

Implementation of China's Cultural Policy through TV Drama as Public Diplomacy Practice

Nadhira Alia Putri

International Relation Department, Faculty of Humanities
Bina Nusantara University
Jakarta, Indonesia
nadhira.putri@binus.ac.id

Rangga Aditya Elias

Head Department of International Relations, Faculty of Humanities
Bina Nusantara University
Jakarta, Indonesia
raaditya@binus.edu

Abstract

Since the work report made on behalf of the 16th CPC Central Committee to the 17th CPC Central Committee, China has emphasized culture as part of the country's soft power. Recently, with the cultural industry being introduced as a pillar industrial sector in the 12th Five-Year Plan, China has developed cultural policies to manage its cultural industry, such as film and drama. After the establishment of the "going global" strategy, Chinese entertainment media are now more accessible and receiving much attention from foreign audiences. With the emergence of Chinese dramas on several international streaming platforms and the latest digital cultural industry policy issued in 2020, this article offers an analysis of the implementation of the Chinese cultural policy through a TV Drama "Word of Honour" as a public diplomacy practice.

Keywords

Public Diplomacy, Cultural Policy, Cultural Industry, International Broadcasting

1. Introduction

The rise of China's economic basket case for an economic superpower (Peng & Keane 2019) allowed China's global economic presence to be unparalleled (Keane 2016). Despite having an indisputable 'hard' influence (Keane 2016), China's cultural and socio-political presence was not very popular. Thus, China hopes to re-establish its significance as a major cultural power (Liu 2019) by using soft power and public diplomacy to change the image of rising China from a hard to a soft rise (Wang 2008).

Joseph Nye popularised the term soft power. He defined soft power as the ability to achieve the outcomes you want from others through the power of attraction and persuasion (Nye 2004). Soft power rest on the ability to shape the preference of others through the attractiveness of a country's culture, political values, and foreign policy (Nye 2004). The concept was prevalent in many countries, including China.

Recently, soft power has emerged as a core concept in the Chinese cultural development policy framework (Zhang 2010). President Hu Jintao stressed the need to enhance Chinese culture as part of the country's 'soft power' in the work report made on behalf of the 16th CPC Central Committee to the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (Zhang 2010). It reflected the strategic importance of culture in China (Zhang 2010).

In the Chinese understanding of soft power, they emphasize culture as the core of soft power (Wu 2018; G. Zhang 2017) and an essential resource for state power creating the terms cultural soft power (*wenhuan ruan shili*) (Beard & Filho 2019; Glaser & Murphy 2009; Keane 2016). While Nye's explanation of soft power is U.S.-centric and focuses on American popular culture and political models, the Chinese counterpart focuses on China's traditional culture and economic development model (M. Li 2009; Y. Zhang & Zhang 2012). It includes China's national cohesion, social justice, political reform, anti-corruption, moral level, and others (M. Li 2009; Y. Zhang & Zhang 2012).

To expand Chinese cultural clout and soft power externally, the Chinese Government exercises a cultural policy that integrates society by showing a clear national identity internally (Lim 2013). In practice, the Chinese

Government carried out a variety of cultural policies such as cultural security, soft power, national image, cultural diplomacy, Confucius revival, and the Confucius Institute (Lim 2013).

In general, cultural policy is what actors envision and enact in terms of cultural affairs (Isar 2009). Nevertheless, the cultural policy could also be seen as a site to produce cultural citizens, with the cultural industries providing not only a realm of representations about oneself and others but a series of rationales for types of conduct' (Lewis & Miller 2003). Lewis and Miller (2003) argued that cultural policy produced and animated institutions, practices, and agencies to find, serve, and nurture a sense of belonging through educational institutions and cultural industries. Jennifer Craik offered another definition of cultural policy. She defined cultural policy 'as the range of cultural practices, products, and forms of circulation and consumption that are organized and subject to policy domains' (Craik 2007). Craik also offers two main definitions of the scope of cultural policy. In the first definition, cultural policy refers to regulating the marketplace of ideas and creative practice (Craik 2007). While the second definition, cultural policy, refers to policies that manage the production, distribution, and consumption or use of cultural resources (Craik 2007).

The term "cultural industry" was introduced and to be incorporated into a Chinese governmental project in the 10th Five-Year Plan in 2004 as part of the "going global" strategy (Lee 2018). In 2009, through the Cultural Industry Promotion Plan, the State Council set out the guidelines and basic principles for developing the cultural industry (Jiang et al., 2019). It also includes the development goals and direction of the industry, specified critical sectors of the industry as cultural and creative products, film and television production, publishing, printing and reproduction, advertising, entertainment, conference and exhibition, digital content, and animations, and listed a series of policies and measures for promoting the development of the cultural industry (Jiang et al. 2019; Shan 2014).

The 12th Five-Year Plan introduced the importance of cultural industries as a pillar industrial sector (Hong 2011; Lee 2018). It emphasized the views of the Chinese central Government on the cultural industries as a fundamental element in steering China's economic development (Jiang et al., 2019; Lee, 2018). Moreover, the 13th Five-Year Plan includes strategies for developing traditional and new media, going culturally global, and framing the cultural industry as a critical industry to build China into a cultural superpower (Lee 2018).

National Bureau of Statistics of China defined the cultural industry as activities that supply cultural products, entertainment and related services, and jobs (Jianfei 2011). The culture and related industries are divided into two divisions according to the nature of activities. The "cultural related area" is a division that refers to the activities for realizing the production of cultural products (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2021). While "cultural core area" refers to the production activities of cultural products (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2021), including film and television drama.

