

Chinese Media and the Judicial System under Soft Authoritarianism

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In the last three decades, the Chinese political system changed from totalitarianism to soft authoritarianism.¹ Under this new political framework, characterized by continued communist monopoly of power with limited political liberalization, both the media and the judicial system have undergone significant changes. While there have been many studies of the Chinese media and the judicial system, there has been relatively little research on how the media report and shape the development and operation of the judicial system even as both institutions are transformed. This is the topic of our paper. In particular, our research focuses on two questions. First, how do the media report on judicial affairs? What are the main themes underlying the reports? Second, does media coverage of judicial affairs have an impact on the judicial system? If so, what kind of impact has it had? We believe these are important issues to explore as we try to understand the complex process of political change in China.

1. Media Reforms

Before exploring media coverage of legal affairs and its influence on the judicial system, it is necessary to review briefly the reforms and the evolving landscape of the media in China.

Since its founding, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been highly sensitive and attentive to the political role of the media. After the CCP took power in 1949, it

¹ The concept of “soft authoritarianism” used here follows the usage by Edwin Winckler in his discussion of Taiwan politics (Winckler 1984). He characterizes Taiwan’s transition from a one-man dictatorship to collective party leadership as a transition from hard to soft authoritarianism. The new soft authoritarian regime is more open to new social and economic forces created by Taiwan’s modernization. Its repression of political dissent was less frequent, more legalistic, and more indirect than before. Similar changes have taken place in the Chinese political system in the reform period.

quickly took over the entire mass media in China. By the early 1950s the government had closed down all the private newspapers, radio stations, and publishers. All the means of mass communication became state-owned. Under the Maoist regime, the media served as the Party's mouthpiece (*dang de hou she*). Its main function was propaganda and mobilization. During the Cultural Revolution, the radicals used the media as an instrument for extreme political indoctrination and persecution. By the end of the period, the media had lost much of its credibility (Fang Hanqi et al 1982).

In the last three decades, Chinese media have gone through a zigzagging path of reform and change. Firstly and most obviously, there has been a dramatic expansion of the mass media.² At the beginning of this period, China had a handful of newspapers, magazines, radio stations and TV stations. In 2005, there were nearly 2,000 newspapers, close to 9,000 magazines, nearly 300 radio stations, and over 300 TV stations. And since China first connected with the internet in 1994, its internet users have sky-rocketed to over 110 million in 2005. Furthermore, the variety of media products has grown rapidly. Before the reform era, the media landscape was dominated by a few central-government published newspapers and journals, such as the *People's Daily*, the *Guangming Daily*, and the journal *Red Flag*, and a network of central, provincial and municipal "people's radio stations." They carried more or less the same ideologically charged reports and commentaries about national and international events. In the last three decades, a myriad of new types of newspapers, journals/magazines, radio and TV programs have burst onto the media scene. They vary widely in content and style, catering to different interests, such as the economy, sports, health, culture, and environment, and serve specific

categories of people, such as business people, workers, farmers, legal professionals, youths, retirees, and women. In the last decade, the internet has introduced to the Chinese public even greater varieties of information and entertainment.

Another change has been a redefinition of the political role of the media. While the role of being the Party's mouthpiece remains today, the media has taken on another equally important new role, i.e., as the people's mouthpiece. In other words, media governance is now subject to both the Party principle (*dang xing*) and the people principle (*ren min xing*). Not only must journalists publicize the Party line and mobilize the public to support government policies, they should also represent the interests of the people and express their desires and grievances (Gan 1994). In this context, since the thirteenth Party Congress in 1987, the CCP has routinely called for media oversight (*yu lun jian du*) of the government. In practice, this has led to an increasing amount of critical reporting of bad behavior on the part of government agencies and government officials. The best-known case is the prime-time program, "Focus (*jiao dian fang tan*)" on China Central TV (CCTV), which since its beginning in 1998 has been the most popular program of investigative journalism (Li 2002, Chan 2002, Wu Haiqing 2004). Although the targets of critical reporting are policy-implementation problems rather than government policies per se, and although they tend to involve low-level government agencies and officials, this certainly marks a major departure from the media's traditional role as the Party's mouthpiece.³ Another prominent example of media oversight is the

² The focus here is on media content. Meanwhile, the hardware of mass media, measured by per capita number of radios, TV sets and computers, has also grown dramatically in China (Hu An'gang and Zhang Xiaoqun 2004, Endeshaw 2004).

³ Two additional programs worth noting are "Now Broadcasting (*xianzai bobao*)," and "News Probe (*xinwen diaocha*)," both of which frequently offer critical reporting (Zhan and Zhao 2003; on *xinwen diaocha* #)

newspaper, *Southern Weekend (Nanfang Zhoumo)*. Critical articles exposing official corruption and abuse of power have been its hallmark, although since the late 1990s its attention has turned toward social problems, such as crime, prostitution and superstitious activities (Zhang Xiaoli # citation).

Third, since the early 1990s there has been extensive commercialization of the media. Under the pre-reform framework, government owned, controlled and financed all the newspapers, journals, radio stations and TV stations as bureaucratic agencies. Since the beginning of the reform, the government has gradually pushed media organizations to depend on the market by steadily reducing its financial input. In response, media organizations have had to generate revenues on their own in order to survive and expand. The first advertisement appeared on Shanghai Television in 1979. Since then advertising has become an increasingly important source of income for all kinds of media. This is even true of the most mainstream media outfits. For instance, CCTV used to be fully funded by the central government. But since the mid-1990s, it has become dependent on advertising for almost all of its revenue. In 2000 CCTV raised 5.5 billion yuan through advertising, while the government only allocated 30 million yuan to it or a mere 0.5% of its total funds (Li 2002). Meanwhile, the organization and operation of media organizations has changed. As early as 1978 the Ministry of Finance approved the introduction of business-style (rather than bureaucratic-style) management to *People's Daily* and several other newspapers published in Beijing. Over time, news organizations have become more and more like market-based enterprises rather than bureaucracies. They hire and fire professional employees on their ability to generate profits. They contract programs out to independent producers and sell pages and blocks of time to

business interests. And many media outfits have developed into business conglomerates that branch into a variety of news, entertainment, educational and other seemingly unrelated business activities (e.g. car repairs). Focusing on brand names, these various activities reinforce and cross-subsidize one another (Zhao 1998: 52-71, Huang 2000).

China's membership in the WTO has added a force for further liberalization of the media market. Under the WTO agreement, China agreed to allow foreign investment in China's advertising market. It is hard to imagine foreign invested and foreign owned advertising companies, along with their clients, not having an impact on Chinese media. China also agreed to allow foreign companies in the printing and packaging of publications. In 2002 the Chinese government approved 202 foreign-invested printers, followed by an additional 84 in 2003. In addition, China commitment included permitting foreign participation in the retail and wholesale of books, magazines, and newspapers. By August 2004 China had approved more than 10 foreign companies' applications to enter the retail business (Wang Lianhe 2005). Finally, China has also agreed to import a growing number of foreign films each year.

Fourth, in large part as a result of commercialization, the media has experienced a shift from ideological indoctrination to a combination of public relations for the Party, information and knowledge sharing, and tabloid journalism. In contrast to the pre-reform era, when the content of the media was almost exclusively political sloganeering, it has become increasingly apolitical and lively. To meet the preference of an ever more demanding public and compete with one another for market shares, newspapers, magazines, radios, TV, and internet service providers have had to come up with ever more useful and interesting content. While the headlines are still dominated by Party

content, a substantial portion of the content focuses on social problems that used to be taboo subjects, such as poverty, unemployment, crime, and corruption, mundane issues that used to be unworthy of news reporting, such as traffic congestion, family relationships, consumer information, and entertainment programs of various shades as well as celebrity gossip, which used to be viewed as a manifestation of unhealthy bourgeois taste and sentiment. One scholar argues that commercialization has created a semi-independent press in China, which enjoys independence in editorial, personnel, and financial matters without any independent legal status (Huang 2000).

