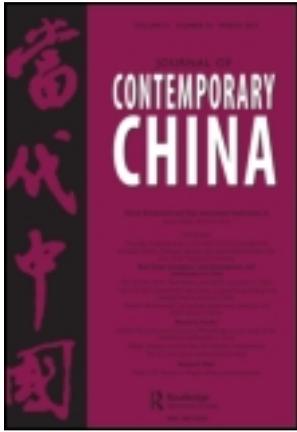


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One Rising China, Multiple Interpretations: China's 60th anniversary celebration through the lens of the world's printed media

JIANGNAN ZHU* and JIE LU

What does a rising China mean to the world? While some countries take China as a salient threat, others regard China as their role model for development and governance. However, limited research has offered a systematic comparative analysis in this regard. China's spectacular celebration of its 60th anniversary uniquely showcased its increasing military might, mounting economic wealth and carefully-maintained mass support. Taking advantage of simultaneous worldwide news coverage of this all-in-one event, we scrutinize how different societies responded to a rising China. We find significant variance in the news coverage from 42 top printed media in 21 sampled societies. Moreover, these societies' political features affect their newspapers' reporting styles the most. This analysis significantly enriches our understanding of the rise of China.

On 1 October 2009, Beijing held an unprecedentedly grand celebration of the 60th National Day of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The two-hour celebration in front of Tiananmen Rostrum included the biggest-ever military review, which displayed sophisticated domestically produced weaponry, as well as 100,000 civilians marching with 19 brightly decorated floats and a mass performance. The whole event was intended to demonstrate China's national economic and social

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progress.¹ As remarked by President Hu Jintao, this celebration exhibited ‘a favorable image of the country’s armed forces and tremendous progress that the PRC had achieved in the past six decades, especially the latest 30 years of opening-up and reform’. It received ‘wide acclaim from international communities’ and ‘strengthened the national confidence and pride of the Chinese home and abroad’.² However, to what extent were other nations attracted to this grand event in China? Did they perceive and interpret it as Beijing intended and claimed? Despite the existence of some evidence suggesting a large discrepancy between how China would like to present itself to the international community and how other nations have perceived China,³ contemporary research on this subject is far from conclusive and demands more systematic empirical work. It is, therefore, worth studying how the world responded to the rise of China, in general, and to this extensive display of China’s military and economic might, in particular.

In this paper, we use data from the 42 most widely circulated broadsheet newspapers in 21 different countries/regions, assisted by content analysis, to examine how the leading printed media in these societies covered and interpreted China’s celebration of its 60th National Day. These major newspapers, conventionally perceived as elite media, can partially reflect such societies’ public and especially socio-political elites’ opinions on the rise of China; and therefore indicate possible development in these societies’ future policies toward China. Our primary goal in this paper is to generate some systematic descriptive analysis. We find that China’s grand celebration did attract considerable attention from foreign elite media, which attests the rising international influence of China. Moreover, we find that 15 out of the 21 sampled societies gave mainly positive or neutral coverage of the event. We also tentatively explore some possible correlates of the sampled societies’ varying responses to this dramatic event. We find that their levels of regime freedom provide the most explanatory power regarding which aspects of China’s rise they are particularly concerned with, as well as the general attitude they hold toward China. However, instead of being conclusive in this paper, we only intend to provide some systematic information and plausible clues as a basis for future research on the implications of China’s rise.

One rising China, multiple interpretations

Since the early 1990s when the Chinese economy first posted exceptional growth, a variety of ‘China threat’ arguments have been developed. These arguments maintain, first, that an increasingly powerful China could destabilize regional security. China’s significant increase in defense spending since the 1990s has led many observers to

1. ‘Floats depict China’s earth-shaking changes in 60 years’, *People’s Daily*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6774807.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

2. ‘President Hu calls for patriotism, national spirit to serve socialist construction’, *People’s Daily*, (7 October 2009), available at: <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6777230.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

3. See Joshua Cooper Ramo, *Brand China* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2007) and Hongying Wang, ‘National image building and Chinese foreign policy’, *China: An International Journal* 1(1), (2003), pp. 46–72.

infer that China intends to build itself into a military super-power.⁴ This perception has naturally stirred insecurity and anxiety among some of China's neighbors. Even if not seriously worried about being physically attacked by China, some countries are still concerned that China might employ various coercive means to maintain an environment serving China's interests only.⁵

Second, China's rapid economic ascendancy is also perceived as a threat to other countries. For both developed and developing economies, an economically stronger China means greater bargaining leverage that may boost China's economic nationalism and induce a confrontational negotiation approach, damaging their economic interests in international trade and other bilateral economic transactions.⁶ For example, China's Southeast Asian neighbors have feared that the sustained expansion of the Chinese economy may divert foreign direct investment (FDI) away from them to China.⁷

Moreover, the authoritarian nature of the Chinese regime, together with its Confucian and Leninist political traditions, has further exacerbated many Western democracies' concerns about China's rise. Given the popularity of political liberalization, democratization and human rights, *inter alia*, in the political and diplomatic discourse of today's world, the rise of a militarily powerful and economically successful authoritarian China seems to swim against the tide and could be a dangerous role model for other developing nations.⁸ Indeed, the increasing popularity of China's unorthodox path for economic growth has already incited some questioning of the Washington Consensus, especially among many Latin American and African countries that have followed this liberal paradigm for a long time without securing much success. Thus, the rise of China alerts the advocates of the Washington Consensus to a possible substitution by the 'Beijing Consensus'.⁹ As expected, for example, the United States is especially afraid of 'surrendering both its hard and soft power—to China—in its backyard';¹⁰ and China's recent investment in the resource industry of African countries has also been criticized as neo-colonialist, not only

4. See among other, Masashi Nishihara, 'Japan has cause to worry about Chinese ambition', *International Herald Tribune*, (12 July 1994), p. 3; and Kenneth W. Allen, Glenn Krumel and Jonathan D. Pollack, *China's Air Force Enters the 21st Century* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1995).

5. Denny Roy, 'The "China threat" issue: major arguments', *Asian Survey* 36(8), (1996), p. 762.

6. David Wall, 'China as a trade partner: threat or opportunity for the OECD?', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 72(2), (1996), p. 330.

7. John Ravenhill, 'Is China an economic threat to Southeast Asia?', *Asian Survey* 46(5), (2006), p. 653; and Ramkishan Rajan, 'Emergence of China as an economic power: what does it imply for South-East Asia?', *Economic and Political Weekly* 38(26), (2003), pp. 2639–2643.

8. Roy, 'The "China threat" issue', pp. 760–761.

9. Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus: Notes on the New Physics of Chinese Power* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2004). Also see Suisheng Zhao, 'The China model: can it replace the Western model of modernization?', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 419–436; Barry Naughton, 'China's distinctive system: can it be a model for others?', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 437–460; and Scott Kennedy, 'The myth of the Beijing Consensus', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 461–477.

10. S. Philip Hsu, 'In search of China's development model: beyond the Beijing Consensus', in S. Philip Hsu, Yu-Shan Wu and Suisheng Zhao, eds, *In Search of China's Development Model: Beyond the Beijing Consensus* (New York: Routledge, 2010), ch. 1, p. 3 (manuscript). Also see Suisheng Zhao, 'Shaping the regional context of China's rise: how the Obama administration brought back hedge in its engagement with China', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(75), (2012), pp. 369–389. For soft power, see Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (Public Affairs, 2005) and Sheng Ding, 'Analyzing rising power from the perspective of soft power: a new look at China's rise to the status quo power', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(64), (2010), pp. 255–272.

grabbing oil and resources from those countries but also propping up repressive regimes.¹¹

Meanwhile, a number of China observers and scholars disagree with the ‘China threat’ arguments. One school simply argues that the world has overestimated China’s strength. Twenty years after Chinese economic reform, Segal argued that China was at most a middle power: economically, China was a relatively unimportant small market; militarily, it posed less global rivalry than regional menace; and politically, it boasted little influence.¹² Some scholars even pessimistically believed that China would eventually decay due to certain inherent flaws, such as rampant corruption, vast waste and irresponsible elites, despite its superficial prosperity.¹³ In contrast, a relatively positive view suggests that Beijing has been increasingly active in bilateral and multilateral international cooperation. According to Shambaugh, with ‘remarkably adept and nuanced’ diplomacy, China is now seen by most Asian nations as ‘a good neighbor, a constructive partner, a careful listener, and a nonthreatening regional power’.¹⁴ In this view, China’s rise as an economic power is expected to provide greater opportunities and contribute to security in both the region and the world.