Recently, Chinese television drama gained more foreign audiences as it is now available to stream on an international streaming platform such as Netflix. "Word of Honor" is an example of a recent *wuxia* drama popular with foreign audiences. It is a streaming television drama series co-produced by Ciwen Media and Youku. It was aired on Youku, China's streaming and video hosting service, from February 22 to May 5, 2021. "Word of Honor" was also aired on Youku's official YouTube channel with various subtitles and is now available to stream on international streaming platforms such as Netflix, Prime Video, and Viki.

This paper aims to analyze the implementation of the cultural policy with the drama "Word of Honor" through the lens of public diplomacy. It begins with literature reviews on public diplomacy, followed by the methodology employed in this paper. The third section discusses China's cultural policy and the drama "Word of Honor." Moreover, the discussion part of this paper focuses on analyzing the implementation of the cultural policy through the drama "Word of Honor." Finally, the last section concludes with implementing the cultural policy through popular culture and how it works as a practice of public diplomacy.

2. Review Literature (Public Diplomacy)

Many actors have defined public diplomacy in different nations over the years. Thus, it is hard to have a singular definition to explain the term public diplomacy. In general, public diplomacy is the communication of an international actor's policies to the citizen of foreign countries (Pamment 2013). In more specific definition, Gregory (2011) defined public diplomacy as 'an instrument used by states, the association of states, and some sub-state and non-state actors to understand cultures, attitudes, and behavior, to build and manage the relationship and to influence thoughts and mobilize action to advance their interests and values. Similarly, Hartig (2016) defined public diplomacy as a country's engagement and communication with foreign publics to deliver certain narratives and images of the country to promote its soft power and, in doing so, their national interest'.

Nevertheless, a framework is needed to understand better how countries develop and conduct public diplomacy. D'Hooghe (2015) created an analytical framework to study and analyse a country's public diplomacy. The framework relies on three major dimensions that constitute a country's public diplomacy: organizational or policymaking, the content of public diplomacy, and public diplomacy's instrument.

The organizational dimension consisted of the decision-making process and the actors involved. It is the most crucial as the actors determine the content of public diplomacy activities and decide on the instruments (d'Hooghe 2015). By actors, it could be both state and non-state actors, depending on the country's political system. The state actors can be divided into two: the central level and the local level. The main level actors may include state leaders, ministers, and officials at ministries and diplomatic missions; military representatives; members of the royal family; and trade promotion and tourism offices (d'Hooghe 2015). Meanwhile, the local level actors may include representatives of local governments, provinces and cities, and harbor authorities (d'Hooghe 2015). On the contrary, the non-state actors are classified into five groups: the academic world, NGOs and lobby groups, the business world, cultural organizations, and citizens (d'Hooghe 2015).

The role that state and non-state actors play is related to how the development and conduct of public diplomacy are organized (d'Hooghe 2015). In the state-oriented model of public diplomacy, state actors dominate the development and conduct of public diplomacy (Hocking 2005), while non-actors act upon instructions from the state and are closely controlled by the state (d'Hooghe 2015). Meanwhile, in the network or new public diplomacy model, state and non-state actors develop and conduct public diplomacy and are equal partners as they jointly or independently develop and spread messages to the public (d'Hooghe 2015).

The second dimension is the content of public diplomacy, consisting of strategies, narratives, and messages (d'Hooghe 2015). The content could be analyzed by examining the policy as it reflected the themes, narratives, and messages the country wanted to deliver and the image it wanted to project. Generally, countries asserted they (perceived) sources of soft power in areas where they believe they have a comparative advantage over the country or audience targeted (d'Hooghe 2015). According to d'Hooghe (2015), the content of public diplomacy is developed in three domains. First, the domestic and foreign policy domain served the country's political and security goals. Second, the economic domain served the country's economic goals through trade promotion and tourism. Lastly, the cultural domain serves cultural goals, which include mutual understanding and appreciation of a country's values through cultural diplomacy and people-to-people diplomacy (d'Hooghe 2015).

The last dimension is the instrument of public diplomacy. It is a tool used by the country to execute its public diplomacy. D'Hooghe (2015) identified five categories of instruments used by countries. First is the media, consisting of traditional and new media alongside mobile phone technologies. The second is events, including small-scale and large-scale cultural and sporting events. The following category is a strategic communication project that relies on various tools, including media, publications, seminars, and branding activities. Moreover, exchange, network meetings, and tourism tools are part of the people and institutions category. The last category includes books, brochures, and video clips as promotional materials (d'Hooghe 2015).

Upon the following framework, this paper aims to analyse China's cultural policy as part of public diplomacy practice.

3. Research Methodology

This paper used a qualitative research method. This method was used to do a content analysis of the data. It is also used because this paper focuses on the meanings and process of implementing China's cultural policy as public diplomacy practice. Furthermore, this paper focused on the phenomena of the high popularity of the drama "Word of Honor" among foreign audiences and the use of international streaming platforms such as Netflix.

