

# Thought Work Contested: Ideology and Journalism Education in China

Maria Repnikova\*

## Abstract

This article examines the dynamic evolution of China's ideology work through the prism of journalism education. Official sensitivity about both student activism and the media makes journalism education a critical sector for observing how the Party attempts to instil ideology. The article interrogates the process of negotiation of official ideology among authorities, educators and students at elite journalism schools. It demonstrates that alongside state-sanctioned media commercialization and globalization, official influence still looms large in journalism training. Ideological teachings continue to occupy a core place in the curricula, and the authorities deploy a mix of structural oversight, ad hoc surveillance and coercion to keep the educators in check. The effects of the official ideology work, however, are ambivalent, as educators and students engage in the active reinterpretation of the Party's media principles. While these practices do not directly undermine the Party's legitimacy, they demonstrate that official ideology has merely constructed what Yurchak terms a "hegemony of form," highlighting a degree of vulnerability in China's mode of adaptive authoritarianism.

**Keywords:** China; journalism; education; ideology; control; resistance; Marxism; authoritarian resilience

---

In the early phases of the reform era (1980–early 1990s), some scholars forecasted that China's ideological apparatus would collapse in the wake of the country's administrative fragmentation, technological advancements and integration into the global economy.<sup>1</sup> However, the party-state has actually resurrected thought work as one of the devices in its efforts to maintain political legitimacy. The consensus among the current scholarship is that ideology work is both a manifestation of China's adaptive governance as well as a key ingredient of its recipe for authoritarian resilience. Recent work has drawn attention to the Party's innovative means of conducting propaganda, especially through the media, highlighting the Party's use of modern tools such as public relations and polling to

\* Department of Communication, Georgia State University. Email: [mrepnikova@gsu.edu](mailto:mrepnikova@gsu.edu).

1 Lynch 1999.

shape public opinion,<sup>2</sup> its proactive ways of engaging with the public,<sup>3</sup> the interactive nature of its digital propaganda,<sup>4</sup> and its flexible approach to cultural governance.<sup>5</sup>

Beyond underscoring these novel approaches to ideology work, the current literature draws direct linkages between adaptive propaganda and authoritarian resilience. A recent edited volume on China's thought management, for instance, attributes the Party's effective crisis management, ranging from SARS to protests, to its reinforcement of propaganda since 1989.<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Perry's lucid analysis of China's cultural governance argues that it represents "a more elusive, yet no less critical, element of state capacity,"<sup>7</sup> and Anne-Marie Brady's seminal study of propaganda institutions in contemporary China stresses that the Party's modernization of thought work is a key factor in its enduring legitimacy, a model she defines as popular authoritarianism.<sup>8</sup>

The analysis of ideology work through a top-down lens that prioritizes institutions, however, is at risk of painting a skewed picture of authoritarian resilience, as it provides little information about the practices that make up ideology formation. The bottom-up studies of societal forces, for instance, suggest that the effects of propaganda are far from absolute. Scholars point to the "ideological dissonance" in China's journalistic profession,<sup>9</sup> to journalists' "pushback" against the state's hegemony,<sup>10</sup> as well as to the importance of the internet in facilitating routine resistance to state ideology by ordinary citizens through satire and other playful strategies.<sup>11</sup> In order to grasp how ideology work is manufactured, therefore, it is vital to examine the practices of transmitting and adapting thought work at different layers of the system. Treating propaganda as a negotiated process in turn allows for a comprehensive re-examination of the linkages between the Party's ideological education policy and its foundations for authoritarian resilience.

This article takes the first step towards analysing the negotiated processes of ideology formation in the critical realm of journalism education, a realm which provides a unique window on how the Party's influence plays out in the training of the next generation of potential public opinion leaders. The literature on the Party's involvement in the education sector shows that students, historically at the heart of democratization movements in China, continue to constitute critical targets for official ideology.<sup>12</sup> Xiaojun Yan's systematic analysis of the

2 Brady 2008.

3 Shambaugh 2007.

4 Esarey 2015; Repnikova and Fang 2016.

5 Perry 2013.

6 Brady 2012.

7 Perry 2013, 2.

8 Brady 2008, 200.

9 Zhou 2000; Zhao 1998.

10 Hassid 2016.

11 Yang 2009; Esarey and Qiang 2008.

12 Yan 2014.

Table 1: **Distribution of Interviewees**

University	Professor	Student
Peking	6	6
Renmin	6	7
Fudan	6	6
China Foreign Studies	5	6
China Youth	5	7
China Communication	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>

Note:

Deans and temporary guest lecturers come under the Professor category

Party's control over students in the reform era, for instance, reveals a sophisticated apparatus, including top-down institutional oversight, enforcement of the Party's ideological training, and co-optation.<sup>13</sup> Research on the evolution of the university entrance examinations (*gaokao* 高考) and the Chinese bar exam further reveals the increasing politicization of these tests in the past decade.<sup>14</sup> Journalism students, arguably, represent a particularly sensitive pocket within the education system owing to their importance to the Party's propaganda mission as well as their potential susceptibility to critical thinking through exposure to alternative information flows. The transformation of the media system and journalism education training in the reform era in the direction of the market further makes it a contentious space for ideological influence.

While the few existing studies have either touched on the subject of journalism education indirectly,<sup>15</sup> or else have focused on attitudes of journalism students<sup>16</sup> and top-down constraints<sup>17</sup> in isolation from one other, this article deploys a unique analytical approach by examining the negotiation of Party principles across different layers of the journalism education system: from the masterminds (officials) to the intermediaries (educators) to the objects of ideology work (students). The analysis draws on extensive fieldwork in Beijing and Shanghai in 2008 and 2012, including the examination of journalism teaching materials (ten textbooks and five syllabi), and 70 in-depth semi-structured interviews with deans, faculty members and final-year students at China's top-tier journalism departments, including Peking University, Fudan University, Renmin University, China Communication University, China's Foreign Studies University and China's Youth University for Political Sciences (see Table 1). In selecting the interviewees, the emphasis was on faculty members teaching courses on journalism theory and practice, and on students majoring in journalism studies as opposed to broadcasting, advertising or communication theory. The article also draws on the author's