Despite these changes, Chinese media remain far more controlled than most other countries in the world. A long-time participant and observer of the Chinese media summarizes the means of government control as follows (He Qinglian 2004). First, the government controls the entry of media organizations. According to Chinese law, all media outlets have to register with the government, and to do so they must have the sponsorship of the Party, the government, the labor union, the youth league or the women's federation. The sponsors have to ensure the political correctness of the media organizations (Jin Chaoyang 2005).⁴ Second, the government has a monitoring system. Groups of monitors read, listen to, and watch various publications and broadcasts. They report mistakes, big and small, to the Party and government agencies in charge, which in turn issue warnings or punish the offenders. According to the Committee to Protect

⁴ The same is true for the book publishing business, the government has made clear that in the next few years private enterprises cannot apply for the right to independently publish any books. This is very different from the registration system in Western countries, where anyone can register a publishing company. The government limits the number of publishers. China has far fewer publishers relative to its population than Western countries. The government also plans the number of books by controlling book numbers (similar to ISBN numbers) and regulates the quality and prices of books they publish. The rationale is that publications, unlike other products, have characteristics of public goods. Their content has wide ideological influence. Consumers and merchants are too short-sighted to overcome their immediate pursuit of sensationalism and profits (Wang Lianhe 2005).

Journalists, China was the world's leading jailer of journalists for the seventh consecutive year in 2005, with 32 behind bars by the end of the year. According to China's own *People's Daily*, censorship agencies closed down 338 publications in 2004 for printing "internal" information, 202 branch offices of newspapers, and punished 73 organizations for illegally "engaging in news activities"

(http://www.cpj.org/attacks05/asia05/china_05.html, accessed July 28/06). Third, from time to time, the government issues formal and informal guidelines for media organizations, which detail what sort of issues they must downplay or avoid reporting altogether. When major political events take place, such as important meetings anniversaries, or crises, the guidelines are enforced especially seriously.

In addition to directly controlling the content of the media, the Party exercises indirect control through its ideological and organizational power over the media workers. The indoctrination of producers, reporters and editors has made many of them keenly aware of the limits beyond which they should not venture. Self-censorship has become a main mechanism against further liberalization of the media. Meanwhile, Chinese media organizations remain quasi-government agencies, even as they are also market actors. For instance, higher level news agencies can supervise lower level governments, but not vice versa. Heads of news organizations enjoy political prestige and privileges according to their administrative ranking rather than the performance of the sales and profits of their papers or programs. These subtle ways enable the government to severely limit the autonomy of the media.

2. Media Reporting of Judicial Affairs

In this section, we empirically investigate the transformation of media reporting of judicial affairs in this larger context. Under the totalitarian phase of the regime, media reporting in this area followed the mouthpiece model. It was dry and propaganda-oriented. How has this changed under soft authoritarianism? We have two sets of expectations and hypotheses we would like to test. First, as the political system morphs into soft authoritarianism, we expect to find change in both the style and the substance of judicial reporting. We expect the style to have become less dry and livelier. We expect the underlying themes of reporting in this area to have expanded beyond propaganda to include popularizing knowledge about the judicial system, expressing public opinion, and exercising oversight on the judicial system. We expect that the propaganda-orientated themes will have decreased over time while other themes will have increased.

Second, under soft authoritarianism, we hypothesize that media reporting of judicial affairs will vary according to media nature. Here the nature of a media outlet refers to its relationship with the CCP and the government. The official media are media outlets which are closely related to and financed by the Party and the government. The commercial media are media outlets which are not closely related to the CCP and the government and which depend on the market financially. In terms of style, we hypothesize that reports in the official media will be drier than reports in the commercial media because the latter has greater need to follow popular taste for interesting and sensational stories. In terms of substance, we hypothesize that the salience of the different themes will vary between the official and the commercial media. The propaganda and education-oriented themes will be more salient in the official media while the public opinion and oversight themes will be more salient in the commercial

media. The official media will emphasize propaganda because it continues to serve to uphold the image of the CCP and the government. The official media will also emphasize popularizing knowledge about the judicial system because the CCP and the government would like to encourage people to take their various social problems to the judicial system rather than to the streets. Educating people to abide by the laws and guiding them to use the law to protect their interests serves this purpose. On the other hand, the commercial media are less concerned about serving the CCP and the government's policy needs and more interested in doing well in the market. Reports that reflect public opinion and expose the limitations of the existing judicial system tend to appeal to the public and thus help the commercial success of the media outlets.

In recent years, the internet has introduced a new form of media to China. Online reporting has joined print media. In this paper, we include newspapers and online reporting of judicial affairs. The effect of media type, i.e., print media or online media, can be quite complex. Because the readers of newspapers tend to be less educated and less affluent than the readers of websites, it is likely that the style of the newspapers will be more lively in order to appeal more to popular taste. But precisely for the same reason, websites may be politically more liberal to better appeal to the middle class, the intellectuals, and the professionals. Overall, it is hard to generalize whether the appearance of online judicial reporting has led the media further away from the totalitarian mouthpiece model, characterized by a dry style and a propaganda orientation. Thus, following the introduction of online reporting, we hypothesize that the distinction between print and online media (media type) interacts with the distinction between

official or commercial media (media nature) and they jointly have an impact on the style and the substance of media reporting of judicial affairs.

To investigate our expectations and test our hypotheses empirically, we have coded a randomly selected sample of reports on judicial affairs in two newspapers –*Legal Daily (Fa Zhi Ri Bao)*, as representative of the official media, and *Southern Weekend (Nan Fang Zhou Mo)*, as a representative of the commercial media from 1985 to mid-2007. We have also coded a randomly selected sample of reports on judicial affairs on two websites – people.com.cn, an official website, and sina.com.cn, a commercial website from 2005-Aug. 2007.⁵

How has media reporting on judicial affairs changed? We divide the reform era into four periods. Period 1 was pre-1989, the Deng Xiaoping period. Period 2 was 1990-1992, the transitional period. Period 3 was 1993-2002, the Jiang Zemin period. Period 4 was 2003-2007, the Hu Jintao period. Figures 1- 4 show some interesting patterns. On the one hand, the style of judicial reporting has become quite lively, as indicated by the presence of episodic⁶ and sensational reporting⁷ shown in figure 1 and figure 2. This is

⁵ For the two newspapers, we chose 6 articles each year. They are from the publications in February, April, June, August, October, and December (only February, April, and June for the year of 2007). In so doing, we attempt to detect the reporting pattern of the whole year and avoid some possible bias from the political cycle of China such as the annual session of the National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and some important anniversaries related with politics. However, we cannot avoid all of these events in the sampling process. We chose the articles from the publications in the middle of each month because most important anniversaries are at the beginning of the relevant months. For people.com.cn, we chose four articles in the middle of each month from 2005-August 2007. For sina.com.cn, we chose two articles in the middle of each month from 2005-August 2007. Because we chose all the articles randomly, some of them are not reports on the judicial system and become missing values in our dataset. This can be improved by enlarging observations in future studies. However, the number of observations in our current dataset has been large enough to conduct statistical analyses. Our coding unit is paragraph. The unit of article or sentence is either too large or too small for studying the reporting themes in which we are interested. Our coding scheme includes fourteen main variables most of which have generated more than 90 percent of agreement in our inter-coder reliability test.