The primary data for this paper was collected from documents and speeches issued by China's leader, China Communist Party, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the National Radio, and Television Bureau, and "Word of Honor" production representatives such as Youku and the drama's director. Official documents used include "Opinion of Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Promoting the High-Quality Development of the Digital Cultural Industry," "Guiding Opinion of the Ministry of Culture on Pushing Forward the Innovation and Development of Digital Cultural Industry," audio-visual regulations, and speeches related to the digital cultural industry. Meanwhile, the secondary data was collected from various journals, books about China's soft power, public diplomacy, China's cultural policy, and cultural industry alongside news media about the drama "Word of Honor."

Data is collected through the library and internet-based research on the mentioned topics, followed by content analysis. The process begins by creating a dataset based on the collection of journals and books about China's soft power, public diplomacy, China's cultural policy, and cultural industry. The dataset was made to create a literature review. The digital cultural industry policy was also added to the dataset and was classified based on the topics.

The content of the policy then been analyzed to build the narratives of the article. Speeches by the Government and the "Word of Honor" production team were added to the dataset as supporting data.

4. China's Cultural Policy and Cultural Industry

In this paper, cultural policy is defined as the range of cultural practices, products, and forms of circulation and consumption that are organized and subject to domains of policy (Craik 2007) and focuses on the second definition of the scope of cultural policy. Through this definition of cultural policy, the Government was seen as the leading role in directly managing the field of cultural production and creative activity (Craik 2007). This leading role could be played through several means: ownership of cultural bodies, direct employment of cultural practitioners, commissioning works and acting as impresario for touring (Craik 2007). Furthermore, to make the policies work, the government agencies set the framework for manifesting cultural resources (Craik 2007).

In the State Council Gazette No. 28 of 2017, the State Council issued the "Guiding Opinion of the Ministry of Culture on Pushing Forward the Innovation and Development of Digital Cultural Industry." It was stated that the digital cultural industry had become a key area of cultural industry development and an essential part of the digital economy (State Council 2017). Moreover, to implement the "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for the Development of National Strategic Emerging Industries" and The Ministry of Culture's "Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for Cultural Development and Reform Plan," some opinions were offered to promote the innovative development of the digital cultural industry. Those opinions include promoting the digitization of excellent cultural resources, enriching the content and form of the online cultural industry, participating in the international division of labour and cooperation in the digital cultural industry, and increasing the policy guarantee of the digital cultural industry (State Council 2017).

To implement the decisions and arrangements by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism issued the "Opinion of Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Promoting the High-Quality Development of the Digital Cultural Industry" in 2020. It is a cultural policy focused on developing the integration of cultural industry with technology and the internet. From this policy, they expected to create new employment and jobs and form industrial chains that adapt to new technologies, new forms of business, new consumption development, and industry chains (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020). By 2025, China is expected to cultivate 20 leading enterprises with outstanding social and economic benefits, strong innovation capabilities, and international influence and continue to emerge with unique and dynamic small, medium, and micro enterprises (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020). It creates five regional influences, leads digital culture industrial clusters for industrial development, and builds 00 digital cultural industry projects with demonstration and driving effects (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020). (Table 1)

Table 1. Digital Cultural Industry Policy Topics

No	Topics	Sub-Topics
1	Consolidating the foundation for the development of the digital cultural industry	Strengthen the content construction of the digital cultural industry Speed up the construction of new infrastructure Promote technological innovation and application Stimulate the potential of data resources elements Cultivate market entities
2	Cultivating new formats of the digital cultural industry	Build an industry-standard system Promote the digitization of excellent cultural resources Deepen integrated development Develop platform economy Cultivate cloud performing arts format Enrich cloud exhibition formats Develop an immersive business format Strengthen the digital cultural equipment Meeting the emerging consumer demand
3	Building a digital cultural industry ecosystem	Promote the innovation and application of the industrial chain Improve innovation and entrepreneurship services Integrate into the regional development strategy Optimize market environment Deepen international cooperation
4	Safeguards	Strengthen organizational leadership Improve policy environment Strengthen element support

The content of the policy can be divided into four main topics, as shown in Table 1. The first topic is consolidating the foundation for developing the digital cultural industry. This topic discussed how to strengthen the content construction of the digital cultural industry, how to speed up the construction of new infrastructure, how to promote technological innovation and application, how to stimulate the potential of data resources elements, how to cultivate market entities, and how to build an industry-standard system (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

The second topic is cultivating new formats in the digital cultural industry. Within this topic, it discussed how to promote the digitization of excellent cultural resources, how to deepen integrated development, how to develop a platform economy, how to cultivate the cloud performing arts format, how to enrich cloud exhibition formats, how to develop immersive business formats, how to improve the strength of digital cultural equipment, and how to meet the emerging consumer demand (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

The third topic talked about building a digital cultural industry ecosystem. It includes how to promote the innovation and application of the industrial chain, improve innovation and entrepreneurship services, integrate into regional development strategy, optimize the market environment, and deepen international cooperation (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

Last, the fourth topic is about safeguards. It discussed strengthening organizational leadership, improving the policy environment, and strengthening the element support (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

There are several ways to carry out the mentioned cultural policy into practice. Moreover, one of them is through online television dramas such as "Word of Honor." With the increasing popularity of Chinese *wuxia* among foreign audiences (Jou 2013), it is understandable that "Word of Honor" also received much love from foreign audiences and was broadcasted on international streaming platforms.

