the contest is *not* merely intergovernmental but lies in every aspect in average citizens' real life. In this scenario, it is *not* the national interest being paralyzed but individual people's personal mundane interest.

Table 6.1 Coded Government Framing Tactics (South Korea, N=273)

Framing Tactics	Definition	Examples	Frequency (%)
Grand Rhetoric	General description of how the conflict affects China's overall national interest, such as 1) national security; 2) bilateral relations; and thus 3) its countermeasures; but 4) often reiterated by portraying how it affects the interest of actors within the targeted regions and them potentially support China's stance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. THAAD's detection and early warning range far exceeds the peninsula, [but its] attempt to endanger China's strategic security is well known...(No.14, Mar 8, 2017) 2. The full name of "THAAD" isThis anti-missile system, ..., is equipped with ... , which is detrimental to the strategic security interests of China,...It has ... affected the friendship and exchanges between the two countries. (No.177, Aug 4, 2016) 3. We firmly oppose the deployment of the THAAD..., and will resolutely take necessary measures to safeguard our own security interests (No.53, Mar 8 2017) 4. Nearly one hundred [Korean] citizens fought against THAAD by fasting...(No. 13, April 30, 2017) 	230 (84%)
Personal-interest Reporting	Frames suggest how the issue affect individuals' personal mundane interest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourists to South Korea are frequently ripped off: taxis deliberately took a detour, and homestays are asking for unreasonable prices...(No.102, May 4, 2017) 2. Hundreds of tourists to Jeju Island are locked in a "little black cabin". Does South Korea no longer welcome Chinese people?... (No.105, Oct. 8, 2016) 3. Chinese tourists were forced to buy Korean ginseng in South Korea, tour guides: [these are] government rules...(No. 107, Oct 10, 2016) 	27 (10%)
Situation Room Reporting	Reporting intelligence of Chinese Tourism to Korea (including overall statistics or information, mostly reduction of tourism)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 8-day "Super Golden Week" expects 710 million trips, and outbound travel to South Korea loses attractiveness... (No.112, Sep 19, 2017) 2. Chinese tourists to South Korea may be reduced by 60 to 70%. Duty-free shops may be closed down (No.119, Mar 6, 2017) 	19 (7%)
Other	Issues including the key words but related mostly to a third party	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taiwanese people complained for Chinese tourists...[as] some Korean [tourists] went back after eating a bento (No. 89, May 3, 2017) 	6 (2%)

Notably, meanwhile, the personal-interest reporting can refer to the coverage of personal interest being infringed on in any domain. The following analysis finds personal-interest reporting mostly fall into the domain of tourism as “tourism” and “tourists” are selected as keywords. There could be more of such type of reporting in domains other than tourism.

Lastly, the “situation room reporting” that illustrates overall statistics regarding tourism (7%) and stories related mostly to a third party (2%) are included.

In the following section, I go into depth with the two most dominant frames, the grand rhetoric, and the personal-interest reporting. The grand rhetoric is normally formulated by official statement delivered in Minister of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) press conferences or by top authorities. It may start with a fact tracking of what THAAD is and in what sense its installation would threaten China’s security. As majority people in China, and anywhere else, do not understand why the deployment of a military equipment in South Korea territory can menace China’s security, many articles serve to elucidate the negative use of THAAD in plain language. Thus, THAAD is narrated a weapon violating mutual trust that would cause more security problems around the peninsula region, and more importantly, pose a threat to China’s national interest and security as well as exchanges between two countries. In addition to dissatisfaction and affirmation in opposing, the grand rhetoric also include resolution to secure national interest and warns of undesirable countermeasures. Moreover, there are many articles/entries frame the political tensions by citing voices in favor of state narratives. For example, amid the THAAD dispute, many articles recorded how Korean citizens opposed their government’s decision of deploying THAAD, justifying the Chinese-government-promoted rhetoric.

There are mainly three ways to frame personal-interest reporting, sometimes escorted with vivid and emotional languages, present Chinese tourists’ unpleasant travel experience in South Korea. First, it uncovered Chinese tourists being ripped off in a few industries, such as by when riding taxies, renting homestays, and paying restaurants. For example, an article published by CCTV and widely reprinted by media outlets mentioned some “outlawed” Korean taxi drivers cheated passengers on price and routes for extra charge, so did homestays and restaurants. More

interestingly, journalists may also frame by emphasizing that the Korean merchants targets particularly Chinese tourists for overcharging. In an article titled “South Korean officials secretly investigating plastic surgery hospitals: Ripping off Chinese Particularly, Some Items 10 times more Expensive”, some Korean plastic surgery institutions are reported charging Chinese patients 9000 US dollars while this service only charged Korean patients 6000 US dollars, 50 percent more. A cosmetic double-eyelid surgery, according to the article, even costs foreigners more than 70 thousand US dollars, which normally priced hundreds of dollars in China.⁵⁵³

Also, it frames Korea as a tourist destination with unfriendly entry policies. In a widely reprinted report during the THAAD dispute, Chinese tourists were portrayed being denied entry to the Jeju Island, a popular Korean tourist attraction. In the reporting, journalists often describe these tourists being requested to spend overnight in a “poorly-equipped” customs inspection room with limited supplies, superimposed by a picture in which a dozen of Chinese travelers rested on the ground with only one thin blanket under each,⁵⁵⁴ which intensifies the image of Korean government mistreating Chinese visitors.

Reports regarding forced shopping is not uncommon, too. Many travelers on budget package tours may be forced by tour guides into purchasing jewelry, electronics and local specialties. In October 2016, an article disclosed that Chinese tourists were strong-armed by a Korean tour guide to purchase Korean ginseng and insulted when refusing to do so.

The *situation room reporting*, although makes up a small portion, is also informative. By reporting purely statistics of Korea-bound tourism, such messages may both signal the public how

⁵⁵³ Sohu, “韩国官方暗查整形医院:专坑中国人有项目贵 10 倍,” accessed August 28, 2022, https://www.sohu.com/a/169341424_99939158.

⁵⁵⁴ Beyond the corpus, this article and related reports were published by Chinese major media outlets and online news portals such as Xinhua, People’s Daily Online, Huanqiu, Sohu and Sina. For one sample, see Jinqiu Zeng, “中国游客被关济州岛‘小黑屋’ 有人已被关 5 天,” Xinhua, February 19, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/legal/2017-02/19/c_1120490370.htm.

effective the government policy is and to discourage those would-be tourists. In examples of the situation room reporting in Table 6.1, after offering the statistics, journalists point out “duty-free shops are closed down” and “outbound travel to South Korea loses attractiveness...”, suggesting that China’s boycott takes effective and Korean trips are not attractive anymore. The fact that most people (reflected by a reduction of 60 to 70 per cent visitors) choose not to go there can expect to wield peer pressure on the few insisting on traveling; after all, peer groups can influence travel decision-making.⁵⁵⁵

The last category *other* mostly centers on a third party but only happen to include the keywords I am interested in. However, they are not useless. For instance, in the example Table 6.1 provides, the Taiwanese tourism merchants suggested Korean visitors being frugal, compared to mainland visitors, because Koreans merely purchased a cheap bento during the trip. While appearing nonrelated to the big anti-Korean picture, it indicates Chinese visitors being wealthy and generous while Koreans stingy, approving Chinese visitors undirectedly.

Taiwan

What are the typical narratives in portraying the interest being encroached in Taiwan-related reports? Table 6.2 also finds a similar framing pattern in covering the cross-strait friction and tourism related stories, where the grand nationalist narrative remains dominant (58%) but more stories framed related to personal interest are discovered (35%). Again, entries reporting overall tourism statistics (13%) or related more to a third party (2%) are included, although making up a relatively small portion.

⁵⁵⁵ Currie, Russell R., Franz Wesley, and Paul Sutherland. "Going where the Joneses go: Understanding how others influence travel decision-making." *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* (2008).

Table 6.2 Coded Government Framing Tactics (Taiwan, N=171)

Framing Tactics	Definition	Examples	Frequency (%)
Grand Rhetoric	General description of the issue affecting general mainland interest, including 1) criticisms of actions regarded separating Taiwan, such as not recognizing 1992 consensus or arms sales; 2) accusing the other party of undermining cross-strait relations, One-China policy, emotions of compatriots, etc; 3) justification of countermeasures 4) often reiterated by portraying how other actors support China's stance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the newly elected leaders of Taiwan still...fail to make a clear and explicit response to whether they agree with the "1992 Consensus" ... the development of cross-strait relations will be greatly affected... (No.115, Mar 10, 2016) 2. Taiwan Affairs Office Spokesperson Ma Xiaoguang said in response to ... the U.S. plan to sell F-16V fighter jets to Taiwan that ...the U.S. grossly interfered in China's internal affairs, seriously violated the one-China principle and the three Sino-US joint communiques...No force should underestimate our determination and ability to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity...(No.7, Aug 19, 2019) 3. ...Our determination to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity remains unchanged, and our capability is stronger. We will resolutely curb any form of "Taiwan independence" separatist acts and plots. (No.19, May 20, 2016) 4. Taiwanese actor, Show Lo Chih Hsiang...said... “We are all Chinese”... Nothing wrong with it? (No.1, Jan 19, 2016) 	99 (58%)
Personal-interest reporting	Description of issues affecting personal mundane interest, such as concerns with travel security in Taiwan.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A tourist bus caught fire in an accident on the liaison road of Taiwan's Taoyuan Airport. All 26 people in the car were killed, including 24 tourists from Liaoning. (No.71, Jul 19, 2016) 2. The driver of the burned bus,... after his wife decided to bring the children back to the mainland, was angry at these mainland tourists. ... and caused the tourist bus firing (No.77, Aug 11, 2016). 	60 (35%)
Situation Room Reporting	Reporting intelligence of mainland tourism to Taiwan (including overall statistics or information, mostly reduction of tourism)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taiwan-bound mainland tourists have seen the number of applying for entry permits to Taiwan dropping significantly...(No.163, May 25, 2016) 2. Now the mainland tourists who apply for high-quality group tours and individual tours do not have to wait in line, and sometimes the quota is not used up...the number of mainland tourists visiting Taiwan has decreased by nearly 2,000 in one day....(No.160, Feb 29, 2016) 	23 (13%)
Other	Description of issues mostly affecting neither the national or personal interest, or related to a third party.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Japanese female tourist looks like the princess living in Yuan Dynasty, [making] netizens laugh head off... (No. 59, Dec 10, 2016) 2. Changshu's AAAAA Tourist Attraction, Monster Village, is accused of plagiarizing Taiwanese... (No. 60, May 18, 2016) 	2 (1%)

In deal with cross-strait relations, the government, again, maintains and commits to a grand rhetoric. It gets agitated by any governments or institutions that challenge the “One China” principle and the “1992 consensus”. First, it keeps reprimanding when Taiwan pro-independence

authorities adopted a quite vague attitude on this issue and failed to recognize the “1992 Consensus”. Taiwan authorities often upset the Chinese government because of official and military exchanges with other governments, for instance, purchasing weapons from the U.S. government. When such happened, the government often emphasizes that the Taiwan issue is China’s internal affairs with the reiteration of the above stance. Second, official statements normally underscore a few harmful impacts such attitudes can cause. For example, they would paralyze peace and stability across the straits and hurting the national feelings of people in the mainland and Taiwan. More determinedly, the government expresses the resolution to defend state sovereignty and territorial integrity by curbing any form of "Taiwan independence" separatist acts and attempts. Recent declarations even more overtly contend for stronger ability in do so and add that the Chinese army is to fight against any attempts of separation. Certainly, if the government-promoted “One China” principle is embraced by any other parties, this action will be endorsed and even praised. As showcased by the example cited in Table 6.2, when the Taiwanese actor, Show Lo Chih Hsiang expressed “We are all Chinese” on his social media, the state media quickly approved the statement. This “common bloodline” narrative is also quite common in the grand rhetoric, and this narrative makes Taiwan’s propaganda distinguish from the Korean case.⁵⁵⁶

Similar to news regarding South Korea, when reporting Taiwan, media outlets also tend to employ the personal-interest reporting which highlight individual tourists’ unfavorable experience in Taiwan. But in Taiwan’s case, they are more likely to do so (35% among all entries). In the corpus, Taiwan’s personal-interest news focuses mainly on tour bus accidents with most attention to the “Taoyuan Bus Fire” accident. Compared to personal-interest reporting of other accidents⁵⁵⁷ and those in the Korea corpus, the Taoyuan Bus Accident is even more interesting. It is an accident

⁵⁵⁶ For other examples, see No. 45, Jun 11, 2016.

⁵⁵⁷ Between April and June 2016, there were two other accidents involving Chinese tourists in Taiwan.

occurred in July 2016 where a bus in Taiwan's Taoyuan county transporting 26 people, including 24 mainland visitors, one Taiwanese tour guide and one Taiwanese driver, was found burnt out and caused the deaths of all. The follow-up investigations confirmed the suicidal driver, Su Ming-cheng, set fire intentionally.

We may also notice the depth of reporting in this event not only through the high frequency of reporting but from the various perspectives these reports touch upon. In this corpus, most reports focus on covering news related to this accident, from its breakout to further investigations, and responses from different actors. All selected media outlets spared considerable space reporting pertinent news from following the accident. Among all 171 entries, 29 (17%) contributes to the coverage and discussion of this accident.

Reports also suggests the personal interest of mainland tourists being comprehensively ruined by a wide range of actors, including social, economic and state actors, in Taiwan. Articles before 2016 mostly focused on brief coverage of accidents per se such as the causalities, rescue processes and investigations of causes. Coverage of the Taoyuan bus accident, comparatively, first discloses hostility of Taiwanese *citizens* towards the mainland. For example, as show in Table 6.2, it is reported the argument between the driver, Su, and his wife, a mainland China citizen, may lead to Su to vent his anger on the mainland tourists and set fire to the vehicle, indicating individual Taiwanese antagonism to mainlanders. Besides, many reports accused a broader range of Taiwan local people of loutishly making statements "hurting feelings of compatriots across the strait",⁵⁵⁸ because they made disrespectful comments that "gloat" over, "ridicule" or "joking" at such deaths.⁵⁵⁹ Also, according to a Weibo post by People's Daily, when the bus caught on fire, a great

⁵⁵⁸ See, for example, No.82, Sep.10, 2016

⁵⁵⁹ Chengqi Ren, "陆客赴台游'七零八落,'" People's Daily Online, August 2, 2016, <http://tw.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0802/c14657-28602619.html>.

amount of vehicles passed by without stopping to rescue, suggesting local people's indifference to lives.⁵⁶⁰ Wrath was also directed toward discrimination expressed by Taiwan's media practitioners. A few reports, citing Chinese netizens, accused some Taiwan's political TV hosts of not being sympathetic with victims and trying to find fault with them as the hosts blamed the victims for being unable to save themselves with security gadgets preinstalled in the bus. Reports also cover mishandling of this tragedy by the incumbent Tsai Ing-wen administration. Several Weibo posts chastised Tsai for different treatments for victims: she sent elegiac couplet to the Taiwanese victim while not to the larger group of victims from the mainland,⁵⁶¹ denouncing Tsai being cold blooded, ridiculous and absent in respect for lives.⁵⁶²

Besides, categories of *situation room reporting* and *other* are also discovered in Taiwan's panel. Like their counterparts in the Korean panel, situation room reporting should play similar roles in illustrating the effectiveness of boycotting Taiwan travel and pressuring more visitors from continuing the trip. News categorized as *other* in the case of Taiwan only makes one per cent in the corpus, perhaps amusing netizens (example 1).

Why Using These Framing Tactics?

An Attempt to Reveal Government Motives

To narrow it down, I focus on the first two dominant narratives, grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting. Why are the frames employed? The importance of the former has been well acknowledged by current literature. The state has long resorted to a grand rhetoric such as the "century of humiliation" narrative to activate the public's xenophobia to international society and justify the party-state's legitimacy.⁵⁶³ It is also known that such a frame has been reiterated by

⁵⁶⁰ No. 92, July 29, 2016.

⁵⁶¹ No. 94, July 30, 2016.

⁵⁶² See, for example,

https://weibo.com/1914880192/E199HaqaW?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment#_rnd1661200059889

⁵⁶³ Suisheng Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," *Communist and*

Chinese officials in response to challenges posed by international society. By portraying itself an innocent and benevolent victim, the government justifies its countermeasures to foreign pressure.⁵⁶⁴ Such frame, in addition to stirring up public nationalist sentiment in favor of the government,⁵⁶⁵ is also used as a signal to demonstrate the national insurmountable power.⁵⁶⁶

But our understanding of the personal-interest reporting limited. Why is it exploited in covering stories pertaining to diplomatic foes, or is it just a coincidence? One may speculate that these articles function as normal reporting of international societies.

This project argues that the above events framed detrimental to individuals' mundane interest such as their concern over travel security and mistreatment is devised intentionally not only to ferment the public antagonism to the targeted regions but to mobilize them into subsequent actions, especially in terms of economic boycotts. On the one hand, an increasingly salient body of literature has shown that the government has realized the power of grassroots as "citizen-consumers" and thus manipulates them to practice consumer nationalism through boycotting foreign products.⁵⁶⁷ On the other hand, there has been a long speculation that in the real world, during international conflicts, the Chinese government may disseminate messages about how foreign brands infringe on consumers' immediate interest to stir up public sentiment and trigger product boycotts purposefully. For example, amid Sino-Canada dispute on Canada's detention of China's tech giant Huawei's CFO, China's broadcasting of the news of Canadian retailer Canada

Post-Communist Studies 31, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 287–302, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x\(98\)00009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0967-067x(98)00009-9); Yinan He, "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino–Japanese Conflict," *Journal of Contemporary China* 16, no. 50 (February 2007): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560601026710>; Zheng, *Never Forget National Humiliation* .

⁵⁶⁴ Gloria, "Justifying Economic Coercion: The Discourse of Victimhood in China's Unilateral Sanctions Policy."

⁵⁶⁵ For example, Mattingly and Yao, "How Soft Propaganda Persuades."

⁵⁶⁶ For example, Haifeng Huang, "The Pathology of Hard Propaganda," *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 3 (May 11, 2018): 1034–38, <https://doi.org/10.1086/696863>.

⁵⁶⁷ Wang, "The Politics of Goods: A Case Study of Consumer Nationalism and Media Discourse in Contemporary China"; Zhihong Gao, "Chinese Grassroots Nationalism and Its Impact on Foreign Brands:," *Journal of Macromarketing* 32, no. 2 (January 23, 2012): 181–92, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146711428808>; Reilly, "Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China's Japan Policy."

Goose of unfair treatment of Chinese consumers led to rumors that such news and activity was aimed to prompt consumer boycotts from the bottom.⁵⁶⁸

Since the government is weaponizing outbound tourism, there are grounds to believe these reports are released deliberately to amplify public irritation over traveling to South Korea and Taiwan by emphasizing how their mundane interest is harmed. Considering the rumors of reducing tours to South Korea in late 2016 and an unofficial tourism ban later,⁵⁶⁹ such news appears to aim at intimidating Chinese consumers, discourage their intention to travel and ultimately pressure the Korean government for policy changes due to diminished tourism industry, given China its largest source of foreign visitors. According to *the Global Times*, Korean media has been aware of such reports and criticized Chinese media for “venting dissatisfaction toward South Korea” caused by THAAD by taking advantage of them.⁵⁷⁰

The ambition to use the example of the Taoyuan bus accident as a tool to intensify Taiwan’s image of an “Island of Bus Accidents” and thus to intimate tourists from traveling there is also revealing. A few articles, after reporting the bus fire and responses delivered by Taiwanese people and the president Tsai Ing-wen, added that the security of Taiwan’s travel and reciprocal trust between people across the strait would pose a sever threat to mainlander intention of Taiwan trips and thus likely cause the reduction of mainland visits to Taiwan.⁵⁷¹ In an article published by state-

⁵⁶⁸ For related news and speculation, see Huifeng He, “China Denies Targeting Canadian Businesses for Political Reasons after Canada Goose Fined for False Advertising,” *South China Morning Post*, September 12, 2021, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3148467/china-denies-targeting-canadian-businesses-political-reasons>; Brandie Weikle, “Canada Goose Fined by China for ‘Misleading’ Consumers about Parka Material,” *CBC News*, September 8, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canada-goose-china-1.6168160>; Infobae, “China Targets Canada Goose, Maker of Posh Parkas - Infobae,” September 16, 2021, <https://www.infobae.com/en/2021/09/16/china-targets-canada-goose-maker-of-posh-parkas/>.