⁶ It means the paragraph is story-oriented. That is to say, it describes concrete episodes, i.e., when, where, what happened to whom.

⁷ It means the paragraph engages in graphic depiction of cases or reports of cases having to do with sex, violence, and celebrities

much more obvious for the commercial newspaper than the official newspaper. On the other hand, the underlying themes of the reports have become quite diverse. Under the mouthpiece model, the media used to stress the close relationship of the judicial system with the CCP and the government and praise the judicial system and its work. These propaganda themes can still be found. As figure 1 shows, the praising theme has been present throughout and even increased in the fourth period. Reports emphasizing the close relationship of the judicial system with the CCP and the government still take up a certain percent of *Legal Daily's* reporting. However, this theme is decreasing steadily. For the commercial newspaper, these themes have always kept a very low profile. These propaganda themes are now joined and often overshadowed by other themes, as shown in figures 1-4. One of the new themes underlying judicial reporting is education about the judicial system. The education theme can be sub-divided into two themes, i.e. state-oriented education and society-oriented education. State-oriented education involves popularizing knowledge about the judicial system with an emphasis on citizen's compliance with the law. Society-oriented education involves popularizing knowledge about the judicial system with an emphasis on citizens using the law to protect their interests. Another new theme underlying judicial coverage is to voice public opinion, which includes public opinion about specific individuals, decisions and procedures of the judicial system and public opinion about the judicial system as a whole. Other new themes in media coverage of judicial affairs include observations and commentaries on the judicial system and criticisms of judicial affairs, including criticisms of specific individuals, decisions and procedures and criticisms of the judicial system in general.

The themes related with legal education are shown in figure 1 and figure 2. Other new themes are shown in figure 3 and figure 4.

[Figures 1-4 about here]

Consistent with our hypothesis, legal education has been an important theme for the official newspaper. But its importance is decreasing. Interestingly, society-oriented education has exceeded state-oriented education since the early 1990s. This theme is less important for the commercial newspaper and is decreasing. Furthermore, legal education in the *Southern Weekend* has almost always been society-oriented. As figure 3 and figure 4 show, all the other new themes have grown for both media outlets. Even the official newspaper has begun to reflect public opinion and to exercise some oversight on the judicial system. However, this development has been limited. Except the theme of observation, the average reporting of all the other themes is less than 10 percent. The increasing trend of these themes is more salient for the commercial newspaper. For *Southern Weekend*, the observation theme has skyrocketed to more than 60 percent. Except the themes of general opinion and criticism of the judicial system, all the other themes have increased to more than 10 percent.

Observers of Chinese politics have noted that since Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin in 2002-03, the Chinese government has tightened its control of the media. Our data provide some evidence. As figure 1 shows, the praising theme for the official newspaper has remained constant over some years but has risen again since 2003. The criticism themes of *Southern Weekend* have remained flat or decreased a little bit during this period. However, the criticism themes of *Legal Daily* have increased slightly in the Hu Jintao era. These trends indicate that the new Chinese leadership may prefer to give

official media outlets limited opportunities to engage in critical reporting while reigning in commercial media outlets.

How does reporting on judicial matters vary between different kinds of media outlet? Tables 1 shows the distinction in style between the official newspaper, *Legal Daily* and the commercial newspaper, *Southern Weekend* between 1985 and 2007. As expected, compared with the official newspaper, the commercial newspaper clearly has a stronger tendency to engage in story-telling and sensational news when in its reporting of judicial affairs. The difference is both substantively and statistically significant.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 2 shows the distinction in theme salience between the official and the commercial newspapers from 1985 to 2007. As expected, in the official newspaper the theme that emphasizes the fusion of the CCP, the government and the judicial system and the theme of praising the existing judicial system are much stronger than in the commercial newspaper. The education themes, including, first, education that urges citizens to abide by state laws and, second, education that guides citizens to use law to protect themselves, are more salient in the official newspaper than in the commercial newspaper. However, the difference is less stark for the second education theme. The commercial newspaper is not far behind in popularizing knowledge about the judicial system as a way to help citizens use the law to protect their interests. The public opinion themes, including, first, public opinion about specific individuals, procedures, decisions, etc. and, second, public opinion about the judicial system in general, are more salient in the commercial newspaper. However, the contrast is not all that sharp for the second public opinion theme. Both the official and the commercial newspapers seldom report

public opinion about the judicial system as a whole. The neutral observation theme also differs between the two kinds of newspapers, showing a stronger salience in the commercial newspaper than the official newspaper. Finally, the criticism themes, including, first, criticism of specific individuals, procedures, decisions, etc. and, second, criticisms of the judicial system in general, are more clearly more salient in the commercial newspaper than in the official newspaper. The difference for the second criticism theme is somewhat less than the first, however. Neither the official nor the commercial newspaper offers much criticism of the judicial system in general.

[Table 2 about here]

Tables 3-4 show the effect of the nature and type of the media on the style their reporting of judicial matters from 2005 to 2007. While each factor has had a significant and separate impact on the style of reporting, there is no indication of any interactive effect.

[Tables 3 and 4 about here]

Tables 5-16 show the effect of the nature and type of the media on the salience of the underlying themes of their reporting of judicial matters from 2005 to 2007. We see a significant joint effect of media nature and media type on 1) the praising theme (table 6), 2) the education theme (table 7), which comes from the society-oriented education theme (table 8), 3) the public opinion theme (table 10), which comes from coverage of public opinion about specific individuals, decisions and procedures, and 4) the criticism theme (table 14), including both the criticisms of specific individuals, decisions and procedures (table 15) and criticisms of the judicial system in general (table 16). Most of these results

confirm our hypotheses. We would like to highlight a few interesting and somewhat unexpected findings.

[Tables 5-16 about here]

First, from 2005 to 2007 the official media was more episodic and sensational in their reporting than the commercial media. It is not immediately clear to us why this was the case.

Second, the commercial website has not departed from the old mouthpiece model as much as one would expect. In fact, along the state-oriented educational theme and the three criticism themes, its orientation is closer to the old model than the official website and the commercial newspaper are. This apparent “conservative” tendency of the commercial website may be the result of self-censorship on the part of the commercial website. With profit as its main goal, commercial websites are interested in attracting eyeballs by adopting a lively style and by engaging in some critical reporting, but they are not willing to take major political risks.

Third, the official website has gone farther away from the old mouthpiece model than expected. Indeed, with regard to the CCP-government theme, the education theme and the three criticism themes, the official website is either equally or more untraditional than the commercial website. This relatively “liberal” orientation is probably a deliberate tactic used by the CCP to be competitive in the cyberspace. From the beginning, the Chinese government recognized the limitations of its ability to control access to and the content of the internet. One way to prevent the internet from becoming a threat to its own rule would be to inundate the cyberspace with attractive and yet acceptable content. The

particular history and circumstances of the official website of www.people.com.cn has led it to push the political envelop (Zhou 2006).

Fourth, in general the commercial newspaper stands out as the most “liberal” among all the media outlets studied. This is especially obvious for the public opinion theme and the criticism themes. The fact that the commercial newspaper shows a more “liberal” orientation than the commercial website may be explained by the different political space each finds itself to be in. The commercial newspaper, *Southern Weekend*, is mostly distributed in Guangdong and neighboring provinces. The central government could be more relaxed about its content than it would be if the paper were distributed nationwide. In contrast, the commercial website, www.sina.com.cn is nationwide. The CCP and the government watches it with great intensity, leaving little room for the website to wander far from the politically correct line.

