

**Analysing the China Cyber Nationalism:  
Research China Campaigns from Social Media**

By  
**Bi Xuan Zhao**  
趙必萱

Submitted to the Faculty of  
Department of International Affairs in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs

Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages  
2026

WENZAO URSULINE UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

This senior paper was presented

by

Bi Xuan Zhao

趙必萱

It was defended on

November 15, 2025

and approved by

Advisor: Yuan-Ming Chiao, Associate Professor, Department of International Affairs

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer 1: Philipp Fluri, Professor, Department of International Affairs

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer 2: Daniel Lin, Assistant Professor, Department of International Affairs

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Copyright © by Bi Xuan Zhao 趙必萱  
2026

**Analysing the China cyber nationalism:  
Research China Campaigns from Social Media**

趙必萱.

Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, 2026

**Abstract**

China boasts over one billion internet users, with approximately 900 million active on social media. Digital nationalism has emerged as a force to be reckoned with in online discourse. While existing research has focused on domestic platforms like Weibo and Bilibili, studies examining how Chinese netizens initiate nationalist actions on global platforms such as Facebook and whether these actions garner official attention or response remain relatively scarce. To address this gap, this study analyzes how Chinese online nationalism responds to international events and external criticism, and assesses whether such discourse is amplified, ignored, or incorporated into policy considerations by the state apparatus. Using comparative examples of the “Diba Expedition” incident on foreign platforms triggered by TsaiIng-wen's inauguration and the domestic “Ten Talks on Unity” campaign following William Lai 's appointment, this paper examines the formation of digital nationalism and its interaction with state discourse. Findings reveal that these movements not only reflect public national identity but may also influence public opinion and foreign policy through social platforms. Understanding this phenomenon helps grasp the intersection of grassroots nationalism and state power in the digital age. This study explores whether such online nationalist actions remain confined to the realm of public discourse or may evolve into official policy influencing issues.

**Keywords:** Digital Nationalism, Cyber Nationalism, Diba Expedition, Social Media Mobilization, Grassroots Action, Chinese Netizens

## 摘要

中國擁有超過十億的網路使用者，其中約有九億人活躍於社群媒體上。數位民族主義已成為網路輿論中不容忽視的力量。現有研究多聚焦於國內平台，如微博與哩哩哩，但針對中國網民如何在 全球性平台如 Facebook 上發起民族主義行動，以及這些行動是否引起官方關注或回應的研究仍相對稀少。為了填補此一研究缺口，本研究分析中國網路民族主義如何回應國際事件與外部批評，並探討此類言論是否被國家機器放大、忽視，或納入政策考量。透過比較「帝吧出征事件」因蔡英文就職引發的海外平台行動與賴清德上任後的國內「團結十講」宣傳活動，本研究檢視數位民族主義的形成過程及其與國家話語的互動關係。研究結果顯示，這些網路運動不僅反映了民眾的國家認同，也可能透過社群平台影響輿論甚至外交政策。理解此現象有助於掌握數位時代中草根民族主義與國家權力的交會。本研究進一步探討此類線上民族主義行動是否僅止於輿論層面，或可能演變為影響政策的官方行動

關鍵詞：數位民族主義、網路民族主義、帝吧出征、社群媒體動員、草根行動、中國網民

## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	1
Research Background .....	1
Research Motivation .....	2
Research Purpose .....	4
Research Questions .....	5
Contribution .....	5
Limits .....	6
Delimits .....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
Introduction .....	9
Cyber-Nationalism Evolution .....	10
Definition of social media campaign .....	12
Social Media as a Platform for Nationalist Mobilization .....	12
The Combination of “Little Pink” Formation and Fan Culture .....	13
Traffic Driven by Nationalism .....	14
The Intersection of Social Media Marketing and Political Mobilization ....	16
Chinese Internet Regulations .....	17
Internet Control and the 'Firewall' in China .....	17
Regulations and Actions to Regulate Cyber Nationalist Actions .....	19
The Impact of Internet Nationalism and Official Issues .....	20
Theoretical Integration Framework .....	21
Definitions of Key Concepts .....	23
Conclusion .....	25
METHODOLOGY .....	27
Introduction .....	27
Research Design .....	27
Sources of Data .....	29
Instrumentation and Data Collection .....	30
Data Analysis Technique .....	33
Ethical Considerations .....	34
Limitations of the Methodology .....	34

Summary .....	36
DATA ANALYSIS.....	37
Introduction.....	37
Coding process.....	37
Identifying Patterns .....	42
Connecting Themes .....	45
The Emotional Commercial Logic of Nationalism.....	46
The Discourse Structure Between Official and Civil Sectors.....	50
Digital Sovereignty and Trans platform Reproduction of Nationalism.....	53
Discussion of Findings.....	60
Summary of Major Findings.....	64
CONCLUSION.....	67
APPENDIX-1 .....	70
APPENDIX-2 .....	82
APPENDIX-3 .....	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	90

## **Lists of Tables**

Table 1: Comparative Analysis between DiBa Expedition and Ten Talks on Unity ..	60
Table 2: Coding Table .....	82



# INTRODUCTION

## Research Background

According to the news on April 27 2025, there was a case of Chinese insults, as the map of China in the support banner of the internationally famous soccer player Cristiano Ronaldo did not show the Taiwan region, which triggered the dissatisfaction of the little pink and threatened to boycott Cristiano Ronaldo, but the relevant postings have now been taken down and can no longer be accessed. The so-called Chinese insults (辱華) have been occurring so often that nowadays fewer people pay attention to them or even don't know about them. The so-called Chinese insults are the so-called internet nationalism that often digs up some cases that are degrading to their own country and nation to carry out the “campaign” behavior.

These exodus behaviors are usually carried out on social media to refute content that is different from their ideas, to promote their ideas in various forms, and to attack behaviors that are called smears to them. This study will examine the development of cyber nationalism through the causes of the 2016 Diba Expedition and its impact on the subsequent online environment, how cybernationalist organizations act on social media, and whether these actions affect the official policies and actions of the government of the People's Republic of China, and how these two are related and interconnected.

This collective reaction to foreign individuals or brands suspected of hurting the feelings of the Chinese people through their words, images or product designs has gradually been institutionalized into a unique phenomenon of digital nationalism. Chinese netizens have initiated a “campaign” on social media by posting, commenting, forwarding, and creating fanzines during such incidents to protect the

country's image, defend national dignity, and even spread their political stance in cyberspace in a light and humorous way.

The development of this kind of cyber nationalism, especially the “march over the wall” on social media platforms, presents a highly organized and symbolic mode of digital action. The 2016 “Diba Campaign” erupted following Taiwanese President Ing wen Tsai inauguration. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese netizens used VPNs to bypass the Great Firewall and flood Facebook with a massive wave of messages defending the “One China” principle. This marked the first organized export of domestic Chinese nationalism to a global platform, demonstrating the mobilization capabilities of grassroots groups in the digital age. Similarly, following William Lai inauguration in 2024, China's domestic “Ten Talks on Unity” online campaign exemplified digital nationalism within the Great Firewall. The contrast between official-led initiatives and grassroots sentiment reflects the complex interplay between the state and netizens.

These cases reveal that China's digital nationalism transcends mere online cultural phenomena, becoming deeply intertwined with international politics and state governance. This study will analyze the causes, manifestations, and impacts of these online movements to examine how they form and amplify within digital spaces, while assessing their potential to evolve into official policy considerations.

### **Research Motivation**

In recent years, with the emergence of China's insulting incidents on international media and social media platforms, online nationalist actions have slowly become a way for Chinese netizens to express their political stance and mobilize their collective emotions. Often in the name of a campaign, these actions are carried out by

using tools such as VPNs to collectively enter foreign social media platforms and bombard them with messages, postings, and declarations of stance. Although these actions are often regarded as spontaneous expression by netizens, their organization, symbolism, and overlap with official discourse suggest that they are not only culturally and emotionally driven, but may also involve the tacit approval of the state.

While many scholars focus on anti-China incidents or brand controversies, cross strait political events actually reveal distinct behavioral patterns among Chinese netizens on domestic and international platforms. This study aims to clarify the operational logic behind these behaviors and how they influence both international and domestic online discourse environments.

Take the 2016 “Diba Campaign” as an example: hundreds of thousands of Chinese netizens collectively flooded Facebook via VPNs, flooding the platform with comments, memes, and political slogans to express opposition to Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration. While such actions appear spontaneous on the surface, their high degree of organization, symbolic significance, and partial overlap with official narratives suggest they may have received tacit state approval or indirect support. In contrast, the 2024 “William Lai Ten Talk on Unity” campaign primarily unfolded on domestic Chinese platforms like Weibo and Bilibili. This event sparked widespread netizen discussion and reposting, accompanied by state media-driven propaganda, illustrating how the state guides and amplifies nationalist sentiment within its domestic internet sphere.

This study aims to understand how Chinese netizens export nationalist sentiment via VPNs to external networks and examine how this “online campaigning” pattern impacts the online environment for Taiwanese and international users. It also explores how nationalism is absorbed, guided, and even extended into policy discourse within

China's domestic internet through the interplay of official propaganda and public responses. This comparative analysis helps reveal selective enforcement within China's internet governance, as well as the cooperation and tensions between the state and its netizens.

### **Research Purpose**

This study focuses on the manifestation of Chinese cyber-nationalism across different social media platforms, particularly examining two forms: “outbound campaigns” and “inbound responses.” It further analyses the relationship between these phenomena and the Chinese government's governance strategies, public opinion control, and international communication. Using the 2016 “Diba Campaign” as a case study, the research examines how Chinese netizens bypassed the Great Firewall to access global platforms like Facebook, launching large-scale collective actions. By integrating emotional expression, organizational mobilization, and meme culture, they formed a nationalist movement with significant scale and discursive power. Simultaneously, using the 2025 “William Lai Ten Talks on Unity” as another case, it analysis nationalist reactions on domestic platforms like Weibo and Bilibili, and how these reactions are absorbed or amplified through official propaganda and public interaction.

This study aims to explain the Chinese government's strategic stance toward these online nationalist actions whether selectively condoning “online campaigns” on foreign platforms as an extension of diplomacy, or leveraging domestic internet regulation and guidance to channel nationalist sentiment into tools for maintaining social stability and bolstering state legitimacy. Furthermore, this study examines whether these originally internet driven public opinion campaigns can influence state

positions, policies, and even diplomatic discourse from the bottom up, becoming significant forces in political mobilization and ideological propaganda.

By comparing nationalist expressions across domestic and international platforms, this study aims not only to supplement existing understanding of China's digital nationalism in terms of international diffusion and political impact, but also to alert Taiwanese society to the potential infiltration, interference, and influence such online nationalism may exert on local social media environments.

### **Research Questions**

**Question 1:** How is Chinese Internet nationalism activated, organized and manifested through social media platforms?

**Question 2:** What impact do China's online nationalist actions have on official policy positions, diplomatic statements, or media strategies?

### **Contribution**

Focusing on the relationship between online nationalism and social media in China, this study will examine the case studies, policy norms, and logic of action, and will make the following academic and practical contributions to the study of digital nationalism, political communication, and digital governance.

On the theoretical level, this study places online nationalism at the intersection of platform politics and digital ethnographies, complementing the inadequacy of past studies that have focused on textual analysis and historical contexts of nationalist phenomena, and emphasizing the action patterns and logic of symbol manipulation in the digital space. The study explores in depth how Chinese netizens have crossed the information blockade and engaged in

expeditionary actions, which helps to understand the logic of selective control of freedom of information in China.

For Taiwan, this study also has practical implications for public opinion awareness. In the face of the fact that Chinese cyber nationalism often targets Taiwan as one of its mobilizing targets, understanding the mechanisms and possible risks of such cyber actions can help Taiwanese people identify the speech on social platforms and prevent the speech space from being systematically influenced or manipulated.

Therefore, this study not only fills in the relationship between Chinese cyber nationalism's behavioral patterns on cross-border platforms and state policy connectivity, but also promotes further understanding of the relationship between nationalism and state power in the digital age.

### **Limits**

There are some unavoidable constraints in the process of conducting the study. First of all, the limitation of data access is the main challenge of this study. Due to the Chinese government's high level of censorship of information and speech, some primary data, such as deleted posts, information, and messages, could not be obtained, and the study had to rely on secondary and secondary data, such as news reports, Internet backups, academic literature, and observation records. Moreover, some netizens delete their posts or accounts after participating in the campaign, making it difficult to track their behavioural patterns and subsequent reactions.

The second point is the limited nature of the platform data. Since this study does not have access to the backend algorithms or user interaction data of platforms such as Facebook or Weibo, we can only analyse the public accounts and posts, and track

keywords and comments, which leads to a certain degree of uncertainty in assessing the spread and impact of speech communication.

Third, because Chinese Internet nationalism relies heavily on myths, harmonies, metaphors, and stems to convey emotions and positions to avoid being directly targeted for deletion by the official authorities or backstage, it is necessary to contextualize the interpretation to avoid misinterpretation and misjudgement. However, in the absence of interview data and users' self-explanation, the meaning of some symbols may still be interpreted differently due to the geographical relationship.

### **Delimits**

To ensure a clear research focus and effective allocation of resources, this study establishes a well-defined scope. The research centers on Chinese netizens' nationalist actions on social media, with particular attention to two distinct scenarios. First, offensive campaigns on foreign platforms, using the 2016 DiBa offensive as a core case study, analysis how Chinese netizens collectively bypassed the Great Firewall to access global platforms like Facebook and disseminate nationalist sentiments. Second, domestic responses, exemplified by the 2024 William Lai Ten Talks on Unity, which examines public reactions on domestic platforms like Weibo and Bilibili, along with interaction patterns between official and grassroots actors.

The primary platforms studied are restricted to global open platforms like Facebook, alongside mainstream domestic Chinese social platforms such as Weibo and Bilibili. This delineation facilitates comparative analysis of nationalist expressions across internal and external platforms, revealing how differing platform mechanisms influence public opinion diffusion and mobilization. The study's timeframe spans 2016 to 2025, encompassing representative events like the “Diba

Expedition” and the “Ten Talks on Unity.” This period not only marks the cross border expansion of Chinese digital nationalism but also documents its intertwining with state discourse.

Concurrently, this study does not involve interviews with individual netizens or offline action surveys, nor does it trace the historical ideological origins of nationalism. Instead, it focuses on the transformation of nationalism within contemporary digital spaces and how netizen actions form and interact with the state within a cross-platform context. This definition ensures the study remains focused on the phenomenon of digital nationalism involving external mobilization and internal responses, avoiding excessive diffusion into unrelated issues.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

In recent years, the phenomenon of cyber-nationalism in China has attracted more and more attention from scholars, especially regarding its development and expression on social media platforms. Cyber-nationalism in China is not only a state-driven discourse, but also a bottom-up driven by grassroots netizens. The literature review addresses different theories of cyber nationalism and examines various perspectives on how nationalist sentiments have been mobilized through social media campaigns and assess whether these digital actions have influenced or evolved into the official state issue.

According to case studies like 2016 “Diba Expedition”, the research has demonstrated how online fan communities integrate the message and information to make the internet memes to launch cyber campaigns against pro-independence narratives in Taiwan.<sup>1</sup> The campaign highlighted the role of pop culture in nationalism mobilization on platforms like Facebook. Also the group like “Little Pinks”, though not directly organized by the state, function as loyal allies in defending national interests online, finding anything that might offend their countries, especially during politically sensitive periods such as the elections in Taiwan or the National activities including Taiwan.

Moreover, the mutual reinforcement between grassroots cyber-nationalist and the Chinese government’s official “Wolf Warrior”<sup>2</sup> diplomacy, suggest that nationalist online are not only tolerated but sometimes amplified nationalist

---

<sup>1</sup> Xiaoping Wu and Richard Fitzgerald, "Internet memes and the mobilization of a “One-China” cyber nationalist campaign: the case of the 2016 Diba Expedition to Taiwan," *Social Semiotics* 34, no. 4 (2024).

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Sullivan and Weixiang Wang, "China's “wolf warrior diplomacy”: The interaction of formal diplomacy and cyber-nationalism," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 52, no. 1 (2023).

sentiments online for strategic purposes.

Ultimately, this literature review seeks to critically assess these theoretical frameworks in order to understand how Chinese cyber-nationalism operate in the digital space, the system of campaign on the social media and whether social media radicalism has transitioned an aspect of state-sanctioned political strategy.

### **Cyber-Nationalism Evolution**

With the rapid development of Internet and social media technologies, Chinese nationalism has gained a wider range of channels and forms of expression, including blogs, forums, videos, pictures, hashtags, and Internet junkies. These digital platforms have provided new channels for the dissemination and mobilization of nationalism. The use of the Internet as a tool for the dissemination of ideas and ideals is a form of nationalism that was unseen before the development of the Internet, prompting scholars to conduct in-depth research on the characteristics and impact of Chinese cyber nationalism.

Cyber nationalism in China has been defined as a non-government-sponsored ideology and movement that originated, exists, and develops in China's cyberspace.<sup>3</sup> Unlike government-led nationalism, cyber nationalism is a spontaneous, grassroots behaviour of Internet users, and Zhang et al.'s study<sup>4</sup> shows that although these nationalist sentiments are usually aligned with official positions, they are mainly generated spontaneously by Internet users, and spread and amplified through digital platforms.