Starring Zhang Zhehan Gong Jun, "Word of Honor" is a *wuxia* drama about the adventure of Zhou Zishu, the previous leader of the assassin organization, and Wen Kexing, the leader of Ghost Valley. As previously mentioned, this drama was co-produced by Ciyen Media and Youku. Youku is one of the largest Chinese video hosting sites with many popular television shows. It is a major competitor to other platforms films and television series are increasingly made for the web, transforming entertainment and children's viewing (de Burgh, 2020). Youku itself works as a subsidiary of Alibaba Group, one of the big three Chinese ICT companies.

According to Keane and Chen (2019), the big three Chinese ICT companies (Alibaba, Baidu, and Tencent) endorsed the goal of rebooting China's economy. They argued that the digitization of China's cultural resources, along with the belief that digital start-ups will kick-start China's 'indigenous innovation' capacity, is part of the development agenda that underpinned the announcement of the digital creative industry (Keane & Chen 2019).

Thus, considering this finding, this paper aims to analyse the implementation of China's cultural policy through the "Word of Honor" series as part of a public diplomacy practice.

5. Cultural Policy as a Public Diplomacy Practice

This section is divided into three. The first section focuses on public diplomacy's actors and the decision-making process in China. The second section examines the public diplomacy content by analysing its strategy, narrative, and message. Lastly, the third section discusses public diplomacy's instrument for the case of "Word of Honor."

5.1 Actor and Decision-Making Process



Figure 1. Decision-making Process

Planning the policy is the first process in making a cultural policy (Figure 1). Formulating a planning policy or the five-year planning (FYP) system is crucial in China. (Huilin 2019; L. Wang & Shen 2014). The purpose of planning is to make an overall layout and plan for the development of the cultural industry, such as direction and goals for the cultural industry's future development (Huilin 2019). Per the "National Economic and Social Development Plan" or the national development comprehensive plan, the formulation of a "cultural development

plan" happens every five years (Huilin 2019). The development plan consisted of basic guidelines, development direction, main objective, major tasks, and measures (Huilin 2019; Melton 2013).

The high-quality development of the digital cultural industry was introduced in the 13th Five-Year Plan of Cultural Industry Development Plan in April 2017. It was stated that the Government wants to promote the application of high technology such as the internet in cultural creation, production, dissemination, consumption, and other links. It also stated that they want to promote the cultural industry and manufacturing, architecture, design, information, tourism, agriculture, sports, health, and other related industry by utilizing the technology. It is stated that they want to implement the strategic deployment of supply-side structural reform, optimize the structural layout of the cultural industry, focus on the development of key cultural enterprises and creative cultural industry, cultivate new cultural formats, promote the transformation, upgrade the cultural industry, improve quality and efficiency, also build a reasonable structure, complete categories, and technological content. Thus, resulting in a high, creative, and competitive modern cultural industry system (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2017).

The 13th five-year plan also stated China's plan to integrate with the international market to build an open economic system. China plans to deeply participate in the international cultural industry's division of labor, study, formulate and implement relevant policies and measures for foreign cultural trade. They also plan to accelerate the pace of China's cultural products, services, and cultural enterprises to go global and enhance China's competitiveness in the international cultural industry market. Furthermore, they want to build a new pattern of international exchanges and cooperation in the cultural industry that is mutually beneficial (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2017).

After the planning, it came to the formulation and operation part of the cultural policy (Figure 1). Following China's political system, the decision-making process is under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, the National People's Congress, and the State Council (Heilmann & Melton 2013; Huilin 2019). Meanwhile, the ones who handle the policy management and operation at the local level are the central and central ministries alongside the commissions (Heilmann & Melton 2013; Huilin 2019). China's cultural policy operational structure involves top-down implementation and cross-ministerial or intergovernmental cooperation with top-level policymakers who pay attention to the top-level design. At the same time, the lower-level organizations implemented the designed cultural policies (Huilin 2019) (Figure 2).

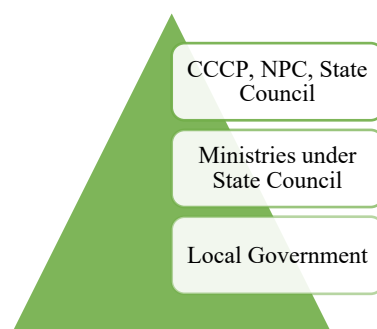


Figure 2. Actors

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCP) is the leading Party coordination body and the most crucial body in the Chinese political system (Jakobson & Manuel 2016). It is responsible for the top-level design of China's cultural policy systems. CCCP determines institutional policies related to the national cultural development strategy, cultural system reform, national cultural security, and others (Huilin 2019). Documents and policies issued by the CCCP became the foundation of the cultural industry administration (Huilin 2019). Meanwhile, the Central Propaganda Department is CCCP's functional department responsible for guiding the development of cultural undertakings and industries (Huilin 2019).

The National People's Congress is China's highest legislative body. Its function is to interpret the constitution; enact and amend laws other than those to be enacted by the full NPC; interpret laws; overseeing the work of the State Council, Central Military Commission, National Supervisory Commission, Supreme People's Court, and Supreme People's Procuratorate; deciding on the appointment or removal of the PRC's representatives abroad; ratifying and abrogating treaties and other important agreements with foreign countries; declaring a state of war in certain circumstances; deciding on national or local mobilization, and deciding whether to declare a state of emergency nationwide or in parts of the country (Lawrence & Lee 2021). The cultural policy decision-making process is responsible for formulating and promulgating cultural laws and reviewing relevant international cultural conventions (Huilin 2019).