⁵⁶⁹ Wen Xin, “韩媒称中方要求旅行社减少赴韩旅游人数 外交部回应,” *Global Times*, October 26, 2016, <https://world.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJYiMF>.

⁵⁷⁰ Wei Wang, “韩媒：中国媒体炒作‘小黑屋’是对韩发泄不满情绪,” *Global Times*, October 9, 2016, <https://world.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJXXkg>.

⁵⁷¹ *People’s Daily Overseas*, “必答卷未完成火烧车又发酵 陆客赴台游‘七零八落,’” *Global Times*, August 2, 2016, <https://taiwan.huanqiu.com/article/9CaKrnJWOLE>.

run *Journal of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference* (Renmin Zhengxie Bao), Taiwan-bound tourism has become “a trip to death” (siwang zhily), a quite disturbing word to deter prospective travelers.⁵⁷²

The intensive coverage of this accident also suggests it not a coincidence. In a similar period, a school bus carrying dozens of Korean pupils in Weihai, Shandong province, burned out in an accident. Succeeding investigations also revealed intentional arsons by the bus driver due to his antisocial emotions. Comparatively, however, this event was reported in a low-profile publication. Some Weibo users sensitive to propaganda strategy even pointed out explicitly the massive reporting of Taiwan’s bus accidents a way of opinion manipulating. As one remarked, “Concentrating on reporting Taiwan’s [bus] accidents is a sharp weapon for brainwashing...”⁵⁷³

In reality, the above reports related to either South Korea and Taiwan indeed instigate hostility of some readers and may affect their intention to travel. For instance, beneath *The Beijing Times* Weibo regarding merchants overcharging in Korea, the most liked comment went, “Did [these people] forget about THAAD this quickly? They deserved to be ripped off.” A follow-up comment agreed by replying, “Exactly. [They] still went there during sensitive period. Truly stupid.”⁵⁷⁴ News regarding Taiwan’s burnt bus accident received similar comments. Many expressed, “You really don't want to go to countries like Taiwan and South Korea.”⁵⁷⁵ They are really not very friendly!”, or “As long as we don't go to Taiwan, we'll be fine. We definitely know Taiwan doesn't

⁵⁷² From author’s dataset. *Journal of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference*. 如何不让赴台游成为死亡之旅? 台湾方面应该拿出整改实招. July 30, 2016

⁵⁷³ https://weibo.com/xjb?profile_ftype=1&is_all=1&is_search=1&key_word=%E5%8F%B0%E6%B9%BE%20%E5%A4%A7%E5%B7%B4#1655565736931

⁵⁷⁴ https://weibo.com/xjb?profile_ftype=1&is_all=1&is_search=1&key_word=%E8%B5%B4%E9%9F%A9%E6%B8%B8%E5%AE%A2%E9%A2%91%E8%A2%AB%E5%AE%B0%EF%BC%9A%E5%87%BA%E7%A7%9F%E8%BD%A6%E6%95%85%E6%84%8F%E7%BB%95%E8%BF%9C#1655564417898

⁵⁷⁵ This comment should mistakenly categorize Taiwan as a country, and this was pointed out by another reply.

like us, but we send [ourselves] to death.... The world is so big. Would you die should you not go to [Taiwan]?”⁵⁷⁶

Accordingly, taking advantage of both frames, one suggesting the infliction of general national interest by rivalries and the other one indicating personal everyday interest being damaged, the government desires to activate public ire to targeted regions and, more importantly, translate the rage into actual actions (i.e., economic boycotts of outbound tourism, in this project).

Additional Perspectives and Strategies

Admittedly, the selected corpus of printed news and Weibo posts cannot fully reflect what the grand nationalist narratives and personal-interest reporting look like. Beyond the corpus, in effect, we may discern more perspectives and strategies are employed to defend grand, general nationalistic interest and narrate personal mundane interest being undermined. For example, in other examples that employ the grand nationalist narrative, especially those positively articulating the “common bloodline” rhetoric, a vivid and emotional description of Taiwanese people desperately seek to “find roots” (xungen)—that is, their ancestors or alive relatives—in the mainland is very common.⁵⁷⁷ In addition to report *human* related “common bloodline” stories, media practitioners often resort to the narrative in “*nonhuman*” descriptions. For instance, in a voting campaign initiated by People’s Daily Weibo, titled “Vote the most beautiful site for enjoying the moon on the Mid-Autumn Festival”, it took four domestic sites as examples, including Taiwan’s Sun and Moon Lake, to indicate Taiwan as a part of China,⁵⁷⁸ which echoes the mainland’s long-term depiction of Taiwan as a “Baodao” (treasure island).⁵⁷⁹ Note that, even much

⁵⁷⁶https://weibo.com/xjb?profile_ftype=1&is_all=1&is_search=1&key_word=%E5%8F%B0%E6%B9%BE%20%E5%A4%A7%E5%B7%B4#1655565736931

⁵⁷⁷ Author’s dataset (Weibo) #278

⁵⁷⁸ <https://weibo.com/2803301701/E7agDFD4t?type= repost>

⁵⁷⁹ Sijia Shen, “More than Just Desserts,” *Global Times*, July 15, 2010, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/552072.shtml>.

of such reporting employ the “human-interest” frame,⁵⁸⁰ I categorize it into the grand rhetoric frame as the event (i.e., finding roots) is less related to the mundane life of average people in China than a strategy to promote the government-backed compatriot or common bloodline narrative.

Besides, there are also more ways to frame the personal-interest reporting. For example, highlighting the image of “Island of Bus Accident” to refer to Taiwan is by no means the only perspective. Mainland tourists being ripped off is also not unheard in Taiwan. A news article first released by *Global Times* went viral covering that Taipei's night market was overcharging mainland tourists and sold them a small bag of fruits for 1000 Taiwan dollars (approximately 33 US dollars). This article cited a few similar events in which mainland visitors were overcharged and metaphorically compared the victims to “fat sheep waited to be slaughtered”, exploiting the homophones of “slaughter” and “ripping off” in Chinese. A reprinted version of the article in Netease, a major online new portal, attracted more than 4000 times of participation and 300 follow-up comments.⁵⁸¹ Reporting of food security in Taiwan also concerns the mainland visitors. In the full dataset with all printed news, in March 2016, at least 20 China's newspapers published the news that 21 mainlanders from a tour group of 40 visitors suffered from food poisoning. In some Weibo comments, readers discouraged those Taiwan-bound visitors by sarcastically suggesting, “Now Taiwan's folk customs (minfeng) are very bad. Those who go to Taiwan remember to buy extra insurances, which can comfort their families in case they can't come back. Bear this in mind!”⁵⁸² A lot aired deep concerns with travel climate in Taiwan, “Tourists from all other [areas]

⁵⁸⁰ Semetko and Valkenburg, “Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News.”

⁵⁸¹ Global Times Online, “台湾夜市被曝坑大陆游客小袋水果卖 219 元 绿媒谴责|士林夜市|台北_网易新闻,” NetEase, May 6, 2019, https://www.163.com/news/article/EEF618640001875N.html#post_comment_area.

⁵⁸² https://weibo.com/1960785875/DkYVpEhe1?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment#_rnd1661285385969

are not poisoned except mainland tourists. It's too scary. Is [Taiwan] starting to take revenge on the mainlanders?..."⁵⁸³

Personal-interest reporting can also occur in domains unrelated to tourism but still play a part in stirring up public resentment against targeted regions. For instance, several months after the THAAD dispute escalated, quite a few reports mentioned that excessive levels of mercury and viruses were found in Korea-brand cosmetics.⁵⁸⁴ Following relevant posts online, many replied with fury, "Koreans only deceive Chinese... It is [because] we are rich and stupid!"⁵⁸⁵ One comment even uncovered the objective of the news more straightforwardly, "Actually these problems have [existed] for a long time, and it is impossible that the state doesn't realize it... South Korea imports THAAD. China cannot let it go. This is the easiest way to oppose..."⁵⁸⁶ Used clothes trafficked from Korea were also found carrying unknown viruses and bacteria.⁵⁸⁷ All these news appears to suggest the consumers' mundane interest is undermined by foreign products, reminding the audience imported products (yanghuo) not worth buying, as explicitly pointed out by *People's Daily* on Weibo.⁵⁸⁸ Doing so is expected to prevent Chinese from consuming products manufactured by targeted regions, thus helping the state impose economic sanctions on them.

Different Media, Different Frames

Does the framing pattern still exist if we disaggregate the reporting according to different types of media outlets and platforms and how they differ? I then compare the different frames state-run media versus commercialized media, and printed media versus Weibo (see Table 6.3). Even viewing the frames through different media outlets and platforms, the previous findings mostly

⁵⁸³ https://weibo.com/1960785875/DkYVpEhe1?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment#_rnd1661285508738

⁵⁸⁴ See, for instance, Minghao Zhang, "韩国半永久化妆品近半重金属超标 个别含一级致癌物," Xinhua, October 7, 2016, http://korea.xinhuanet.com/2016-10/07/c_135736195.htm.

⁵⁸⁵ https://weibo.com/2028810631/EbMpf50BS?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment

⁵⁸⁶ https://weibo.com/2028810631/EbMpf50BS?refer_flag=1001030103_&type=comment

⁵⁸⁷ https://weibo.com/1644114654/F6SKPeqGw?refer_flag=1001030103_

⁵⁸⁸ Author's dataset (Weibo) #22.

exist. The grand rhetoric and personal-interest remain the two dominant frames if dividing media outlets into state-run and commercialized, or printed and digital platforms. In whichever subcategories, the grand rhetoric is the most dominant frame, at least 70% among all frames. Personal-interest reporting constitutes around 10% frame in all forms but printed newspaper, suggesting traditional media's reporting style centering around more abstract information related to national interest. But commercialized media and digital media more likely to report personal-interest news than their counterparts, suggesting the difference of reporting style of these media.⁵⁸⁹

Table 6.3 Framing Tactics by Media Types and Platforms (South Korea)

	State-run (N=150)	Commercialized (N=123)	Printed (N=150)	Weibo (N=123)
Grand Rhetoric	128 (85%)	102 (83%)	141 (94%)	89 (72%)
Personal-interest Reporting	14 (9%)	13 (11%)	8 (5%)	19 (15%)
Situation Room Reporting	9 (6%)	10 (8%)	3 (2%)	16 (13%)
Other	2 (1%)	4 (3%)	0 (0%)	6 (5%)

The Taiwan panel yields similar results (see Table 6.4). Although commercialized media also contribute most of their space to grand rhetoric (49%), they appear more likely to focus on personal-interest reporting (39%) than state-run media (grand rhetoric 66% versus personal-interest 32%). State-run media, as scholars find, are more interested in generic, abstract stories.⁵⁹⁰ The digital platform, Weibo also attach much importance to personal-interest reporting compared to printed media outlets. Interestingly, however, in the printed platforms, although the grand rhetoric remains the most resorted frame by printed, personal-interest reporting (15%) is slightly

⁵⁸⁹ Stockmann, *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*.

⁵⁹⁰ Stockmann.

less than the situation reporting (16%), indicating traditional printed media’s crave for abstract, sometimes turning to dry numbers, to influence their audience.

Table 6.4 Framing Tactics by Media Types and Platforms (Taiwan)

	State-run (N=91)	Commercialized (N=80)	Printed (N=59)	Weibo (N=112)
Grand Rhetoric	60 (66%)	39 (49%)	39 (66%)	60 (54%)
Personal-interest Reporting	29 (32%)	31 (39%)	15 (25%)	45 (40%)
Situation Room Reporting	3 (3%)	20 (25%)	16 (27%)	7 (6%)
Other	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)

Discussion and Conclusion

How does the propaganda machine rely on different framing strategies to shape public sentiment and behavior toward Korea and Taiwan? Consistent with previous studies, this study shows that grand nationalist rhetoric that reprimand foreign infringement on China’s national interest is a dominant frame. More importantly, and what goes beyond the current findings, is the identification of the tactic of using personal-interest reporting which frames the immediate interest of ordinary citizens being harmed by rivalry regions. Even disaggregating the media into different types or according to their platforms, I find this pattern remain.

The identification of the framing strategies, particularly the personal-interest reporting is significant in both theoretical and empirical terms. It first adds to the studies of framing effect in media studies,⁵⁹¹ especially in the authoritarian context where the frames of “hard propaganda”⁵⁹²

⁵⁹¹ Semetko and Valkenburg, “Framing European Politics: A Content Analysis of Press and Television News”; Arturas Rozenas and Denis Stukal, “How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia’s State-Controlled Television,” *The Journal of Politics* 81, no. 3 (June 18, 2019): 982–96, <https://doi.org/10.1086/703208>.

⁵⁹² Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1999); Haifeng Huang, “Propaganda as Signaling,” *Comparative Politics* (Comparative Politics, Ph.D. Programs in Political Science, City University of New York, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.2307/43664158>; Huang, “The

and relatively “soft propaganda” gains increasingly salient debate.⁵⁹³ On the one hand, although consistent with these studies, this article finds rhetoric emphasizing national interest a dominant framing strategy, it identifies a sophisticated propaganda innovation, personal-interest reporting, the state has adopted to achieve diplomatic goals. Among one of the first papers doing so, it suggests autocrats’ endeavors to revise propaganda strategies to adapt to meet the new requirement of nationalist cause. As suggested above, although the use of soft propaganda in China’s media space may compensate for the weakness of hard propaganda in persuasion, the gist of both referring to content that highlight national interest rather than personal interest. After all, many frames suggesting national interest, even packaged in entertaining forms, have provoked discontent. For instance, while thousands of dramas/movies presenting China’s anti-Japanese war are churned out to stimulate hostility toward Japan, audience has continued ridiculing them of being unrealistic and televisions had to pull them off due to ludicrous plots.⁵⁹⁴ And as the state demands of mobilization become gradually specific (in terms of economic retaliation) and audience have been unsatisfied with propaganda floating from real life experience, frames emphasizing personal daily life interest and how the interest is damaged by international societies are worth noting. This chapter suggests that the Chinese government has adaptively revised its propaganda strategy to meet the new requirement of nationalist cause and accommodate evolving requests from its audience.

Pathology of Hard Propaganda”; Erin Baggott Carter and Brett L. Carter, “When Autocrats Threaten Citizens with Violence: Evidence from China,” *British Journal of Political Science*, 2021, 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123420000575>; Andrew T. Little, “Propaganda and Credulity,” *Games and Economic Behavior* 102 (March 1, 2017): 224–32, <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.GEB.2016.12.006>.

⁵⁹³ Rozenas and Stukal, “How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia’s State-Controlled Television”; Mattingly and Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades”; Zou, “When Nationalism Meets Hip-Hop: Aestheticized Politics of Ideotainment in China*.”

⁵⁹⁴ Sina, “Anti-Japanese War Dramas Pulled from TV Due to Ludicrous Plots,” *China Daily*, August 20, 2015, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2015-08/20/content_21656428.htm.

More broadly, the identification of the personal-interest reporting sheds light on a larger body of literature beyond authoritarian propaganda. Even in democracies, governments and leaders can mold citizens' political opinions without resorting to events of high political relevance,⁵⁹⁵ or journalists would choose frames of high "individual relevance" to attract audience.⁵⁹⁶ This study, provides a window into, in the context of an authoritarian regime, how reporting irrelevant to politics but more relatable to personal mundane interest is empirically used,⁵⁹⁷ especially considering that the party has long cared about the use of such frame in persuading the audience. For example, in the early period during CCP's anti-(Kuomintang)government mobilization, Mao Zedong instructed journalists to cover events "intimately relate to the life of the masses" such as "cattle plague, dead crops, rice and salt shortages..." so that "the masses must be interested in reading".⁵⁹⁸

Finally, identifying both frames also helps explain how a state conceives different propaganda strategies to help itself mobilize more voluntary supporters in the nationalistic cause and to achieve economic sanctions. In the former scenario, the government conducts state-led nationalism by activating the public antagonistic sentiment and actions (i.e., consumer boycotts) through reporting

⁵⁹⁵ Ethan C. Busby, James N. Druckman, and Alexandria Fredendall, "The Political Relevance of Irrelevant Events," *Journal of Politics* 79, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 346–50, <https://doi.org/10.1086/688585/ASSET/IMAGES/LARGE/FG1.JPEG>; Manuel Bagues and Berta Esteve-Volart, "Politicians' Luck of the Draw: Evidence from the Spanish Christmas Lottery," *Journal of Political Economy* 124, no. 5 (August 31, 2016): 1269–94, <https://doi.org/10.1086/688178>; Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government* (Princeton University Press, 2017).

⁵⁹⁶ Kim Christian Schröder, "What Do News Readers Really Want to Read about? How Relevance Works for News Audiences," Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2019, <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/what-do-news-readers-really-want-read-about-how-relevance-works-news-audiences>; Carsten Reinemann et al., "Hard and Soft News: A Review of Concepts, Operationalizations and Key Findings," *Journalism* 13, no. 2 (November 11, 2011): 221–39, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884911427803>; Anna Sophie Kümpel, "The Issue Takes It All?," *Digital Journalism* 7, no. 2 (February 7, 2018): 165–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2018.1465831>.

⁵⁹⁷ Chen and MacDonald (2020) offer an excellent work on studying authoritarian propaganda using politically irrelevant news. But the analysis, focusing on sports events, should not be categorized as personal-interest reporting. Dan Chen and Andrew W. MacDonald, "Bread and Circuses: Sports and Public Opinion in China," *Journal of Experimental Political Science* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 41–55, <https://doi.org/10.1017/XPS.2019.15>.

⁵⁹⁸ Zedong Mao, "普遍地举办《时事简报》," 毛泽东新闻工作文选, 1931, <https://www.marxistphilosophy.org/maozedong/mx1/037.htm>.

China or Chinese individuals' interests being damaged.⁵⁹⁹ Changing ordinary people into agitated consumers, the government expects to realize the ulterior end of economic coercion/sanction.⁶⁰⁰

The natural follow-up question is that of the effectiveness of these framing tactics on diplomatic goals. The next chapter aims to address this question.

⁵⁹⁹ Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," September 1, 1998; Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism: Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications*; He, "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict"; Zheng, *Never Forget National Humiliation*; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*. Wang, "The Politics of Goods: A Case Study of Consumer Nationalism and Media Discourse in Contemporary China"; Gao, "Chinese Grassroots Nationalism and Its Impact on Foreign Brands"; Reilly, "Popular Nationalism and Economic Interests in China's Japan Policy."

⁶⁰⁰ For example, Daniel W. Drezner, "The Hidden Hand of Economic Coercion," *International Organization* 57, no. 3 (2003): 643–59, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818303573052>; David A. Baldwin and Robert A. Pape, "Evaluating Economic Sanctions," *International Security* 23, no. 2 (October 1, 1998): 189–98, <https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC.23.2.189>; Robert A. Pape, "Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work," *International Security* 22, no. 2 (1997): 90–110, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539368>.

CHAPTER 7

TESTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FRAMING WITH SURVEY EXPERIMENT

The previous chapter identified four frame strategies the government relies on to cover South Korea and Taiwan related issues, with grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting being the dominant ones. It also briefly analyzes, in principle, how such framing can expect to help the state to reach nationalist goals, such as fomenting hostility toward targeted regions and even facilitates the citizens to internalize such sentiment into real behavior, as indicated by Weibo comments provided in Chapter 6.

Will such framing tactics be truly effective? It is believed that deliberate ways of framing a given issue could affect public opinion and their subsequent choice of action.⁶⁰¹ For example, to realize policy goals, diffuse protests and make the regime survive, the Chinese government can believe in particular framing.⁶⁰² And, if framing the same issue differently (in either more dovish or more hawkish way), the propaganda should be able to move respondents to adopt policy positions closer to the ones espoused by the regime.⁶⁰³

But it is unclear whether the currently identified frames can be effective, and to what extent, in this specific context, especially considering the state is ambitious to not only arouse generic

⁶⁰¹ Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm"; Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects"; Nelson, Oxley, and Clawson, "Toward a Psychology of Framing Effects," 236.

⁶⁰² Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 2018; King, Pan, and Roberts, "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression"; Lorentzen, "China's Strategic Censorship"; Repnikova, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*; Du, Han, and Lv, "Defusing Environmental Activism through Scientific Greening: Government Framing Strategy and Its Effects in China."

⁶⁰³ Pan, Shao, and Xu, "How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing."

hostility towards the party-state's diplomatic foes but expect the information receivers to participate in campaigns against targeted societies through economic means.