“Little Pink” is a prominent nationalist group in China's cyberspace, composed

---

<sup>3</sup> Xiaoyu Zhang, Delia Dumitrica, and Jeroen Jansz, "Mapping Chinese digital nationalism: a literature review," *International Journal of Communication* 18 (2024).

<sup>4</sup> Zhuang Pinghui, "The Rise of the Little Pinks: China's Angry Young Digital Warriors," *South China Morning Post* 26 (2017).

of young netizens with nationalist tendencies who actively defend the government on the Internet. According to the *South China Morning Post*, these young netizens are mostly women between the ages of 18 and 24, and most of them come from China's third- and fourth-tier cities.<sup>5</sup> Despite attempts by the Chinese authorities to guide and mobilize them, they are seen primarily as allies of the government, not subsidiaries. They have demonstrated an amazing ability to organize collective action, which is rooted in the vibrant fan culture of Chinese cyber(Wei 2025)space.

Internet fandom is frequently used in political events and in the discursive mobilization of cyber nationalism to convey irony, parody, playfulness, and creativity. Wu and Fitzgerald's study analysis the 2016 "Diba Expedition" event, which is a prime example of cyber nationalism's war on the Internet through highly organized fandom. Chinese users used multimodal elements, combining political propaganda and pop culture, to prepare for and participate in the campaign. The incident also demonstrated the playful and carnivalesque nature of Chinese social media. Notably, despite Facebook being blocked in mainland China, Chinese netizens used technologies such as VPNs to bypass firewalls to participate in the nationalist action.

According to Zhang et al. (2022), define Chinese cyber nationalism as an ideology and movement that is not government-sponsored, emphasizing its spontaneous nature. Although these sentiments are often in line with the official position, they believe that they are mainly generated and spread spontaneously by netizens. In Zhang's view, cyber nationalism is the expression of group sentiments empowered by digital platforms, and it is an uncontrolled act of civic political

---

<sup>5</sup> Wei, X. (2025). Silver netizens as digital residents: exploring the daily digital experience of senior netizens in China, University of Southampton.

participation from the bottom up.

On the other hand, Wu & Fitzgerald (2023) emphasize that the obvious fan culture and playful nature of these actions carried out by young netizens does not completely rule out the connection between them and national strategies.<sup>6</sup> Through a multimodal analysis of the linguistic and visual symbols of the 2016 Diba Exodus, they point out that such actions are organized and characterized by a mix of political propaganda. Although they do not explicitly mention direct state involvement, they argue that these campaigns are ideologically aligned with the official narrative, and point out that even though Facebook was blocked in China, officials did not prevent such wall-flipping, but rather acquiesced to the campaigns as part of a public opinion war, suggesting some degree of potential state support.<sup>7</sup>

The development of digital technology has not only changed the ways in which nationalism is expressed, but has also affected its reach and influence, according to Schneider, who points out that digital nationalism is the result of “technological empowerment, economic incentives, and policy choices” and is “an emergent feature of communication networks. This means that the design and algorithms of online platforms may amplify certain nationalist sentiments, further influencing public opinion and policy decisions.

### **Definition of social media campaign**

#### **Social Media as a Platform for Nationalist Mobilization**

Nationalist sentiment in China is no longer just a product of the state through traditional media, but is gradually fermenting naturally in online communities. Most

---

<sup>6</sup> Wu and Fitzgerald, "Internet memes and the mobilization of a “One-China” cyber nationalist campaign: the case of the 2016 Diba Expedition to Taiwan."

<sup>7</sup> Florian Schneider, "Emergent nationalism in China's sociotechnical networks: How technological affordance and complexity amplify digital nationalism," *Nations and Nationalism* 28, no. 1 (2022).

of the existing studies still analyze the text in terms of events, but they seldom explore how platform design and algorithms structurally contribute to nationalist mobilization and sentiment enhancement (Zhang). The study points out that platforms such as Weibo, Bilibili, and Jitterbit not only provide space for nationalist speech, but also have feedback mechanisms (“likes,” “retweets,” and “hot lists”) that may enhance the echo chamber effect among users, further contributing to collective action online. In addition, the real-time and decentralized nature of social media allows individuals and small communities to quickly gather and spread information. This ability to spread in real time has led to the rapid outbreak and escalation of many nationalist events, such as boycotts of foreign brands or celebrity controversies over Taiwan-related comments.

### **The Combination of “Little Pink” Formation and Fan Culture**

Little Pink is a representative social media nationalist group of young Chinese netizens with a strong sense of national identity, as exemplified by the “Imperial Bar Expedition to Facebook” in 2016, which originated from the reaction of users of Baidu's Li Yi Bar to Tsai's victory in the election (Wu and Fitzgerald). They collectively crossed the firewall and swiped messages on Facebook in support of the “One China Policy” and engaged in “cyber warfare” through a plethora of fanfic, emoticons and buzzwords.

In addition to reflecting nationalist sentiments, this incident also highlights how fan culture in Chinese social media can be combined with political demands. Little Pink are not the product of direct organization, but rather the result of China's diverse online culture. Their ability to self-mobilize and organize is deeply rooted in Chinese business and fan culture, showing that nationalism has been internalized as part of

digital youth culture (Wu and Fitzgerald). The “Little Pink” model mimics the idol support model, with a clear division of labor, the use of graphic kits, and the call to action for online battles. Its mode of action is almost identical to that of the fan community, but more radical, except that it transforms the idolized object into the “motherland” and the “Chinese dream”. This also shows that internet nationalism is no longer just a serious political mobilization and that for them, the Chinese government is like an object of worship, trusting the government's decisions and attacking different voices. Although the phenomenon of “Little Pink” has been widely discussed, there is still limited systematic analysis of how fan culture is transformed into a tool for political mobilization. The combination of spontaneity and strategic nationalism has not been fully explored.

### **Traffic Driven by Nationalism**

In the analysis of public opinion after the stabbing incident of the Japanese boy in Shenzhen, self-media deliberately incited nationalism and xenophobia in order to attract traffic, increase views and platform recommendations. This kind of “traffic-driven nationalism” has been rapidly spreading on microblogs, WeChat, and Xiaohongshu through title parties, emotional graphics, and exaggerated remarks (Wang and Li).

Many of these content creators are not motivated by political ideals, but by commercial profits, advertising exposure, and platform partnerships, demonstrating the transformation of Chinese nationalism from a political tool into a commercial commodity. This situation not only blurs the line between patriotism and commerce, but also makes extreme nationalist speech prioritized by platform algorithms, which has a high impact on public opinion and social atmosphere.

Wang & Li's (2024) content analysis points out that in order to increase readership and advertising revenue, self-media deliberately create emotional and exaggerated nationalist content on platforms such as Weibo and Xiaohongshu, forming a traffic-driven nationalism. The study mainly adopts media text analysis, focusing on case texts and community responses, and does not focus on how platform algorithms and economic incentives systematically shape the diffusion and amplification of nationalist messages<sup>8</sup>.

In different facets, if viewed from the perspective of digital capitalism and the attention economy, such nationalistic content becomes one of the strategic tools for platforms to compete for users' attention. As Schneider (2022) points out, Chinese commercial media often amplify radical nationalism through the choice of algorithmic mechanisms and compelling headlines in order to gain traffic and profits, which is exactly the mode of behavior that platforms inevitably adopt under the drive of capital. Schmalz (2024) also emphasizes that digital capitalism in China implies a strong logic of synergy between the platform and the state, meaning that the platform is both a market entity and at the same time supported by the state and constructed by public opinion. According to the paper, nationalism is not just an emotional expression, but a phenomenon shaped by the economic conditions of the platforms and the strategies of state capitalism at the same time. While Wang & Li present exaggerated manipulation at the case level, the latter reveals how the institutional design of the platforms and the orientation of the state are co-conspirators in the flourishing of this nationalist narrative.

---

<sup>8</sup> Wang Qiyue and Li Mingjiang, "Japanese Boy Stabbed in Shenzhen: Alarm Bells Ring for the Traffic-Driven Business of Cyber Nationalism in China," (2024).

## **The Intersection of Social Media Marketing and Political Mobilization**

From an international perspective, compared to China, social media has long been used by political parties and candidates for political marketing and mass mobilization. In China, while the government maintains strict control over social media, many nationalist actions have demonstrated the potential for grassroots political mobilization, and Alves et al. show that social media platforms have the mobilization potential, interaction mechanisms, and communication efficiency ratios that make them indispensable tools for marketing or political advocacy.<sup>9</sup>

When it comes to nationalism, brand marketing often interacts with political mobilization. This phenomenon can be regarded as a kind of patriotic branding, in which companies or brands take the initiative to take a stance in specific political events, using national symbols to look like China, in order to maintain or enhance market favouritism. For example, in Taiwan-related, Hong Kong-related or international disputes, many Chinese brands will openly voice their support for the government's position on Weibo or WeChat, and bind the packaging of their products with national identity, in an attempt to trigger the linkage between national resonance and consumer behavior<sup>10</sup>.

In addition, this phenomenon can also be seen as spectacle-driven politics, in which campaigns are often presented in the form of fans, short videos, and slogans, which construct emotional tensions through dramatization and visual symbols, attracting the public's attention and creating a community of political intentions and commercial drivers<sup>11</sup>. In this context, political action is not only a declaration of

---

<sup>9</sup> Zhang, Dumitrica, and Jansz, "Mapping Chinese digital nationalism: a literature review."

<sup>10</sup> Hongmei Li, "Branding Chinese products: Between nationalism and transnationalism," *International Journal of Communication* 2 (2008).

<sup>11</sup> Ouyang Chen, Sonya Song, and Mike Z Yao, "Brands as a nation: An analysis of overseas media engagement of top Chinese brands," *Global Media and China* 5, no. 1 (2020).



identity, but also a competitive strategy for traffic and visibility, indirectly contributing to content marketing.

Because of their ability to provoke emotional responses and high interaction rates, extreme nationalist rhetoric is often more likely to be recommended by platforms, creating echo chambers in which political and commercial information can increase each other, as a result of the attention economy<sup>12</sup>. Such nationalist actions may not only bring short-term traffic and commercial benefits to the brand, but may also be seen by the state as a tool for exporting sovereign discourse and stabilizing internal opinion. The overlap between political action and brand narratives therefore essentially constructs a digital nationalist market whose dynamics are driven by a combination of platform algorithms, commercial interests, and state ideology.

In the Chinese context, while the central government's official media still monopolize the mainstream narrative and control of public opinion, nationalist communities often become the government's 'external allies', forming a kind of 'quasi-official' public opinion guidance through advocacy or spontaneous help in attacking foreign brands, diplomatic disputes, or criticizing dissidents. This relationship also highlights the convergence between social media marketing strategies and the mobilization of nationalist political sentiment.

## **Chinese Internet Regulations**

### **Internet Control and the 'Firewall' in China**

The Chinese government maintains strict controls over Internet content and has

---

<sup>12</sup> Schneider, "Emergent nationalism in China's sociotechnical networks: How technological affordance and complexity amplify digital nationalism."

established an extensive Internet censorship system, commonly known as the Great Firewall. This system is designed to restrict domestic users from accessing information outside the country that is deemed politically sensitive or a threat to social stability. The Chinese government uses technical means, such as IP address blocking, DNS hijacking, and keyword filtering, to control Internet content. The Chinese government is particularly concerned about online speech that may trigger “collective action” and tends to censor and remove such content.<sup>13</sup>

However, China's Internet filtering system is not uniform and may vary from region to region, with Internet policies often more stringent in areas of higher political risk (e.g., Beijing). While the government continues to tighten its block on “wall-crossing” tools such as VPNs, some Internet users are still able to use these tools to circumvent Internet censorship.<sup>14</sup> The study estimates that a relatively small percentage of China's Internet population uses VPNs.

Against the backdrop of the Chinese government's strict restrictions on the flow of information on the Internet, the “march over the wall” has become a paradoxical phenomenon that has attracted attention. Chinese netizens often utilize VPNs and other tools to flood foreign social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) to express strong nationalistic sentiments about specific events or targets. These “outbursts” often occur in the context of incidents involving national sovereignty, territorial integrity, or events that are perceived to be detrimental to China's national interests.

This contrasts with the Chinese government's explicit ban on the use of unauthorized VPN services. China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) has issued several circulars to clean up and regulate the market for network

---

<sup>13</sup> Eric Harwit and Duncan Clark, “Shaping the internet in China. Evolution of political control over network infrastructure and content,” *Asian Survey* 41, no. 3 (2001).

<sup>14</sup> Guobin Yang, “Internet activism & the party-state in China,” *Daedalus* 143, no. 2 (2014).

access services and crack down on illegal VPN services. Some local governments, such as the Chongqing Municipal Public Security Bureau, have also instituted penalties for the use of unauthorized channels for international networking.

The Chinese government's tolerance of some VPN usage is actually a deliberate strategy. This selective enforcement mechanism can minimize political risk while optimizing China's economic performance, expanding its external publicity and soft power, and rallying domestic nationalist support.<sup>15</sup> By allowing some netizens to “flip the wall,” the Chinese government may be able to channel domestic nationalist sentiment toward specific external targets, deflecting domestic conflict and making “China's voice” heard in the international arena.

### **Regulations and Actions to Regulate Cyber Nationalist Actions**

While the “march over the wall” may be tacitly tolerated or even utilized in certain circumstances, the Chinese government does have regulations on cyber nationalist actions. The main purpose is to ensure that these actions are in line with the government's overall political objectives and do not get out of hand or negatively affect domestic stability. Restrictions are mostly found in the management of Internet content, user behavior, and the use of VPNs.

Laws and regulations related to Internet content management: The Internet Security Law and other laws and regulations strictly control the dissemination of information on the Internet and prohibit the dissemination of content that jeopardizes national security, damages national honor and interests, or incites national hatred and discrimination. These regulations can be used to curb radical speech or behavior that

---

<sup>15</sup> Jinghan Zeng, Tim Stevens, and Yaru Chen, "China's solution to global cyber governance: Unpacking the domestic discourse of “internet sovereignty”," *Politics & Policy* 45, no. 3 (2017).

may occur in the context of online nationalism.<sup>16</sup>

User account management and real-name systems: China requires Internet service providers to implement real-name systems for users. This makes it easier for the government to track and regulate the behavior of Internet users, and serves as a deterrent to those who participate in the “march over the wall”.

Removal of “Harmful Information”: The government claims that it will tighten its control over online news reporting by removing “harmful” content. This measure also applies to information that could be seen as inciting excessive nationalism or having negative international repercussions.

Selective Enforcement: The Chinese government has adopted a selective enforcement strategy for VPN use. The government is likely to be more lenient with those “over the wall” behaviors that are deemed to be in the national interest, while cracking down more severely on those that challenge the government's position or may cause domestic instability.

The Chinese government is also actively using official media and online platforms to steer the direction of online opinion and shape the narrative in favor of the government. In China's restricted online environment, Chinese netizens tend to participate more in government-sponsored political debates and activities. The government also utilizes the Internet as a tool to foster nationalism.

### **The Impact of Internet Nationalism and Official Issues**

Chinese cyber nationalism has demonstrated a strong influence through social media. For example, the “Exodus” campaign against Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-

---

<sup>16</sup> Gary King, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E Roberts, "How censorship in China allows government criticism but silences collective expression," *American political science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013).

wen's Facebook page has been recognized as a manifestation of Chinese netizens' nationalist sentiments. This “virtual protest” is also seen as a way of communicating China's position and its domestic public support to Taiwan and the international community.<sup>17</sup>

From the government's perspective, Internet nationalism is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be used to rally people's support and demonstrate national strength and determination. On the other hand, out-of-control cyber nationalism can cause social instability and damage China's international image. Therefore, the Chinese government's attitude toward cyber nationalism is complex and dynamic, preferring to guide and utilize it in a controlled manner. Official media and leaders' statements also reflect the government's emphasis on online opinion and ideology. Xi Jinping emphasized that ideological work is “extremely important work” for the party, and called for strengthening the management of online society and promoting the orderly development of the Internet in accordance with the law. Official media outlets such as the Global Times have also published articles that recognize and guide the expression of cyber nationalism to a certain extent. This shows that online nationalism and its expression on social media has become an issue that the Chinese government is concerned about and is trying to lead.

### **Theoretical Integration Framework**

The previous literature can be summarized into three key contexts for understanding Chinese online nationalism: (1) grassroots mobilization centered on

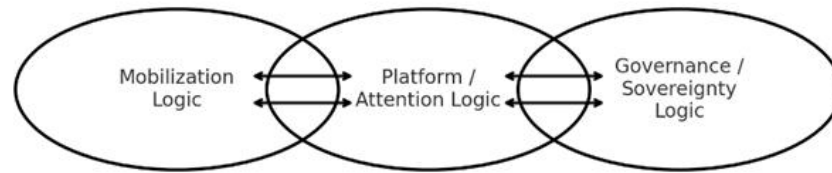
---

<sup>17</sup> Marco Huang, "Chinese netizens flood Tsai Ing-Wen's Facebook page with anti-Taiwan independence posts," *WSJ Blogs-China Real Time Report* (2016).

emotion and fascination; (2) platform mechanisms and attention/traffic logic determining visibility and diffusion; (3) state-level governance practices and assertions of digital sovereignty. This study does not treat these three as mutually exclusive explanatory pathways but adopts an integrated analytical framework, viewing mobilization logic, governance logic, and sovereignty as mutually reinforcing mechanisms that jointly construct the phenomenon of online nationalism. Emotional and symbolic resources (memes, emotive discourse) form the raw materials of mobilization logic; Platform functions and incentive structures (rankings, trending topics, collaborative features) transform these raw materials into observable visibility through attention-driven mechanisms; State and institutional media, meanwhile, influence discourse production through governance logic and digital sovereignty operations (discourse framing, amplification or suppression), thereby exerting a counterforce on mobilization practices and platform operations. A dynamic interplay exists among these three logics: for instance, emotional content may attract increased traffic, prompting algorithmic amplification that in turn facilitates selective official adoption or suppression, creating feedback loops that reshape subsequent dynamics.