More importantly, there is a rising trend from Russia to Syria to Vietnam that views China as a successful model that is capable of maintaining effective control during an era of rapid change.¹⁵ Even the Western community has recognized some merits in the China model. For instance, the appointment of a leading Chinese economist as the World Bank’s senior vice president clearly indicates the World Bank’s willingness to refer to Chinese strategies for fighting poverty in other developing nations.¹⁶ Scholars like Peerenboom and French have also identified several aspects central to China’s success that could be valuable for other late developers.¹⁷

Beijing is aware of the serious implications of the multiple interpretations of its growing economic wealth and military power. That is why ‘peaceful rise’—to catch up with advanced countries without military conflicts—has been repeatedly emphasized in China’s foreign policies, through a variety of channels.¹⁸ Chinese scholars have also tried very hard to demonstrate to both domestic and international audiences why a peaceful rise is not only theoretically possible, but also a practical and

11. Wenran Jiang, ‘Fuelling the dragon: China’s rise and its energy and resources extraction in Africa’, *The China Quarterly* 199, (September 2009), p. 585.

12. Gerald Segal, ‘Does China matter?’, *Foreign Affairs* 78(5), (1999), pp. 24–36.

13. Minxin Pei, ‘The dark side of China’s rise’, *Foreign Policy* 153, (2006), p. 32.

14. David Shambaugh, ‘China engages Asia: reshaping the regional order’, *International Security* 29(3), (2004), p. 64.

15. Perry Link and Joshua Kurlantzick, ‘China’s modern authoritarianism’, *The Wall Street Journal*, (25 May 2009), available at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124319304482150525.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

16. Hsu, ‘In search of China’s development model’, pp. 2–3.

17. Randall Peerenboom, *China Modernizes: Threat to the West or Model for the Rest?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Howard H. French, ‘Letter from China: what if Beijing is right?’, *New York Times*, (2 November 2007), available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/02/world/asia/02iht-letter.1.8162318.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed 2 March 2013).

18. Q. Edward Wang, ‘“Rise of the great powers” = rise of China? Challenges of the advancement of global history in the People’s Republic of China’, *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(64), (2010), pp. 273–289; Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower: How China’s Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Bonnie S. Glaser and Evan S. Medeiros, ‘The changing ecology of foreign policy-making in China: the ascension and demise of the theory of peaceful rise?’, *The China Quarterly* 190, (2007), pp. 291–310.

attractive strategic choice for China. Tactically, the Chinese government has made serious efforts since the early 1990s to increase its soft power, or China's attractiveness to foreign nations, and to promote a benign image of a rising China on the international stage. For example, China has taken advantage of major international events like the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai Expo to improve its national image. It has also actively relied on diplomacy (e.g. engaging in security cooperation and providing foreign aid), trade incentives, and cultural and educational exchange opportunities, to win over especially China's neighbors and other developing countries. Meanwhile, China also moves cautiously without offending the United States.¹⁹ More recently, after announcing an ambitious plan (with a tentative budget of around US\$7 billion) in 2009 to transform its official media system and enhance its capability of delivering news worldwide in different languages, China officially launched public relations campaigns in different countries featuring two promotional videos in early 2011.²⁰ Given the competing interpretations of China's rise in the international community and Beijing's continuous efforts to tilt the political discourse in its favor, a question naturally arises: has China been successful in promoting its peaceful rise and cultivating a favorable image in other nations? How do other nations, particularly their socioeconomic and political elites, respond to the rising China? What factors are critical in shaping such responses?

Previous research on the implications of the ascending dragon, as well as other countries' response, has usually focused on only a certain aspect, a specific region or cases that are only relevant to a few countries.²¹ Little research has done cross-country comparisons of responses concerning various aspects of China's rise. We take advantage of the extraordinary National Day celebration for this paper's analysis to fill this gap.

The commemoration of China's 60th anniversary bears several unique methodological advantages for our research. First, by comparing different societies' coverage of the same salient event we can control for potential influences from different timing, specific events and possible self-selection bias on these societies' attitudes. For instance, trade or territory disputes may only be of interest for a few relevant societies, whose response could be strongly biased by issue-specific interests. In contrast, the National Day celebration is primarily a domestic issue with little involvement by other nations. Thus, other societies' coverage of this event is expected to primarily reflect their general interest in and attitude toward China.

19. For details, see Derek McDougall, 'Responses to "rising China" in the East Asian region: soft balancing with accommodation', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(73), (2012), pp. 1–17; Nick Bisley, 'China's rise and the making of East Asia's security architecture', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(73), (2012), pp. 19–34; Mark Beeson and Fujian Li, 'Charmed or alarmed? Reading China's regional relations', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(73), (2012), pp. 35–51; Baogang He, 'Politics of accommodation of the rise of China: the case of Australia', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(73), (2012), pp. 53–70; James Reilly, 'A norm-taker or a norm-maker? Chinese aid in Southeast Asia', *Journal of Contemporary China* 21(73), (2012), pp. 71–91.

20. Weihua Chen, Lianxing Li and Yan Duan, 'National image lights up Time Squares', *China Daily*, (19 January 2011), available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2011-01/19/content_11877488.htm (accessed 2 March 2013).

21. Some recent research includes Tao Xie and Benjamin I. Page, 'Americans and the rise of China as a world power', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(65), (2010), pp. 479–501; Peter Hays Gries, H. Michael Crowson and Todd Sandel, 'The Olympic effect on American attitudes towards China', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(64), (2010), pp. 213–231; and Li Zhang, 'The rise of China: media perception and implications for international politics', *Journal of Contemporary China* 19(64), (2010), pp. 233–254.

Second, China's celebration of its 60th anniversary sent a strong and unified message of its rise to the world. This is essentially different from events like the Beijing Olympics and the Shanghai Expo, wherein military and political issues were intentionally downplayed. In contrast, the massive military parade and the marching of thousands of citizens chanting slogans of loyalty and pride during the celebration intentionally showcased China's military power and political capacity in control and mobilization. It is highly likely that this event might catch attention, stir complicated feelings from different societies and ignite further debates on the implications of China's rise. Thus, the selection bias in previous research, due to different societies' attention to distinct aspects of China's rise, as well as Beijing's strategic manipulation, could have been minimized.

Moreover, other societies' choices on which aspects of the celebration to focus on and cover for domestic elite audiences provide valuable information on their possible interpretations of the rising China. Finally, similar to other large-scale events, Beijing also intentionally used its media system to promote an image of a peacefully rising China to the world. Hence, the National Day celebration offered a golden opportunity to scrutinize different societies' attitude towards China and further analyze how and why these countries responded differently.

Method, data and validity

We approximate other nations' possible response to China's 60th anniversary celebration by their top newspapers' coverage of the event. Many scholars have shown that mass media are a major information source, shaping public opinion and influencing policymaking in both democracies and authoritarian societies. This is especially the case when it comes to attitudes toward other countries.²² Very few people have direct experiences with the 'whole range of international affairs. It is the news media that provide people with information about world affairs'. Thus, most people rely on the 'mass media to make a map of the world'.²³ Moreover, comparatively speaking, newspapers in all societies have been generally recognized as 'elite media' due to their higher demand for education, literacy and other resources among consumers.²⁴ Despite the competition from cable networks and the Internet, newspapers in many countries are still widely embraced for their comprehensive and high quality news coverage, particularly among socioeconomic and political elites.²⁵ Meanwhile, such elites, whether in democratic or authoritarian societies, also take

22. Michael Kunzick, *Images of Nations and International Public Relations* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997).