The landscape of media reporting of judicial affairs under soft authoritarianism, as reflected in the findings presented here, is both dynamic and complex. The implications of these findings are worth further exploration.

3. Impact of Media on Judicial System

Has media reporting had an impact on the judicial system? The consensus in the Chinese public discourse answers this question in the positive. In fact, the widely shared recognition of media’s impact on the judicial system had led to a heated debate in China as to how to balance media oversight and judicial independence. While most commentators accept that the media have a right to exercise oversight over the courts, they argue that the media should do so without jeopardizing judicial independence. Some

propose objective (meaning balanced) reporting, separating reporting from editorial opinions, and self-discipline of the media (Ma Jun 2006). Some propose greater transparency of the court procedures and judicial evaluation of media coverage (Wang Yuan 2006). Some argue media oversight should only focus on court corruption and unfair decisions (Wang Yuan 2006).

In this section, we examine a few high-profile cases where the media have tried to influence the work of the judicial system. However, the outcomes were different in these cases.

Abolishing an Administrative Regulation: The Case of Sun Zhigang

In 1982 the State Council issued The Detention and Repatriation Methods of Urban Vagrants and Beggars. It authorized the police to take vagrants and beggars, i.e. people without documentation for urban residence, into custody and to repatriate these people to their hometowns. In March 2003 a college graduate-turned new migrant in Guangzhou, Sun Zhigang, was taken into custody. He was tortured to death at a detention center. A reporter of a local newspaper, *Southern Metropolitan (Nanfang Dushi Bao)*, first uncovered and reported this incident. The report soon generated heated and passionate discussions on the internet and numerous media outlets followed up. In May, three doctors of law submitted a proposal to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and alleged that The Detention and Repatriation Methods of Urban Vagrants and Beggars violated the constitution. Ten days later, five famous jurists wrote a letter to the same institution and demanded special investigation of this case and the detention and repatriation system as a whole. Public opinion expressed by both the elite and the masses called the central government's attention to the case and the problems

with the detention system. All the suspects involved in the case were arrested and punished. Furthermore, the State Council promptly enacted a new regulation to replace the old one. On June 20th, Premier Wen Jiabao signed the new Measures for Rescuing Urban Vagrants and Beggars, which abolished the whole detention and repatriation system.

Changing a Court Decision: The Case of Liu Yong

Liu Yong was a well-known gangster in Shenyang, the capital city of Liaoning province. On April 17th 2002, the Intermediate Court of Tieling city in Liaoning province sentenced him to death for the crime of intentional injury. He appealed to the Liaoning Provincial High Court. On August 15th 2003, the Liaoning High Court changed the original death sentence to death sentence with a two-year reprieve. According to the judgment, the major reason for this change was that the court could not exclude the possibility of interrogation by torture during the investigation of the case. However, the court did not explain this further and did not open any documents related with the case to the public. This change of the original sentence enraged the public. The internet was flooded with comments about possible collusion between the gangs and the government. Given Liu's ingrained personal networks with some high-ranking government officials, many people believed that corruption led to the change of the sentence. In this context, the *Bund Magazine (Waitan Huabao)* of Shanghai raised questions about the sentencing. Other media outlets followed suit. Unlike Sun Zhigang's case, legal experts held different views from the masses this time. They viewed the decision of the High Court of Liaoning positively because it was based on procedural justice. As early as September 2001, fourteen legal experts of criminal law signed a position paper declaring that the evidence

used by the Intermediate Court was problematic. They believed that the re-sentencing was based on the persuasive arguments by Liu's lawyer rather than on the corruption of the judges in the second trial. The opinion of these legal experts met with overwhelming condemnation by the public.

The outburst of public dissatisfaction ultimately pressured the Supreme People's Court to intervene in the case two months after the second trial. It was rare for the Supreme Court to adjudicate an ordinary criminal case directly instead of sending it back to the original court. On December 22nd 2003, the Supreme Court changed the sentence again. It sentenced Liu to death with immediate execution. Only an hour and a half later, Liu was executed by injection. The Supreme Court simply denied interrogation by torture without providing any concrete information. All evidence and materials related with the case were kept secret.

Eradicating a Long-standing Evil: The Case of Shanxi "Black Brick Kilns"

Clay is abundant in some areas of Shanxi province. Because of China's rapid economic development, making bricks has become a profitable industry. As a result, many brick kilns have sprung up in Shanxi. However, many of the brick kilns are labeled "black" because they are not licensed and they abuse and enslave the laborers, who have been inveigled or even kidnapped.

These illegal activities have existed for many years. According to a report of *Xinmin Evening News (Xinmin Wanbao)* on June 15th 2007, the police of Shanxi had known about the "black brick kilns" since the 1990s, but had not been able to shut them down permanently. The media had also been aware of the situation at least since 2003.⁸

⁸ According to a report, the first report of such illegal activities appeared in 2003 (http://china.dayoo.com/gb/content/2007-06/18/content_2854751.htm, accessed March 20/08).

Even Premier Wen Jiabao was informed of this issue in 2006.⁹ But neither the public nor the government paid much attention until mid-2007.

It was the media's persistent reporting that pushed this problem onto the agenda. *Sanjin Metropolitan News (Sanjin Dushi Bao)* disclosed the tragic condition of the laborers in the "Black Brick Kilns" on May 15th 2007. Two weeks later, *Shanxi Evening News (Shanxi Wanbao)* reported that the police of Hongdong County had uncovered a "Black Brick Kiln" in the county and saved 31 workers. Because one worker had been beaten to death, this news spread quickly. A poster appeared on Dahe Forum (vcom.dahe.cn) on June 5th, through which four hundred fathers asked for help in looking for their lost children, presumably kidnapped to work in the "Black Brick Kilns". Two days later, the poster was transformed into a forum (www.tianya.cn) where heated discussions took place about this problem. Meanwhile, traditional media outlets continued reporting of this issue. On June 13th, *New Express Daily (Xin Kuai Bao)* reported that more than one thousand children had been inveigled to "Black Brick Kilns" and worked as coolies. June 12th 2007 happened to be the sixth World Day against Child Labor. This news made existing discussions explosive. On the same day, Wang Zhaoguo, a member of the politburo, expressed his astonishment. A high-ranking official of All China Federation of Trade Unions came to the scene the next day. On June 15th, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao demanded a thorough investigation. In the following days, Shanxi province launched a battle to clamp down the "Black Brick Kilns," arrest the

⁹ Chen Jianjiao, a representative of Hunan Provincial People's Congress, had investigated the case for nine years. He wrote a number of letters to the State Council, including one mailed to Wen in 2006. Wen responded a week later and asked the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to investigate the case. It was obvious that the Ministry did not treat it seriously and the Premier did not follow up. <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2007-06-25/173113307037.shtml>, accessed March 18/08. This news was from a Shanghai Based TV program called SMG One Seventh.

criminals, and rescue the “Kiln Slaves.” The battle ended in the middle of August. More than 3,000 kilns were shut down. Sixty people received penalties from the courts.

Ninety-five officials were punished.¹⁰

A Fruitless Investigation: the Case of Su Xiuwen

On October 16th 2003, a peasant couple, Dai Yiquan and Liu Zhongxia, drove their tractor to downtown Harbin, the capital city of Heilongjiang province. They were going to send green Chinese onion to a customer. Their tractor scratched a BMW SUV on Fushun Street. The driver, Su Xiuwen, was very angry. She got back into her car. To the surprise of the bystanders, the vehicle ran into a number of people including Liu Zhongxia, Dai’s wife. Liu was killed on the spot and twelve other people were injured.