13 Ibid.

14 Koesel 2015; Stern 2016.

15 Polumbaum and Lei 2008; Bandurski and Hala 2010; Zhao 2008.

16 Dombernowsky 2014.

17 Guo 2010.

participant observations at journalism seminars and lectures as well as at workshops on media ethics and investigative reporting held at some of these universities. The methodological emphasis is notably placed on top-tier schools, as they are the microcosms of ideology battles. These schools offer unusual exposure to alternative thinking whilst remaining under the vigilant eye of the Party authorities. The focus on elite universities borrows from other studies on authoritarian regimes that use top schools as a prism for gauging future leaders' perspectives on state ideology and political trajectories.<sup>18</sup>

This article demonstrates that amidst the infiltration of the market and Western influences in the teaching curricula, the Party's shadow looms large in elite journalism training. Ideological instruction remains an integral part of the curricula, and the state employs a number of control mechanisms to ensure that the training serves the Party's interests. The effects of the Party's ideological pursuits, however, are ambiguous as educators and students take advantage of limited openings to reinterpret some aspects of the Party's ideology. While this mode of re-adapting state ideology does not challenge the political status quo per se, it does demonstrate that ideology work produces a superficial complicity rather than a deeper internalization and adherence to the Party's principles. This article proceeds by presenting the shifts and continuities in elite journalism education in the past decade, and the official toolkit deployed in overseeing and controlling the journalism teaching agenda. It then continues by examining how educators and students interpret Party principles, illuminating their improvisational tactics as well as the subtle processes at work in their rethinking of the media role within China's political system.

### **Journalism Education: New Shifts, Old Foundations**

The state-driven commercialization of Chinese media, which led to the subsequent formation of the media industry and a diversification of the media landscape, facilitated an explosion of journalism departments across the country.<sup>19</sup> The number of journalism schools mushroomed, from a handful in the 1970s to over 600 by the mid-2000s.<sup>20</sup> The analysis of teaching materials, including five syllabi from the selected journalism schools, and the interviews with journalism faculty members show that commercial and global influences have also led to a diversification in journalism schools' teaching agendas in the past two decades. Specifically, the departments have incorporated courses on practical and professional dimensions of journalism in addition to official ideological teachings. At the same time, the official conception of the media's appropriate role in society continues to serve as the foundation for students' understanding of political communication, and the Party line is strictly enforced in all departments through a combination of coercion and co-optation.

18 Mickiewicz 2014.

19 On media commercialization, see Stockmann 2012.

20 Guo 2010.

Interviews with faculty members demonstrate that the move from strictly Party-dominated ideological training to new approaches that encompass a mix of different discourses on the media became especially apparent in the 2000s when media commercialization reached a high point. “The biggest change has been a shift from the uncompromising focus on propaganda to professionalism in teaching media practice and theory,” noted a professor at Fudan’s journalism school, who was previously a student there.<sup>21</sup> While professionalism is an ambiguous concept, especially in the Chinese context, this scholar understood it as carrying the Western notions of objective and accurate reporting.<sup>22</sup> Other interviewees similarly remarked that China’s journalism training is no longer a simple manifestation of the Party’s ideology but rather a complex fusion of different teachings aimed at fostering competitive, globally oriented media professionals.<sup>23</sup> A vice-dean at the journalism school in Fudan University, for instance, pointed to the school’s emphasis on nurturing well-rounded, sophisticated communicators.<sup>24</sup> He further explained the importance of equipping journalists with the skills to succeed in domestic and global media markets – an ambition that was echoed in interviews with other heads and faculty members of journalism schools.

An overview of the available undergraduate syllabi confirmed both the increasing emphasis on skills (i.e. interviewing, news gathering, data analysis, digital media) and an expanded offering of elective courses, such as investigative reporting and media law.<sup>25</sup> The practical coursework and elective classes further reflect the schools’ exposure to Western education approaches. Many teaching materials used are direct translations of popular journalism textbooks used at the Missouri and Columbia schools of journalism, among other top US universities.<sup>26</sup> The courses, therefore, provide students with a level of technical exposure similar to that of their counterparts in the United States and Europe. “Judging by the standard of trade skills, what a journalism student learns in Shanghai is not markedly different from what she would learn in Missouri,” argues Zhongshi Guo in his assessment of Chinese journalism curricula.<sup>27</sup>

Although journalism training has become more diversified, Party ideology continues to be embedded within the teaching agenda. Courses on Marxist principles and teaching on the Party’s vision of the media are an important part of the curricula. With the exception of Renmin University, a course on Marxist journalist theory is still compulsory in all the sampled departments, and a separate, basic course on Marxist political theory is part of the general coursework at all of the

21 Interview JS02.

22 Some China scholars defined professionalism in the Chinese context as newsgathering that constitutes a public service and entails fast and accurate transmission of information. Hassid 2011.

23 Interviews JS03; JS04; JS10.

24 Interview JS11.

25 Some of the practical courses are also electives.

26 Missouri Group textbooks are some of the required readings. Other widely popular US textbooks include Melvin Mencher’s *News Reporting and Writing* and Wilbur Schramm’s *Mass Communication*.

27 Guo 2010.

schools.<sup>28</sup> Even courses that do not directly deal with ideological training, such as journalism theory and media ethics, moreover, still incorporate Party principles into their curricula. Professors teaching these courses admitted in interviews that they emphasize that the primary role of the media is to be a conduit for Party propaganda, and they impart to their students that the correct guidance of public opinion is their key duty as they embark on journalism careers.<sup>29</sup> A comparison of two popular journalism theory textbooks from two different time periods is illustrative of how the media is continuously framed as a tool of the party-state.<sup>30</sup> A textbook from the 1980s puts forward a forceful argument for media propaganda. It states that the media's key missions include "unifying public opinion for the purpose of enhancing the development of the nation, organizing the proletariat revolution, and exposing the old world." In explaining the relationship between the media and the Party, the textbook uses the word "grasp" (*zhangwo* 掌握) in reference to the Party's enduring hold over the media. The 1999 version of the textbook is more subtle. The media's political function is presented as "helping protect the Party's legitimacy, serving as the participatory mechanism for the public to engage in politics; and *yulun jiandu* (舆论监督) or media supervision of public opinion." The latter is a Chinese version of the media oversight role, cautiously endorsed by the central state since 1987.<sup>31</sup> The newer textbook thereby suggests that the party-state now welcomes the media to take on functions additional to propaganda such as supervision, but only in so far as these functions complement their main duty of bolstering the Party's legitimacy. Party ideology, therefore, or what some scholars refer to as the "first layer of ideological ingredients,"<sup>32</sup> remains non-negotiable regardless of market and societal pressures, even if it is now presented less forcefully or less explicitly in some teaching materials.<sup>33</sup>

Other than being directly channelled through the curricula and teaching materials, the Party's pronounced influence is also manifest in its deployment of control mechanisms to ensure that educators adhere to the Party line. The "menu of manipulation" is similar to that used to manage the media, including structural oversight, ad hoc surveillance and coercive measures.<sup>34</sup> As for structural oversight, there is a growing trend for journalism schools to form close partnerships with local propaganda departments and official news outlets. To this end, former

28 In some schools, like Peking University, the actual course name was just "journalism theory" although the actual teaching primarily drew on Marxist media principles. In Tsinghua, Marxist journalism theory was part of the graduate curricula, but not the undergraduate one. Beyond the sampled schools, interviews revealed that Marxist journalism thought is also part of the core curricula at Wuhan and Zhejiang universities.

29 Interviews JC11; JC13.

30 Gan 1981; Liu 1999. The second textbook is still used in journalism theory classes today.

31 For more details, see Repnikova 2017.

32 Guo 2010.

33 For more on the transformations in journalism teaching materials, see Chen 2008, and on the transformations in journalism education more broadly, see Zhong and Zhou 2006.

34 The phrase is borrowed from Schedler's (2002) analysis of electoral manipulation by authoritarian regimes.

propaganda officials or high-ranking state media journalists are frequently appointed as the deans or the official gatekeepers at top journalism schools. This trend can also be seen in the close cooperation between journalism department staff and officials in developing research and teaching agendas. The current dean of the Fudan journalism school, Yin Minghua 尹明华, is the former secretary of the Party committee (*dangwei shuji* 党委书记) at the Jiefang media group 解放日报报业集团. His predecessor, Song Chao 宋超, was formerly the deputy propaganda director for Shanghai.<sup>35</sup> The dean at Tsinghua, Liu Binjie 柳斌杰, is a former Party chief at the General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) and president of the National Copyright Administration.<sup>36</sup> The current dean of Renmin's journalism school, Zhao Qizheng 赵启正, is a former minister in the State Council's Information Office. The dean at Peking University, Lu Shaoyang 陆绍阳, has not held a prior official post, but his predecessor, Shao Huaze 邵华泽, was previously a publisher at *Renmin ribao* 人民报 (*People's Daily*).<sup>37</sup> Although not directly involved in prescribing the teaching agenda, according to the interviewees, the deans and vice-deans have a say in curricula and funding matters. Their appointments epitomize the unequal power relations between journalism schools and the party-state. Personnel appointments are also a notable oversight tactic in the Party's management of the media, with many top editors and publishers at official news outlets having close links to the Party apparatus and therefore a strong incentive to keep journalists in check.<sup>38</sup>

Closely linked to official affiliations is the emergence of symbiotic ties between Party units and journalism schools. A number of interviewees pointed to Fudan Journalism School as the model that pioneered this trend. Since 2001, Fudan has worked closely with the Shanghai propaganda authorities on developing its journalism school, with much of the research funding coming directly from the Shanghai propaganda department.<sup>39</sup> Most recently, under Xi Jinping's 习近平 leadership, there has been a renewed emphasis on fostering closer cooperation between journalism schools and official channels. In 2013, for instance, 19 universities announced plans to collaborate with propaganda departments or official media units in restructuring their journalism departments.<sup>40</sup> For example, Renmin University is enhancing its collaboration with Beijing's propaganda department, while the China University of Political Science and Law is working together with *Guangming ribao* 光明日报. Interviews with media faculty staff at these institutions suggest that these efforts are aimed both at injecting Party ideology directly into journalism education agendas and at monitoring the

35 Song's predecessor, Zhao Kai, was the head of a Shanghai newspaper group, *Wenhui xinming lianhe baoye*.

36 Tsinghua School of Journalism and Communication website, <http://www.tsjc.tsinghua.edu.cn/publish/jc/234/index.html>. Accessed 2 February 2017.

37 See <http://sjc.pku.edu.cn/School-0.aspx>. Accessed 2 February 2017.

38 On personnel control via appointments in the media, see Esarey 2006.

39 Interviewees at Fudan, including a number of professors and the dean himself, confirmed that research funding is provided by Shanghai's propaganda department.

40 Yi and Qin 2014.



development of journalism programmes to ensure that they remain in line with official interests.<sup>41</sup>

Official influence is also channelled through occasional visits to journalism schools by representatives of the Education Ministry and the central Propaganda Department. These visits take the form of discussions with staff on the importance of adhering to the principles of Marxist journalism. Senior faculty members at Fudan and the China Youth University shared that such visits are infrequent and more symbolic in nature, but they nonetheless serve as reminders of the presence of top-down oversight.<sup>42</sup> These visits appear to resemble the so-called “invitations for tea” issued by the official apparatus that are frequently used to intimidate Chinese and Western journalists.<sup>43</sup> Like journalists, educators tend to resent soft co-optation but still conform to it in practice by communicating to their visitors a commitment to incorporating Party principles into their teaching.

In addition to structural oversight and the infusion of ideological thinking from the top down, control is also reinforced via the explicit and implicit censorship of journalism teaching. As for the former, according to journalism faculty staff, there are certain sensitive issues that fall into the “red zone” and which are typically left untouched in research, classrooms or even in private discussions with students. These include issues known to be sensitive in the eyes of the party-state, such as China’s human rights record, Tibet, Taiwan and any direct questioning of the legitimacy of the Party’s rule, issues which are similarly taboo for China’s media professionals.<sup>44</sup>

As for the more implicit censorship, many issues fall into a “grey zone” of political sensitivity, such as the teachings on media oversight, environmental journalism and media ethics. When it comes to these semi-sensitive topics, the restrictions are looser and the boundaries are patrolled with ad hoc bans. An example of one such ban, which was raised in many interviews, is that of Sun Xupei’s 孙旭培 textbook, *A Dynamic Opening in China’s Mass Media* (*Zhongguo chuanmei de huodong kongjian* 中国传媒的活动空间). This book devotes a large section to the media’s supervisory role and advocates for a media law and for constitutional protections to be granted to journalists.<sup>45</sup> Sun learned about the government order to ban his book from his publisher, who was given a direct instruction by an official from the publishing arm of the Beijing propaganda department.<sup>46</sup> Such textbook bans are relatively rare, but restrictions on textbook content can be imposed via suggestions from the dean

41 Interviews JS32; JS33; JS34.

42 Interviews JS12; JS14; JS17.

43 An “invitation for tea” is the phrase often used by the Chinese public security apparatus when attempting to question foreign journalists, advocacy groups and Chinese activists. This seemingly benign phrase tends to be linked to surveillance in the Chinese context.