23. Li Zhang, 'The rise of China', p. 236. The author cites from Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963).

24. Bill O'Reilly, 'Defining the elite media', *The O'Reilly Factor*, (8 March 2004), available at: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,113614,00.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

25. Following John Zaller, we define elites as 'politicians, higher-level government officials, journalists, some activists, and many kinds of experts and policy specialists', as well as corporate elites. See John Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 6. For relations between political elites and mass media, see among others, W. Phillips Davison, 'News media and international negotiation', *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 38(2), (1974), pp. 174–191; Yoel Cohen, *Media Diplomacy: The Foreign Office in the Mass Communications Age* (London: Frank Cass, 1986); Patrick O'Heffernan, *Mass Media and American Foreign Policy: Insider Perspectives on Global Journalism and the Foreign Policy Process* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1991).

advantage of mass media as means of framing issues, exercising agenda control, cultivating popular support and influencing their countries' domestic and foreign policies.²⁶ Therefore, we choose to focus on the coverage of China's 60th anniversary celebration in selected societies' major newspapers to approximate their perceptions of China's rise, particularly those among their elites.

Which cases/nations to include is also consequential. Theoretically, we would like to include all countries for analysis. Unfortunately, we do not have the necessary language skills and enough resources to undertake such an ambitious project. Therefore, we intentionally select a group of nations and societies that boast the features suggested by existing literature as pertinent or that are theoretically expected to be crucial. Basically, we choose cases to represent the following features, though this categorization is not mutually exclusive and exhaustive: (1) major world powers, such as members of the United Nations Security Council; (2) countries that watch China's development most closely, such as China's Asian neighbors; (3) countries/regions that China watches most closely, such as the Greater China Community; (4) countries with different types of regimes and political history, including both democracies and non-democracies, as well as communist and post-communist countries; and (5) countries/regions with different degrees of economic connections with China.

For most countries, we do not have hardcopies of their top newspapers. Therefore, we rely on the websites of these newspapers, which further constrains our data availability. We also try to collect news reports in a newspaper's original language, whenever our language skills allow.²⁷ For countries for which we cannot obtain or read articles in their original languages, we search for articles in the English version of their newspaper websites. Given the aforementioned criteria, as well as our constrained resources and capability, we finally obtain a sample of 21 countries/regions, which include: (1) major Western powers, i.e. the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany; (2) China's Asian neighbors, i.e. India, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines; (3) the Greater China Community, i.e. Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan; (4) communist and former communist countries: Russia, Lithuania, Poland and Cuba; and (5) countries with emerging economic ties with China: Turkey and Nigeria. Again, this is not a random and representative sample of world countries, but does cover all critical country features that the contemporary literature identifies, and represents theoretically and practically meaningful cases. For each country, we focus on their respective top two national level broadsheet daily newspapers ranked by circulation.²⁸ For each newspaper, we first search out all news reports on China using the keywords 'China' and 'Chinese' between 29 September and 5 October

26. Scott Althaus, Jill Edy, Robert Entman and Patricia Phelen, 'Revising the indexing hypothesis: officials, media and the Libya crisis', *Political Communication* 13(4), (1996), pp. 407–421; W. Lance Bennett and Jarol B. Manheim, 'Taking the public by storm: information, cueing, and the democratic process in the Gulf conflict', *Political Communication* 10(4), (1993), pp. 331–352; and Barbara Geddes and John Zaller, 'Sources of popular support for authoritarian regimes', *American Journal of Political Science* 33(2), (May 1989), pp. 319–347.

27. This gave us the same articles as they were read by a newspaper's domestic audience.

28. The list of the selected newspapers is provided in the Appendix, Table A1.

2009, a seven-day time span around China's National Day. For each identified news report, we then apply content analysis following a predetermined scheme.²⁹

Priming and framing are two distinct mechanisms identified by scholars on how mass opinion is shaped by the surrounding information environment.³⁰ Priming focuses on the salience assigned to different aspects of the same fact, while framing privileges one out of many possible perspectives in interpreting the same fact. Despite different psychological and cognitive dynamics involved, both priming and framing are supposed to be very effective and widely adopted in the mass media to shift public opinion. Thus, how our selected printed media primed their domestic audience and framed the interpretation of China's 60th anniversary celebration for their domestic audience can offer invaluable clues for inferring how their respective host countries may respond to China's rise in the future. Practically, we pay special attention to how China's National Day celebration was primed and framed in foreign media, by examining the subjects, wording and general positivity or negativity of pertinent news coverage.

China's 60th anniversary celebration through the lens of the world's printed media

How much attention did different societies pay to the 60th anniversary celebration? We examine this question based on the volume of relevant coverage in selected newspapers. From all the 21 countries/regions, we collect a total of 775 news reports relevant to China during the specified time period. [Figure 1](#) presents the distribution of the 775 news articles, as well as the percentage of these reports in each country that specifically addressed China's National Day celebration.

Among the top five societies with the highest volume of news coverage on China, India places first with a total of 130 news reports. Given India's perception of China as its most important competitor in Asia, this extensive coverage of China is understandable.³¹ Following India, Singapore ranks second with a total of 99 news reports. Singapore is well-known for having maintained a close and a relatively good relationship with China for a long time, and that there are deep-rooted cultural ties between the two countries. The fact that the second largest newspaper in Singapore, *Lianhe Zaobao*, is a Chinese-language newspaper is probably another reason why Singapore has the second largest volume of coverage of China. Following Singapore are Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan with a total of 85, 78 and 75 relevant articles,

29. The coding scheme is provided in the Appendix (Table A2). Content analysis is conventionally adopted in pertinent research. For language compatibility, we do not use special content analysis software. For each country, we have two coders do coding independently and then cross-checked the validity of their coding. The final dataset is based on the cross-validated coding of independent coders. Though photos are usually instrumental for delivering the intended information, we do not code photos.

30. James N. Druckman and Kjersten R. Nelson, 'Framing and deliberation: how citizens' conversations limit elite influence', *American Journal of Political Science* 47(4), (2003), pp. 729–745; Thomas E. Nelson and Zoe M. Oxley, 'Issue framing effects on belief importance and opinion', *Journal of Politics* 61(4), (1999), pp. 1040–1067; Thomas E. Nelson, Zoe M. Oxley and Rosalee A. Clawson, 'Toward a psychology of framing effects', *Political Behavior* 19(3), (1997), pp. 221–246.

31. Michael Kugelman, 'India's China fears', *Dawn.com*, (7 April 2011), available at: <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/07/indias-china-fears.htm> (accessed 2 March 2013).