To answer the question, I employ an original survey experiment. To make a comparison between these two frames, I use both of them as working vignettes.

For each target, the experiment includes one vignette transmitting grand rhetoric (with two paragraphs of news, Treatment 1) and one vignette concerning personal-interest reporting (also two paragraphs of news, Treatment 2). For example, Treatment 1 for the Korean case involves Chinese government's criticism of the THAAD infringing on China's national security and eroding Sino-Korean relations while the Treatment 2 report Chinese tourists being denied to the Jeju Island and ripped off in Korea. Similarly, Treatment 1 in the Taiwan panel briefly cites the mainland government's censures of Taiwan's pro-independence attitudes and arms sale with the U.S. government. Treatment 2 concerns the "Taoyuan Bus Fire" incident, which resulted in casualties of 26 mainlanders, and messages of how Taiwan-bound visitors were overcharged by local merchants.

Since in the real world audience might *not* be exposed to simply one vignette of the above propaganda, I also include a third vignette containing both vignettes (four paragraphs, Treatment 3) to project their combining effect in reality. Meanwhile, a control group with no message exposure is included for each country case. To sum up, for South Korea and Taiwan, respectively, it selects three treatment groups and one control group, making the experiment having eight groups in total (see Appendix 7.A for treatment groups and message examples).

To warrant external validity of this experiment, all treatment messages are excerpted from real news articles or opinion pieces released by China's state media outlets, printed or online. And these messages have been mostly reported previously. Minimum necessary revisions (i.e.,

transition phrases) are made to create smooth and engaging reading experience, as an individual message may include excerpts from several different articles.

The experiment was conducted between October and November 2021. 1600 participants were recruited through a market survey company located in China. To complete the experiment, all participants were directed to a US-based survey website. They first needed to answer a few questions regarding demographics and daily habits accessing news before being randomly allocated to any one of the eight groups. Participants assigned to control groups would then direct to questions inquiring their opinions over relevant issues while those to treatment groups should read messages before doing so. Figure 7.1 provides a flow graph to illustrate the research design.

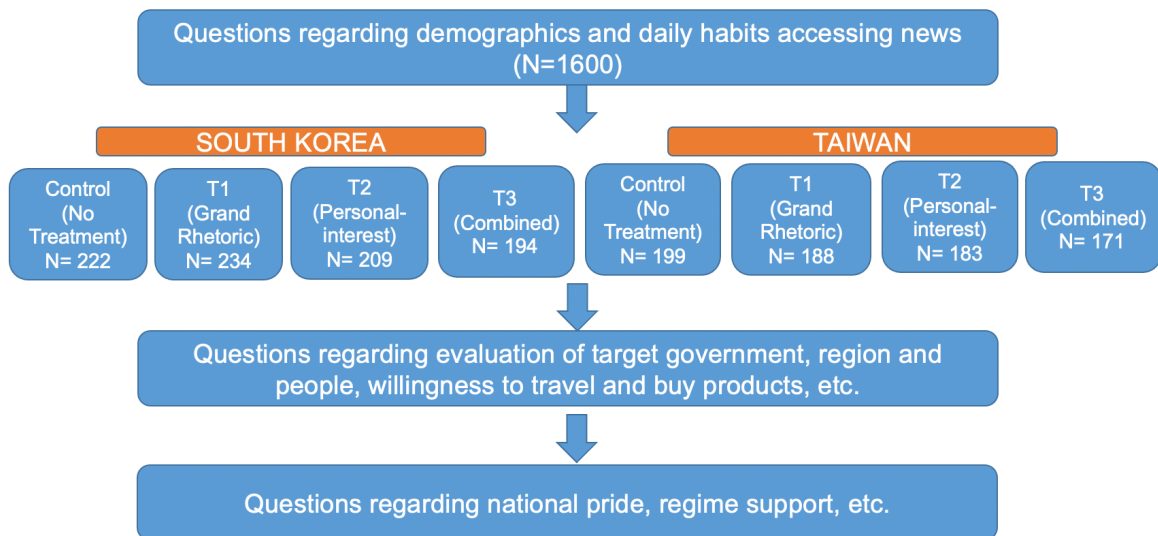


Figure 7.1 Research Design

A comparison of the survey participants and the Chinese Internet users is offered in Appendix 7.B. Similar to many studies employing online survey experiment,⁶⁰⁴ it indicates the diversity of

⁶⁰⁴For example, Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda,” 1036.

participants' sociodemographic backgrounds, despite largely younger (more in their 20s) and higher educated (more with college education and above) than China's general internet population. Echoing Huang,⁶⁰⁵ I believe that "working age adults", as predominant users of the platform, and those younger and better educated population, who are "politically active" and "represent China's future", should "worth particular attention".

Please note that the original battery questions utilize a 10-point rating scale with 1 indicating the least positive (or the most negative) sentiment and 10 as the most positive (or the least negative) sentiment. To standardize the questions, I rescaled them to a 0-1 measurement.

Variables and Measurement

Dependent Variables

The outcome variables in this section include two major facets: the effect of propaganda message on the respondents' *generic emotions toward the targets* and *their possible economic activities*. The generic emotions in this study are operationalized as 1) respondents' evaluation of the target state/region in general, 2) assessment of its government after being or not being exposed to propaganda and 3) their warmness to citizens of the targeted societies (reflected by how much the respondents would like to make friends with citizens from targeted regions).

To operationalize the participants' economic activities, I use two proxies. The first outcome variable measuring it include their willingness of planning a trip to the destined regions. As assumed throughout the paper, a reduced intention to travel, or consumer boycott in tourism, is desired and promoted by the government to curb continuing foreign pressure.

Besides, I am interested in whether they would boycott merely tourism. If a change in mood can be contagious, not only affecting seemingly unrelated opinions⁶⁰⁶ but transferring people's

⁶⁰⁵ Huang, 1036.

⁶⁰⁶ Gregory A. Huber, Seth J. Hill, and Gabriel S. Lenz, "Sources of Bias in Retrospective Decision Making: Experimental

emotions in one domain toward judgment in a completely separate domain,⁶⁰⁷ an intention to boycott one industry may “spill over” to boycotts of all products manufactured by the rivalries. This is because messages in Treatment 2, although focuses on citizens’ mistreatment in tourism, also suggests an overall violation of consumer rights. It, thus, may assumedly aggravate customers’ antagonism to other products from same rivalry region.

Sets of Hypothesis

Is the grand rhetoric framing effective? Some findings suggest there is a link between the nationalist propaganda and public sentiment,⁶⁰⁸ especially given that the state’s decade-long nationalist propaganda, or the state-led nationalist campaigns, have indeed created a good number of nationalist activists.⁶⁰⁹ And in many scenarios, such frame can rally citizens round the flag.⁶¹⁰ However, there are also studies indicating the state’s limitation in affecting social discourse.⁶¹¹ And its persuasion effect would be mediated especially when the propaganda is framed heavily-handedly and crudely.⁶¹² Beside, is the grand rhetoric, briefly discussing how national interest is sabotaged, able to mobilize the respondents into government-desired economic activities? We are unclear about this. As such, my hypothesis about the influence of grand rhetoric, often framed heavily-handed, is that it may affect the respondents in some ways but have limitations in persuading them. That is,

Evidence on Voters’ Limitations in Controlling Incumbents,” *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 4 (November 2012): 731, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000391>.

⁶⁰⁷ Andrew Healy and Neil Malhotra, “Random Events, Economic Losses, and Retrospective Voting: Implications for Democratic Competence,” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 5, no. 2 (2010): 12804, <https://doi.org/10.1561/100.00009057>.

⁶⁰⁸ Min Zhou and Hanning Wang, “Anti-Japanese Sentiment among Chinese University Students: The Influence of Contemporary Nationalist Propaganda:,” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 46, no. 1 (April 1, 2017): 167–85, <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261704600107>.

⁶⁰⁹ For example, Zhao, “A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China,” September 1, 1998; Wu, *Chinese Cyber Nationalism : Evolution, Characteristics, and Implications*.

⁶¹⁰ Chuyu Liu and Xiao Ma, “Popular Threats and Nationalistic Propaganda: Political Logic of China’s Patriotic Campaign,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2, 2018): 633–64, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2018.1483632>.

⁶¹¹ Yanqi Tong and Shaohua Lei, “War of Position and Microblogging in China,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 22, no. 80 (2013): 292–311.

⁶¹² Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda.”

H_{1a}: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, the grand rhetoric included in Treatment 1 likely will show some limited persuasion effects over the respondents' evaluation of the respective governments, the state/region as a whole and their warmness to citizens there;

H_{1b}: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, the grand rhetoric likely shows some limited persuasion effects over the respondents' willingness to boycott tourism destined to and products from target societies.

By comparison, the literature suggests that the personal-interest reporting in Treatment 2 should demonstrate rigorous persuasion effects. On the one hand, its framing is comparatively “soft” and sometimes involving human emotions. Thus, it should be regarded demonstrating persuasion effects as “soft propaganda” does.⁶¹³ On the other hand, as the content of personal-interest reporting reflects individuals' mundane interest, it should reduce the “social psychological distance” perceived by the respondents and make the messages more engaging.⁶¹⁴ Thus,

H_{2a}: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, personal-interest reporting (T2) tends to decrease the respondents' evaluation of respective governments, the state/region as a whole, and their warmness to citizens there.

H_{2b}: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, personal-interest reporting (T2) tends to increase the likelihood of the respondents boycotting tourism destined to and products from target societies.

Treatment 3 should generate significant persuasion effects, although the effect of personal-interest reporting could be diluted by the limited effect exerted by Grand Rhetoric.⁶¹⁵ So,

⁶¹³ Mattingly and Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades.”

⁶¹⁴ Leaf Van Boven et al., “Feeling Close: Emotional Intensity Reduces Perceived Psychological Distance,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 98, no. 6 (June 2010): 872–85, <https://doi.org/10.1037/A0019262>; Alexa Spence, Wouter Poortinga, and Nick Pidgeon, “The Psychological Distance of Climate Change,” *Risk Analysis* 32, no. 6 (June 1, 2012): 957–72, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1539-6924.2011.01695.X>.

⁶¹⁵ Here I'm not assuming that both frames are necessarily additive to each other. The Grand Rhetoric, as some scholars argue, may even generate “backfire effect” that dilutes the effectiveness of propaganda messages. Therefore, both additive or dilution

H3a: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, news messages combining grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting (T3) tend to decrease the respondents' evaluation of respective governments, the state/region as a whole and their warmness toward citizens there;

H3b: Compared to no exposure to propaganda, news messages combining grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting (T3) tend to increase the likelihood of the respondents boycotting tourism destined to and products from target societies.

Key Control Variables

In addition to the causal inference of political messages over the respondents' political sentiment and actions, this survey includes control variables to uncover predictors that may also confound the effectiveness of framing tactics. It employs four sets of predispositional variables: individual national pride, regime and policy support, socio-demographic factors, and variables concerning individuals' personal daily interests or concerns.

I include these predispositional variables as it has been found that the effect of propaganda can be contingent on a respondent's national pride⁶¹⁶ and socio-demographic factors such as age, education and gender.⁶¹⁷ Regime support related variables (such as general political trust of the government, etc.) are also often used as fundamental predisposition variables in examining the effects of propaganda.⁶¹⁸

effect may occur. But since in this experiment, I am only comparing if using any of the frames could differ from not being treated with any frames at all, I do not highlight which framing strategy shows strongest persuasion effect.

⁶¹⁶ Fei Shen and Zhongshi Steve Guo, "The Last Refuge of Media Persuasion: News Use, National Pride and Political Trust in China," *Asian Journal of Communication* 23, no. 2 (April 2013): 135–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292986.2012.725173>; Dan Chen, "Political Context and Citizen Information: Propaganda Effects in China," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 31, no. 3 (September 1, 2019): 463–84, <https://doi.org/10.1093/IJPOR/EDY019>.

⁶¹⁷ Ashley Esarey, Daniela Stockmann, and Jie Zhang, "Support for Propaganda: Chinese Perceptions of Public Service Advertising," *Journal of Contemporary China* 26, no. 103 (January 2, 2016): 101–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2016.1206282>; John James Kennedy, "Maintaining Popular Support for the Chinese Communist Party: The Influence of Education and the State-Controlled Media," *Political Studies* 57, no. 3 (October 1, 2009): 517–36, <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1467-9248.2008.00740.X>.

⁶¹⁸ See, for instance, Pan, Shao, and Xu, "How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing."

The set of national pride variables includes five questions such as their intention to buy Chinese brands, to maintain national interest at the risk of self-interest, preference to be Chinese citizens and the notion that China is better than other countries, that the world would be better if everyone is like Chinese. As one can tell, the questions in the national pride index are more in line with patriotism than nationalist sentiment.⁶¹⁹

The set of regime and policy support variables include another five questions: one question straightforwardly asking the respondents' support for the political system, one for attitudes towards the role of the government, two questions concerning political trust, and one regarding their support for government policies. All questions regarding these two sets are consistent with previous studies.⁶²⁰ For research parsimony, I grouped these questions into two sets of indices, with the Cronbach alpha scores for national pride being 0.783 and regime support 0.735, demonstrating the internal coherence of these questions.

Also, I add one factor to the conventionally employed socio-demographic variables, foreign language proficiency (in Korean or English)⁶²¹ in the Korean case to reflect the influence of one's access to the foreign world on his/her evaluation of it.⁶²²

While the first two sets of variables reflect individuals' quite general interests or concerns, this experiment also highlights a set of variables speaking to individuals' relatively mundane interest or experience in specific domains: the respondents' daily habit of consuming entertainment

⁶¹⁹ Bruce J. Dickson, Mingming Shen, and Jie Yan, "Generating Regime Support in Contemporary China: Legitimation and the Local Legitimacy Deficit," *Modern China* 43, no. 2 (October 14, 2016): 123–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700416672419>.

⁶²⁰ Wenfang Tang and Benjamin Darr, "Chinese Nationalism and Its Political and Social Origins," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21, no. 77 (September 2012): 811–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2012.684965>; Darrel Robinson and Marcus Tannenber, "Self-Censorship of Regime Support in Authoritarian States: Evidence from List Experiments in China," *Research & Politics* 6, no. 3 (July 12, 2019): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168019856449>; Bart Bonikowski and Paul DiMaggio, "Varieties of American Popular Nationalism," *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 5 (September 8, 2016): 949–80, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416663683>; GESIS, "ISSP 2013 – National Identity III Basic Questionnaire," International Social Survey Programme, accessed August 29, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12312>.

⁶²¹ There are two missing values in this variable. I thus used fluency level 2 (indicating know a little of foreign language) to replace the missing data as it approximates the mode, mean and median

⁶²² Zhou and Wang, "Anti-Japanese Sentiment among Chinese University Students: The Influence of Contemporary Nationalist Propaganda."

products released by target regions (an ordinal variable measured by time watching Korean/Taiwanese films, dramas, programs or listening to Korean/Taiwanese music) and their interest in traveling (dummy variable with 0 indicating not interested and 1 interested),⁶²³ as the former can condition respondents' warmth to foreign states⁶²⁴ and the latter should largely impact one's travel intentions and plans.

Appendix 7.C shows that independent variables are well-balanced across the groups, with the mean of each treatment group not significantly different that of the control groups. Two variables in the South Korea panel, income and habits of consuming entertainment demonstrate slightly significant difference between the personal relatable news treatment group and the control group. To address the concern, I have the demographics and other covariates controlled by using the regression analysis in the next section.

Results, Analysis and Discussion

South Korea

I first present difference-in-means tests of each treated group as opposed to those not treated in the panel of Korea. As Figure 7.2 shows, being exposed to personal-interest reporting indeed yields significant results across all dependent variables. First, news with personal-interest reporting can significantly stoke participants' emotions toward South Korea as a nation, its government and people. For example, it reduces the respondents' assessment of the government by more than 0.1 and 0.075 on the region regarding the mean (on 0-1 scale). More interestingly, such enmity is not merely reflected in their immediate emotions but can translate to their intended actions like plans on international travels (a reduction of about 0.1). Furthermore, the findings suggest a "spillover

⁶²³ The time period is locked between 2016 and 2020 because both crises started from around 2016 and till 2020 before almost all international travels were canceled (and discouraged) due to the COVID.

⁶²⁴ Peter Gries, "Disillusionment and Dismay: How Chinese Netizens Think and Feel About the Two Koreas," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (2012): 31–56, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S159824080000761X>.

effect” where propaganda pertaining to consumer mistreatment of a particular industry can also influence the citizen consumers’ intention to buy products from the very destination in general. All demonstrate personal-interest reporting induces quite vigorous effect. The Treatment 3 shows even stronger impacts. These findings confirm both H_2 and H_3 . In other words, the propaganda innovation by employing personal-interest reporting should be considered successfully manipulating public sentiment and hostile economic activities as desired, at least in Korea case. In such a way, the propaganda not only helps the state stir up anti-Korean attitudes but, more importantly, dissuades them from traveling to Korea and consuming products, achieving the expected goals of economic coercion.

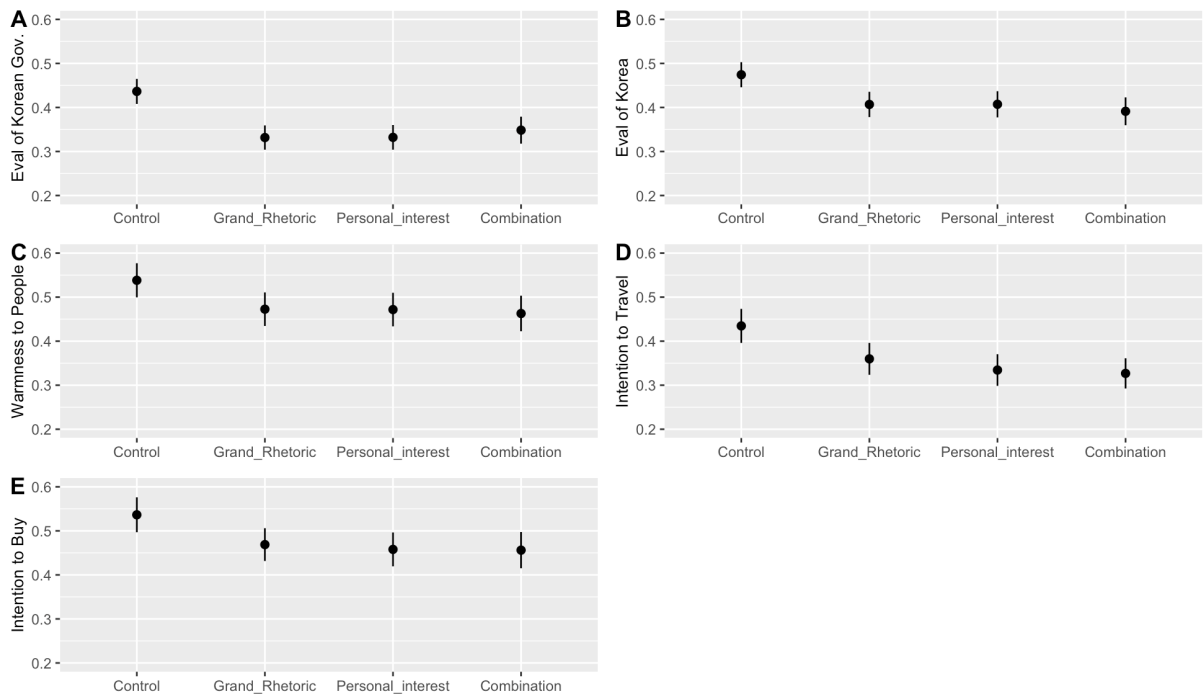


Figure 7.2. Treatment effects of propaganda on hostile sentiments against South Korea and economic activities. Bars show 95% confidence intervals for the mean for each condition.

Meanwhile, the grand rhetoric appears effective, too. While with abstract and even cliched rhetoric, the narrative remains effectively affecting recipients in accordance with state anticipation:

lower assessments of Korea, the government and less warmth to its people, as well as reducing the likelihood of making trips to South Korea, buying Korean. However, the results appear to question previous theorization that crude hard propaganda would show limited effects over persuading the information receivers. Although this study does not examine whether grand rhetoric, which narrates eroding national interest, can signal the state power and thus deter dissent, the findings suggest even using such kind of nationalist cliché, the state remains powerful in persuading message recipients into political attitudes and behavior in ways favored by the regime in the diplomatic wars.