44 Repnikova 2017.

45 The author obtained an unofficial copy of the manuscript from Professor Sun during a visit in 2008.

46 The author interviewed Professor Sun shortly after the ban.



or senior faculty members on particular topics or sections to be omitted or revised. A number of interviewees noted that research and teaching proposals could be screened at many levels, with the final versions reflecting different degrees of internal censorship. Faculty members might also be advised not to publish books or articles during politically sensitive time periods, or to avoid specific topics in class discussions. Such “suggestions” can come from the Ministry of Education or the Propaganda Department, but are usually relayed via high-level administrators in journalism departments. For instance, a professor of journalism at Beijing Foreign Studies University, who tends to write on media ethics and Western journalism norms, was recently cautioned by the dean to focus only on articles and to avoid submitting whole manuscripts of new textbooks.<sup>47</sup> The timing of this warning coincided with a general tightening of political control in the education arena under Xi’s rule.

Applying bans or any other implicit censorship directives is closely interlinked to another coercive tactic: the demotion or even dismissal of outspoken faculty members. Professional downgrading refers to the transfer of a disruptive faculty member to either a lower position within the school or to a less influential school entirely, a tactic also used in the journalism field.<sup>48</sup> A senior professor of journalism at Renmin University described it in the following terms:

The outspoken faculty members are typically not dismissed or arrested, but rather advised to move elsewhere to a new position that would make their voice almost non-existent ... One cannot publicly resist the demotion as the authorities are simply sending you elsewhere to “serve the Party,” which is a normal duty for a good citizen ... also since “downgraded” intellectuals tend to have held high positions originally, they are not allowed to go abroad because of their possible knowledge of “high-level national secrets.”<sup>49</sup>

This excerpt highlights how professional downgrading can be a subtle but effective mechanism, as it works to silence critical voices by removing them from their sphere of influence and by signalling to other scholars the potential retribution they would face if they crossed the line. The interviewee cited noted that a number of his colleagues at the Academy of Social Sciences and journalism schools had received this type of “treatment.” The respondent suggested that none of these scholars had managed to reclaim their original positions.

In more extreme cases of scholars crossing the line and directly challenging the Party’s principles, expulsion from the academy becomes a possibility. The 2004 dismissal of Jiao Guobiao 焦国标, an associate professor in journalism at Peking University, is a famous case that cropped up in most interviews. In 2004, Jiao wrote an openly critical letter about freedom of press to the Propaganda Department and shared its contents with his students. He was initially removed from the journalism department and “offered” a position at the Centre for Ancient Chinese Classics and Archives. When he refused to comply, Jiao was discharged from all his professional duties.

47 Interview JS30.

48 Repnikova 2017.

49 Interview JS29.

While demotion and dismissal are not widespread, they do instil a degree of caution and self-censorship in the faculty. The very reactions to Jiao's radical challenge to authority are illustrative of how deeply self-censorship is engrained in self-perceptions and routine practices of members of the journalism faculty. Jiao's colleagues were both empathetic and critical about his fate. According to one senior professor at Peking University, "We all agree with his concepts, but he spoke too directly and that is useless. Now he has no status and no job. Mao Zedong's notion of protecting oneself (*baocun ziji* 保存自己) is still critical. The key is to protect yourself first, before you help others."<sup>50</sup> Jiao's attempts to take a radical stance were perceived as strategically foolish by his colleagues considering the outcome, which most found predictable. Some interviewees further shared how the threat of losing their jobs is constantly on their minds as they engage in teaching and research. "There are times I feel uncomfortable or anxious after discussing potentially sensitive issues with my students ... harsh repercussions are very unlikely, but I still think about them," shared one young professor from Tsinghua University.<sup>51</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed in interviews with other professors, especially junior ones. Research on Chinese journalists, again, offers some parallels here, as professional downgrading and dismissal in the media sphere are rarely used but highly feared, and thereby remain effective in co-opting media professionals into compliance.<sup>52</sup>

While the mechanisms to uphold ideological training and to patrol the boundaries of what is permissible lead to self-censorship, the fusion of market and Western influences with Party principles, along with some ambiguity in official enforcement practices, leaves space for agency within journalism schools. The next section explains how some journalism educators navigate the ideological terrain by reinterpreting some of its elements while still signalling their allegiance to the Party. The analysis then turns to the question of how journalism students reinterpret the official media discourse.

### **Journalism Educators: Stretching the Boundaries of Official Ideology**

From classroom observations and interviews with journalism faculty staff, I found that journalism educators, while generally towing the Party line on media politics (as discussed above), manage to inject some alternative thinking into their teaching. Specifically, some educators emphasize the compatibility of the media's oversight function with China's political system, draw implicit comparisons with Western media systems, and critically scrutinize theoretical principles of Marxist journalism.

In introducing the political role of the media, educators generally convey to their students that the media's primary role is to channel state views and facilitate

50 Interview JS28.

51 Interview JS29.

52 Repnikova 2017.

stability; at the same time, they emphasize the importance of the media's oversight role. Namely, professors of in-depth reporting, media ethics and Western journalism practices tend to incorporate teachings on the media's oversight role into their curricula through the state-endorsed concept of *yulun jiandu*. This policy tasks the media with a duty to report public grievances and local governance failures and is understood to be a Chinese version of the watchdog role played by the media in other countries.<sup>53</sup> The media supervise government by conveying public opinion through their reporting. Examples of media supervision include the media's investigations into corruption, environmental protests and the mismanagement of disasters. Media oversight tends to focus only on local-level failures, which allows the central government to step in and resolve the problems, thereby maintaining and exerting its authority. In emphasizing and illustrating this function of the media, some faculty members go beyond theoretical discussions and arrange guest lectures with renowned investigative journalists. Such lectures took place regularly at all the surveyed journalism schools but were particularly popular at Fudan, Renmin and Tsinghua universities. Wang Keqin 王克勤, one of China's most famous investigative journalists, a "veteran" according to the Western press,<sup>54</sup> has been a frequent speaker, sharing with students accounts of his fearless exposés of corruption, disasters and other thorny issues that the authorities are eager to hide from the public eye. Other popular speakers include journalists from the investigative unit of *Zhongguo qingnian bao* 中国青年报 (*Bingdian* 冰点), as well as more liberal commercialized publications like *Caixin* 财新 magazine and Guangzhou's *Nanfang zhoumo* 南方周末. These lectures, often dynamic and emotionally charged, attract hundreds of students. The speakers tend to project a hopeful vision of journalism's potential to shape Chinese society. "When I speak to students, I talk about the ideals of journalism, the importance of conscience and societal contribution ... despite the difficulties of investigative reporting, each day brings me new hope that I try to convey to students," shared one of the speakers, a senior journalist at *Zhongguo qingnian bao*, after his talk at China's Foreign Studies University.<sup>55</sup> Journalist lecturers tend to understate their service to the Party and the political dimensions of journalism work, focusing instead on the importance of their duty to represent the people and be a voice for disadvantaged groups such as migrants and laid-off workers.