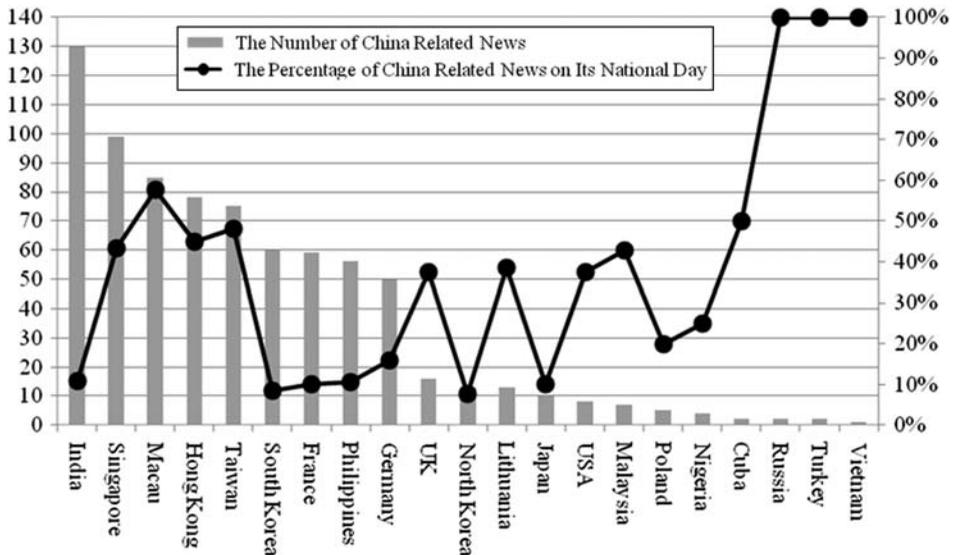


Figure 1. Volume of newspaper coverage on China by country ($N = 775$).

respectively. As they are in the Greater China Community, it is not surprising that they gave more news coverage to China than most other countries. It is actually interesting to find that India and Singapore, two foreign countries, out-numbered Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan in terms of the volume of China-related news coverage in their top printed media. In contrast, countries that gave the least coverage of China during the same time period are Vietnam with only one article, and Turkey, Russia and Cuba with two articles each.

Among the 775 news articles, 229, or around 30%, were devoted to China's 60th anniversary celebration. As illustrated by the black line in Figure 1, four of the top five societies that covered China most intensively also devoted a significant portion of their news coverage to the celebration. Macau, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong each had more than 60% of their China-related news focusing on the event. Altogether, they contributed 163 news articles and accounted for 71.18% of all the 229 pertinent news articles from the 21 societies. India, however, seemed to be much less enthusiastic about China's celebration, with 14 pertinent articles, or 10.77% of its 130 China-related news articles. Though some countries did not have many news stories on China during the seven days, several of them devoted all of their China-related news reports to the National Day celebration, i.e. Turkey, Russia and Vietnam. Other countries like Malaysia, Lithuania, Cuba, the United States and the United Kingdom also allocated more than 40% of their China news to the celebration.

It is also interesting to note that several countries that are conventionally assumed to be interested in China did not report much on China's celebration. As illustrated in Figure 1, North Korea, South Korea, Japan and the Philippines, i.e. China's East Asian neighbors, did not have a large volume of news coverage on China. Moreover, each spent less than 20% of their limited China coverage on its National Day

celebration. The coverage volume in European powers like France and Germany was average. Given the information in Figure 1, it is safe to conclude that China's celebration of its 60th anniversary did attract attention from societies all over the world. This attests to the perceived increasing influence of China in the international community and rejects the argument that China is only a middle power with limited regional influence. Nevertheless, the attention China received from other societies varied dramatically. In general, the Greater China Community plus Singapore gave the most attention to China's National Day celebration in terms of both absolute volume and relative percentage of pertinent news coverage. This should not be surprising, as they are probably affected the most by China and have a large Han Chinese population in their societies.

How was the 60th anniversary celebration primed and framed in the selected media?

While Figure 1 confirms that the message of a rising China with increasing influence is almost universally received, how is this message interpreted by others? To answer this question, we first examine the subject selection of pertinent news articles in different societies. This tells which aspects of a rising China are of most interest to different societies, as well as how top printed media in these societies might prime their readers with regard to evaluating a rising China.

Figure 2(a) shows the subject distribution among all 229 National Day-related news reports. China's military power and achievements attracted most attention: 48.47% of the 229 pertinent articles discussed such issues. Many news reports emphasized the massive military parade showing some of the newest technology and weapons produced by China. Coverage on the international implications of China's rise was secondary, mentioned by 47.60% of all pertinent articles. Several countries' newspapers commented that China had developed from a weak and invaded country to a world power, or was hovering on the brink of it, which the West had to recognize;³² and 38.86% of the coverage touched upon the corresponding domestic implications, including how the Chinese deserved to be proud of their national development, the necessity of Beijing to make continual ideological compromises and adjustments to the economic reform, as well as some sensitive issues like human rights violations and ethnic constraints in Tibet. Interestingly, China's economic achievements attracted much less interest from the top printed media in other societies, with only 24.89% of the 229 articles addressing this topic.

Clearly, there was enough variance in the information provided by the selected printed media for a variety of possible interpretations, despite an obviously higher interest in China's growing military power as revealed through the celebration. This relatively unbalanced coverage of military and economic implications of China's 60th anniversary celebration might be attributed to two factors: (1) the National Day celebration featured the military parade more prominently than anything else, which naturally drew more attention to Chinese military power; and (2) the economic recession hit many countries in 2009; thus, printed media in these societies avoided

32. For instance, Poland (*Gazeta Wyborcza*), Malaysia (*The Star*), the United Kingdom (*The Times*), etc.

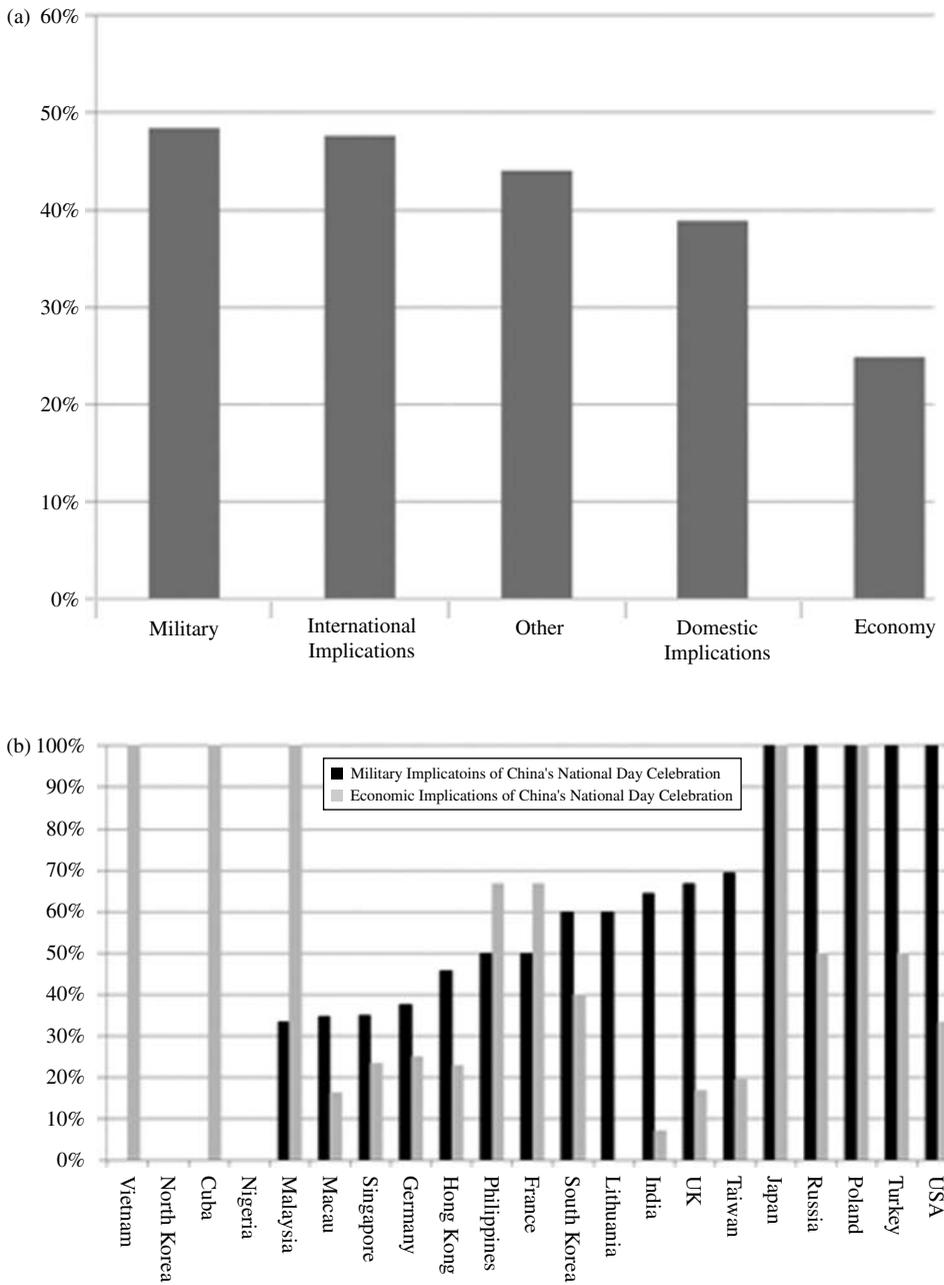


Figure 2. Subjects of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration ($N = 229$). (a) Subjects of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration. (b) Subjects of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration by country.