To remove the effect generated by demographic imbalance, check the robustness of the difference-in-means rests and capture the variance caused by other confounding variables, I use the OLS regression for further analysis (see Table 7.1). In the South Korea panel, with or without controlling the covariates, three treatments show largely the same results as indicated by the difference-in-means comparisons: they effectively churn out animosity towards Korea and stimulate boycotts in tourism services and in general products.

Independent variables, additionally, exhibit notable implications of the influence of predisposition over the respondents' opinions. First, variables related to general feelings show quite limited impacts. The respondents' supports dedicated to the regime and state polices are not significantly related to any of their emotions or economic behavior to Korea. By comparison, although the participants' increased level of national pride, holding all other variables constant, can significantly decrease their evaluation of the rivalry state and discourage them from consuming products and traveling the very state provides, it has no significant effects over how the respondents desire to retain relationship with Korean people. In contrast, factors concerning mundane interest such as the participants' habits of entertainment products exposure and self-

reported interest in traveling positively affect all dependent variables.⁶²⁵ Such banal habits and interest, more interestingly, like the personal-interest news, which reflect ordinary people's everyday interest, can cause the spillover effect over the participants' opinions. Increased interest in traveling augments their positive emotions toward Korea in a general sense, appraisals of the nation, the government, the merchandises and even people there. I find similar results using the original 1-10 scale as a measurement of all dependent variables and employing an ordered logit model (see Appendix 7.D).

Table 7.1 OLS Model with Covariates (South Korea)

	<i>Dependent Variables</i>				
	Evaluation of Gov	Evaluation of Korea	Warmness to People	Probability of Travel	Probability of Buying
Grand Rhetoric	-0.094*** (0.017)	-0.052*** (0.016)	-0.052* (0.022)	-0.063*** (0.018)	-0.057** (0.022)
Personal-Interest	-0.094*** (0.017)	-0.052** (0.016)	-0.058** (0.022)	-0.093*** (0.019)	-0.071** (0.022)
Combination	-0.076*** (0.017)	-0.067*** (0.016)	-0.063** (0.023)	-0.099*** (0.019)	-0.069** (0.023)
National Pride	-0.045** (0.014)	-0.039** (0.013)	-0.013 (0.018)	-0.068*** (0.016)	-0.041* (0.018)
Regime Support	0.010 (0.013)	-0.0001 (0.013)	-0.019 (0.017)	-0.003 (0.015)	-0.008 (0.017)
Watch Drama	0.063*** (0.010)	0.110*** (0.009)	0.108*** (0.013)	0.088*** (0.011)	0.108*** (0.013)
Interest in Travel	0.044*** (0.013)	0.065*** (0.012)	0.093*** (0.017)	0.178*** (0.014)	0.087*** (0.017)
Constant	0.466*** (0.060)	0.392*** (0.057)	0.380*** (0.079)	0.427*** (0.067)	0.479*** (0.079)
Demographics	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	859	859	859	859	859
R ²	0.162	0.282	0.181	0.349	0.208
F Statistics	12.530***	25.558***	34.872***	17.024***	14.337***

Note: + $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

⁶²⁵ The results are similar even disaggregating the nationalism index and the regime support index, with almost all indicators of regime support not significantly affecting anti-Korean sentiments and actions at the 0.05 level and only a couple of indicators of nationalism gain significance. The variables of consuming entertainment products and showing interest in traveling, in contrast, are significantly influencing all dependent variables.

The results further confirm the assumption of attaching more importance of personal immediate interest in examining government propaganda effectiveness, as opposed to those general, abstract interest on behalf of the state and nation. Certainly, some of such factors reflect the influence of a foreign country's soft power over private preferences of recipients.⁶²⁶ This may explain why the Chinese government has continued regulating the development of Korea popular entertainment industry (Korean Wave) in China in particular and reining in the influence of Korea's soft power over Chinese people in general.⁶²⁷

Many previous studies argue that citizens' predispositions such as political awareness, education, nationalist leaning and regime support may condition the effect of propaganda.⁶²⁸ Appendix 7.E thus further examines this concern by breaking the respondents into subgroups across the dimensions of education, national pride and regime support⁶²⁹ in the same logic with current literature.⁶³⁰ Compared with the aggregate attitude, results indicate reduced statistical significance of treatments in some scenarios due probably to shrunk samples in each group, but all of the subgroups still reflect enmity toward Korea after the propaganda, irrespective of political leanings and education.

⁶²⁶ Joseph S. Nye, "Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power," Basic Books, 1990.

⁶²⁷ Ji Hoon Park, Yong Suk Lee, and Hogeun Seo, "The Rise and Fall of Korean Drama Export to China: The History of State Regulation of Korean Dramas in China.," *International Communication Gazette* 81, no. 2 (October 11, 2018): 139–57, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048518802915>; Lu Chen, "The Emergence of the Anti-Hallyu Movement in China," *Media, Culture & Society* 39, no. 3 (April 27, 2016): 374–90, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716646176>; Youna Kim, *The Korean Wave: Korean Media Go Global*, Taylor and Francis (Taylor and Francis, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315859064>.

⁶²⁸ Barbara Geddes and John Zaller, "Sources of Popular Support for Authoritarian Regimes," *American Journal of Political Science* 33, no. 2 (May 1989): 319–47, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111150>; Chen, "Political Context and Citizen Information: Propaganda Effects in China"; Kennedy, "Maintaining Popular Support for the Chinese Communist Party: The Influence of Education and the State-Controlled Media."

⁶²⁹ Here in the national pride and regime support indices, I disaggregated them and used solo indicator respectively as respondents exhibit extremely high nationalism and support for the regime with only slight variation. Therefore, I chose the most varied indicator from each index, "buying Chinese brands" and "support for the political system" to represent nationalism and regime support. The threshold of high and low education is 4 (max 8), indicating respondents receiving below or beyond high school education. The threshold of high and low national pride is 0.8 (max 1) and that of regime support is 0.8 (max 1), too. Setting the latter two indicators at the cutoff point at 0.8 out of 1 is indeed relatively high but this is how the means and mode are like, due to some "ceiling effect" of nationalism and regime support in China. Reducing them to the 0.7 yield same results.

⁶³⁰ Huang, "The Pathology of Hard Propaganda," 1037.

Taiwan

Will these treatments demonstrate the same effectiveness in manipulating public attitudes and economic activities towards Taiwan? As Figure 7.3 suggests, personal-interest reporting mentioning Taiwan's ordeal travel environment indeed rigorously influences some of the nationalist attitudes and their economic actions, especially the respondents' attitudes to the Taiwanese government, reducing the likelihood of them traveling there and slightly lowering the assessment of Taiwan as a society. This confirms H2a but partly violates H2b, which indeed complicates the story.

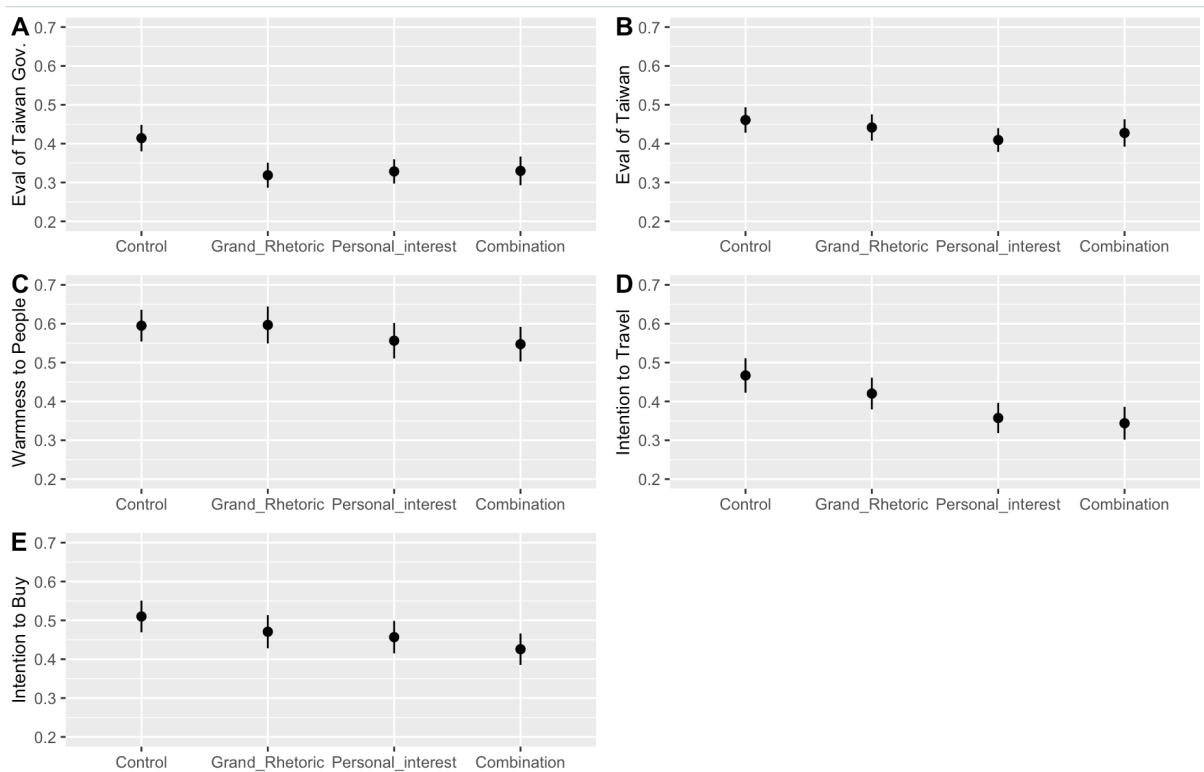


Figure 7.3. Treatment effects of propaganda on hostile sentiments against Taiwan and economic activities. Bars show 95% confidence intervals for the mean for each condition.

(Taiwan)

Compared with the propaganda directed at South Korea, Taiwan-related propaganda is less effective in provoking antagonism to Taiwan as a society, its products and people. This phenomenon is even more salient when looking at the grand rhetoric and the combination treatment. The former loses its strength in manipulating public opinion in majority domains, and the latter casts not significant light on persuading recipients' attitudes toward the Taiwanese society and its people. The findings indeed indicate the robustness of personal-interest reporting in shaping the public but also suggest its limited influence in particular contexts, not to mention the grand rhetoric. What other mechanisms may work in between mediating the effects? I leave this question until later.

The OLS models (see Table 7.2) show similar, though slightly different, results. Controlling covariates, generally, all messages can exert significant influence over respondents' hostile emotions towards the Taiwanese government, their intention to travel to Taiwan and purchasing Taiwanese products. Personal-interest reporting also show rigorous influence over the respondents' sentiment towards Taiwan in general. However, other than that, we see the weakness of the propaganda messages in changing their opinion toward Taiwanese people. Furthermore, like in the difference-in-means tests, treatments containing grand rhetoric (both T1 and T3) play not significantly in affecting people's opinion of Taiwan as a whole region. The Ordered Logit Models yield almost same findings (Appendix 7.F).

Similarly, like in the Korean analysis, independent variables related to personal habits and interest such as watching Taiwanese dramas and consuming Taiwanese songs positively condition the participants' warmness toward all sentiments and actions, including those towards Taiwan as a whole and its people, with only interest in touring Taiwan this time not relate to their evaluation of the government. The public's general interest such as national pride or regime support,

comparatively, appear to not that critical in affecting citizens’ nationalist sentiments and following economic activities. Increased regime support, surprisingly, tends to improve respondents’ evaluation of Taiwan at the $p < 0.1$ level, although it loses significance in the logit model. Such findings, again, further confirm the robustness of the regression models in the South Korea panel and emphasize the necessity to probe independent factors related to personal interest in examining the effectiveness of propaganda.

Table 7.2 OLS Model with Covariates (Taiwan)

	<i>Dependent Variables</i>				
	Evaluation of Gov	Evaluation of Taiwan	Warmness to People	Probability of Travel	Probability of Buying
Grand Rhetoric	-0.099*** (0.020)	-0.024 (0.019)	-0.006 (0.026)	-0.061** (0.023)	-0.049* (0.024)
Personal-Interest	-0.085*** (0.020)	-0.049* (0.019)	-0.028 (0.026)	-0.101*** (0.023)	-0.045+ (0.024)
Combination	-0.080*** (0.020)	-0.024 (0.019)	-0.040 (0.026)	-0.117*** (0.023)	-0.076** (0.024)
National Pride	-0.255** (0.095)	-0.327*** (0.090)	-0.063 (0.121)	-0.175 (0.107)	-0.288* (0.112)
Regime Support	0.035 (0.079)	0.132+ (0.075)	0.063 (0.101)	-0.027 (0.090)	0.096 (0.093)
Watch Drama	0.056*** (0.013)	0.079*** (0.012)	0.103*** (0.016)	0.088*** (0.014)	0.096*** (0.015)
Interest in Travel	-0.003 (0.015)	0.035* (0.015)	0.100*** (0.020)	0.164*** (0.017)	0.094*** (0.018)
Constant	0.584*** (0.076)	0.457*** (0.072)	0.276** (0.097)	0.362*** (0.086)	0.437*** (0.089)
Demographics	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	741	741	741	741	741
R ²	0.100	0.142	0.25	0.163	0.137
F Statistics	6.772***	10.020***	20.195***	11.811***	9.627***

Note: + $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Using subgroups to investigate if different sets of citizens—again, across the education, national pride and regime support dimensions—are affected to a diverse extent generates similar but

intriguing results. Like the subgroup comparisons in the South Korea panel, treatments may lose significance across some variables due to reduced sample size, but propaganda generally demonstrate negative influence over the participants' attitudes towards Taiwan. However, when tested their likelihood of making Taiwanese friends, in a few scenarios (see Appendix 7.G), participants exposed to grand rhetoric show more intentions to make Taiwanese friends and inflated evaluation of Taiwan, mostly around participants with relatively low national pride (intentions to be Chinese citizens < 0.9, max 1),⁶³¹ high education (average education beyond high school) and higher regime support (supporting political system > 8). This may echo the previous studies that a subset group of people are reverse to propaganda,⁶³² but raises the question that haunts over so far: why is Taiwanese people and Taiwan as a whole region? To answer this question, I delve into an explanation of the differences of propaganda between South Korea and Taiwan.

Comparing South Korea and Taiwan

Why does the state propaganda have a harder time persuading the recipients to air hostility to Taiwanese people than to Korean people? Although it is hard to systematically decipher the mechanisms behind this disparity, a reminder of China's propaganda strategy would benefit our understand of this issue and help further confirming the evidence presented before. Again, distinctive from South Korea perceived as an entirely foreign state, Taiwan is considered a renegade province that must be united with the mainland. Thus, regarded essentially internal affairs while maintaining intricate relations with the mainland, topics of Taiwan are quite sensitive and media reports of them should follow quite stringent directives on what can be covered and how,

⁶³¹ In subgroup comparisons regarding Taiwan, I chose intention to be Chinese citizens to indicate national pride as it is the most varied indicator among all five national pride indicators.

⁶³² Geddes and Zaller, "Sources of Popular Support for Authoritarian Regimes."

including correct terminology to address Taiwan related issues.⁶³³ As one may recall in examining frames regarding Taiwan issues, the “common bloodline” narrative is also often seen. The narrative of “seeking root” (xungen) of Taiwanese people searching for their ancestors or alive relatives in the mainland is also highlighted.⁶³⁴ Besides, China’s propaganda of Taiwan often termed the island with the nickname of “treasure island” (baodao). Taiwan’s renown sightseeing, such as the Sun and Moon Lake, is frequently cited as a reminder of it being part of China. Compared to commendatory connotation related to Taiwan and its people, the Taiwanese government and authorities are neutrally named “dangju” and often derogatorily ridiculed not the legitimate government on the island.⁶³⁵ Such propaganda likely leads to somewhat intricate emotions held by mainland Chinese for Taiwan: they loath the government whereas desire to keep close social interactions with people there.

This may, to some extent, help explain why the survey participants demonstrate fairly low assessment of the Taiwanese government but relative hospitality to people and Taiwan as a whole. Recall Figure 7.3 where even the nontreated control group rates the Taiwanese government on an average of slightly over 0.4 on a 0-1 scale, lower than that of the Korean government (almost 0.45, recall Figure 7.2), with other treatment groups presenting even more hostility. By comparison, their warmness to Taiwanese people, indicated by the likelihood of making friends, reaches a surprising mean of almost 0.6 in the control group, the highest among all groups across all dependent variables, compared to a score of no more than 0.55 in Korean case. Even treated by

⁶³³ Anne Marie Brady, “Unifying the Ancestral Land: The CCP’s ‘Taiwan’ Frames,” *The China Quarterly* 223 (September 7, 2015): 787–806, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S030574101500082X>.

⁶³⁴ For example, see

https://weibo.com/1644114654/EoDa6noS8?refer_flag=1001030103_&ssl_rnd=1662050169.5563&type=comment

⁶³⁵ Jun Tao Yeung, “Why Is Taiwan so Important? The Manipulation of Nationalism in Legitimizing One-Party Rule in China,” *The Yale Review of International Studies*, October 2019, <http://yris.yira.org/essays/3613>.

propaganda messages, the means center around 0.55. Average means of attitudes toward Taiwan as a whole region, similarly, are higher than those projected by the Korean samples on average.

These findings should strengthen my argument rather than weakening it because they shed light on how propaganda prevails in the recipients' opinions by having them internalize the message, especially those introducing personally related emotions such as the "compatriots" or "common bloodline" narratives. The intriguing results generated by Table 7.2 seems to echo such explanation: those who claim higher regime support tend to demonstrate increased evaluation of Taiwan as a whole, partially because being more supportive of the regime promotes one more likely to consume pervasive state narratives and persuaded (in this case, that Taiwan is a treasure island and people there are their compatriots). These findings are also consistent with what Huang argues for the "backfire effect" in which if the messages are incongruent with the receivers' prior opinions, they tend to "counterargue with the messages and move further away from the positions advocated by the messages".⁶³⁶

Conclusion

Are the two dominant framing strategies in reporting rivalry regions, namely, grand rhetoric and personal-interest reporting, effective in mobilizing more supporters into government promoted campaigns, particularly a wave of hostile sentiment and antagonist actions? The answer is briefly yes. In most scenarios, no matter employing traditional propaganda strategies such as grand rhetoric or innovation such as personal-interest rhetoric, the government is able to elicit ire from the audience so that the latter conveys antagonism towards targeted governments and then export subsequent actions that may undermine targeted societies' economies such as tourism and manufactures. In this process, personal-interest reporting news demonstrates more robustness in

⁶³⁶ Huang, "The Pathology of Hard Propaganda," 1035.

persuasion effects than grand rhetoric. However, in some particular context, especially where prior propaganda messages have prevailed over the audience's mind, like in the case of Taiwan, both frames may lose attractiveness and not so efficient.

These findings contribute to our current understanding of authoritarian propaganda while call it into more question. First, testing the effectiveness of personal-interest reporting enriches the studies of media effects.⁶³⁷ It boasts among the first of its kind that examines the effectiveness of such a kind of government propaganda innovation in manipulating public opinion and behavior. The findings add more evidence to the current discussion of “soft propaganda” that if framed propaganda softly, the government can rely on it for opinion shaping.⁶³⁸ Meanwhile, however, results also seem to challenge the previous argument over “hard propaganda” that the heavy-handed indoctrination exerts limited influence on persuasion.⁶³⁹ Although it has shown that in particular scenarios the heavy-handed grand rhetoric could refrain from persuading the audience into antagonism, it at least can help the state achieve immediate economic goals through opinion manipulation. This suggests the limitations of the “hard propaganda” theorization that whether and how propaganda persuades should also depend on what the state endeavors to persuade with. Besides, the findings once again indicate an emphasis on context-specific in examining media effects and its effectiveness. Under some circumstances, the effectiveness of both frames propaganda might be mediated by previously prevailing state narratives and show the “backfire”

⁶³⁷ Geddes and Zaller, “Sources of Popular Support for Authoritarian Regimes”; John R. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion, The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511818691>; Xueyi Chen and Tianjian Shi, “Media Effects on Political Confidence and Trust in the People's Republic of China in the Post-Tiananmen Period,” *East Asia* 19, no. 3 (September 2001): 84–118, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-001-0011-3>.

⁶³⁸ Rozenas and Stukal, “How Autocrats Manipulate Economic News: Evidence from Russia's State-Controlled Television”; Mattingly and Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades”; Zou, “When Nationalism Meets Hip-Hop: Aestheticized Politics of Ideotainment in China*.”

⁶³⁹ Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*; Huang, “Propaganda as Signaling”; Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda”; Carter and Carter, “When Autocrats Threaten Citizens with Violence: Evidence from China”; Little, “Propaganda and Credulity.”

effect.⁶⁴⁰ Empirically, meanwhile, this experiment boasts to be one of the few studies that involve the “hard propaganda” and “soft propaganda” concurrently and make comparisons, the attempt of which has been encouraged by scholars.⁶⁴¹

More broadly, the findings also improve our understanding of authoritarian resilience.⁶⁴² They indicate that authoritarian governments like China have not only adopted various ways of propaganda innovation to adapt to the new demands their audience have attended to but empirically showed that in doing so, they can maintain the public to conform to state goals spontaneously and thus fabricate more “voluntary compliance”⁶⁴³ that ultimately help the regime remain resilient.

⁶⁴⁰ Huang, “The Pathology of Hard Propaganda.”

⁶⁴¹ Mattingly and Yao, “How Soft Propaganda Persuades.”

⁶⁴² Nathan, “China’s Changing of the Guard: Authoritarian Resilience”; Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 2018; Han, “Debating China beyond the Great Firewall: Digital Disenchantment and Authoritarian Resilience.”

⁶⁴³ Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 2018.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

How do states achieve foreign policy goals using economic means? This project seeks to understand the question by bringing in a perspective that has been well-acknowledged but understudied in recent years: state-led mobilization.

This project argues that to achieve diplomatic goals, such as changing political behavior of overseas governments, China's party-state would mobilize myriad domestic actors, particularly commercial entities and the mass public to partake in the economic retribution for counteracting international pressure. Examining China's diplomatic frictions with South Korea during the THAAD dispute between 2016 and 2017 as well as the cross-strait tensions with Taiwan in 2016 and 2019, this project focuses on the party-state's use of outbound tourism in dealing with such conflicts.

Through the lens of a "hard plus soft" dual mobilization paradigm that combines mobilization by decree and mobilization by persuasion, this project argues that the Chinese government endeavors to rally a wide range of domestic forces, including commercial and social actors to counteract foreign pressure. On the one hand, the government establishes intermediary economic actors, such as travel agencies, to help execute state directives by requiring citizens to abide by "hard", coercive state rules. It orders travel agencies, which are well-supervised by the state, to help the government implement formal or informal tourism bans in which ordinary tourists would find themselves *unable* to make desired trips as planned. On the other hand, the state carries out "soft mobilization" through media persuasion to manipulate public opinion and to bring citizens

into spontaneous compliance such that the prospective tourists are *unwilling* to insist on the trips. In conducting the soft mobilization, it not only *primes* domestic audience of the political agenda the government has been promoted, but engage in strategic *framings* to accommodate national interest as well as ordinary citizens' everyday interest.

Experimental and real-world investigations of the effectiveness of such dual mobilization paradigm also demonstrate that both the hard and soft mobilization tactics can successfully prevent domestic actors from traveling to rival regions to a large extent, with which the Chinese government should be able to punish the targets through weaponizing the tourism industry, a measure of economic coercion.

Why Is the Project Important, again?

My examination of China's economic use in achieving state goals, thus, speaks to myriad bodies of literature and situates itself in an interdisciplinary entrepreneurship. In speaking with comparative politics literature, it brings back in the conception of mobilization, particularly in an authoritarian context. It attempts to remind the readers that mobilization, although believed marginalized in contemporary realpolitik, retains autocrats' attention because of its ability to shore up mass support. The hard plus soft mobilization paradigm sets itself apart from current studies in identifying two entirely different mechanisms through which authoritarian states can rely on and expect to complete diverse goals, that is, one for action manipulation and the other for opinion manipulation. Moreover, it brings attention to a tripartite interaction that involves the state, the commercial actors (travel agencies) and the citizens. Different from previously highlighted state-society interplay, this project aims to undergird the importance of intermediary actors, such as commercial actors, in maintaining an organic and vibrant state-society interaction and fortifying authoritarian rule.

Same importantly, the examination of domestic mobilization for diplomatic use introduces one analytical concern that is not fully addressed in international relations studies: what is the role of domestic actors in shaping foreign relations? In quite a long term, domestic forces have been considered a useful and reliable force that could be exploited in diplomacy. However, how this role is reflected in such a particular field as economic coercion remains blurred and understudied. Economic coercion or sanction is mostly dealt with as an interplay between the state and certain economic entities, with little attention paid to the public. Therefore, the current research that investigates economic sanctions at diplomatic wars through a lens of state mobilizing both the market force and the public at the same time is much needed, not to mention it delves into an economic sector much cornered in IR, the tourism industry.

Tourism, while acknowledged as a helpful means in handling foreign relations, barely gains enough academic attention. With the development of international exchange, however, students of political science should notice the increasing salience of international tourism in foreign policy. Moreover, the focus on tourism invites further research into more innovative, but overlooked, means that states can rely on to achieve desirable goals. For instance, it is believed that the Chinese government has instrumentalized the high-tech-loaded social credit system and even a health-tracker system to combat COVID to realize state control.⁶⁴⁴

Empirical findings, of course, also unveil the state's innovation in mobilizing the masses through persuasion. Propaganda authorities not only use media to prime the audience with the key information they desire to highlight and promote but smartly exploits different types of media and various platforms to reach to groups of target audience. Besides, through different frames, the state

⁶⁴⁴ Weilun Soon, "Chinese Protestors Fear COVID QR Code Is Being Used to Monitor Them," Business Insider, June 17, 2022, <https://www.businessinsider.com/chinese-protestors-fear-covid-qr-code-monitor-them-2022-6>; Katie Canales, "China Social Credit System, Punishments and Rewards Explained," Business Insider, December 24, 2021, <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-social-credit-system-punishments-and-rewards-explained-2018-4>.

no longer relies merely on grand nationalistic rhetoric but endeavors to enshrine in the audiences' mundane life and contemplate on their personal immediate interest when propagating. Such framing strategies are also found effective in helping achieving state diplomatic goals. These sets of evidence together call for more thoughts into propaganda innovation in the field of media politics.

Last but not least, this project sheds light on an intensely debated “authoritarian resilience” agenda embraced by numerous prestigious scholars: how the Chinese authoritarian regime remains resilient among all kinds of challenges, from within the state and outside of it?⁶⁴⁵ Divorced from many current studies, this project explained this resilient regime through the mobilization framework in which it suggests state mobilization, no matter in terms of hard mobilization or soft mobilization, as an important capacity that an authoritarian regime can rely on. On the one hand, it resorts to intermediary actors for policy implementation, which helps force social actors into compliance. On the other hand, to reduce defiance, it has managed to reinforce the rule by accommodating more citizens through various propaganda tactics, smartly mixing traditional strategies with propaganda innovation, in confronting the challenges brought by a more marketized and digitalized era. Through the bifurcated hard plus soft scheme, it harvests “discontented compliance”⁶⁴⁶ and “contented compliance” that can facilitate government's political and diplomatic goals.

⁶⁴⁵ Andrew J. Nathan, “China's Changing of the Guard: Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 1 (2003): 6–17, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2003.0019>; Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (Oxford University Press, 2008); Rongbin Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2018); Rongbin Han, “Debating China beyond the Great Firewall: Digital Disenchantment and Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, July 5, 2022, 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11366-022-09812-4>.

⁶⁴⁶ Han, *Contesting Cyberspace in China: Online Expression and Authoritarian Resilience*, 55.

Economic Retaliation in Other Forms

Indeed, tourism remains only one among all economic tools the Chinese government can depend on for retaliation. Considering the economic interdependency between (mainland) China and Korea/Taiwan, the former has retained a set of toolkit for economic leverage. Such measures include a wide range of types from embargos of goods (including cultural goods) to forbidding the entry (exit) of particular group of people. Retribution may also direct at foreign investment entities.

As the largest importer of Korean products, China is the target country of almost \$137 billion, 26% of all Korean exports per year solely before THAAD.⁶⁴⁷ Many products are quite popular among Chinese public, such as Korean cosmetics. A set of 2015 statistics indicate that China's imports of South Korean cosmetics rose 237 percent year on year, with Korea accounting for 19.1 percent of all cosmetic imports in China.⁶⁴⁸ Korean exports hence become another major target of China's economic retaliation. In late 2016, a report revealing Korean cosmetics containing excessive levels of toxic heavy metal was disseminated nationwide.⁶⁴⁹ Beginning in 2017, China announced that it would be banning imports of 19 Korean cosmetics products for diverse reasons, though mainly regarded as a punitive response to THAAD.⁶⁵⁰

Apart from forbidding importing tangible products, the Chinese government also shifts attention to non-traditional products: a ban on Korean entertainment products, that is, the so-called Korean wave (hallyu). The Korean wave, including Korean pop music (K-pop) and Korean dramas/movies (K-drama/K-movie), has become enormously popular among Chinese youth since

⁶⁴⁷ People's Republic of China Ministry of Commerce, "2015 年韩国货物贸易及中韩双边贸易概况," 2016, https://countryreport.mofcom.gov.cn/record/view110209.asp?news_id=47547.

⁶⁴⁸ Peter S. Kim, "How South Korean Cosmetics Are Seducing Chinese Consumers," Nikkei Asia, June 3, 2015, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/How-South-Korean-cosmetics-are-seducing-Chinese-consumers>.

⁶⁴⁹ For a report of this kind, see Minghao Zhang, "韩国半永久化妆品近半重金属超标 个别含一级致癌物," Sina, October 8, 2016, https://www.sohu.com/a/115551763_119038.

⁶⁵⁰ Ja-young Yoon, "China Bans Imports of 19 Korean Cosmetics," The Korea Times, January 11, 2017, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/biz/2017/01/488_221794.html.

earlier this century. China boasts one of the largest importers of Korean wave products.⁶⁵¹ Some of the K-dramas were imported at the price of \$280,000 an episode, even higher than many better-known American dramas.⁶⁵² In 2018, moreover, China contributed \$111.96 million to the Korean music industry, ranked the second highest among all countries.⁶⁵³ As another immediate response to THAAD, the Chinese government was reported decreeing an unofficial “Korea ban order” (xian han ling), outlawing importing and airing South Korean entertainment content, including dramas, movies, advertisement, and games,⁶⁵⁴ halting visa issuance to K-pop stars,⁶⁵⁵ and even imposing restrictions on all music shows funded and produced by Korean companies.⁶⁵⁶ It was estimated that the Korean entertainment industry lost over \$54 million in revenue because of the ban.⁶⁵⁷

Another form of economic retaliation worth momentous attention is how Lotte Mart, a hypermarket belonging to the Lotte group, was treated amid the THAAD tensions. Since Lotte group signed to swap land with the Korean government for installing THAAD facilities, by August 2017, a total of 74 of the 112 Chinese Lotte Mart stores had been forcibly closed for reasons such fire safety violations by local governments and never reopened until 2018 Lotte Mart announced withdrawing from China.⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵¹ Fan Wang, “‘限韩令’下的韩流产业能否重回中国市场?,” BBC, December 12, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-42319225>.

⁶⁵² K Xian Zhanche, “韩剧引进单集要价数百万，国剧出海每集只能卖几千，新成立的中国电视剧出口联盟能打破巨额逆差吗,” Sohu, January 2, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/214251818_649449.

⁶⁵³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/625143/south-korea-export-music-region/>; <https://www.statista.com/statistics/625158/south-korea-export-music-industry/>

⁶⁵⁴ Ki-Yong Kim, “Korean Drama to Be Aired in China in Six Years,” The Dong-a Ilbo, January 6, 2022, <https://www.donga.com/en/article/all/20220106/3128212/1>.

⁶⁵⁵ Jethro Mullen, “China’s ‘Unofficial’ Sanctions over THAAD Missile System Rattle South Korea,” CNN.com, March 3, 2017, <https://money.cnn.com/2017/03/03/news/economy/china-south-korea-thaad-tourism-trade-sanctions/>.

⁶⁵⁶ Daniel Sanchez, “China Bans Any and All Korean Music and Entertainment,” Digital Music News, November 29, 2016, <https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2016/11/29/china-bans-korean-hallyu-kpop/>.

⁶⁵⁷ Tamar Herman, “Korean Entertainment Thrives On Beneficial But Tense Relationship With Chinese Investments,” Forbes, February 27, 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tamarherman/2018/02/27/korean-entertainment-thrives-on-beneficial-but-tense-relationship-with-chinese-investments/?sh=4c4d4aff6364>.

⁶⁵⁸ Darren J. Lim and Victor Ferguson, “Chinese Economic Coercion during the THAAD Dispute,” The Asan Forum, December 28, 2019, <https://theasanforum.org/chinese-economic-coercion-during-the-thaad-dispute/#12>.

Besides, Chinese aviation authorities rejected the application of chartered flights before the 2017 Lunar New Year.⁶⁵⁹ Serviced when there are surplus demands, chartered flights play a supplementary role during Lunar New Year, the most important national holiday in China. As a Korean official explained, it was truly “unprecedented” for a whole group of flights of various carriers and routes to be disapproved, and thus suspicious of a malign “side effect” of THAAD.⁶⁶⁰

The way the mainland has disciplined Taiwan is quite similar to South Korea but bears slight distinctions. In 2021, the mainland released a couple of bans on importing Taiwanese fruits such as pineapples and lychee. As pineapples are an important source of income for farmers in central and southern Taiwan, and almost all exported pineapples are entirely shipped to China before the ban, the embargo posed severe threats to Taiwan local farmers.⁶⁶¹ The ban also makes the mainland stake of Taiwan’s fruit exports dropping from 80 percent to less than 50 percent.⁶⁶²

Besides, the government employs various reasons to castigate pro-independence Taiwanese enterprises. For example, in 2021, it imposed hefty fines on Taiwan’s Far Eastern Group, which financed pro-independence forces, at around 70 million US dollars for multiple violations, mostly of fire safety, environmental preservation, etc., at their factories in China. When asked if this was related to the government’s anti-independence course, an official replied, “We welcome support for Taiwan compatriots and Taiwan enterprises to invest and develop in the mainland, ... but those who support “Taiwan independence” and undermine cross-strait relations will never be allowed to make money in the mainland...”⁶⁶³

⁶⁵⁹ Korea Times, “China Rejects Applications for Chartered Flights from South Korea,” South China Morning Post, January 2, 2017, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/2058683/china-rejects-applications-chartered-flights-south-korea>.

⁶⁶⁰ Korea Times.

⁶⁶¹ Betty Hou, “China’s Ban on Taiwan Pineapples Backfires as New Buyers Step In,” Bloomberg, August 5, 2021, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-08-05/china-s-ban-on-taiwan-pineapples-backfires-as-new-buyers-step-in#xj4y7vzkg>.

⁶⁶² Asia Fruit, “台湾水果：大陆进口份额下滑近 50%仍为最大市场,” October 25, 2021, <https://asiafruitchina.net/index.php?id=3232>.

⁶⁶³ BBC, “中国惩处台湾远东集团 背后的政治和经济考量,” November 26, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-59416392>.

Also, perhaps to reduce Taiwan's revenue gained from international education, the mainland government also reportedly prevented students from studying in Taiwan on purpose. Mainland students, who account for 40 percent of all international students in Taiwan, contribute not only tuition and fee but higher health insurance than students from any other countries/regions.⁶⁶⁴ Mainland students, thus, are considered a major source of income for Taiwanese colleges. Since Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration in May 2016, rumors have gone viral with regards to the party-state's decisions on limiting the number of students applying for colleges in Taiwan.⁶⁶⁵ From 2020, China's Ministry of Education suspends all programs that send mainland students to Taiwan for further education, explaining this is affected by the COVID-19 and *the current cross-strait relations*.⁶⁶⁶

Admittedly, the mainland government should have been more confident in economically coercing Taiwan's pro-independence force, given the massive trade and cultural exchanges between two parties. But unlike disciplining South Korea in a "comprehensive" fashion—penalizing economic entities and individuals regardless of political stance—the mainland government appears lenient with those challenging its official narratives. For example, in 2018 when Taiwan president Tsai Ing-wen's paid a visit to an 85°C Bakery, a coffee shop owned by a Taiwanese company, on a stopover during a diplomatic trip in Los Angeles, both Chinese citizens and the mainland government were outraged. As the major market of 85°C Bakery, the mainland rebuked the private company for supporting Taiwan independence.⁶⁶⁷ However, while e-

⁶⁶⁴ China News, "台媒：赴台学生近4成来自大陆 台湾相当倚赖陆生," February 15, 2016, <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/m/tw/2016/02-15/7757128.shtml>.

⁶⁶⁵ Ke Wei, "分析：台湾的大学需要靠陆生才能存活？," BBC, June 6, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/china/2016/06/160606_ana_taiwan_china_university.

⁶⁶⁶ Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, "暂停 2020 年陆生赴台就读试点工作," April 9, 2020, http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/xw_zt/moe_357/jyzt_2020n/2020_zt03/zydt/zydt_jyb/202004/t20200409_441791.html.

⁶⁶⁷ Global Times Online, "精彩了，台湾 85 度 C 这是嫌自己还凉的不够快啊," Sohu, August 15, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/247405208_419342.

commerce platforms discontinued 85°C products to vent dissatisfaction and the public expected it to shut down as Korea's Lotte,⁶⁶⁸ it resumed normal service only a month later as the resentment subdued.⁶⁶⁹ In other words, the 85°C Bakery did not receive same level of punishment as Lotte.

Meantime, the mainland government encourages cultural relations in terms of entertainment. As long as not acclaiming pro-independence, Taiwanese actors find them easy to screen in the mainland, and TV dramas co-produced with institutions from Taiwan are administrated in a quite relaxed fashion.⁶⁷⁰ Taiwanese actors, in this regard, are treated entirely different compared to their Korean counterparts. The mainland government, furthermore, has never stopped chartered airlines across the strait since they started to transport Taiwanese citizens working in the mainland from the 2003 Lunar New Year.

Readers may raise questions on why the mainland government behaves more moderate in economically punishing Taiwan. I pause here and leave this concern until later.

Countermeasures to Countermeasures

China appears to be adept at using economic means to countermeasure international pressure and diplomatic conflicts. It can turn to a variety of tools, such as innovative means like imposing tourism ban (which is the focus of this project) and even on entertainment industry, or traditional means like embargos to flex its economic muscles.

However, neither regions resign themselves to “death”. In response to China's economic retaliation, both expend great efforts in countering the negative effects caused by the tourism ban. The Korean government has resorted to three major measures: directing at the Chinese government,

⁶⁶⁸ Beijing Business Today Online, “母公司‘神助攻’，外卖平台已经下架，85度C怕是要凉凉,” Sohu, August 16, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/247571874_268453.

⁶⁶⁹ Hongxun Wu, “85度C大陸市場止血 外賣平台恢復上架,” China Times, September 25, 2018, <https://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20180925002305-260511?chdtv>.

⁶⁷⁰ Shanghai Youth Daily, “广电总局放宽台湾剧准入机制 鼓励海峡两岸交流,” Sina, September 5, 2006, <http://ent.sina.com.cn/v/m/2006-09-05/09421231456.html>.

encouraging China's domestic tourists and addressing the domestic problems within Korea. The Korean government first appealed to the World Trade Organization to determine if the Chinese government is treating South Korean companies unfairly, including its decisions on freezing Korea-bound tours and suspended sale and distribution of Korean entertainment products.⁶⁷¹

In addition to the complaints, it proactively modified the visa policy executed in China for dozens of years. Before the issuance of the travel advisory (regarded as the informal tourism ban) in March 2017, submission of all tourism visa application, group visa or individual visa, was required through government-authorized travel agencies. 12 days after the travel warning, Korean Embassy in China announced the pause of agency-assisted visa application, replacing it with a much more relaxed policy that allowed individual tourists to submit visa application in person without going through travel agents.⁶⁷² This change signifies obvious countermeasures toward China's tourism ban, as tourists can shy away travel agencies, which minimizes Chinese government's interference. However, such provisional countermeasure was quickly abandoned as Sino-Korean relations improved in late 2017.⁶⁷³ Moreover, beginning from mid-2017, local governments in Korea even promoted a temporary visa waiver policy targeting particular group of Chinese tourists, encouraging more visits to Korea.⁶⁷⁴

It is also realistic to slacken interdependency on China and look for an alternative market. Succeeding the THAAD confrontation, the Korean government turns the economic gear into other countries and deepens its ties with them. A new program, the so-called New Southern Policy (NSP),

⁶⁷¹ BBC, "S Korea Complains to WTO about China over Thaad," March 20, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-39324536>.

