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Communist Discourse and the Development of Chinese Diplomatic Doctrine under Xi Jinping: An analysis of "Seeking Truth" in the period 2018-2022

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Communist Discourse and the Development of Chinese Diplomatic Doctrine under Xi Jinping

an analysis of "Seeking Truth" in the period 2018-2022



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Introduction

In recent years, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has risen to global prominence, and is rapidly becoming one of the world's most powerful nations. Wielding significant influence over the global economy, China's ever growing reach and influence also means the country increasingly affects the way diplomacy is being made around the globe. It is for this reason that Melissen, Sharp & Zhang (2021, 195) argue that China's impact on global diplomacy "provides new challenges to which students of contemporary diplomacy in China and in the rest of the world must respond with study and research." In other words, the rise of the PRC and its ever-increasing role in the shaping diplomacy and foreign relations means it is relevant to think about Chinese diplomatic doctrine. Chinese diplomatic doctrine, or diplomatic style, as I will further discuss in chapter I, is a loosely defined set of principles upon which Chinese diplomacy is built.

Diplomacy and global standing, however, are not the only aspects of the PRC political context that have changed significantly in the past decade. Especially under the leadership of Xi Jinping, ideology has once again come to play an important role in determining how Chinese policy, both foreign and domestic, is made. Especially at the 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party of China, which took place in October 2017, ideology was once again put at the forefront of Chinese politics, as "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Age" was written into the constitution of the CCP.

To understand or to unpack what factors influence the diplomatic style and practice of a certain country, there are many avenues that one can take, and many different aspects of diplomacy and political systems that one can analyse. One such aspect, especially relevant for an understanding of China under Xi Jinping, is ideology. Ideology, as defined by Creemers (2020, 33) can be seen as an "an interrelated set of concepts, assumptions, norms, values and ideas that (1) provides an explanatory account of reality and (2) outlines a path for political action and change." For those interested in the study of Chinese diplomacy, this could raise the question how ideology, as an outline for political action, has an influence on how Chinese diplomatic doctrine is shaped.

That being said, it is very difficult, or even outright impossible, to quantify just how much ideology has influenced and still influences Chinese diplomatic doctrine to this day. What can be analysed, however, is the way in which the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) writes about Chinese diplomatic doctrine, and how ideology is reflected in those writings. In this thesis, I essentially seek to argue that doing so is worthwhile, as it allows us to gain an insight into how

the ideology of the CCP, to the extent that that ideology is related to diplomacy, has evolved, and to use those insights to reflect on our current understanding of Chinese diplomacy.

It is for this reason that, in this thesis, I seek to contribute to an answer the following question: “*How has the narrative on Chinese diplomatic doctrine in ‘Seeking Truth’ developed over the course of the second term of the presidency of Xi Jinping (the period 2018-2022), and what does this mean for our understanding of contemporary Chinese diplomatic doctrine and the role of ideology therein?*” To answer this research question, I will conduct an interpretive, qualitative discourse analysis of articles on the topic of diplomacy. These articles were published in *Seeking Truth* [求是; qiu shi], the foremost ideological journal of the CCP Central Committee, published for the purpose of disseminating the official Party line among Party cadres (I will elaborate on this in a later chapter). Having analysed these articles, I will compare the insights of the discourse analysis with previous research on contemporary Chinese diplomacy and on the role of ideology in the Chinese political system, and reflect on how these insights contribute to our understanding of Chinese diplomatic doctrine and the role of ideology.

Now that the main research question and the overall goal of this thesis have been established, we can move on to an elaboration on how this framework relates to the main research question and the goal of this thesis. As mentioned earlier, the main research question that this thesis aims to investigate is how the narrative on Chinese diplomatic doctrine in *Seeking Truth* has developed over the course of the second term of the presidency of Xi Jinping. In order to be able to do so, there are essentially three sub-questions that will need to be answered over the course of the thesis:

1. What are the main characteristics of Chinese diplomatic doctrine, how has Chinese diplomatic doctrine developed in recent years, and what role does ideology play therein?
2. What is discourse and why is it useful for the purposes of answering the main research question of this thesis?
3. How do the findings from a discourse analysis compare to existing academic research on the current state of Chinese diplomatic doctrine and the role of ideology therein?

While the first and the second points will be discussed in the next chapters as part of the conceptual framework upon which this thesis is built, the final point will only become clear after having completed the discourse analysis itself. Having done so, I will have understood

how CCP discourse on diplomacy has evolved over the past four years, and I will then be able to provide an answer to the main research question, and reflect on how the development of discourse on diplomacy relates to the current state of Chinese diplomacy. That being said, it is not the purpose of this thesis to establish or to illustrate any form of direct causal relations between the change in CCP discourse on diplomacy and/or the role of ideology in the Chinese political system and the current state of Chinese diplomatic doctrine, as it would be nearly impossible to ‘measure’ to what extent any change, or the absence of it, in official CCP discourse on diplomacy has shaped and affected Chinese diplomatic practice. Of course, this then begs the question why doing this type of research is relevant at all. The reason it is relevant to analyse the discourse set by CCP official sources, is because it helps us to better understand how the current Chinese leadership thinks about diplomacy, and, perhaps even more importantly, how it *wants* current and future party elite to think about diplomacy. As will be explained in more detail in the next two chapters, understanding Chinese official discourse will help us to better understand their ideology and the role of ideology in the Chinese political system, which in turn will allow us to understand a part of the Chinese perspective on Chinese diplomacy. Especially since the Nineteenth Party Congress in 2017, during which Xi declared that the Party would lead on all fronts (Gao 2017), it can be said that it is imperative to “better understand how the party sees itself and how it sees the world”, and that for this reason, we should seek to gain “a more complete understanding of the domestic forces that exert influence on the CCP—be they economic, political, or ideological” (Blanchette 2019, 18). Unpacking this perspective of the CCP leadership on itself, on China, and on the world, is what I will set out to do in this thesis.

Beside a more practical relevance, there is also the academic relevance of this thesis. The reason this thesis is relevant from an academic point of view, is not because it seeks to prove some novel theory about Chinese diplomacy, but because it applies a specific method (discourse analysis) to evaluate to what extent certain trends that have already been established by previous research on Chinese diplomacy are reflected in the official discourse of the Chinese Communist Party.

Finally, the structure of this thesis is as follows: First, I will provide a literature review on the current state of Chinese diplomacy in Chapter I. In chapter II, I will briefly discuss the history of ideology in the Chinese political system. In chapter III, I will provide a literature review on the meaning of discourse and the discourse analysis, and its relevance. Afterwards, in the fourth chapter, I will elaborate more on the research methodology used for this specific thesis, I will

justify the choices I had to make during the research process, such as timescale and scope, and I will discuss some of the validity issues that making these choices could entail. Then, the fifth chapter will be the most extensive one, and as it will deal with the actual discourse analysis of the articles published in *Seeking Truth*. Thus, this chapter will contain a multitude of subsections, each discussing one specific article. Having completed the analysis, I will then use the sixth and final chapter to reflect on how the findings of my analysis relate our understanding of Chinese diplomacy, and on how it helps us to unpack the PRC as a diplomatic actor. Finally, I will conclude that, although the bulk of the CCP discourse on diplomacy has remained relatively consistent during the 2018-2022 period, certain changes seem to indicate that the CCP is taking an ever harsher stance on the current world order, is insisting more and more on the central leadership of Xi Jinping and the CCP, and is growing more eager and willing to export ‘Chinese-style’ diplomacy to other countries.

Chapter I: Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics

Although a definition of what exactly the characteristics and underlying principles of Chinese diplomacy are and how they have developed would warrant an entire research question on its own, I will at least attempt to provide an outline of the larger trends in and characteristics of the development of Chinese diplomatic doctrine.

First of all, the broad consensus among scholars seems to be that the way in which the PRC conducts its diplomacy vis à vis other nations has become much more “vocal and active” over the course of the last decade (d’Hooghe 2021, 299). It has become more assertive, more bold and has even been described as so-called ‘wolf warrior diplomacy’¹, due to Chinese diplomats switching “their diplomatic and subtle tone for tough talk and bold actions,” and because they are more oftenf making use of “China’s economic and political weight to coerce governments into support for China” (d’Hooghe 2021, 313). Despite this increasingly assertive tone, the contemporary Chinese narrative on diplomacy has also been characterised as a mixture between “the assertive” and “the placatory” (Brown 2020, 326), as on the one hand China attempts to improve its own global standing, and on the other hand still needs to frame its narrative on diplomacy in a way that is acceptable for foreign audiences.

¹ For more information on the origin and meaning the term ‘wolf-warrior diplomacy’, see the introduction chapter of Martin 2021.

Another framework for analysing Chinese diplomatic style is proposed by Amako (2014, 3-4) who defines it as a combination of Wuxu Zhuyi [务虚主义] and Wushi Zhuyi [务实主义], or idealism and pragmatism. The former, which can be seen as part of what Amako (2014, 8) calls “China’s diplomacy of form” (meaning: diplomacy as it is derived from ideological motivations), is “formulated by objective domestic/international situational recognition and subjective self-recognition including visions of the future, the ideal state of the nation, historical experiences and traditional philosophies.”

This characterisation of Chinese diplomatic style as a kind of balancing act between ideological principles and pragmatic concerns is also adopted by Freeman (2021, 376), who characterises Chinese foreign policy objectives as an interplay between “principles” [原则] and “core interests” [核心利益], which correspond to Amako’s focus on idealism and pragmatism, respectively. For the purposes of this thesis, framing Chinese diplomacy as a combination of both ideological and practical goals can be useful to better understand the way in which ideology shapes Chinese diplomatic doctrine, which will be discussed in the next chapter. In addition, this framework helps to remind us not to attach too much importance to the role of ideology, as it is far from the only factor that shapes Chinese diplomatic theory and practice.

Another way to analyse the main characteristics of Chinese diplomatic doctrine is by examining what features are unique to the Chinese diplomatic system. Zhang (2021), for example, proposes the following three points as three unique features of Chinese diplomacy:

- 1) the extent to which the Chinese government insist on the uniqueness of its own style of diplomacy
- 2) a growing emphasis on so-called ‘big power diplomacy’
- 3) the leadership of the CCP in the making of Chinese diplomacy

The first point is reflected by the emphasis that Xi’s “New Era” concept puts on how “the Chinese government will conduct its international affairs in ways that align with traditional Chinese cultural values, rather than adopt models and principles from the West” (Zhang 2018).

It is also this kind of sentiment that underlies many schools within Chinese IR, which often find “common ground” on introducing “China’s unique way of understanding international politics” (Do 2015, 22). One such example of these schools is the *Tianxia* system, which was proposed

by Chinese scholar Zhao Tingyang (2009, 6), in which he essentially argues that Chinese traditional thinking offers a better model for world governance. In this theory, he argues that the Chinese concept of all-under-heaven (天下: tianxia)²², with the whole world answering to a superpower that rules through respect and morale, offers a better model for a system of world governance than the Western-style, (from a Chinese perspective) hegemonic system.

The second point is a characteristic that has also been identified by d'Hooghe & Chen (2010, 309.) They view it as part of China's diplomatic activities becoming more diverse and "more sophisticated," as the country has "developed a multi-dimensional and long-term diplomatic strategy that involves major-power diplomacy, good-neighbour diplomacy, an increasingly active multilateral diplomacy and the promotion of good bilateral ties with countries all around the globe." This characteristic also raises questions about the role of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in shaping Chinese diplomacy, as opposed to that of the Party. One of the interpretations of the role of the MFA within Chinese diplomacy is that of "pivotal relator", as the MFA tends "to consider relations before taking specific action," and can often only achieve national relations by aiding in the facilitation of the interests of other nations and the international community (Qin 2019, 171-172).