talking too much about China's economic prosperity to avoid stirring domestic unease.³³

To further examine the subject distribution in related newspaper coverage, we present the coverage of military and economic implications of China's 60th anniversary within each of the selected societies in Figure 2(b). Most societies had a higher percentage of coverage on the former than the latter. Especially in countries like the United States, Turkey, Poland, Russia and Japan, their top newspapers discussed the Chinese military in every related news article. Nevertheless, several countries focused primarily on the Chinese economy. The top newspapers in Vietnam, Cuba, Malaysia, Japan and Poland talked about the Chinese economy in all related news articles. Moreover, pertinent news coverage in Vietnam and Cuba solely focused on the Chinese economy, with little coverage on China's military power, though they varied in making interpretations. For instance, a Vietnamese article discussed the uncertainty of China's future along with this fast development.³⁴ The Cuban news report was more positive, applauding Chinese economic accomplishments and displaying confidence in China.³⁵ The economy-exclusive coverage in Vietnam and Cuba was very likely driven by the two countries' strong interest in learning from China's experiences for economic reforms.³⁶ Vietnam might also intentionally avoid talking about Chinese military power, so as not to provoke domestic criticism of the government's inability in solving existing territorial disputes with China, including the South China Sea.

Besides priming their domestic audience by carefully selecting some aspects of China to report, how printed media framed their audiences' possible evaluations of China's rise is also critical. We accordingly investigate the sampled newspapers' general attitude toward the National Day celebration by checking the basic tone and usage of rhetoric in pertinent coverage.

Figure 3 presents the distribution of China's National Day related news articles with negative, neutral and positive positions. Basically, reports mainly emphasizing China's achievements and referring to China as a successful model or/and a friendly and peaceful country were coded as positive. Those focusing on describing facts or with mixed comments were coded as neutral. For example, a German article briefly portrayed the celebration simply as the news title described, 'China celebrates its birthday with a grand weapons show', without additional comments.³⁷ Accordingly, this was coded as neutral. *Chosun Ilbo*, South Korea's most circulated national newspaper, had an article first acclaiming Chinese economic achievements, such as

33. For the rest of the 546 news articles irrelevant to the celebration, a large number of the articles (i.e. nearly 50%) were about international politics, especially China's relations with other countries. Social issues, such as public health, environment, accidents and disasters, etc., also caught some attention from the selected media (i.e. around 30%). The economy again got the least coverage (i.e. 15%).

34. Andrew Marshall, 'As modern China turns 60, can we foresee its future?', *Tuoitre/Vietnews*, (3 October 2009), available at: http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/10/1/worldupdates/2009-10-01T202646Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-428481-1&sec=Worldupdates (accessed 2 March 2013).

35. Nylam Vázquez García, 'Believing in Chinese victory', *Juventud Rebelde*, (29 September 2009), available at: <http://www.juventudrebelde.co.cu/international/2009-09-29/believing-in-the-chinese-victory/> (accessed 2 March 2013).

36. Yinghong Cheng, 'Fidel Castro and a Chinese perspective', *The China Quarterly* 189, (2007), pp. 24–42.

37. 'China celebrated its birthday with a grand weapons show', *Die Zeit*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://www.zeit.de/newsticker/2009/10/iptc-hfk-20091001-23-22558746xml> (accessed 2 March 2013).

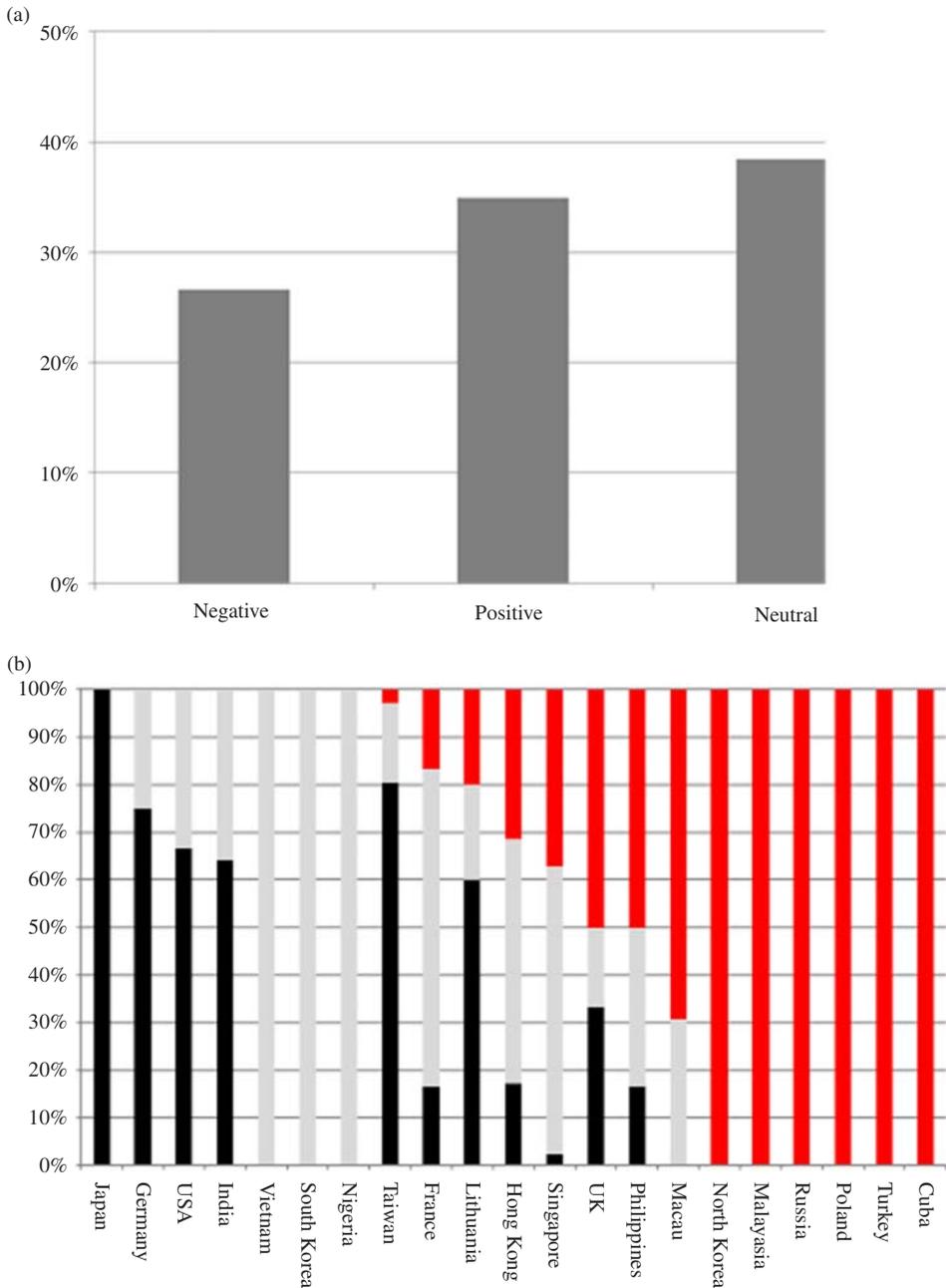


Figure 3. Position of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration ($N = 229$). (a) Position of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration. (b) Position of newspaper coverage on China's National Day celebration by country.

poverty lifting, and then criticizing the restraint of political reform.³⁸ Since the positive and negative comments in this article were pretty balanced, it was also coded as neutral. In contrast, reports highlighting or implying the potential negative implications of the rise of China to some countries, or the world in general, were coded as negative. For example, an article in the *Daily Telegraph* of the United Kingdom clearly led its readers with a negative frame: the military parade was depicted as ‘redolent of the Soviet and North Korean extravaganzas of the Cold War era’; Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were called ‘cult leaders’; and the scene of children flocking around the senior leaders was compared to China’s ‘old propaganda posters’.³⁹ Similar articles were coded as negative.