⁶⁷² See the Weibo entry by Korean Embassy.

https://weibo.com/2394895404/EzV8OAqRW?from=page_1001062394895404_profile&wvr=6&mod=weibotime&type=comment

⁶⁷³ https://weibo.com/2394895404/FzkzLmfT8?from=page_1001062394895404_profile&wvr=6&mod=weibotime&type=comment#_rnd1654352531409

⁶⁷⁴ Shihua Tang, "South Korea to Grant 15-Day Visa-Free Entry for Chinese Citizens for Three Months," Yicai Global, December 1, 2017, <https://www.yicaiglobal.com/news/south-korea-to-grant-15-day-visa-free-entry-for-chinese-citizens-for-three-months>.

was launched in November 2017 led by the Moon Jae-in administration that aimed at fostering stronger ties with Southeast Asia.⁶⁷⁵ For example, Korea has attracted a growth of 28 percent tourists from ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries between 2017 and 2019, and ASEAN-Korean trade volume registered a 37 percent increase in 2019.⁶⁷⁶ Besides, the Korean government aspired to attract 1.2 million Muslim tourists in 2017 after losing the Chinese market, a 22 percent bump from 2016.⁶⁷⁷

Taiwanese authorities have fostered similar measures to neutralize the mainland government's influence. Similar to Korean government resorting to international organizations like WTO for mediating its trade disputes with China, Taiwan raised a trade complaint against mainland China at a WTO meeting over Beijing's moves to block imports of Taiwanese products.⁶⁷⁸

Besides, Taiwan released more friendly policies to entice mainland visitors. It increased the quota from 5000 tourists daily to 6000 at the end of 2016.⁶⁷⁹ Some officials from Kuomintang-administered prefectures (the pan-blue coalition), capitalizing on their pro-unification stance, promoted local tourism in the mainland.⁶⁸⁰ However, different from the Korean scenario, Taiwan-bound tourism has been an outcome from bilateral agreement and thus under severe (Chinese) government surveillance. Since the Chinese government interferes in almost all phases in tourism

⁶⁷⁵ Kathryn Botto, "South Korea Beyond Northeast Asia: How Seoul Is Deepening Ties With India and ASEAN," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 19, 2021, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/10/19/south-korea-beyond-northeast-asia-how-seoul-is-deepening-ties-with-india-and-asean-pub-85572>.

⁶⁷⁶ Aaron Jed Rabena, "An Asia-Pacific View of South Korea's New Southern Policy," *Unravel* (Columbia University Press, April 13, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.7312/SNYD18548-008/PDF>.

⁶⁷⁷ Rachel Premack, "After Losing Chinese Tourists, South Korea Wants To Grow Its Burgeoning Muslim Tourism Numbers," *Forbes*, October 19, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelpremack/2017/10/19/south-korea-wants-to-solve-its-tourism-crisis-with-halal-food/?sh=4bc4a6253640>.

⁶⁷⁸ Emma Farge, "Taiwan Raises WTO Complaint against China in Fruit Dispute | Reuters," *Reuters*, November 4, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/business/taiwan-raises-wto-complaint-against-china-apple-imports-sources-2021-11-04/>.

⁶⁷⁹ Cankao Xiaoxi, "台当局增大大陆赴台自由行配额 旅游业者：本来也用不完," *ifeng*, December 21, 2016, <http://news.ifeng.com/50447990/news.shtml?&back>.

⁶⁸⁰ Zhonglan Zheng, "陆推'泛蓝 8 县市旅游'其他县市不乐见," *BBC*, October 2, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/china/2016/10/161002_taiwan_mainland_tourism_mayors.

application to Taiwan, the Taiwan side alone is comparatively feeble in handling China's sanctions on tourism.

To make it less dependent on the mainland, Taiwan launched its version of New Southbound Policy in September 2016, equivalent to Korea's NSP. This initiative also aims to enhance cooperation and exchange with countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia and Australasia. In terms of merely the tourism industry, Tsai Ing-wen's administration provided relaxation of visa requirements to qualified applicants from a few ASEAN countries. The number of tourists traveling from ASEAN countries then rose 16 percent in 2016 and more than 29 percent in 2017, with travelers from Thailand and Brunei growing by 57 percent and 52 percent respectively and tourists from Philippines seeing a 69 percent jump, in comparison to Vietnamese tourist figures nearly doubled.⁶⁸¹ In 2019, the year before COVID, the number of foreign visitors to Taiwan hit a record high, the outcome by luring tourists from other markets, mostly Japan and Southeast Asia.⁶⁸²

Economic Retaliation Toward Other Countries

China's use of economic means to lever international conflicts is not unique toward South Korea and Taiwan. As briefed in Chapter 1, the Chinese government has flexed its economic muscle in response to foreign pressure almost since 2010, involving countries and regions around the world.

Many of them received traditional forms of economic sanction, such as blocking or delaying goods imports. For example, in 2010, the Chinese government banned the imports of Norwegian salmon, the second largest export of this northern European country, for it awarding China's

⁶⁸¹ Hunter Marston and Richard C. Bush, "Taiwan's Engagement with Southeast Asia Is Making Progress under the New Southbound Policy," Brookings, July 30, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/taiwans-engagement-with-southeast-asia-is-making-progress-under-the-new-southbound-policy/>.

⁶⁸² Isabella Steger, "Taiwan Tourism Hits Record High despite China Boycott," Quartz, January 7, 2020, <https://qz.com/1780709/taiwan-tourism-hits-record-high-despite-china-boycott/>.

dissident Liu Xiaobo the Nobel Peace Prize, resulting in an estimated loss between 125 and 176 million US dollars in direct exports of fish to China and direct total exports from Norway to China of between 780 and 1300 million US dollars in the period 2011–2013.⁶⁸³ Amid the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute on the Diaoyu Islands, the Chinese government placed a trade embargo on all exports to Japan of rare earth, a crucial category of minerals used in products like hybrid cars, wind turbines and guided missiles.⁶⁸⁴ Bananas imported from the Philippines, accounting for more than 80 percent of total banana imports in China, were also halted at customs as China escalated its quarrel with the Philippines over the Huangyan island in the South China Sea in 2012, leading to Filipino merchants complaining about millions of dollars loss.⁶⁸⁵ Besides, it postponed or ceased imports of Australian products such as beef, coalmine, wine and barley during waves of diplomatic tensions as Australia grows concerns of Chinese political meddling in the Australian society and because the Australian government has pushed for an international, inquiry into the origins of the COVID-19 targeting China.⁶⁸⁶ Canola oil shipment was also slowed and even canceled from Canada to China, albeit the latter making up for 40 percent of Canada’s canola exports each year.⁶⁸⁷ Because of Canadian detention of Meng Wanzhou, an executive at the Chinese telecom giant Huawei Technologies Co., canola seed exports to China have fallen from \$2.8 billion before the restrictions to \$800 million.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸³ Ivar Kolstad, “Too Big to Fault? Effects of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize on Norwegian Exports to China and Foreign Policy,” *International Political Science Review* 41, no. 2 (January 10, 2019): 207–23, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512118808610>.

⁶⁸⁴ Keith Bradsher, “China Bans Rare Earth Exports to Japan Amid Tension,” CNBC, September 23, 2010, <https://www.cnbc.com/id/39318826>.

⁶⁸⁵ Andrew Higgins, “In Philippines, Banana Growers Feel Effect of South China Sea Dispute,” *The Washington Post*, June 10, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/in-philippines-banana-growers-feel-effect-of-south-china-sea-dispute/2012/06/10/gJQA47WVTV_story.html.

⁶⁸⁶ Daniel Hurst, “China Reportedly Orders Halt to Imports of Australian Coal,” *The Guardian*, October 12, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/oct/12/china-orders-halt-to-imports-of-australian-coal>.

⁶⁸⁷ Amanda Coletta, “China Has Put Canadian Canola Oil in the Middle of A Wider Geopolitical Dispute,” *The Washington Post*, March 27, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/03/27/china-has-put-canadian-canola-oil-middle-wider-geopolitical-dispute/>.

⁶⁸⁸ Tony Seskus, “Farm Groups Hope End of Meng Wanzhou Case Leads to Resolution of Canola Dispute with China,” CBC, September 28, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canada-china-canola-trade-1.6191706>.

Economically weaponizing international education is also seen amid the Sino-Australian conflicts. From 2018, China's Ministry of Education issued several warnings on studying in Australia, citing the vicious attacks and worsened discrimination on Chinese students.⁶⁸⁹ Even China's state-affiliated media, *Global Times*, acknowledged the warning as a result of aggregated China-Australian relationship and China's stepped-up attempts at economically pressuring the Australian government,⁶⁹⁰ considering that Australia's higher education system is heavily reliant on fee-paying Chinese students, which accounted for about 40% of all international students before COVID.⁶⁹¹

Last but not least, tourism bans are employed from time to time. In frictions with Japan (2012), the Philippines (2012), Palau (2017), other than Taiwan and South Korea, the Chinese government all issued formal and informal tourism bans or travel warnings and directed travel agencies not to send tours.

Differences Behind Mobilization:

Government Capacity and Intention

As China emerges as the world's economic powerhouse, it would naturally take the economic arsenal to counteract foreign pressure and mold international relations. In every handling, mobilizing the domestic audience becomes critical. A more intriguing concern is, thus, how we should treat the differences in state's mobilization attempts.

Indeed, the whole project reveals that the government tends to vary its mobilization strategies according to different sets of timeframe and targets. Take mobilization in the tourism industry, for instance. The hard mobilization in terms of travel bans is not always available to all conflicts. Only

⁶⁸⁹ Lin Wan and Keyue Xu, "China Issues Fresh Warnings on Studying in Australia," *Global Times*, February 5, 2021, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202102/1215063.shtml>.

⁶⁹⁰ Wan and Xu.

⁶⁹¹ BBC, "China Pressure 'Undermining Australian Universities', Report Says," June 30, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-57647418>.

around five countries/regions have been avenged through tourism bans, and countries like Canada and the U.S. received almost none sanctions related to tourism. Moreover, even the hard mobilization is implemented at various severity. Amid conflicts with Taiwan, the government issued a *formal* travel ban on individual tours while with Korea, it merely released travel advisory, although considered as an *informal* ban. Hard mobilization is also unleashed *not* at the outset of conflicts but implemented progressively until it comes to the peak of argument. For example, in the THAAD crisis, the Chinese government did not reveal the tourism ban until Lotte Group agreed upon the land swap, which was almost eight months into the dispute. While upset with Tsai Ing-wen's pro-independence position, the party-state chose not to rely on a formal travel ban until close to Tsai's second term.

On the other hand, the employment of soft mobilization is also context specific. As discussed in previous chapters, China's propaganda regarding Taiwan centers relatively around the pro-unification narratives and insists on the common blood-line discourse whilst downplaying political conflicts. For South Korea, by comparison, the conflict rhetoric is quite obvious. In frictions with other states, furthermore, soft mobilization is even unemployed. For instance, there is quite little media release of Palau, the small island country that was also attacked by Chinese government's travel ban, to the Chinese public. Among major domestic media, only *Global Times* and *China Youth Daily* released a couple of short articles covering Palau's conflict with China, others being silent and shunned away from the topic.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹² For these two articles, see Global Times Online, “帕劳拒与台湾‘断交’: ‘一个中国’不是我们的选择,” China Youth Daily Online, August 20, 2018, http://news.cyol.com/content/2018-08/20/content_17499321.htm; Sikun Li, “帕劳为应对中国‘旅游禁令’求助美日,” China Youth Daily Online, July 27, 2018, http://news.cyol.com/content/2018-07/27/content_17421932.htm.

Although it is not the project's major objective to examine the drives behind state-led mobilization systemically, a succinct discussion should be conducive. Briefly, I consider the government's varied *capacity* and *intention* in mobilization to be a good start to think of.

The following discussion looks into government capacity and intention in hard mobilization and soft mobilization, respectively. For research parsimony, this discussion roughly dichotomizes the government mobilization capacity and intention into two levels, high and low, generating four brief scenarios. But as will be further explained, in the real world, the intricacy of government capacity and intention in mobilization would lead to more variation in each scenario.

Capacity and Intention in Hard Mobilization

Theoretically, the capacity of hard mobilization in managing outbound tourism refers to the level of government interference in citizens' trips. If one individual can skirt government interference (that is, through assistance provided by travel agencies) in visiting a particular region, the capacity of hard mobilization is then considered low. If not, it should be considered high.

For example, tours to South Korea, Taiwan and Japan requires the involvement of government-authorized travel agencies (or government agencies themselves) throughout the whole tourism document application process (see Table 8.1, scenario 1). Admittedly, however, trips to Taiwan are even more demanding than any other regions/countries, considering the application of all travel documents is required to process under government supervision. Thus, in the category of "high" capacity of hard mobilization, Taiwan should be of the highest level of hard mobilization capacity.

Trips to some other countries, such as Palau, the Philippines, Norway and Australia, are more straightforward and simpler (scenarios 2 and 4). As Palau's visa on arrival policy is available to Chinese citizens, the tourists often do not have to go through travel agencies for a trip opportunity to Palau, if they opt out of group tours. Government interference in the U.S. and Canada trips is

even less likely, as all individuals are requested to submit visa application in person, including those packed in group tours. That said, while some can rely on travel agencies for certain assistance during the application and tours, in an ideal scenario, one can be blessed with a tour completely without third-party involvement. This results in a hard mobilization difficult to launch.

Table 8.1 Categorization of Government’s Capacity and Intention in Hard Mobilization

		Capacity	
		High	Low
Intention	High	Scenario 1 Taiwan (2019>2016) South Korea after Lotte land swap, Japan	Scenario 2 Palau, The Philippines
	Low	Scenario 3 South Korea before Lotte land swap	Scenario 4 The United States, Canada, Norway, Australia

However, the government is not stagnant in the *intention* to practice the capacity. I consider government intention to carry out the capacity into real world through if an administrative order (formal or informal) has been delivered to the travel agencies for tour suspension. Obviously, government intention of use of such capacity fluctuates across time and situation. For example, the party-state is not in full-fledged intention to exercise its hard mobilization capacity beginning the THAAD crisis until the Lotte group approved the land swap deal (scenarios 3 versus scenario 1). In addressing the cross-strait conflicts, it demonstrates high intention for repressing Taiwan’s tourism in 2016 but even greater in 2019, representing by an official tourism ban on all individual tours (within scenario 1).

There are scenarios where the government is low in its capacity in mobilizing the domestic audience in a hard form and thus, thus barely enthusiastic about exploiting it (see scenario 4).

There is quite limited evidence that Chinese authorities have issued directions about freezing or reducing tours to such countries as the U.S., Canada, Norway, and Australia, even when their tensions climaxed.⁶⁹³

However, relatively low capacity indicates not equivalently low intention. In scenario 2 where individual tourists can avoid government authorized/affiliated intermediary actors at their own discretion, the government remained its ambition to launch a tourism ban by require a cancelation of group tours to the Philippines and Palau. Such hard mobilization is effective to a large extent, given the plummet of Chinese arrivals in Palau, for example.⁶⁹⁴

Capacity and Intention in Soft Mobilization

Chinese government's capacity and intention of hard mobilization may vary according to different context, its capacity in soft mobilization is nonetheless overwhelming. Given the daily supervision over media industry, the party-state's ability in launching soft mobilization (in the form of propaganda) is quite high. As government grips on the media information get increasingly tightened, news regarding international affairs may enjoy very limited variation. In this regard, I consider the government capacity in soft mobilization to be constantly high, regardless of what the target is.

Nonetheless, the intention to resort to the soft mobilization varies (see Table 8.2). Conflicts with South Korea and Taiwan showcase what a high intention of soft mobilization is like. Although the concrete strategies distinguish in Korea and Taiwan cases, propaganda attempts are rather evident: negative information is frequently reported, with the exploitation of both grand rhetoric

⁶⁹³ Ankit Panda, "China's US Travel Alert: Weaponizing Tourism Amid the Trade War? – The Diplomat," The Diplomat, June 5, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/chinas-us-travel-alert-weaponizing-tourism-amid-the-trade-war/>.

⁶⁹⁴ Lauren Beldi, "China's 'Tourist Ban' Leaves Palau Struggling to Fill Hotels and An Airline in Limbo," ABC News, August 27, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-26/china-tourist-ban-leaves-palau-tourism-in-peril/10160020>.

and personal-interest reporting. The government employs such messages to signal frustration as well as to discourage potential travels.

In conflicts not expounded on in this project, such as those with the U.S., Canada and Australia, the party-state also endeavors to propagandize and shape public sentiment. For instance, China’s Tourism Bureau released travel advisory to the U.S. in a straight four years from 2018 to 2021, citing this country inflicted by the gun abuse and safety problems and warning travelers of possible racial discrimination. Negative news often dominates headlines, surrounding issues such as mass shootings and mishandling of the COVID, agitating the public warmness to this country. Likely, the government also issued two travel advisories to Australia (in 2020 and 2021) and one to Canada (in 2019), respectively, raising similar safety concerns. In reporting confrontations with Japan and the Philippines on controversial territories, state media also play the role of fueling the flame.⁶⁹⁵

On the contrary, its intention to mobilize public opinion toward Norway and Palau is relatively low. As mentioned, the government appears to underestimate the friction between China and Palau with only two major media portals covering the very issue. In covering Norway’s meddling in China’s human rights affairs, only a few party mouthpieces briefly introduced the conflict with almost no commercial media republishing relevant articles.⁶⁹⁶

Table 8.2 Categorization of Government’s Intention in Soft Mobilization

High	Low
Scenario 5 South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, The United States, Canada, Australia	Scenario 6 Norway, Palau

⁶⁹⁵ Zhan Zhang, “Fanning the Flames of Public Rage: Coverage of Diaoyu Islands Dispute in Chinese Legacy Media,” in *The Dispute Over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands*, ed. Thomas A. Hollihan (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 81–118, https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137443366_4.

⁶⁹⁶ For such articles, see, for example, Xinhua, “挪威诺贝尔委员会搞‘缺席’颁奖仪式成闹剧,” *China Daily*, December 11, 2010, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqgj/2010-12/11/content_11686579.htm.

Given the above, it is important to notice that the state-led mobilization should be contextualized. That said, the state may possess the capacity to mobilize a general public, but the capacity varies according to what diplomatic foes it is confronting. Meanwhile, whether it is willing to present the capacity also depends on time, targets and context. And the intention to mobilize might be quite conditioned on the capacity perceived by the government: the *interaction* between capacity and intention dictates, to a large extent. In other words, the government calculates the expected *utility* of its mobilization policy

Such notions are especially important in this project. As shown throughout, the Chinese government's strategy in maneuvering tourism differs between Korea and Taiwan, especially when taking its propaganda strategy into account. The belief that regards Taiwan as an internal territory significantly shapes how the party carries out propagation. Compared with the conflict-ridden anti-Korean rhetoric, Taiwan-related propaganda is less adversarial and sometimes more cooperative.

The softened intention to highlight conflict also likely justifies the question raised before: why does the Chinese government behave more moderate when penalizing some undisciplined Taiwanese enterprises? Since unification is the ulterior goal of the mainland government, it could take the economic penalty more as an opportunity to signal discontent; after all, Taiwanese businesspeople who do business in mainland (taishang) are widely perceived the key conduit for Beijing's influence and supporters of economic integration between Taiwan and the mainland.⁶⁹⁷ Hence to win over more pro-unification followers instead of distancing potential allies, the government's strategy on Taiwan has remained quite privileged and favorable, at least at face value.

⁶⁹⁷ Murray Scot Tanner, *Chinese Economic Coercion Against Taiwan: A Tricky Weapon to Use, Chinese Economic Coercion Against Taiwan: A Tricky Weapon to Use* (RAND Corporation, 2007), <https://doi.org/10.7249/MG507>.

Beyond Foreign Policy, Beyond China

While the analytical concern of this project is to address the question of how an authoritarian state like China achieves foreign policy goals using economic means, the proposal of state-led mobilization can have broader implications beyond merely in terms of economic means or constrained within diplomatic conflicts. In dealing with domestic crises, for example, we can still identify the use of hard and soft mobilization in contemporary domestic affairs in China. For example, in its serious attempts at combating the COVID pandemic since 2020, the Chinese government mobilizes almost all economic and social actors through draconian mandates, escorted by propaganda and even disinformation of the illness to indoctrinate average citizens.⁶⁹⁸ This kind of mobilization appears to become a widely retained tool when tackling domestic crises and governance in China.