A local newspaper, *Heilongjiang Morning News (Heilongjiang Chenbao)*, reported the incident the next day. The news was spread quickly through both the internet and traditional media outlets. A lot of people suspected that Su hit those people, at least the peasant couple, intentionally.

Daoli District People’s Court conducted a public trial with live TV coverage on Dec. 20th 2003. The only plaintiff was Daoli District People’s Procuratorate. No victims sued Su and none of the twelve injured people showed up as witnesses. The court ascertained the case as a traffic accident. Su Xiuwen committed an error by mistakenly operating the vehicle. She was sentenced to a two-year imprisonment with a three-year retrieve.

The result of the trial outraged the public. Given that one side of the case was a rich woman, married to a rich businessman, and the other side was a poor peasant couple, the public sympathized with the latter. Many people questioned the fairness of the trial

¹⁰ <http://news.sohu.com/20070814/n251571741.shtml>, accessed March18/08.

and believed that the lenient punishment was due to corruption. Some legal experts questioned the procedures of the trial. They pointed out that the twelve witnesses should not be absent and at least the public prosecutor should have read their testimonies completely. In addition, they criticized the court for not having investigated the conflicts in Su's affidavit. There was also a rumor that Su was the daughter-in-law of some provincial leader.¹¹

Under public pressure the provincial government set up a task force to investigate the case in early 2004. According to a report of *Chinese Commercial News (Huashang Bao)* on Jan. 9th 2004, members of the task force sent its report to the CCP's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection. But there was no news on the response of the commission and any other institutions in Beijing. In March, the investigative work was finished. The task force announced that they found no problems with the case and upheld the original adjudication. In April, a deputy procurator of Daoli District Procuratorate and a vice-president of Daoli District Court were found to have accepted bribes from Su Xiuwen or her relatives. This news was leaked to the media in July, three months after the arrest of the two individuals.¹² But there was no further investigation of Su's case in light of the misconduct of the legal workers.

A Denied Psychiatric Appraisal: the case of Qiu Xinghua

Qiu Xinghua killed ten people in a temple of Shaanxi province on July 14th 2006. The killing was gruesome. He even took out one victim's eyes and heart and stewed them. After his arrest on August 19th 2006, he maintained that he did this because he believed that his wife had an affair with the abbot of the temple.

¹¹ This has been proved to be false finally.

¹² <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2004-07-09/21363661452.shtml>, accessed Aug. 28/07.

Because of the thrilling plot of the case, various media outlets had reported the case even before Qiu's arrest. After reading the reports, Liu Xiwei, a psychiatrist, deemed that Qiu was mentally ill. On October 19th, the Intermediate Court of Ankang city in Shaanxi province sentenced Qiu to death. On November 31st, Qiu appealed to Shaanxi High Court because he wanted the court to confirm that he killed those people for his wife's affair.

Meanwhile, Liu Xiwei mobilized a number of specialists to call for a judicial psychiatric appraisal of Qiu Xinghua. At first, they were condemned in internet discussions and some media reports. But gradually more and more people began to accept their suggestion. The results of a survey conducted by sina.com.cn showed that more than 60% respondents supported the judicial psychiatric appraisal.¹³ Under the suggestion of the legal specialists, Qiu's wife and his lawyer requested a judicial psychiatric appraisal during the second trial at Shaanxi High Court. On December 11th, five jurists posted an open letter on the internet calling for public support of a judicial psychiatric appraisal. Their purpose was to advance the procedural justice in China's court system.

However, according to China's Criminal Procedure Law, the court has the final say on this issue. On December 28th 2006, Shaanxi High Court denied the judicial psychiatric appraisal and upheld the original judgment. The court decided that the evidence provided by Qiu's wife and his lawyer was invalid because it was not from any professional institutions. Qiu was executed on the same day. Some people noted that the Supreme People's Court was due to take back the reviewing power on death penalty cases from the lower courts on January 1st 2007. It means that three days later Qiu's

death sentence would have to be reviewed by the Supreme Court, which might have made the judicial psychiatric appraisal possible.

A Comparison of the Cases

In all of the cases discussed above, the media voiced public opinion and sought to influence the work of the judicial system. What explains the different outcomes of these cases? We suggest that an influence process model might provide some insights. This model describes the process through which the media encounter the judicial system and analyzes the routes of media's influence on the judicial system. Although this model is induced from these five cases, we hope that it can be applied to other cases as well.

As figure 5 shows, the starting point of every case is a triggering event, such as Sun Zhigang's death, Liu Yong's second trial, the exposure of a "Black Brick Kiln" by the police, a dubious traffic accident, and a thrilling homicidal case. The common ground of these events is their startling nature. Sensational events are attractive to reporters as well as the audience. They provide the venues for the media to encounter the judicial system.

[Figure 5 about here]

But startling events do not guarantee opportunities for the media to influence the judicial system. The reporter's insights, courage, and endeavors are also important. In Sun Zhigang's case, Chen Feng—the reporter of *Southern Metropolitan*—played a key role in disclosing the undeserved death of a college student. More importantly, the impact of the media on the judicial system is through the interaction with public opinion. As shown earlier in the paper, the media in China increasingly voice public opinion. In the cases discussed above, media outlets reported public outrage and discontent. Even

¹³ <http://law.cctv.com/20070104/101816.shtml>, accessed Feb. 25/08.

when public opinion was divided, as in the cases of Liu Yong and Qiu Xinghua, both sides were found in the media.

It is interesting to note that experts' opinion played important roles in some cases, but not in other cases. For instance, in Sun Zhigang's case, the eight legal experts questioned the whole detention and repatriation system in addition to Sun's specific case. Their opinion served as guidance for the general public opinion. On the other hand, we do not find experts' opinion in the case of 'Black Brick Kilns.' In Su Xiuwen's case, for instance, although some legal experts pointed out the problematic procedure of the court, the public did not pay much attention to this. When the task force announced that there was no corruption in the case, the public seemed satisfied. In general, the experts hold more professional and stable views than the masses. They care more about procedural justice than the outcomes of individual cases.

In addition to voicing public opinion, the media also shape public opinion. In the cases discussed above, media reports of judicial affairs provoked the public, including the elite and the masses. The reaction of the public, often reported in the media, in turn put pressure on the judicial system. If media reporting failed to generate strong public reactions, it would not have had much influence on the judicial system.

However, even in cases where media coverage of judicial affairs did generate strong public reactions, the judicial system did not always follow public opinion. The five cases which we have discussed can be grouped into two categories. In the first three cases, the judicial system responded to public opinion. The media's efforts led to changes in the judicial system. In the other two cases, the judicial system did not respond to public opinion and changed nothing.

Comparing these two groups of cases, we find a major difference—the involvement of central authorities (see figure 5). The central authorities include not only the Supreme People’s Court, the Supreme People’s Procuratorate, and the Ministry of Public Security, but also various other institutions in Beijing such as the Politburo, the State Council, the National People’s Congress, the Central Political-legal Committee, and the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CCP. Once the central authorities got involved in a case, the judicial system responded to public opinion quickly and effectively. On the contrary, if the central authorities decided to stay away from a case, the judicial system did not respond to public opinion. In Sun Zhigang’s case, both the National People’s Congress and the State Council involved. In Liu Yong’s case, the Supreme People’s Court intervened in the case. In the case of the “Black Brick Kiln”, members of the Politburo intervened. There were no such involvements in the other two cases. In the case of Su Xiuwen, although Central Commission for Discipline Inspection was supposed to have received the report of the provincial task force it ignored the case. In Qiu Xinghua’s case, Central Political-legal Committee and the Ministry of Public Security demanded the police of Shaanxi province to arrest Qiu as soon as possible. But they never expressed their attitudes towards the judicial psychiatric appraisal. In these two cases, the lower courts upheld their original decisions despite aggressive media demands. Therefore, there are two routes through which the media influence the judicial system, as we show in figure 6. The first route is to influence the judicial system through central authorities. Once central authorities respond, they will have substantial impacts on the judicial system. But they do not respond every time. The second route is to influence the judicial system without the involvement of central authorities. Under this

circumstance, the media can hardly have a substantial impact on the judicial system although it can still exert some pressure on it. The first three cases followed the first route while the other two cases followed the second route.

[Figure 6 about here]

Why do central authorities respond to media and public pressure in some cases and turn a deaf ear to other cases? It is not an easy question to answer because both the political and the judicial systems in China lack transparency. We can, however, suggest two plausible factors.

First, we think that the central authorities are likely to respond to media and public pressure when their major policy proposals and the regime's legitimacy are at stake. Since Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao came to power in 2003, their major policy proposal has been to establish a harmonious society. Sun Zhigang's case exposed serious problems with the detention and repatriation system, which mistreated a large number of people. This obviously conflicted with the blueprint of a harmonious society. When media reports of the case highlighted these problems, Wen abolished the system. Similarly, "Black Brick Kilns" abused and enslaved large numbers of laborers including children. If the government could not eradicate such establishments despite media spot light, social discontent could spread. This would undermine social stability and the government's legitimacy. So the central authorities demanded immediate judicial action against them. In Liu Yong's case, leniency toward a gangster group would shake people's trust and confidence in the government. As a result, executing Liu Yong became the best choice for central authorities. In contrast, Su Xiuwen's case and Qiu

Xinghua's case did not have such broad social implications. In those cases, the central authorities chose to stay aloof, leaving the judicial matters to local courts.

Second, central authorities do not seem to attach much importance to procedural justice. We speculate that they are not likely to intervene in cases where procedural matters are at stake. In the case of Qiu Xinghua, they did not support the conduct of a judicial psychiatric appraisal for Qiu. In the case of Su Xiuwen, they were not interested in correcting the procedural mistakes in the trial. In the case of Liu Yong, the central authorities obviously put policy goals ahead of procedural justice. On this basis, we believe that if the media seek to influence the judicial system in the name of procedural justice, they are not likely to be successful.

Conclusion

In the last three decades China's media have changed significantly. They have become more pluralized, commercialized, and liberalized under soft authoritarianism. News spreads quickly through the network of different media outlets. In sharp contrast with the mouthpiece model, the media have increasingly taken on the role of voicing public opinion and exercising oversight. These trends are reflected in media coverage of judicial affairs. In this paper we have examined how different kinds of media outlets report judicial matters and found some interesting patterns. We have also studied several cases where the media – interacting with public opinion – have tried to influence the judicial system. In China today there is a heated discussion whether media oversight undermines judicial independence. Our findings suggest that whether the media actually generate substantial influence on the judicial system often depends on the attitude and

action of the central authorities. Without the involvement of central authorities, the judicial system can make independent decisions no matter how aggressive the media are. This means that the media have only limited capacity to influence the judicial system either as a watchdog on behalf of justice or as an obstacle to judicial independence.

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Appendix: Figures and Tables