State Council is the cabinet of China's Government and is described as the highest organ of State administration. It is responsible for implementing policies formulated by the CPC and laws passed by the NPC and overseeing the day-to-day work of the state bureaucracy (Lawrence & Lee 2021). Adhering to its function, the State Council is responsible for enacting cultural and administrative regulations and rules, formulating, and implementing a cultural policy that the CCCP and NPC previously formed promoting cultural development, and organizing international cultural exchanges and cooperation (Huilin 2019).

The ministries and commissions under the State Council promulgated and implemented the high-level decision-makers cultural industry policies. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is one of the constituent departments and entities under the State Council. It is the supreme institution of Chinese cultural administration and is responsible for the cultural and artistic undertaking of the State Council (Huilin 2019). In addition, when talking about the cultural industry, the National Radio, and Television Bureau (NRTA) must be discussed. NRTA is an agency directly under the State Council responsible for radio and television management, replacing the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) (Huilin 2019).

The local governments at the prefectural, city, and county levels have the legislative powers of the local cultural policies granted by law (Chen 2008; Huilin 2019). In implementing the cultural policy, the cultural policy issued by the Central Government is detailed by the local governments (Huilin 2019). They own management authority regarding local cultural undertakings and the development of local cultural industry (Huilin 2019). The local Government's policies are based on local conditions and protect citizens' cultural rights and interests (Chen 2008; Huilin 2019).

Table 2. Actors and Tasks

No	Actors	Task
1	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCP)	Create a top-level design for all of China's cultural policy system
2	National People's Congress (NPC)	Formulating and promulgating cultural laws and reviewing relevant international cultural conventions
3	State Council	Enacting cultural and administrative regulations and rules, formulating, and implementing cultural policy formed by CCCP and NPC
4	Ministry of Culture and Tourism	Managing and operating the cultural policy
5	National Radio and Television Bureau (NRTA)	Managing and operating the cultural policy
6	Local governments	Implementing the cultural policy at the local level

In conclusion, as China followed the authoritarian political system, the Government became the centre of the decision-making process. It used a top-down implementation system with the Central Government at the top of the hierarchy. In creating public diplomacy, the decision-making process went through three steps of operation: planning, formation, and operation or implementation. The central Government, such as the CCCP, NPC and State Council are responsible for the grand design of public diplomacy. Meanwhile, the ministries and agencies under the State Council and the local governments are responsible for implementing the policies designed by the Central Government (Table 2).

5.2 Public Diplomacy Content

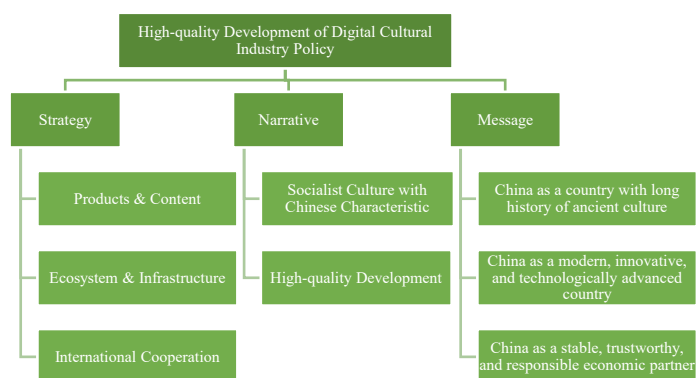


Figure 3. Content

The digital cultural industry policy was issued in 2020 and made available online at the Ministry of Cultural and Tourism's official website under "Cultural Tourism Industry Issue [2020] No. 78". It is stipulated in the policy that they want the existence of the digital cultural industry to be able to deliver the story of China, present a good image of China, and promote the spirit of China. Those things carry out through fully exploring cultural resources and improving the quality and connotation of the digital cultural industry by adhering to the guidance of socialist core values. It also wants to promote the deep integration of the cultural industry with the digital and real economies to build a digital cultural industry ecosystem. Through the digitization of the cultural industry, it hoped to grasp the development trend of science and technology, integrate, and apply new technologies, create more scientific and technological innovation achievements in the industry, and provide strong support for the supply of high-quality culture. Moreover, last, they want to strengthen international exchange and cooperation and cultivate new advantages for China to participate in international cooperation and competition through innovating new formats and models of digital cultural service exports and developing digital trade (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

They used to achieve those goals by consolidating the foundation for developing the digital cultural industry, cultivating new formats of digital cultural industry, building a digital cultural industry ecosystem, and implementing safeguards. Focusing on audio-visual and entertainment products, they deeply grasped the attributes of digital cultural content, strengthened the construction of originality capability, and created more digital cultural products that both meet the cultural needs of the people and enhance the spiritual strength of the people. They also cultivated and shaped a group of original IPs with distinctive Chinese cultural characteristics, strengthening IP development and transformation. Using online and digital products, they promoted traditional Chinese cultural creative transformation and innovative development, inheriting revolutionary culture, developing advanced socialist culture, and creating more digital cultural brands with extensive influence (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

China promoted the interaction of resources such as technology, talents, and capital to participate in international cooperation and competition. Also, they cultivate a group of internationally competitive enterprises and a group of products that young overseas users favor. Through the "One Belt, One Road" initiative, they deepen international cooperation in the digital cultural industry by building an exchange and cooperation platform, providing digital services to "One Belt, One Road" countries and regions, and cooperating in developing digital products. The Government also encouraged enterprises to participate in international markets through e-commerce, project cooperation, overseas mergers and acquisitions, and the establishment of branches (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2020).

Socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is the central theme and guiding ideology of the high-quality development of digital cultural industry policy, which conveys the message that China is a country with a long history of ancient culture (d'Hooghe 2005). Socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is derived from China's refined traditional culture, which was born from the Chinese civilization and nurtured over more than 5,000 years (Xinhua 2017). At the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, President Xi Jinping stated that culture is a country and a nation's soul. He stated that without complete confidence in Chinese culture and rich and prosperous culture, the Chinese nation would be unable to rejuvenate itself (Xinhua 2017). Therefore, Xi Jinping believed that they must develop a socialist culture with Chinese characteristics, inspire the cultural creativity of the whole nation, and develop a great socialist culture in China (Xinhua 2017).

The "Opinions of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Promoting the High-Quality Development of the Digital Cultural Industry" expressed how much the Government put importance on Chinese culture. As previously mentioned, the Chinese Government cultivated and shaped a group of original IPs with distinctive Chinese cultural characteristics and promoted the Chinese traditional cultural creative transformation and innovative development through online and digital products.

The second theme is high-quality development. Integrating "Internet +" and cultural industry conveyed that China had become modern, innovative, and technologically advanced (d'Hooghe 2005). The policy shows that China is trying in digitization by supporting and providing the infrastructure and industry-standard system. By utilizing technology, they create supplies for high-quality culture. Thus, it resulted in high-quality digital cultural products such as on-demand video and streaming platforms.

The integration of the cultural industry with the digital economy and the real economy to build a digital cultural industry ecosystem, strengthen international exchange and cooperation, and innovating new formats and models of digital cultural service exports, and develop digital trade, reflects the commitment of China to be a stable, trustworthy, and responsible economic partner (d'Hooghe 2005). By deepening international cooperation in the digital cultural industry through building an exchange and cooperation platform, providing digital services to "One Belt, One Road" countries and regions, and cooperating in developing digital products, China showed its ability

to become a capable economic partner. China's insertion into the international market and willingness to cooperate also conveyed a message of China as a rising economic power that does not have to be feared (d'Hooghe 2005).

To summarise, the High-Quality Development of Digital Cultural Industry content reflected China's public diplomacy strategy. It also delivered the narratives and messages China wanted to tell the world. The policy helped China tell the story of China, presenting a good image of China and promoting the spirit of China through the integration of technology and cultural industry (Figure 3). This policy allows China to achieve its harmonious diplomacy that advocates for peaceful coexisting. Building a relationship through cooperation also allows China to counter the 'China's threat' argument. Thus, it fulfilled China's goal of establishing China's soft rise.

5.3 Instrument

Following the case study for this paper, the *wuxia* drama "Word of Honor" was aired on Youku from February 22 to May 5, 2021, with 36 episodes and gained popularity not only in China but also in Southeast Asia, North America, Europe, and Japan (China Net Technology 2021; Qiu 2021). Zhou Peng, the head of Youku's overseas operations, said that "Word of Honor" has the world view of martial arts and the spirit of chivalry, elements of Chinese culture (Qiu 2021). Ma Tao, the producer of the show, said that "Word of Honor" includes many classical and ancient Chinese poems which are not easy for foreign audiences to understand. Thus, they are delighted to be able to introduce Chinese martial arts and Chinese culture to the world with the help of the show (K. Zhang 2021). It is in corresponds with China's wish in the High-Quality Development of Digital Cultural Industry Policy to deliver the story of China, present a good image of China, and promote the spirit of China.

In May 2021, since the show started being broadcasted on Youku Official YouTube on February 23, the show has gained 80 million views in total. It has been translated into six languages: English, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Arabic (K. Zhang 2021). Aside from the Youku Official YouTube account, "Word of Honor" is also available on international streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Viki. Aside from the international streaming platform, the drama was also broadcasted on VieON and HTV7 Vietnam; Line TV, ATV, Friday, MyVideo, and Hami Video Taiwan; TrueID Thailand; Astro TV Malaysia; Singtel TV Singapore, Brunei, and Cambodia; Chunghwa TV South Korea; Wowow TV Japan; and MX Player India.

Table 3. International Broadcasting of "Word of Honor"

<i>No.</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Network</i>
1	China	Youku
2	International Broadcast	YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Viki
3	Vietnam	VieON, HTV7
4	Taiwan	Line TV, LiTV, Friday, MyVideo, Hami Video
5	Thailand	TrueID
6	Malaysia	Astro TV
7	Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia	Singtel TV
10	South Korea	Chunghwa TV
11	Japan	Wowow TV
12	India	MX Player

Though not directly participating in the distribution, the NRTA does have a role. It launched an announcement on strengthening the management of online audio-visual programs such as online drama and micro-movies in 2014 to ensure the content followed the existing regulation (National Radio and Television Administration 2014). In 2020, the State Administration of Radio and Television also released a notice on Further Promoting the Production and Creation of High-quality TV Drama, mentioning the importance of presenting content with Chinese characteristics. It mentioned how TV Drama should not only be full of artistry but also respect the laws of art and cultural content (National Radio and Television Administration 2020). Thus, it could be summarised that the NRTA is responsible for the quality and distribution control over the drama.