In a broader comparative context, this project draws more attention to state-led mobilization in other societies. Recent scholarship has increasingly pointed out that totalitarian regimes have mobilized their people and used popular support to achieve their goals, demonstrated in Putin's Russia, Venezuela and the authoritarian Taiwan.⁶⁹⁹ More interestingly, even in quite some democracies such as the United States, state-sponsored mobilization had been employed as a critical tool in managing the Civil Rights era.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁸ Bo Yan et al., "Why Do Countries Respond Differently to COVID-19? A Comparative Study of Sweden, China, France, and Japan," *American Review of Public Administration* 50, no. 6–7 (August 1, 2020): 762–69, https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074020942445/ASSET/IMAGES/LARGE/10.1177_0275074020942445-FIG2.JPEG; Melanie Manion, "The Information Politics of COVID-19 in China," in *The Coronavirus: Human, Social and Political Implications*, ed. James Miller (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 69–75, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-9362-8_8; Kecheng Fang, "'Rumor-Debunking' as a Propaganda and Censorship Strategy in China," in *Disinformation in the Global South*, ed. Herman Wasserman and Dani Madrid-Morales (John Wiley & Sons, 2022), 108–22, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119714491.CH8>.

⁶⁹⁹ Grzegorz Ekiert, Elizabeth J. Perry, and Xiaojun Yan, *Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements, Ruling by Other Means* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108784146>.

⁷⁰⁰ David Cunningham and Peter B. Owens, "Enforcement Networks and Racial Contention in Civil Rights–Era Mississippi," in *Ruling by Other Means State-Mobilized Movements*, ed. Grzegorz Ekiert, Elizabeth J. Perry, and Xiaojun Yan (Cambridge University Press, 2020), 110–39, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108784146.005>.

These together, again, brings to mind the framework of state-led mobilization in governance. In explaining government management of domestic and foreign affairs, *mobilization* may have already become a critical component in investigating and evaluating its capacity.

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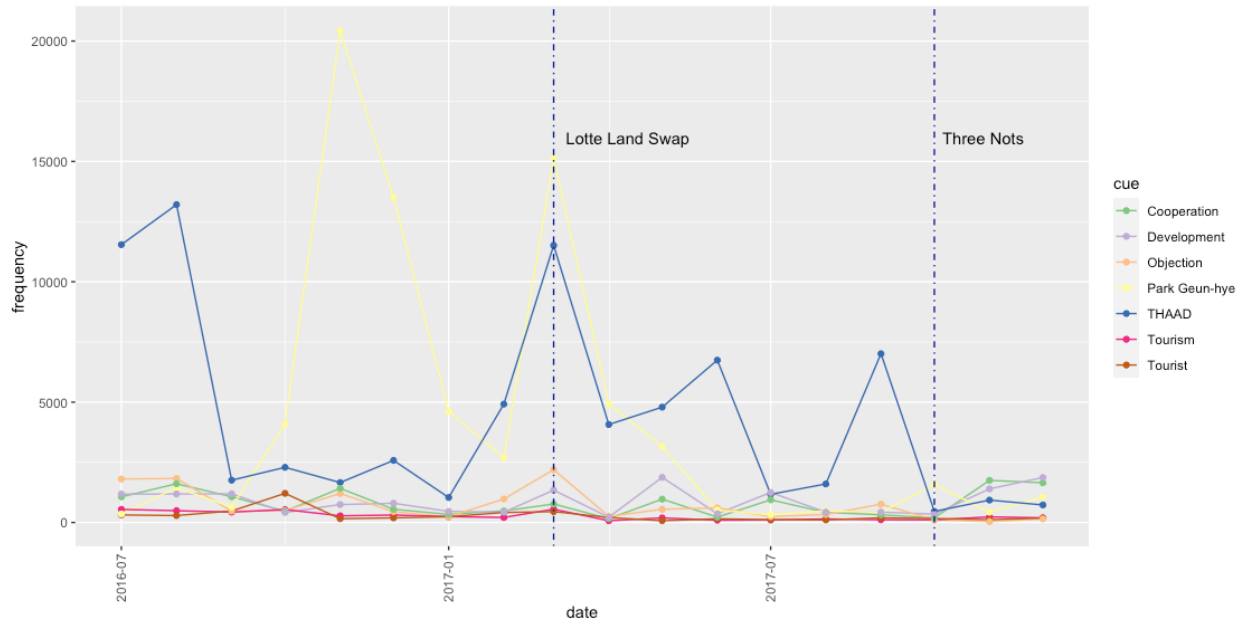
APPENDICES

Appendix 5.A Top 10 Keywords Monthly of South Korea (Rest Months)

May 2016		Aug 2016		Nov 2016		Dec 2016		Jan 2017	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
China	2962	THAAD	13205	Park Geun-hye	20430	Park Geun-hye	13503	Park Geun-hye	4614
North Korea	1768	Deployment	7882	President	9823	President	9408	Japan	4105
Sino-Korea	1530	China	5982	Choi Soon-sil	8898	Choi Soon-sil	4562	President	3688
Cooperation	1198	U.S.	4996	Prosecutor	8322	Impeachment case	4319	Comfort-woman	3052
Enterprise	1122	System	4765	Investigation	7699	Opposition Party	4209	Ban Ki-moon	2563
Seoul	1118	North Korea	4711	Agreement	5529	Congress	3951	Event	2229
Conduct	1067	Missile	3641	Opposition Party	4971	Congressman	3892	Choi Soon-sil	2227
Disinfectant	1015	Japan	2790	Blue house	4473	Impeachment	3860	Report	2153
Tourism	985	Problem	2741	Event	4302	State	3569	Lee Jae-yong	2032
Humidifier	981	Seoul	2414	Report	4005	Through	3326	Crony	1939
Mar 2017		Apr 2017		May 2017		Jun 2017		Jul 2017	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Park Geun-hye	15146	President	5232	Moon Jae-in	11400	THAAD	6745	Korean side	2279
THAAD	11511	Park Geun-hye	4927	President	10655	Deployment	3911	North Korea	2263
President	9985	THAAD	4070	Election	5695	Assessment	3210	Both sides	2259
Deployment	6838	Candidate	3652	THAAD	4792	Moon Jae-in	3205	Relations	2078
China	6511	North Korea	3532	Candidate	3471	Blue house	2587	Chinese side	1802
North Korea	5378	Moon Jae-in	2593	Vote	3255	Ministry of Defense	2137	U.S.	1744
Prosecutor	4906	Missile	2568	Park Geun-hye	3156	President	2067	President	1686
Investigation	4225	Ahn Cheol-soo	2456	Xinhua News Agency	2788	Environment	2035	Military	1614
Xinhua News Agency	4082	U.S.	2382	Seoul	2770	System	2031	Problem	1567
U.S.	3891	Deployment	2330	State	2768	U.S.	1900	Moon Jae-in	2379
Aug 2017		Oct 2017							
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency						
North Korea	3306	Park Geun-hye	1578						
Moon Jae-in	1944	China	1230						

U.S.	1888	President	1095
THAAD	1601	U.S.	829
Missile	1470	Noh Young-min	719
Report	1428	Moon Jae-in	693
Japan	1380	Rank	680
President	1347	Seoul	587
Seoul	1326	Report	560
Lee Jae-yong	1294	Relations	513

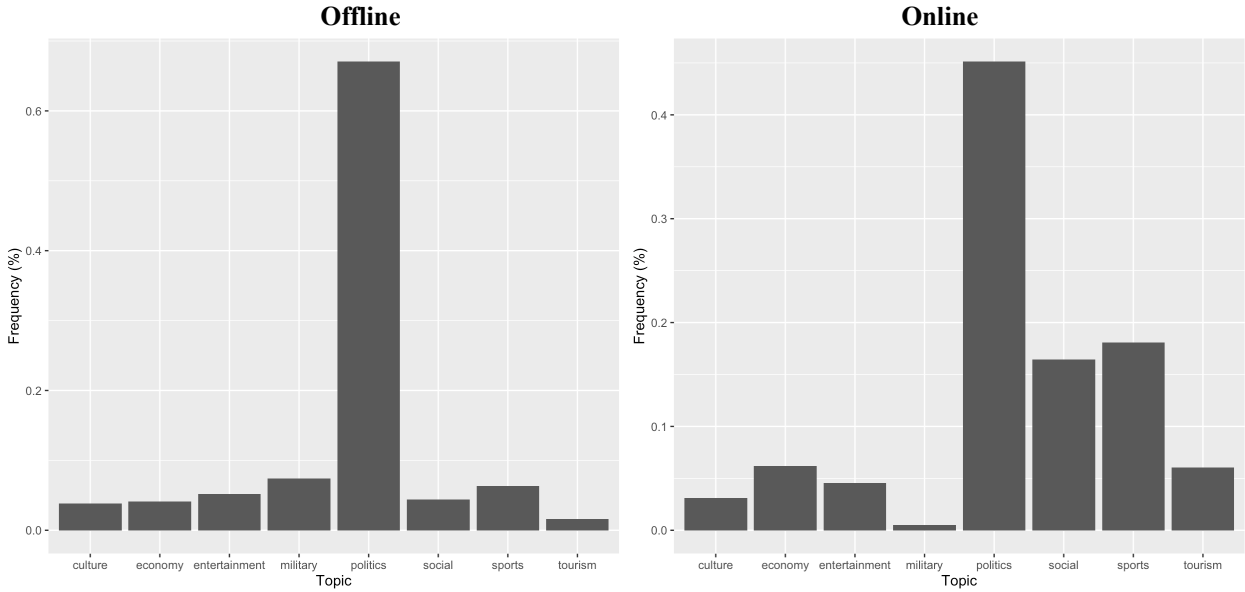
Appendix 5.B Frequency of Selected Keywords (South Korea)



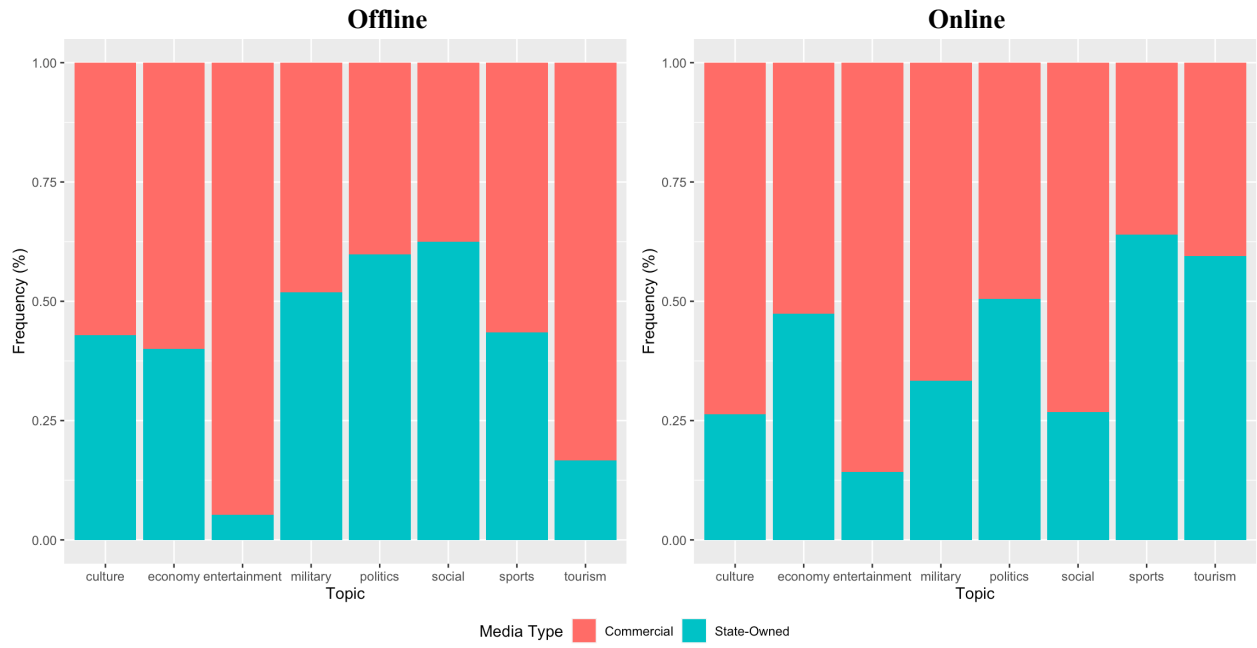
Appendix 5.D Description of Topics

Topics	South Korea		Taiwan	
	Including	# of Reports	Including	# of Reports
Politics	THAAD dispute, the former president Park Geun-Hye's political scandal, election of the new administration, etc.	521 (53.2%)	Taiwan's internal political news including presidential election, civic criticism of the government, Mainland's official visits, forums, statements and policies regarding Taiwan	259 (28.7%)
Military	Military news such as military drills conducted by South Korea and the U.S., S. Korean responses to North Korea's missile tests, etc.	30 (3.1%)	US arm sales, Taiwan's military activities, such as cruising the Taiping Island, revelation of a military project, etc.	36 (4.0%)
Economy	Trade between China and Korea, Samsung Note 7 explosion, quality of Korean products, etc	53 (5.4%)	Cross strait trades, economic forums and Taiwan's internal economic news, etc.	47 (5.2%)
Social	Social news occurred within Korea, Sewol-ho ferry salvage, cosmetic surgery related to Korea, etc	117 (12.0%)	Taiwan's internal social news, including criminals, earthquake, typhoon, etc.	291 (32.2%)
Culture	Korean latest research and findings, or development in technology	33 (3.4%)	Cross strait cultural exchanges, cultural forums, Taiwan's local culture, etc.	87 (9.7%)
Entertainment	Entertainment products with regards to Korea, such as Korean movies, dramas, reality shows, etc.	47 (4.8%)	Entertainment products with regards to Taiwan, such as Korean movies, dramas, reality shows, etc.	64 (7.1%)
Sports	International games in association with Korea	134 (13.7%)	International/regional games in association with Taiwan	3 (0.3%)
Tourism	News about Chinese tourists to South Korea, ranging from general tourism statistics to specific individual travel experience	43 (4.4%)	News about Chinese tourists to South Korea, ranging from general tourism statistics to specific individual travel experience	110 (12.2%)
Advertisement	Ads of Korean products/services	1 (0.1%)	Ads of Taiwanese products/services	3 (0.3%)
Mixed	NA	0 (0%)	Entry includes mixed topics	1 (0.1%)

Appendix 5.E Comparison of Topics (Online v.s. Offline, S.K.)



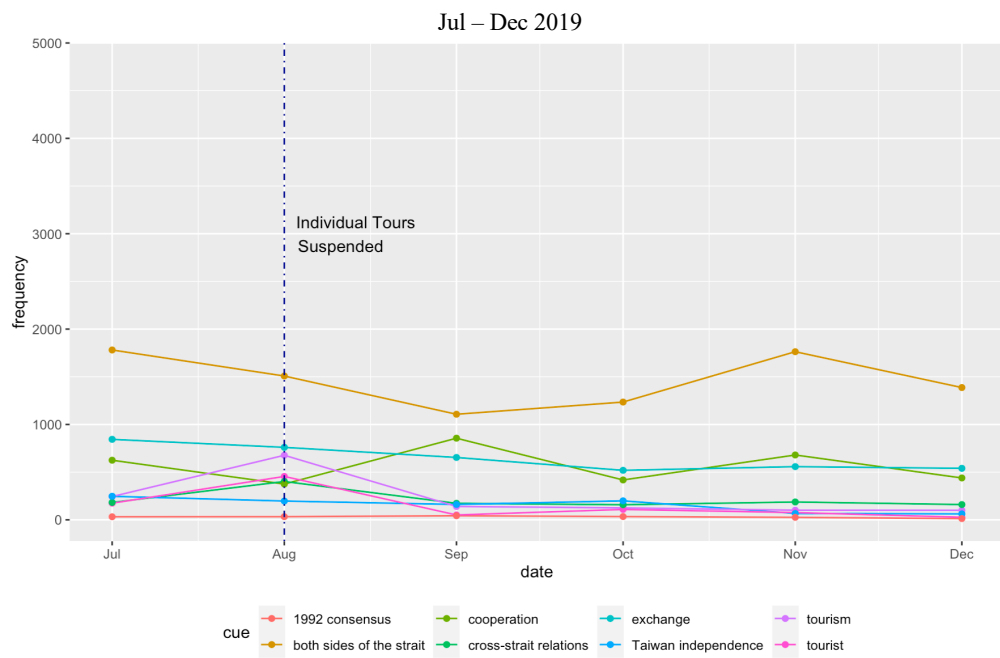
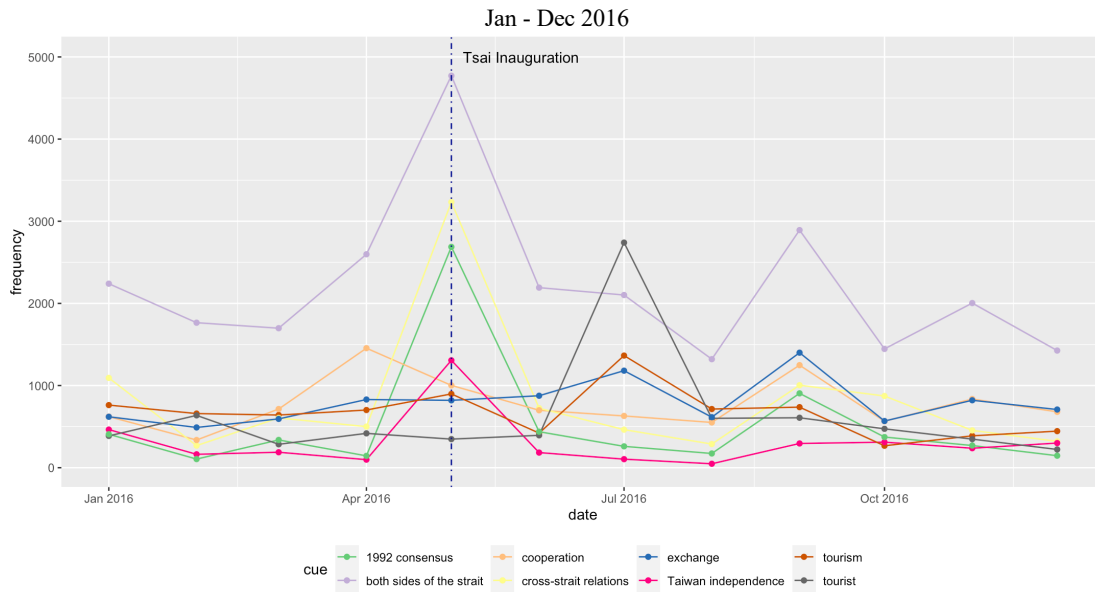
Appendix 5.F Comparison of Topics (State-owned Media v.s. Commercialized Media, S.K.)