This integrated framework serves two analytical functions in this study: First, it provides a common mechanism for coding and comparing two cases (the DiBa campaign on external networks and the Lai case on internal networks). Second, it demonstrates how to connect micro-level posts and meme practices to platform processes and ultimately to governance outcomes. Regarding causal inferences about internal state coordination, this study proceeds only within the limits permitted by discourse and interaction evidence. Subsequently, this framework will guide thematic coding of individual cases and cross case comparisons.

**Figure 1: Model Chart**



### **Definitions of Key Concepts**

To ensure analytical clarity and to specify how key terms are used in this study, the following operational definitions are provided. These definitions are deliberately practice-oriented and grounded in the literature reviewed above, and they determine how concepts are coded and interpreted in the subsequent analysis. (1) **Cyber Nationalism:** For this study, cyber nationalism refers to collective, identity-based nationalist expression and coordinated political action that originates in online communities and is mediated by social media affordances. It includes rapid emotional mobilization (e.g., indignation, pride), meme-based cultural performance, and organized platform tactics (e.g., coordinated commenting, reporting, or content production) aimed at defending or promoting national narratives across domestic and transnational platforms. This study treats cyber nationalism as a hybrid phenomenon that may be grassroots-driven yet semantically and functionally entangled with official narratives.<sup>18</sup> (2) **Mobilization Logic:** Mobilization logic denotes the set of observable methods and interactional routines by which actors turn sentiment into

---

<sup>18</sup> Wu, X. and R. Fitzgerald (2024). "Internet memes and the mobilization of a "One-China" cyber nationalist campaign: the case of the 2016 Diba Expedition to Taiwan." *Social Semiotics* **34**(4): 697-719.

coordinated online action. Operational indicators include division of labor vocabulary (e.g., “routes”, “frontlines”), platform operation tasks (reporting/liking/translating), meme and content production workflows, and call-to-action devices (hashtags, group announcements). Mobilization logic captures both the affordances of platforms (how algorithms and features enable spread) and the social practices (how communities organize) that produce mass participation. (3) Governance Logic: Governance logic refers to the state and platform level strategies that shape, permit, or constrain online nationalist action. This includes legal and technical controls (e.g., VPN regulation), official media framing, algorithmic promotion or suppression, and selective enforcement strategies that together determine which grassroots actions are tolerated, amplified, repackaged, or suppressed. In this project governance logic is analyzed as a variable interacting with mobilization logic to produce different outcomes across internal and external platforms. (4) Policy Amplification: Policy amplification describes processes by which online discourse (especially widespread or highly visible cyber-nationalist campaigns) feeds into formal policy discourse or practice either by prompting official statements, shaping media agendas, or being selectively integrated into propaganda and diplomatic rhetoric. Operational evidence includes official rephrasing of grassroots terms, citation or use of online frames in government media, or observable policy responses temporally proximate to online campaigns. (5) Discursive Co-production: Discursive co-production denotes the reciprocal linguistic and symbolic exchange between state actors and grassroots participants in which vocabulary, metaphors, and frames circulate bidirectionally. Indicators include popularization of official slogans in grassroots posts, and conversely, the adoption of netizen terms by state media. This co-production highlights a blurring of “top-down” and “bottom-up” narratives. (6) Digital Sovereignty: Digital sovereignty is used here



to describe both (a) institutional practices through which states assert control over information spaces (platform governance, data jurisdiction, algorithmic steering), and (b) symbolic practices by which actors perform claims to narrative space across platforms (e.g., cross-wall expeditions that project a domestic narrative onto international platforms).

## **Conclusion**

Existing studies have initially and multifacetedly discussed the formation and development of Internet nationalism in China, with particular attention to its grassroots mobilization on social media platforms and its interaction with official ideological propaganda. Literature such as Wu and Fitzgerald's analysis of “Diba Exodus” and fandom culture, as well as Zhang et al.'s discussion of how microblogs and piki piki mile platforms use algorithms to enhance nationalist sentiment, illustrate the complex entanglements of digital nationalism with fan culture, popular symbols, and political sentiments. The Chinese government has adopted a strategy of “guiding and utilizing” Internet nationalism, using it as a tool for mobilizing public opinion on the one hand, and suppressing it when it becomes too radical or out of control on the other.

In existing research, while numerous scholars have conducted descriptive analyses of the cultural practices of Chinese cyber nationalism and specific events such as the Diba campaign and boycotts of foreign brands, most studies remain focused on single incidents or emotional dimensions, with limited attention paid to their interactive structures within cross platform and state governance contexts. The contradictory relationship between Chinese netizens circumventing the Great Firewall to launch campaigns and state regulatory policies often tacitly permitted or even

exploited within the political context remains under analyzed. How online nationalism forms diffusion mechanisms through memes and emotional traffic on social platforms has also not been sufficiently integrated theoretically. This leaves gaps in our understanding of the interactive mechanisms and political communication functions between the state, platforms, and users.

This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the mobilization structures and governance logic of Chinese cyber nationalism through three lenses: political communication, digital ethnography, and policy interconstruction. It particularly examines how cyber nationalism is strategically absorbed or repackaged, and how social platform interaction mechanisms facilitate the generation and regeneration of specific ideologies. The study's contribution lies in placing grassroots netizens' spontaneous actions and official policy discourses within a unified analytical framework, revealing their interwoven dynamics in the digital sphere to deepen our understanding of nationalist politics under digital authoritarianism. Subsequent chapters will elaborate on the research methodology and analytical strategy. Employing qualitative case studies, the research will examine representative events and contemporary phenomena, centering on the “Diba Campaign” and “Ten Lectures on Unity by William Lai.” Through thematic coding and discourse analysis, it examines the emotional structures, narrative patterns, and collective action logic within these texts. It also scrutinizes how China's selective enforcement in cyber governance shapes the emergence and dissemination of nationalism.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the research methodology and data analysis procedures adopted in this study to investigate how Chinese cyber nationalism is mobilized and expressed across both international and domestic social media platforms, and to analyze whether these actions are selectively absorbed, ignored, or amplified by the state apparatus. In the literature review, prior studies have primarily focused on textual and discourse analysis of single cases, often overlooking the comparative dimension between actions on foreign platforms and reactions within China's domestic platforms. To address this gap, this study employs a comparative content analysis approach, detailing the research design, data sources, research instruments and data collection methods, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, as well as the limitations and delimitations of the methodology.

Given that the central aim of this study is to understand the mobilization logic and discursive strategies of cybernationalist actions, a qualitative research design combined with thematic analysis was adopted. This allows the study to systematically examine the 2016 Diba Expedition as an example of outside the wall nationalist mobilization on Facebook, alongside the 2025 Ten Talks on Unity as a case of domestic nationalist reactions on platforms such as Weibo and Bilibili. By comparing these two contexts, the study highlights not only the discursive practices of Chinese netizens on Taiwan-related issues but also the interplay between grassroots actions and state-led narratives in shaping the dynamics of digital nationalism.

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to investigate how Chinese cyber nationalism is mobilized and expressed across both international and

domestic social media platforms, and to explore whether these actions are subsequently absorbed, ignored, or amplified by the state. Since the focus lies on examining social phenomena with strong attributes such as behavioural patterns, discursive strategies, and the interaction between online mobilization and state narratives, rather than on testing statistical relationships, a qualitative design was chosen. This approach enables the study to capture the deeper contextual meanings and symbolic processes behind cybernationalist actions, which are often overlooked in purely quantitative research.

Qualitative methods are especially suitable given the recurring nature of cybernationalist events, ranging from large-scale mobilizations to smaller online campaigns. Instead of measuring frequency or intensity alone, qualitative analysis allows for flexible data collection and the interpretation of the structural and cultural logics underpinning these actions. In particular, this study compares two representative cases: the 2016 Diba Expedition, in which Chinese netizens collectively bypassed the firewall to launch a campaign on Facebook, and the 2025 Ten Talks on Unity, which triggered widespread reactions on domestic platforms such as Weibo and Bilibili. By situating these cases within the broader landscape of digital nationalism, the research aims to reveal how grassroots actions and official discourses interact in both external and internal online spaces.

The data sources will primarily consist of nationalist actions on public social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, and Bilibili. Through content analysis and discourse analysis, the study will examine organizational patterns, narrative frameworks, emotional mobilization mechanisms, and the extent to which these online discourses resonate with or diverge from official state positions.

## Sources of Data

The primary sources of data for this study are the public posts, comments, and interaction records generated by Chinese netizens' online nationalist campaigns across both international and domestic social media platforms. Specifically, this research selects Facebook and Twitter as representative platforms for external nationalist mobilization, and Weibo and Bilibili as the main platforms for domestic nationalist discourse. This selection enables a comparative analysis of outside the wall campaigns and internal online reactions, which together provide a more comprehensive view of how digital nationalism operates across different online spaces.

In terms of cases, the study focuses on two representative events closely related to Taiwan. The first is the 2016 Diba Expedition, during which large numbers of Chinese netizens bypassed the Great Firewall to launch a coordinated campaign on Facebook in response to Tsai Ing-wen's inauguration. The second is the 2025 Ten Talks on Unity following William Lai appointment, which triggered widespread reactions on Chinese domestic platforms such as Weibo and Bilibili. These two cases are selected not only for their salience in the development of Chinese cyber nationalism, but also for the contrast they provide between external mobilization and internal discursive responses.

Although this study focuses on online spaces, particular attention is given to the Taiwan-related dimension of these campaigns, as they often serve as flashpoints for nationalist mobilization. It should also be noted that posts on Chinese domestic platforms may be subject to deletion or censorship, making data preservation a challenge. To address this, the study collects not only real-time posts but also relies on

archived screenshots, reposts, and trending commentaries to ensure that the analysis reflects the broader scope of online discourse during these campaigns.

### **Instrumentation and Data Collection**

In this study, content analysis was used as the main data collection and analysis tool to systematically collect and categorize online nationalist actions on four major social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Weibo, Bilibili) through self-designed thematic categorization and coding methods. The code was constructed based on existing literature and preliminary observations. The following core variables were recorded for each post or message: the identity of the sender such as individual, public account, the theme of the post (politics, diplomacy, cross-strait), the use of symbols or linguistic features such as fanfic, hashtag, and insulting accusations, the expression of emotions such as support, opposition, sarcasm, anger, etc., and the interactive data of the posts such as the data types are like, share and message counts.

To increase transparency and reliability, this study specifies the scope and selection criteria of the materials analyzed. For the DiBa Expedition case, I reviewed publicly accessible posts and comment threads on Weibo and Bilibili that explicitly referenced 帝吧出征,包大戰, or the 2016 flooding of Tsai Ing-wen's Facebook page. Materials included users' reflections on the event such as the widely circulated post describing the expedition as a 表情包大戰 as well as media reports such as BBC News coverage documenting the scale of the incident and the nature of the cross-platform mobilization. For the William Lai "Ten Talks on Unity" case, I collected posts from major Chinese state-affiliated accounts on Weibo, including CCTV News, People's Daily, Global Times, and the Taiwan Affairs Office. The dataset covers

posts dated from June 23 to July 26, capturing the first four speeches and the subsequent waves of official commentary.

This study examines two sets of materials corresponding to the outbound and domestic cases. For the DiBa Expedition, the dataset includes 9 Facebook posts, 2 Bilibili videos, 6 Weibo posts, and 1 BBC news report circulated during the period of heightened online activity. For the William Lai “Ten Talks on Unity” case, the dataset consists of 9 Weibo posts published by state-aligned or high-visibility accounts, 20 high-engagement Weibo comments, and 3 official Douyin videos reporting or amplifying the event. These items represent the most widely circulated and most frequently interacted-with materials within each platform environment during the incident period. Example:

People’s Daily Weibo post (7/2):

“『台獨』是台灣最大的災禍。『台獨』一日不除，台海就一天不得安寧。賴清德『謀獨』越深，『毀台』越甚。只有堅決反對、有力遏制『台獨』分裂，台海和平才能得到實際維護，台灣百姓才能安心安居。” This post was initially coded with anti-independence framing, crisis narrative, and alignment with state security discourse. In the second stage of coding, these labels were grouped under the broader category of discursive co-construction, as the post exemplifies how official accounts establish narrative boundaries that are subsequently echoed and reinforced by ordinary users in comments and reposts. The emphasis on “台獨” as an existential threat also contributes to the category of digital sovereignty, as it frames cross-strait identity as a matter of national territorial integrity.

The coding process followed a qualitative content analysis approach. I first conducted an open-coding pass to identify recurring emotional expressions, rhetorical framings, and mobilization cues. I then grouped these initial codes into three broader

thematic categories that structure the analysis chapter: emotional-commercial mobilization, discursive co-construction, and digital sovereignty framing.

The data types are mainly open-ended textual data, with descriptive markers for multimedia elements (images, videos, emoticons). Found posts and messages are saved as screenshots and are initially categorized and coded by subject. This not only helps to systematically record posting patterns and political meanings, but also serves as a basis for subsequent thematic and discursive analyses.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, this study made reference to the analytical framework used by Wu and Fitzgerald (2023) for the DiBa Expedition, and conducted a pilot observation on two cases to revise the categorization logic and the naming of the variables to ensure the consistency of the research framework and data correspondence. In order to strengthen the credibility of the study, some of the samples will be recoded and compared to minimize the occurrence of subjective results that may lead to misinformation.

Because this activity is an online event, the data collection is online data collection, which is to retrieve the posts and messages related to the research event from public social media platforms and follow the rules of the platforms' data usage. All the collected content will be de-identified, and only the time of posting, account attributes, and content features will be retained; no personal identifiable information or contact information will be involved, and no information about the owner of the account will be obtained. Research and analysis is limited to public posts only, and does not include private clubs, closed accounts, or content that requires authorized access.



## **Data Analysis Technique**

This study adopts thematic analysis as the primary data analysis technique, combined with systematic coding using Excel spreadsheets to categorize and interpret the collected social media data. This method allows for the identification of recurring patterns, discursive strategies, and emotional framings in both external and domestic platforms, which in turn facilitates answering the central research questions: how Chinese cyber nationalism is manifested on different types of social media platforms, and whether these manifestations resonate with or influence official discourse.

The analysis process is divided into four main stages. The first stage involves a preliminary reading of the data, during which posts, comments, and multimedia content from Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, and Bilibili will be systematically examined and recorded. Salient items will be marked according to their political relevance, emotional tone, and mobilization function. The second stage is open coding, where the data are categorized according to pre-set and emergent themes. Initial coding categories may include semantic units such as “defense of One China,” “support for government policy,” “use of VPNs,” “Taiwan sovereignty disputes,” and “official amplification.”

The third stage involves thematic integration and analysis, where similar codes are grouped into broader themes, such as “grassroots mobilization,” “state-led amplification,” or “cross-platform discourse export.” This step also considers the differences between the Diba Expedition (external mobilization via VPNs) and the Ten Talks on Unity (internal mobilization with state involvement), highlighting how platform mechanisms and state strategies intersect. The fourth stage involves iterative cross-checking and refinement. Coding will be repeatedly compared across different datasets to reduce subjective bias and increase reliability. The final step will be the

aggregation of higher-level themes, which will be contextualized within the broader event background and interaction logics of online communities, forming the interpretative foundation for this study's discussion.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study is a non-interactive qualitative study, and the sources of data are posts, messages, and news on public social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Bilibili and Weibo), so no direct interaction with the participants was involved. Therefore, this study does not apply the traditional written informed consent procedure, but still strictly adheres to the ethical norms of academic research, with respect for personal privacy and information security as the primary principles. All data collected will be limited to publicly available content only, and will not involve any private communities, closed accounts, or platforms that require authorization for access. In the study, identifiable information, such as user names, avatars, and geographic locations, was removed from the posts, and only necessary linguistic information and time stamps were retained for analysis to ensure that data anonymity and participant privacy were not infringed upon.

This study also promises to respect the original context and cultural meaning of the research participants' speeches, avoiding any misinterpretation, exaggeration, or out-of-context interpretation, and ensuring that the research results have ethical legitimacy and public credibility.

### **Limitations of the Methodology**

Although this study adopts qualitative content analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the logic of action and semantic structure of Internet nationalism,

there are some methodological limitations. Since the source of data is limited to public posts, it is not possible to obtain deleted content or platform backend data, which may result in incomplete or biased information. Theme analysis relies on subjective interpretation by the researcher, and although cross-checking is used to increase confidence, it may still be affected by cultural context or personal perception. In addition, this study only focuses on specific platforms and events, and the findings are not necessarily applicable to all forms of online nationalism. Considering the above limitations, some parts of the news data will be used as part of the analysis to make up for the deletion of data in the past and the occurrence of overly subjective analyses. The public facing posts may be incomplete or selectively preserved. On Chinese domestic platforms, content removal, retroactive moderation, and user self-censorship may affect the availability of posts. On international platforms, posts related to politically sensitive topics may be deleted by users or reported by other actors. This means the dataset represents the visible layer of discourse rather than its full historical depth. Because the dataset does not include user-level demographic or behavioural information, the analysis cannot differentiate between individual users, highly active volunteers, semi organized communities, or coordinated accounts. The study therefore focuses on discourse level patterns rather than the identities or intentions of specific actors. This study employs a comparative research design contrasting external network events with internal network events where the platform architectures, governance environments, and political systems are not equivalent. Therefore, the emphasis lies on comparing “patterns and mechanisms” rather than drawing one-to-one causal inferences.