There are also those scholars, however, that attribute less agency to the Chinese MFA, and instead focus more on the role of the Chinese Communist Party. This brings us to the third point, which is the point that would be most important for an understanding of how the diplomacy of the Chinese state can be linked to the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party. Zhang (2017; 2019) has written extensively on the importance of the role the CCP plays when it comes to the making of Chinese diplomacy, and has even argued that "Chinese diplomacy is not the diplomacy of the state but that of the Party" (Zhang 2017, 306). Similarly, Freeman (2021, 370) characterises Chinese diplomacy as being extensively "influenced by the ruling Chinese Communist Party's conceptions of how political leadership and control are exercised and maintained." Moreover, Zhang (2021, 364) notes how "the CCP leadership over China's diplomacy is ideological and political as well as organisational", and how only the CCP has the ability to "co-ordinate China's diplomacy of the party, the state and the army, and diplomacy in all other domains" (Zhang 2021, 364). When discussing Chinese public diplomacy, Zhao (2019, 173), too, writes that "the structure can (...) be summarised as a unique system of 'party-led diplomacy'." This characterisation of the CCP as ideological and political guide for PRC

²² For more examples of how Chinese traditional thinking has influenced Chinese IR, see the overview of the different schools of Chinese IR in Do 2015.

diplomacy leads us to the next question: what is the role of ideology within the Chinese overall political system? This issue will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter II: Ideology & the Chinese Political System

The relationship between the CCP, the Chinese government, and ideology has been the subject of extensive study among Sinologists. In the context of the role of ideology in Chinese policymaking, Joseph (2019, 157-158) defines ideology as “a systemic or comprehensive set of values and beliefs that provides way of looking at and understanding the world,” or more succinctly as an “operational code for policy-making elites.” More succinctly, Lams (2018, 391) simply defines ideology as ‘contents of thinking’.

The importance of communist ideology in Chinese policymaking can be dated back to 1945, when the CCP declared Mao Zedong Thought to be their main guiding ideology, by writing it into their constitution as such (Joseph 2019, 164). Throughout Mao’s tumultuous reign, ideology, rather than practice, remained the main guiding beacon for political action in China.

In comparison to the adherence to ideology in Mao’s China, there seems to be a certain impression that, ever since the opening up and reform took off in the 80’s, the CCP has cast aside ideology as the main driver behind their decision-making processes, and instead have chosen to be more “guided by pragmatism”. Although this has led to China being referred to as a “post-Communist society” (Brown 2012, 52), scholars still describe ideology and political discourse as “key elements of the [Chinese] political system” (Klimeš & Marinelli 2018, 313), and as something that expresses “the worldview of the CCP leadership” and “informs their policy choices, both at home and abroad” (Joseph 2019, 194). Similarly, Brown (2012, 53), characterises ideology as “the bones within the [Chinese] system, giving structure, cohesiveness and functionality to social practices, justifying them to key constituencies and audiences.”

Ideology can therefore still be understood as a significant factor when it comes to understanding the Chinese political system, and especially so under the presidency of Xi Jinping, as it was under his presidency that ideology has once again been made the guideline for Chinese political action. Klimeš & Marinelli (2018, 319-320) note how, since 2012, we have seen “reassertion-cum-innovation of Maoist uses of ideology, propaganda, and political discourse, primarily aiming at strengthening one-party rule.” In other words, what is new

about the use of ideology under the presidency of Xi Jinping is not necessarily its content, but rather the way in which it is used as a tool for exercising power.

More specifically, the use of ideology in China can be interpreted as having three distinct goals: 1) “the provision of normative justifications for the rightful source of political authority”, 2) “the definition of the proper ends and standards of regime performance,” and 3) “the mobilization of consent of subordinates, or at least of relevant elites” (Holbig 2013, 62-63). This shift in the role of ideology was reflected in the CCP Party School system. To illustrate this, Blanchette (2019, 153) discusses how

“Traditional bastions of elite-level patronage, such as the CCP Party School system and the Communist Youth League, came under sustained political pressure to increase their allegiance to Xi. Intra-party ideological and disciplinary campaigns began increasing in frequency and severity, while a raft of new organizational regulations and guidelines reshaped incentive structures for cadres up and down the party hierarchy. The goal of these reforms was to arrest and reverse the CCP’s internal decay by restoring rigid political and organizational discipline so that the party could lead the Chinese people to a “national rejuvenation,” which Xi first outlined in November 2012.”

In other words, ideology under the presidency of Xi has regained its status as a tool used by the central leadership CCP to maintain discipline and unity within the Party. This perspective on the role of ideology in China also seems to hold up when analysed in light of the developments in Chinese politics under Xi’s presidency, as he used the insertion of his ideological framework (Xi Jinping Thought) into the constitution of the CCP to secure his own position as paramount leader of the PRC and the CCP, and to solidify the overall authority of the Party over Chinese society as a whole (Cho 2018, 74). In this sense, Xi’s ideology can be seen as a “comprehensive ruling ideology”, providing him with a much greater degree of ideological authority than his two predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, did (Cho 2018, 73). In addition, the fact that the name of Xi Jinping was linked to ‘his’ new ideological framework, which is something that neither Jiang or Hu had done (Joseph 2019, 193).

Of course, when analysing the role of ideology in the Chinese political system, it would make sense to include Chinese sources as well. However, it would seem that, ever since Xi declared that “universities must toe the party line,” ideology has been a topic that researchers are hesitant to discuss critically. For example, many articles on the topic of ideology and Chinese foreign policy and diplomacy under Xi Jinping exclusively deal with the uniqueness innovativeness and benefits of Xi Jinping Thought for Chinese diplomacy and the Chinese nation as a whole.³

³ For examples; see Jin & Liu 2020, or Hou 2020

Besides questions about the meaning of ideology, perhaps a more important question (at least for the purposes of this thesis) is how one can analyse ideology. For an answer to this question, I turn to Brown (2012, 54), who states that “ideology makes no sense unless it is linked to language.” What this means for this thesis is that although it is extremely difficult to analyse what exactly Xi Jinping (let alone the entire combined leadership of the Chinese Communist Party) thinks about Chinese diplomatic doctrine, it is possible to analyse what kind of narrative on diplomacy is communicated to the ranks of the CCP, and to analyse how this narrative is constructed. This analysis of CCP on discourse will be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter III: Discourse & the Analysis of Discourse

As has been mentioned in the introduction, I have selected discourse analysis as the main research method for my thesis. Before discussing the importance of discourse analysis itself, however, we must first establish a definition of what discourse is in the first place.

Discourses can be defined as “systems of meaning-production that fix meaning, however temporarily, and enable actors to make sense of the world and to act within it” (Dunn & Neumann 2016, 125), or as a “collection of statements that members of a society make about something” (Schneider 2022, 94). When it comes to applying this definition to official discourse on Chinese diplomatic doctrine, discourse can thus be seen as the narrative that the Party constructs on the topic of diplomacy. Even with a clear definition of ‘discourse,’ one should still ask what discourse analysis is, and why it should be analysed in the first place. One definition is that discourse analysis is a method of research that looks at

“patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used.” discourse analysis also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. (...) It also considers how views of the world, and identities, are constructed through the use of text...” (Paltridge 2006, 2)

Therefore, the analysis of discourse can help to “show how language is vital in constructing a perspective on a certain topic” (Mautner 2008, 33). Furthermore, employing discourse analysis as a research method allow us to “interrogate the ways in which specific systems of meaning production have been generated, circulated, internalized, and/or resisted” (Dunn & Neumann

2016, 4). To make these reasons for discourse analysis more concrete, one could argue that discourse analysis enables us to ‘tap into’ the way of thinking of the Party leadership, and how this view is communicated to other party branches and officials.

Beyond ‘just’ discourse analysis, there are several subfields of discourse analysis, that deal with different aspects or types of discourse, or have different purpose for doing an analysis. There are two of these subfields that are most relevant for the purposes of this thesis: political discourse analysis (PDA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Dunmire (2012, 736), PDA is concerned with “understanding the nature and function of political discourse and with critiquing the role discourse plays in producing, maintaining, abusing, and resisting power in contemporary society.” Especially the latter part of the function of PDA is closely related to CDA, which is a research method that focuses “especially on the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination” (Van Dijk 2001, 97). In other words, CDA is concerned with interrogating how a certain discourse creates and maintains a certain hierarchy or the dominant position of a certain ideology or group of people. While this method is often applied to texts concerning social issues such as gender inequality or racism, the fact that the CCP is based (at least) on a specific ideology still renders CDA useful for the purposes of this thesis.

The ideology aspect of the research question of this thesis is most closely related to CDA. According to the definition set by Fairclough (2003, 218), ideologies are “representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation.” Critical Discourse Analysis, then, seeks to investigate how these “representations” are constructed through the use of language. The reason that this research also relates to political discourse analysis, is because the purpose of Qiusi is to advocate the line of thinking of a certain political group. According to Chilton (2005, 5) it is “shared perceptions that defines political associations.” Language, then is established as having the “‘indicating’ – i.e., signifying, communicating – what is deemed, according to such shared perceptions, to be advantageous or not, by implication to the group, and what is deemed right and wrong within that group.”

Finally, to sum up the three sections that deal with the conceptual framework for this thesis proposal, it is the goal of this thesis to use discourse analysis to analyse what narrative the CCP constructs on the topic of Chinese diplomatic doctrine, and to compare the findings of this analysis to existing research on contemporary Chinese diplomacy and the role of ideology as a main driving force behind CCP policymaking. The ultimate purpose of this thesis, then, is to

contribute to an understanding of how the leadership of the PRC and the CCP perceives its own diplomatic doctrine.

Chapter IV: Methodology

Now that we have discussed *why* discourse should be analysed, we can move on to *how* one should go about conducting a discourse analysis. *When* conducting discourse analysis, there are several choices in methodology that one has to make, each with its own advantages and drawbacks. The first choice one will need to make is that of which source to analyse.

For the purposes of this thesis, I have selected *Seeking Truth* as the source from which I will take the articles for my discourse analysis. To understand why this source is suitable for the purposes of this thesis, we need to have a good understanding of how *Seeking Truth* relates to the broader media landscape in China, and of how its publications relate to the research topic. *Seeking Truth* was first published in 1988, and to this day it is seen as “as China’s most influential and authoritative propaganda journal” (Lams 2018, 394). Its purpose is to serve as “an important ideological and theoretical medium for guiding the work of the entire Party and the country as a whole” and to “introduce the CCP’s theories, policies, and practical experience in national governance to domestic and foreign audience” (Qiushi 2020). The overall purpose of the journal, in the words of Fang & Gitter (2018, 90), is to “communicate the theoretical underpinnings of CCP authority and related Central Committee policy directives.” This role has become more pronounced under Xi’s presidency, as the Party seeks to broadcast a “politically correct main melody amongst the increasing cacophony of media voices emerging since the liberalization of the media”(Lams 2018 399).

This function as a pre-eminent party mouthpiece makes it quite similar to other state media such as the *People’s Daily* [人民日报] or Xinhua News [新华社]. The reason I chose to analyse *Seeking Truth* rather than any of the other state media, is that the journal is jointly published by the CCP Central Party School and the CCP Central Committee, and that the intended audience is not the common people, but rather the cadres-in-training of the Central Party School, and members of the current Chinese political elite. In other words, the reason I selected *Seeking Truth* is because I believe it is 1) the most ideological in terms of content, 2) targets those people who actually make or will shape Chinese diplomacy.

When it comes to methods of discourse analysis, a general distinction can be made between two different approaches: *quantitative* and *qualitative* discourse analysis. As has been mentioned in the introduction, the method that will be used in this thesis is qualitative discourse analysis. The reason I opted for this method specifically, is that the qualitative approach allows one to not only investigate how certain vocabulary is used to construct a discourse, but also to understand how the ideological, historical and political background informs the language that a source uses to construct a certain narrative. In other words, the qualitative approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of what narrative on diplomacy is constructed in *Seeking Truth*. Of course, the fact that I have chosen the qualitative method for my analysis does not mean that taking the quantitative approach to answer the research question of this thesis would be without merits. Conducting a quantitative analysis could provide one with a better insight how the usage of specific vocabulary has evolved over time in Chinese diplomatic discourse, and, due to the automated nature of quantitative discourse analysis, allows one to analyse much larger quantities of source material. However, due to the thesis being relatively constrained in both time and scope, I have decided to exclusively focus on the qualitative approach, and leave the quantitative analysis of Chinese diplomatic discourse to future researchers.