Appendix 5.G Top 10 Keywords Monthly of Taiwan (Rest Months)

Mar 2016		Jun 2016		Aug 2016		Sep 2016		Oct 2016	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Mainland	1732	Both sides of the strait	2192	Mainland	1919	Mainland	3256	Both sides of the strait	1446
Both sides of the strait	1698	Mainland	2012	Both sides of the strait	1321	Both sides of the strait	2892	Mainland	1428
Development	897	Development	934	Start a business	1004	Administration	1665	Cross-strait relations	873
Cooperation	714	Exchange	876	Youth	944	Exchange	1400	Administration	683
Work	644	Start a business	796	Activity	787	Industry	1325	Development	678
Tourism	641	We	792	Tourism	714	Cooperation	1248	We	632
We	633	Enterprise	755	Administration	701	Development	1129	Exchange	568
Taipei	610	Cross-strait relations	724	Taipei	655	Tourism	1072	Cooperation	566
Cross-strait relations	606	Youth	710	Culture	630	We	1046	Problem	523
Exchange	594	Cooperation	699	Development	626	Activity	1026	Activity	517
Nov 2016		Dec 2016		Aug 2019		Sep 2019		Nov 2019	
Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Both sides of the strait	2004	Mainland	2059	Mainland	2017	China	1217	Mainland	2130
Mainland	1636	Both sides of the strait	1426	Both sides of the strait	1508	Both sides of the strait	1107	Both sides of the strait	1763
Foshing	1099	China	1114	China	1444	Development	1038	Measure	1363
Airline	1044	U.S.	839	American side	1365	Mainland	999	Development	1141
Development	983	Development	829	Chinese side	1231	Cooperation	856	Enterprise	943
Youth	939	We	822	Weapon	1036	Exchange	654	Taiwanese Compatriot (Taiwan tongbao)	818
Cooperation	836	Food	769	Development	816	One China	628	Taiwanese Compatriot (taibao)	810
Start a business	832	One China	745	Seriously (yanzhong)	798	Activity	580	Cooperation	680
Exchange	821	Japan	744	Exchange	760	Principle	546	Work	663
Culture	812	Pass (tongxingzheng)	742	Individual	708	We	512	Provide	661

Appendix 5.H Frequency of Selected Keywords (Taiwan)



Appendix 5.I Word Clouds Comparing Word Frequency, Printed v.s. Online (Taiwan)

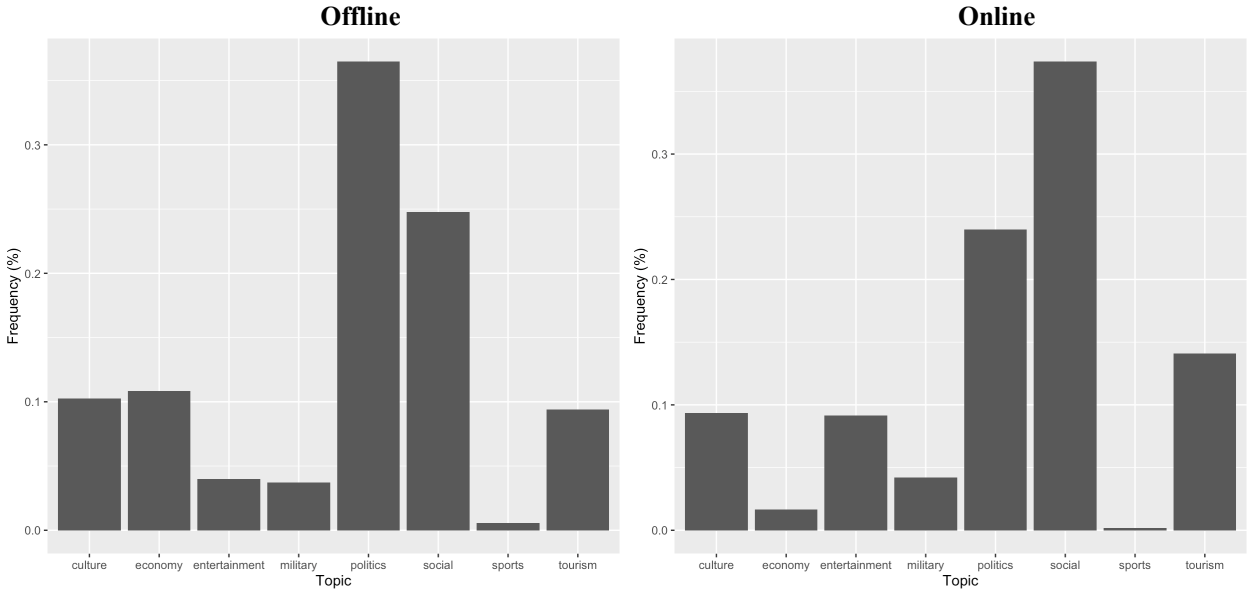


Printed Newspapers

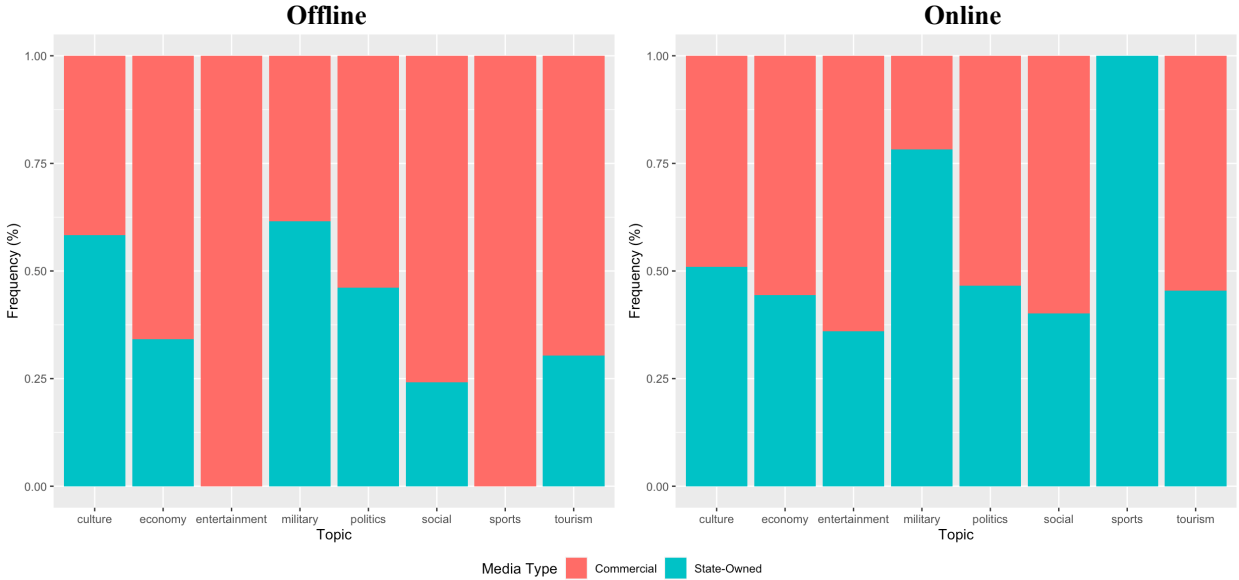


Weibo

Appendix 5.J Comparison of Topics (Online v.s. Offline, Taiwan)



Appendix 5.K Comparison of Topics (State-owned Media v.s. Commercialized Media, Taiwan)



Appendix 7.A Description of Groups and Treatment Message Examples

<i>Groups</i>	South Korea	Taiwan
Control (No message)	None	None
Treatment 1 (2 messages)	Grand Rhetoric Ex: ... South Korea chose to deploy THAAD, which will inevitably damage the diplomatic relations between South Korea and China, and seriously damage the political mutual trust between China and South Korea...	Grand Rhetoric Ex: ...The DPP authorities refused to recognize the "1992 Consensus" and unilaterally undermined the common political foundation for the development of cross-strait relations...
Treatment 2 (2 messages)	Personal-interest Reporting Ex: A tourist and his wife from Nantong were also kept in the "little black room" at Jeju International Airport in South Korea...In the video provided by this tourist, the facilities in the " little black room " are rudimentary.	Personal-interest Reporting Ex:... in Taiwan, a burnt car accident broke out. ...This is the worst tourist bus accident in Taiwan's traffic history.... After the incident, there were a lot of texts gloating [over the loss] appearing on the Taiwanese Internet...
Treatment 3 (4 messages)	Grand Rhetoric+ Personal-interest Reporting Ex: 1. ... South Korea chose to deploy THAAD, which will inevitably damage the diplomatic relations between South Korea and China, and seriously damage the political mutual trust between China and South Korea... 2. A tourist and his wife from Nantong were also kept in the "little black room" at Jeju International Airport in South Korea...In the video provided by this tourist, the facilities in the " little black room " are rudimentary.	Grand Rhetoric+ Personal-interest Reporting Ex: 1. ...The DPP authorities refused to recognize the "1992 Consensus" and unilaterally undermined the common political foundation for the development of cross-strait relations... 2. in Taiwan, a burnt car accident broke out. ...This is the worst tourist bus accident in Taiwan's traffic history.... After the incident, there were a lot of texts gloating [over the loss] appearing on the Taiwanese Internet...

Appendix 7.B Sociodemographics of Survey Participants and Chinese Internet Users

Demographics		Chinese Internet Users (%)	Survey Participants (%)
Age	≤ 19	16.6	11.9
	20-29	17.8	40.7
	30-39	20.5	21.9
	40-49	18.8	14.1
	50-59	15.1	7.6
	≥ 60	11.2	3.9
Gender	Female	49	48.4
Partisanship	CCP Members	≥ 6.8	11.7
Education	Primary school or below	19.3	4.1
	Junior high school	40.3	19.4
	Senior high school	20.6	32.4
	3-year college	10.5	30.3
	4-year college and above	9.3	13.8

Notes: Statistics of Chinese Internet Users are retrieved from the 2020 survey report by Chinese Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC)

Appendix 7.C Balance Test of Key Independent Variables

	Taiwan				South Korea			
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-interest	Both	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-interest	Both
Age ^a	2.749 (1.254)	2.734 (1.366)	2.770 (1.246)	2.643 (1.249)	2.865 (1.328)	2.675 (1.126)	2.809 (1.309)	2.856 (1.311)
Female	0.497 (0.501)	0.463 (0.500)	0.525 (0.501)	0.439 (0.498)	0.486 (0.501)	0.534 (0.500)	0.397 (0.490)	0.526 (0.501)
Income ^b	1.854 (0.997)	1.840 (1.048)	1.814 (1.109)	1.766 (1.065)	1.694 (0.875)	1.744 (1.097)	1.976* (1.215)	1.881 (1.106)
Education ^c	4.332 (1.097)	4.319 (1.062)	4.284 (1.112)	4.211 (1.199)	4.297 (0.994)	4.188 (1.142)	4.373 (1.141)	4.474 (1.248)
CCP Membership	0.126 (0.332)	0.101 (0.302)	0.098 (0.299)	0.099 (0.300)	0.162 (0.369)	0.124 (0.330)	0.100 (0.301)	0.113 (0.318)
Language ^d	/	/	/	/	2.153 (0.655)	2.124 (0.832)	2.144 (0.777)	2.144 (0.814)
Entertainment exposure ^e	1.623 (0.614)	1.654 (0.605)	1.552 (0.590)	1.550 (0.586)	1.860 (0.604)	1.726 (0.663)	1.708+ (0.593)	1.722 (0.716)
Interested in Traveling ^f	0.447 (0.498)	0.505 (0.501)	0.426 (0.496)	0.474 (0.501)	0.423 (0.495)	0.466 (0.500)	0.440 (0.498)	0.454 (0.499)
N	199	188	183	171	222	234	209	194

Notes: ^a scale 1 to 6; ^b scale 1 to 6; ^c scale 1 to 8; ^d scale 1 to 5; ^e scale 1 to 4; ^f scale 0 to 1

Entries are means of each group. Standard deviation in parentheses. + and * indicates p-values from t-tests comparing the treatment groups with the control group in each sample at the 0.1 and 0.05 levels.

Appendix 7.D Ordered Logit Model (South Korea)

	<i>Dependent Variables</i>				
	Evaluation of Gov	Evaluation of Taiwan	Warmness to People	Probability of Travel	Probability of Buying
Grand Rhetoric	-0.983*** (0.172)	-0.577*** (0.169)	-0.439** (0.168)	-0.595*** (0.172)	-0.441** (0.168)
Personal-Interest	-0.949*** (0.173)	-0.520** (0.174)	-0.441* (0.172)	-0.849*** (0.178)	-0.548** (0.170)
Combination	-0.802*** (0.179)	-0.668*** (0.176)	-0.536** (0.175)	-0.879*** (0.179)	-0.596*** (0.175)
National Pride	-0.455** (0.146)	-0.469** (0.146)	-0.130 (0.140)	-0.675*** (0.150)	-0.312* (0.141)
Regime Support	0.031 (0.137)	-0.004 (0.135)	-0.147 (0.135)	-0.004 (0.139)	-0.127 (0.135)
Watch Drama	0.642*** (0.104)	1.193*** (0.108)	0.848*** (0.103)	0.848*** (0.106)	0.862*** (0.104)
Interest in Travel	0.495*** (0.130)	0.745*** (0.132)	0.728*** (0.130)	1.623*** (0.138)	0.714*** (0.129)
Demographics	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	859	859	859	859	859

Appendix 7.E Subgroup Comparisons (South Korea)

Panel 1

High Education (Education higher than High School)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.444(0.171)	0.328***(0.193)	0.330***(0.174)	0.348**(0.192)
Evaluation of Region	0.488(0.165)	0.403*(0.193)	0.413*(0.193)	0.399**(0.202)
Probability to Travel	0.456(0.237)	0.377+(0.254)	0.367*(0.237)	0.318***(0.207)
Buying Brands	0.542(0.237)	0.501(0.270)	0.467(0.241)	0.454+(0.260)
Making Friends	0.551(0.220)	0.498(0.286)	0.484(0.253)	0.475(0.253)
N	129	140	116	90
Low Education (Education equal to or lower than High School)				
Evaluation of Government	0.431(0.197)	0.334***(0.182)	0.334***(0.182)	0.349**(0.184)
Evaluation of Region	0.464(0.201)	0.409+(0.194)	0.403+(0.187)	0.382*(0.185)
Probability to Travel	0.419(0.264)	0.349+(0.238)	0.309*(0.219)	0.337+(0.215)
Buying Brands	0.533(0.276)	0.447*(0.235)	0.451+(0.248)	0.459(0.244)
Making Friends	0.529(0.276)	0.456+(0.234)	0.462(0.235)	0.449+(0.241)
N	93	94	93	104

Panel 2

High National Pride (Buying Chinese Brands > 8)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.413(0.199)	0.314***(0.190)	0.307***(0.177)	0.319***(0.187)
Evaluation of Region	0.449(0.201)	0.383*(0.197)	0.370**(0.189)	0.348***(0.190)
Probability to Travel	0.377(0.242)	0.324(0.239)	0.277***(0.199)	0.279**(0.192)
Buying Brands	0.495(0.272)	0.430(0.249)	0.402*(0.237)	0.414*(0.259)
Making Friends	0.511(0.265)	0.450(0.274)	0.429*(0.249)	0.425*(0.253)
N	141	167	138	132
Low National Pride (Buying Chinese Brands < 9)				
Evaluation of Government	0.477(0.154)	0.376**(0.169)	0.382**(0.171)	0.411+(0.176)
Evaluation of Region	0.488(0.165)	0.403(0.193)	0.413(0.193)	0.399(0.202)
Probability to Travel	0.456(0.237)	0.377(0.254)	0.367+(0.237)	0.318*(0.207)
Buying Brands	0.609(0.221)	0.566(0.230)	0.566(0.224)	0.545(0.212)
Making Friends	0.585(0.228)	0.528(0.200)	0.555(0.209)	0.544(0.215)
N	81	67	71	62

Panel 3

High Regime Support (Support Political System > 8)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.414(0.194)	0.329**(0.199)	0.339*(0.198)	0.310***(0.187)
Evaluation of Region	0.450(0.206)	0.385+(0.208)	0.385(0.193)	0.347**(0.195)
Probability to Travel	0.378(0.255)	0.332(0.249)	0.312(0.227)	0.285*(0.197)
Buying Brands	0.512(0.295)	0.447(0.250)	0.416+(0.240)	0.439(0.274)
Making Friends	0.496(0.274)	0.442(0.269)	0.453(0.245)	0.441(0.256)
N	113	116	94	108
Low Regime Support (Support Political System < 9)				
Evaluation of Government	0.460(0.175)	0.334***(0.173)	0.326***(0.161)	0.397+(0.178)
Evaluation of Region	0.500(0.162)	0.428*(0.176)	0.425**(0.185)	0.447(0.179)
Probability to Travel	0.494(0.239)	0.387**(0.237)	0.353***(0.229)	0.379**(0.216)
Buying Brands	0.562(0.216)	0.491+(0.251)	0.492(0.244)	0.478+(0.221)
Making Friends	0.582(0.224)	0.503+(0.241)	0.487*(0.241)	0.491*(0.234)
N	109	118	115	86

Appendix 7.F Ordered Logit Model (Taiwan)

<i>Dependent Variables</i>					
	Evaluation of Gov	Evaluation of Taiwan	Warmness to People	Probability of Travel	Probability of Buying
Grand Rhetoric	-0.900*** (0.184)	-0.295 (0.181)	-0.024 (0.179)	-0.405* (0.181)	-0.433* (0.181)
Personal-Interest	-0.750*** (0.181)	-0.464* (0.181)	-0.182 (0.179)	-0.736*** (0.183)	-0.347+ (0.182)
Combination	-0.782*** (0.188)	-0.24 (0.186)	-0.267 (0.179)	-0.893*** (0.189)	-0.563** (0.183)
National Pride	-1.447+ (0.874)	-2.681** (0.845)	-0.488 (0.822)	-1.379 (0.876)	-2.223** (0.856)
Regime Support	-0.382 (0.716)	0.73 (0.714)	0.439 (0.698)	-0.288 (0.723)	0.581 (0.714)
Watch Drama	0.486*** (0.118)	0.733*** (0.117)	0.723*** (0.116)	0.700*** (0.116)	0.751*** (0.118)
Interest in Travel	-0.058 (0.138)	0.318* (0.139)	0.700*** (0.140)	1.350*** (0.145)	0.749*** (0.139)
Demographics	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	741	741	741	741	741

Appendix 7.G Subgroup Comparisons (Taiwan)

Panel 1

High Education (Education > 4)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.431(0.222)	0.309***(0.186)	0.306***(0.187)	0.349+(0.214)
Evaluation of Region	0.474(0.215)	0.452(0.206)	0.389*(0.190)	0.482(0.209)
Probability to Travel	0.503(0.264)	0.456(0.252)	0.340***(0.234)	0.379*(0.261)
Buying Brands	0.519(0.246)	0.478(0.251)	0.445(0.262)	0.462(0.219)
Making Friends	0.608(0.242)	0.649(0.275)	0.549(0.282)	0.610(0.232)
N	89	79	80	73
Low Education (Education < 5)				
Evaluation of Government	0.400(0.202)	0.326*(0.200)	0.346(0.184)	0.315*(0.210)
Evaluation of Region	0.450(0.192)	0.434(0.204)	0.425(0.175)	0.387+(0.190)
Probability to Travel	0.437(0.281)	0.394(0.240)	0.371(0.230)	0.317**(0.226)
Buying Brands	0.503(0.260)	0.465(0.264)	0.466(0.238)	0.399*(0.240)
Making Friends	0.585(0.263)	0.559(0.289)	0.562(0.263)	0.501(0.265)
N	110	109	103	98

Panel 2

High National Pride (Better others being like Chinese > 8)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.404(0.217)	0.323**(0.206)	0.325**(0.194)	0.320**(0.196)
Evaluation of Region	0.451(0.213)	0.419(0.215)	0.394(0.189)	0.403(0.205)
Probability to Travel	0.465(0.289)	0.410(0.247)	0.346**(0.238)	0.343***(0.250)
Buying Brands	0.494(0.266)	0.459(0.268)	0.444(0.263)	0.402*(0.232)
Making Friends	0.584(0.259)	0.582(0.297)	0.546(0.284)	0.519(0.258)
N	139	118	127	123
Low National Pride (Better others being like Chinese < 9)				
Evaluation of Government	0.437(0.198)	0.311**(0.172)	0.336*(0.169)	0.354(0.248)
Evaluation of Region	0.483(0.176)	0.480(0.181)	0.443(0.162)	0.490(0.187)
Probability to Travel	0.472(0.243)	0.437(0.246)	0.384(0.216)	0.346*(0.226)
Buying Brands	0.547(0.217)	0.490(0.241)	0.486(0.212)	0.488(0.227)
Making Friends	0.620(0.241)	0.621(0.265)	0.579(0.239)	0.621(0.239)
N	60	70	56	48

Panel 3

High Regime Support (Support Political System > 8)				
	Control	Grand Rhetoric	Personal-Interest	Both
Evaluation of Government	0.388(0.227)	0.302*(0.196)	0.312+(0.202)	0.283**(0.194)
Evaluation of Region	0.438(0.221)	0.418(0.220)	0.380(0.201)	0.391(0.214)
Probability to Travel	0.444(0.296)	0.395(0.246)	0.340*(0.237)	0.333*(0.254)
Buying Brands	0.495(0.254)	0.471(0.271)	0.444(0.275)	0.378*(0.233)
Making Friends	0.579(0.272)	0.602(0.302)	0.535(0.294)	0.511(0.265)
N	98	87	94	82
Low Regime Support (Support Political System < 9)				
Evaluation of Government	0.440(0.192)	0.333***(0.192)	0.346**(0.167)	0.373+(0.220)
Evaluation of Region	0.483(0.181)	0.461(0.189)	0.440(0.155)	0.461(0.187)
Probability to Travel	0.489(0.253)	0.442(0.245)	0.375**(0.225)	0.354***(0.232)
Buying Brands	0.525(0.253)	0.470(0.247)	0.471(0.217)	0.470(0.225)
Making Friends	0.611(0.234)	0.592(0.272)	0.579(0.244)	0.581(0.244)
N	101	101	89	89