Some journalism professors go further and organize conferences on the media's supervisory role (*yulun jiandu huiyi* 舆论监督会议) to which they invite journalists, students and selected faculty members. The author's attendance of two of these conferences in 2009 and 2010 and observations of the preparation process leading up to these gatherings reveal that such events test the boundaries of official tolerance, and they are often banned at the last minute. Consequently, most

53 Ibid.

54 Branigan 2010.

55 Interview JJ02.

journalism schools refuse to host them for fear of political repercussions. Nonetheless, these conferences have taken place at different schools, bringing together investigative reporters from across the country for dynamic two-day discussions about the potential for and the limitations of the media's oversight role in the Chinese context.<sup>56</sup> In theoretical teachings as well as in practical exposure, educators present the media's oversight function as complementary to, rather than in conflict with, the general notion of the media serving the Party's interests. The theoretical teachings focus on how the oversight role enhances the media's capacity to guide public opinion by boosting the media's credibility in the eyes of the public. In the practical exposure gained through guest lecturers and conferences, students are encouraged to pursue investigative journalism as constructive criticism that is congruent with the vision of gradual political change.

Educators also project a more reflective and critical understanding of the role of the media indirectly in classes on Western journalism, media ethics and news-gathering skills. In interviews, a number of professors admitted that while they present Party principles on the media role to their students, they tend to underplay them whenever possible; instead, they emphasize professional values and practices that borrow heavily from the West. Some professors reported that they introduce students to examples of Western reporting that led to political and societal transformations, such as the coverage of the Watergate scandal. Courses on Western journalism theory and professional skills training also occasionally feature guest speakers from renowned international news outlets, such as the BBC and the *New York Times*. In some cases, students are exposed to the principles of Western journalism directly through US-educated lecturers who teach entire classes. Visiting academics expressed surprise at their ability to talk freely to students about most subjects, so long as they were within a Western context.<sup>57</sup> Since discussions focus on the West rather than on China, they fall within the limits of political sensitivity and are therefore tolerable. Journalism educators, both foreign and Chinese, skilfully employ this opening to their advantage by introducing students to Chinese realities indirectly through the Western lens and thereby implicitly encouraging more reflective thinking.

This opening, however, now appears to be tightening with high-level officials issuing warnings about the dangers of the infiltration of Western values. In 2015, China's Minister of Education, Yuan Guiren 袁贵仁, introduced new rules restricting the use of Western textbooks, and stressed the importance of "strengthening management of the use of original Western teaching materials."<sup>58</sup> The implications of these new directives remain unclear. If taken at face value, most teaching materials in journalism schools would need to be replaced. Recent interviews with teaching staff suggest that they continue to use the existing

56 It must be noted that no such conferences have not been organized since Xi Jinping came to power owing to the increasing crackdown on media and public spaces more broadly.

57 The author spoke to a number of Western media educators in both permanent and temporary teaching posts at China's top journalism departments.

58 Buckley 2015.

textbooks but exercise more caution in their discussions in classrooms.<sup>59</sup> As with the media's supervision function, these educators do not view Western principles as necessarily being at odds with China's official ideology, but rather see the two as indefinitely coexisting. For the most part, students are encouraged to take advantage of Western tools and experiences in order to survive in, rather than to subvert, the domestic media ecosystem.

Finally, some creative adaptation of official ideology also takes place at the level of Marxist journalism teachings. While most tend to blur the lines between Marxist and Party ideology on journalism, some professors, including two leading Marxist theorists at Renmin and Fudan, carefully separate the two perspectives. Specifically, they trace the Party's current concept of the media's role back to the original ideas expressed by Marx.<sup>60</sup> These scholars demonstrate that whereas Marx forecast and critiqued media-based capitalism, the Chinese party-state has used Marxist thought to justify the "mouthpiece" role of the media, which was not prescribed in Marx's original writings. In their teaching and research, these scholars refrain from personal attacks on the Chinese interpretation of Marx but do highlight the distinctions between official statements and Marxist texts. Some interviewees deeply familiar with the works of these scholars suggest that they chose to focus on Marxism precisely because it allows them to question the Party's ideology: "Professor x is the best Marxism scholar in China today ... he decided to use their own 'tools' to criticize [the Party] – if Marxism is so important let me show you what it really is, and how it is distinct from what the government makes you believe it is."<sup>61</sup> This interviewee's comment alludes to the practice of "rightful resistance" which is widely embraced by Chinese activists and journalists.<sup>62</sup> By critically engaging with the officially endorsed subject of Marxist ideology, and by burying their critiques in historical discourse and official statements, these scholars have managed to reinterpret Party ideology while at the same time appearing to adhere to and even espouse its principles. Students seem to appreciate the duality in Marxist thinking that is presented by these faculty members. Despite being heavily focused on Party thought, their lectures enjoy unusual popularity, with some attracting over 150 students.

The analysis above shows how some educators take advantage of the hybrid ideologies permeating the media studies field, and stretch the contours of the Party's media discourses, by actively introducing students to the idea of media supervision, by inviting reflective analysis of Chinese realities through the lens of Western contexts, and by critically engaging with Marxist thought. As demonstrated above, the creativity of these efforts is not to be conflated with their subversive nature. What we see here is not so much resistance but rather active efforts

59 Interviews JS25; JS29.

60 Interviews JS15; JS17.

61 Interview JS20.

62 O'Brien and Li 2006, 3.

on behalf of educators to tease out some meanings and practices of official ideology. These efforts, however, are indicative of the malleable nature of official ideological education as Party principles are readapted by their transmitters or the educators themselves. We now turn to journalism students and their reinterpretation of the official ideology in media practices.