Figure 3(a) shows a roughly equal distribution of neutral, positive and negative positions in the interpretations among the 229 news articles. More specifically, articles with neutral positions account for 38.43%, while articles with positive positions account for 34.93% and 26.64% of the articles take negative positions. Altogether, articles with a non-negative position account for up to 73.36%.⁴⁰ It seems the world, on average, responded to China’s grand celebration of its National Day in a fairly friendly way. This clearly contradicts what the ‘China threat’ arguments would suggest. Of course, still around one-third of selected printed media adopted a negative position in their presentation of China’s 60th anniversary celebration for their respective domestic audiences.

We further examine the position distribution of news coverage within each of the 21 societies, as illustrated by Figure 3(b). Newspaper coverage on the celebration from seven societies was predominantly positive (i.e. no negative coverage, and more than 60% positive coverage): North Korea, Malaysia, Russia, Poland, Turkey, Cuba and Macau. Two themes stood out in the news coverage from this group: (1) significance of the friendship between China and these societies. For instance, *The Star* of Malaysia used the word ‘lucky’ to describe Malaysians who were invited to attend the celebration. It also cited the remarks of a leader of the business community, saying, ‘Every country wanted to isolate China, but now everyone wants to be China’s friend and wants to be invited to the celebration’;⁴¹ and (2) affirmation of China’s fast development and the value of its successful experiences to other countries. A leading Russian national newspaper, wrote, ‘Well and certainly, the Chinese economic experience is very useful for Russia to learn how to achieve such rates of development’.⁴² Turkey also quoted a Chinese spokesperson’s speech on China’s peaceful development and interpreted the Chinese military strength as non-threatening to the world, especially to its neighbors.⁴³

38. ‘China celebrates 60th anniversary of modern state’s founding’, *Chosun Ilbo*, (29 September 2009), available at: http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/09/29/2009092900262.html (accessed 2 March 2013).

39. ‘China celebrates 60th anniversary of communist rule with largest parade in history’, *Daily Telegraph*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/6248952/China-celebrates-60th-anniversary-of-Communist-rule-with-largest-parade-in-history.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

40. Among the other 546 news articles: 19.19% negative, 63.37% neutral and 17.44% positive.

41. Sim Leoi Leoi, ‘45 to attend China’s anniversary’, *The Star*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/10/1/nation/4820913&sec=nation> (accessed 2 March 2013).

42. ‘China is not ready yet to a role of a superstate’, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, (2 October 2009), available at: <http://www.kp.ru/daily/24370/553352/> (accessed 2 March 2013).

43. ‘Military assurance to its neighbors from China’, *Cumhuriyet*, (23 September 2009), available at: <http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/?im=yhs&hn=83652> (accessed 2 April 2011).

In contrast, pertinent news articles from six societies were primarily negative (i.e. at least 60% negative coverage): Japan, Taiwan, Germany, the United States, India and Lithuania. The critical tone on China of the news coverage from this group of countries was reflected in the following aspects. First, some newspapers specifically discussed the potential threats of a rising China. For instance, an editorial by Japan's *Asahi Shimbun* grieved that China had overtaken Japan becoming the world's second-largest economy and explicitly said:

The world is increasingly worried about China's rapid military buildup. This is a reality with serious security implications for Japan, too. Beijing's aggressive strategy for securing energy and other resources is causing conflict in many parts of the world.⁴⁴

Similarly, most reports in the *Hindustan Times* in India were about Chinese military forces, and one report specifically talked about the worrying military competition between China and India.⁴⁵ *The Wall Street Journal* also had an article writing that the Dongfeng 21, an antiship ballistic missile, was meant to keep US aircraft carriers at bay and deter Taiwan from declaring its formal independence.⁴⁶ The sense of a China threat also went beyond economy and security. A German article, citing the view of an exiled Chinese writer, warned that a strong China would not care about pleasing the West anymore and would behave more in China's own way domestically and internationally.⁴⁷

Second, many newspapers in this group also discussed the Chinese government's tight control of society during the celebration, indicating that the event disturbed people's normal life and that the government can be very repressive when needed. For example, three of the four news articles on the Chinese National Day in Lithuania talked about various enforced restrictions during the celebration, such as the prohibition on kites and residents showing up in streets or their balcony during the parade. German news reports revealed that the Chinese government had been harsh against activists of democratic and ethnic minority movements to prevent any possible unrest on the National Day.⁴⁸ Finally, articles in this group often criticized China's domestic issues, such as serious corruption, lack of rule of law and the government's propaganda through selective presentations of its achievements while ignoring its historical mistakes.

The rest—except for completely neutral coverage in Vietnam, South Korea and Nigeria—showed a mixed picture, i.e. France, Hong Kong, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the Philippines. For instance, most of the six French news reports about the Chinese National Day maintained a neutral tone, simply summarizing the events during the celebration. One article, complemented by video clips, presented a mixed

44. 'Editorial: China's 60th anniversary', *Asahi Shimbun*, (3 October 2009), available at: <http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200910030114.html> (accessed 3 May 2011).

45. Reshma Patil, 'China turns 60 in style', *Hindustan Times*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/restofasia/China-turns-60-in-style/Article1-460262.aspx> (accessed 2 March 2013).

46. Ian Johnson, 'China showcases military in anniversary parade', *The Wall Street Journal*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125436303133555023.html> (accessed 2 March 2013).

47. 'China wants to please, which is dangerous', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, (2 October 2009), available at: <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/341/489726/text/> (accessed 2 March 2013).

48. 'China's regime reaps sharp critique on its anniversary', *Die Zeit*, (1 October 2009), available at: <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2009-10/china-menschenrechte-jahrestag-kritik> (accessed 2 March 2013).

image of the PRC over the past 60 years, with both formidable economic progress and rising international status, as well as some man-made disasters in the 1960s, bloody crackdowns on the democratic movement in 1989 and considerable challenges currently.⁴⁹ The Philippines showed mixed reactions to the event as well: three positive articles showed explicit affirmation and even admiration of China's rise; two neutral articles described the celebration, commenting on its stirring of pride among Chinese people and probable unease among China's neighbors;⁵⁰ and one article criticized the rising income inequality in China.⁵¹ Nevertheless, in all societies with mixed reports, more than 60% of the articles in their respective top two newspapers were actually non-negative.

Thus, totally, in 15 out of the 21 sampled societies, more than 60% of pertinent news stories on the Chinese National Day celebration were framed in a non-negative way. Basically, the elite media in the majority of our sampled societies interpreted the strong and unified message of a rising China, sent through its grand 60th anniversary celebration, in a relatively objective and positive way. This further attests to the fact that the 'China threat' argument is not the dominant voice of today's international community.