To structure my discourse analysis, I have made use of the working steps for discourse analysis when analysing the individual articles, as defined by Schneider 2022, 121). These steps include the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. establishing the context | 2. exploring the production process |
| 3. preparing the materials for analysis | 4. coding the materials |
| 5. examining the structure | 6. compiling and examine statements |
| 7. identifying cultural references | 8. analysing linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms |
| 9. interpreting the findings | 10. presenting the results |

As I already have discussed the broader context of my analysis in Chapter II and III, I will start the next chapter with the second step of my research process; exploring the production process of *Seeking Truth*.

To prepare my materials for analysis, I used the online database of *Seeking Truth*, which allowed me to retrieve the articles, which were published in Mandarin. This then allowed me

to code the materials to help me discern different topics being discussed and different strands of discourse being created in the articles. I made the deliberate decision to read the articles in the original source language, as this helped me to circumvent the problem of having to rely on translations made by others.

The next chapter is essentially divided into 17 sections, with each section discussing a single, specific article. I will discuss the relevant statements, cultural references, and linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms for every individual article, followed by an occasional interpretation. Then, the final chapters will be devoted to presenting the final results and to better place them in the context of Chinese diplomacy and ideology.

When it comes to the time frame of discourse analyses, Schneider (2022, 100) distinguishes between two types of discourse analysis: synchronous and diachronous. While synchronous discourse analysis focuses on analysing a discourse constructed at a *single* point in time, diachronous discourse analysis takes place at *several different* moments in time. As this thesis is mainly concerned with mapping out the evolution of Chinese official discourse on diplomacy over time, I will conduct a diachronous discourse analysis. This way, it also allows one to account for what Wodak & Krzyżanowski (2008, 9) call *intertextuality*. This means that discourse in a certain text only achieves meaning when viewed in relations to other texts. In other words, conducting a diachronous discourse analysis allows for a better understanding of the discourses created in individual articles, and thereby strengthens the interpretation of the whole discourse.

When conducting a diachronous discourse analysis, one will still need to make a selection of the specific articles that are to be analysed, as it would be both needlessly difficult and redundant to simply analyse all article published in *Seeking Truth* over a 4-year period. For the purposes of this thesis, then, I have decided to analyse all the articles published on the topic of diplomacy between the 1st of January 2018 and the 1st of May 2022. I chose this period because it constitutes the second presidential term of Xi Jinping, in which he distinguished himself from his predecessors by having his ideology integrated into the Chinese constitution. The reason that this period is interesting, then, is because such an establishment of a new central ideology was a politically very significant move, and was more likely to have a certain effect on the discourse discussing that ideology. One caveat with choosing Xi's second presidential term, however, is that the articles do not cover the entirety of Xi's presidency, as that is only set to end in October 2022 (six months from the moment of writing).

Then, there is the issue of selecting individual articles. Because the online database of *Seeking Truth* did not offer anything in terms of pre-made categories/filters such as “diplomacy” or “foreign affairs” for its articles for the period from which I intended to retrieve the research materials, I decided to make use the online database of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). This database allowed me to filter through all the individual articles and speeches published in all the issues of *Seeking Truth* between 2018 and 2022. For the purposes of this thesis, in which I aim to document the development of CCP discourse on diplomacy specifically, I decided to create my own category of articles by filtering on the keyword “diplomacy” [外交 *waijiao*]. This resulted in a selection of seventeen articles that make mention of diplomacy in one way or another. Although this method has provided me with a relatively efficient method of gathering the relevant material for my research, this method of selecting articles does come with the potential caveat of missing on out articles that deal more implicitly with the topic of diplomacy, without explicitly mentioning the word 外交.

One final aspect of analysing political discourse is the *visual* analysis of photos that potentially accompany the text (Schneider 2022, 126). As doing so would require me to establish a completely different methodology aimed at analysing the discourse of visual materials, I have decided to leave this aspect out of my analysis.

Of course, discourse analysis is not without its shortcomings. One of these shortcomings is its exclusive focus on either “written or spoken word” (Schneider 2022, 123). While discourse analysis does well in the analysis of spoken or written texts, it holds up less well when other aspects of communication are involved.

Another shortcoming of discourse analysis is that it is impossible to effectively measure the effect that a certain article or specific type of discourse has on its audience. Hence, we cannot know whether the audience is convinced by the message an articles carries, or if they agree with the standpoint of the author. The only thing that we are able to deduce from conducting a discourse analysis of *Seeking Truth*, in this case, is how the CCP *wants* the readership of the journal to think about certain issues concerning diplomacy, China, and the world.

Chapter V: An Analysis of *Seeking Truth*

Before delving into the actual articles concerning the topic of diplomacy, we will need to understand the *production process* of *Seeking Truth*. Understanding this involves knowing who wrote the articles, what the affiliations are of both the author and/ or the publishes, and what the target audience.

While the publisher is the same for all the articles, the articles can be written by different authors. At the start of the analysis, I will mention the author backgrounds will be discussed when relevant, on a case-by-case basis. That being said, for *Seeking Truth*, it seems more likely that the message of an article affects the author more than the author affects the message of the articles. Considering how the articles in *Seeking Truth* “undergo an exhaustive approval process prior to publication” (Fang & Gitter 2018, 90), it seems rather unlikely that different authors would express views that are too different from the official party line. In the case of *Seeking Truth* and other Chinese state media, defining the publisher and its affiliation can be more straightforward than it would be for Western-style, privately-owned media publishers. While the affiliation of private news companies can sometimes be rather obscure, *Seeking Truth* have a very clear affiliation; they are owned by the CCP Central Commission, and are jointly published with the CCP Central Party School. As will become clear in the coming sections, the authors of the articles range from scholars to MFA official from different levels. Even though their ‘role’ within Chinese society does not necessarily influence their narrative per se, the positions of the authors themselves can be part of the narrative constructed in the articles. Even if the articles are in reality written by an editorial board or another person (which, considering the high position of some of the authors, does not seem an unlikely scenario), the fact that a certain person would lend his/her name to an article would be sufficient to convey a certain message.

Article I/ 31-12-2017: Xin Jinping Thought & China as the Champion of Globalisation

The title of the first article is “opening up a new realm of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era”[开辟新时代中国特色大国外交新境界], and the author of the article is Wang Yi [王毅], the PRC Minister of Foreign Affairs. The fact that the author of this

first article is such an authoritative figure within the Chinese diplomatic apparatus is likely meant to imbue the article and the message with a certain weight. This can be seen as part of an effort to legitimise Xi Jinping Thought, as the foreign minister here underwrites the importance of Xi Jinping Thought for his own field of responsibility, namely diplomacy.

In the first few sections of the article, the author mainly discusses the topic of globalisation, and portrays China as a champion of globalisation and global economic development. Phrases that reinforce this image include phrases such as “on the road to economic globalisation, China has become a lighthouse that leads the way” [在经济全球化的航线上, 中国成为辨识方向的灯塔]. The BRI also features prominently, and is used as an example of how China successfully leads global economic development. This section also praises the success of the 19th Party Congress [党的十九大胜利召开], at which the CCP, with Chairman Xi at its core [以习近平同志为核心的党中央], declared the ultimate goal of Chinese diplomatic efforts, which is “to realise the Chinese Dream of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” [实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦].

The second section then moves on to discuss the importance of Sino-American relations, which is expressed through phrases such as “Sino-American relations do not only touch upon the well-being of the two countries, but affect the entire world” [中美关系不仅攸关两国福祉, 而且牵动整个世界]. On a whole, the US is portrayed as both a rival and an important partner, and the article reiterates that mutual respect should be the basis for all cooperation between the two countries.

What follows is quite an extensive section containing examples of Chinese bilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries such as Laos, Cambodia or Japan. This is meant to reinforce the image of China as a benevolent and cooperation-minded nation that seeks good relations with all.

The final section of the article deals is perhaps the most interesting, as it deals more explicitly with diplomacy, by praising the success of Chinese diplomacy in recent years, and by providing an outline for Chinese diplomacy in the years to come. Especially interesting, perhaps, is how the author points out that the Chinese diplomacy has achieved “pioneering results” [取得开创性成果] “thanks to the centralised and unified leadership of the Party, with comrade Xi Jinping at the core” [归功于以习近平同志为核心的党中央集中统一领导]. In other words, the

success of Chinese diplomacy is very explicitly attributed to the leadership of the CCP, and most importantly, that of Xi Jinping.

The article also refers back to the 19th Party Congress, by mentioning that at the Congress, “Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Age was established as the leading ideology that the Party must follow for a long time” [大会把习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想确立为党必须长期的指导思想]. This line, in combination with other, less explicit references throughout the article, is meant to communicate that Xi Jinping’s ideology has been established as the main guiding ideology for the CCP, for both domestic and foreign affairs.

At the very end of the article, the author calls for the Party members to “unite more closely around the central leadership of the Party with Xi Jinping at its core”, to achieve the goal of “opening up a new realm of Chinese major country diplomacy” [开辟中国特色大国外交新境界] and of “achieving new victories for the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics” [夺取中国特色社会主义伟大事业新胜利].

In short, this article mostly deals with evaluating the success of Chinese diplomacy in the past few years, while also charting its future course. Both its success in the past and the future potential success of Chinese diplomacy are attributed to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and that of Xi Jinping himself. Moreover, by using a plethora of what I would like to call ‘Xi Jinping vocabulary’ throughout the entire article, such as “win-win” [共赢], “community with a shared future for mankind” [人类命运共同体], or “the Chinese Dream of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” [中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦], the importance of Xi’s ideology is affirmed not just by clear, explicit statements on its importance, but also by the very framework of the article itself. As we will see, this is a returning pattern throughout the entire body of analysed articles. What this article creates, then, is an interpretation of Chinese diplomacy. It provides an outline of what things made it successful, and what it should strive to be in the future. Considering that both the author and the publisher are closely connected with the CCP Central Committee, this article can be seen as part of an effort to cement Xi’s position as paramount leader of the CCP. It also provides an outline of the role that diplomacy plays to the CCP; it is seen as a toolbox to help achieve the end goal, which is the Rejuvenation of the Great Chinese Nation.

Article II/ 15-04-2018: Promoting International Cooperation & a New Type of International Relations

The title of the second article is “Promoting the construction of a new type of international relations under the guidance of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind” [以人类命运共同体理念为指导推动构建新型国际关系], and was written by Gao Fei [高飞], a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU). While the CFAU is by no means independent from the Chinese government, including an academic in the list of authors might serve the purpose of nurturing the image that government policies are also supported by other layers of society.

The author starts the article with a quote from Xi Jinping at the 19th Party Congress, and states that “Major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics should promote the building of a new type of international relations and the building of a community with a shared future for mankind” [中国特色大国外交要推动构建新型国际关系，推动构建人类命运共同体]. By stating both the end goal for Chinese diplomacy by using ‘Xi Jinping vocabulary’, the author here reinforces its position as the guiding ideology for Chinese diplomatic practice. In the second paragraph of the article, the author laments the persistence of a “cold war mentality” [冷战思维] on the world stage, and argues that this mentality will need to be abandoned in order to be able to create a “brighter future for humanity” [人类更加光明的未来]. This is part of a discourse strand where China is portrayed as a force that will work towards this brighter future of humanity, as opposed to those who would be stuck in a cold war mentality. Without naming the country directly, the author seems to be referring to the United States.

In the following sections, the author moves on to discuss five different aspects/fields of Chinese diplomacy: political [政治领域], security [安全领域], development [发展领域], cultural [文化领域], and ecological [生态领域]. For the first three categories, the content is rather uniform; the author advocates “win-win cooperation” [共赢], “fairness and justice” [公平正义], and “common prosperity” [共同繁荣]. This is once again meant to convey an image of Chinese as a benevolent and responsible country.

In the fourth section, the author states that, under the envisaged new international system, there will be a need to “remove cultural barriers” [消除文化壁垒], and to “respect the diversity of

the world's cultures" [要尊重世界文明多样性]. This seems to reflect the Chinese insistence on national sovereignty and that every country should be allowed to 'walk its own road'.