Figure 1 Changes in Style and Themes of Reporting
--Legal Daily

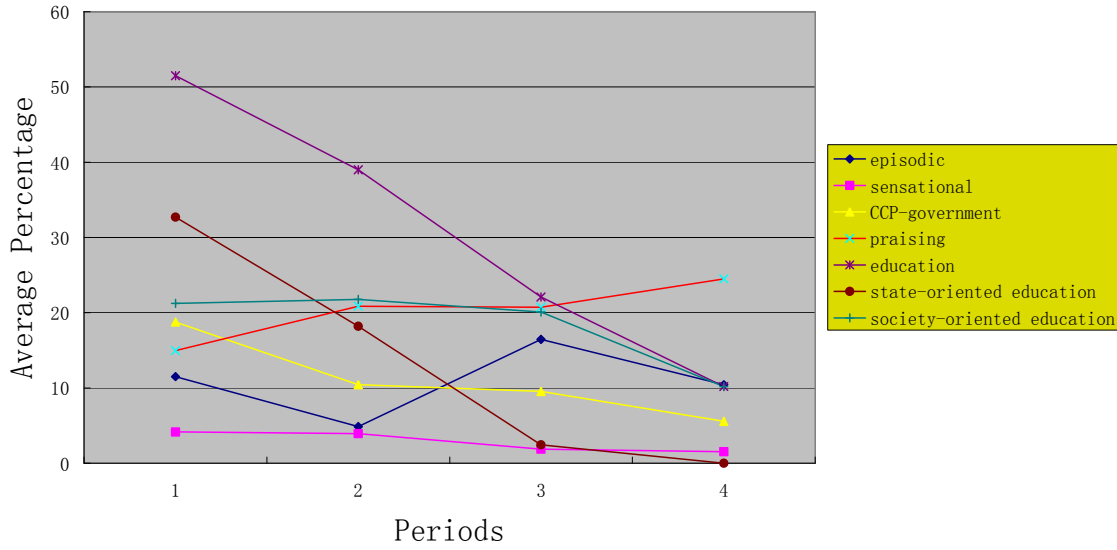


Figure 2 Changes in Style and Themes of Reporting--
Southern Weekend

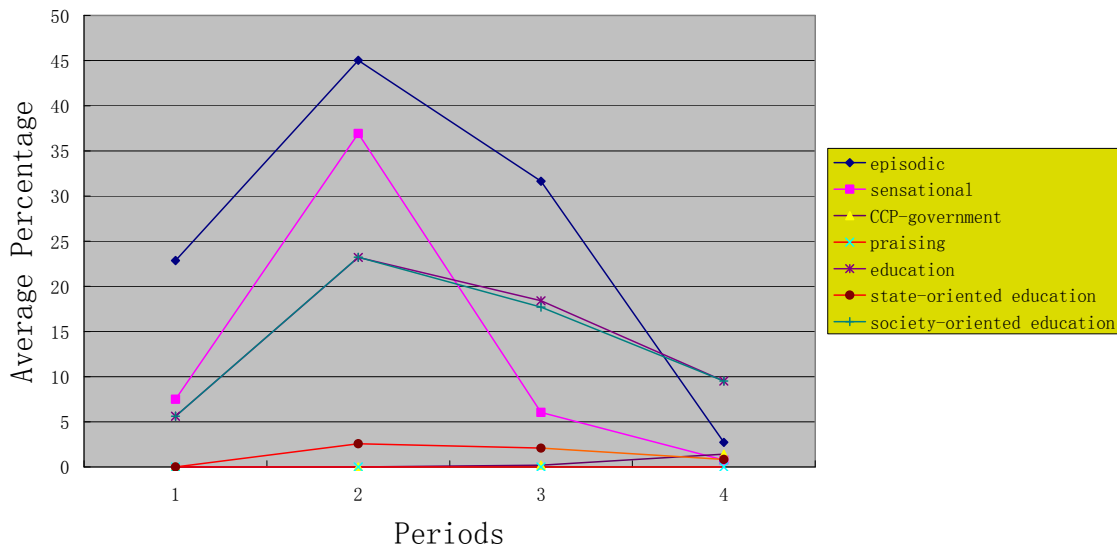


Figure 3 Changes in Themes of Reporting--Legal Daily

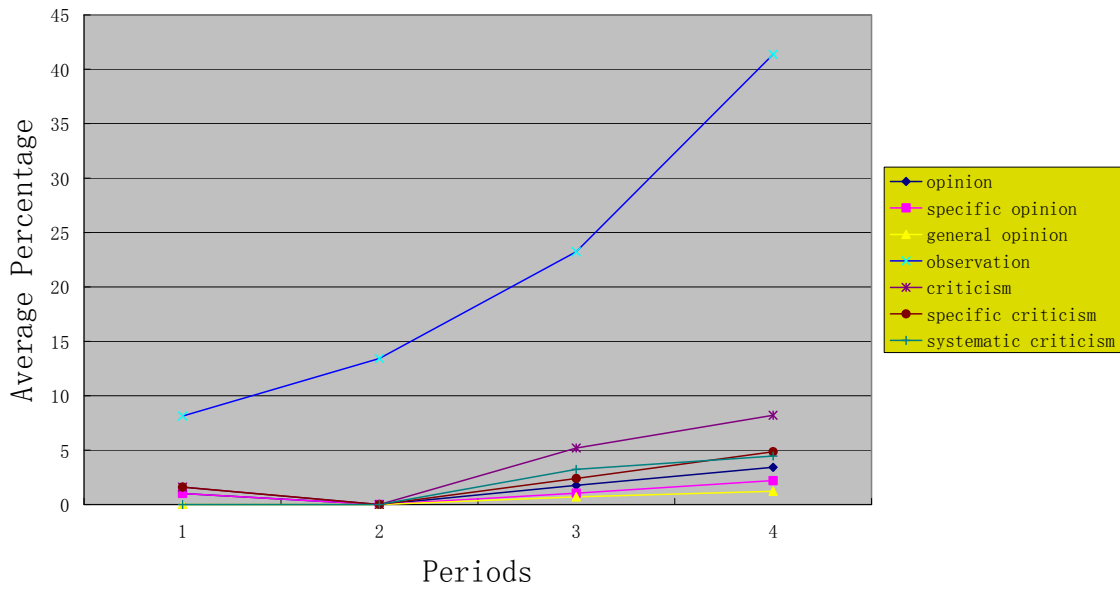


Figure 4 Changes in Themes of Reporting--Southern Weekend

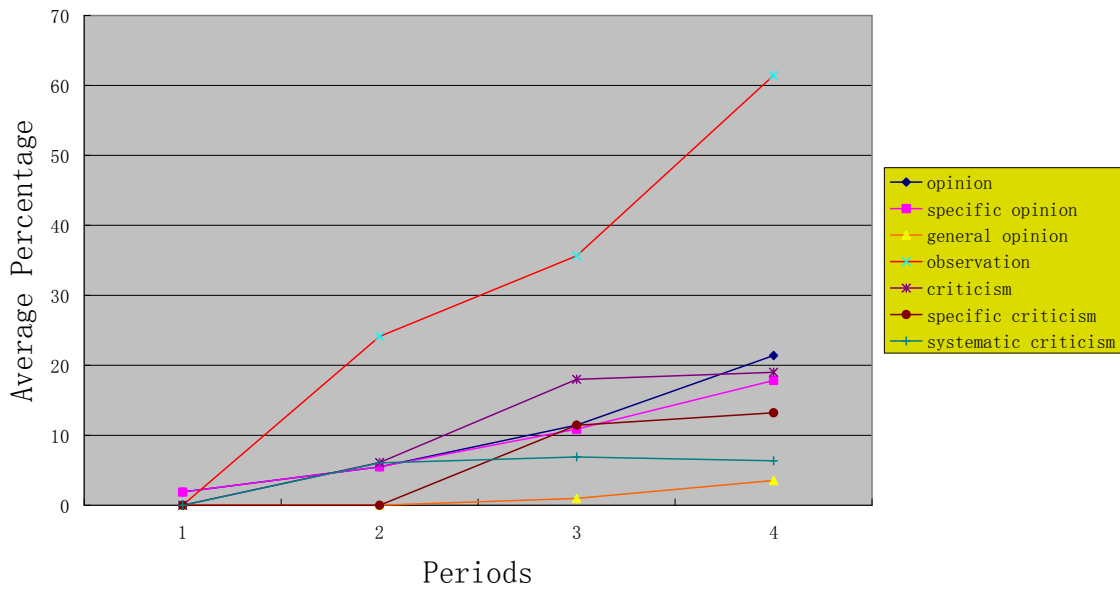


Figure 5 Influence Process

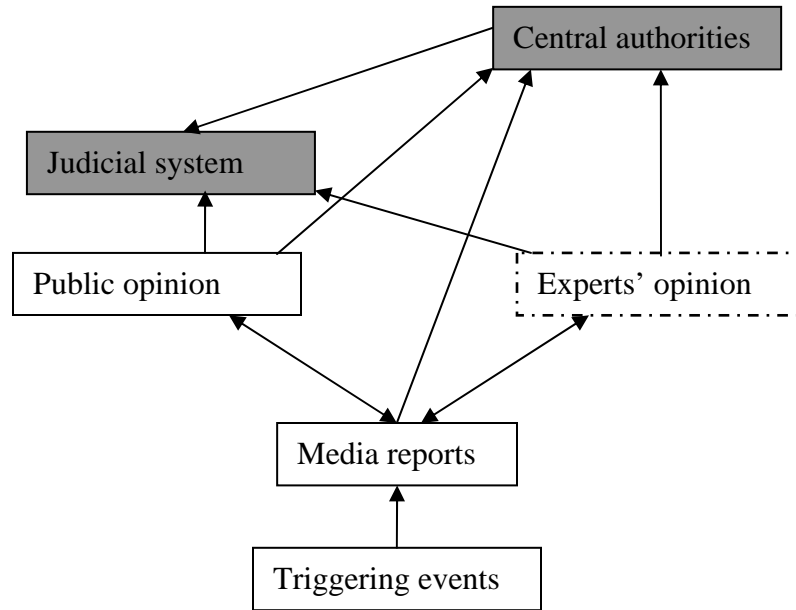


Figure 6 Routes of Influence

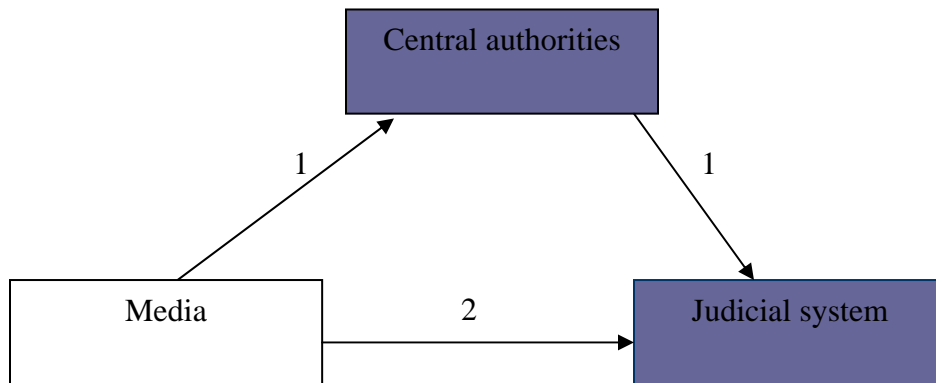


Table 1 Independent *t* test for style variables by media nature

<i>Variables</i>	Media nature		<i>t value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
	official mean (SD) (<i>N</i> =612)	commercial mean (SD) (<i>N</i> =1071)			
Percentage of episodic reports	.15 (.353)	.28 (.448)	-6.716	1519.870	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of sensational reports	.03 (.164)	.07 (.263)	-4.498	1667.799	<i>p</i> <.001