### **Journalism Students: Straddling Different Ideologies**

Interviews with a group of seniors at selected journalism departments reveal that while these students appear to adhere to official ideology by attending classes and completing the required assignments, they do not necessarily internalize the principles taught in these classes.<sup>63</sup> The students' reinterpretation of official ideology manifests itself in their openly expressed preferences for alternative media roles, their internalized conflicts between their aspirations and the realities of journalism, and finally in their choice of apolitical careers.

Many students openly expressed indifference towards ideological training. The students' appraisals of these courses ranged from "maybe useful one day in the future" to "boring" and "totally impractical."<sup>64</sup> When asked about what role the media should play in China, only a few students responded that the media should serve as a "mouthpiece" or propaganda tool. The majority of students believed that the media should function as a voice for society or else as an objective information channel, similar to how they envision the media to be in the West.

When discussing the public dimension of journalism work, students often invoked the term *yulun jiandu* and expressed admiration for the investigative reporters they encountered in their classrooms. "The media should play the role of supervising the government," noted a number of students. Many cited examples of successful investigative reporting, such as the Sichuan earthquake coverage, as something to which they aspired, and commended the guest lecturers for exposing them to new ways of thinking about the media. One student from Peking University reported that, "it is through these guest lecturers that I really got a sense about the workings of investigative journalism and alternative practices to state propaganda. Some journalists, like Wang Keqin, appear so brave and inspiring that many of us are left in tears at the end of his talks."<sup>65</sup> A number of other interviewees similarly commented on the "awakening" they experienced from attending these guest lectures. Others expressed a preference for playing the role of objective informant. These students were influenced by Western journalism articles that stress that the media should serve as a mediator between the state and society rather than as a channel for either the interests of power-holders or the masses. They found investigative or human-interest reporting to be

63 I spoke primarily to students majoring in journalism rather than those focusing on broadcasting, PR or advertising.

64 Interviews JST02; JST04.

65 Interview JST05.

potentially one-sided and instead wanted to report the facts and let readers come to their own conclusions. The distinction between students interested in investigative versus Western-style professional journalism corresponds to the different categories of Chinese journalists drawn up by some media scholars. Jonathan Hassid, for instance, draws a line between advocacy journalists and professionals: both are engaged in negotiating the official ideology of media propaganda but in different forms.<sup>66</sup> Regardless of their preferences for different forms of journalism, most students shared an interest in more practical training and exposure to the field, and a disregard for theory and ideology coursework.

The active reinterpretation of state ideology by journalism students is also evident in their awareness of the gap between ideals and reality, as well as in their inner conflicts regarding ideological contradictions when it comes to the journalism profession. Many interviewees spoke of the underlying tensions between their hopes for the media and the complex political realities. “Young people believe in Western principles of journalism, but we have not reached the level of fully adhering to these principles in China and the role of the media is conflicted in our eyes,” remarked a student from Beijing University.<sup>67</sup> Another student, from Renmin University, noted, “No matter what different models of journalism we might aspire to, such as that of the media supervision, all media still belong to the government, and one way or another, journalists are still succumbing to performing propaganda in their day-to-day work.”<sup>68</sup>

These reflections are formed in part by the students’ practical experiences of these contradictions through university media or summer internships, a standard requirement for most journalism students. In these semi-professional settings, students are exposed to the routine constraints journalists face when practising alternative media ideologies. Most interviewees involved in student media shared stories about the challenges of publishing any critical or sensitive content. Students at Renmin University, for instance, recounted their attempts to push the boundaries when they published a piece in a student newspaper that suggested that the university’s decision to install an elevator in a three-story building was a waste of resources. This seemingly politically neutral topic led to serious repercussions for the newspaper.<sup>69</sup> Students had similarly discouraging experiences as media interns. One Peking University student described his time as an intern with a newspaper in Shanghai as like being fully immersed in the propaganda zone: “Every morning, an editorial meeting takes place where the editor announces what the propaganda department officials suggest we should report on today and which issues are to be avoided ... the speech is usually quite long.”<sup>70</sup> Even students interning for investigative outlets mainly highlighted the constraints rather than the opportunities that they faced during these experiences.

66 Hassid 2011.

67 Interview JST10.

68 Interviews JST15; JST17.

69 Interviews JST20; JST25; JST30.

70 Interview JST22.



When contrasting what they were taught at university with the practical realities of journalism, students expressed despair. One student from the China Youth University lamented that “our society is not ruled by knowledge, but by unwritten rules and connections ... there is a discrepancy between our discussions about ethics and the hypothetical role of the media, including *yulun jiandu*, and the practice of journalism, over which the Party still has immense influence, especially in official publications ... this creates a certain ‘split thinking’ in how you think and how you present your thoughts.”<sup>71</sup> The notion of “split thinking” as expressed by this student reveals how students actively navigate official ideology: they are aware of political pressures forcing them into compliance, yet internally they de-link this political reality from their deep-seated aspirations and beliefs.

These ideological schisms appear to translate into a degree of cynicism among journalism students about their post-graduation career paths. Only a fraction of the interviewees planned to follow in the footsteps of their heroes like Wang Keqin and become investigative journalists. The majority said they were reluctant to follow this route because they lacked the courage and patience to deal with the contradictions within China’s media system. “My conscience would not be able to handle it – the worst is when you know something is wrong, but are not allowed to expose it ... one needs to be courageous to be an investigative journalist, but I’m afraid, I am not,” admitted a student from Renmin University.<sup>72</sup> Other studies on Chinese journalism students confirm that, despite much admiration for the cause, few dare to embark on investigative reporting careers.<sup>73</sup> Of the group of student interviewees who did want to become journalists, most were interested in stable journalism careers that involve what they referred to as “professional” reporting which does not necessarily challenge the Party line. “I would like to write about timely issues in an objective manner, but I wouldn’t necessarily want to engage with the most sensitive matters and walk the thin line between control and resistance,” explained a student at Fudan.<sup>74</sup> Others openly expressed a preference for entertainment journalism, aspiring to a career that is “fun” and “adventurous” for a given time period while not necessarily constituting a long-term pursuit. Here, again, we see that students choose to abide by the official line in practice by straying away from sensitive areas, but they do so mainly out of fear rather than out of any sincere allegiance to the Party’s vision of the media. The majority of the interviewees, however, were considering non-journalistic careers, a trend confirmed in other recent surveys of journalism school graduates. According to the Fudan School of Journalism’s 2010 employment statistics, only five out of 16 students majoring in journalism were intending to become journalists, and this number was even lower for those graduating with

71 Interview JST27.

72 Interview JST29.

73 Dombrowsky 2014.

74 Interview JST19.

broadcasting and advertising majors.<sup>75</sup> Regardless of their major, most graduates from Fudan were planning to work in the business sector. This choice is not unique to China, as journalism students in the West also increasingly settle for careers outside of journalism.<sup>76</sup> In the Chinese context, however, it carries more political significance. It appears that these students are resolving their conflicting visions of the media's role by abandoning journalism altogether and settling instead for individualistic commercially-driven pursuits. While official ideology is aimed at training future propagandists, in reality it largely works to drive young students away from propaganda and more towards the shadow of the market – a safe, apolitical space.