Finally, in the fifth section on ecology, Gao Fei writes that is imperative to create a system that respects and protects the environment, and that international cooperation is the only way to do so is to adhere to the principles of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy. Similar to the first article, this creates a narrative where the ideology of Xi Jinping is presented as a prerequisite for the future success of Chinese diplomacy.

All these sections on different aspects of Chinese diplomacy are meant to illustrate the importance of adhering to the larger framework of international cooperation, and to portray Chinese diplomatic efforts as good and just. In other words, this article mostly seeks to outline what will need to be done to create a new (and better) international environment and seeks to illustrate the importance of adhering to Xi's line of thinking.

Article III/ 29-06-2018: The Qingdao Summit & the Important Role of Comrade Xi

The title of the third article is "The Qingdao Summit opens a new journey for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" [青岛峰会开启上海合作组织新征程], and has once again been written by Wang Yi [王毅].

The main topic of the article, as the title suggests, is the holding of the Qingdao Summit Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The event is described as "a lively interpretation of Xi Jinping Thought on diplomacy" [习近平外交思想的生动诠释和新时代中国特色大国外交的重要实践]. First, the article states that "the cooperation and unity of the SCO are a model for international relations and regional cooperation "[上合组织团结合作 (...) 日益成为国际关系和区域合作的典范]. These phrases are all meant to exemplify the success of Chinese diplomatic efforts.

What is perhaps most notable about this article however, is how the success and activities of the SCO are not only linked to Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, but rather to the person of Xi Jinping himself. While the previous articles mainly focused on the importance of Xi Jinping Thought and its corresponding principles, this article seems to be predominantly focused on elevating the person of Xi Jinping himself, by listing his contributions to the SCO. One example

of how the article tries to construct this discourse, is the phrase that explains how “President Xi Jinping accurately grasped the new situation and new tasks faced by the SCO at a new historical starting point, and, focusing on how to further carry forward the “Shanghai Spirit”, pioneered five concepts that the SCO should uphold in its future development” [习近平主席准确把握上合组织在新的历史起点上面临的新形势新任务，围绕如何进一步弘扬“上海精神”，开创性地提出上合组织未来发展应秉持的五大理念]. The author then further seeks to convince the reader of Xi’s good work ethic by mentioning that he “intensively held nearly 30 bilateral activities, and discussed and cooperated with the leaders of the SCO member states and observer states.” [峰会期间，习近平主席密集开展近三十场双边活动，同上合组织成员国、观察员国领导人共商合作，取得多边搭好台、双边唱好戏的积极效果]. These phrases are meant to showcase Xi as a hard-working leader, and can therefore be seen as justifying his personal leadership, with a special focus on his leading role within Chinese diplomacy.

In short then, this article aims to portray the SCO as a good example of the success of Chinese diplomacy. At the same time, Xi Jinping himself, is portrayed to be at the very core of all these diplomatic efforts.

Article IV/01-08-2018: the Ten Upholds

The title of the fourth article is “Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, Deepen the Promotion of Foreign Affairs in the New Era” [以习近平外交思想为指导 深入推进新时代对外工作], and has been written by Yang Jiechi [杨洁篪], member of the CCP Politburo and current chairman of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission of the CCP. The latter position, especially under Xi Jinping, can be seen as an especially influential position due to Xi making the Commission the most important institution within the Chinese diplomatic apparatus, meant to “further sideline the government agencies in charge of foreign policy” as part of reforms introduced in 2018 (Legarda 2018).

In the first paragraph of the article, the author mentions the most recent session of the Central Foreign Affairs Work Council, and hails it as a “historic meeting” [一次历史性会], as it saw “the establishment of the guiding position of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy” [确立了习近平外交思想的指导地位]. This serves to once again emphasize the importance and central position of Xi’s ideology. The rest of the article is then divided into three sections. In the first

section, the author moves on to list and elaborate on one of the central concepts of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, namely the so-called “Ten Upholds” [十个坚持]. In this section, the future success of Chinese diplomatic efforts are very explicitly linked to the upholding of the principles of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy as the guideline for Chinese diplomatic practice. For example, when discussing the second of the “Ten Upholds”, which is “adhering to the mission of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and promoting major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics” [坚持以实现中华民族伟大复兴为使命推进中国特色大国外交], the author states that “if we want to do well in foreign affairs in the new era, we must provide all-round support for deepening reform and opening up (...) and create a good environment for the Rejuvenation of the Great Chinese Nation, and to gather more understanding and support” [做好新时代对外工作，要为全面深化改革开放和对外开放提供全方位 (...) 实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦营造良好外部环境、争取更多理解支持]. In other words, success in foreign affairs/diplomacy is once more linked to the degree in which the CCP manages to uphold Xi Jinping Thought

Another example is the eighth of the “Ten Upholds”, which is “to uphold the concept of fairness and justice to lead the reform of the global governance system” [坚持以公平正义为理念引领全球治理体系改革]. When expanding on this point, the author describes it as “an important direction for Chinese Diplomacy in the New Age” [新时代中国外交的重要努力方向]. In this fashion, every single one of the “Ten Upholds” is being described as, in one way or another, serving a distinct and important purpose within the framework of Chinese diplomacy. What this means, then, is that the discourse that the author engages in is one of *legitimisation*. In other words, repeating over and over again the merits of adhering to a certain ideological framework serves to legitimise the ideological framework itself, and by extension, the legitimacy of the person who is the face of this ideology.

In the second section of the article, Yang specifically lists certain things that need to be achieved when it comes to Chinese diplomacy. These include 1) “accurately grasping the general development trend of China and the world in the new era” [准确把握新时代中国和世界发展大势], 2) “earnestly doing a good job in foreign affairs during the period of historical confluence” [切实做好历史交汇期的对外工作], 3) “resolutely implementing the strategic deployment of the CCP Central Committee for Foreign Affairs” [坚决贯彻党中央对对外工作的战略部署], and 4) “continuously strengthening the centralized and unified leadership of

the Party over foreign affairs” [不断强化党对对外工作的集中统一领导]. In this section, the author repeatedly elaborates on these four points by quoting Secretary General Xi, thus once again underlining his centrality.

Whereas the four points of action in the second section mostly dealt with political points of action, the third section proposes certain points of action on a more practical level. Perhaps most interesting here is the first point, where the author states that it is necessary to “improve the political position and to further arm the mind with Xi Jinping Thought” [提高政治站位, 进一步用习近平外交思想武装头脑], and that “thought is the guide of action, and theory is compass of practice” [思想是行动的先导, 理论是实践的指南]. I believe these phrases essentially sum up the CCP’s outlook on ideology; it is seen, especially under Xi Jinping, as an instrument to help unify the Party.

Article V/ 16-09-2018: Sino-African Cooperation

The fifth article, titled “Joining hands to build a closer Sino-African community with a shared future” [携手构建更加紧密的中非命运共同体], which was written by Wang Yi [王毅], begins with a recounting of the 2018 Sino-African summit⁴, and praises it as “a new milestone in the history of Sino-African relations” [中非关系发展史上新的里程碑].

In the first section, the author elaborates on the, in his perspective, fruitful cooperation between China and Africa. The relations between China and Africa are described with phrases such as “China and Africa are good brothers with sincerity, friendship, equality and mutual respect” [中非是真诚友好、平等互尊的好兄弟]. By stating that “China-Africa friendly relations follow the basic norms of international relations with the purposes of the UN Charter as the core” [中非友好关系遵循以联合国宪章宗旨为核心的国际关系基本准则], the author seems to portray China as a strong adherent to the UN and the current framework of international relations. China-Africa relations are further described as “the banner leading international cooperation with Africa and South-South cooperation” [引领国际对非合作和南南合作的一面旗帜]. This way of framing Sino-African relations seem to be aimed at reinforcing the idea of China as the champion or protector of developing countries. In that sense,

⁴ The 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Summit took place on 03-10-2018.
<http://focacsummit.mfa.gov.cn/eng/>

I believe the purpose of this paragraph is to reinforce China's reputation as a diplomatically successful country.

In the second section, the author indirectly links the building of Sino-African relations (which was already determined to be a great success in the previous section) to the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought, by stating that "The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (...) takes promoting the building of a closer China-Africa community with a shared future as the guide to push China-Africa relations to new heights." [党中央统揽全局 (...) 以推动构建更加紧密的中非命运共同体为统领, 推动中非关系实现新的提升]. While the author here does not necessarily indicate that Xi Jinping Thought is important to Sino-African relations, the end goal is phrased in such a way that it resembles one of the tenets of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy; China-Africa Community with a shared future. In this way, the author implicitly underlines the importance of Xi Jinping Thought.

This link is then further emphasized by statements showcasing the personal involvement of Xi himself as a guiding beacon for the overall diplomatic effort vis-à-vis African countries, with statements such as "Xi Jinping (...) clarified the principles and the direction of Sino-African Cooperation" [习近平 (...) 明确中非合作原则和方向].

In the fourth section, the author describes "building a new type of international relations" [构建新型国际关系之路] as "the inevitable choice for the development and evolution of Sino-African relations over the past 60 years" [中非关系 60 多年来发展演进的必然选择]. This section also aims to communicate China and Africa's support for the multilateral system [坚定支持多边主义和自由贸易体制].

In the fifth and final section, the author ties all of these examples of successful diplomacy to the guidance of Xi Jinping and the ideological guidance of Xi Jinping Thought, by stating that the Beijing Summit "reflects the innovative achievements of China's diplomatic theory and practice" [体现了中国外交理论与实践创新成果]. Once again, mention is made of the personal contributions made by president Xi, by stating that, during the summit, "the work agenda of Chairman Xi was extremely full" [习近平主席工作日程极其繁忙]. In short, the author constructed a narrative in which Sino-African cooperation is portrayed as a success story for China diplomacy, and China is, on the whole, again portrayed as a champion of multilateralism. What is perhaps more interesting than what is being said here, however, is that which is *not* being said. Through the entire article, in which Sino-African cooperation is

discussed extensively, the *agency* of the cooperation seems to be put entirely on the shoulders of the PRC and Xi Jinping. While the African countries are portrayed as a willing and suitable cooperation partner on many fronts, the actual *initiation* of new proposals and initiatives are exclusively attributed to China, the Party, and Chairman Xi.

Article VI/ 30-09-2018: Following Xi in Theory & Practice

The sixth article, which was the last one related to diplomacy to be published in 2018, is titled “Work hard to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind” [努力推动构建人类命运共同体]. It was written by the Theoretical Study Center Group of the Party Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [外交部党委理论学习中心组]. The article starts with praising the “grand vision and strategic thinking of a statesman” [政治家和战略家的宏大视野与战略思维], displayed by Chairman Xi, and with stating that his concepts and plans “have set a glorious banner” [树立起一面光辉旗帜] for Chinese diplomacy. This once again serves to underline the centrality of both his ideology and Xi himself in the Chinese diplomatic effort.

The remainder of the article has been divided into three different sections. In the first section, the author first elaborates on the importance of adhering to the principle of “building a community with a shared future for mankind.” The author then provides the reader with an explanation, by stating that the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind is ‘China’s response to unilateralism, Cold War mentality, and power politics.’ [中国方案是对单边主义、冷战思维、强权政治的回应]. By stating that China and Xi Jinping Thought are answer to what China perceives as flaws of the current international system, China is indirectly depicted as a supporter of international cooperation and multilateralism.

The second section is mainly devoted to explaining the direction that international cooperation and international institutions should take in the future, as proposed by president Xi.

The third and final section is a consideration of how the principle of building a community with a shared future for mankind can be applied to the practice of Chinese diplomacy. The article finishes with a sentence on how “the diplomatic front will closely unite around the party with Xi Jinping at its core” [外交战线将更加紧密地团结在以习近平同志为核心的党中央周围], and on how it will “arm their minds with Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese

Characteristics for the new era” [以习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想武装头脑]. Interesting here is how the word “will” [将] is used to indicate a certain kind of inevitability. This corresponds with the overall tone in all of the articles analysed thus far, which is mostly very self-confident, positive and authoritative.