Table 2 Independent *t* test for theme variables by media nature

<i>Variables</i>	Media nature		<i>t value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
	official mean (SD) (<i>N</i> =612)	commercial mean (SD) (<i>N</i> =1071)			
Percentage of CCP-government theme	.11 (.315)	.01 (.081)	8.075	657.208	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of praising theme	.20 (.402)	.00 (.000)	12.460	611.000	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of education theme	.27 (.444)	.15 (.361)	5.483	1072.608	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of state-oriented education	.08 (.272)	.02 (.139)	5.137	796.587	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of society-oriented education	.19 (.396)	.15 (.358)	2.276	1167.897	<i>p</i> <.05
Percentage of public opinion theme	.02 (.150)	.11 (.313)	-7.710	1637.789	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of opinions on specifics	.02 (.127)	.09 (.292)	-7.568	1589.196	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of opinions on system	.01 (.081)	.02 (.129)	-2.012	1666.949	<i>p</i> <.05
Percentage of neural observations theme	.25 (.431)	.41 (.492)	-7.046	1411.091	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of criticism theme	.05 (.216)	.16 (.370)	-8.007	1680.210	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of criticisms of specifics	.03 (.164)	.11 (.307)	-6.755	1674.639	<i>p</i> <.001
Percentage of criticisms of system	.03 (.160)	.06 (.239)	-3.545	1640.688	<i>p</i> <.001

Table 3 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on episodic reporting

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			9.053	1, 1438	$p < .01$
Official	.182	.021			
Commercial	.100	.017			
Main effect of media type			23.032	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Print	.076	.025			
Online	.207	.012			
Interaction between media nature and media type			2.858	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.14	.349			
Official and online	.22	.418			
Commercial and print	.01	.108			
Commercial and online	.19	.392			

Table 4 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on sensational reporting

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			4.211	1, 1438	<i>p</i> <.05
Official	.050	.013			
Commercial	.016	.011			
Main effect of media type			11.285	1, 1438	<i>p</i> <.01
Print	.005	.015			
Online	.061	.007			
Interaction between media nature and media type			1.956	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.01	.104			
Official and online	.09	.285			
Commercial and print	.00	.000			
Commercial and online	.03	.177			

Table 5 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on CCP-government theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.202	1, 1438	ns
Official	.012	.007			
Commercial	.017	.006			
Main effect of media type			1.858	1, 1438	ns
Print	.008	.008			
Online	.021	.004			
Interaction between media nature and media type			.973	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.01	.104			
Official and online	.01	.118			
Commercial and print	.01	.076			
Commercial and online	.03	.163			

Table 6 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on praising theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			118.058	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official	.082	.006			
Commercial	.001	.005			
Main effect of media type			110.682	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Print	.081	.007			
Online	.003	.003			
Interaction between media nature and media type			117.768	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official and print	.16	.370			
Official and online	.00	.051			
Commercial and print	.00	.000			
Commercial and online	.00	.050			

Table 7 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on education theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.227	1, 1438	ns
Official	.076	.013			
Commercial	.068	.011			
Main effect of media type			1.816	1, 1438	ns
Print	.083	.015			
Online	.060	.007			
Interaction between media nature and media type			5.987	1, 1438	<i>p</i> <.05
Official and print	.11	.311			
Official and online	.04	.205			
Commercial and print	.06	.235			
Commercial and online	.08	.267			

Table 8 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on state-oriented education

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.157	1, 1438	ns
Official	.010	.007			
Commercial	.014	.006			
Main effect of media type			3.822	1, 1438	ns
Print	.003	.009			
Online	.021	.004			
Interaction between media nature and media type			.048	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.00	.000			
Official and online	.02	.142			
Commercial and print	.01	.076			
Commercial and online	.02	.148			

Table 9 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on society-oriented education

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.898	1, 1438	ns
Official	.072	.012			
Commercial	.058	.010			
Main effect of media type			5.313	1, 1438	<i>p</i> <.05
Print	.083	.014			
Online	.047	.007			
Interaction between media nature and media type			4.903	1, 1438	<i>p</i> <.05
Official and print	.11	.311			
Official and online	.04	.190			
Commercial and print	.06	.235			
Commercial and online	.06	.232			

Table 10 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on public opinion theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			30.691	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official	.051	.015			
Commercial	.160	.013			
Main effect of media type			10.996	1, 1438	$p < .01$
Print	.138	.018			
Online	.073	.008			
Interaction between media nature and media type			17.182	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official and print	.04	.204			
Official and online	.06	.236			
Commercial and print	.23	.425			
Commercial and online	.09	.282			

Table 11 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on opinion on specifics

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			33.939	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official	.035	.014			
Commercial	.141	.012			
Main effect of media type			9.315	1, 1438	$p < .01$
Print	.116	.016			
Online	.060	.008			
Interaction between media nature and media type			20.842	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official and print	.02	.146			
Official and online	.05	.216			
Commercial and print	.21	.409			
Commercial and online	.07	.259			

Table 12 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on opinions on system

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.149	1, 1438	ns
Official	.016	.006			
Commercial	.019	.005			
Main effect of media type			1.389	1, 1438	ns
Print	.022	.008			
Online	.013	.004			
Interaction between media nature and media type			.026	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.02	.146			
Official and online	.01	.101			
Commercial and print	.02	.152			
Commercial and online	.01	.121			

Table 13 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on observations theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			3.150	1, 1438	ns
Official	.518	.027			
Commercial	.581	.023			
Main effect of media type			1.063	1, 1438	ns
Print	.568	.032			
Online	.531	.015			
Interaction between media nature and media type			.261	1, 1438	ns
Official and print	.53	.502			
Official and online	.51	.500			
Commercial and print	.61	.490			
Commercial and online	.55	.498			

Table 14 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on criticism theme

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			7.398	1, 1438	$p < .01$
Official	.075	.017			
Commercial	.135	.014			
Main effect of media type			1.014	1, 1438	ns
Print	.116	.020			
Online	.094	.010			
Interaction between media nature and media type			33.522	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official and print	.02	.146			
Official and online	.13	.334			
Commercial and print	.21	.409			
Commercial and online	.06	.237			

Table 15 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on criticisms of specifics

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			6.746	1, 1438	$p < .01$
Official	.50	.015			
Commercial	.102	.013			
Main effect of media type			.000	1, 1438	ns
Print	.076	.018			
Online	.076	.009			
Interaction between media nature and media type			25.333	1, 1438	$p < .001$
Official and print	.00	.000			
Official and online	.10	.301			
Commercial and print	.15	.360			
Commercial and online	.05	.223			

Table 16 Two-way analysis of variance of media nature and media type on criticisms of system

<i>Main effect and interaction</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Main effect of media nature			.609	1, 1438	ns
Official	.024	.009			
Commercial	.033	.007			
Main effect of media type			4.191	1, 1438	$p < .05$
Print	.040	.010			
Online	.017	.005			
Interaction between media nature and media type			6.508	1, 1438	$p < .05$
Official and print	.02	.146			
Official and online	.03	.162			
Commercial and print	.06	.235			
Commercial and online	.01	.086			