### Conclusion and Theoretical Implications

The analysis in this article interrogated how the Party attempts to instil its ideology as a multi-layered process through the prism of elite journalism education. The study has documented the diverse strategies that the state deploys in diffusing official principles amidst the otherwise hybrid ideological frontier, heavily influenced by market and Western forces. The analysis of how the Party's ideology trickles down from officials and education managers to educators and students in elite media departments further demonstrates that it undergoes a degree of metamorphosis. Educators, while exercising significant self-censorship and staying within the parameters of permissible discourses, stretch the contours of official ideology by mixing in alternative practices and principles, as well as by discerning theoretical bases of official claims from the original Marxist writings. Students, in turn, privately disentangle the official line from their individual aspirations while publicly succumbing to apolitical careers. The adherence to official ideology by educators, and especially by students, therefore appears to be more on the surface than in substance, rendering the effects of the Party's thought work rather ambivalent.

The arguments posed in this article offer theoretical implications for our thinking about the evolution of the Party's thought work. They reassert the notion that ideology work encompasses an important facet of the Party's adaptive governance while questioning the linkages between the Party's adaptation and authoritarian resilience.<sup>77</sup> The analysis in this article suggests that the ideological ingredient of the Party's governance is unlikely to wane in the journalism education sphere or in the education sector more broadly. If anything, it appears to have been reasserted under Xi's rule, as evident in the state-directed fusion of journalism schools with Party propaganda and official media units. The authorities have taken an active stance on diffusing Party principles in media training, with co-optation and control strategies mirroring those practised within the wider

75 Internal employment statistics were shared by colleagues at Fudan University.

76 When attending a comparative workshop on media and journalism practices in Washington, DC, in October 2014, the author found that a shared theme was that there was a declining interest among journalism students in both countries in becoming journalists.

77 On adaptive authoritarianism, see Heilmann and Perry 2011.

education domain as well as in the media sphere. Even if much of the top-down oversight and ideological training may appear symbolic, the Party takes this symbolism seriously. Echoing the writings on Assad's cult in Syria, the Chinese regime endows significant value to public manifestations of obedience.<sup>78</sup>

The association between the Party's pursuit of ideological control and its resilience, however, is not obvious. The effectiveness of ideology work in fostering a strict allegiance to Party principles among educators and the young educated elite appears to be mixed. Educators adopt an eclectic approach towards state media ideology by generally transmitting the political status quo through their teachings while finding opportune moments to tease out and amplify some facets of state ideology with more critical thought. Students view ideological teachings with a degree of pragmatism. They demonstrate minimal adherence in order to meet their graduation requirements while actively reinterpreting and reflecting on state media principles, which in turn affect their apolitical career choices. This echoes Daniel Lynch's earlier arguments that the inadvertent effect of the state's thought work is the "depoliticization of society," with the "construction of culture becoming excessively market-oriented without being directed toward the achievement of public political goals."<sup>79</sup>

The distinctions between form and substance speak to other works in Chinese and authoritarian politics. The notion of manufacturing adherence to official ideology while harbouring more critical thoughts has been eloquently discussed in Lisa Wedeen's work on Syria as well as in Vaclav Havel's writings on Communist Czechoslovakia.<sup>80</sup> The concept of "public displays of political behaviour" being a pragmatic survival strategy has also been carefully examined in Rachel Stern's recent study on the Chinese bar exam, and contextualized in Kenneth Lieberthal's distinctions between *orthodoxy*, or correct conduct, and *orthodoxy*, or correct thought, with more importance historically being placed on the former as conduct was supposed to transform beliefs in the long term.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, the analysis in this article cautions against the binary view of allegiance versus resistance, and of public versus private domains. Educators and students reinterpret official ideology more in an effort to make sense of it in light of competing influences rather than as an explicit or even implicit act of transgression. Educators creatively strive towards finding some compatibility between media oversight and one-party rule, Western teachings and Chinese realities, and Marxist theories and China's political trajectory. Students, in turn, view the different visions to which they are exposed as being in conflict with one another, and so attempt to resolve their inner conflicts by foregoing the political domain altogether. In their modes of re-adapting official ideology, private and public gets fused together. This is evident in educators' public reinterpretation

78 Wedeen 1999.

79 Lynch 1999. The direct quotes are from <http://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=1613>.

80 Wedeen 1999; Havel 1990.

81 Stern 2016, 506; Lieberthal 2004.

of Party principles in their classrooms and their private expressions of frustration with censorship, as well as in students' privately expressed cynicism about the media's propaganda role and their public display of cynicism in their career choices. The transmission of official ideology across different layers of the system, therefore, is marred by conflicts and reinterpretation by different actors along the "assembly line." These actors are not so much behaving "as if," to use Wedeen's terms; rather, they attempt to combine multiple acts and adapt them to the different situations at hand in order to mitigate mixed ideological signals.

Journalism educators neither overtly undermine nor actively enhance the official ideology. If the practical calculations of young students were to change, their ideological allegiance would unlikely be an important factor in sustaining their support for the regime. The Soviet case is a prime example of how superficial adherence to ideology can render it obsolete in the long run. As Alexei Yurchak persuasively argues in his astute analysis of the workings of ideology in the late Soviet context, the practice of "hegemony of form," whereby the reproduction of ideological forms becomes more important to people than adherence to their precise meanings, was conducive to public support for radical transformation in a time of political upheaval under Gorbachev.<sup>82</sup> As Chinese leaders face increasing pressures on their legitimacy in light of the economic slowdown, the ambivalent results of the Party's ideological education may translate more into a vulnerability than into a resilience booster in China's battle for political adaptation.

## Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to Vivienne Shue, Patricia Thornton, Andrew Mertha, Kristen Looney, Anne-Marie Brady and Elena Minina, as well as the two anonymous reviewers for comments on earlier drafts. She gratefully acknowledges funding from the University of Oxford's China Centre, and the Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania.

## Biographical note

Maria Repnikova (DPhil Oxford) is an assistant professor in global communication, and a director of the Center for Global Information Studies, at Georgia State University. She was previously a post-doctoral fellow at Annenberg School for Communication, Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication.

**摘要:** 本文从新闻学教育的视角来探究中国意识形态工作的动态演变。新闻学教育对中国官方而言具有学生运动及媒体的双重敏感性, 因此可以作为观察当局意识形态工作的关键领域。本文探究了在中国精英新闻学教育

82 Yurchak 2006.

机构中, 政府、教师和学生针对官方意识形态的协商过程, 论证了在国家允许的媒体商业化及全球化过程中, 官方影响在新闻学教育培训中依然非常突出。在新闻媒体课程中意识形态继续占据核心地位, 而当局还通过一系列诸如结构性监督、临时性管制、乃至强力高压措施来约束教师。尽管如此, 政府意识形态工作的效果却差强人意, 因为教师和学生总是不断地对党的媒体原则进行积极的重新解读。这种行为虽然并不能直接削弱当局的合法性, 但是却展示了官方意识形态工作仅仅建立了“形式霸权”, 从而凸显了中国调适性威权主义模式在一定程度上的脆弱性。

**关键词:** 中国; 新闻学; 教育; 意识形态; 控制; 抵抗; 马克思主义; 威权主义的韧性

## References

- Bandurski, David, and Martin Hala. 2010. *Investigative Journalism in China: Eight Cases in Chinese Watchdog Journalism*. Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press.
- Brady, Anne-Marie. 2008. *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Brady, Anne-Marie (ed). 2012. *China's Thought Management*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Branigan, Tania. 2010. "Wang Keqin and China's revolution in investigative journalism," *The Guardian*, 23 May.
- Buckley, Chris. 2015. "China warns against 'Western values' in imported textbooks," *Sinosphere*, 30 January, <http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/30/china-warns-against-western-values-in-imported-textbooks/>. Accessed 2 February 2017.
- Chen, Lidan. 2008. "Huigui xinwen xue benben: gaige kaifang sanshi nian lai wo guo xinwen lilun jiaocai jiegou de bianhua" (A review of journalism teaching materials: the transformation in media theory textbooks in the 30 years since reform and opening up). *Guoji xinwenjie* 12, 12–17.
- Dombernowsky, Laura. 2014. "Chinese journalism students: balancing competing values." In Marina Svensson, Elin Saether and Zhi'an Zhang (eds.), *Chinese Investigative Journalists' Dreams*. New York: Lexington Books, 53–75.
- Esarey, Ashley. 2006. "Speak no evil: mass media control in contemporary China." *Freedom at Issue*, A Freedom House Special Report, February.
- Esarey, Ashley. 2015. "Winning hearts and minds? Cadres as microbloggers in China." *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 44(2), 69–103.
- Esarey, Ashley, and Xiao Qiang. 2008. "Political expression in the Chinese blogosphere: below the radar." *Asian Survey* 48(5), 752–777.
- Gan, Xifen. 1981. *Xinwen lilun jichu (Basics in News Theory)*. Beijing: Renmin University Press.
- Guo, Zhongshi. 2010. "Through barbed wires: context, content, and constraints for journalism education in China." In Beate Josephi (ed.), *Journalism Education in Countries with Limited Media Freedom*. New York: Peter Lang, 15–33.
- Hassid, Jonathan. 2011. "Four models of the fourth estate: a typology of contemporary Chinese journalists." *The China Quarterly* 208, 13–32.
- Hassid, Jonathan. 2016. *China's Unruly Journalists: How Committed Professionals Are Changing the People's Republic*. London: Routledge.
- Havel, Vaclav. 1990. *Living in Truth*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Heilmann, Sebastian, and Elizabeth J. Perry. 2011. *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.
- Koesel, Karrie J. 2015. "Learning to be loyal: political education in China." Paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies, Chicago, IL.

- Lieberthal, Kenneth. 2004. *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Liu, Jianmin. 1999. *Xiandai xinwen lilun (Modern News Theory)*. Beijing: Mingzhu chubanshe.
- Lynch, Daniel C. 1999. *After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and "Thought Work" in Reformed China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Mickiewicz, Ellen. 2014. *No Illusions: The Voices of Russia's Future Leaders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- O'Brien, Kevin, and Lijiang Li. 2006. *Rightful Resistance in Rural China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Perry, Elizabeth J. 2013. "Cultural governance in contemporary China: 're-orienting' Party propaganda." Yenching Institute Working Paper, Harvard University.
- Polumbaum, Judy, and Xiong Lei. 2008. *China Ink: The Changing Face of Journalism in China*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Repnikova, Maria. 2017. *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Repnikova, Maria, and Kecheng Fang. 2016. "Persuasion 2.0: digital propaganda under Xi." Paper presented at Association for Asian Studies, March 2016.
- Schedler, Andreas. 2002. "The menu of manipulation." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2), 36–50.
- Shambaugh, David. 2007. "China's propaganda system: institutions, processes, and efficacy." *The China Quarterly* 57, 25–58.
- Stern, Rachel. 2016. "Political reliability and the Chinese bar exam." *Journal of Law and Society* 43 (4), 506–533.
- Stockmann, Daniela. 2012. *Media Commercialization and Authoritarian Rule in China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wedeen, Lisa. 1999. *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Yan, Xiaojun. 2014. "Engineering stability: authoritarian political control over university students in post-Deng China." *The China Quarterly* 218, 493–513.
- Yang, Guobin. 2009. *The Power of the Internet in China : Citizen Activism Online*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Yi, Damon, and Amy Qin. 2014. "Appointment at Chinese journalism school highlights growing Party role," *The New York Times*, 24 August.
- Yurchak, Alexei. 2006. *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zhao, Yuezhi. 1998. *Media, Market, and Democracy: Between the Party Line and the Bottom Line*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Zhao, Yuezhi. 2008. *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power, and Conflict*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Zhong, Xin, and Shuhua Zhou. 2006. *Continuity and Change: Perspectives on Journalism and Communication Education*. Beijing: Communication University of China Press.
- Zhou, He. 2000. "Working with a dying ideology: dissonance and its reduction in Chinese journalism." *Journalism Studies* 1(4), 599–616.