Overall, this article once again underlines the importance of adhering to the principles of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, and it portrays China as the nation that will bring prosperity and development to the world.

Article VII/01-01-2019: Xi Jinping Thought & the Merits of Chinese Diplomacy

The seventh article is titled “Continue to Create a New Situation of Major Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics under the Guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy” [以习近平外交思想为引领 不断开创中国特色大国外交新局面], and has been written by Wang Yi [王毅].

The article consists of two sections, the first of which discusses the success of Chinese diplomatic efforts., highlighting issues such as Sino-American negotiations, South-South cooperation, and global governance. This article offers us a rather deterministic view of recent events in world politics, describing the political situation as “full of complex and profound changes” [杂深刻变化], which China, thanks to “the correct guidance” of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, has dealt with in a “calm ” [冷静] and “proper” [妥善] manner. The author also uses many phrases meant to depict China as a champion of multilateralism and a force of stability in world politics, such as “staunch protector of multilateralism and free trade” [坚定捍卫多边主义和自由贸易], and “has become a mainstay in a world of chaos” [成为世界乱象中的中流砥柱]. In a rather evident manner, this paragraph seek to create a contrast between a volatile and unstable world on the one hand, and a stable, calm China on the other.

The second section of the article addresses future diplomatic commitments, which include “to further study and understand Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy” [深入学习领会习近平外交思想], “further participate in and lead global governance”[深入参与和引领全球治理], “to continue to firmly safeguard world peace and stability”[我们将继续坚定维护世界和平稳定].

Similar to the other articles that have been analysed thus far, this article seems to construct a narrative that seeks to outline the success of Chinese diplomatic efforts by listing examples of summits or developments in bilateral relations. It also shows a commitment to uphold Xi Jinping Thought as ideological guideline and an insistence on the role of China as a leader in global multilateralism.

Article VIII/ 16-04-2019: Chinese Peripheral Diplomacy

The eight article is titled “Xi Jinping Thought and innovation in the theory and practice of Chinese peripheral diplomacy” [习近平外交思想和中国周边外交理论与实践创新], and was written by Kong Xuanyou [孔铉佑], which, at the time the article was written, was the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC. While having a lower position than, for example, Wang Yi, an article authored by the Vice Minister still endows the article with a certain legitimacy. In the first paragraph of the article, the author reiterates the importance of Xi Jinping Thought, but also introduces the concept of Chinese peripheral diplomacy [中国周边外交] as an “important component” [重要组成部分] of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy.

The main body of the article is divided into two sections. The first section is used to elaborate on the importance of the Chinese periphery to China’s strategic goals, and to state that peripheral diplomacy should serve the end goal of the Rejuvenation of the Great Chinese Nation.

The second section seeks to emphasize once more the importance and personal involvement of Secretary General Xi, by using such phrases such as “practicing what one preaches” [身体力行], “personally implement” [亲自践行]. The section also mentions China’s confidence when it comes to issues concerning “national sovereignty and security” [国家主权和安全], such as the Diaoyu Island dispute and the South China Sea Conflict. The second section also makes ample use of phrases to promote China as a leader in regional integration [引领区域一体化进程], and as a “responsible major country” [发挥负责任大国作用].

The last part of the second section returns to a more ideological tone, with the author noting how Chairman Xi attaches great importance to “telling China’s story well, and disseminating Chinese voices” [讲好中国故事、传播好中国声音]. In addition to this, the author notes how Xi “incisively interprets Chinese history and culture and the concept of peaceful development” [精辟阐释中国历史文化与和平发展理念], and “shares experiences in state governance” [分

享治国理政经验]. This statement, the actual content of these insights from Chinese history and culture put aside, is interesting in itself, as it makes a few very relevant assumptions. First, it seems that Chinese history and culture are seen as some sort of unique source of insights when it comes to governance. Second, sharing these insights with other heads of state seems to indicate that there is a belief that these insights, at least to a certain degree, can be applied to other context than just the Chinese one. This seems to be in line with the observation made by Zhang (see: Chapter I) that insistence on uniqueness is one of the aspects of contemporary Chinese diplomacy.

In the final section, the entirety of Chinese peripheral diplomacy is once more linked to upholding Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, as well as the end goal of achieving the Rejuvenation of the Great Chinese Nation and building a community with a shared community for mankind.

The overall purpose of this article, then, seems to be to take a specific field of diplomacy, namely peripheral diplomacy, and to use it as an example of how Xi Jinping Thought of Diplomacy should be implemented into practice.

Article IX/ 16-08-2019: The Belt and Road Initiative & Negative Rhetoric

The ninth article was titled “The Party’s foreign work and the high-quality development of jointly building One Belt One Road” [党的对外工作与共建“一带一路”高质量发展] The article was written by Song Tao [宋涛], the head of the CCP International Liaison Department.

In this article, the author starts by discussing the BRI and its importance of the party’s external work for the “overall diplomacy of the country” [国家总体外交的重要组成部分], praising its “unique advantages” [独特优势], such as “a deep level of exchanges” [交往程度深] and “flexible communication methods” [交往方式灵活]. Beyond just the ideological leadership of the Party over diplomacy, this paragraph suggests that the involvement of the Party also serves more practical ends. This then serves to legitimise its role in diplomacy and its overall rule.

In the first section, the author mentions high-level dialogue on the BRI taking place. Sentences used to describe the dialogue such as “highly appealing” [高度感召力] and “deepens the understanding of all parties on promoting the building of a community with a shared future for

mankind” [深化了各方对于通过共建“一带一路”推动构建人类命运共同体的认识], seem to convey the message that all the parties involved are in support of the BRI.

In the second section, the author discusses how jointly developing the Belt and Road Initiative, with the purpose of achieving “win-win” [共赢] and “common development” [共同发展]. These Chinese initiatives are then proposed as an answer against “unbalanced development” [发展不平衡], which is said to be “a symptom of traditional globalisation, dominated by neoliberal ideas” [新自由主义理念主导下的传统经济全球化的病灶]. The effect this has, is that Chinese diplomatic initiatives are essentially juxtaposed with the traditional, Western-led global economic order.

The rest of the section is then devoted to reiterating the importance of adhering to the “correct concepts of development” [离不开正确发展理念的引领], which in this case is the “people-centred ideas for development and the new concepts of innovation, coordination, green, opening up and sharing” [以人民为中心的发展思想和创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的新发展理念]. This seems to strengthen the idea put forward in the previous section, namely that good development, as opposed to unequal, neoliberal development, requires the guidance of good concepts (which in this case means Xi Jinping Thought).

Throughout the whole article, the author frequently mentions the role of Xi Jinping when it comes to proposing concepts or directions for diplomatic development, using statements such as “General Secretary Xi Jinping (...) further proposed” [习近平总书记 (...) 进一步提出], or “General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out” [习近平总书记提出]. Such phrases seem to serve the purpose of enforcing his position as the ‘core of the party’, and his primacy in ideological matters.

Without naming any specific countries/organisation, this section also discusses criticism on the BRI initiative by mentioning how sometimes “‘negative rhetoric’” [负面论调], including phrases such as “neo-colonialism” [新殖民主义] or “debt trap” [债务陷阱] are used to discredit the BRI. Worth noting is how these phrases are all put between quotation marks, as to emphasize how these allegations come from somewhere else. In this context, the quotation marks can also be seen as indicators that the content of the allegations is void. These points of criticism/negative rhetoric are then blamed for “pushing hatred” [拉仇恨], and are essentially represented as the opposite of what is necessary to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

In the final section of this article, the author once again starts with a quote from Xi Jinping, and underlines the importance of Party foreign work. He then moves on to discuss how the CCP has pledged to “provide 15.000 people from political parties around the world with the opportunity to go on an exchange in China” [中国共产党将向世界各国政党提供 1.5 万名人员来华交流的机会], in order to “strengthen the exchange of party experience in governing the country” [加强治国治党经验交流]. Even though the author maintains that the Party here “strictly adheres to the principle of neither importing foreign custom nor exporting Chinese customs” [我们党秉持既不“输入”外国模式也不“输出”中国模式的原则], this statement does have significant implications for Chinese diplomatic practice. While it might not directly involve the export of Chinese political ideology (anything related to Xi Jinping Thought, or Marxism-Leninism), it does seem to suggest that 1) Chinese style of governance is viewed as worthy of sharing with others, and 2) that ‘training’ or ‘exchange’ of members of foreign political parties is seen as part of the Chinese diplomatic toolkit.

Article X/01-09-2019: Under the Banner of Xi Jinping

The tenth article was again written by Yang Jiechi [杨洁篪], and is titled “Under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, strive to promote Major Country Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics” [在习近平外交思想指引下奋力推进中国特色大国外交].

In the first section, Yang provides an overview of the diplomatic and political developments over the past 70 years. When discussing the leaders of China and the CCP, the author seems to put an emphasis on the importance of Xi Jinping. When discussing Xi’s predecessors (Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin & Hu Jintao), the author introduces them and their contributions to China’s political and diplomatic development with the phrase “mainly represented by...” for example: “After the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese Communists, mainly represented by Comrade Hu Jintao” [党的十六大以后，以胡锦涛同志为主要代表的中国共产党人]. This phrase is used in exactly the same manner for Mao, Deng, and Jiang; All leaders are introduced as “mainly representing” the CCP. When introducing Xi Jinping, however, the author uses the phrase “the Party Central Committee, with Xi Jinping at its core” [以习近平同志为核心的党中央]. This seems to depict Xi Jinping as a much more central figure to current Chinese diplomatic efforts than his predecessors were to the initiatives of their time. This section also makes mention of how

“China has come to be recognized by the international community as a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order” [成为国际社会公认的世界和平的建设者、全球发展的贡献者、国际秩序的维护者]. This phrase once again seems aimed at portraying the PRC as a champion of developing countries, and as a protector/upholder of the international order, which is a discourse strand we have also seen in previous articles.

The second part of the first section is a list of “a set of policies with Chinese characteristics that conform to the trend of the times, promote human progress, and have accumulated a wealth of valuable experience” [一整套具有中国特色、顺应时代潮流、促进人类进步的方针原则, 积累了丰富的宝贵经验]. These policies include “adhering to the leadership of the Party” [坚持党的领导], “pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace” [奉行独立自主的和平外交政策], “advocating the basic norms of international relations centred on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.” [倡导以和平共处五项原则为核心的国际关系基本准则], “opposing hegemonism and power politics” [们始终反对霸权主义和强权政治], “always standing firmly with the vast number of developing countries” [坚定地同广大发展中国家站在一起], “adhered to safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests” [坚持维护国家主权、安全、发展利益], “always adhering to the combination of safeguarding our own interests and promoting the common development of mankind” [坚持将维护自身利益与促进人类共同发展相结合], and finally, “always insisting on seeking truth from facts, advancing with the times, and pioneering and innovating” [坚持实事求是、与时俱进、开拓创新]. The section then ends with the remark that the “great achievements in China’s development and the glory of Chinese⁵ diplomacy have fully proven that the leadership of the Communist Party of China and the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics are completely correct” [我国发展的巨大成就和中国外交的光辉历程充分证明, 中国共产党的领导和中国特色社会主义道路是完全正确的].

In short, the purpose of this section seems to be twofold. On the one hand, Xi Jinping is portrayed as the most important in the development of Chinese diplomacy since 1949. On the

⁵ The term ‘我国’ (wo guo) officially means “our country”, but is here exclusively used to refer to the PRC. For the sake of clarity and readability, I have chosen to translate the term as ‘China’ throughout this thesis.

other hand, the author seems to emphasize the uniqueness of Chinese diplomacy, and as well as the importance of the leadership of the Party.

While the first section mainly deals with the past of Chinese Diplomacy and with where the CCP stands this day, the author uses the second section to look ahead and set the direction for China's diplomacy. The section starts with a paragraph on Xi Jinping Diplomatic Thought, describing it as "the crystallization of the 70 years of new China's diplomatic theories and practices" [新中国七十年外交理论与实践的结晶] and as "the fundamental guide for China's basic compliances and actions in foreign affairs in the new era" [新时代我国对外工作的根本遵循和行动指南]. The focus then once more shifts towards the contributions of Xi Jinping, praising his "historic and decisive contributions to comprehensively creating a new situation in major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics" [为全面开创中国特色大国外交新局面作出了历史性、决定性贡献]. This serves to put Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy in a prominent position in the historical narrative of the CCP, and once again highlights the personal involvement of Xi Jinping. The remainder of the second section is then devoted to outlining eight points which Chinese diplomacy should uphold, such as the leadership of the Party, building a global partnership network, or the further construction of the BRI.

In the third and final section, the author once more underlines the importance of uniting around the central leadership of the Party, and calls for the study and implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy to improve Chinese diplomatic to "continuously enhance the vitality of foreign affairs" [不断增强对外工作的生机活力].

Article XI/ 16-11-2019: the History of PRC Diplomacy

The eleventh article was published on November 16th, 2019, and is titled "towards a community with a future for mankind" [走向人类命运共同体]. The author is named Ju Li [巨力].⁶ The article is essentially an overview of the history of Chinese diplomacy, as well as China's role on the world stage. Throughout the article, the author discusses different phases of Chinese history, and retells how China conducted diplomacy in these phases. This retelling of Chinese

⁶ 巨力 [juli ; tremendous power] seems to be a pseudonym. CCP media often uses pseudonyms for their articles to indicate a certain stance or specific topics. In this case, the name could be used to tell a story of China as a weak nation that has grown strong. Sadly, I have not been able to confirm this with other research or official Chinese websites. For more on the CCP's use of pseudonyms, and the meanings of those pseudonyms, see Fang & Gitter 2018.

diplomatic history seems aimed at illustrating how the Chinese leadership have always chosen peace as the cornerstone of Chinese diplomacy, and to illustrate how China has always chosen the path of multilateralism.

Perhaps the overall sentiment of this article is best summarized by its final sentence: “If the world is good, China will be good; if China is good, the world will be better” [世界好，中国才能好；中国好，世界才更好]. This sentence can be seen as serving two purposes; on the one hand, it links adherence to multilateralism and helping other countries as essential to China’s wellbeing. On the other hand, it implies that the rise of China and the achievement of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation are ultimately perceived as being beneficial to mankind and the world.

Article XII/ 20-01-01: China in the International System

The twelfth article was titled “Do not forget the original intention, continue to strive, and make every effort to open up a new situation of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics” [不忘初心 接续奋斗 全力开拓中国特色大国外交新局面], and was once again written by Wang Yi [王毅]. The introduction characterises Chinese diplomacy as being confident and unique, through the use of phrases such as “stepped into the world with a more confident pace” [以更加自信的步伐走向世界], and “distinctive Chinese characteristics” [展现鲜明的中国特色]. This reinforces the image of China as assertive yet unique.

In the first section, the international system is characterised as unstable [变革激荡], with ongoing conflict between multilateralism and unilateralism [多边与单边的对垒] as one of its major characteristics. The author then condemns unilateralism, along with the “withdrawal from groups” for causing chaos [“退群”(…)“乱象纷呈"], and refers explicitly to the abandonment of the Paris Climate Accords and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. While not explicitly blaming the United States, the author is referring to the abandonment of the aforementioned international treaties by the US under the presidency of Donald Trump. The purpose of this section, then, is to depict the United States as an untrustworthy partner for international cooperation, and, in contrast, to depict China as an upholder of global multilateralism.

The second section is divided into several parts, with each part starting with a statement, followed by examples to illustrate these statements. These statements included phrases such as “We are builders of regional integration and development” [我们是地区融合与发展的建设者] or “We are the guardians of international fairness and justice” [我们是世界和平与安全的贡献者]. These two statements, respectively, are then illustrated with the role of China in development projects in Asia, and the contribution of China in negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Korea. The goal of this section, then, is to portray China as a champion of multilateralism and global cooperation and regional development, and a trustworthy partner by listing the different fields in which it has made important contributions.

Finally, the author uses the final section to reiterate the importance of studying Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, and to repeat the goal of Chinese diplomacy, which is to “provide a better external environment for domestic economic and social development, and create better external conditions for the realization of the Chinese dream of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation.” [为国内经济社会发展提供更好外部环境, 为实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦营造更好外部条件]. Overall, this section seeks to describe Chinese diplomacy as a combination of upholding multilateralism and the defence of national interests. On the one hand, the author mentions how China will “safeguard the international system with the United Nations at the core” [维护以联合国为核心的国际体系] and will “promote the construction of a global ecological civilization,” [推进全球生态文明建设]. On the other hand, Wang also states that China will “resolutely destroy all attempts by external forces to interfere in China’s internal affairs” [坚决打掉外部势力干涉我国内部事务的各种图谋]. This is perhaps a good example of Chinese diplomacy being a mix of placatory and assertive elements, as mentioned in chapter I.

On the whole, this article seeks to portray China as a staunch protector of multilateralism, while indirectly depicting the United States as the opposite. In the later parts of the article, the author once again links the whole endeavour of Chinese diplomacy to the central guidance of Xi Jinping Thought and the Party.

Article XIII/ 15-04-2020: Chinese Diplomacy & COVID-19

The thirteenth article was once more written by Wang Yi [王毅], and was titled “Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, promote the building of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity in the Global Anti-epidemic Cooperation” [以习近平外交思想为指引 在全球抗疫合作中推动构建人类命运共同体]. What is striking about the title, is that, contrary to the titles of any of the articles previously analysed, is that it contains a direct reference to the COVID-19 pandemic. Already in the title it can be seen how the broader concept of Community with a Shared Future for Humanity is linked to the more specific goal of Global anti-epidemic Cooperation. The fact this is the first article on diplomacy that explicitly deals with the issue of COVID-19 is interesting in itself, as it was only published in *Seeking Truth* on April 20th in 2020.

In the first section, the author talks about how the PRC has successfully stopped the spread of the Corona virus under the leadership of the CCP, and through the personal effort of Xi Jinping himself. It also provides an extensive list of initiatives and steps, both in domestic and foreign affairs, that have been taken to curb the spread of the virus. The author also notes how “China, since the beginning of the pandemic, has prioritised and developed international cooperation.”

In the second section, the author explicitly talks about the role of the “diplomatic front” [外交战线] in the anti-COVID efforts. The first ‘order of business’ proposed by the author is to “thoroughly implement the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important instructions and the decisions and deployments of the CCP Central Committee and the State Council.” This once again highlights the importance of Xi and the Party in diplomacy, albeit in a COVID-related context. The author then further proposes three points of action, which are all attributed to Xi and the Party. The first point is to “unswervingly uphold the Party’s centralized and unified leadership” [要毫不动摇坚持党的集中统一领导]. This point is then further justified by pointing out how well the pandemic has been handled by Xi and the central leadership so far, using phrases such as “made careful arrangements in a timely manner on major issues of epidemic prevention and control” [及时就疫情防控重大问题作出周密部署], “General Secretary Xi Jinping made a series of important instructions and expositions” [习近平总书记就抗疫涉外工作作出一系列重要指示和论述], or “devoted themselves to the frontline of anti-epidemic diplomacy without hesitation” [义无反顾投身抗疫外交一线] to describe the actions of Xi, the Party and its cadres. The second and third points are both borrowed from a

speech by Xi. They include “unswervingly adhere to the people-centred work orientation” [毫不动摇坚持以人民为中心的工作导向], and “unswervingly adhere to the grand goal of building a community with a shared future for mankind” [毫不动摇坚持构建人类命运共同体的宏伟目标]. The second point seems to be aimed at further legitimising China’s approach to COVID-19, by illustrating how the country places great emphasis on human life. The third point then once again seeks to cement the position of Xi Jinping Thought by propagating a community with a shared future for mankind as the ultimate goal for the future.

The third and final section then briefly summarises the overall content of the article by reiterating that Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy continue to be taken as the main ideological point of guidance for Chinese diplomacy in the era of COVID-19. It also promises a victory over the pandemic, built on four pillars; international cooperation on stopping the spread of the virus, adhering to the principles of multilateralism, strengthening international anti-pandemic cooperation, and countering the economic effects of the pandemic. The purpose of listing these pillars seems to be to illustrate China’s insistence on multilateralism and the central role of Party leadership in the Chinese diplomatic effort.

The purpose of the discourse constructed in this article, then, seems to be twofold. One the one hand, it seems to establish a discourse on diplomacy similar to what we have seen in the other articles analysed so far including an emphasis on Party Leadership, multilateralism, and the role of Xi Jinping and his ideology. On the other hand, this articles seems to be also aimed at legitimising China’s COVID’s measures, both in terms of domestic measures and foreign initiatives and cooperation. This can be seen as further reinforcement of China’s image as a responsible major power.

Article XIV/01-08-2020: the Internationalisation of Xi Jinping Thought

The fourteenth article, “In-depth study and implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy” [深入学习贯彻习近平外交思想 不断开创中国特色大国外交新局面], was once again written by Wang Yi [王毅].

Perhaps not too surprisingly, the author calls for deeper study Xi Jinping Thought, as it “clearly answer a series of major theories and practical problems” [旗帜鲜明地回答了(...) 一系列重大理论和实践问题], such as “what kind of international relations should China build” [构建

什么样的国际关系], or “how to do a good job in diplomacy in the new era” [怎样办好新时代外交]. This fits well within the legitimisation discourse that has been constructed in other articles so far.

This discourse strand is continued throughout the first section, where the author describes Xi Jinping Thought as an “epoch-making and significant achievement” [划时代意义的重大成果].

What is particularly striking about the first section of this article, is how the author seeks to legitimise the correctness of Xi Jinping Thought by elaborating on how it adheres to the principles and methods of Marxism. This is done by stating that “Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy adheres to dialectical materialism and historical materialism, scientifically applies the standpoints and methods of Marxism...” [习近平外交思想坚持辩证唯物主义和历史唯物主义，科学运用马克思主义的立场观点方法], and by pointing out how it “combines the basic principles of Marxism with the practice of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, and enriches and develops Marxism with a series of original major ideas and viewpoints” [马克思主义基本原理同中国特色大国外交实践相结合，以一系列原创性的重大思想观点丰富和发展了马克思主义国际关系理论]. In other words, Xi Jinping Thought is presented both as a continuation and an enrichment of Marxist ideology upon which the CCP the was founded.

In addition to Marxism, Xi Jinping Thought is then described as “the inheritance and innovation of the excellent traditional Chinese culture” [是对中华优秀传统文化的传承创新], combined with “a new imprint of the times and humanistic connotations, and achieved creative transformation and innovative development” [新的时代印记和人文内涵].

Finally, this is all attributed to the leadership of the Party and of Xi Jinping himself, by noting how “under the strong leadership of the CCP Central Committee and under the personal planning and planning of General Secretary Xi Jinping, China's diplomacy, guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, has overcome difficulties, forged ahead, made historical achievements” [在党中央坚强领导下，在习近平总书记亲自擘画运筹下，中国外交以习近平外交思想为指引，攻坚克难，开拓进取，取得了历史成就，开创了崭新局面]. On the whole, this section serves to reinforce the position Xi Jinping Thought as the guiding ideology for Chinese diplomatic practice, as well as to legitimise the leadership of the Party and Xi Jinping.

The second section starts with stating that “in the face of the international situation full of uncertainties, we must take Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy as the fundamental follow-up and action guide for all our work, maintain our composure in the midst of chaos, and seize opportunities in changing situations...” [面对充满不确定性的国际形势，我们要以习近平外交思想作为全部工作的根本遵循和行动指南，在乱局中保持定力、在变局中抓住机遇]. This serves to once more establish Xi Jinping Thought as the key to future stability and success in a world where unilateralism and economic misery are on the rise. Perhaps even more striking, perhaps, is the paragraph that follows, in which Wang advocates for “actively carrying out international exchanges, so that all countries and peoples have a deeper understanding of the scientific and advanced nature of Xi Jinping's diplomatic thought” [积极开展国际交流，让各国和各国人民更加深入了解习近平外交思想的科学性和先进性]. He then also adds that “Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy is a thought of world significance and has important practical significance for solving various global challenges facing the world today” [习近平外交思想是具有世界意义的思想，对解决当今世界面临的各種全球性挑战具有重要现实意义]. This discourse set in this section does not only imply that Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy is not only seen as a good set of guidelines for Chinese diplomacy, but also for the rest of the world. Considering how previous articles stated the importance of not exporting or importing any ideologies (see Article IX by Song Tao [宋涛], published in August 2019), this can be considered a significant change in discourse.

In conclusion, this article continues many of the discourse strands that we have seen so far in other articles, including the leadership of the Party & Xi Jinping, and the ideological guidance of Xi Jinping Thought. What is new, however, is the legitimisation of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy from a Marxist perspective, and the introduction of the idea that it can be ‘exported’ to the benefit of other countries.

Article XV/16-01-2021: COVID, Xi & the United States

The fifteenth article is titled “Facing up to difficulties, taking responsibility for the country, and striving to open a new road for major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics” [迎难而上 为国担当 奋力开启中国特色大国外交新征程], and was written by Wang Yi [王毅].

The first section begins discussion of how the COVID pandemic has affected the world, of how “people of all countries have a deeper understanding of a community with a shared future for mankind” [各国人民对人类命运共同体的认知更加深刻], and how “unity rather than division, openness rather than closure, cooperation rather than confrontation has become the common aspiration of the vast majority of members of the international community” [要团结不要分裂、要开放不要封闭、要合作不要对抗，成为国际社会绝大多数成员的共同心声]. This seems to suggest to the reader that the Chinese outlook on multilateralism is shared by people abroad, and that the COVID pandemic has reinforced this shared outlook.

The second section begins with a characterisation of Xi Jinping as a force of stability in an unstable world raged by the COVID pandemic, as well as a hardworking diplomat. This is illustrated by phrases such as “the sea is rough, but the mountains stand firm” [沧海横流，山岳弥坚]. The author then moves on to discuss his contributions to the anti-pandemic and diplomatic efforts, by stating that he “has intensively carried out the diplomacy of the head of state” [密集开展元首外交], and how he has “met and telephoned 88 times with foreign leaders and heads of international organizations” [同外国领导人及国际组织负责人会晤、通话 88 次].

Later in the section there is a statement on how China will “take a clear stand against the wrong actions of the US in politicizing the epidemic and labelling the virus, and will not allow any “political virus” to run rampant in the world” [我们旗帜鲜明反对美方将疫情政治化、病毒标签化的错误行径，不让任何“政治病毒”横行于世界]. In contrast with previous articles, the United States are here explicitly named as an opponent, which could perhaps indicate hardened stances on the matter.

The section then further praises the success of recent Chinese diplomatic efforts, by citing, for example, the promotion of “mutually beneficial cooperation with South Korea such as resumption of work and production” [与韩国有效推进复工复产等互利合作].

Finally, the third section once more emphasizes that Chinese diplomacy is guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, and sets out the “fundamental direction of diplomacy” [外交根本方向]. The author then discusses different points for this ‘fundamental direction,’ including issues such as “adhering to the party’s leadership and the socialist system with Chinese characteristics” [坚持党的领导和中国特色社会主义制度], and “actively participating the reform of global

governance” [主动参与全球治理变革]. This creates a narrative of a China that is adamant on issues that it considers to be part of its core interests, that seeks to promote and lead in regional cooperation and multilateralism, and is focused on mutual benefit when it comes to international cooperation. In other words, this section is largely a continuation of the overall narrative that we have seen thus far.

However, we do see a slight change in the elaboration on the second point (which is to “continue building a new type of international relations” [持续构建新型国际关系]), which includes “pushing the US to return to rationality in its China policy, meet China halfway, sum up experience, reflect on lessons, reopen dialogue, restart cooperation, rebuild mutual trust, place China-US relations in a strategic framework for healthy and stable development, and find a way for countries with different social systems to the way of peaceful coexistence on this planet” [推动美方对华政策回归理性, 同中方相向而行, 总结经验, 反思教训, 重开对话, 重启合作, 重建互信, 将中美关系置于健康稳定发展的战略框架, 找到一条不同社会制度国家在这个星球上的和平共处之道]. This sentence seems to be in line with the more assertive stance on Sino-American relations that we saw earlier in this article, and therefore reinforces a departure from the more harmony-focus approach that we saw in some of the articles published in 2018. Even though the author still cites cooperation, dialogue and peaceful coexistence as the norm, the blame of the state of Sino-American relations is clearly put on the US.

Article XVI/ 16-11-2021: Studying Xi Jinping Thought

The sixteenth article, the last one to be published on the topic of diplomacy in 2021, is titled “In-depth study and implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy and forge ahead with the grand journey of China's diplomacy in the New Era” [深入学习贯彻习近平外交思想 奋进新时代中国外交壮阔征程] and was written by Wang Yi [王毅]. The first section is mainly devoted to discussing Xi and his ideology, praising Xi as having “the outstanding political wisdom and extraordinary theoretical courage of Marxist statesmen” [马克思主义政治家、思想家、战略家的卓越政治智慧, 非凡理论勇气], and calling Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy “a major theoretical achievement of the combination of the basic principles of Marxism and the practice of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.” [马克思

主义基本原理同中国特色大国外交实践相结合的重大理论成果]. The merits of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy are then further discussed from the perspectives of Marxist ideology and Chinese traditional culture (See Article XIV/01-08-2020). In the remainder of the first section, the author elaborates further on Xi Jinping Thought and Chinese diplomacy.

In the second section, the author moves begins with a paragraph in which he calls upon the reader to “set an example on the diplomatic front” [外交战线尤其要做好表率], and to “take the in-depth study and implementation of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy as a major political task” [将深入学习贯彻习近平外交思想作为重大政治任务]. The section then moves on to discuss a set of objectives for future Chinese diplomacy, which includes “Continuing to improve international communication capabilities and expand the influence and appeal of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy” [持续提升国际传播能力，不断扩大习近平外交思想的影响力和感召力]. In another of these points, meanwhile, the author notes how “the world significance and value of the times of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy are getting more and more attention and recognition from the international community.” [习近平外交思想的世界意义和时代价值正在得到国际社会越来越广泛的关注和认同] These two sentences fit within the discourse strand of exporting Xi Jinping Thought, and seek to establish the image that the international community is willing to accept the ideological framework, if the CCP would only work on the capability to spread the story.

On the whole, the discourse set in this article largely repeats the discourse of the articles that we have seen before, with a focus on legitimising Xi Jinping Thought, presenting China as a leader in multilateralism, and on upholding Xi Jinping Thought and Central Party leadership.

Article XVII/ 01-01-2022: Two Orientations & Six Points

The first article of 2022, and the last one to be published on the topic of diplomacy, is titled “striding forward while holding high the banner with a shared future for mankind” [高举人类命运共同体旗帜阔步前行], and was written by Wang Yi. The first section once again offers us a depiction of the world as chaotic, and as the battle ground between two “orientations,” that of the traditional world order, and that of working for the common well-being of mankind. In similar fashion to the narrative we have already seen, albeit more overtly, the author here states that “...China's diplomacy upholds the mind of the world, practices the conduct of the country and the people, opens up new opportunities in the midst of global changes, turns crises into

opportunities in the midst of world chaos, and creates opportunities through struggle and cooperation” [中国外交秉持天下胸怀，践行为国为民，在全球变局中开创新局，在世界乱局中化危为机，在斗争与合作中营造有利外部环境]. Essentially, the Chinese way of conducting diplomacy is contrasted with Cold War mentality and the “instigation of division and confrontation” [挑动分裂对立]. In other words, the Chinese model of diplomacy is portrayed as a logical “right” choice, as opposed to the “backwards” mentality of the United States (although they are not explicitly named here).

Then there is the second section, which, too, largely follows the discourse strands that we have seen in earlier articles: It praises the successes of the BRI and Chinese COVID-19 aid to illustrate the overall success and efficacy of Chinese diplomacy, it emphasises China’s adherence to the current multilateral framework with the UN at its core, and it maintains its insistence on the right to defend national interests, citing Taiwan, Hongkong, and Xinjiang as issues on which China will “prevent external forces from interfering” [有力遏阻外部势力干预].

The third and final section sets out six points of action for 2022, which include points such as “actively responding to challenges in the post-epidemic period”, [积极应对后疫情时期挑战], “defending the core interests of the country”, [坚定捍卫国家核心利益], “expanding and deepening global partnerships”, [拓展深化全球伙伴关系]. This once again is meant to depict China as an eager cooperation partner, while indicating that it will not compromise on certain issues.

Most notably, perhaps, is the fifth point of action, which is to “correct the chaos in China-US relations” [致力中美关系拨乱反正]. This forms an interesting contrast with the discourse strand we saw in the first section of this article, as well as other articles, which (either directly or indirectly) criticizes the US for its Cold War mentality and the international that it built. This seems to fit within the narrative that China is a peaceful nation and a champion of multilateralism.

Chapter VI: Discourse Comparison & Implications

Now that we have discussed the discourses constructed in Qiusi between 2018 and April 2022, A thorough analysis of the articles on the topic of diplomacy published in *Seeking Truth* during the second presidential term of Xi Jinping has revealed a broad range of articles on a broad range of topics. Throughout the body of articles,, and touching upon a multitude of issues, the following discourse strands can be distinguished:

The first strand is an insistence on the central guiding role of the Chinese Communist Party, with Xi Jinping Thought and the different principles that belong to it as its guiding beacon. This strand is an example of a pattern that has already been recognized by Wang (2017, 418), who states that, under Xi Jinping, the CCP often “manoeuvres rich resources of appraisal or evaluative language to propagandise” their ideology.

The second strand is the personal involvement and effort of Xi Jinping himself. Beyond just the importance of Xi Jinping Thought, many of articles analysed also mention the personal involvement of Xi in the Chinese diplomatic effort, by providing examples of him going on state visits, hosting summits, proposing directions for development, or meeting with other heads of state. I believe this can be seen as part of the tendency towards personal (as opposed to collective) leadership that has been viewed as a characteristic of his second presidential term. The purpose of this discourse strand, then, seems to be to legitimise his leadership by illustrating his success as a diplomat and statesman.

The third strand is that of diplomatic success. Many of the articles invoke examples of bilateral or multilateral diplomatic efforts, to portray Chinese diplomacy as effective. This is then often linked to the first discourse strand, by attributing the success to either the leadership of the Party, the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, the personal efforts of Xi Jinping, or any combination of those three.

The fourth strand is the insistence on the importance of multilateralism and the portrayal of the People’s Republic of China as a champion of said multilateralism and the creator of a new international system. This strand essentially shows the difference between Western and Chinese interpretations of the term ‘multilateralism,’ as the articles mainly advocate a type of ‘new’ international system.’ The multilateral system that China envisages, then, is one in which “the hegemonic power of the US is balanced and mitigated by a rearranged multilateral system,” and which “includes a greater role for the emerging ‘poles’, including China itself in the first

place” (Chang & Pieke 2017, 17-18). This discourse strand, in a trend also identified by Lams (2018, 395-296), is often also accompanied by painting a negative portrait of the traditional, Western/US-led world order. As has been mentioned before in the chapter on Chinese diplomacy, we have also seen a balancing between assertive and placatory elements, where China strikes a very adamant and resolute tone when it comes to issues such as Taiwan or Xinjiang on the one hand, and constructs a peaceful, cooperative narrative on the other hand. This is what Lams (2018, 407) considered to be one of the hallmarks of Chinese political language under Xi Jinping, and calls it “the duality of the discursive carrot-and-stick method.”

The fifth strand is the characterisation of the PRC as a force for stability. On several occasions, the world is portrayed as chaotic, with forces such as lack of mutual trust or untrustworthy partners being on the rise. China, the diplomacy of which is under the guiding hand of the Party and Xi Jinping, is then portrayed as a benevolent force for stability and cooperation. We see a clear intensification of this discourse strand once the articles start mentioning the COVID-19 pandemic, as that disrupted global supply chains and brought chaos and economic misery to countries all around the globe.

These discourse strands fit within the characterisation of Chinese contemporary diplomacy, as has been discussed in chapter I. We have seen that the articles are more assertive in their tone, depict Chinese-style diplomacy as unique (thanks to the insights from Chinese culture and history), and seek to legitimise the leadership of both Xi and the Party.

One significant aspect of discourse that has remained relatively undiscussed thus far, is that of modality and tone. After all, it is not only the words, but the way in which they are represented that make up the way in which a certain discourse is communicated. As far as this discourse analysis is concerned, the tone and modality has remained rather consistent and straightforward across the entire body of articles. What happened in the past is presented as fact, and the goals of the future are presented as if it were set in stone. In this manner, the journal crafts a very clear and authoritative message for the reader: this is the way things are. This kind of modality, considering the role *Seeking Truth* as the main guiding ideological journal of the CCP, does not seem unexpected. What makes it interesting, however, is that the modality partially confirms the persistence of the trend that the official narrative has become ‘louder’ under the presidency of Xi Jinping (Lams 2018).

That being said, the purpose of this thesis has not only been to analyse what kind of discourse strands/ topics can be found within *Seeking Truth*, but also to pinpoint what elements of this discourse have changed, and *how* they have changed over the course of the 2018-2022 period.

The first major change lies in how the applicability of Xi Jinping Thought is portrayed. Throughout the entire 2018-2022 period, Xi Jinping Thought is being praised for its contributions to Chinese Diplomacy, and is being established as the guiding beacon for Chinese diplomacy and the key to its success in the coming years. What changed, however, is that, after 2019, there seems to be changed perception of where the ideology can and should be applied. In article, the author seems convinced that Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy should and could also be applied to other countries. Luqiu (2016, 295), for example, has already shown how this has had an impact on Chinese public diplomacy, as Chinese propaganda targeted foreign audiences to create a more favourable image of Chairman Xi abroad.

Then, there is the role of Xi Jinping himself. While basically all the articles that were analysed discuss Chinese diplomacy through the lens of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, it was only later in 2019 that Xi Jinping himself was also explicitly made a decisive factor in the shaping of Chinese diplomacy, by listing off his feats of excellent diplomacy and statesmanship. Essentially, Xi Jinping, both as a diplomat and as the grand strategic mind behind Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, is represented as the catalyst of the historical experience from Chinese culture and Marxist doctrine, as the one who has led Chinese diplomacy to its recent successes, and whose guidance will bring the nations diplomacy to success, and who will eventually help achieve the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation. This increased focus on Xi himself could be seen as part of the broader trend of the establishment of a new personality cult.

Also interesting is the Marxist discourse strand, wherein Xi Jinping Thought is legitimised by looking at it from a Marxist perspective. Perhaps this can be seen as an attempt to gather political support among the more Leftist elements within the Chinese Communist Party, who have been less than happy about Xi's presidency and the course the CCP has taken in recent decades.⁷ This would fit within a trend that was confirmed by Lams (2018, 405-406), wherein the central leadership uses "old concepts to promote new strategies", in order to "seek a balance between the current path, and the dissenting voices of the so-called new Left within the Chinese political system."

⁷ See Blanchette 2019 for more information on the emergence of the 'New Left' within the Chinese political system.

When we look at the prevalence of articles on diplomacy, we do see a certain downward trend, with six articles published in 2018, five articles published in 2019, three articles published in 2020, four articles published in 2021, and only one published in 2022. Although there have only been eight issues published in 2022 (considering that it is only May 2022, at the time of writing). This does, however, lead to the question whether there is a concrete, underlying cause to this downward trend.

One explanation could be that diplomacy has become a less prevalent topic in the articles published by *Seeking Truth*. Another possible answer is that the topic of diplomacy has not become less popular or prevalent per se, but that the phraseology or categorisation of articles has changed. However, as determining the answer to what exactly caused this trend lies outside of the scope of this thesis, I will leave further discussion of this topic to future researchers with an interest in the phraseology in Chinese official discourse.

One other issue that has changed over the course the 2018-2022 period, is the authorship of the articles on diplomacy. While we saw a larger diversity of authors during the first two years of Xi's presidency, most articles published in the second two years seem to have been written by Wang Yi. This could be an indication that there is a further centralisation going on within the propagandisation of Xi Jinping Thought on Ideology, with only the higher officials, such as Foreign Minister Wang Yi, being allowed to disseminate the official Party line on diplomacy. These are, however, only speculations, and would require much more research to be discussed in earnest.

In short, then, the main takeaway from the discourse analysis seems to be that most of the trends in the development of Chinese diplomacy and the role of ideology in the Chinese political system have persisted during the second presidential term of Xi Jinping, with the exception of the discourse on the personal leadership of Xi Jinping and the applicability of Xi Jinping Thought, which have both intensified.

Even though some of the discourse strands have stayed relatively consistent throughout the second presidency of Xi Jinping, and others have changed significantly, both 'categories' (that is, changed and non-changed) can be said to point towards certain implications for our current understanding of Chinese diplomacy.

First, the persistence of a discourse of a more assertive and influential China, with an insistence on the uniqueness of Chinese diplomacy, seems to be a continuing reminder that, rather than model itself after a Western-style democracy and be fully integrated into the traditional world

order, China will develop a distinct way of conducting diplomacy (even if only in name), which it will seek to propagate around the world in order to create a better external environment for its ‘Great Rejuvenation.’

Second, the increasing emphasis on Xi Jinping’s leadership in diplomacy suggest that the transition from collective leadership to personal leadership. Therefore it could be the case that, in the coming years, we see Chinese diplomatic language move ever closer to his phraseology, and therefore becoming less diverse, and leaving less room for manoeuvres for Chinese diplomatic officials.

Third, the seemingly growing conviction that Chinese concepts and ideologies can also be applied to other countries could have serious implications for the way in which China deals with other countries. For example, it could mean that China will more actively disseminate these views through the diplomatic academies it is now setting up throughout the world.

Although discourse analysis only allows for speculation about the future of Chinese diplomacy, it still is a useful tool to help us unpack the People’s Republic of China as an actor on the diplomatic stage; it allows us to better evaluate how the Chinese leadership views *itself*, how it views diplomacy, and how it views the world, and how these views could guide the development of Chinese diplomatic doctrine in the future.

Conclusion

Along with China’s development as an economic power, its diplomacy has developed to become more assertive than perhaps ever before. At the same time, the presidency of Xi Jinping has seen as reassertion of ideology as a tool for unification, and has strengthened the CCP control over the Chinese diplomatic apparatus. Through the use of discourse analysis, I have analysed what narrative on diplomacy is disseminated by the CCP and how this narrative has evolved, which allows for an insight into how ideological thinking feeds into the way the People’s Republic is governed, and into the way its foreign policy is made. An analysis of the diplomatic discourse constructed in *Seeking Truth* has shown that the way in which the articles discuss the topic of diplomacy has stayed relatively consistent over the course of the 2018-2022 period. The majority of the articles advocate for a strengthening of Central Party leadership, promote Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy as the guiding ideological framework

for China's diplomatic practice, insist on the importance of multilateralism, and portray China as a force for good and stability. What has changed over time, however, is the emphasis on the personal leadership of Xi Jinping and on the global applicability of Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy as a guiding ideology. In other words, there are only certain specific topics and discourse strands that have developed in a way that they are now distinguishably different from what they were at the beginning of the 2018-2022 period. This provides us with an answer to the first part of the central research question of this thesis, which asked how the diplomatic discourse in *Seeking Truth* has developed during the second presidential term of Xi Jinping. To return to the second part of the main research question, then, it can be said that many of the trends that were identified by previous research on Chinese diplomacy have been reflected in the diplomatic discourse in *Seeking Truth*.

While the discourse analysis on its own does not allow us to either confirm or deny the existence of any direct causal relation between the development of diplomatic discourse in *Seeking Truth* and/or Chinese ideology under Xi Jinping and Chinese diplomatic doctrine, the findings of the discourse analysis do seem to point towards further implications for Chinese diplomatic doctrine. The increased insistence on the role of Xi Jinping in Chinese diplomacy could be seen as an indicator of a transition from collective to personal leadership within the Chinese political system, and might even be interpreted as a signal of the growing presence of a personality cult under Xi. This raises certain questions about what the implications of such a trend would be for Chinese diplomacy. Would it leave Chinese diplomatic officials with less room for manoeuvre? Only time and further research will tell.

The increased focus on the central leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in the making of Chinese diplomacy, meanwhile, could lead one to wonder to what extent the increasingly ideological discourse on diplomacy is a consequence of the less prominent position of the Chinese MFA within the process of making Chinese diplomacy. It would also be fascinating to see where the trend of a diminishing role of the Chinese MFA would take Chinese diplomacy and the discourse on Chinese diplomacy in the future. Answering either of these questions, however, would require extensive additional research.

Perhaps most interesting, however, are the increased willingness to export Chinese ideologies abroad, and the position of China as a leader in global multilateralism. With increased trust in its own system and its own values, China is likely to increasingly counter "Western" understandings of the international system. It showcases that China, rather than adopt Western-derived principles and understanding of multilateralism, is now in a position to both

create and disseminate an own understanding of what the current multilateral system is, and more importantly, should be in the future. It also makes one wonder about what the implications would be of a China that is less and less willing to engage with the outside world on less than its own terms, and how this would affect Chinese and global diplomacy.

While the discourse analysis presented in this thesis has helped to provide a concrete answer to the question how official Chinese discourse on diplomacy developed between 2018 and 2022, it also raised many other questions about the future of Chinese diplomacy, which will have to be left to future research. These questions aside, the breadth and variety of topics and themes that are relevant to Chinese diplomacy and the role of ideology in the Chinese political system means that this thesis can only provide one single piece of the massively complex puzzle that is Chinese diplomacy. I have chosen to exclusively analyse the Chinese, 'internal' perspective on Chinese by looking at the discourse of CCP propaganda journals. While it is an influential source, *Seeking Truth* is far from the only option when one wishes to analyse the thinking of the Chinese leadership. There is a multitude of different avenues of research that one could take to conduct research related to Chinese diplomacy, and it is my sincere hope that future researchers will keep finding different ways to unpack China as an actor on the world stage. As China's position in the world is likely to grow, so is its diplomatic presence and influence. Therefore, I am convinced that future scholars and students with an interest in diplomacy, both that of China and the world, will keep feeling compelled to rise to the challenge, and will continue to find ways to contribute to our understanding of Chinese diplomacy.

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Appendix

Source Material used for the discourse analysis:

Article I/ 31-12-2017, issue 1 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2017-12/31/c_1122175289.htm

Article II/ 15-04-2018, issue 8 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2018-04/15/c_1122669708.htm

Article III/ 29-06-2018, issue 13 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2018-06/29/c_1123054525.htm

Article IV/ 01-08-2018, issue 15 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2018-08/01/c_1123209510.htm

Article V/ 16-09-2018, issue 18 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2018-09/16/c_1123429190.htm

Article VI/ 30-09-2018, issue 19 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2018-09/30/c_1123498381.htm

Article VII/ 01-01-2019, issue 1 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-01/01/c_1123923828.htm

Article VIII/ 16-04-2019, issue 8 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-04/16/c_1124364176.htm

Article IX/ 16-08-2019, issue 16 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-08/16/c_1124874538.htm

Article X/ 01-09-2019, issue 17 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-09/01/c_1124940423.htm

Article XI/ 16-11-2019, issue 22 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-11/16/c_1125235139.htm

Article XII/ 01-01-2020, issue 1 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2020-01/01/c_1125402778.htm

Article XIII/ 15-04-2020, issue 8 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2020-04/15/c_1125858149.htm

Article XIV/ 01-08-2020, issue 15 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2020-08/01/c_1126305967.htm

Article XV/ 16-01-2021, issue 2 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2021-01/16/c_1126985877.htm

Article XVI/16-11-2021, issue 22 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2021-11/16/c_1128064546.htm

Article XVII/ 01-01-2022, issue 1 http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2014/2022-01/01/c_1128220424.htm