It is also worth mentioning the notable differences among the three Greater China Community members: Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The predominantly negative news coverage from Taiwan is predictable, considering the rising Taiwanese identity, politically mobilized movements favoring independence and Taiwanese ambivalence about the mainland.⁵² Most articles argued that the parade allowed the mainland to show off its military prowess and the threat it poses to Taiwan, or even the Asia-Pacific region and the world. Some articles showed a wholesale antipathy to China. For instance, the *Liberty Times* commented, 'Ever since the founding of the PRC, it has only shown its hegemonic nature and numerous people have lost their lives in the past 60 years. What is worth celebrating?'.⁵³ Other articles pressured the Ma Ying-jeou administration, criticized its soft-line against Beijing and cautioned that the Republic of China would meet its end under President Ma.⁵⁴

Theoretically, one would predict that the media coverage in Hong Kong and Macau would have not deviated from the guidelines set by the Central Propaganda Department, since both of them had been closely monitored and influenced by Beijing.⁵⁵

49. Publi e le, 'The images of communist China since 1949', *Le Parisien*, (30 September 2009), available at: <http://www.leparisien.fr/international/les-images-de-la-chine-communiste-depuis-1949-30-09-2009-657705.php> (accessed 2 March 2013).

50. 'China's 60th anniversary stirs pride, also unease', *Manila Bulletin*, (2 October 2009), available at: <http://www.mb.com.ph/articles/222774/chinas-60th-anniversary-stirs-pride-also-unease> (accessed 2 March 2013).

51. John Lee, 'Ending excuses for China at age 60', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, (5 October 2009), available at: <http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/columns/view/20091005-228428/Ending-excuses-for-China-at-age-60> (accessed 2 March 2013).

52. See among others, Emerson M. S. Niou, 'Understanding Taiwan independence and its policy implications', *Asian Survey* 44(4), (2004), pp. 555–567; and T. Y. Wang and I-Chou Liu, 'Contending identities in Taiwan: implications for cross-Strait relations', *Asian Survey* 44(4), (2004), pp. 568–590.

53. Weizhen Zeng, Xinfang Li and Yuhua He, 'China troop march—Green party criticizes militarist display', *The Liberty Times*, (2 October 2009), available at: <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2009/new/oct/2/today-p1.htm> (accessed 2 March 2013).

54. 'Ma administration ends the Republic of China', *The Liberty Times*, (3 October 2009), available at: <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2009/new/oct/3/today-fo2-2.htm> (accessed 2 March 2013).

55. We thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

Nevertheless, there were actually nuances between the two special administrative regions (SARs). Most news articles in Macau took a stance consistent with the *People's Daily*, describing the grand celebration with affirmative rhetoric. For example, one article said that China's military equipment was becoming the 'top', the Chinese people were standing 'taller' and China was to meet the 'great rejuvenation'.⁵⁶ Some articles cited foreign media coverage and politicians, like Henry Kissinger, to confirm the increasing international significance of China.⁵⁷ Another article did not forget to honor the central government's support of the SAR, quoting Premier Wen Jiabao's talk on maintaining the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macau.⁵⁸ In contrast, Hong Kong news reports reflected more mixed tones. Some articles in *Ming Pao*, the most circulated newspaper in Hong Kong, also described the magnificent celebration, similar to Macau news reports, but there were also unequivocal critiques of the mainland, such as the higher authorities' monitoring of Hong Kong businessmen who petitioned Beijing, the banning of books and restrictions during the celebration.⁵⁹

The prevailingly positive views from Macau and the mixed feelings from Hong Kong were probably caused by their different media environments and traditions, as well as their divergent experiences with Beijing since their respective handovers. Despite the erosion of media freedom, as many critics have suggested, Hong Kong has maintained a long tradition of press freedom promoting a critical media.⁶⁰ The existence of popular English-language publications, including Hong Kong's second-most popular newspaper, *The South China Morning Post*, also leaves more freedom for Hong Kong's press, as the central government cares most about publications in Chinese.⁶¹ Moreover, while Hong Kong has had several conflicts with Beijing since its retrocession, the Macau SAR government has been more skillful in dealing with the central government.⁶² Thus, the social sentiment in Macau might have been directed to be more supportive to Beijing than that in Hong Kong.

56. 'China's military equipment is becoming the top', *Today Macao*, (2 October 2009), available at: http://www.todaymacao.com/news/2009_10_02_4.html (accessed 5 April 2010); 'The Chinese people to stand taller and more stable', *Macao Daily*, (1 October 2009), available at: http://www.macaodaily.com/html/2009-10/01/content_372147.htm (accessed 5 April 2010); 'Unity of the Chinese nation to meet the great rejuvenation', *Macao Daily*, (1 October 2009), available at: http://www.macaodaily.com/html/2009-10/01/content_372095.htm (accessed 5 April 2010).

57. 'Kissinger: China to play an increasingly important role', *Macao Daily*, (5 October 2009), available at: http://www.macaodaily.com/html/2009-10/05/content_373616.htm (accessed 5 April 2010).

58. 'Premier Wen: to maintain prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao', *Macao Daily*, (1 October 2009), available at: http://www.macaodaily.com/html/2009-10/01/content_372070.htm (accessed 5 April 2010).

59. 'Hong Kong businessmen closely monitored by higher authorities', *Ming Pao*, (30 September 2009), available at: <http://specials.mingpao.com/cfm/News.cfm?SpecialsID=205&Page=1&News=c193724a468969ec4c93d6dac80331ecc91ed58eca5377e4ac1215e84a> (accessed 2 March 2013); 'What is Chinese afraid of?', *Ming Pao*, (4 October 2009), available at: <http://specials.mingpao.com/cfm/News.cfm?SpecialsID=205&Page=1&News=c193724e468979ec4c93d2ceec80321ecc91ed58eca436fecac1215e85a> (accessed 2 March 2013); 'Motels on Changan Road are closed for the National Day', *Ming Pao*, (29 September 2009), available at: <http://specials.mingpao.com/cfm/News.cfm?SpecialsID=205&Page=2&News=c19b724a468969ec4c93d2decc0331ecc91ed58eca5367e4ac1215f84a> (accessed 2 March 2013).

60. Francis L. F Lee, 'Hong Kong citizens' beliefs in media neutrality and perceptions of press freedom: objectivity as self-censorship?', *Asian Survey* 47(3), (2007), pp. 434–454.

61. James E. Sciotto, 'China's muffling of the Hong Kong media', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 547, (1996), pp. 131–143.

62. Sonny Shiu-Hing Lo, 'One formula, two experiences: political divergence of Hong Kong and Macao since retrocession', *Journal of Contemporary China* 16(52), (2007), pp. 359–387.

Societal features and response to China's National Day celebration

There is clear and significant variance across our selected societies, in terms of the topics and general positions of their news coverage on China's 60th anniversary celebration. We tentatively explore the underlying factors contributing to such variance with multiple regressions.⁶³ Due to the non-randomly selected sample and data, our findings are far from conclusive and should be interpreted with caution. However, they are still valuable for understanding China's rise and useful for providing some clues for further research on this topic.

We focus on the possible influence of critical factors identified in extant literature: political regime features, ideological/political tradition, economic connections with China and security concerns involving China. Political regime features are measured by the Freedom House ratings in 2008. We average a country's scores of political rights and civil liberty, with a higher score indicating a higher level of democracy.⁶⁴ Macau is dropped from this analysis for lack of a Freedom House rating.⁶⁵ Ideological/political tradition is measured by selected societies' communist history, which is coded as a binary variable. These societies' FDI in China in 2008 is used to capture their economic connections with China and is accordingly categorized into three groups: low FDI (less than US\$0.1 billion), medium FDI (between US\$0.1 billion and US\$1 billion), and high FDI (more than US\$1 billion).⁶⁶ These societies' security concerns involving China are approximated by their previous and current territory disputes with China, which is also coded as a binary following historical records. The dependent variables—'subjects' and 'positions' of news coverage in the 20 societies—are measured by the percentages of news reports on military and economic topics respectively, and the percentages of positive and negative news reports respectively.

Table 1 lays out the OLS regression results. *F*-statistics suggest that selected media's primary coverage of China's military power (M1) and the percentage of negatively framed news (M4) are the only two dependent variables that can be meaningfully explained by our specified models. In contrast, our specified model does not provide statistically significant explanatory power on these societies' news coverage on China's economy (M2), as well as the percentage of positively framed news (M3). Moreover, in M1 and M4, the only variable showing a statistically significant effect is a society's level of democracy: societies with higher levels of democracy had a significantly higher percentage of reports focusing on China's military power, as well as a significantly higher percentage of negatively framed news coverage on China's 60th anniversary celebration. In other words, how the selected elite media chose to cover and interpret the implications of a rising China was highly affected by its retrospective host society's regime features, i.e. its democratic nature.

63. We also used cross-tabulations and findings are consistent.

64. Press freedom is highly consistent with regime freedom for most sampled nations, thus we do not include press freedom in our analysis.

65. We also tried dropping Hong Kong and Taiwan as they are the Greater China members. The results are about the same. We present the results of the 20 societies here. Results based on 18 societies are available upon request.

66. Data are collected from the *Chinese Statistic Yearbook 2009* (China Statistics Bureau). We also check the effect of China's direct investment in sampled societies, but no significant pattern is found. Raw FDI data are also used and regression results are similar.

Table 1. OLS regression results

	M1 Military report	M2 Economic report	M3 Positive report	M4 Negative report
Level of democracy (Std err)	12.46*** (3.63)	-4.78 (4.45)	-5.72 (5.04)	9.36** (3.69)
Communist history	19.25 (19.77)	33.67 (24.19)	15.32 (27.43)	8.56 (20.04)
FDI level in China	2.42 (10.15)	7.70 (12.42)	-10.04 (14.09)	7.41 (10.29)
Territory dispute with China	16.78 (13.54)	14.28 (16.57)	-13.51 (18.79)	13.25 (13.73)
Constant	-24.43 (29.63)	44.39 (36.25)	87.82** (41.11)	-40.80 (30.04)
<i>N</i>	20	20	20	20
Prob. > <i>F</i>	0.03	0.21	0.18	0.07
<i>R</i> -squared	0.48	0.31	0.32	0.42

Notes: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$.

In addition, our regression results also suggest that increasing economic integration through FDI does not necessarily make a society's response to China's rise more favorable, particularly when there are deep-rooted political and ideological differences. Moreover, countries with territory disputes with China did not necessarily report more on Chinese military in their elite media, though these countries might be actually interested in or even anxious about Chinese military buildup.⁶⁷

Conclusion

This research has two objectives. First, we want to examine whether China's grand celebration of its 60th anniversary attracted world attention and received primarily positive or non-negative representation in other countries' elite media as Beijing intended. Second, we take advantage of this unique event to examine what aspects of China's rise are of greater interest to other countries' top printed media, what their general inclinations in interpreting the rise of China are and finally whether there are consistent factors that may help explain the revealed patterns in their news coverage of China's National Day celebration.

We try to answer the above questions by collecting news reports during a seven-day time span from the top printed media in 21 selected societies, which are intended to represent different types of societies in the world that are theoretically meaningful and practically interesting for the topic under examination. In general, we find that India, Singapore and Greater China, including Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan, paid the most attention to China, dedicating numerous news articles to China during the

67. For instance, Vietnam is very concerned about Chinese military buildup. See Nitin Gokhale, 'India's quiet counter-China strategy', *The Diplomat*, (16 March 2011), available at: <http://thediplomat.com/2011/03/16/india%E2%80%99s-quiet-counter-china-strategy-2/> (accessed 2 March 2013), but Vietnam gave no report on the Chinese military in the sample.

specified period. In these five societies, Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore gave the most coverage to the Chinese National Day celebration. Also, we find the elite media in most societies—15 of the 21—gave relatively positive, or at least non-negative, coverage of the celebration. This seems to have met Beijing's intention of presenting a favorable image of China internationally.

In terms of the varying aspects of China's rise, we find that the military implications of China's rise appeared to be more compelling to other countries than its economic implications. Besides these societies' security concerns, China's military technology and power saliently demonstrated during the military parade may also contribute to the large volume of news coverage on the Chinese military.

We also tentatively look at how other nations' regime types, ideological histories, economic connections and territory disputes with China could have affected their interest and attitude toward China. Among all the factors, a society's level of democracy shows the most explanatory power. Countries with higher levels of political freedom paid more attention to the Chinese military and gave more negative reports on the National Day celebration than countries with lower levels of political freedom. The remaining factors do not present significant explanatory power. Our findings in this paper generally resonate with the conclusions of the existing literature, indicating that ideological and regime differences play the dominant role in determining other nations' possible interpretations of and responses to a rising China.

Appendix

Table A1. Top two broadsheet daily newspapers in selected countries/regions

Classification	Country	No. 1 newspaper	No. 2 newspaper
Western powers	The United States	<i>USA Today</i>	<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>
	The United Kingdom	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	<i>The Times</i>
	Germany	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>	<i>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</i>
	France	<i>Le Parisien/Aujourd'hui en France</i>	<i>Le Figaro</i>
Asian neighbors	India	<i>Times of India</i>	<i>Hindustan Times*</i>
	Japan	<i>Yomiuri Shimbun</i>	<i>Asahi Shimbun</i>
	North Korea	<i>Rodong Sinmun</i> ('News-paper of the workers')	<i>Joson Inmingun</i> (Korean People's Army Daily)
	South Korea	<i>The Chosun Ilbo</i>	<i>JoongAng Ilbo</i>
	Vietnam	<i>Tuổi Trẻ</i>	<i>Thanh Nien News</i> (Youth)
	Malaysia	<i>The Star</i>	<i>Utusan Malaysia</i>
	Singapore	<i>The Strait Times</i>	<i>Lianhe Zaobao</i>
	The Philippines	<i>Philippine Daily Inquirer</i>	<i>Manila Bulletin</i>
Great China Community	Hong Kong	<i>Ming Pao</i>	<i>South China Morning Post</i>
	Macau	<i>Macao Daily News</i>	<i>Va Kio Daily/Jornal 'Va Kio'</i>
Communist and former communist countries	Taiwan	<i>Liberty Times</i>	<i>The United Daily</i>
	Russia	<i>Argumenty i Fakty</i>	<i>Moskovskij Komsomolets</i>
	Poland	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i> ('Election Gazette')	<i>Dziennik Polska–Europa–Świat</i> (Daily Poland–Europe–World)
	Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos Rytas</i>	<i>Lietuvos žinios</i>
Countries with emerging economic ties with China	Cuba	<i>Granma</i>	<i>Juventud Rebelde</i>
	Turkey	<i>Milliyet</i>	<i>Cumhuriyet</i>
	Nigeria	<i>This Day</i>	<i>The Punch</i>

Note: * *Dainik Jagran* has a larger circulation, but its website was inaccessible.

Source: Newspaper circulation ranks are obtained from *Europa World*, available at: <http://0-www.europaworld.com/innpac.library.unr.edu/welcome?authstatuscode=200>, and double checked on the newspapers' official websites.

Table A2. Content analysis of news reports

Is this news report about Chinese National Day? Yes = 1	Is it about the military? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about the economy? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about areas other than the military and the economy? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about the domestic implications of the celebration? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about the international implications of the celebration? Yes = 1, No = 0
Is this news report about Chinese National Day? No = 0	Just a brief mention of China? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about economic issues? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about social issues? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about Chinese domestic politics? Yes = 1, No = 0
	Is it about Chinese international politics? Yes = 1, No = 0
Does this news coverage on average have a positive, negative, or neutral tone when talking about China?	Highly negative = 0, Negative = 1, Neutral = 2, Positive = 3, Highly positive = 4