The mentioned actors in Table 3 and NRTA allow China to achieve its goal of taking part in the international cultural industry market. China provided digital cultural products in the form of audio-visual to be aired on a broadcast or streaming platform owned by country members of "One Belt, One Road." "Word of Honor" overseas popularity shows that China succeeds in making products that young overseas users favor. The Government, represented by the NRTA, is making sure the audio-visual products pass the standard and overseeing the overall distribution of the products. Thus, it could be concluded that the international distribution of the drama "Word of Honor" allows China to execute public diplomacy.

6. Conclusion

With soft power emerging as a core concept in Chinese cultural development policy, the Chinese Government executes a cultural policy to expand their cultural soft power. The Chinese Government had prioritized cultural industries as a pillar industrial sector and thus started to develop a cultural industry policy. With the current development of technology and digitization, the Government issued a digital cultural industry policy to create new forms of employment and jobs and form industrial chains that adapt to new technologies, new forms of business, and new consumption development industrial chains.

China's decision-making process is state-centric due to its nature as an authoritarian country. Thus, the Central Government has control over the policy, while the non-state actors could only follow the direction given by the Government. The content of the High-Quality Development of Digital Cultural Industry Policy implied the messages China wanted to tell. It emphasized China as an advanced country with a rich culture. Its plan for international cooperation also implied that China was a cooperative partner and not a threat. The international cooperation could be seen through the distribution of the "Word of Honor," aired on several countries broadcasting platforms. Moreover, it is also broadcasted on international streaming platforms such as YouTube and Netflix, which aligns with the "going global" strategy. Thus, it could be concluded that the international broadcasting of the drama "Word of Honor" is part of an implementation of cultural policy that worked as public diplomacy and helped China expand its cultural soft power.

References

- BeCARD, D. S. R. and Filho, P. M., Chinese Cultural Diplomacy: Instruments in China's Strategy for International Insertion in the 21st Century, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, vol. 62, no. 1, 2019, doi:10.1590/0034-7329201900105.
- Chen, J., *Chinese Law: Context and Transformation*. Martinus Nijhoff, 2008.
- China Net Technology., Youku's 'Ling of Mountains and Rivers' Landed on Netflix Today, and the Number of YouTube Views Has Exceeded 100 million, Available: <https://www.dashizg.com/redian/20210529125064.html>, May 29, 2021.
- Craik, J., *Re-Visioning Arts and Cultural Policy: Current Impasses and Future Directions*. ANU E Press, 2007.
- de Burgh, H., *China's Media in the Emerging World Order*. 2nd Edition, University of Buckingham Press, 2020.
- d'Hooghe, I., *China's Public Diplomacy*. Edited by Jan Melissen, vol. 10, Brill Nijhoff, 2015.
- d'Hooghe, I., Public Diplomacy in the People's Republic of China, *The New Public Diplomacy*, edited by Jan Melissen, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 88–105, 2005.
- Glaser, B. S. and Murphy, M. E., Soft Power with Chinese Characteristics: The Ongoing Debate, *Chinese Soft Power and Its Implication for the United States: Competition and Cooperation in The Developing World*, edited by Carola McGiffert, Center for Strategic and International Studies, pp. 10–26, 2009.
- Gregory, B., American Public Diplomacy: Enduring Characteristics, Elusive Transformation. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 3–4, pp. 351–72, 2011, doi:10.1163/187119111X583941.
- Hartig, F., How China Understands Public Diplomacy: The Importance of National Image for National Interests, *International Studies Review*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 655–80, 2016, doi:10.1093/isr/viw007.
- Heilmann, S. and Melton, O., "The Reinvention of Development Planning in China, 1993-2012." *Modern China*, vol. 39, no. 6, pp. 580–628, 2013, doi:10.1177/0097700413497551.
- Hocking, B., Rethinking the 'New' Public Diplomacy, *The New Public Diplomacy*, edited by Jan Melissen, Palgrave Macmillan UK, pp. 28–43, 2005, doi:10.1057/9780230554931_2.
- Hong, Y. U. Reading the Twelfth Five-Year Plan: China's Communication-Driven Mode of Economic Restructuring, *International Journal of Communication*, vol. 5, 2011, <http://ijoc.org>.
- Huilin, H. "Chinese Cultural Policy: History, Formation and Characteristics." *Journal of Forensic, Legal & Investigative Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 1–9, 2019, doi:10.24966/FLIS-733X/100030.
- Isar, Y. R., " 'Cultural Policy': Towards a Global Survey." *Cultural Unbound*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 51–65, 2009, <http://www.cultureunbound.ep.liu.se>.
- Jakobson, L. and Manuel, R., How Are Foreign Policy Decisions Made in China? *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 101–10, 2016, doi:10.1002/app5.121.
- Jianfei, Y., The Chinese Understanding of Cultural Industries, *Santalka: Filosofija, Komunikacija*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 90–97, 2011, doi:10.3846/coactivity.2011.18.
- Jiang, C., et al. *Development of China's Cultural Industry*. Edited by Chang Jiang et al., 1st ed., Springer, 2019.
- Jou, E. Wuxia on the Web Goes West as Genre Spreads, Available: https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/culture/2013-04/13/content_16398076.htm, April 13, 2013.
- Keane, M., Going Global or Going Nowhere? Chinese Media in a Time of Flux, *Media International Australia*, vol. 159, no. 1, pp. 13–21, 2016, doi:10.1177/1329878X16638937.