The above limitations delineate the interpretive boundaries of the research and reinforce its focus on discourse production mechanisms and platform mediation.

## **Summary**

This chapter outlines the qualitative research design of this study, which focuses on analysing how Chinese cyber nationalism is mobilized and expressed on both international and domestic social media platforms. Data were collected from public posts, comments, and news related to Taiwan on Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, and Bilibili, and analyzed through thematic analysis and open coding using Excel spreadsheets to identify recurring discursive patterns, emotional framings, and mobilization strategies. Special attention is given to two representative events: the 2016 Diba Expedition, which exemplifies nationalist mobilization on foreign platforms through VPN assisted access, and the 2025 Ten Talks on Unity, which demonstrates domestic reactions within Chinese platforms shaped by both grassroots participation and official amplification. By comparing these cases, the study highlights the dynamics of cyber nationalism as it operates “outside the wall” and “inside the wall.” Throughout the process, the principles of data ethics and transparency are emphasized, with all materials limited to publicly available content, while acknowledging methodological limitations such as potential data loss due to censorship on domestic platforms and the interpretive subjectivity inherent in qualitative coding. Nevertheless, this methodological framework establishes a solid foundation for addressing the research questions and provides the analytical groundwork for the subsequent presentation and discussion of results.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Introduction**

This chapter aims to present the overall framework for data analysis and explain how systematic textual analysis can address the core research question: How is Chinese cyber nationalism mobilized and presented in two distinct arenas external online campaigns (represented by the 2016 DiBa campaign) and internal online responses (represented by the 2025 William Lai Ten Talks on Unity)? Furthermore, does it interact with or get absorbed into state governance and policy discourse? To achieve this objective, the analysis proceeds sequentially through four stages: coding, comparative pattern identification, thematic construction, and meaning linkage.

The coding phase will analyse publicly available posts and multimodal content across selected platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, Bilibili), identifying actor types such as Little Pink, official media, opinion leaders, and mobilization strategies. Key elements include memes, hashtags, call-to-action posts, and emotional frameworks like anger, sarcasm, or other sentiments, alongside platform-specific characteristics. Subsequently, comparative analysis will identify recurring patterns across platforms and cases. For instance, external platforms feature collective bombardment by Chinese netizens and visual memes, while internal platforms exhibit amplified hybrid patterns of official-civilian interaction. Finally, these patterns will be aggregated into higher-level themes: China's official tacit approval mechanisms, emotionally charged mobilization driven by national consciousness, and distinct presentation forms of Chinese netizens on external and internal networks. The study will also examine causal and emergent relationships among these themes.

### **Coding process**

The “Diba Campaign” that erupted after Tsai Ing-wen's election victory in 2016 stands as a classic example of Chinese netizens breaching the Great Firewall to launch massive comment bombings on Facebook pages belonging to Taiwanese politicians and media outlets. According to BBC reports, netizens used VPNs to bypass the firewall, flooding pages like Tsai Ing-wen's, Sanlih News, and Apple Daily within a short timeframe. They flooded the comments with slogans like “One China” and appeals to nationalist sentiment, creating an overwhelming public opinion effect. Operationally, participants extensively employed visual symbols like memes, animated images, and visual symbols, packaging serious political issues into an entertaining “meme war.” This approach reduced the weight of political controversy while enhancing cross-platform appeal.

Moreover, the campaign carried strong nationalist overtones, with comments predominantly opposing Taiwan independence and advocating patriotism, reinforcing a collective consciousness centered on safeguarding national dignity. Though not directly mobilized by authorities, the Communist Youth League's Weibo account and state-run media subsequently praised the initiative, framing it as a youth-led action to present patriotism. This highlights the ambiguous relationship between officialdom and grassroots nationalism. This incident reveals how DiBa's campaign combined organizational mobilization, emotional appeals, meme culture, and tacit official approval to present a “semi-official” model of digital nationalism. This case not only demonstrates how Chinese netizens leverage VPNs to project domestic discourse onto international platforms but also sheds light on the interactive logic between grassroots actions and state discourse.

In conducting open coding for the DiBa campaign incident, this study employed a combined approach of qualitative text analysis and thematic coding. Through line-

by-line coding and semantic tagging, collected posts, comments, and media reports underwent systematic lexical categorization. The coding process comprised five stages: data screening, preliminary reading, open coding, category induction, thematic integration, ensuring traceability and consistency of analytical outcomes.

For data screening, primary corpora related to the DiBa campaign were extracted from publicly available sources: BBC and Reuters news reports, screenshots of Facebook posts and comments, and secondary sources such as Weibo reposts and academic citations. Selection criteria included: explicit action directives (“launch an expedition,” “group announcement,” “first, second, third routes”), expressions of nationalist stance (“Taiwan is part of China,” “TAIWAN BELONGS TO MY COUNTRY”), or symbolic language (“firecrackers,” “image battles,” “patriotic memes”). To preserve authenticity, no sentence modifications were made; the analysis focused on raw online terminology.

During the initial reading phase, researchers repeatedly reviewed the corpus, segmenting text semantically and annotating potential key terms or symbolic expressions. This stage aimed to familiarize with the corpus context and identify recurring or culturally significant terms. Subsequently, the open coding phase involved deconstructing and categorizing each term. Each word was treated as an analytical unit, defined based on its semantic function and emotional connotation. For instance, “TAIWAN BELONGS TO MY COUNTRY” is defined as a sovereignty assertion; “meme wars” are categorized as a political action centered on visual memes; while “first line, second line, third line” are coded as organized division of labor. During category induction, terms are grouped into six major categories based on their pragmatic functions: (1) Meme and cultural performance vocabulary: “meme battles,” “firecracker memes,” “emoticon packs”; (2) Organized mobilization

terminology: “first line, second line,” “group announcements,” “front lines”; (3) National sovereignty and unification slogans: “Taiwan belongs to our country,” “harmony brings prosperity,” “successors of socialism”; (4) Historical legitimization narratives: “The Sui Dynasty dispatched envoys three times,” “The Qing government established Taiwan Prefecture,” (5) Insulting and aggressive vocabulary: “idiot,” “pretentious,” (6) Technical and platform operation terms: “VPN,” “scaling the wall,” “launching an offensive on FB.” This open coding process clearly reveals the multilayered characteristics of the DiBa offensive's lexical system: it encompasses both entertaining meme language and solemn political pledges; it embodies the spontaneity of grassroots action while forming an intertextual relationship with state discourse.

During the open coding process of “William Lai Ten Talks on Unity,” this study followed the steps of qualitative text analysis to reveal the linguistic structures and ideological logic employed by Chinese officials and netizens on internal platforms regarding Taiwanese political events. Textual materials primarily collected pertain to William Lai Ten Talks on Unity from 2025. Sources included official media outlets such as People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, CCTV News, and Ministry of National Defence press conference transcripts, alongside highly interactive netizen comments and reposts on Weibo and Bilibili. Key themes included hashtags like #LaiChengdeTenUnityTalks, #IronProofTaiwanBelongsToChinaSinceAncientTimes, and #TaiwanAffairsOfficeCondemnsLaiChengdeTaiwanIndependenceNature. All materials are authentic, verifiable public texts encompassing multi-tiered discourse from central government spokespeople and media editorials to netizen feedback, ensuring representativeness and research value. Through multiple text reviews and semantic segmentation, key terms bearing political stance, emotional connotations,



and rhetorical functions were identified. This process discerned which vocabulary carries ideological implications and emotional mobilization power. Terms like Taiwan independence, selling out Taiwan, destroying Taiwan, evil path, motherland's embrace, national righteousness, shared homeland, recovery, seeking independence through foreign support, and pursuing independence by force frequently appear across texts. Collectively, they construct a binary oppositional political language structure portraying William Lai and the DPP as separatists, traitors, and warmongers, while motherland and nation symbolize order, peace, and moral legitimacy. Symbolic or high-frequency terms were designated as primary codes, with their contextual definitions recorded. For instance, Taiwan independence was defined as any advocacy for Taiwan's sovereignty or autonomy, carrying strong political hostility and moral condemnation. Destroy Taiwan and sell out Taiwan functioned as political stigmatization labels to accuse William Lai of "betraying the nation. Motherland's embrace, national righteousness, and shared homeland constitute symbolic vocabulary for unification and emotional mobilization, constructing the political imagination of one national family. Furthermore, terms like relying on foreign powers for independence, seeking independence through military force, the wrong path, and a dead end reveal official securitization narratives concerning external interference and military confrontation. Meanwhile, public comments such as support the motherland, well said, and firmly oppose Taiwan independence demonstrate a grassroots echo chamber effect, indicating that official discourse has permeated public discourse spaces.

Thematic integration analysis, combining lexical data with contextual events, reveals that the Ten Talks on Unity by William Lai corpus exhibits high ideological concentration and a tendency toward narrative uniformity. Official discourse centers

on the premise that Taiwan independence is a crime, linking political dissent with moral corruption to create a black and white narrative framework. ethnic sentiment terms and military vocabulary were deployed together to construct the political logic that peace equals obedience, resistance equals war. Meanwhile, netizen comments predominantly reproduced official perspectives through brief, repetitive affirmations, reflecting the state narrative's penetration and automated reproduction mechanisms on social media. Overall, this coding reveals top-down discourse control and ideological mobilization during the Ten Talks on Unity by William Lai incident: the government sets agendas and frames through media, algorithms amplify mainstream opinions, while popular language functions as a subordinate echo chamber transmitting political allegiance.

### **Identifying Patterns**

After comparing the open coding of the Diba Campaign and William Lai's Ten Talks on Unity, research reveals that despite occurring in distinct online and offline, private and official discourse spheres, both phenomena present a highly mirrored relationship in linguistic structure, emotional mobilization, and ideological connections. This phenomenon indicates that China's digital nationalism is not merely top down promotion, but rather a process of mutual construction between state narratives and public expression across different platforms.

Both cases heavily rely on symbolic language and collective identity frameworks. The vocabulary used in DiBa's campaigns included phrases like "TAIWAN BELONGS TO MY COUNTRY," "scorched earth,(寸草不生)" "love for the motherland,(熱愛祖國)" and "successors of socialism(社會主義接班人)." Meanwhile, posts related to the William Lai incident frequently featured slogans such

as “Taiwan independence separatism(台獨分裂),” “national righteousness(民族大義),” and “both sides of the strait belong to one China(兩岸同屬一個中國).” Both employed highly politicized nationalist rhetoric to reinforce boundaries between us and them. In addition, both reaffirmed sovereignty legitimacy through legitimizing historical narratives. Di Ba's campaigns referenced historical narratives of Taiwan's governance during the Three Kingdoms, Sui-Tang, and Qing dynasties, while the Taiwan Affairs Office and People's Daily posts centered on themes like “historically belonging to China(自古屬於中國)” and “clear historical threads,(歷史經緯清晰)” shaping a continuous historical connection.

Another similarity lies in emotional mobilization and collective empathy. DiBa's memes and emoticons, cloaked in entertainment, carry potent emotional energy; while official discourse within the intranet, though formally solemn, similarly invokes national cohesion through emotional vocabulary like anger, crisis, and betrayal. This collective anger forms the emotional core of cyber nationalism, capable of both mobilizing the masses and reinforcing national identity.

The most significant difference lies in the distribution of agency and discourse power. DiBa's campaign was a grassroots-led, spontaneously organized initiative by netizens, relying on fan culture and community collaboration as evidenced by codes like “all the way(一路),” “group announcements(群公告),” and “image battles(斗圖)” indicating clear division of labor. In contrast, the Ten Talks on Solidarity incident reflected the publicity discourse dominated by state institutions, with all statements originating from official media or government speakers, exhibiting high consistency and institutionalization.

In terms of media expression strategies, DiBa adopted meme politics, using humor, satire, and visual dissemination to mobilize grassroots support. The official

response to the William Lai incident, however, embodied a rhetoric of legitimacy, employing a serious, critical tone to reaffirm legal and historical positions. This illustrates that extranet nationalism tends toward cultural performance and entertainment, while intranet nationalism centers on policy extension and political indoctrination.

Furthermore, significant differences exist in audience orientation. DiBa's actions target foreign audiences, projecting China's voice through foreign language slogans and international platforms. In contrast, the official "Ten Talks on Unity" discourse primarily addresses domestic audiences, reinforcing mainland public consensus and compliance regarding the threat of Taiwan independence. This creates a double layered strategy of internal integration and external projection.

From an operational perspective, although DiBa's actions were spontaneous, their lexical framework highly overlapped with state propaganda. This indicates that grassroots nationalism and official nationalism are not mutually exclusive but rather a symbiotic and complementary political performance. Conversely, in the case of the Ten Talks on Unity, the state led discourse adopted aggressive terminology commonly used by netizens terms like "heretical doctrines(邪說)," "perverse reasoning(歪理)," "relying on foreign powers to plot secession(倚外謀獨)," and "selling out and destroying Taiwan(賣台毀台)" revealing a reverse infiltration phenomenon where grassroots language permeates the state's discourse system.

This contrast reveals the double sided fluidity of contemporary Chinese nationalism: bottom up popular sentiment becomes institutionalized, while top down official propaganda borrows grassroots language to enhance relatability and persuasiveness. This linguistic fusion renders political narratives more flexible and

reflects the blurring of power relations between the state and citizens in the digital environment.

Integrating these two cases reveals that the formation of Chinese cyber nationalism is not merely an emotional outburst or political manipulation, but rather a politicized practice that has become institutionalized and platform dependent. Its core operational logic progresses from emotional mobilization to linguistic replication, followed by symbolic amplification and political cooption. Whether through the meme tactics of DiBa or the official rhetoric condemning Lai, both contribute to a mode of operation that navigates the intersection of traffic and power. This interactive pattern enables Chinese nationalism to emerge within cyberspace as both spontaneous and guided, evolving into a form of political mobilization that straddles the line between mass culture and state governance.

### **Connecting Themes**

Based on the findings of the coding analysis, this study integrates the corpus analysis of two cases the 2016 DiBa campaign and the 2025 William Lai Ten Speeches on Solidarity into three core themes: the traffic logic of emotional nationalism, the discourse systems between official and grassroots spheres, and the regeneration of digital sovereignty and cross platform national narratives.

These themes emerged from a comprehensive synthesis of the semantic functions, shared relationships, and platform specific meanings within the coded data. High frequency emotional vocabulary such as “love for the motherland 熱愛祖國,” “national righteousness 民族大義,” “anger,” “betrayal,” and entertainment driven meme language like “meme wars 表情包大戰,” “firecrackers 鬧天猴,” and “image battles 斗圖” reveal how nationalism operates online through emotion and traffic,

transforming into an attention-grabbing cultural practice that constitutes the traffic logic of emotional nationalism. The high overlap between official media and netizen terminology such as “Taiwan is part of China,” “Taiwan independence,” and “both sides belong to one China” reveals a phenomenon of lexical interchange and discursive collaboration. This indicates that grassroots actions and state propaganda are not antagonistic but rather coconstructed through shared production of political language and national narratives. Terms related to coding, technology, and platform actions—such as “VPN,” “circumventing the firewall,” “reporting,” “foreign language translation,” and “trending searches” reveal the digital foundations and cross platform diffusion mechanisms of nationalist actions. This reflects the regeneration of digital sovereignty and cross platform national narratives, where cyber nationalism is continuously amplified and institutionalized within technological governance and platform algorithms. These three themes emotion, discourse, and technology constitute a coherent analytical framework for understanding how Chinese cyber nationalism emerges, propagates, and is absorbed across diverse contexts.

### **The Emotional Commercial Logic of Nationalism**

The corpus from these two cases reveals that emotional mobilization and traffic manipulation form the crucial foundation of Chinese online nationalism. This emotional-commercial logic is central to understanding digital nationalism because it demonstrates how national sentiment is no longer confined to ideological persuasion, but transformed into interactive, performative, and monetizable content within platform economies. In other words, the commodification of collective feelings turns nationalism from ideology into interactional performance, allowing emotions to circulate through clicks, shares, and memes as units of online value. Whether in the

2016 DiBa campaign targeting foreign websites or the 2025 William Lai ‘Ten Talks on Unity’ incident's domestic online response, emotional expression is transformed into a quantifiable, scalable action pattern. This theme reveals how national sentiment becomes algorithmically amplified traffic, forming an interactive political ecosystem across platforms. This finding matters because it shows that what drives participation in nationalism is not only political conviction but also the pleasure and visibility derived from emotional engagement itself.

In the DiBa case, open coding revealed high-frequency terms like “meme wars(表情包大戰),” “firecrackers(寧天猴),” “image battles(斗圖),” “campaigns(出征),” “all the way(一路),” and “group announcements(群公告),” all pointing to an emotionally entertaining and strategically organized collective action logic. These codes indicate that emotion and organization are intertwined: anger, humor, and pride operate simultaneously as social glue and as traffic driving mechanisms. Nationalism functions not only as an expression of political stance but also as part of emotional consumption and group entertainment. Through the creation of memes and emoticons, serious political issues are visualized, allowing participants to release anger and patriotic sentiments in a lighthearted context, thereby generating cohesion and viral effects. This action pattern aligns with the traffic logic of Chinese social media, trading emotional intensity for algorithmic promotion and community engagement rates.

In contrast, the William Lai incident reveals another form of institutionalized emotional politics within internal network discourse. Coded terms like “selling Taiwan(賣台),” “destroying Taiwan(毀台),” “heretical doctrines(邪說),” “seeking independence through foreign support(倚外謀獨),” “national righteousness,” and “Taiwan independence separatism(台獨分裂)” indicate that emotions are not

organically generated but guided by official media through labeling and moralizing language. The narratives on Weibo, CCTV, and People's Daily not only incite national anger but also channel it toward support for “unification” and “sovereignty.” Unlike the DiBa campaign, where emotion arises bottom up through humor and collective participation, in the William Lai case emotion is mobilized top-down through moral authority and propaganda framing. This contrast illustrates that both cases use emotion as a mechanism of political alignment, but they differ in directionality and control grassroots emotional flow versus institutional emotional governance. This linguistic manipulation transforms emotional expression into an institutionalized, controllable political resource. Within this framework, two key observations emerge from both incidents: (1) Emotional Visualization and Entertainment: DiBa cultivated observable nationalism through memes, emoticons, and symbolic warfare. (2) Emotional Legitimation: Official media legitimized emotional outbursts within the intranet using moral rhetoric like “national duty” and “betraying one's ancestors.”

Comparing the two cases reveals that emotional nationalism functions as both an expressive outlet and a governance tool. In grassroots contexts, emotion serves as connective energy that sustains digital collectives; within official contexts, it serves as moral capital that validates state discourse. The continuity between these two modes demonstrates the integrative nature of emotional politics in Chinese cyberspace. In terms of research questions, this theme addresses the core issue of how Chinese online nationalism is mobilized and expressed on platforms. DiBa's mass mobilization demonstrates how bottom up emotional energy is amplified by platform traffic structures, while the William Lai incident reveals how authorities top down leverage identical emotional language and traffic logic to repackage political propaganda.



These dynamics show that the emotional commercial logic not only sustains online participation but also acts as the circulatory infrastructure through which nationalism adapts to digital governance. It links individual affect to algorithmic visibility, turning feeling into both social currency and political signal. Together, they show that the power of Chinese online nationalism stems not only from political ideology but is deeply embedded within platform ecosystems and emotional transmission mechanisms.

The patterns described above can be read through the lens of attention- and platform-centered theories of the contemporary media economy. Specifically, the conversion of emotional expression into measurable platform traffic resonates with conceptualizations of the attention economy and surveillance capitalism: affective content (memes, anger, humor) functions as both a mobilizing resource and an input that platforms monetize through visibility mechanisms. This theoretical reading clarifies why emotional appeals spread rapidly across both grassroots and state-aligned actors, they are effective not only politically but also operationally within platform economies. Importantly, this interpretation reframes emotional mobilization as a systemic mechanism that links user practices to algorithmic incentives, rather than treating emotion simply as an individual psychological driver. At the same time, this inference must be qualified by the study's methodological limits: without platform backend data and algorithmic parameters, it cannot definitively attribute causality to mechanisms; nevertheless, the recurrent co-occurrence of emotional forms in corpus is consistent with an emotional-commercial logic. The examples above indicate that emotional and meme based expressions operate as practical mobilization devices within platform ecologies they convert collective affect into visible traffic and coordinated action, thereby illustrating how mobilization can

emerge from loosely organized user communities. This reading remains cautious about causal claims: given the reliance on public-facing data, the study documents patterns of discursive amplification consistent with an emotional-commercial logic rather than direct algorithmic causation.

### **The Discourse Structure Between Official and Civil Sectors**

Building on the emotional commercial logic discussed in *The Emotional Commercial Logic of Nationalism*, this section examines how emotional traffic transforms into discursive circulation between state and grassroots actors. The affective energy described earlier becomes the communicative medium through which official and civil rhetoric intertwine, circulate, and gain legitimacy. The corpus from these two cases reveals that the formation of Chinese internet nationalism is neither a unidirectional state manipulation nor a purely spontaneous mass movement, but rather a mutually constitutive phenomenon between official and popular spheres. This theme reveals how official discourse and popular expression mutually mimic, borrow from, and feed back into each other at linguistic, symbolic, and emotional levels, ultimately forming a hybrid political communication that defies clear distinction between top down and bottom up logics.

In the DiBa Expedition incident, although the action appeared to originate from a grassroots community like Baidu Tieba, the coded language terms like “Route One, Two, Three(一路、二路、三路),” “group announcements,” “frontline(前線),” and “meme warfare(表情包戰)” revealed clear organizational structure and task division. This reflects how grassroots participants had internalized state style mobilization language, such as “expedition(出征),” “defend(保卫),” “unify(统一),” and “anti-independence(反独).” and “anti-independence.” These terms echo the war metaphors

of CCP propaganda like “frontline(戰線),” “position(陣地),” and “hostile forces(敵對勢力)” creating linguistic repetition that unites official and grassroots consciousness. Here, civil actors are not simply amplifying state messages but actively reinterpreting them turning bureaucratic vocabulary into cultural symbols and participatory humor. Their appropriation of state discourse grants emotional warmth and performative appeal to what would otherwise be rigid propaganda. One observable phenomenon is that before and after DiBa's campaign, official media outlets like the Communist Youth League Central Committee and People's Daily even DiBa's own official channels posted supportive content on Weibo and other Chinese social media platforms. They framed the action as a patriotic initiative by young netizens and a new wave of online patriotism in the era, reframing the originally spontaneous movement as a patriotic declaration. This move not only represents the state's renarration of grassroots actions but also reinforces public emotional identification with official nationalism, bolstering support for online public opinion in such endeavors. Even now, long after the DiBa incident concluded, expressions of admiration and pride for the netizens who initiated these actions remain visible.

During the William Lai Ten Talks on Unity incident, while official discourse gained dominance on social media, its linguistic style exhibited ‘civilianized’ characteristics. Open coding revealed that state media increasingly adopted terms like ‘heretical doctrines(邪說),’ ‘fallacious arguments(歪理),’ “relying on foreign powers to plot independence(倚外謀獨),” “selling out Taiwan(賣台),” “destroying Taiwan(毀台),” “going down a dark path(走到黑),” and “a dead-end road(一條死路)” terms previously common in netizen discourse and social media comments now appear in official reports and statements. This convergence marks the inverse direction of discourse flow: official institutions absorbing the idioms of the masses.

Through this appropriation, the state recontextualizes emotionally charged popular expressions into instruments of institutional legitimacy. This indicates that authorities no longer rely solely on institutionalized language to convey positions but have embraced these expressions, forming populist rhetoric attuned to emotional contexts. This situation enhances the infectiousness and online visibility of official language while reinforcing public reaffirmation of the state's stance.

Combining these observations reveals that Chinese online nationalism exhibits a mutually reinforcing coproduction at the linguistic level: the public expresses emotions using official language, while the government repackages political narratives using public language, ultimately generating semantic resonance and emotional resonance. This linguistic coproduction not only lends greater “authenticity” to official narratives but also grants grassroots participants a sense of symbolic involvement in political expression, forming a mutually reinforcing chain of relationships. Three key observations emerge under this theme: (1) Language Borrowing and Imitation: Examples include Di Ba's use of politicized mobilization terms like “march to war” and “unification,” which resonate with official media discourse. (2) Popularization of Official Rhetoric: Online expressions such as “heretical doctrines,” “selling Taiwan,” and “destroying Taiwan” are adopted by authorities, reflecting the integration of grassroots sentiment into institutional discourse. (3) Mutual Cooperation in Discourse Formation: Civil society and officialdom create a mutually amplifying mechanism for sentiment and semantics, blurring power boundaries.

This theme's relevance to the research question lies in revealing that Chinese cyber-nationalism is not merely passive reception or grassroots initiated, but rather a hybrid governance model formed through linguistic flows and symbolic interaction.

This model demonstrates a new form of political communication in China's digital age: the state permeates the public sphere through language, while the public sphere feeds back to the state through language, ultimately achieving a copformance of political performance that shapes national identity within the online public sphere.

The high degree of overlap between official media vocabulary and netizen slang supports interpreting state-society interaction as a co-construction of discourse rather than mere top-down propaganda. Data reveals bidirectional flow: grassroots vocabulary is absorbed and reproduced by official discourse, while official language is reshaped by grassroots through performative practices. This co-construction model aligns with theories emphasizing semantic permeation between state and public, pointing to a hybrid governance mode that gains legitimacy through resonance rather than coercion alone. This challenges the dichotomy between propaganda and spontaneous action, instead viewing political communication as a collaborative process of meaning-making. Caution is warranted, however, in distinguishing deliberate state coordination from spontaneous interaction, as this study relies on publicly available corpora to demonstrate shared vocabulary and frameworks in discursive outcomes. The empirical overlap between official frames and grassroots vocabulary demonstrates a process of discursive co-construction in which state and public actors iteratively borrow and rework terms, producing shared repertoires that stabilize public meaning. However, the evidence supports a model of discursive reinforcement official uptake or echoing of popular terms rather than definitive proof that grassroots expressions independently determine policy outcomes, given the limits of publicly available materials.

### **Digital Sovereignty and Trans platform Reproduction of Nationalism**

The discourse structure between official and civil sectors demonstrates how discourse travels between official and civil actors, extends this circulation across digital platforms and boundaries, showing how linguistic and emotional flows evolve into a broader structure of digital sovereignty. Through platform mechanisms and technical linguistic practices, Chinese cyber nationalism integrates the concept of digital sovereignty, continuously regenerating and spreading across diverse media and spaces. This process reveals that cyber nationalism functions both as a public opinion battle and, more fundamentally, as a trans platform political narrative project. A comparative analysis of the DiBa campaign and the ‘Ten Talks on Unity’ by William Lai reveals that China's cyber nationalist discourse presents a formidable reproductive capacity through technical operations, symbolic conversion, and platform circulation. The cross platform nature was particularly evident in the DiBa campaign. Open source coding reveals netizens employing technical and action codes like “scaling the wall(翻牆),” “VPN,” “expedition,” “FB meme warFB (表情包戰),” and . Through online tools, they extended Chinese political language onto blocked international platforms. These terms not only denote technical actions but also symbolize a sovereign transgression reclaiming China's narrative voice within Facebook, a space perceived as belonging to external information sovereignty. Through memes, images, and collective posting, DiBa users enact territorial expansion at the digital level, transforming internal network sentiment into external offensive maneuvers while reproducing a China centered discourse order on foreign platforms. This cross wall action can be viewed as an unofficial performance of digital sovereignty, simultaneously challenging international platforms' content order while symbolically extending the imagined boundaries of China's political sphere.

During the William Lai Ten Talks on Unity incident, the regeneration of digital sovereignty manifested in another inward focused form. Language actions by state media, the Ministry of National Defense, and the Taiwan Affairs Office concentrated on reinforcing internal reaffirmation processes centered on “sovereignty belongs to us” and the One-China principle. Keywords such as “Taiwan is part of China(台灣是中國的一部分),” “sovereign integrity(主權完整),” “crushing the illusion of Taiwan independence(粉碎台獨幻想),” and “national righteousness(民族大義)” emerged in the coding, forming the linguistic boundaries of digital sovereignty. Through algorithmic promotion on Weibo and Bilibili, such content was repeatedly reinforced, rendering the “One China framework” a visualized and passively accepted political commonplace. This process demonstrates the state's deep governance capabilities over platforms—achieving the reproduction and control of the public opinion sphere through algorithmic sovereignty. Simultaneously, netizens' responses with comments like “supporting the motherland(支持祖國)” and “firmly opposing Taiwan independence(堅決反對台獨)” reflect the passive reproduction and resonance of state discourse within civil society. This ensures digital sovereignty exists not only at the institutional level but also permeates emotional and everyday interactions.

These two cases mutually illuminate each other, revealing that the cross platform logic of Chinese cyber nationalism possesses a dual structure of outward penetration and inward consolidation. Externally, DiBa style actions present citizens' capacity to spontaneously extend the boundaries of state discourse. Internally, the state reinternalizes sovereignty narratives into collective consciousness through platform governance, algorithmic filtering, and emotional mobilization. Ultimately, nationalism ceases to depend on superficial boundaries, instead growing and proliferating within the digital realm. Three observable dimensions are observed:

Symbolic Practice of Technical Sovereignty: For instance, Di Ba performs digital border-crossing through action-oriented vocabulary like “VPN,” “expedition(出征),” and “wall-jumping(翻牆).” Reproduction of Algorithmic Governance Discourse: Platforms like Weibo and state media leverage technological push mechanisms to regenerate political narratives. Continuity between Internal and External Narratives: Overseas actions are renarrated by domestic media, forming a closed loop of digital nationalism.

This theme corresponds to the research question by revealing the platform dependency and digital expansiveness of Chinese cyber nationalism. Whether through meme campaigns on foreign platforms or official propaganda on domestic networks, nationalist discourse is mediated by digital technology, continually reconfigured and transformed into new semantic forms. China's nationalist power no longer operates solely through territory or institutions but iterates through algorithms, platforms, and language, persistently regenerating the symbolic order of sovereignty within digital spaces. In short, digital sovereignty functions as an extension of the infrastructure underpinning emotional and discursive nationalism. It encompasses the convergence of emotion, language, and technology, within which platforms become neutral spaces. This framework highlights how Chinese nationalism has evolved from territorial governance to information governance, with the state and citizens jointly maintaining symbolic sovereignty through algorithms and participatory mechanisms.

Outward communication resembles a campaign beyond walls, while inward consolidation involves observing algorithmically reinforced internal discourse both can be situated within the contemporary theoretical framework of digital sovereignty. Research indicates that digital sovereignty encompasses both infrastructure layers such as platform regulation, legislation, and algorithmic operations and the symbolic



exercise of sovereignty by citizens through cross-platform actions and technological practices. Emphasizing that control over information spaces is a co-produced outcome of institutional capacity and grassroots practices, this argument extends traditional narratives of state control. It highlights how citizens can reshape sovereign imaginaries through symbolic actions even in the absence of formal authority. This research does not directly measure internal platform governance mechanisms; its arguments are grounded in discourse and interaction evidence rather than direct quantitative assessments of algorithmic operations. The contrasting patterns observed across external and domestic platforms show that claims of digital sovereignty are both infrastructural and performative: platform affordances and governance regimes shape whether nationalist repertoires are projected outward or consolidated inward, thereby specifying the conditions under which mobilization or governance logics dominate. As before, these inferences concern discursive and interactional mechanisms rather than direct measurements of policy decision making.

### **Comparative Analysis of the Two Cases**

Combine the cases, the two cases reveal both shared mechanisms and structurally conditioned differences in how cyber-nationalist discourse emerges and circulates across platforms. On the one hand, both cases display a similar interaction among the three analytical logics defined in this study: emotional-commercial mobilization, discursive co-production between official and civil actors, and sovereignty oriented projection. In both the DiBa expedition and the William Lai incident, emotional expression is rapidly converted into high visibility content; grassroots and official actors adopt overlapping frames; and participants articulate claims about China's narrative boundaries across platforms. The two cases diverge in the conditions under

which these logics operate. The DiBa expedition unfolds in an external platform environment where users must rely on technical bypassing, informal coordination, and community-driven repertoires to project national narratives outward. Mobilization is therefore more visible, improvisational, and performative. By contrast, the William Lai incident occurs within a domestically governed platform ecology where algorithmic steering, editorial amplification by state-aligned outlets, and higher institutional alignment shape discourse formation. Here, nationalist expression is more embedded within platform governance routines and becomes rapidly normalized through official media uptake.

These differences not only illustrate how the two cases differ in their expression of nationalism, but also explain why. Platform architecture and governance systems alter the ratio between mobilization logic and governance logic, thereby influencing the speed, scale, and direction of nationalist discourse. This comparative analysis reaffirms the theoretical framework of this study: online nationalism does not stem solely from grassroots sentiment or state intervention, but rather emerges from the interactions of multiple actors within specific platform environments.

While the preceding comparison outlines structural differences between external and internal platform environments, a further synthesis clarifies what examining these two cases together reveals about the dynamics of Chinese cyber nationalism. Viewed side by side, the DiBa Expedition and the Ten Talks on Unity illustrate how similar nationalist repertoires emotional expression, meme-based symbolism, and sovereignty oriented framing are activated through different pathways depending on platform governance and actor alignment. The DiBa case demonstrates a mobilization centered mode in which grassroots users rely on technical circumvention, communal coordination, and participatory humor to project national narratives outward. In

contrast, the William Lai incident represents a governance-centered mode in which official framing, editorial amplification, and domestic algorithmic structures rapidly normalize nationalist discourse within internal platforms. This cross case synthesis highlights that platform ecology determines whether mobilization logic or governance logic becomes dominant in shaping discourse. It also shows that discursive coproduction operates differently across settings: on external platforms, grassroots creativity produces semiofficially symbolic projection; on internal platforms, state aligned institutions repurpose grassroots vocabulary to consolidate consensus. Taken together, the comparison suggests that Chinese cyber nationalism is best understood not as two separate phenomena but as a unified system whose form depends on the interaction among user repertoires, platform affordances, and state governance. This provides a more precise answer to the research questions by demonstrating how mobilization occurs and under what conditions it becomes rhetorically or symbolically absorbed into official narratives.

**Table 1: Comparative Analysis between DiBa Expedition and Ten Talks on Unity**

<b>Analytical Dimension</b>	<b>DiBa Expedition (Outbound)</b>	<b>Ten Talks on Unity (Domestic)</b>
Platform Environment	External, relatively uncontrolled spaces (Facebook, BBC, Bilibili mirrors)	Highly regulated domestic platforms (Weibo, Xinhua, Douyin)
Primary Actors	Grassroots users; fan-culture style coordination	State-affiliated media, official accounts, and users responding within curated environments
Mobilization Pattern	Meme-based, humorous, emotionally driven collective action	Formal rhetoric, official framing, rapid internal amplification
State Role / Reaction	Indirect tolerance; no explicit coordination; symbolic projection outward	Direct narrative shaping; selective amplification; alignment with official messaging
Visibility & Spread	High external visibility through reposting and cross-platform circulation	High internal visibility through trending lists, hot comments, and official amplification
Dominant Logic	Mobilization Logic (bottom-up affect + meme-driven coordination)	Governance Logic + Discursive Co-construction (official framing reinforced by user uptake)

### Discussion of Findings

The findings allow this study to revisit its two guiding research questions more directly. RQ1 asks how cyber-nationalist mobilization occurs across different platform environments. The DiBa Expedition illustrates a form of grassroots, community-driven mobilization shaped by fan culture organization and the expressive repertoires of online subcultures. Participants coordinated through shared visual memes, playful symbols, and repeated in-group references, enabling large numbers of

users to act collectively without centralized leadership. Emotional intensity and the creative adaptation of memes thus served as both motivational fuel and coordination infrastructure. In contrast, responses to William Lai's "Ten Talks on Unity" demonstrate a platform environment where mobilization is structured primarily through state-aligned rhetorical scripts. Here, nationalist sentiment becomes articulated through official framings such as "台獨本性," "歪理邪說," and "同屬一個中國" that circulate rapidly through verified media accounts. Mobilization in this case does not arise from bottom-up coordination but from the swift uptake and repetition of authoritative narratives.

For RQ2 asks whether and how online nationalism affects official discourse or policy. The findings indicate that while online discourse can interact with official narratives, the available evidence supports only claims about discursive amplification, not direct policy influence. In the DiBa case, grassroots expressions did not feed into formal state rhetoric; rather, they remained largely contained within user-driven spaces. Conversely, in the Lai case, online reactions synchronized closely with state media language, but this alignment reflects top-down guidance rather than bottom-up impact. The data show that official accounts amplified nationalist interpretations, but there is no evidence that public online expressions independently shaped policy positions. Therefore, the study concludes that the relationship takes the form of discursive reinforcement, not causal policy change. This clarification ensures that the empirical findings directly address the research questions while remaining consistent with the limitations of publicly observable data.

The findings of this study reveal three core themes of Chinese cyber nationalism: the traffic logic of emotional nationalism, the discursive composition between official and grassroots voices, and the regeneration of digital sovereignty and cross-platform

national narratives. These themes not only respond to existing literature on digital nationalism but also further expand its theoretical scope. Previous scholars such as Zhang & Shaw (2021) and Wu & Fitzgerald (2018) have noted that Chinese online nationalism often manifests as grassroots actions, leveraging entertainment-oriented and meme-based language to attract public participation. This study reveals that such actions are not merely self-expressive but form a coproductive relationship with platform mechanisms and discourse, transcending the traditional superficial dichotomy of top-down propaganda versus bottom-up feedback.

Regarding the traffic logic of emotional nationalism, the findings resonate with Wang & Li's (2022) theory of traffic-driven nationalism. The DiBa campaign demonstrates that emotional expression serves not only as a tool for political mobilization but also as a production model within the content economy. Memes, emojis, and campaign slogans form a symbolic cycle on platforms that can be amplified by algorithms, transforming nationalist sentiment into visibility and influence through traffic and interaction mechanisms. This finding reveals that nationalism's propagation relies not only on political mobilization but is deeply embedded within the operational logic of the platform economy, resonating with Fuchs (2017) and Zuboff (2019)'s discourses on the attention economy and surveillance capitalism.

The discursive construction between official and popular spheres reveals a relationship of mutual permeation and coconstruction between state propaganda and popular sentiment. This finding extends the perspectives of Guo & Li (2020) and Yang (2021), indicating that the boundary between official nationalism and grassroots nationalism is increasingly blurred. Through corpus analysis of Di Ba and William Lai Ten Talks on Unity, this study finds that while official media appropriates popular

terms like “selling Taiwan,” “heretical doctrines,” and “Taiwan independence separatism,” it simultaneously reinforces the legitimacy of official discourse by reproducing netizens' emotions. This demonstrates that China's online nationalism is not unidirectional indoctrination but an interactive governance model centered on achieving voluntary resonance through linguistic co-construction.

The regeneration of digital sovereignty and cross-platform national narratives expands academic understanding of digital sovereignty. While existing literature like Jiang & Fung (2023) primarily focuses on the Chinese government's control over platforms and data, this study demonstrates that Chinese netizens can also achieve symbolic, non-official digital sovereignty through cross-platform actions such as circumventing the Great Firewall and creating memes. The online mobilization of DiBa's campaigns and the narrative frameworks of official media jointly constitute digital borders, while algorithmic reinforcement on Weibo and Bilibili further forms internal and external closed loops. These findings demonstrate that Chinese nationalism has partially transformed from traditional geopolitics to digital politics, where sovereignty imaginaries no longer remain confined by national borders but continuously expand through information technology and discourse circulation in virtual spaces.

The innovation of these findings lies in revealing Chinese cyber-nationalism as a multi-layered, cross-media mobilization system. This research not only validates prior literature on spontaneous nationalism but further demonstrates its operational reliance on the interplay between platform algorithms, linguistic symbols, and state governance. This signifies that Chinese nationalism in the digital environment has transformed from a political act into a systemic production process—propelled by platforms and sustained by collective sentiment. This process of mutual construction

offers a crucial entry point for understanding contemporary Chinese digital governance and public opinion control.

### **Summary of Major Findings**

Through open coding and thematic integration of two representative cases—the 2016 DiBa campaign targeting foreign websites and the 2025 internal network response to William Lai Ten Talks on Unity on Unity—this study reveals three core operational logics of Chinese cyber nationalism in the digital environment: the traffic logic of emotional nationalism, the discursive constitution between official and popular spheres, and the regeneration of digital sovereignty and cross platform national narratives.

This study confirms the link between emotion and traffic. Taking DiBa as an example, memes, emojis, and group based task division enabled the rapid commodification of anger, humor, and patriotic sentiment, amplified by platform algorithms. In the William Lai case, Chinese authorities and media employed similar emotional rhetoric terms like “national righteousness,” “selling Taiwan,” and “destroying Taiwan” to construct moralized narratives, repeatedly reinforcing consensus through internal network mechanisms. Emotion serves both as mobilization material and as capital converted by platforms and governance mechanisms into visible political energy.

Furthermore, official and grassroots discourses exhibit high mutual construction. Grassroots rhetoric adopts official mobilization terms like “marching to battle” and “unification,” while official language incorporates popular expressions to enhance dissemination effectiveness. This blurs the clear boundaries between top-down and bottom-up approaches, forming a coevolutionary political communication field. It



further endows certain grassroots behaviors with symbolic semi official status and influence.

Regarding the importance of digital sovereignty and cross platform regeneration, the DiBa incident demonstrates citizens' capacity to reconstruct China centered narratives externally through technical means like VPNs, circumventing firewalls, and cross platform posting. Internally, authorities repeatedly reinforce identical discourses via algorithms, push notifications, and content governance, perpetually reproducing sovereign narratives within digital spaces. Together, these form a cycle of outward penetration and inward consolidation.

Given the potential deletion or blocking of domestic content, research relies on news reports, screenshots, and reposted materials to supplement the scarcity of original archives. This study utilizes only publicly available texts and interaction data, excluding deep interviews or platform backend data. Consequently, limitations exist in the depth of interpretation regarding actors' subjective meanings and the precise mechanisms of platform algorithms.

This chapter conceptualizes digital nationalism as a multidimensional, interactive generative process rather than propaganda from a single source or an emotional outburst. Through the interplay of emotional mobilization and discursive co-construction, online nationalism can be manufactured, disseminated, and institutionalized across platforms, potentially exerting feedback effects on international public opinion and national policy spaces. This finding directly addresses the research question: Chinese online nationalism not only shapes social media discourse but also possesses the potential for its forms and vocabulary to be co-opted or amplified by official channels. Consequently, it may evolve into an official agenda or be integrated into policy discourse, contingent upon the resonance of its

vocabulary, the amplification effects of platform algorithms, and the state's selective governance strategies.

## CONCLUSION

How Chinese cyber nationalism influences social media, and whether such online movements may evolve into official policy or be incorporated into state discourse and diplomatic rhetoric, is examined through two representative cases: the 2016 DiBa campaign's cross wall actions on external platforms and the 2025 William Lai Ten Talks on Unity network responses, this study employs open coding and thematic integration analysis of interactions between official and private actors on domestic platforms. It draws the following conclusions.

Emotional Commercial Logic serves as a core operational mechanism of online nationalism. The DiBa case demonstrates how memes,表情包, and group based task division visualize and entertain anger and patriotic sentiment, converting them into platform recognizable traffic that algorithms amplify for visibility. Within the internal network, specifically the Ten Talks on Unity, we observed official discourse employing similar emotional vocabulary terms like “national righteousness” and “selling out Taiwan” to institutionalize and moralize emotional capital, repeatedly reinforced through media and algorithms. Together, these demonstrate that emotion serves not only as a mobilization tool but also as an asset consumed and amplified by the platform economy, becoming a key intermediary enabling the rapid diffusion of cyber nationalism.

This study finds that official discourse and netizen rhetoric intersect. Although DiBa's actions possess grassroots and community spontaneity, the extensive use of terms like “expedition,” “frontline,” and “unification” overlaps semantically with official mobilization language. Conversely, official discourse within the internal network adopts and reshapes popular vernacular, such as incorporating netizen labeled terminology into official propaganda. Grassroots actions gain reinterpretation

and legitimization through official discourse, while authorities leverage popular sentiment and vocabulary to enhance online reach and public appeal. Online nationalism in China is neither unidirectional state indoctrination nor purely spontaneous grassroots movement, but rather a reconstructed outcome of language, symbols, and platform mechanisms.

The DiBa case demonstrates that VPN technology and cross platform activism themselves become symbolic acts of digital sovereignty. Through technical means, grassroots discourse is projected onto blocked international platforms, enabling China-centric narrative projection within global discourse spaces. The Lai case reveals that domestic platforms can rapidly regenerate and solidify consensus around the One China narrative through algorithmic manipulation, content prioritization, and media platform integration. Both cases collectively indicate that the current influence of cyber nationalism depends not only on technical circumvention, platform design, and algorithms, but also on political state governance and media mobilization. Their interaction forms a cross domain discourse production and reproduction circuit.

In summary, regarding the research question of whether online nationalism may evolve into an official agenda, this study reaches a conditional conclusion: online nationalism possesses significant potential to be absorbed or amplified by the state, but this typically hinges on whether the action aligns with national interests, diplomatic strategies, or domestic stability objectives. When the rhetoric and sentiment of grassroots actions serve state narratives or diplomatic needs, the state tends toward selective tolerance, guidance, or transformation. However, if actions exceed controllable limits or risk significant damage to international image, they face suppression or cleanup. This selective enforcement and tolerance aligns with the

digital sovereignty governance logic described in prior literature, constituting a key finding of this study.

The theoretical and practical contributions of this research include: Introducing traffic logic and the attention economy into cyber nationalism analysis, revealing how emotions are transformed into tradable resources on platforms. It provides an analytical framework describing the mutual construction of state and civil discourses, illustrating how they function as resources for each other at the lexical level.

Focusing on two representative cases, this study primarily analyses publicly available texts and media materials. It does not include platform backend data or in depth interviews, thus unable to make precise causal judgments regarding the subjective motivations of mobilizers or the actual operation of platform algorithms. Future research could integrate platform data analysis, in-depth interviews, or experimental methods to further examine the mechanism from emotion to algorithm to policy absorption. It could also extend to other contexts or comparative studies across nations to validate the explanatory framework proposed in this study.

In summary, this study demonstrates that China's online nationalism possesses both spontaneous and mass-cultural dimensions while being embedded within the structures of the platform economy and state governance. It can rapidly amplify through emotional traffic mechanisms and, under specific conditions, be absorbed or transformed by official discourse, becoming a significant force influencing public opinion and even shaping diplomatic and policy contexts.

## APPENDIX-1

BBC 報導 [https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-35368930?OCID=fbasia&ocid=socialflow\\_facebook&ns\\_mchannel=social&ns\\_campaign=bbcnews&ns\\_source=facebook](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-35368930?OCID=fbasia&ocid=socialflow_facebook&ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbcnews&ns_source=facebook)

The Facebook page of Taiwan's new president-elect Tsai Ing-wen has been flooded with hostile posts, seemingly from mainland China.

Tens of thousands of posts demanded that the island be reunified with the mainland, under Beijing's control.

Meanwhile, China conducted military drills on its coast opposite Taiwan.

Ms Tsai and her Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won a landslide victory in presidential and parliamentary elections on Saturday.

The DPP is broadly supportive of independence from China.

Beijing considers Taiwan a breakaway province that must one day be brought back under mainland control.

It is concerned that Taiwan may declare formal independence although Ms Tsai has not declared herself in favour of such a move.

'Love the motherland'

Ms Tsai brushed off the Facebook campaign

, external on Thursday, saying: "The greatness of this country lies in how every single person can exercise their rights."

Her party, too, said they "respected" those who exercised freedom of speech.

Several commenters have posted a set of Chinese communist slogans, urging "love for the motherland", in quick succession

Most of the posters wrote in the simplified Chinese characters used on the mainland, as opposed to the traditional characters used in Taiwan.

Many repeatedly spammed Ms Tsai's Facebook page with a series of Chinese Communist Party slogans known as the "eight honours and eight shames", which among other things encourages "love for the motherland".

Access to Facebook and most major Western social media sites are officially blocked in mainland China - although technologically savvy users often circumvent the restrictions.

The irony was not lost on Taiwanese Facebook posters, who sarcastically congratulated the mainland critics on bypassing the firewall.

Observers say the comments appear to be part of a campaign organised from China although it is not clear by whom. Chinese officials have been known to pay online commentators, external to post opinions supportive of government policies. Some experts, external have estimated that China employs about 250,000 "paid commenters".

## **'Live-fire'**

China said it had carried out live-fire landing drills at its base in Xiamen, near the Taiwan-controlled island of Kinmen, "in recent days".

The drills involved the use of long-range rockets and amphibious tanks, Chinese state TV said, without giving more details.

Tsai Ing-wen will replace Taiwan's more pro-China current president, Ma Ying-jeou. Steve Lin, an official from Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, which manages the island's affairs with China, described the drills as "very bad news".

"We'll raise our military deployment, and at the same time we'll deal with it via reasonable dialogue with the Chinese side," he said in quotes carried by Reuters news agency.

Ms Tsai says she wants peaceful relations with China. The island has ruled itself since Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists fled there in 1949 after being defeated by Communist forces in the civil war.

賴清德團結十講：

6/29 賴清德微博 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5182981724963218>

## **央視網**

6-29 21:10 來自微博視頻號

【「無主之地」？#台灣自古屬於中國的鐵證#】#台灣絕對不是所謂無主之地# 賴清德不僅在史前問題上信口開河，更全盤否認台灣自古屬於中國的歷史經緯和法理事實，妄稱直至明末清初“中國開始跟台灣發生關係”，並刻意把鄭成功收復台灣描繪成與荷蘭、西班牙同等的“外來政權”，企圖抹殺兩岸同屬一個中國的歷史事實，把台灣變成“無主之地”，把台灣同胞變成“無根浮萍”，數典忘祖，用心險惡。

6/30 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5183225585469918>

## 央視新聞

6-30 13:19 來自微博視頻號 已編輯

#台灣光復是兩岸捍衛民族尊嚴的成果#【#賴清德又是一通歪理邪說#】今日，國台辦發言人朱鳳蓮就台灣地區領導人 28 日在民進黨全代會發表講話相關內容答記者問。

問：台灣地區領導人 28 日在民進黨全代會發表講話，29 日進行所謂「團結十講」第三講。請問對其這兩次演講中涉兩岸關係內容有何評論？

答：賴清德的講話無視島內各界的強烈反對聲浪，再次撕裂台灣社會民意，再次進行謀“獨”挑釁，變本加厲破壞兩岸關係。

賴清德在演講中渲染所謂“大陸威脅”，重彈“台獨”老調，升高兩岸敵意對抗，又是一通違背法理和歷史事實、罔顧島內主流民意的歪理邪說。他扭曲聯大第 2758 號決議，挑戰國際法權威；偷換概念、混淆是非，繼續兜售兩岸「互不隸屬」謬論，割裂兩岸法理歷史聯結，傷害兩岸同胞民族情感，完全是數典忘祖、背棄民族；一味操弄「反中抗中」，污蔑心譚與祖國大陸為廣大公眾恐慌的心理和父母相分離。

台灣是中國的領土，兩岸同屬一個中國，兩岸同胞同為中國人，歷史經緯清晰，法理事實清楚，任何人任何勢力都無法否認，也不容否認。台灣光復是二戰後國際秩序的重要內容，更是兩岸同胞攜手捍衛民族尊嚴、守護共同家園的勝利成果，歷史必須銘記，成果不容踐踏。但凡違背中華民族整體利益搞倒行逆施，注定遭到失敗；挑戰國家領土主權搞「台獨」分裂，只是絕路一條。

兩岸同胞都期盼和平、發展、交流、合作。我們堅定順應兩岸同胞對美好生活的嚮往，致力於深化兩岸和平發展、融合發展，尊重、關愛、造福台灣同胞，



讓台灣同胞更有獲得感、幸福感、歸屬感。希望廣大台灣同胞認清賴清德當局冥頑不靈的「台獨」本性，看透他們的虛偽面目，揭穿他們的拙劣伎倆，同我們一道堅定做民族復興的同行者、兩岸和平的捍衛者，共謀祖國統一大業，共創民族復興偉業！ 6/23 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5180830982604022>

## 環球時報

6-23 22:43 來自微博網頁版

#國台辦痛批賴清德台獨本性#【國台辦：賴清德充分暴露其冥頑不化的「台獨」本性】#台灣前途只能由 14 億中國人民共同決定# 6 月 23 日，國務院台辦發言人陳斌華答記者問。

問：台灣地區領導人 22 日展開所謂「團結國家十講」第一場演講，請問對講話中涉兩岸關係內容有何評論？

答：賴清德 22 日的演講充斥著謊言與欺騙、敵意與挑釁，刻意曲解、割裂歷史，大肆兜售「台獨」分裂謬論，妄圖為其建構「台獨」論述炮製拼湊依據，為其推動「大罷免」「政治鬥爭謀取政治私利」進行文宣造勢，是一篇赤裸裸煽動兩岸對立對抗的「台獨」宣言，是一盤錯漏百出的「台獨」歪理邪說大雜燴，充分暴露其冥頑不化的「台獨」本性。

賴清德在演講中刻意篡改台灣的歷史，否認台灣自古屬於中國的事實，否定台灣先住民繫從大陸直接或間接移居而來，罔顧中國歷代政府管轄台灣的事實，是對歷史的歪曲和踐踏。

賴清德在致詞中無視台灣同胞與大陸同胞勠力同心、共禦外族、付出巨大犧牲打敗外族侵略、讓台灣回歸祖國懷抱的歷史事實，把台灣同胞愛國愛鄉愛土的感情與所謂「台獨」掛鉤，企圖蠱惑民眾，是對台灣人民光榮的愛國主義傳統和無數先行者。

賴清德在演講中偷換概念，抹殺二戰勝利成果，拋開《開羅宣言》、《波茨坦公告》等一系列具有國際法效力的法律文件，挑戰扭曲聯大第 2758 號決議，妄稱“台灣不屬於中國”、鼓吹“互不隸屬”，完全違背國際法，是對國際法權威的公然挑戰。

賴清德在演講中大放異彩，無視台灣民眾要和平、要發展、要交流、要合作的普遍願望，大肆渲染所謂“大陸威脅”，鼓吹推進“17 項因應策略”，操弄“反中抗中”、強化“綠色恐怖”，阻撓兩岸交流交往，完全違背人心民意。

歷史不容竄改，事實不容否認，是非不能顛倒。有關台灣的全部歷史、事實和法律證明，台灣自古以來就是中國領土不可分割的一部分。大量的考古發現和史書文獻記載證明中國人民最早開發和建造台灣。宋元以後，中國歷代中央政府開始在台灣設治，並實施行政管轄。清朝政府 1885 年設台灣為行省，是當時中國第 20 個行省。1895 年 4 月，日本強迫清朝政府簽訂不平等的《馬關條約》，霸占了台灣。1943 年中美英三國發表的《開羅宣言》，1945 年中美英三國共同簽署、後來蘇聯參加的《波茨坦公告》，以及日本簽署的《日本投降條款》，都明確了台灣必須歸還中國。1945 年 10 月 25 日，中國政府收復台灣、澎湖，恢復對台灣行使主權。1949 年 10 月 1 日，中華人民共和國中央人民政府宣告成立，成為全中國的唯一合法政府和在國際上的唯一合法代表，這是在同一國際法主體沒有發生變化的情況下新政權取代舊政權，中國的主權和固有領土疆域並未由此而改變，中華人民共和國政府理所當然地完全享有和行使對台灣的主權。此後，中日兩國之間的一系列政治文件也確認了台灣回歸中國的事實。台灣是中國一部分，台灣從來不是一個國家。一個中國原則是國際關係基本準則和國際社會普遍共識。

賴清德違背歷史、現實和法理胡編亂造的種種謬論，只會被掃進歷史的垃圾堆。台灣的前途，只能由包括台灣同胞在內的 14 億多中國人民共同決定。賴清德無論怎樣費盡心機，都改變不了台灣是中國一部分的法理事實，動搖不了國際社會堅持一個中國原則的基本格局，更阻擋不了祖國終將統一、也必將統一的歷史大勢。

## 人民日報

7-2 13:11 來自微博網頁版

【國台辦再批賴清德所謂「團結十講」：#對任何台獨分裂行徑決不容忍決不姑息#】#賴清德在賣台毀台邪路上一條道走到黑#今日，國台辦發言人陳斌華就台灣地區領導人相關言論答記者問。

問：台灣地區領導人7月1日進行所謂「團結十講」第四講。請問對其中涉兩岸關係內容有何評論？

答：賴清德昨天的演講再次揭露其妄圖「倚外謀獨」「以武謀獨」的險惡用心。其悖逆島內民眾渴望和平發展的主流民意，罔顧台灣同胞生命安全和利益福祉，蓄意挑起兩岸對立對抗、破壞台海和平穩定，在“賣台”“毀台”的邪路上一條道走到黑，是不折不扣的“和平破壞者”、徹頭徹尾的“戰爭販賣者”、名副其實的“麻煩製造者”。

賴清德鼓吹所謂“為台澎金馬而戰”，實則是為民進黨一黨之私而戰、為其“台獨”執念而戰，不惜將無辜民眾綁上“台獨”戰車，讓年輕人走上戰場，成為其分裂圖謀的犧牲品；所謂“大陸軍事威脅”，是為掩蓋其一味挑釁、“以武謀獨”的分裂本質；宣稱所謂“與民主國家站在一起”，實則是加碼繳納“保護費”、遞“投名狀”，換取某些外部勢力撐腰打氣。

「台獨」是台灣最大的災禍。「台獨」一日不除，台海就一天不得安寧。賴清德「謀獨」越深，「毀台」越甚。只有堅決反對、有力遏制「台獨」分裂，台海和平才能得到實際維護，台灣百姓才能安心安居。

兩岸同屬一個中國，台、澎、金、馬都是中國神聖領土，兩岸同胞都是中國人。只要不搞「台獨」分裂，兩岸就可以共享和平共謀發展。同時，我們對任何「台獨」分裂行徑決不容忍、決不姑息，有堅定意志、堅強決心和強大能力捍衛國家主權和領土完整，粉碎一切「台獨」分裂圖謀。希望廣大台灣同胞從民族大義和自身福祉出發，堅決反對「台獨」分裂行徑，共同維護台海和平穩定。網頁連結

## 人民日報

7-2 13:11 來自微博網頁版

【國台辦再批賴清德所謂「團結十講」：#對任何台獨分裂行徑決不容忍決不姑息#】#賴清德在賣台毀台邪路上一條道走到黑#今日，國台辦發言人陳斌華就台灣地區領導人相關言論答記者問。

問：台灣地區領導人7月1日進行所謂「團結十講」第四講。請問對其中涉兩岸關係內容有何評論？

答：賴清德昨天的演講再次揭露其妄圖「倚外謀獨」「以武謀獨」的險惡用心。其悖逆島內民眾渴望和平發展的主流民意，罔顧台灣同胞生命安全和利益福祉，蓄意挑起兩岸對立對抗、破壞台海和平穩定，在“賣台”“毀台”的邪路上一條道走到黑，是不折不扣的“和平破壞者”、徹頭徹尾的“戰爭販賣者”、名副其實的“麻煩製造者”。

賴清德鼓吹所謂“為台澎金馬而戰”，實則是為民進黨一黨之私而戰、為其“台獨”執念而戰，不惜將無辜民眾綁上“台獨”戰車，讓年輕人走上戰場，成為其分裂圖謀的犧牲品；所謂“大陸軍事威脅”，是為掩蓋其一味挑釁、“以武謀獨”的分裂本質；宣稱所謂“與民主國家站在一起”，實則是加碼繳納“保護費”、遞“投名狀”，換取某些外部勢力撐腰打氣。

「台獨」是台灣最大的災禍。「台獨」一日不除，台海就一天不得安寧。賴清德「謀獨」越深，「毀台」越甚。只有堅決反對、有力遏制「台獨」分裂，台海和平才能得到實際維護，台灣百姓才能安心安居。

兩岸同屬一個中國，台、澎、金、馬都是中國神聖領土，兩岸同胞都是中國人。只要不搞「台獨」分裂，兩岸就可以共享和平共謀發展。同時，我們對任何「台獨」分裂行徑決不容忍、決不姑息，有堅定意志、堅強決心和強大能力捍衛國家主權和領土完整，粉碎一切「台獨」分裂圖謀。希望廣大台灣同胞從民族大義和自身福祉出發，堅決反對「台獨」分裂行徑，共同維護台海和平穩定。

7/8 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5186159319974339>

## 國防部發布

7-8 15:36 來自微博視頻號

【國防部：解放軍有信心有能力粉碎「台獨」分裂幻想】#國防部邀請您看記者會#

7月8日下午，國防部新聞局副局長、國防部新聞發言人蔣斌大校就近期涉軍問題發布消息。

記者：近日，賴清德發表所謂“團結十講”第四講，渲染所謂“大陸軍事威脅”，鼓吹增加“國防”預算，要台軍“為台澎金馬而戰”。請問發言人有何評論？

蔣斌：台灣是中國的一個省，哪來的什麼「國防」預算？賴清德扭曲歷史、偷換概念，用精心編織的謊言包裝其「台獨」分裂圖謀，大肆渲染「大陸威脅」、製造安全焦慮、裹挾台灣民意，妄圖將台灣社會軍事化，把台灣的未來鎖進外部干涉勢力的棋局。賴清德鼓吹“為台澎金馬而戰”，實則是為民進黨一黨之私而戰，為“台獨”分裂而戰，把台灣老百姓騙上“以武拒統”、“賣台”、“毀台”的絕路。

兩岸同屬一個中國，台、澎、金、馬都是中國神聖領土，兩岸同胞都是中國人。賴清德之流鬧得越歡就滅亡得越快，「台獨」武裝助紂為虐只會一起陪葬。解放軍有信心有能力粉碎一切「台獨」分裂幻想，堅決捍衛國家主權和領土完整。

7/15 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5188598116125534>

## 人民日報

7-15 09:07 來自微博 weibo.com

【人民日報鐘一平文章：#賴清德才是應該被打掉的雜質#】#賴清德當然也知道自己在胡說八道#賴清德所謂「團結十講」已經講了四講，這四講在歷史、學理、法理、常識上的錯謬，徒增笑柄和罪證比比皆是。賴清德以一場又一場拙劣表演，讓台灣民眾徹底看清其「台獨」本性的頑固、「台獨」嘴臉的醜陋、「台獨」分裂行徑的毫無底線。

賴清德等極少數「台獨」分離主義者正是島內禍亂、民主混亂、發展錯亂的病根病灶。無論對台灣一域還是整個中華民族來說，賴清德才是真正的“雜質”，不打掉這樣的“雜質”，台灣就不會有美好的未來。人民日報鐘一平文章：賴清德才是應被打掉的“雜質”

7/26 <https://m.weibo.cn/detail/5192562881334280>

## 環球網

7-26 07:42 來自微博視頻號

#環球時報專訪台政治評論員賴岳謙##台獨才是台灣真正的雜質#【島內知名政治評論員賴岳謙接受《環球時報》專訪：「台獨」是台灣真正的「雜質」】台灣地區領導人賴清德拋出所謂「團結十講」後，遭到島內輿論的猛烈批評。台灣知名政治評論員賴岳謙近日接受《環球時報》專訪時表示，賴清德把不支持“台獨”的人視為“雜質”，但“台獨”才是台灣真正的“雜質”。

賴清德扭曲歷史，揭露無知↓

環球時報：賴清德拋出「團結十講」中的四講後，島上似乎在進行挑錯比賽。您發現了哪些錯誤？

賴岳謙：首先他講到台灣人有反抗侵略的傳統，指的是清朝末期甲午戰爭後把台灣割讓給日本，台灣人站起來反對侵略。賴清德想說，「將來大陸統一的時候，台灣也會抵抗」。這完全在胡說八道，其實大家都知道，台灣人開始對抗外來族群的時候，對抗的就是日本人。1945年台灣光復、國民政府來接收台灣的時候，台灣人沒有抵抗。日本是外來民族，而大陸和台灣同文同種，這根本上是不一樣的。

賴清德以他的歷史觀，說什麼“台灣人基本上是南島語族”，認為台灣是南島語族的發源地。我目前還沒有看到菲律賓人承認他們的祖先源自台灣，也沒有看到馬來西亞或關島或夏威夷的人認為他們的祖先來自台灣。這些都是他自己編的。大家都知道台灣人最早其實是從大陸移民過來的。幾十萬年前，台灣和大陸板塊連在一起，這才是可靠的歷史。



另一方面，即使賴清德一直在強調“台灣最早的原住民是南島語族”，但南島語族也就是台灣少數民族，佔台灣地區人口比例不過 2.6%，96% 以上都不屬於南島語族。也就是說，台灣民眾的主體是漢人，是中華民族，連賴清德本身都不是南島語族。

賴清德也談到聯合國大會第 2758 號決議，並一直引用美國國務院的說法，但問題在於到今天為止，美國唯一承認的就是中華人民共和國，聯合國到目前為止也還是主張「兩岸同屬於一個中國，世界上只有一個中國」。在這部分，賴清德是沒辦法自圓其說的。你只要問他一個問題，就是美國現在承認的是哪一個？當然是中華人民共和國。“台灣跟大陸同屬於一個中國”，我想基本上來講是沒有什麼爭議性的，只是個別政客在操弄。

因此，賴清德的「第一講」一出來，就被當成笑話。他基本上不懂歷史，又愛講歷史、扭曲歷史，暴露出他的無知。

環球時報：「團結十講」如此扭曲歷史的目的是什麼，對台灣民眾尤其是青年的歷史觀會造成怎樣的誤導？

賴岳謙：這種誤導在賴清德的身上就很明顯，為什麼這麼說呢？他的「第一講」中所講的所謂歷史就是二三十年前「台獨」分子所製造出來的那套論述。我在讀研究所的時候也看過，但這套論述在當時，台灣絕大部分的中國人是完全不相信的。其在台灣的影響不到 13%，但是受到影響的人裡面就包括賴清德跟「台獨」的這些人，現在的情況是，賴清德用政治資源把這套「台獨」論述變成教科書的內容，那這影響就大了，會製造一堆賴清德這樣的人。

環球時報：台灣輿論嘲諷說，賴清德的幕僚沒有發現歷史和事實錯誤，也是被「去中國化」害的。您如何理解這樣的評論？

賴岳謙：這種評論其實似是而非，賴清德本人跟他的幕僚以及文膽，基本上都是沒有什麼學問的人，專業程度也不高。這和他們被「台獨」誤導是另一件事，因為他們本來就是同質性很強的一類人，在讀書期間搞不清楚中國史，卻相信少數「台獨」分子所炮製出來的那一套講不通的歪理，你就可以知道他們的智商能有多高。因為當時絕大部分正常的台灣人都不相信「台獨」所主張的那一套。這一群少數人，就是我們看到的這些民進黨內主張「台獨」的人，他們本身就是智慧不足的。

“仇恨十講”，就是在台灣製造對立↓

環球時報：“雜質說”在島上還在發酵。您認為賴清德口中的「雜質」指的是哪些人？您在他眼中算「雜質」嗎？

賴岳謙：他所說的「雜質」就是不支持「台獨」、不認同「台獨」的人。在他眼中，當然認為我是「雜質」。對於“雜質”，賴清德當然會想辦法“查水錶”，審查你的言論。一旦民進黨在立法機構佔有多數席位的時候，就會通過一堆“法

案和法律”，用司法工具破壞你。他們也可以透過很多政治力，例如我原本的工作好好的，他們就透過很多政治力把我的工作拿掉。我本身就是一個例子。

但我眼中，當然認為他才是「雜質」。因為台灣人中主張“獨立”的不過兩成多，絕大部分近八成都不主張“獨立”，所以“主張獨立的才是雜質”。

環球時報：賴清德「第五講」因颱風取消後，有分析認為，颱風只是藉口。您覺得是什麼原因？

賴岳謙：最主要的原因是「團結十講」引發很大爭議，連《紐約時報》都批評了，歐洲的媒體也都在批評，認為賴清德越講，台灣越不團結，分歧矛盾越嚴重，彼此之間的鬥爭越來越激烈。民進黨的民調也越來越低，再加上他們推動的大罷免支持度越來越低，反罷免的支持度越來越高，民進黨內也出現了很多反對聲音，開始要賴清德把嘴巴閉起來。

不過之後的“六講”，我覺得賴清德還是一定會講，只是會把稿子抽掉重寫。

環球時報：不少人把「團結十講」稱為「亂台十講」。您會用哪個字定義呢？

賴岳謙：「仇恨十講」吧，因為它就是在台灣製造仇恨、製造對立、製造矛盾。賴清德想利用這股仇恨把他眼中的所謂「雜質」都去除掉。我們可以看到那些搞大罷免的人站在街頭，當遇到民眾說「你們不應該這樣子，你們影響到我們」的時候，他們就對民眾咆哮、怒語、謾罵，甚至威脅。這是在製造仇恨，企圖用仇恨把反對的聲音壓下來。

島內民眾罵民進黨「吃飽沒事幹」↓

環球時報：今年3月，賴清德當局把大陸定位為「境外敵對勢力」。您認為這對兩岸關係最大的危害是什麼？

賴岳謙：兩岸關係越來越緊張了。賴清德掌握台灣的軍隊、警察、司法以及行政權力，一旦他宣布“獨立”，兩岸一定爆發軍事衝突。因為他把大陸視為“境外敵對勢力”，大陸怎麼可能不把“台獨”視為在不得已的情況下必須要用武力清除的對象？而兩岸出現衝突，不是我們廣大台灣民眾想要看到的。

環球時報：如果用一兩個字來概括上半年的兩岸關係，您會用什麼字呢？

賴岳謙：越來越糟。

我覺得大陸對台灣一直有誠意，很有耐心。只要我們到大陸去，大陸同胞都張開雙臂歡迎，熱誠地接待。大陸對台灣的民眾也好，企業也好，或願意到大陸參觀旅遊、教學、閱讀、生活的人，都是盡心盡力在安排、在接待。但是台灣這邊的民進黨對於大陸年輕的學生、商人、學者，更不用講對大陸的官員，不但毫無善意，而且充滿敵意。



環球時報：7月26日就要進行「立委」大罷免投票。這次大罷免的結果，對台灣來說意味著什麼？

賴岳謙：如果民進黨慘敗的話，我覺得對於台灣是一件大好的事，對於賴清德的政治地位會有很大的衝擊，也會影響到明年的縣市長選舉以及2028年賴清德連任。大家都知道，大罷免是賴清德推動的，一旦慘敗，基本上要負起完全的責任。所以，我覺得最主要的就是怎麼樣讓民進黨慘敗。

環球時報：台灣民眾對大罷免是什麼態度？

賴岳謙：目前反對罷免的聲音越來越大，主張罷免的人在台灣比較弱勢，越來越多的人討厭他們。我親眼看到有民眾對他們說，“你們吃飽沒事幹”，還有民眾罵他們“民進黨就是輸不起，輸了就要賴，這樣做太不要臉”，用各種各樣的方式罵他們、諷刺他們。

但問題關鍵在於7月26日這天，反對大罷免的人願不願意走出去投下那一票。這點很重要，需要熱情，也需要有危機意識。也就是說，要這麼多的人在這個禮拜六，願意走出家門去投票反對。反對大罷免不能只是內心反對，要用行動來表示，這樣才能夠打敗民進黨，還台灣太平。（環球時報報道記者吳薇）

8/5 <https://m.weibo.cn/status/5196287425122944>

## APPENDIX-2

**Table 2: Coding Table**

關鍵字／詞語	編碼定義	範例
1 表情包大戰	以大量表情包／貼圖為主要互動手段的網路行動形式，透過視覺迷因大量佔領留言空間與情緒；具有娛樂化與動員雙重功能。	「帝吧出征表情包大戰 很多明星就是被做成愛國表情包」
2 愛國表情包	將影星或符號加工為帶有愛國信息的迷因，用以宣示民族立場或作輿論攻擊。	「很多明星就是被做成愛國表情包」
3 網路老人／90後	世代標籤，表徵參與者的年代記憶或自我認同（網路資歷）。	「怎麼感覺我真的是網路老人 咱們 90 後真的見證了一個個時代」
4 台獨	指稱「台灣獨立」之政治立場（被編碼為被攻擊/反對之目標詞）。	「民進黨普遍支持台灣脫離中國獨立。」
5 統一	要求台灣與大陸合併、接受北京管制之政治訴求或口號。	「數以萬計的貼文要求台灣與大陸統一，接受北京的控制。」
6 軍事演習	官方軍事威懾行動，常用以強化政治訊息或情勢升溫脈絡。	「中國在台灣對面的海岸舉行軍事演習。」
7 八榮八恥	中共宣傳語，成為帖文中複製貼上的政治口號素材。	「許多人反覆在蔡英文的 Facebook 頁面上發布...‘八榮八恥’。」
8 熱愛祖國	愛國口號化表述，常作為正當化集體行動的情緒標註。	「其中包括鼓勵‘熱愛祖國’。」
9 翻牆／繞過防火牆／VPN	技術行為詞，指中國網民使用工具進入被封鎖的外部平台以參與行動。	「精通技術的用戶經常繞過這些限制。」
10 言論自由	台灣方面的核心價值詞，用於回應或對比大陸限制；呈現跨境語境對立。	「這個國家的偉大之處在於每個人都能行使自己的權利。」（蔡英文）
11 諷刺／諷刺地祝賀	台灣網民使用反諷作為回應策略，揭示行動中的矛盾。	「台灣的 Facebook 用戶也諷刺地祝賀大陸批評者繞過了防火牆。」
12 寸草不生	行動的戰鬥口號之一，象徵強勢攻擊與不留餘地的態度。	「帝吧出征 寸草不生」
13 帝吧出征	事件名稱與行動標識，指代該次大規模跨境留言行動。	「帝吧今晚七點 FB 出征 #帝吧 fb 出征#」
14 路（如一路、二路、三路）	行動分工術語，指示不同小組與任務分配的組織化結構。	「一路 收集 td 言論和圖片...二路 發帖招人...三路 制作反 td 圖片和言論...」
15 戰場化／前線	把社群互動視為戰場的語言，顯示動員語境的戰爭化隱喻。	「前線一路戰場化」
16 收集 td 言論和圖片	資料蒐集任務代碼化，表明出征行動有資料採集與彙整步驟。	「一路 收集 td 言論和圖片」
17 制作反 td 圖片	創作攻擊性或反駁性視覺內容的指令性語句。	「三路 制作反 td 圖片和言論」
18 外語翻譯	將攻擊性或宣傳語翻譯為外語以向外擴散的策略行為。	「四路...反 td 外語翻譯」

19	專門舉報、點讚 (b 舉報、贊)	平台操作任務—舉報、點讚作為操控平台推薦或下架策略。	「五路 專門 b 舉報、讚」
20	TAIWAN BELONGS TO MY COUNTRY	直接英文口號表述，強化國家主權主張並向國際受眾傳達。	「TAIWAN BELONGS TO MY COUNTRY」
21	We are Chinese / 我們是中國人	集體身分宣示，作為行動正當性與團結感來源。	「We are Chinese」
22	Taiwan is an inalienable part of China / 台湾是中国的一部分	官方式領域主張語句的復述，作為主權論述核心。	「Taiwan is an inalienable part of China」
23	丑成这样还学人 / 搞独立 傻逼	人身攻擊、辱罵性詞語，用來貶抑對方與抹殺對方立場。	「丑成这样还学人 搞独立 傻逼」
24	劳资可是社会主义接班人	世代／意識形態自我宣示（宣稱為社會主義接班人），作為動員身份語彙。	「劳资可是社会主义接班人」
25	你算个什么东西也放在我面前装逼	貶抑與侮辱性話語，強化攻擊立場。	「你算个什么东西也放在我面前装逼」
26	早在三国时期...	歷史敘事與合理化主張，使用古代史證明對台主權的歷史連續性論述。	「早在三国时期...清政府设置台湾府...隶属于福建省」
27	甯天猴 (表情包)	特定迷因或諷刺圖像（以俚語或標籤化形式出現）作為攻擊或娛樂工具。	「给你个甯天猴你去上天吧!」
28	FB 表情包大战 #標籤	群組化的標籤與號召，利於在平台上擴散與搜尋。	「#FB 表情包大战##fb 表情包大战#」
29	前线提供表情包	把生產表情包視為支援前線的長期資源與責任。	「国家培养我的目的了,就是为前线提供无穷无尽的表情包!」
30	社会主义接班人	意識形態自我定位詞，反映政治正當性來源。	「如果说我们还有丝毫的联系 那大概就是我们都是社会主义的接班人吧」
31	台湾属于我国	與英文口號相對應的中文主權宣示，用於留言轟炸。	「台湾属于我国」
32	裝逼模式 (老夫装逼五十余载)	含諷刺或誇示自誇的語言，作為幽默化或自豪化表達。	「老夫装逼五十余载 从未见过如此装法」
33	made in china	國族標記／揶揄語，用在貶抑或自豪語境中視語境而定。	「made in china」
34	斗图 / 斗图大战	以拼圖、表情包互鬥為主要互動形式的動員語言。	「听说湾湾要在 FB 上和我们斗图,这么牛逼...」
35	前线/小组/大群	群組化動員結構與動員流程（分組、公告、退群等作業術語）。	「新人请看群公告,因为现在 大群人满,所以请战友们加入小组后退大群」
36	台海两相望 / 台海一家 (詩句)	詩化或文學化的民族主義表述，用以美化或情感動員。	詩句範例：「台海两相望 独站天安楼...台上笙箫沁海边风波平」
37	家和万事兴	簡短箴言式的口號，強調統一帶來的秩序與繁榮。	「家和万事兴」

38	拔山河盖世 / 生当为豪杰	激昂的英雄化語言，用於英雄主義與戰鬥榮耀的動員話語。	詩句範例：「拔山河盖世 出生死随意 征刀劍如海」
39	无主之地	將賴清德言論描述為否定主權歸屬、挑戰歷史合法性的說法	「賴清德企圖把台灣變成‘無主之地’、把台灣同胞變成‘無根浮萍’。」（新華社）
40	數典忘祖	批評台灣政治人物背離中華歷史與文化認同的政治修辭	「數典忘祖，用心險惡。」（人民日報）
41	妄称	用以否定賴清德的歷史陳述、暗示其為虛假言論	「妄稱直至明末清初中國才與台灣有關係。」（新華社）
42	倚外谋独	描述賴清德依靠國際勢力推動台獨的政治指控	「妄圖‘倚外謀獨’，以武謀獨。」（央視新聞）
43	以武谋独	將賴清德與軍事威脅掛鉤，暗示其破壞和平	「在‘賣台’‘毀台’的邪路上一條道走到黑。」（國防部發布）
44	毀台	將其政治行動定性為危害台灣自身利益	「民進黨在把老百姓騙上毀台絕路。」（國防部新聞局）
45	賣台	將台獨主張與背叛國家利益相聯結	「在‘賣台’‘毀台’邪路上一條道走到黑。」（陳斌華發言）
46	戰爭販賣者	用於人格化批判，強調賴清德挑起兩岸衝突	「徹頭徹尾的‘戰爭販賣者’。」（央視新聞）
47	麻煩製造者	以輕蔑語氣削弱政治正當性	「名副其實的‘麻煩製造者’。」（國台辦）
48	台独分裂行径	對所有不符合「一中原則」言行的官方總稱	「對任何‘台獨’分裂行徑決不容忍、決不姑息。」（國台辦發言）
49	祖国怀抱	用以象徵統一與民族歸屬	「讓台灣回歸祖國懷抱的歷史事實。」（人民日報）
50	民族尊严	將統一與民族榮譽掛鉤的核心論述	「守護共同家園的勝利成果，捍衛民族尊嚴。」（新華社）
51	搬弄是非	指責台灣領導人“曲解歷史”或“挑撥對立”	「偷換概念、混淆是非。」（國台辦）
52	歪理邪说	表示言論荒謬、違背常理的貶抑性語言	「又是一通歪理邪說。」（陳斌華發言）
53	冥顽不化	對政治人物定性的重複性描述，顯示宣傳模式	「充分暴露其冥頑不化的台獨本性。」（人民日報）
54	反中抗中	將台灣民主政治行為歸類為敵對操作	「一味操弄‘反中抗中’。」（朱鳳蓮發言）
55	裹挟民意	認為民進黨以群眾動員掩蓋政治圖謀	「裹挾台灣民意，妄圖將台灣社會軍事化。」（國防部）
56	谎言包装	認為演講內容經過政治包裝以掩飾真實目的	「用精心編織的謊言包裝‘台獨’圖謀。」（國防部新聞局）
57	历史歪曲	將賴清德論述定性為歷史偽造	「賴清德刻意篡改歷史，否認台灣自古屬於中國。」（央視新聞）

58	祖国统一	統一論述的核心標語，呈現價值目標	「祖國統一的歷史大勢不可阻擋。」（人民日報）
59	台澎金马	將主權具體化的象徵性用語	「台澎金馬都是中國神聖領土。」（國防部）
60	绝路一条	對“台獨”最強烈的結語式否定語	「挑戰國家主權搞‘台獨’分裂，只是絕路一條。」（新華社）
61	保护费	用以暗指與美國合作為“出賣主權”	「為外部勢力繳納‘保護費’、遞‘投名狀’。」（陳斌華發言）
62	杂质	對賴清德人格化侮辱的政治修辭	「賴清德才是真正的‘雜質’，不打掉台灣就沒未來。」（人民日報鐘一平）
63	翻车四讲	用諷刺語形容演講失敗與民意反彈	「‘團結十講’淪為‘翻車四講’，成為笑柄與罪證。」（人民日報）
64	罢免案全军覆没	將政治失敗作為報應性敘事	「7月26日罷免案全軍覆沒。」（新華社）
65	谋私	將政治行為解釋為個人利益驅動	「謀獨先謀私。」（人民日報）
66	伪命题	以理性框架否定對方言論的策略性用詞	「用‘南島語族’等偽命題包裝台獨意識形態。」（央視新聞）
67	历史民粹化	用於指責台灣將歷史政治化、情緒化	「將學術工具化、歷史民粹化的卑劣表演。」（人民日報）
68	民生困顿	以民生對比政治，塑造價值判斷	「當民生困頓、災害肆虐時，他只顧罷免政治。」（人民日報）
69	兩岸一家親	曾被視為緩和口號，但在此語境中常被網民諷刺或反駁。	「還講什麼‘兩岸一家親’，笑話！」（微博留言）
70	愛國青年	網民對自我或他人角色的正面認同。	「我們愛國青年要行動起來！」（微博留言）

## APPENDIX-3



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5





Figure 4



Figure 7



Figure 8





Figure 5



Figure 6

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Chen, Ouyang, Sonya Song, and Mike Z Yao. "Brands as a Nation: An Analysis of Overseas Media Engagement of Top Chinese Brands." *Global Media and China* 5, no. 1 (2020): 22-39.
- Harwit, Eric, and Duncan Clark. "Shaping the Internet in China. Evolution of Political Control over Network Infrastructure and Content." *Asian Survey* 41, no. 3 (2001): 377-408.
- Huang, Marco. "Chinese Netizens Flood Tsai Ing-Wen's Facebook Page with Anti-Taiwan Independence Posts." *WSJ Blogs-China Real Time Report* (2016).
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E Roberts. "How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression." *American political science Review* 107, no. 2 (2013): 326-43.
- Li, Hongmei. "Branding Chinese Products: Between Nationalism and Transnationalism." *International Journal of Communication* 2 (2008): 38.
- Pinghui, Zhuang. "The Rise of the Little Pinks: China's Angry Young Digital Warriors." *South China Morning Post* 26 (2017): 768.
- Qiyue, Wang, and Li Mingjiang. "Japanese Boy Stabbed in Shenzhen: Alarm Bells Ring for the Traffic-Driven Business of Cyber Nationalism in China." (2024).
- Schneider, Florian. "Emergent Nationalism in China's Sociotechnical Networks: How Technological Affordance and Complexity Amplify Digital Nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism* 28, no. 1 (2022): 267-85.
- Sullivan, Jonathan, and Weixiang Wang. "China's 'Wolf Warrior Diplomacy': The Interaction of Formal Diplomacy and Cyber-Nationalism." *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 52, no. 1 (2023): 68-88.
- Wu, Xiaoping, and Richard Fitzgerald. "Internet Memes and the Mobilization of a 'One-China' Cyber Nationalist Campaign: The Case of the 2016 Diba Expedition to Taiwan." *Social Semiotics* 34, no. 4 (2024): 697-719.
- Yang, Guobin. "Internet Activism & the Party-State in China." *Daedalus* 143, no. 2 (2014): 110-23.
- Zeng, Jinghan, Tim Stevens, and Yaru Chen. "China's Solution to Global Cyber Governance: Unpacking the Domestic Discourse of 'Internet Sovereignty'." *Politics & Policy* 45, no. 3 (2017): 432-64.
- Zhang, Xiaoyu, Delia Dumitrica, and Jeroen Jansz. "Mapping Chinese Digital Nationalism: A Literature Review." *International Journal of Communication* 18 (2024): 22.