- Keane, M., and Chen, Y., Entrepreneurial Solutionism, Characteristic Cultural Industries and the Chinese Dream, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 743–55, 2019, doi:10.1080/10286632.2017.1374382.
- Lawrence, S. V., and Lee, M. Y., *China's Political System in Charts: A Snapshot Before the 20 Th Party Congress*. November 24, 2021, <https://crsreports.congress.gov>.
- Lee, C. S., *Soft Power Made in China*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
- Lewis, J. and Miller, T., *Critical Cultural Policy Studies*. Edited by Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, Blackwell Publishing, 2003.
- Li, M., Soft Power in Chinese Discourse: Popularity and Prospect, *Soft Power: China's Emerging Strategy in International Politics*, edited by Mingjiang Li, Lexington Books, pp. 21–44, 2009.
- Lim, K., China's Shift in Culture Policy and Cultural Awareness, *Multimedia and Ubiquitous Engineering*, edited by James J Park et al., Springer, pp. 601–09, 2013, doi:10.1007/978-94-007-6738-6_74.
- Liu, X., China's Cultural Diplomacy: A Great Leap Outward with Chinese Characteristics? Multiple Comparative Case Studies of the Confucius Institutes, *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 28, no. 118, pp. 646–61, 2019, doi:10.1080/10670564.2018.1557951.
- Melton, O., The Reinvention of Development Planning in China. *Modern China*, vol. 39, no. 6, 2013.
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism., Notice of the Ministry of Culture on Printing and Distributing the 'Ministry of Culture's Cultural Industry Development Plan during the 13th Five-Year Plan Period, Available: http://zwgk.mct.gov.cn/zfxgkml/ghjh/202012/t20201204_906372.html, April 20. 2017.
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism., Opinions of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on Promoting the High-Quality Development of the Digital Cultural Industry, Available: http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2020-11/27/content_5565316.htm, November 18 2020.
- National Bureau of Statistics of China., Value-Added of National Culture and Related Industries in 2020, Available: http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/PressRelease/202112/t20211230_1825755.html, December 30 2021.
- National Radio and Television Administration., Supplementary Notice on Further Improving the Management of Online Audio-Visual Programs Such as Online Dramas and Micro-Movies, Available: http://www.nrta.gov.cn/art/2014/3/21/art_113_4860.html, March 21. 2014.
- National Radio and Television Administration., Notice of the General Office of the State Administration of Radio and Television on Further Promoting the Production and Creation of High-Quality TV Dramas, Available: http://www.nrta.gov.cn/art/2020/12/4/art_113_54114.html, December 4 2020.
- Nye, J. S., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Public Affairs, 2004.
- Pamment, J., *New Public Diplomacy in the 21st Century A Comparative Study of Policy and Practice*. Edited by Corneliu Bjola and Markus Kornprobst, Routledge, 2013.
- Peng, W. and Keane, M., China's Soft Power Conundrum, Film Coproduction, and Visions of Shared Prosperity, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 25, no. 7, pp. 904–16, 2019, doi:10.1080/10286632.2019.1634062.
- Qiu, J., The Order of Mountains and Rivers' Has Exceeded 50 million Overseas Broadcasts, Available: <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/cul/2021/03-29/9442362.shtml>, March 29, 2021.
- Shan, S., Chinese Cultural Policy and the Cultural Industries, *City, Culture and Society*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 115–21, 2014, doi: 10.1016/j.ccs.2014.07.004.
- State Council., Guiding Opinions of the Ministry of Culture on Promoting the Innovative Development of the Digital Cultural Industry, Available: http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2017/content_5230291.htm, October 10, 2017.
- Wang, L. and Shen, J., Changing Spatial Planning in China's Five-Year Planning System, *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers: Urban Design and Planning*, vol. 167, no. 5, pp. 189–95, 2014, doi:10.1680/udap.14.00008.
- Wang, Y., Public Diplomacy, and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 616, no. 1, pp. 257–73, 2008, doi:10.1177/0002716207312757.
- Wu, Y., The Rise of China with Cultural Soft Power in the Age of Globalization. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, vol. 8, no. 5, pp. 763–78, 2018, doi:10.17265/2159-5836/2018.05.006.
- Xinhua, Full Text of Xi Jinping's Report at 19th CPC National Congress, Available: https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/19thpcnationalcongress/2017-11/04/content_34115212.htm, November 4 2017.
- Zhang, G., *Research Outline for China's Cultural Soft Power*. Edited by Yang Li and Peilin Li, Springer, 2017, <http://www.springer.com/series/13571>.
- Zhang, K., Chinese Wuxia Drama' Word of Honor': A Big Hit among Overseas Viewers, Available: <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-05-06/Chinese-Wuxia-drama-Word-of-Honor-A-big-hit-among-overseas-viewers-102Zd0SMxgY/index.html>, May 6 2021.

Zhang, W., China's Cultural Future: From Soft Power to Comprehensive National Power. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 383–402, 2010, doi:10.1080/10286630903134300.

Zhang, Y. and Zhang, C., Soft Power' and Chinese Soft Power, *China's Soft Power and International Relations*, edited by Hongyi Lai and Yiyi Lu, Routledge, 2012.

Biography

Nadhira Alia Putri is a student in Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia. She majored international relations studies at Bina Nusantara University. Her research interest focuses on media studies and East Asian studies.

Rangga Aditya Elias is the Head Department of International Relations, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia. His research focuses on Indonesia-China relations, Taiwan studies, and China's international relations. His research has been published in the *Journal of ASEAN Studies*. Rangga holds a Ph.D. from the National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan.